

# **Case Study on Intercultural Policies and Intergroup Relations Malmö, Sweden**

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## Foreword

This report is part of the Eurofound project *Cities for Local Integration Policy (CLIP)*, which began in 2006. Malmo is one of the 30 European cities that are members of CLIP and cooperate in exchanging information about their policies for integration.

The project collects and analyses information on innovative policies and their successful implementation at the local level, and supports the exchange of experience between cities. This encourages a learning process within the network of cities which can address the role of social partners, NGOs, companies and voluntary associations in supporting successful integration policies. CLIP also provides an objective assessment of current practice and initiatives and an opportunity to discuss the transferability of such initiatives, communicating good practices to other cities in Europe and developing guidelines to help cities to cope more effectively with the challenge of integrating migrants. This work supports the further development of a European integration policy by communicating the policy relevant experiences and outputs of the network to European organisations of cities and local regional authorities, the European and national organisations of social partners, the Council of Europe and the various institutions of the European Union.

The CLIP network requires cooperation between cities and research institutes. Five research institutes in Bamberg, Amsterdam, Vienna, Liege and Swansea are responsible for the outputs of CLIP. Researchers from the Centre for Migration Policy Research (CMPR) at Swansea University are responsible for this report on Malmo. Together with the contact persons of the city of Malmo, a significant effort has been made to find all necessary and relevant data for this report.

Between 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February 2009 the researchers met with officials of the city council, public sector organisations, representatives from the city districts, researchers at Malmo University, and representatives from a range of non-governmental and voluntary organisations including ENAR and a number of faith-based groups. A full list of research participants is included at the end of this report. Numerous reports, statistics and comments on the concept version of this report have been provided from the various organisations listed.

We would like to offer our sincere thanks to everyone who cooperated in providing information for this report. Particular thanks are due to Kent Andersson, the Vice Mayor of Malmo and his political secretary, Torbjorn Karlsson, and to Andreas Konstantinides, Head of the Integration and Employment Department and Mayor of the city district of Rosengård for their assistance in coordinating the search for data, for providing a thorough and varied field visit to Malmo, and for their support and hospitality throughout this research

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## **1 Introduction**

The third module of the CLIP project focuses on intercultural policies and intergroup relations.

These include minority cultures, ethnic heritage and intercultural dialogue on the local level, faith based communities with a specific focus on Muslim communities and related local policies and finally; intergroup relationships, radicalisation and local policy responses.

Generally, the aim of the study is to provide a shared learning process between the participating cities. This shared learning process is also extended between the cities and the researchers, and between both the representatives on the local and European level. Additionally, this module aims to improve intergroup relations by providing a systematic overview of areas of local policy intervention on intergroup relations and inter-cultural dialogue and presenting findings on relationships with Muslim communities at the local level as well as related policy initiatives.

Initially, this process is carried out by the city's completion of a Common Report Scheme (CRS) document which is returned to the research team. On receipt of the CRS document, the research team organises a four day field visit, consisting of meetings, interviews, focus groups and presentations with city officials, academics, media representatives, NGOs and other community and faith organisations and welfare associations. The purpose of the field visit is to attempt to corroborate and elaborate on the responses provided by the city through the CRS document.

Finally, using the research evidence provided through the CRS document and the field visit, the research team produce their report on the city in question. From these case studies, the CLIP research team, in cooperation with the cities, produce an overview report which advises future policy development at the local, national and European level.

## **2 Background information on the country**

### **2.1 History of migration and composition of the migrant populations**

Sweden is one of the largest Nordic countries by size and population (nine million), but one of the smaller members of the European Union since its membership in 1995. Industrialisation occurred towards the end of the nineteenth century and by the mid twentieth century Sweden became known for its combination of a liberal market economy and state-run welfare policies (Westin 2006).

Although immigration to Sweden started when the Vikings arrived and continued during the Middle Ages with European monks arriving alongside significant numbers of Germans, Danes and Fins (Allwood, Myhre and Edebäck 2007), Borkert (2007) suggests that modern Swedish immigration can be divided into three phases. Although this is a useful framework, for understanding the history of migration to Sweden, it should be noted that even prior to the first phase refugees from Germany, from Sweden's Nordic neighbours and from the Baltic States initially transformed Sweden during this period from an emigrant country into an immigrant country during the course of the Second World War. Many of these refugees returned to their native countries after the war, but a large number remained, among them the majority of those from the Baltic States (Swedish Migration Board 2009).

The first phase took place during the 1950s and 1960s and represents a virtually free entry of labour immigrants from Finland and southern Europe at a time when many Western European countries were also seeking migrant labour. Immigrant labour was essential for generating the tax-base required for the expansion of the public sector and for meeting the demand for Swedish production required across Europe following the Second World War.

Initially, migrants came from Yugoslavia and Italy in the 1950s. This was followed in the 1960s with the arrival of migrants from Spain and Portugal as a result of a labour recruitment agreement made between the Swedish government and other European countries. This was concurrent with the introduction of the guest worker system of labour migration that took place across much of Western Europe. Unlike other European countries, Sweden established a policy of permanent immigration that treated labour migrants as future citizens (Westin 2006). Of these workers, the Yugoslavians and Turkish populations remain large communities (Table 1).

However, the most significant number of immigrants arriving during this period was from Sweden's neighbouring countries, Denmark, Norway and Finland. This movement was heightened by the 1954 agreement of free movement between Nordic countries. The Fins are currently the largest immigrant group, with 180,906. The Danish and Norwegian groups are smaller and relatively equal in number, respectively 44,444 and 44,727.

The second phase in Sweden's recent immigration history began in the mid 1960s, when the management of immigration was significantly modified. The introduction of work permits limited immigration for most with the exception of refugees and Nordic citizens. Attention turned increasingly towards policies for the integration of those who had already arrived. Policy discourse was framed in terms of 'equality, freedom of choice and cooperation', and the right to vote for non-nationals in local and regional elections was introduced. In addition, policies were introduced to enable funding for migrant associations, the importation of journals and magazines and the ability to study in the mother tongue at school. This resulted in a further diversification within immigrant groups during this period (Borkert 2007).

**Table 1: Foreign-born persons in Sweden by country of birth, 2006 (groups larger than 9000)**

Country	Number	Rank
Afghanistan	9872	
Chile	27967	
China (excluding Hong Kong)	14453	
Colombia	9375	
Denmark	44444	7
Eritrea and Ethiopia	6066+11427=17493	
Finland	180906	1
Germany	43044	
Greece	10760	
Hungary	13711	
India	13979	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	55747	4
Iraq	82827	3
Korea (Republic of)	9862	
Lebanon	22697	
Norway	44727	6
Poland	51743	5
Romania	12910	
Somalia	18342	
Syrian Arab Republic	17768	
Thailand	20524	
The Soviet Union, former plus Russian Federation and Estonia	6667+12121+9820=22608	
Turkey	37107	
United Kingdom	17788	
United States of America	15225	
Vietnam	12814	
Federal Republic Yugoslavia plus Serbia and Montenegro plus Macedonia plus Croatia	73671+6805+3669+6063=90208	2

Source: City of Malmo 2008c

What might be described as a third phase of recent Swedish immigration started in the early to mid-1990s as a result of the growing global number of refugees (Borkert 2007). As a result of the Balkan war the (former) Yugoslavian community increased significantly in size in Sweden and is now the second largest immigrant group. Iraqi and Iranian refugee groups are currently the two

largest non-European refugee groups with 82,827 and 55,747 people respectively. Significant communities of refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Afghanistan also established themselves in Sweden during this period.

The expanded membership of the European Union in 2004 has had a limited impact on the scale and composition of migration to Sweden (Borkert 2007). The notable exception to this is the Polish community. Whilst a Polish community has been established in Sweden since 1973, with 6,138 Polish nationals being resident at that time, the number has increased steadily from 40,123 in 2000 to 51,743 in 2006. In 2006 more than 50% of those who were Polish and living in Sweden held Swedish passports (Borkert 2007).

Allwood et al (2007, 27) provide a breakdown of the categorisation of resident permits given in Sweden in 2005. The largest category (35%) were resident permit holders based on family reunification, followed by EU/EEA immigrants (29%), students (11%), labour migrants (10%) and asylum seekers and refugees (8%). Smaller categories consisted of immigrants based on a temporary law (4%), quota refugees (2%) and adopted children (1%). In 2006, approximately 12% of Sweden's population was foreign born (Westin 2006).

