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**Categorical inequality in Homelessness –  
How has the Neoliberalisation of housing policies in Sweden  
affected homelessness in Malmö from social workers' perspectives?**

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# Abstract

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Title: Categorical inequality in homelessness – How has the Neoliberalisation of housing policies in Sweden affected homelessness in Malmö from social workers' perspectives?

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During the 90s, the Swedish government implemented a series of neoliberal housing policies in search of a way out for the economic crisis, including demolition of the ministry of housing, deregulations and disincentivising housing construction, which has created decline in housing production and privatisation of municipal housing companies. The neoliberal policy reform was attributed to the shortage in the housing market, which allegedly led to the reemergence of homelessness in Sweden. The Swedish government has also shifted homelessness into individual and the social services' responsibility through political discourse. Since then social workers and practitioners have been facing enormous pressure and challenges in offering assistance to the homeless clients. This study has conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 social workers and practitioners working for Malmö Stad or NGOs in Malmö in order to find out the challenges they encountered under neoliberal housing policies. The data was sorted into three categories, namely new handling guide on categorisation of homelessness in Malmö Stad, New Public Management (NPM) and shortage in public housing and stigmatisation. The data is as well analysed with the theory of power in sensemaking processes (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019) in order to understand the sensemaking of the challenges from the interviewees.

Keywords: Neoliberalisation, Housing policies, Social Work, Homelessness, New Public Management, Malmö

# Preface

Way back to the beginning of the master thesis, people thought I was out of my mind to choose a topic which is completely contextualised in Sweden. Yes, I think they were right. It was not a wise choice but it was not necessarily a bad choice either. It might be a bit of a challenge for an international student to do it, however, it was not completely out of the blue. I studied in Sweden in 2018 and since then I have been obsessed with the Swedish housing market because of its uniqueness. The passion in housing policies has helped me make it here writing the last few paragraphs of my master thesis.

Talking about choices, the choice of coming back to Skåne has led me to loads of existential crises. Because of COVID-19 I have not been home since august 2020 which is what I did not expect at all. I have missed a handful of life events of my family and friends that are enough for me to regret for a lifetime. But the show must go on no matter what. Does it hurt? Yes, it does indeed. But do I want to turn it back? No, because good weather always comes after the storm.

The choices I made have also brought me to some good human-beings who I would like to thank here. They are the reason why I still have not been depressed reading socialtjänstlagen. Thank you to my roomies and ex-corridor mates at Sparta, Kajsa, Lex and Tobias. Thanks for being my Swedish teachers, my vitamin D in the winter and my ego booster. And of course my mom and my best friend Kate as well because they will be mad if I do not mention them. Finally, special thanks to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Verner Denvall. I know he is the best supervisor one can ever get when he replies to my email in three hours. Thank you so much!

It feels like there should be a quote to wrap it up but I am not that big of a reader unfortunately and it is what I can contribute.

*“Travel far enough, you meet yourself.”*

*David Mitchell, Cloud Atlas*

24th May 2022, Malmö

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# 1. Introduction

Homelessness has been an ancient phenomenon to our society. In Sweden, tracing back up to the end of 18th century, access to housing depends on family or one's working status, which masters or employers were expected to provide shelters or housing to their labour even when they were too old or incapable of working (Sahlin, 2013). Those who did not have occupations, family and wealth would be classified as poor. In such cases, they would be placed in "the poor house" and forced to work in some circumstances (Sahlin, 2013). Until the 30s in Sweden, poor living conditions, such as overcrowded living space, had caused public health problems and drastically reduced the fertility rate. This issue had raised the attention of the public and the government. In the 50s, municipality-owned public housing companies (Allmännyttan) were founded, responsible for building and managing public rental housing aligned with the needs of municipalities. Until 1965-1975, the million programme (miljonprogrammet) was launched in order to combat the lack of housing supply by constructing a significant amount of rental and small accommodations (Hedin, Clark, Lundholm & Malmberg, 2012). The housing policies had been recognised as "phenomenally successful both qualitatively and quantitatively" internationally (Headey, 1978). In the 80s, homelessness was no longer described as a problem.

Throughout the combat with homelessness in the housing policies' history in Sweden before the 90s, the issue had been seen as a result of a lack of affordable housing, which would be resolved with rational production and distribution, for example the million programme (miljonprogrammet). "Boende är en social rättighet" (Housing is a social right.) and "Alla ska ges förutsättningar att leva i goda bostäder till rimliga kostnader och i en stimulerande och trygg miljö inom långsiktigt hållbara ramar" (Everyone should be given conditions of good housing at reasonable prices and in a incentive and safe environment in a long-term sustainable framework.) had long been the annual target for housing policies in the Swedish parliament (Riksdagen) (SOU, 1996). This explains the relationship of housing to the public, a social right instead of a commodity. However, the target has altered to "Målet för bostadsfrågor är långsiktigt väl fungerande bostadsmarknader där konsumenternas efterfrågan möter ett utbud av bostäder som

svarar mot behoven.” (The goal for the housing problem is a long-term well-functioning housing market where consumers’ demand meets the supply of the housing that meets their needs.) The shift of housing goals at the Swedish parliament could be attributed to the neoliberalisation (Nyliberaliseringen) on housing policies in Sweden.

Neoliberalisation on housing policies in Sweden started roughly in the 90s while a conservative coalition took office in the government. In around 1975, the Swedish economy reached its peak after the second world war and after the 70s Sweden was struggling with economic crisis and extensive structural transformations (Clark, 2013). The welfare state thus was seen as the cause of the economic crisis back in the 90s. Neoliberal reform then was the first mission that the conservative coalition government led by Carl Bildt carried out, including demolition of the ministry of housing. With multiple neoliberal policies on housing markets in Sweden, it has changed the nature of the market drastically. This shift, including cut-backs, improved the Swedish economy with 50 billion crowns, while the cuts in housing were much greater than in other policy areas like healthcare and unemployment aids (Lindbom, 2001). Housing politics 2000—From production policies to housing policies (Bostadspolitik 2000 från produktions- till boendepolitik: Överväganden och förslag) has even stated the target for 2000s housing policy that the housing policy is a part of the welfare policy (Bostadspolitiken är en del av välfärdspolitiken) (SOU, 1996), however, the return of traditional welfare policy was not put in action by the social democratic government.

The scope of tackling homelessness has altered accordingly along with the shift of policy’s direction of housing to a large extent. In the past, the concept of "Bostadslöshet" (Housinglessness) was adopted by the government, meanwhile the rhetoric has been changed in 1991 to "Hemlöshet" (Homelessness), which explicitly implies that the responsibility has been put on the municipal social services (socialtjänsten) and the National Board of Health and Welfare (socialstyrelsen), at the same time, the problem has been decoupled with production and distribution of housing (Sahlin, 2004; 2013).

Malmö is the third largest city in Sweden located in the region of Scania with a population of 350,647 (SCB, 2021). According to the Malmö Stad (2019a; 2021), Malmö Stad has 1,115

homeless clients and they have been actively dealing with homelessness in the society in alliance with different departments, for instance social services and the office of urban planning (Malmö Stad, 2019a). In the same year, they published a new guide concerning the categorisation of homelessness (Malmö Stad, 2019b) and the document clarified that some of the homeless people might not have the rights to assistance according to the social services act (socialtjänstlagen) but only entitled to emergency housing after emergency assessment (nödprövning). Afterwards, Skåne Stadsmission (an organisation helping underprivileged people in the region of Scania) has criticised Malmö Stad for giving a false image of the situation because the number shown on the report might only represent the number the municipality works with but not the actual number of homeless people in the municipality (Skåne Stadsmission, 2021).

With the neoliberal policy reforms, social work practice has been experiencing great pressure on improvement of service quality and cost-efficiency. Mounting performance crisis, procedural conformity, conflicting internal interests, etc are what social workers are facing nowadays (McDonald, 2006). Control and monitoring to performance of social workers are based on goal attainments, often deploying variables constructed for databases with little relevance for social work efficiency (Marthinsen, 2019). Sensemaking is a great part of the daily duties in social work practice because it affects how they make every decision in work. As the working conditions are becoming more and more challenging, the theories of sensemaking (Weick, 1995; Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019) will be brought up in order to analyse different forces and power within institutions which would influence their sensemaking processes in the challenges of counteracting homelessness.



## 1.1. Aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to generate knowledge of how the social workers in Malmö make sense of and react to their social work practices under the process of neoliberalisation in relation to homelessness. The study is a qualitative research with semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis.

The followings sub-research questions which will help to achieve the research aims:

- RQ: How have neoliberal housing policies affected the practice of social work towards homelessness according to social workers and practitioners?
- RQ: How do social workers or practitioners make sense of the challenges under neoliberalisation of housing policies?

## 1.2. Thesis disposition

This thesis consists of seven chapters. In the first chapter, an overview of the problematisation and research aim is presented. In the following chapter, it includes the background of the study with the help of literature. The third chapter is literature review on previous research which covered the topic. In the fourth chapter, the theory of sensemaking is presented to understand how the research units are processing their opinions. The fifth chapter introduces the methodology that the study is adopting and the considerations alongside. In the sixth chapter, the results are showcased with theoretical analysis. Last but not least, the conclusion and discussion for the entire research is presented in the seventh chapter.

## 2. Background

This chapter is dedicated to the definitions of some concepts that would be applied in the study which might be context-specific to grasp the idea. Especially for some concepts which have several definitions, it is important to set a boundary or directions that the concepts are applied. This might help readers to understand the study more easily and in a clearer way to navigate through the reading. At the following, the definitions of Neoliberalisation on housing policies and Homelessness in Malmö are introduced.

### 2.1. Neoliberalisation on housing policies in Sweden

The word "Neoliberalisation" is rooted from the "Neoliberalism" which has several definitions. Among them, Vincent (2009) defined "Neoliberalism" as a term to depict the phenomenon of the return of free-market capitalism during the 20-century. Davies (2014) suggested that "Neoliberalism" is a term more sophisticated than defining it just on a basis of laissez-faire economics, but it involves more sociological and political meanings. As Polanyi (1944) mentioned, Capitalism commodifies objects or ideas into "fictitious commodities" and dehumanises the human instinct and social structure. In particular, the comeback of "free-market capitalism" influences more than merely the market but governmental authorities and governing ideologies. It concerns liberation of economics, for example deregulations, privatisations, austerity and reduction of public spendings (Hickel, 2016). Hickel (2016) also criticised in the chapter that most people regard Neoliberalism as a sign of retrenching governmental interventionist policies but in fact it entails new powerful forms of state interventions and ideologies of foreign countries.

According to Hedin, Clark, Lundholm & Malmberg (2012), since the 90s the Swedish government has implemented a series of neoliberal housing policies, which the process is regarded as "Neoliberalisation" (Nyliberalisering). The conservative coalition government led by Carl Bildt first demolished the ministry of housing then deregulated laws for housing supply

(bostadsförsörjningslagen), housing allocations (bostadsanvisningslagen) and the land's terms (markvillkoret) (Clark, 2013). Clark (2013) described the shift of policies as commodification of housing. The neoliberalisation on housing policies has caused several impacts as Hedin, Clark, Lundholm & Malmberg (2012) mentioned, which includes decline in housing production, increase in crowded housing conditions, public housing companies shutting down or shifting to profit-making, privatisation and social polarisation.