The Swedish government has been concerned about unemployment levels among the foreign born as compared to native Swedes for some time. There is evidence that immigrant groups have higher levels unemployment and therefore, higher levels of social welfare dependency (Westin 2006). According to the Swedish Migration Board (2004), employment in Sweden since 1987 has decreased for the whole population from 82% to 75%, but the decrease has been greater among immigrants, from 75% to 59%. It seems that deindustrialization, rationalization and cutbacks have affected immigrant groups the most with the majority of temporary employment being offered to those that are foreign born. Furthermore, with legislation concerning job security favoring those employees with the longest employment records, it is probably a tenable conclusion that immigrants are more vulnerable when it comes to market fluctuations. There has also been a large structural change concerning the relative distribution of types of employment for immigrants. Towards the end of the 1980s about 40% of all foreign-born men and about 20% of all foreign-born women worked in industries. These shares have decreased to 25 and 10% respectively in 2004 (Statistics Sweden 2007)

It is important to note here that neither ethnicity nor religion is recorded in Sweden. As a result there is limited information about the religious background of immigrants, at either the national or local level. It should also be noted that prior to the abolishment of the Swedish State Church in 2000, those born in Sweden automatically became members of the State Church, only having the option to leave when they turned 18 years of age. Since 2000, all citizens, whether Swedish Church members or not, remain liable to pay taxes to the church for life events, such as marriages or funerals. For those that opt for Swedish Church membership, a higher rate of annual tax is imposed. Despite the abolition of the Swedish State Church, it has a current estimated membership of 75% of the overall population (Malmo City 2009).

## **2.2 National policy context**

Sweden is a highly centralized and democratic state and has established a balance of power between strong central government and independent local authorities. In comparison with other European cities, this balance of power is far greater for local authorities, especially regarding finances and decision-making (Borkert 2007)

In 2006, the Swedish Social Democrats narrowly lost the general election after almost seventy years in power (they lost power between 1976 – 1982 and 1991-1994) and were replaced by a coalition government between the Moderate Party and three other parties, thus creating a centre-right government. This government has been in power since 2006 and the next general election is scheduled to take place in September 2010.

Since 1975, when the Swedish Parliament endorsed an integration policy based on the needs of labour migrants from Southern Europe, multiculturalism has been defined in terms of equal rights and therefore 'equality, freedom of choice and cooperation'. This provides immigrants residing permanently in Sweden, with the same rights as Swedish citizens including in terms of their access to the welfare state (equality). It also allows immigrants the freedom to assimilate or maintain their distinct native culture, and therefore provides targeted language support for immigrant children (freedom) and whatever their preference in this regard, should not conflict with essential Swedish values and norms, such as voting rights in the local and county elections (co-operation) (Westin 2006). This is the fundamental basis of the national policy context and, although the terminology has changed, these principles still apply today. For example, in recognition of integration as a two-way process between the minority and majority populations, the concept of diversity has replaced the concept of integration which was viewed more as a process of adjustment by the migrant into mainstream society rather than a mutual adjustment and adaptation by both the migrant and host society (Westin 2006).

The Swedish employment rate is currently 74% for men and 73% for women, but is not equally divided between ethnic groups. Although anti-discrimination laws have been established on the national level, concerns regarding high levels of unemployment, welfare dependency, segregation, rising crime rates and voter apathy amongst the foreign-born compared with native Swedes remain. All foreign-born groups - including Danish immigrants - have a considerably lower rate of employment. In the majority of cases, the employment rate does not reach 50%. The two groups that have the lowest employment rates are Iraqis (22% of men are employed and just 11% of women) and Somalia's (23% of men employed and 21% of women). In 2005 the Government established a Commission to investigate structural discrimination but the causes of such discrimination have yet to be identified (Westin 2006).

### 3 Background information on the City

#### 3.1 Brief description of the city

Malmo lies in the most southern part of Sweden and is in close proximity with Denmark. The Oresund Bridge was built in 2000 and connects Malmo to Copenhagen (Figure 1). The city of Copenhagen currently provides employment for approximately 5% of the population (City of Malmo 2009).

**Figure 1: The Oresund Bridge**



Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth 2009

Malmo's economy was traditionally based on shipbuilding and construction-related industries such as concrete factories and continued to expand through the first half of the 20th century. Kockums shipyard was one of the world's largest shipyards but closed in the mid 1980s, depriving the city of its largest employer and its shipbuilding identity. By 1985, Malmo had lost 35,000 inhabitants leaving a remaining population of 229,000. The old shipyard area is now used by Malmo University, which opened in 1998 and caters for approximately 15,000 students.

The decreasing population associated with the decline of the shipping industry was further compounded by the economic crisis during the early 1990s. Although the economic crisis had an adverse effect on Sweden generally, the impact on Malmo was greater than for any other Swedish city. Malmo's traditional industrial structure was virtually destroyed and between 1990 and 1995, approximately 27,000 jobs were lost. Malmo had Sweden's highest unemployment rate and its economy was under considerable stress.

The economic crisis coincided with a significant increase in the arrival of refugees and other new immigrants from war-torn areas in the Balkans and the Middle East described in the previous chapter. The proportion of the population with a foreign background increased during the 1990s by 10%. As a result, levels of long-term unemployment, exclusion, poverty and segregation were overwhelming and historically unique during this period.

More recently, the construction of the Oresund Bridge, and the subsequent establishment of government-funded projects have provided Malmo with the opportunity to undertake a process of revival. By the end of the 1990s Malmo was beginning a period of recovery. The strongest sectors in Malmo are logistics, retail and wholesale trade, construction, and property. There are also a number of well-known companies within biotechnology and medical technology, environmental technology, IT, and digital media fields. Co-operation between colleges, science parks, and companies has provided a sound basis for entrepreneurs and creative development. Additionally, attractive seafront quarters constructed within the south-west harbour area alongside the new apartment buildings and villas with attractive waterfront vistas, have become the core of a new city district, aimed at the urban middle-class.

**Figure 2: Districts of Malmo**



Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth 2009

A well developed infrastructure now makes Malmo easier to reach. Malmo has an international harbour and the airports Kastrup and Sturup are only half an hour's journey from the centre. The motorway reaches right into the city centre and Malmo has excellent rail connections with the rest of Sweden and Europe.

Today Malmo can be described as ethnically and socio-economically segregated, with middle class neighbourhoods in the west and working class neighbourhoods in the south and east (Figure 2). Unemployment rates, crime rates and the number of households in need of social benefits correlate very closely with this pattern (Anderson 2003).

### **3.2 The city's migrant population and its characteristics/main groups**

Malmo is Sweden's third largest city with 286,440 inhabitants (City of Malmo 2008). It is an ethnically diverse city with 174 different nationalities speaking 130 different languages. It has the highest proportion of individuals of non-Scandinavian extraction of any Swedish city and is highly segregated.

Since the 1960s, Malmo's population has changed from being relatively homogenous to one of significant diversity. The population consists of 30% first generation with a foreign background and 44% second generation with a foreign background. 55% of children under nineteen speak a second language with at least one of their parents. Approximately 100,000 people of Malmo's 286,000 population are immigrants (City of Malmo 2008c). As of January 2008, 29% of the population or 79,389 inhabitants were born outside Sweden. 61% of those have Swedish citizenship. 9% of the population or 25,244 Malmo inhabitants were born in Sweden but have both parents born outside Sweden. 37% or 104,633 Malmo inhabitants have a foreign background, i.e. they were born outside Sweden or in Sweden but with both parents outside Sweden. 61% of those born outside Sweden were born in Europe, and approximately 30% come from Asia. Following the Swedish legislation in 1974, which prevented the collection of data identifying ethnicity and religion, there is no demographic data on the size or character of religious groups. 63% of the migrant population has acquired Swedish citizenship (Scuzzarello 2008).

Unlike many other Swedish cities, Malmo has a young population with 47% of the population being under 35 years of age. This is predominantly due to immigration. 50% of children living in Malmo have parents who are foreign born (City of Malmo 2008c).

Danes are the largest immigrant group in Malmo (Table 2). The recent immigration of Danes increased following the construction of the Oresund Bridge in 2000. With a 30 minute train journey into Copenhagen from Malmo and a shortage of affordable housing in Copenhagen, many Danes have relocated to Malmo where housing is cheaper. Additionally, Danish civil servants have the power to ban a non-Danish spouse from living in Denmark if they consider that person's ties to Denmark are not strong enough. This has resulted in many Danes married to or wishing to marry immigrants relocating to Malmo.

**Table 2: Largest foreign nationalities in Malmo, 1st January 2008**

<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>79 389</b>
01. Denmark	8 857
02. Yugoslavia	8 658
03. Iraq	7 975
04. Poland	6 314
05. Bosnia and Herzegovina	5 725
06. Lebanon	3 392
07. Iran	3 041
08. Hungary	1 856
09. Germany	1 822
10. Finland	1 694
11. Afghanistan	1 673
12. Romania	1 640
13. Turkey	1 589
14. Chile	1 329
15. Vietnam	1 167
16. Somalia	1 037
17. Macedonia	947
18. Norway	847
19. Pakistan	806
20. Croatia	754

Source: City of Malmo 2008c

Within the city of Malmo, there is a high concentration of immigrants in a few city districts. The level of concentration is higher than in most other European cities. This segregation is based on an older structure of socio-economic segregation previously established in Malmo. Refugees settle in the existing low income areas alongside their existing fellow ethnic group members and previous residents of Swedish origin have, over the past few years, gradually moved away. In Sweden refugees can settle in any city they want to: they are not obliged to stay in the few refugee camps that Sweden has, nor do the city authorities determine where they will be housed. When the rent of a flat exceeds the tenant's income, Malmo City Council (MCC) pays a share, irrespective of the tenant's nationality, total rent price or other characteristic of the flat.

The city district with the highest percentage of immigrants is Rosengård. As of 1st January 2005, 59% of residents were first generation migrants, with 25% second generation migrants with two foreign parents and a further 10% having one foreign parent (Table 3). In total, 84% of the residents of this district can be described as having an immigrant background, and only 16% have two Swedish parents (City of Malmo 2005). Other city districts with high concentrations of immigrants are Fossie (38% first generation, 12 % second generation), Hyllie (26% first generation, 8% second generation), and Centrum (22% first generation, 6% second generation). In these last two districts, the majority of immigrants are Danish.

### Figure 3: Citizens of Rosengård with foreign background (1st and 2nd generation), 1st January 2005

Source: City of Malmo 2008b

Due to the lack of demographic data, it is difficult to identify the main minority and majority ethnic and religious groups in Malmo. However, many respondents suggest the main minority religious group is Muslim.

The main organisations and groups regarded by the city as important in the context of integration and intergroup relations in Malmo city are:

- **The Islamic Centre** was established in 1984. It is a religious organisation that manages the central mosque, the Muslim school and library in Malmo. It also provides information on the Islamic way of life, and aims to promote peace, integration, understanding and diversity through various non-profit projects;
- **The Organisation for International Women in Malmo (IKF)** was established in Sweden in 1970 and in Malmo in 2001 and aims to be a local resource centre for women. It affirms and encourages women and aims to increase their involvement in all areas of society;
- **The Iraqi Culture Association** contributes to the safeguarding of the cultural and historical inheritance of Iraq;
- **The Afghans Cultural Association** contributes to the safeguarding of the cultural and historical inheritance of Afghanistan;
- **The Somaliland Association** is a unique organisation focused on promoting the Somali community through collective, proactive action;
- **The Iranian–Swedish Association** was established in 2004 and promotes a cross-cultural perspective. It aims to advance attitudes, policies and actions that promote tolerance, justice and social inclusion for Iranian communities in Malmo and to encourage a more Iranian –Swedish exchange; and

- **The Rosengård Women's Organisation** aims to provide inclusive projects that demonstrate independence, and social inclusion for all women across Malmö.

The city collaborates with these groups as part of its efforts to promote intercultural understanding between different ethnic groups and the majority population in Malmö.

### **3.3 The city's Muslim population and its characteristics**

As previously stated, Sweden does not gather data concerning its citizen's religious beliefs and therefore, it is difficult to identify the demographic structure, ethnicity and socio-economic status of the Muslim population. However, within the Rosengård, Fosie and Hyllie Districts, there are significant numbers of immigrants residing, many of whom are Muslim. All housing in the Herrgård district, and the majority of the housing in the Fosie and Rosengård districts is for rent only. With lower levels of co-operative housing available in these areas, it can be concluded that those at the lower end of the socio-economic scale, who are unable to access a mortgage, live within these areas. A housing cooperative is an economic association whose purpose is to convey occupancy rights in residential or commercial space with cooperative apartments in the building owned by the cooperative to its members (members of the cooperative). People who live in cooperative apartments are members of a housing cooperative. Members own the cooperative's buildings and land in common. Members have occupancy rights to their apartments for an unlimited time. Shares (memberships) can be sold and can be inherited or transferred in the same way as other assets). It should also be noted that Rosengård has the highest level of unemployment in Sweden.

According to the city, the most important Muslim religious organisation in Malmö is the Islamic Centre, an association that is located on the outskirts of Malmö at Skavlinge Kyrkoväg. Adjacent to the Islamic Centre is the first mosque built in Scandinavia and currently the largest mosque in Malmö. It is the most prominent organisation in the Muslim community, not only in Malmö but also across Denmark and the Scania region. The mosque at the Islamic Centre was inaugurated in 1984 and over 5,000 Muslims from Malmö and Copenhagen use the mosque regularly. The head of the Islamic Centre is also responsible for the mosque and the only Muslim school in Malmö, which is also located on this site. The city funds each student equally whether they attend a Muslim School or a State School and as a result, the Malmö Muslim school receives the same funding per student as any other school in Malmö.

According to the city, the Islamic Centre is the largest and most representative Muslim association in Malmö, the Scania region and Denmark and provides support and activities for the welfare of local migrant communities such as family counselling and after school activities for pupils. There is also a national association, the Islamic Federation which are represented in Malmö with five different local associations. The city is able to communicate with both of these organisations.

## **4 Local intercultural policies in general**

### **4.1 General approach and responsibility for relations to ethnic and religious organisations in the city.**

The administration of the Malmö City Council (MCC) is divided into ten city districts: Centrum, Fosie, Husie, Hyllie, Kirseberg, Limhamn-Bunkeflo, Oxie, Rosengård, Södra Innerstaden and Västra Innerstaden. The purpose of these divisions is to develop and strengthen local democracy, thereby increasing citizen's opportunities to influence conditions within their own area.

The city began dealing with issues relating to migrants' integration in the late 1990s. In 1997, as a general strategy to address the major economic crisis that was affecting the municipality, the city adopted a *General Plan for Employment*. Although the Plan did not explicitly address migrant integration policies, its focus on employment directly affected the lives of migrants as a large share of those who were unemployed at the time were from migrant backgrounds.

In 1999, the city adopted the first *Action Plan* that explicitly aimed to promote migrants' integration in Malmo. The Plan stressed the importance of adopting a policy of integration that could allow migrants to participate in the future development of the city while retaining their cultures, viewing cultural diversity as a resource for the city. The plan echoes the rhetoric of the national approach to integration policies and was a watershed in the development of Swedish integration politics. It entailed a discursive shift, already in the title of the Plan, from 'immigrant politics' to 'integration politics'. The earlier politics were blamed for reinforcing the polarisation between Swedes and migrants. As a reaction to this, the Plan suggested:

- Giving clear time limits to policies that target migrants;
- Formulating the needs of migrant minorities as general welfare provisions; and
- Avoiding the use of the concept 'migrant' in policies that target migrants as a socio-economic disadvantaged group (Borevi 2002, 130).

Despite the re-formulation of the city's identity (from working-class city to city of knowledge), the socio-economic and urban segregation of migrants still exists (Scuzzarello 2008). The Action Plan continues to be annually reviewed and reworked and has also been adopted by each of its ten city administration districts. Most recently, an *Anti-Discrimination Plan* has been established for the city.

The Department of Integration and Employment, headed by the Deputy Mayor, Kent Andersson, and a further six Employment and Integration departments (AIC) based in the 10 city districts, are responsible for all relations towards ethnic and religious organisations in Malmo city. There are approximately 25% elected representatives in the city with an ethnic background, (the highest in Sweden), however they are representative of the community at large, not representative of a specific ethnic or religious group. For districts that have a high population of immigrants, this percentage is much higher within the city district councils.

The city of Malmo considers that their general attitude towards ethnic and religious organisations is welcoming and supportive. The collaboration between the city, more specifically the Department of Integration and Employment and the Deputy Mayor and ethnic organisations, involves both consultation and more extensive common work such as the development of the *Action Plan* and newly established *Anti-Discrimination Plan*, in an attempt to promote integration in the city. The Deputy Mayor operates an open door policy and is available to meet with any organisation and prepared to listen to their concerns, issues or proposals.

Furthermore, the city districts have established their own local NGO networks. In some districts, such as Rosengård ethnic and religious associations are engaged in various integration activities such as Herrgardens Kvinnoforening (Swedish and Iranian Women's Association). Whilst the city does not have ethnic representatives who play an active role in intercultural policies, 25% of members have ethnic backgrounds. The city appears to be dedicated to intercultural issues as evidenced through the number and breadth of projects being currently funded and its receptive and open approach to new projects. Some representatives did however suggest that whilst the city is

prepared to provide funding city representatives and officials are insufficiently interactive at a grass roots level.

## **4.2 Issues, demands and interests**

The city considers that one of the major demands from groups and associations is to have their own meeting places. These demands are considered legitimate and efforts are made to meet them through both financial support and by actively attempting to locate and in some instances, create meeting space on the organisation or groups' behalf.

A good example of this can be seen at the Rosengård city district Library which has responded to the request for meeting spaces by providing a new layout of library services to its users. Previously, many of the local immigrant men would gather in the library's central areas to play chess, cards and chat. This would limit the space for delivering weekly lectures and deter the local women from coming into the library to also meet with friends and chat. During the Library's reorganisation, a room dedicated to chess was established. The room has approximately nine tables, each with a chess set and four chairs. The men now congregate in this room and the women are left free to meet or attend the weekly lectures in the central areas. Books are available in this library in twenty different languages and there are over 100 different national newspapers from around the world. All the staff are multi-lingual, although there is currently no one able to speak Arabic. The library not only provides a meeting place but also offers courses in IT, how to use the internet, and has an extensive language library offering language courses through CDs and tapes. It also runs a weekly language café, where topics of visitor's choice are discussed in Swedish over coffee with some of the librarians and other visitors. Since its reorganisation, the Rosengård city district Library has seen a significant increase in the number of women visiting and using its facilities. Primarily it sells itself as a meeting place and is ideally situated for this, being located in district's shopping mall.