The above neoliberal policies of reducing public responsibilities can be regarded as New Public Management (NPM). NPM is a common trend of governmental reform in the 70s as a solution to the classical, rational, hierarchical public management, which is regarded as rigidity and inefficiency in terms of policy-making process, administration and implementation (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). In the 70s, the Swedish government was facing an economic crisis therefore greater efficiency and cost-saving governing models were needed to replace the rigid and bureaucratic classical public management.

In this study, the concept will be used to understand how the shift in Sweden has affected the social work practice for homelessness in Malmö city. However, the change in housing policies in the 90s mainly happened nationally but the municipalities, in recent decades, also have gone through different types of neoliberalisation regarding housing policies and social work practice.

## 2.2. Social work and Homelessness in Malmö

Internationally in different academic literature, the concept of homelessness is defined in many different ways and types of definitions, like radical, conventional and conservative, would directly affect how difficult it is to urge the government to meet the needs of the homeless people (Chamberlain & Mackenzie, 1992). Even between the Nordic countries, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland, there is a distinct difference in definitions and governing between Finland and the rest (Dyb, Lars, Knutagård, & Lindén, 2021). Therefore, a more general definition of homelessness is applied in this context. According to Hanson-Easey, Every, Tehan, Richardson & Krackowizer (2016), homelessness is categorised into three levels, including primary: living

on the streets; secondary: moving between temporary shelters, including houses of friends, family and emergency accommodation; tertiary: living in private boarding houses without a private bathroom and/or security of tenure. Also, homelessness can be seen as an interplay of risk factors in four levels: structural, institutional, relational and individual level (Fitzpatrick, 2005).

In Sweden, the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen) defines homelessness as four situations (Boverket, 2021).

Situation 1: Acute homelessness	People who live outside or in the stairwells, tents or similar and also the ones who stay over at emergency housing, shelter, protective housing or equivalent.
Situation 2: Institution residency & supported accommodations	Admitted or enrolled in a prison, or other institution or supported housing and must move from there within three months, but has no home to move to.
Situation 3: Long-term housing solutions	Accommodation in one of the social services' special housing solutions, where the housing is associated with supervision and special conditions or rules. This applies to e.g. trial apartments, training apartments and social contracts.
Situation 4: Self-arranged short-term accommodations	Lives temporarily and without a contract with friends / acquaintances, family / relatives or has a temporary resident or second-hand contract with a private person.

**Table I.** Definitions of homelessness (Boverket, 2021)

The definition of homelessness above has been used since 2011 for surveys for homelessness, however, in order to keep track of the figures over time Malmö Stad did not use the definition completely from the National Board of Health and Welfare in their reports of homelessness (Malmö Stad, 2019a). Until 2021, Malmö Stad started to apply the definition of homelessness from the National Board of Health and Welfare in their reports and the statistics are largely unchanged (Malmö Stad, 2021).

Nationwide, the National board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen) conducts a national report about homelessness every six years starting from 1993. According to the latest national

homelessness report in 2017, there was 33,269 homeless people in Sweden (Socialstyrelsen, 2017), however, the figure might have a high chance of being underestimated since 20% of the country's management of social services did not participate in the survey and the number did not count the people without documents, asylum seekers and EU migrants (Knutagård, Kristiansen, Larsson, & Sahlin, 2020).

The number of homeless adults in Malmö kept increasing from 2005 to 2018, however, the number dropped in 2018 from 1,959 to 1,115 in 2021 in Malmö only excluding the situation 3: Long-term housing solutions (Malmö Stad, 2021). Malmö Stad also categorises the causes of homelessness into two types, structural homelessness which covers around 55% of the total and the rest of them is social homelessness (Malmö Stad, 2019a). The drop in numbers was explained in the report in 2020 that a new guideline for assistance to housing in the spring 2019 is one of the contributing reasons (Malmö, 2020). The new guideline (and case law) clarified that structurally homeless people are not entitled to long-term housing assistance but only to receive aid once a week from social services if there is urgent need (Malmö Stad, 2020). Skåne Stadsmission criticised that the figures on the report gave a false image of the situation of homelessness in Malmö, which only is the homeless people they are working on but not the entire picture of Malmö city (Skåne Stadsmission, 2020).

The above report "Program för att motverka hemlöshet (Programme to counteract homelessness)", apart from figures collected by the authorities, also presents the programme of Malmö stad combating homelessness. Malmö stad planned to work on three steps, firstly to reduce the number of households in homelessness then a sustainable and cost-effective secondary housing assistance and lastly assist them to have their own housing (Malmö Stad, 2019a). However, the chapter of the programme to counteract homelessness consists of only two pages in the report and the rest of it is dedicated to for example the causes of homelessness, the responsible departments and overseas experiences.

In the respect of social workers, one of the trade unions of social workers in Sweden, Akademikerförbundet SSR, has conducted several surveys about the satisfaction of social workers in their work. According to the national survey in 2019, more than every two

respondents were unsatisfied with the workload as social workers and seven in ten respondents experienced high workload in their work (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2019), which shows that the work demand on social workers is quite high.

For this study, the sampling targets are social workers and social work practitioners within the field of homelessness. Social workers and social practitioners are identified as, included but not limited to, the positions of social secretary (socialsekreterare) which handle cases relating to homelessness people, and also the workers who work with related areas, for example organising programmes in NGOs, providing curative support and running shelters or emergency housing, are also included.

The criticism from Skåne Stadsmission above shows that the actual situation of homelessness in Malmö might remain unclear and the programmes that counteract homelessness from the report written by Malmö stad were not extensively motivated. In order to fill up the gaps in the whole picture, there is hence a need to explore the social work practice in homelessness in Malmö.

### 3. Literature review

In the chapter, previous literature, including researches and reports, will be presented in order to show the picture of the neoliberalisation of housing policies in Sweden and showcase the situations and discourse of homelessness in Malmö. Through the literature that has been examined in terms of knowledge, methodology, etc., it can shed light on the niche of this study in the field of housing policy and homelessness. This chapter will be divided into four parts, namely Neoliberalisation on housing policies, Homelessness, Social Work in Neoliberalisation and Sensemaking in Social Work. Different aspects of literature will be introduced, for example the knowledge and the methodology of a study, which could give insights to what the existing research is focusing on.

#### 3.1. Neoliberalisation on housing policies in Sweden

Neoliberalisation on housing policies in Sweden has not been studied to a high extent in terms of Swedish and internationally. Hedin et al. (2012) and Larsson et al. (2012) have covered a great deal of neoliberal housing policies during the 90s and in the past. The authors mentioned the consequences of the neoliberal policy reform and the motives for the government are well elaborated. In order to counteract the economic decline starting from around 1975 (Hedin, Clark, Lundholm & Malmberg, 2012), the solution that government tried to find to get out of the crisis is a systematic shift from the Swedish social democratic welfare regime model has been started by a conservative coalition government led by Carl Bildt (Larsson, Letell & Thörn, 2012.) The neoliberalisation process has been described as the slow and deliberate dismantling of the Swedish welfare state (Lindbom, 2001; Sernhede, Thörn, & Thörn, 2016). The neoliberal housing policies were carried out throughout the span of different terms of government, including conservative coalition and social democratic government. Discontinuation of general subsidies, targeted investment grants, financial risk with building commissioner, targeted housing allowances and 'housing on market conditions' were mainly the examples of the policy changes

(Hedin, Clark, Lundholm & Malmberg, 2012). Only rental regulation survived throughout the process.

The pause on housing allowances and subsidies deeply affected the housing market with long lasting impacts. According to Hedin et al. (2012), the neoliberal policies have caused decline in new production and rise in vacancies and increase in crowded housing conditions. The production of housing plunged from 70,000 units annually to around 10,000 units between 1990 and 1997, which is lower than the number since the second World War. At the same time, rents rose 122% in two decades as a consequence of shortage of housing. Since the restrictions on profit-making by municipal housing companies were removed (Sernhede, Thörn, & Thörn, 2016), more originally municipality owned public housing companies turned profit-making oriented so that social housing became only open to applicants with good economy and reference (Sahlin, 2013).

Both of the literature have mainly reviewed how the neoliberal housing policies connect to either social segregation or economic polarisation. Hedin, Clark, Lundholm & Malmberg (2012) collected statistical data then created maps in three cities that indicate the gentrification, filtering and polarisation in Sweden, meanwhile Sernhede, Thörn & Thörn (2016) conducted a document review on different governmental and media reports to explain the relationship between the shift in housing policy and urban uprisings related to ethnic groups in Sweden. However, there is a clear research gap on how neoliberal housing policies are affecting homeless people, which is one of the most affected vulnerable groups in society. There are few articles written by Sahlin about neoliberalisation on housing policies and homelessness, for example 'Bostadslöshet som politiskt resultat', which gives a solid foundation and overview on the topic (Sahlin, 2004; 2013). However, methodologically speaking, more in-depth knowledge in the field might be worth exploring as well.

In terms of methodology, the articles were based on both quantitative and qualitative methods, yet there is no found research conducted with qualitative interviews to give an in-depth picture on the practical field work in Sweden. Besides that, data collection was mostly based on second-hand sources, like governmental statistics and media reports, which on one hand can



provide a generalised and objective point of view, on the other hand, there might be a lack of detailed and down-to-earth practical knowledge. In order to gain first-hand and in-depth knowledge on the field of homelessness in Sweden, a qualitative interview would be a way to collect useful data to tell what the frontline workers are facing.

## 3.2. Homelessness in Sweden

Among most of the academic research on homelessness, the studies are usually conducted in a comparative international context or a way of analysing national strategies with small extent of emphasis on a city. One of the most typical studies is cross-countries comparative study in scandinavia. For more city- or region-specific matters, it is usually handled by some reports from the authorities and NGOs.

To tackle homelessness, compared to other nordic countries, like Denmark and Norway, Sweden has been adopting an idea of a housing ladder for the homeless people, gradually gaining qualification to obtain a regular housing contract instead of emphasising their needs and giving them real contracts (Benjaminsen, & Dyb, 2008). According to Knutagård et al. (2020), one of the parts in Hemlöshet (homelessness) mentioned the effort to reduce homelessness in Sweden, including the housing ladder and care chain model, social housing, housing first, land allocation agreements and rental control, structured housing queues, etc. In terms of the research angle, since the literature concerns only comparative social policies, among other research, study areas related to the actual practice, effectiveness and difficulties of the measures towards homelessness were not studied extensively. In order to improve the outcomes of the existing measure tackling the issue, it is needed to conduct research to study the practices in the field from frontline practitioners' perspectives on top of official reports done by the authorities.