Many of those who were interviewed during the field visit to Malmo said that they felt the Rosengård District Library was a good example of an inventive way to create space. Nonetheless it is strongly felt that significantly more meeting space is required.

Meeting space for sporting activities was also discussed. The city has a specific policy with regard to sports groups and clubs, activities and facilities such as pitches and gyms and funds all sporting facilities directly, managing the allocation of time within each facility for each activity. Members are expected to pay a nominal 200KR per annum which enables them to use any sporting facility across Malmo city. For those unable to afford the membership fee, the city pays it on their behalf.

Other prominent issues, demands and interests were identified in relation to social needs, such as housing and employment, education and language learning.

Issues associated with housing generally relate to the shortage of adequate, affordable accommodation, overcrowding and segregation. As noted above, new arrivals in Malmo are free to reside in whichever district they choose. This has created a high level of ethnic and religious segregation and overcrowding, which particularly within Rosengård District is also associated with sub-standard accommodation. The problems of segregation and overcrowding are two-fold. On the one hand new arrivals understandably prefer to be close to family and friends and with the current shortage of accommodation in Malmo generally, opt to move into relatives and friends home which are already in segregated areas. This accommodation then becomes overcrowded. At the same time as a result of discrimination, some immigrants also find it difficult to acquire tenancies in the

less segregated, more affluent areas, such as Limhamn and therefore have no option but to take accommodation in Rosengård. Some of the landlords in Rosengård exploit this situation and are less inclined to maintain their accommodation to the appropriate standard. City representatives are aware of the issues of overcrowding and sub-standard accommodation within this district and are currently pursuing landlords in an attempt to force them to maintain their properties.

Issues surrounding employment are related to the high level of unemployment amongst immigrant groups, as was noted previously. Many representatives believe this is primarily due to discrimination and the lack of adequate Swedish language skills.

According to the city, it has no responsibility for the police or fire services. Ethnic representation within public sector employment is particularly low. Ethnic minorities are currently extremely under-represented in the police force and the fire service: only two fire service employees in 500 across the entire Scania region come from an ethnic minority background. Whilst the local police in Malmö have been addressing this issue for some time and are believed to making some headway, if only slowly, the fire service have only just begun to address the imbalance. Some respondents suggested that current efforts to increase ethnic minority representation are a reflection of increases in conflict during emergency call outs in the Rosengård District directed at fire service equipment and personnel, for example petrol bombs and bricks being thrown, rather than a genuine commitment to anti-discriminatory policies. Nonetheless a programme of change began in January 2009 which aims to improve relations and increase representation. Two workers have initially been employed to bridge the gap between community and fire personnel and to encourage communication. The fire service believe this is proving successful and open days have been held at the fire station in Rosengård District. Communities have been invited to the centre to meet with fire-fighters, who have also used this opportunity to provide visitors with information concerning fire safety.

At the same time, in an attempt to create positive role models for younger visitors and encourage intercultural dialogue between the fire service and the community, 186 applicants from the Scania region were selected to undertake a 10-month training course, mentored by 13 existing voluntary fire-fighters. The training course provides participants with the opportunity to work towards the entrance criteria to the fire service college and become either a fire-fighter or a link worker for the fire service in the future. Jobs and entrance to the fire service training college are not guaranteed, and there has been some resentment displayed by existing fire-fighters that those selected are receiving preferential treatment and bypassing the conventional route into fire service employment. Nonetheless some respondents consider that this is a positive step forward and signifies an initial attempt to move away from the traditional identity that the fire service has maintained towards achieving a more intercultural, diverse approach.

The Swedish government is aware of the ways in which inadequate Swedish language skills can create a barrier to employment, education and integration more generally. In response, Skolverket, the Swedish National Agency for Education, developed a *Swedish For Immigrants (SFI)* programme which now operates throughout Sweden and in two different areas in Malmö, one of which is the Hyllie Park Folkhögskola, an adult education institution. Education is targeted for those aged 16 plus and consists of three different study paths: Sfi 1, Sfi 2 and Sfi 3. These study paths are designed for people with different backgrounds, prerequisites and goals. Instruction is offered in several languages including Swedish, Arabic, Pathtu, Dari, Albanian, Somali, Turkmen and all dialects of Kurdish. Currently, the institution has capacity for 160 participants with short or no formal educational background. Sfi 1 is made up of courses A and B, Sfi 2 of courses B and C and Sfi 3 of courses C and D. Each study path thus consists of two courses that illustrate the

progression in the education. This provides students with the opportunity to plan their studies by means of goals that can be attained within a reasonable period.

Generally, the city considers itself to be receptive to all new events and activities proposed by ethnic and migrant groups in Malmo. All associations and organisations representing any interest group, and regardless of their cultural or religious nature have the right to apply to the city for funding. The only condition imposed on all those applying for funding is that the association or organisation must follow the democratic process. For example, there must be an elected board and annual meetings must take place.

### **4.3 Forms of relations and dialogue**

The city has formal and informal regular and institutionalised contact with a number of ethnic and religious organisations. It has a continuing dialogue with various groups, for example, dialogue with the Islamic Centre operates on an 'as-and-when' basis, but also has formal and institutionalised contact with all organisations through regular meetings held with the Department of Integration and Employment and individual city district meetings at a more local level. Additional contact also takes place when and if issues arise, such as funding requests for Muslim school activities. As issues for discussion arise frequently there is often daily dialogue between city representatives and the Islamic Centre.

The city of Malmo, especially the representative in the local district offices, tries to have a continuing dialogue with various minority groups. This dialogue is organised through meetings and open forums where representatives from a range of organisations are invited. Members of the general public are also able to attend these meetings.

Funding is provided by the city for various ethnic and religious organisations in line with all funding requests received from other groups and organisations. Funding allocation is based on the democratic rule and within this context the city exerts some influence concerning specific issues. For example, the city funds the Muslim school at the same rate per student as for any other school in Malmo, but requests all students are able to apply for places, regardless of their background. Another example is where an organisation applies for funding to set up a football team. In this case the city will request that the football team is available to both boys and girls.

There is co-operation with associations in order to implement the city policies for integration and anti-discrimination and to prevent social exclusion. One example of this co-operation is the recent fire service project discussed in the previous section. There are no specific representatives from ethnic groups who are directly involved in these policies, although each of the city district councils who are directly involved in city policies and projects are representative of the district and city population as a whole. The anti-discrimination committee is the only formal consultation body in Malmo where ethnic organisations are invited to participate. The city of Malmo does not provide a platform or an institutionalised structure for relations with specific ethnic or religious organisations but provides a platform for relations with all organisations across the city.

The city does not have a specific policy aimed at improving intercultural relations, but rather it takes a more holistic approach towards all of its policies and projects which include intercultural relations. The main objectives and challenges to this holistic approach are to have an integrated, harmonious society. For example, an inter-religious room has been established at Malmo University. The first of its kind in Sweden, the room is organised by a Minister from the Swedish Church and is available to all students, from all faiths throughout the day. All religious symbols are placed in cupboards

within the room, and are to be taken out and used at will. The room can accommodate up to 25-30 people at any one time from whatever faith at any one time. The inter-religious room has been operating over the past twelve months and during this time there have no incidents of inter-religious conflict. The Swedish government plans to implement dedicated inter-religious rooms across all Swedish universities.

Members representing the Islamic Centre, the Swedish Church and the city meet informally in an attempt to encourage a working partnership where current issues affecting all parties involved can be discussed. The meetings are held regularly and attended by at least two representatives from each organisation. The Swedish Church is situated less than 500m from the Islamic Centre and therefore relations initially commenced in a neighbourly context. However over the past twenty years, relationships have forged into good working relationships where all parties feel a joint responsibility to the community and Malmö city generally.

The collaborative committee was initiated by the Islamic Centre and the Swedish Church together. They decided themselves who would represent them and no elections took place. Main topics discussed include various projects on how to promote intercultural relations to improve understanding amongst minority and majority groups and the future funding of such projects.

Generally, the city considers itself to take an active role in inter-religious dialogue. The city provides the majority of funding and meeting place venues for organisations, groups and activities through the Department of Integration. Through their relevant district boards, the city is well positioned to be aware of, and respond to, emerging issues and concerns. Different ethnic organisations and associations often organise meeting and events when they celebrate days of special ethnic or religious importance. They usually invite city representatives although no specific funding is provided by the city for these activities.

The city does however have a policy directed towards the majority population for improving relations with ethnic minority groups. MISO, the Malmö Sports Associations Cooperation Organisation, helps to integrate newcomers to different sporting associations across Malmö city. There is also an Action Plan to promote integration in the city. Various district events are also open for everyone to participate in such as the Rosengård Festival and Rosengård, Fosie and Hyllie district open days. Additionally, the annual Malmö Festival held in August takes place alongside various annual district open days in central Malmö. The festival lasts for one week every year since 1985 and includes a celebration of food, music, culture and folk. The city is filled with music stages, market stalls, food vendors and crowds of people. The Malmö Festival is the highlight of the summer calendar for many the locals but it is also a highlight for festival goers from further afield: the Malmö Festival is Sweden's largest city festival, and everything – apart from the food – is free.