To understand how neoliberalisation affects homelessness in Sweden, three main factors of governance in studying homelessness are "discourse", "projects" and "non-decision" (Sahlin, 2004). According to Sahlin (2013), during the 90s the government altered the discourse of the issue of homelessness from housingless (bostadslöshet) to homelessness (hemlöshet). It implies

the shift of responsibility of tackling the issue entirely being put on the social services solely even though the department has no authority to allocate any regular housing (Sahlin, 2004). Meanwhile, in order to tackle the bureaucracy, NPM has been introduced in municipalities which created a more like purchaser-provider model in social services. With tightening budgets and resources, the municipalities have to exclude some of the homeless people from the municipalities to tackle the problem that demand of services is higher than provision (Löfstrand, 2012). Plus, Because of certain parties in higher positions and they try to ensure their own interests, for example landlords, "non-decision" might work as a means to do so (Sahlin, 2004). Both "discourse" and "non-decision" would affect the project funding in helping homelessness, meanwhile, "projects" might also be influenced by different political translations in workings that fundings of different types of projects are directly affected (Sahlin, 2004). This literature has defined three aspects of the research directions in homelessness that can help researchers to study and understand the situation in local municipalities in a more structured way.

The categorisation of homelessness in Malmö has been studied by Sahlin (2020), which set a foundation in further research in the local situation of homelessness in Malmö. The article included the background of the decision made by the municipality, the potential reasons, affected groups of people and analysis of statistics. It is believed that the most affected group, which is structural homelessness, is related to the self-settled newly arrived refugees. Through the analysis of the statistics of homelessness in Malmö, it has enriched and expanded the knowledge of the consequences of the decision. The study helps researchers to understand the social work practice and challenge within homelessness in Malmö more easily. Sahlin (2020) has also studied the account used by the municipalities, for example Staffanstorps municipality, for reducing their public responsibility, which is an area that could be further studied. However, more and deeper data must be collected in order to analyse their account of the decisions.

To study more about “categorical inequality” by Tilly (1999) in homelessness, a case study of Lysboda, a municipality in Sweden, has been taken as an example to illustrate how social work practices have been affected under housing shortage in Sweden (Carlsson Stylianides, Denvall & Knutagård, 2021). Through the negotiations between the housing mediating group and the housing companies, the risks of subletting have been transferred to the social services and

categorical inequality has been created in terms of access to housing. The theoretical analysis of categorical inequality can as well be applied in Malmö to study the issue of categorisation of homelessness for access to emergency housing.

### 3.3. Social Work in Neoliberalisation

To start with neoliberalisation in social work, it must be seen through the angle of New Public Management (NPM). In the article Neoliberalisation, the social investment state and social work written by Marthinsen (2019, p. 355), NPM is to 'enable efficiency as well as cost-awareness and is related to ideas of neoliberalism through policies of outsourcing of public interests and institutions'. Controlling and monitoring are the means of goal attainment with deploying variables constructed for databases with little relevance for social work efficiency (Marthinsen, 2019). The idea of market fundamentalism and managerialism in neoliberalism control social work practice with marginalised people, challenging the complicated professional understanding (Marthinsen, 2019). Social problems started to be regarded as personal responsibilities and family and community are seen as the first agents to offer help and care before the government. Solutions to social problems become the clients' inner drive for change from motivational work, rather than external conditions (Härnbro, 2019). The role for the government to provide safety net to poverty has accordingly changed under neoliberalism, civil society and corporate social responsibility are more expected to provide help (Sivakumar, 2007).

The welfare states, like Sweden, have been transformed into a 'mixed economy of welfare' in which welfare is provided by different actors, for example the state, private actors and voluntary/informal sector (Powell, 2007). Clients have "informed choice" when it comes to market-oriented social work and they are given independence and power in order to enhance the quality of social services (Härnbro, 2019). With this regard, according to McDonald (2006), mounting performance crisis, growth in internal and external criticism, increased pressure to innovate, procedural conformity, increased technical specificity or goal clarity and conflicting internal interests are the problems that social workers are facing regardless of state-owned or non-profit organisations. Meanwhile, limited and insufficient resources have also affected social

work practice with more emphasis on risk-based approaches because of efficiency, risk and prioritisation (Hojer and Forkby, 2010; Hölscher, 2008).

Regards collecting data from social workers in a local context, Abramovitz (2005) conducted in-depth interviews with senior staff at 107 agencies in New York City in search of unfolding the stories of how NGOs' workers responded to the impact of welfare reform on their clients, their jobs, and the delivery of services. The article has shown a sample of conducting local research with social workers and practitioners in NGOs using qualitative interviews. In order to figure out the impacts of welfare reform, like neoliberalisation, conducting qualitative interviews with social workers and practitioners is one of the insights taken from this research. Nevertheless, this research merely focused on describing the response from the interviewees and there was no analysis or theories to explain why they have such response or reactions, which could be further studied. The research adapted a self-selection sampling method and it stated that some areas were overrepresented because of the sampling method, however, the sample base was relatively large so it might fix the matter.

As a reflection on the literature, Neoliberalism's impacts on social work are often studied on an international level which illustrate a more generic picture over different countries and how social work reacts upon it. It is indeed vitally important to generate international knowledge and awareness on the issue, on the other hand, it is equally important to provide local insights to generate local- or national-based solutions as well. It would be beneficial to the government, social workers and beneficiaries to find better balance or solutions on social work practice and efficiency under neoliberalisation at a more local level. International experience and knowledge undoubtedly is essential to make improvements and preventions, however, each country or even municipality might have its own practice, system or culture in terms of neoliberalisation or NPM, international knowledge might not be applicable in every case. Therefore, it points out the importance of doing local research to explore the field from local social workers' perspectives.

### 3.4. Sensemaking in Social Work

The concept of Sensemaking was introduced by Karl Weick (1995) that describes how agents construct the unknown with a plausible understanding through placing stimuli into frameworks "to comprehend, understand, explain, attribute, extrapolate, and predict". In other words, sensemaking turns the ongoing complex world of mind into "a situation that can be comprehended explicitly in words". Louis (1980) also laid a foundation on understanding sensemaking that she views sensemaking as a thinking process using retrospective accounts to explain surprises. Sensemaking is a recurring cycle that consists of a sequence of events occurring over time, which begins as individuals form unconscious and conscious anticipations and assumptions, which serve as predictions upon future events (Louis, 1980). Whenever a prediction is denied, some ongoing activities are disrupted. Understanding sensemaking hence, at the same time, is also to understand how people handle interruptions (Louis, 1980). With the foundation of sensemaking, scholars could conceptualise the process of sensemaking in humans' minds indifferent contexts.

In the field of social work, sensemaking takes a great part of a social worker's daily work, in which they have to interpret a great deal of information, for instance written reports, behavioural cues, verbal and emotional signs (Cook & Gregory, 2020). Less attention on sensemaking has been put on social work literature with attempts of conceptualising it. Cook & Gregory (2020) provided a conceptualisation on the process of sensemaking contextualised in which social workers identify, select and attribute meaning to assessment information before arriving at a decision. The authors explained three lenses, intrapersonal (intuitive), interpersonal (storytelling), and social (emotionally informed), as dimensions in sensemaking. With three of the lenses, they drew six propositions about sensemaking in child and family assessment: sensemaking is a process of formulation; involves movement between conscious and non-conscious processes; can be developed through experience and learning through reflection; is inseparable from the environment in which it takes place; is a dialogic process; is an emotionally-informed as well as cognitive process (Cook & Gregory, 2020). The conceptualisations explore social work with sensemaking itself and enable social workers to be

aware of the sensemaking before coming to a judgement. Meanwhile, these propositions help researchers to understand how social workers receive information and social cues in their work.

With the literature which sets the knowledge base of sensemaking in social work, researchers can more easily grasp how social workers make sense of different information and situations, however, social work literature seldom puts attention on how social workers make sense of their own situation instead of their clients. The field of social work has been getting more unfavourable in terms of working conditions and environment with the effect of neoliberalisation in social policies. In the discussion, more emphasis will be put on analysing how they make sense of and react to their deteriorating working conditions.

## 4. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, a theoretical framework will be introduced to analyse the data collected. The aim of this study is to, through the social workers' perspectives, gain more understanding how the shift in housing policies affect their fieldwork on homelessness and how they make sense of the shift. It takes a vital role to understand how social workers perceive information and make sense of their work. To be able to facilitate the goal, the theoretical framework will shed light on how sensemaking and circuits of power work, then it will be applied in analysing the perspectives from the participants. Individuals process the situations through "the cues in the environment, interpret the meaning of such cues, and then externalise these interpretations via concrete activities" (Weick, 1995). In order to analyse social workers' sensemaking, the following theory provides a framework on different types of sensemaking that social workers in different positions might fit in. Systemic power will also help us to understand different types of sensemaking to be able to analyse the data.

### 4.1. Sensemaking process

Apart from the literature examined in the part of sensemaking in social work, Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen (2019) extended the concept of circuits of power into theories to explain different ideal types of sensemaking processing within institutional frameworks. This is also to gain understanding on "the forces that inhibit and facilitate adaptive sensemaking in the face of the unexpected" (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). Regarding this research project, the theory could help to provide explanations on how institutional forces or power, for example policy change, affect social workers' sensemaking or -breaking process. This theory is particularly significant to understand the social workers' insights because this framework provides different types of sensemaking that they can be categorised with.

The framework has been applied on different studies, for example understanding the role of culture in crisis management (Sherman & Roberto, 2020), the role of substantive Actions during

strategic change (Weiser, 2020), influencing the sensemaking of others during organisational change (Robert & Ola, 2020). It is mainly used in the area of management because this framework is based on the context of institutions. Therefore it can be helpful to explain the situations in Malmö Stad.

To start with the concept, circuits of power was suggested by Clegg (1989) to illustrate the production and organisation of power as an electric circuit board with two macro and one micro circuits: dispositional, facilitative and episodic circuit. Episodic as a micro circuit represents irregular exercise of power as agents to address emotions, conflict and communication on a daily basis. Macro circuits like dispositional controls rules and socially constructed reality that inform member relations and legitimate authority and facilitative means technology, environmental contingencies and networks, which empower or disempower.

Clegg (1989) further categorised three types of circuits into two power, episodic and systemic power, which Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen (2019) adopted as categorisations. On top of the above definitions, Episodic power has functions to capture deliberate efforts of actors to coerce, influence or manipulate others; whereas Systemic power take control of how agents perceive taken-for-granted knowledge structures and individual and how collective identities shape the way actors see the world and act (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019).

To understand the intersection of the two different types of power, figure I gives an overview of Schildt, Mentere & Cornelissen (2019) framework of power in sensemaking processes. It indicates a complex processing between episodic power as sensemaking and -breaking influence and systematic power as shaping effects. In the following, different parts of the theory will be illustrated accordingly.