The success of the festival is considered to be largely attributable to local support. The city's businesses contribute most of the funding for the festival, and each year's event proves to be popular thanks to this backing and the hard work put in by the 6,000 or so people who participate. The programme has grown every year, with more artists, events and unique features.

Other successful projects and practices that aim to improve relations between the majority and minority populations include the integration of newcomers and refugees to various other associations that are not necessarily sports orientated. This project is organised through MIP, (Malmö non-profit organisation) which is an umbrella organisation representing some 250 different non-profit organisations operating in Malmö. The project, entitled 'integration through non-profit

associations' started in 2007 and is funded solely by the city. Organisations have mentors who are allocated to each new arrival and provide information concerning projects they consider most appropriate for the new arrival based on their interests and experiences. This project is produced in eleven different languages and available in various public organisations, including schools.

Other projects include an initiative where city employees are entitled to use two hours of their working month to meet with newcomers who study *Swedish for Immigrants*. There are no statistics indicating how many employees actually participate in this initiative. Some interviewees commented that participation levels in the scheme are low.

The city considers that many of the ethnic and religious organisations and groups in Malmö provide relevant and necessary support for the welfare of local migrant communities in differing ways, such as the collaborative work they undertake with schools to teach Swedish using the student's mother tongue. For example, at schools in Rosengård, Swedish language and Maths classes are taught in mother tongue languages such as Arabic.

*The Peoples House* was established at various locations across the city, with five in total. Various activities take place at these locations that attempt to promote integration and understanding between different ethnic groups as well as the majority population. For example, families are encouraged to play tennis and football together. This provides children and parents the opportunity to meet other children and parents. Whilst the city does not fund or organise these houses, they are sometimes involved and fund, certain projects located within them. These projects reflect the willingness of the city to provide opportunities for different people from different districts and communities to meet each other and communicate in a positive way.

The Rosengård *House of Dreams* is a self-governing organization that helps people fulfil their lives through culture. Men, women, children and young people -- of many different nationalities and with very different capabilities -- are provided opportunities to be able to work together and undertake activities such as sculpting, cooking, music or acrobatics. The project has no formula and is regarded as a project-based organization, which because it is constantly changing is a work in progress. The city, alongside other funding bodies, provides funding for this organisation. Projects run by the *House of Dreams* work on a number of different levels. For example, a project on the surface may appear to be about teaching children to play djembe drums. However two classes are arranged to take the course at the same time. One will be from a suburban school, the other from an inner-city school with a high immigrant population. They meet, work together and perhaps make friends. Drawing on their heritage as a theatre company the children might also use drama or role-playing, thereby bringing new inspiration to the classroom. When the project finishes a concert is hosted at Rosengård and the children and their parents get to go to a neighbourhood they might not have visited otherwise.

The Rosengård Stadsförvaltning School, in collaboration with local community organisations, runs community projects in the evenings and at the weekends for both immigrant children and their parents. These are predominantly co-ordinated through the Imam who is employed by the city as a link worker across the five schools in Rosengård, catering for some 6,000 students. Currently, the Imam is involved in a project organised with the Swedish Church entitled *Early Time*. This is a four-year- project that organises workshops through drama and play that develop key themes such as mutual respect and balanced faith across Rosengård, providing an arena for moral and ethical issues to be discussed and the promotion of interfaith dialogue in a secure environment.

Additionally, IKF Malmo, the International Women's Organisation (referred to earlier) has over 1000 members in Malmo alone from various ethnic and religious backgrounds, 40% of whom have a Swedish background. Its aim is to give all women the opportunity to enjoy good health and independence through a democratic, humanitarian and gender equality lens. They hold daily courses in different languages in computer science and music, hold Open House activities weekly and organise monthly an evening with food from different countries. The city of Malmo provides some funding for ongoing projects which include: youth in action programme, sexual health, abuse against women and their children, integration and equality in the Nordic countries, providing positive role models, women and men's mentorship.

City representatives confirm that some projects have been less successful as a result of the reallocation of funding to other more promising initiatives. According to the city those projects which occasionally do not provide the anticipated outcomes are rarely viewed as unsuccessful, merely as less informative. All projects, regardless of their outcome, are considered by the city as contributing to knowledge surrounding the integration process and to promote dialogue and relations.

#### **4.4 Relationship between different ethnic groups in the city**

The city believes there to be a relaxed atmosphere by the majority population towards minority groups. The success and levels of attendance and participation in the Malmo Festival and the District Open Days held in Rosengård, Fosie, Hyllie and Krosback Districts are considered indicative of this.

Nonetheless some organisations that participated in this research expressed concern that whilst the festival and open days are viewed very positively, these events are now well established and successful. These respondents commented that the attention of city representatives should now turn to what are considered more challenging issues. Examples of such issues include the lack of diversity in the public services, high levels of segregation in particular districts, levels of intergroup conflict in some areas of the city and claims that radicalised groups from both the majority and minority populations are operating in Malmo.

There is some indication that traditional conflict lines exist between majority and minority groups living in the city. The Scania Party was Sweden's far right political party during the 1980s, 1990s and the very beginning of the 2000's, but during the last two decades their support has dwindled and by 2006 they completely disappeared. Their disappearance was followed by the new emergence of the Swedish Democrat Party who shared very similar political ideologies as the previous Scania Party. The Swedish Democrats have since become more well known and three years ago won, and have held since, five seats within Malmo's city council. With the population of the city growing considerably over the past decade, this would suggest an increase in the number of Swedish Democrat voters. Furthermore, some of the opinions expressed during the visit to the city suggest the operation of an increasing anti-immigrant minority group, particularly within the Scania region at large. There was also one claim from the Ethnic Relations Unit of the city of a group of neo-Nazis operating in Malmo.

It is fair to say that there are both traditional and new conflict lines between organisations of different ethnic and religious groups that the city regards as problematic for social cohesion and integration in the city. Traditional conflict lines include the segregated nature of particular districts. Whilst some respondents suggested that segregation is based on socio-economic conditions and subsequent housing tenure, rather than ethnicity or religion, there is some evidence that even

where this is the case, those from different ethnic backgrounds and religions are disproportionately represented at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder, thereby forcing them to reside in particular districts. This creates a level of ethnic and religious segregation which undermines the process of integration. For example, although there is a plethora of well funded and interesting integration projects in operation within Rosengård district, there are very few native Swedes living within the district with which integration can occur.

Some respondents suggested that new conflict lines have arisen in Malmö over the past two years. There have been several arson attacks on both Malmö's main mosque situated at the Islamic Centre and the Jewish Chapel in central Malmö. It was suggested that the recent troubles in Gaza have compounded inter-religious conflict on the street and also in the classroom.

Notwithstanding the events and issues raised above, organisations of different ethnic or religious groups in the city co-operate through umbrella organisations on certain issues. For example Malmö non-profit organisation, MIP, represents and protects the interests of Malmö's non-profit associations. MIP dates back to 1945 when the youth associations of Malmö united in order to support each other, to show their importance to the community and to speak with one voice. In 1975 Malmö's growing number of immigrant associations joined MIP and in 2002 these two organisations joined forces, making MIP the oldest and largest 'trade union' for non-profit associations in Sweden. Any democratic non-profit association active in Malmö, are welcome to become a member of MIP which is religiously and politically independent. MIP gathers and disseminates news and information to its members, as well as to politicians, civil servants and the general public. The organisation is active in, and frequently initiates, working groups and networks. MIP encourages and contributes to research on the social and economic value of the non-profit sector and works to help the associations improve and show their standard of quality.

Additionally, Malmö Sports Associations' Cooperation Organization was formed in 1974 and is entrusted with the task of representing sports and athletics associations in Malmö. MISO is a contact body for Malmö city's Leisure Board and other boards, promoting the cooperation between sports and other non-profit associations. In addition to directly sports-related issues MISO is engaged in a number of areas such as integration, public health, crime prevention, social medicine, labour market, antiracism and school-related issues.

The city is financially supportive towards both of these organisations and views them positively.

#### **4.5 Public communication**

The city does not have a strategy for public communication relating to ethnic and religious groups living in the city. This is predominantly because city representatives consider that implementing such a strategy would in itself be discriminatory.

Local media organisations in Malmö include local newspapers such as Sydsvenska Dagbladet, Skanska Dagbladet, and the evening, more left wing paper, Aftonbladet, all of which cover local news, sports, business, jobs and community events. Additionally, there are several radio stations including, Sveriges SR Din Gata at 100.6FM and Gamla Godingar at 94.5FM. According to the city there are no ethnic radio stations.

As far as the city is aware, there are no official relations between journalists or publishers and ethnic and religious groups and only very few members belonging to ethnic minorities involved in the local media as journalists. The vast majority are of Swedish origin. The city is not aware of any

local media organisations that provide training to staff in cultural competence. Whilst there are several national multi-ethnic and ethnic based papers and magazines circulating in Malmo, there is no local ethnic media currently in operation. No contrary information was received in this regard.