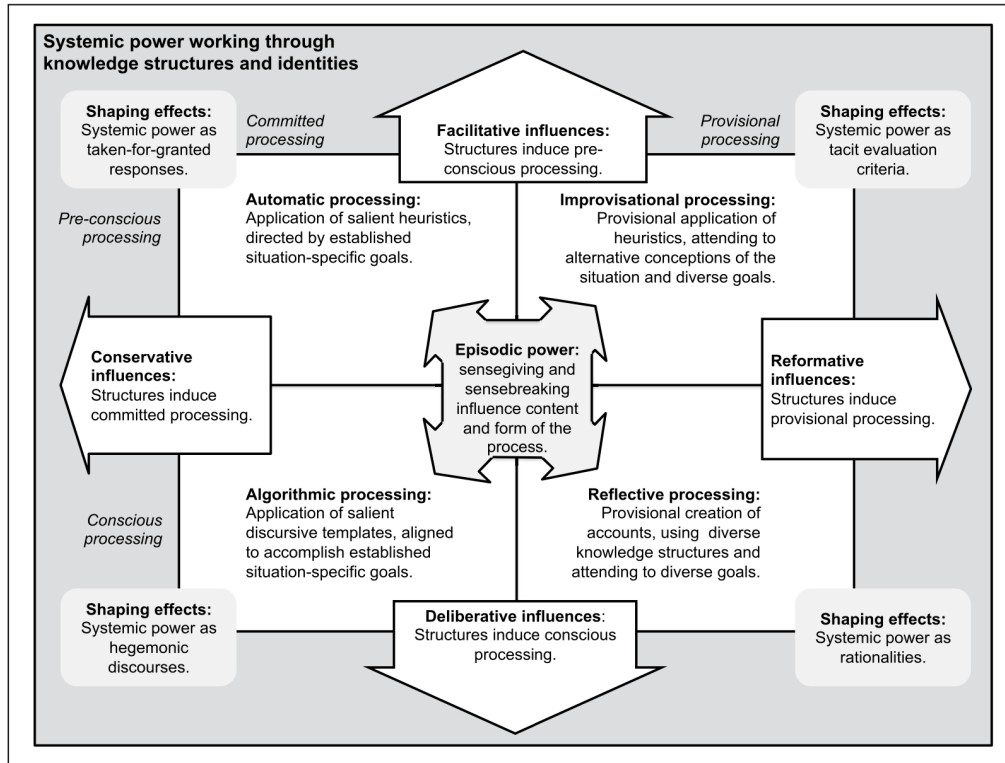


Figure I. Schildt, Mentere & Cornelissen (2019) episodic and systemic power in sensemaking.

#### 4.1.1. Ideal types of sensemaking process

The theory of sensemaking starts with four types of processing, Automatic, Algorithmic, Improvisational and reflective processings, which are indicated in the grid in the middle. Each type of processing depends on two central dimensions, namely extent of conscious attention and either committed or provisional attitudes. Extent of conscious attention means how much conscious attention you pay to the formation and plausibility of influences that link to observations, beliefs and actions into understandings, whereas, another dimension is towards if the actors hold committed or provisional attitudes towards the initial influence that they make, and either to seek for formation or to challenge and enrich it.

<b>Automatic Sensemaking</b> (committed and preconscious)	"... relies on heuristics that connect salient observations and claims to a categorical understanding of the situation with minimal conscious effort or attention."
<b>Algorithmic Sensemaking</b> (committed and conscious)	"... captures the more attentive formation of rationalizing accounts, carried out in a predictable manner according to pre-existing 'algorithms' provided by specific discourses or narrative templates."
<b>Improvisational Sensemaking</b> (provisional and preconscious)	"... lacks conscious attention to inferences yet involves a continued evaluation of inferences, probing actions, and attention to discrepant cues."
<b>Reflective Sensemaking</b> (provisional and conscious)	"... involves the deliberate consideration of multiple alternative accounts that relate observations, relevant existing beliefs and future or past actions, enabling rich 'generative' sensemaking."

**Figure II.** Schildt, Mentere & Cornelissen (2019, p.248) four ideal types of sensemaking.

Sensemaking is a process affected by several factors, actors in different occupations within different institutions might show different signs of sensemaking depending on for example the goals and cultures of the institutions, which the systemic power could further shape their sensemaking into certain types as well. The following part will explain the shaping effects of systemic power.

#### 4.1.2. Systemic power – Shaping effects

Within these four different ideal types of sensemaking, knowledge structures and identities shape the content of sensemaking, which is dependent on the form of the sensemaking processes. Figure I shows how the systemic power embedded in knowledge structures and identities influences the formation of understandings for each individual type of sensemaking. Four

shaping effects can be found in figure I on four corners at each ideal type, namely taken-for-granted responses, hegemonic discourses, tacit criteria for evaluation and rationalities.

Automatic processing and taken-for-granted responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● rely on <i>salient</i> and <i>taken-for-granted</i> heuristics</li> <li>● provide stock interpretations and responses to the situation, pre-empting active efforts to pursue new understandings</li> <li>● are often subjugated to such established power structures</li> </ul>
Algorithmic processing and hegemonic discourses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● established discourses or rationalities provide <i>ready-made hegemonic templates</i> or narrative</li> <li>● actors can elaborate and ‘normalize’ the situation</li> <li>● identities shape interpretation as actors compose rationalizing accounts or narratives that help maintain their identity-related beliefs</li> </ul>
Improvisational processing and tacit criteria for evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● might at first appear to be immune to systemic power</li> <li>● provide actors with tacit evaluation criteria</li> <li>● the internalized evaluation criteria and goals to discriminate between alternative framings rather than by providing a specific taken-for-granted frame.</li> </ul>
Reflective processing and rationalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● provisional attitudes limit the impact of knowledge structures as conduits of constraining systemic power</li> <li>● appropriate identity narratives as sources of diverse stories and ideas that empower actors to craft rich compelling accounts</li> <li>● justifies and legitimizes the appropriateness and importance of those beliefs</li> </ul>

**Figure III.** Schildt, Mentere & Cornelissen (2019)

### 4.1.3. Systemic power – Influences

While the shaping effects of systemic power casting impacts on the content of sensemaking, systemic power can also be capable of transforming one type of sensemaking process to another one. In order to minimise the efforts required by routine issues, many sensemaking processes in organisations depend on automatic sensemaking (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). This routinised sensemaking process helps actors to handle unexpected issues more easily, hence, systemic power embedded in organisations tend to drive the organisation into committed and/ or pre-conscious forms of sensemaking; whereas contextual factors might go another way around, driving the organisation towards more provisional and/ or conscious forms of sensemaking (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019).