The city believes that the local media have been relatively balanced, with limited articles relating specifically to ethnic and religious groups appearing locally. Those articles that have appeared have predominantly been neutral in tone. One organisation participating in the field visit stated that they had enjoyed positive contact with the local media who they believed had reported on their integration projects accurately, portraying them in a positive light. Nonetheless city representatives stated that following the riots in Rosengård in December 2008, and the publication of the report commissioned by the government investigating the presence of Muslim radicalisation in Malmo, there has been increased media coverage. Some of those who participated in this research expressed dissatisfaction with some aspects of the media coverage, and in particular the media's perceived sensationalisation of these events. At the time of the field visit, city representatives were analysing and considering this situation.

In summary, the city of Malmo considers itself to have good relations with ethnic and religious groups in the city. The city believes that it contributes regularly to intergroup relations through open dialogue and/or the funding of various projects. In turn there is evidence that ethnic and religious groups in the city provide their support to the MCC when required. City representatives consider relationships with existing groups to be extremely productive for the integration of minority and majority groups. Such relationships are also considered a more effective method for finding solutions to any issues of problems that arise and for and implementing new policies and practices.

All the organisations interviewed during the field visit complimented the city for its funding contributions and financial support. Some respondents did, however, express concern at the city's perceived inability to engage with some grass roots events and issues. These events and issues relate primarily to the problems associated with the high levels of segregation in the Rosengård District. This is particularly evident in relation to parts of the Muslim communities, an issue which is discussed further in the sections that follow.

## **5 Local intercultural policies towards Muslim communities**

### **5.1 Major issues, demands and interests**

Generally the city considers its approach to the Muslim population as helpful and supportive and believes there to exist a broad unity and an unspoken consensus among the main political parties at the local level which wishes to continue in this vein. Interviews with a range of respondents working in the city suggest that this appears to be largely the case, although a number of issues raised by the Muslim population appear unresolved.

The major issues in the city's life in relation to Muslim organisations or resulting from reactions of local populations include the need for a new mosque in Malmo, issues surrounding cemetery and burial rules and the perceived clash between Swedish society and Muslim beliefs in relation to gender roles.

There is one main mosque in Malmo which is currently being used by approximately 5,000 Muslims from the surrounding area and various unofficial cellar mosques operating across Malmo. A cellar mosque is a basement or cellar that is used for Muslim prayer. The floor is carpeted with rugs and the walls decorated with material wall hangings depicting Islamic scriptures. It is difficult to say how

many cellar mosques operate across Malmo although estimates provided by interviewees range between 12 and 26. Some of the cellar mosques are gender segregated and therefore provide Muslims with alternative prayer venues to those utilised by the mainstream Muslim community.

Some Muslims also travel to Malmo from Copenhagen in order to worship at the mosque. There are regular demands from Muslims for an additional mosque to be built. Whilst the city claims to be open to discussions concerning this request along other funding requests for new religious buildings, the city is unable to provide funding for a new mosque or the construction of any religious building.

The main issue surrounding cemetery and burial rules is connected to the lack of available space that can be utilised for this purpose.

The issues surrounding perceived gender roles are slightly more complex. On the one hand, new arrivals are unfamiliar with Swedish gender equality legislation which ultimately conflicts with some traditional aspects of the Muslim faith. An academic at Malmo University, suggested that a key issue for the Muslim communities in Malmo is their inability to compromise or be flexible over conflicting ideologies such as gender roles. It was further suggested that Swedish society has compromised a step too far and is afraid to debate conflicting issues for fear of being labelled racist. Equally, the majority population are unfamiliar with traditional aspects of the Muslim faith and this also creates conflict. This evidence suggests that there is a lack of understanding on both sides.

No opinion surveys have been undertaken to explore relations between the majority population and the Muslim community to date. The Malmo Institute for Migration (MIM) and the International Migration and Ethnic Research Centre IMER, based at the University of Malmo have carried out some general research concerning young people's attitude towards Muslims in Sweden. The findings suggest that younger people are more positive towards Muslims. Although there are plans to undertake societal attitudinal research of this kind in Malmo in the near future, no evidence currently exists in relation to this issue.

Issues from the majority population appear little explored but this may be due to the informal nature of their presence. To date, no organised groups have approached the city regarding gender issues or other issues relating to the Muslim population generally.

## **5.2 General approaches and policies improving the relations with Muslim groups**

Currently the city does not have an explicit policy aimed at improving intercultural relations with Muslim communities. It is suggested that this is for two reasons: city representatives consider that to do so would appear discriminatory and also that integration policies should incorporate the necessary components required to improve intercultural relations across all groups. In this sense an explicit policy to improve relations with Muslim groups is regarded both inappropriate and unnecessary.

Although the city has no specific formal or institutionalised contact with Muslim groups, city representatives stated that they are available to meet any organisations, including Muslim organisations, which follow the democratic rules, at any time. At the city level, the Department of Integration and Employment has contact to all organisations including Muslim organisations to foster good relationships, keep abreast of current issues and promote integration generally. At the

local level, the city district authorities, including both politicians and officials, also share this level of contact.

There are several Muslim organisations with which the city has no contact. These are considered to be organisations that do not want contact with society more generally, predominantly because they do not hold the same Swedish democratic values and prefer to adopt more traditional views based on fundamental Muslim beliefs. This is of concern to the city, which endeavours to engage with all organisations and communities across Malmo.

There are Muslim representatives and organisations in consulting bodies, such as the Anti-Discrimination Committee. However, these representatives are not in elected political organisations. There are also Muslim individuals who have been elected to the MCC and city district councils but who are not engaged or elected as representatives from Muslim organisations and therefore do not necessarily represent these interests.

City representatives are unaware of any financial or political support for Muslim organisations from abroad. It was however suggested by one community organisation that representatives from Saudi Arabia are funding certain Muslim activities within the Rosengård District. Unfortunately, they were not prepared to be any more specific about the nature of this funding or any implications.

### **5.3 Good practice examples of concrete activities and measures improving relations with Muslim groups**

Whilst there are no specific policies aimed at improving relations with Muslim groups, every city district has an intensive Action Plan to improve and respond to integration issues between all groups within their own district and in collaboration with other districts. As previously discussed, there are a plethora of projects and initiatives to improve integration at both the local district and general city level.

These include the Trappan project in which women from different ethnic minority backgrounds are selected through the Labour Integration Office based in Rosengård to take part in running a café for two days per week in the Rosengård district. The women learn to prepare, cook and present various cultural dishes and also learn how to run and promote a catering business. This project also provides a material workshop to teach participants how to sew, weave, knit and embroider goods which are then sold in the Trappan shop. It should be noted that it is compulsory for the unemployed to attend a project offered by the relevant Labour Integration Office and Trappan is one such project offered.

The city has also given direct support to Muslim organisations in Malmo. For example, around 25 years ago, the city gave a piece of land to the Muslim community free of charge. The Muslim community used this land to build a mosque. As discussed earlier, this is now the largest mosque in Scania. The city has also provided some land for use as a Muslim cemetery. Funding is provided for any democratic organisation (including Muslim organisations) for any activities involving anyone under the age of 24. Additionally, according to city representatives, there are specific funds allocated for activities or projects that promote integration.

Malmo Museum has focused on the importance of diversity for many years and continues to develop projects that promote cultural heritage, diversity, empowerment and human rights within a cosmopolitan perspective are key priorities for the Museum's future development. Exhibitions have

included *99 Gods*, an exhibition on Nelson Mandela's life, the 'cultural bus', and the creation of multi-religious guides on prayer, festivals, food, dress and death.

Malmö Central Library has developed a *Life Library*, where members of the public borrow a person rather than a book for forty-five minutes to find out more about their particular experiences. The 'person-on-loan' changes weekly. People on loan come from diverse backgrounds. For example, previous participants have included a transvestite, a lesbian, a homeless man, and ex convict, a Muslim and an Imam. This is a popular project and attracts wide participation from both minority and majority groups.

The city's Ethnic Relations Unit is intending to establish a project called *Expedition Malmö*. The concept of this project is to make all areas in Malmö and residents of the city places and people of interest. A *City Safari* is also planned where participants will be given a personal guided tour of the city, and the opportunity to visit private homes and interesting work places. A similar project has been recently successfully implemented in Rotterdam.

The city organises seminars at which Muslim representatives present their culture and religion in various ways. The Islamic Centre is also extremely pro-active in inviting the public to various events and celebrations which are sometimes co-organised with the Swedish Church. They also actively encourage school visits and other group visits into the Centre, adjoining mosque and school. Representatives of the Islamic Centre generally consider these events to be successful and of value to the majority population in helping to break down barriers and provide a positive experience and encounter with the Muslim community. The fact that the Imam of the Islamic Centre is a very positive and diplomatic individual can be seen to facilitate good communication not only with city representatives but with the majority population more generally.

In addition to these examples of good practice in which the city is directly involved, there are a number of examples within Malmö of projects and initiatives developed by Muslim groups and organisations and groups in association with others. The Islamic Centre has an alliance with the Islamic Federation, a national association, which has five different associations across Malmö. It is difficult to determine the extent to which these organisations can be said to be representative of the Muslim community in Malmö, particularly as there are additional cellar mosques established and being established in different locations throughout the city.

The Islamic Centre operate numerous collaborate projects to promote integration and intergroup relations as well as providing relevant support for the welfare of local migrant communities. For example, in collaboration with the Swedish Church, they initiated a project entitled *Abraham's Children*. This is a common interest group across faiths that serves to education children and adults alike of the benefits and necessity of interfaith dialogue and to adopt a balance of faiths. The Islamic Centre has also developed a project entitled *Girls Talk*, which is open to all girls from all faiths to discuss any issues or concerns they have relating to puberty. They operate a victim support group, offer family counselling, accessible to all. Two years ago they established *New Ways*, and appointed two community researchers to collect data concerning the main interfaith issues within the city and established an inter-religious council to respond to those issues. There are currently plans to organise a second project of this kind called *New Ways 2*, which will also include representatives from the media and the local police. The Islamic Centre is also due to start monthly *Free Debates* with all citizens free to attend to discuss anything and everything. The media will be invited to these events.

Additionally, there are other Muslim representatives that provide relevant support for the welfare of local migrant communities, such as after school activities for pupils, mentoring programmes operating in areas where there are a high number of youths.

It should be noted that whilst the city has no responsibility for the local police, city representatives are aware of the potential tensions that arise between minority and majority groups and the police. The Islamic Centre is generally positive towards the police and confirms that they share positive and regular dialogue. It should be noted however that both the Islamic Centre and the city have encountered some inappropriate language and a lack of cultural awareness from individual police officers from time to time. According to some respondents, this was particularly apparent during the recent unrest in the Rosengård district in December 2008. Whilst some city representatives were initially informed that this kind of behaviour was associated with drafted reinforcement officers from other cities, some community representatives consider that individuals from Malmö City Police Officers have behaved inappropriately. Television coverage exposed the inappropriate police behaviour which has heightened tensions further.

#### **5.4 Public communication**

The city of Malmö does not have a strategy for public communication on Muslim in the media. The Islamic Centre believes that when the media require information concerning the Muslim population in Malmö they generally approach the Islamic Centre in the first instance for further information and clarification. The Islamic Centre appears satisfied with this arrangement and considers that it gives them the opportunity to provide accurate information. No dissatisfaction was expressed with the way in which the local media reports on issues relating to Muslim communities, although responses to most the contentious issues were clearly diplomatic. The city believes that the local media report in a neutral way but are not familiar with the relationships journalists or publishers may have with the Muslim community. There is no local Muslim media in Malmö.

#### **5.5 Summary and lessons learnt**

In summary the overall state-of-affairs in relations between the city of Malmö and mainstream Muslim organisations appears to be generally good. There is a willingness on each side to have an open dialogue which often provides an opportunity to establish and develop collaborative projects in an attempt to improve relations further. However, there appears to be a small section of the Muslim community that does not wish to participate within mainstream Swedish society. As a result, groups representing or reflecting these interests have no dialogue or relationship with the city. The city does not appear to have a strategy for opening a dialogue with this section of the Muslim community living in Malmö.

Issues surrounding the availability of land to use for burial ground and the construction of a further mosque sometimes create problematic relations between the Muslim community and the city and are not likely to be resolved in the foreseeable future. The city's inability to respond to these issues is sometimes perceived by Muslim groups and organisations as reflecting a disinterest or a lack of concern regarding their frustrations.

Continuing open intergroup dialogue and a commitment in providing adequate funding for all organisations that follow the democratic rules are considered essential by the city for ensuring the establishment and continuance of present and future successful integration projects. Additionally, ongoing good relations generally are considered particularly relevant for the social cohesion and integration of migrants living in the city of Malmö.

## **6 Intergroup relations and radicalisation**

### **6.1 Radicalisation within the majority population**

Several of those who participated in research commented that there has been a significant growth in membership to Sweden's far right party - the Swedish Democrats - during the past five years. City representatives confirmed that the Swedish Democrats currently hold five seats out of 61 on the MCC. According to the city, the number of seats held by the Swedish Democrats/Scania Party has remained unchanged for the past twenty four years. According to the city, this group is not considered to be radicalised in that, it is not perceived to be violent or a serious threat to integration, nor is it considered to have a level of support which might, in turn, generate high levels of concern.

The city does not consider there to be any relevant forms of radicalisation in the local population within Malmo city that resent religious and/or ethnic minorities. According to city representatives there have been no reported violent incidents, and no reports of intimidation or harassment of this nature. Moreover there have been no media reports concerning this issue, with the exception of the recent television coverage of police officers during the December 2008 riots previously mentioned.

Nonetheless one city representative who was interviewed does consider that there are radicalised groups within the majority population operating within Malmo city. Membership numbers or details of socio-economic status, age, gender, characteristics of individuals or groups of this kind are unknown. Other respondents suggested that radicalised groups within the majority population are more prevalent in the Scania region more generally specific to the city of Malmo. This opinion was also shared by representatives at Malmo Museum where a neo-Nazi exhibition was recently displayed. The exhibition was successful in that it attracted much interest from the population, generally, but based on information collected when the exhibition was created, those working at the museum were unaware of any radicalised groups of this nature operating in the city. Concern was however expressed about the possibility of increased membership of such groups operating across the Scania region more generally.

In terms of hostile behaviour towards Muslim and other minority religious groups, it should be noted that there have been several arson attacks and graffiti on the Islamic Centre. For example, the Star of David was spray painted on the front of the mosque. On another occasion a petrol bomb was thrown into the mosque which caused significant damage. Other arson attacks have taken place on the Jewish Chapel, where the Star of David was set alight.

It is unclear which individual(s) or groups are responsible for such incidents. The Islamic Centre believe that these incidents are not linked to any religious individual or group but related to the varying socio-economic conditions within the city. Representatives at the Employment and Development Centre (AIC) in Fosie district similarly consider that the incidents are associated with bored youth rather than radicalisation. This view is shared by other organisations, although some of those who participated in the field visit claimed that the attacks were carried out by radicalised Muslim and Jewish groups. To date, no one has been arrested or convicted of any of the arson attacks and the identity of those responsible remains unknown.

The city states that spokespeople in the media have reported that these speculated groups, Muslim and Jewish groups, are against all forms of violence and therefore, the city believes that the

individuals involved in these speculated groups have a low threshold to violence and do not pose a violent threat. There has been unrest in the city in the past, most recently in December 2008. This has obviously impacted on the local population and influenced some debate concerning the local integration of migrants and minorities. City representatives expressed concern that this unrest has received a disproportionate level of media attention, and that other types of activists have 'hijacked' events and made them look far worse than the religious groups could have expected. The Islamic Centre shares this view. The city believes that these speculated groups are being used by the media as scapegoats in general debates for various other agendas.

Although some potentially relevant research is being carried out by researchers at Malmö University's IMER, the focus is on right-wing populist politics across Sweden in general and is not particular to Malmö. Researchers at the IMER are not aware of any research concerning radicalisation tendencies with the majority population living in the city.

### **6.1.2. General approach, policies and measures towards these groups**

As the city does not consider there to be any relevant forms of radicalisation in the majority population there is no policy in relation to these groups or activities, and no identified individuals or departments with the city that would be responsible for this policy should it exist. Nor are there any methods and measures used to address issues these groups may raise.

### **6.1.3 Relations between groups**

According to city representatives there are no organisations or groups in the resident civil society that are active against anti-immigrant and/or anti-minority groups.

## **6.2 Radicalisation within the migrant and/or minority population**

### **6.2.1 Radicalisation tendencies: who and what**

The Swedish government published a commissioned report in February 2009 concerning radicalisation which stated that there were radicalised groups operating in Malmö (Ranstorp and Dos Santos 2009). However, according to the city, the validity of the report is currently being heavily criticised by academics. The political debate continues as to whether radicalised Muslim groups are operating in Malmö. As noted previously, religious affiliation is not recorded in Sweden and it is therefore difficult to obtain information concerning membership of formal or informal groups. However, as far as city representatives are aware, informal groups do not agitate openly but work within Koran schools and at Friday prayers in cellar mosques. Koran schools – otherwise known as Madrassahs – are privately organised sessions where individuals are specifically taught the teachings of the Koran.

City representatives consider that there are some minor Muslim groups, who, according to other Muslim organisations, follow a more fundamental (radical) form of Islam. They believe it is mainly religious radicalisation, although there are signs that the radicalisation is becoming more political. For example, these groups would like to have elected representatives within the district councils. The city understands there are radical individuals who have formed religious groups, but considers these organisations to be informal with loose networks. The city does not consider the radicalisation as attitudinal but believes there is a conflict of interest between local authorities such as the city district and landlords, and informal groups. Whilst they believe the conflict does not lead

to any direct action or concrete incidents, they accept that it does affect the social climate of the city and the nature of local debate around integration and social cohesion.

By contrast, one of the community organisations that participated in this research insisted that there is radical group operating within the Rosengård district, more precisely within Herrgarden, which has over two hundred members. Representatives of this community organisation commented that they do not consider this radical group to operate within their own laws rather than those of Swedish society. The group identified prefers not to use the Islamic Centre and associated mosque for prayer as the mosque is not considered to represent their religious beliefs. There is no communication or dialogue with this group, which prefers to pray at one of the cellar mosques, and the majority Muslim population. The Islamic Centre confirmed that they had no contact with any radicalised groups, but also stated that to their knowledge, no radical groups existed in Malmö.

Representatives of the same community organisation also maintained that both city and national government representatives were aware of the group's existence but did not want to acknowledge it publicly because this would then compel them to address the issues raised. It was further claimed that this radical group is actively oppressing women living in Malmö, physically and psychologically, and using forms of intimidation and harassment against those individuals and groups offering local Muslim women support and encouraging them to have some independent thought away from their husbands and children. Representatives claimed that female genital mutilation was actively taking place in local homes amongst this group. There was also some discussion concerning the recent increase in so-called 'honour killings' in Malmö and the higher than average fatal female balcony deaths that have occurred over the past two years.

Whilst the city does not view so-called 'honour killings' as being specific to the Muslim community, the city has been supporting a project called *Homa* in response to some of these concerns. This project is funded by central government and was developed in response to over 2,000 incidents of honour violence reported across Sweden last year (US Department of State 2009). The project attempts to address issues surrounding not only physical violence but also psychological abuse towards girls and women from their male family members. It focuses on drawing women away from the home and building up their confidence and independence to resist and/or find coping strategies to deal with their oppression. City representatives maintain that this project is not only for Muslim women but all women suffering from honour abuse and killings. It should be noted that so-called 'honour killings' are not related to a particular faith, but to the existence of a more 'traditional' culture and way of life and have been apparent in other minority groups.

### **6.2.2 General approach, policies and measures towards these groups**

There is no specific policy towards these groups. As previously stated there is a general policy concerning integration which incorporates holistic measures to prevent radicalisation. This policy is the responsibility of the MCC and the Department for Integration and their approach is towards minority issues in general rather than religious issues specifically. Representatives of the city of Malmö, particularly the local district offices and boards, stated that they endeavour to have a continuing dialogue with various minority groups. This dialogue is organised through various means such as meetings and open forums where representatives from organisations are invited to take part and which members of the public are also able to attend.

### **6.2.3 Relations between groups**

Within the city there are a range of organisations that work with integration projects and issues, such as the International Women's Association (IKF) previously mentioned. These organisations and their relevant projects are usually financially supported in part, by the city. There are also often cultural organisations based around a specific ethnic group, such as the Swedish and Iranian Women's Association based in Herrgarden, Rosengård. City representatives are actively involved in many activities within civil society that promote integration and believe that within this broader context they are working against radicalisation. For example, the Swedish and Iranian Women's Association actively promote integration through various projects such as providing a workshop for women to learn new skills such as weaving and cooking. Furthermore, as this particular group operates in the area where there is perceived to be a radical group operating (as discussed above), the city considers itself to be directly involved in direct activities against radicalisation.

Whilst the city provides some funding to groups that address issues raised by radicalisation among migrants or minorities, some respondents suggest the need for further co-operation. For example, some representatives commented that whilst the city provides funding and addresses issues that might be considered 'extreme', such as the issue of so-called 'honour killings', less extreme issues are not being addressed. For example, Malmö, concurrent with Swedish society, promotes gender neutrality, but some Muslim communities do not. Some respondents from both majority and minority organisations criticised the city for failing to respond appropriately where there has been a clash of ideologies between Swedish society and Muslim culture. For example, the Swedish and Iranian Women's Association claim that they are actively mobilising against radicalisation among migrants and minorities. They arrange workshops and a meeting place for all women, including Muslim women, to develop their own identity and obtain a level of independence. The leader of this group claims she has received personal threats against her safety and an arson attack was carried out on their workshop last year. City representatives were not aware of the context of this attack. Nor were they aware of claims that a radicalised group is operating in the Rosengård district. The city does not have any responsibility for the local police and this may have contributed to their lack of knowledge concerning any criminal activities.

### **6.3 Communication strategy concerning radicalisation**

The city does not have a dedicated or joint public relations strategy with the media, regarding reporting on xenophobic, Islamophobic, or anti-Semitic groups. Nor are they aware of any joint or dedicated strategy followed by the media when they report on radical groups among migrants and/or minorities.

As city representatives have not previously perceived the presence of any anti-immigrant and/or anti-minority groups operating in the city, they have not established or developed good practices in this regard.

With regard to radicalised groups operating amongst migrants and minorities, city representatives are keen to establish evidence confirming the existence or otherwise of radical groups and are also keen to determine the possible extent of radicalisation within sections of the minority populations. At the time of writing this work is at an embryonic stage. The development of policies orientated at promoting good relations, positive attitudinal formation and communication strategies remain at an embryonic stage until further clarification and formal recognition is obtained confirming that such groups exist.

## 7 Conclusion: Key challenges, lessons and learning for CLIP

Sweden's economic crisis during the 1990s affected Malmo more adversely than any other Swedish city. The significant increase in the arrival of refugees and other new immigrants from war-torn areas in the Balkans and the Middle East contributed to high levels of long-term unemployment, exclusion, poverty and segregation which were overwhelming and historically unique during this period. Following the establishment of Malmo University, inaugurated in 1999 and the subsequent construction of the Oresund Bridge in 2000 linking Copenhagen to Malmo, an economic revival has transformed Malmo from a city of traditional industry to one of knowledge. Today Malmo is ethnically diverse with some 174 different nationalities speaking 130 different languages. It has the highest proportion of individuals of non-Scandinavian extraction of any Swedish city but is also highly ethnically and socio-economically segregated.

With a raft of integration projects being implemented across the city and a commitment to the funding of such projects, processes of intercultural dialogue seem likely to improve in the future. However, with high levels of segregation within particular districts, ensuring that migrant and minority groups integrate not only with one another but with the native Swedish population remains a significant challenge. A range of initiatives and events including the Malmo Festival and District Open Days certainly provide opportunities for all communities to come together. But a range of organisations and groups working within the city consider that the time has come to develop new forms of intercultural dialogue. This dialogue needs to be encouraged and facilitated on a day-to-day basis as well as part of one-off events.

Many of those who participated in the field visit complimented the city of Malmo on its robust response to extreme issues surrounding integration, such as the recent increase in so-called 'honour killings'. However individuals and organisations were critical of a perceived lack of engagement in everyday conflicting ideologies and grass root issues such as dialogue relating to differing values and norms surrounding gender and the existence or otherwise of Muslim radicalisation. Furthermore, there was a widely held view that the informal communication that currently exists between all migrant and religious organisations, the police, fire services and media needs to be complemented by a more formal process of communication. This would enable more regular dialogue to begin and would lead to a deeper awareness and understanding of the issues that many communities and individuals living in the city face. Certainly the city and ten city district boards are already well established and well placed to start these processes.

Additionally there is some evidence, as yet unconfirmed, of intergroup tensions between Jews and Muslims living in the city, as well as concerns surrounding the potential growth of a right wing anti-immigrant movement, contradictory reports relating to the existence of Muslim radicals operating in Malmo, and the recent social unrest in Rosengård district in December 2008. All of these factors highlight the need for this engagement and subsequent dialogue to begin as soon as possible.

Despite these issues and concerns, much can be learnt from Malmo. Whilst there has been criticism concerning access to the *Swedish for Immigrants* programme, the concept of teaching a new language in the mother tongue is unique and apparently very successful. The redevelopment of Rosengård Library in reflecting the needs of its community and becoming an area to meet, be sociable and to learn is an insight into how receptive and innovative public service can be. Furthermore, attempts by the police service, and more recently the fire service to adjust and respond to the neighbourhoods it serves suggests a recognition that much more work needs to be done and thus provides a basis from which progress can be made.

Finally, amidst Malmo's hugely diverse and exciting population, the city's commitment to the democratic process shines through a sometimes complex and sensitive array of decisions and compromises to be made. This can be seen from issues relating to the funding of a Muslim school to attempts to deal with the desperate shortage of meeting space. Whilst there remains much work to be done in the continual development of intercultural dialogue in Malmo, the fundamental basis from which all of this work derives itself is solid, well funded, well positioned and operational. With this infrastructure running alongside communities that are ready to step up to the challenges ahead, successful outcomes for positive intercultural dialogue and intergroup relationships must surely be achievable.

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## 9 Interview partners

- Deputy Mayor of Malmo City Council and District Mayor of Rosengård district
- Employment and Development Centre, Fosie District
- European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
- Ethnic Relations Unit, Malmo City Council (MCC)
- Islamic Centre and adjoining school
- Malmo Institute of Migration (MIM)
- Malmo Museum
- Malmo Ideella foreningars Paraplyorganisation (MIP)
- Organisation for International Women in Malmo (IKF)
- Rosengård Fire Service
- Rosengård Library
- Rosengård School
- Senior Lecturer at Malmo University
- Swedish and Iranian Women's Association and Heders och mangfaldsarbete (HOMA)
- Swedish Church and an academic with PhD in Islamic Studies.
- Swedish for Immigrants
- Trappan Women's Group
- University Chaplain of Malmo University Interfaith Prayer Room