Structural effects	Effects	Drivers
<b>Conservative influences</b>	Systemic power induces more committed forms of sensemaking	Salient coherent knowledge structures or identities Hierarchical communication practices Temporal structuring
<b>Reformative influences</b>	Systemic power induces more provisional forms of sensemaking	Plural knowledge structures and identities Dialogical communication practices
<b>Facilitative influences</b>	Systemic power induces more pre-conscious forms of sensemaking	Feelings of familiarity and predictability Temporal pressure, hurry
<b>Deliberative influences</b>	Systemic power induces more conscious forms of sensemaking	Experienced accountability Persistent attention to competing demands or tensions

**Figure III.** Schildt, Mentere & Cornelissen (2019) effects of systemic power on the form of sensemaking.

The above table, figure III, shows different influences that systemic power and contextual factors might do to the actors. The more committed actors are (*conservative influences*) towards new information and knowledge in the sensemaking process, the less questions would be asked about the understandings implied by the established knowledge structures, whereas the contrary represents *reformative influences*, which induces more provisional forms of sensemaking.

On the other hand, the tendency of pre-conscious forms of sensemaking process (*facilitative influences*) may prevent the actors from articulating contradictions and tensions that might lead them to question the established set of power, while *deliberative influences* increase conscious attention in sensemaking.

## 4.2. Application in the study

In this study, the framework of power in sensemaking processes is to be applied in the analysis of qualitative data collected from interviews with social workers and practitioners. Each selected conversation is analysed with different parts of the framework. The above three subsections have introduced the types of sensemaking and how systematic power affects actors' sensemaking. The ideal types of sensemaking are to help us to understand and categorise the interviewee's sensemaking so that more knowledge behind their responses can be obtained. The shaping effects from systematic power are to be applied when it comes to understanding how the information or knowledge provided by institutions affect the content that the actors receive with its structure and identity. Last but not least, the influences from systematic power within institutions are used to analyse a bigger picture of how systemic power changes actors' sensemaking. The framework included more parts than what are shown above, for example episodic power, however, the rest of the parts would not be used in this study to understand the data.

## 5. Methodology

In order to achieve the research goals, this chapter will present the methodology used in this research project, including data collection methods, sampling strategy, analysis, etc. It is crucial to explain the methodological considerations since methodology can influence the accuracy and authenticity of the dataset during data collection. In order to ensure that the data collection process is conducted as expected, each method adopted will be motivated accordingly in different parts to showcase how the research is conducted through the research period. Apart from data collection methods, analysis strategies, ethics and limitations of the study will be included in this chapter to explain further how the data will be processed afterwards to generate the results.

### 5.1. Data collection

According to Mason (2018), while choosing methods for our research project, researchers have to think about which types of methods can fit the best for achieving the research goal. The main goals are to explore how social work practice is affected in homelessness under neoliberal housing policies instead of building up a theory or generalising a certain phenomenon.

Therefore, the more detailed answers or opinions generated from the interviewees, the more optimal it would be. The data can be studied to understand what circumstances social workers in the field of homelessness are facing. Hence, qualitative interview is applied in the study due to its explorative features in data collection with the help of other research methods. On the other hand, since the study is looking into social work practice, social workers in the field of homelessness are the sampling group.

### 5.1.1. Sampling

This research project is aiming for the social worker and practitioner in the field of homelessness in Malmö as a sample unit. Mason (2018) suggested that strategic sampling must involve a strong theoretical logic in the selection process but not based on the idea of empirical representation. Based on the characteristics of the sample unit that the sample frame is relatively narrow and with highly similar backgrounds, snowball sampling is an optimal choice to fulfil the sampling goals. Snowball sampling begins with one sampling unit – usually a person – and ask them to put you in touch with others of a similar or known type (Mason, 2018). This type of sampling strategy could provide the researcher a way to get in touch with a group of interviewees with high similarity in a narrow field, such as social workers.

To start with social workers and practitioners in the field of homelessness in Malmö, they can be categorised into the two types. Those who work for Malmö Stad usually have the position title of social worker (socialsekreterare) and those who work for non-governmental organisations might not be in the position of social workers hence I categorise them into the group of practitioners. For the interviewees who work for Malmö Stad, they might come from different departments with different functionalities. There are three departments under the management of labour market and social administration (arbetsmarknads- och socialförvaltning), namely labour market and economic assistance (arbetsmarknad och ekonomiskt bistånd), housing, custody and service (boende, tillsyn och service) and individual and family (individ och familj). For the interviewees from non-governmental organisations, they mainly involve and coordinate in different programmes catering for homeless people, for example Skåne Stadsmission, Pingstkyrkan (The Pentecostal Church), Rädda barnen (Save the children), etc.

Categories	Number of interviewees	Forms of interviews	Language
Malmö Stad	4	2 individual 1 pair	3 ENG
Non-governmental organisations	6	4 individual 1 pair	5 ENG

**Table II.** Information about the interviews

There are ten social workers or practitioners interviewed in eight qualitative interviews in total, which spreads out in different departments in Malmö Stad and different non-governmental organisations. This research project collected data from four interviewees working within Malmö Stad as case workers, emergency housing social workers, etc.; six interviewees working within three different non-governmental organisations, handling different programmes related to homelessness. For the details of the interviewees, four males and six females have participated in the study and they were all under 50 years old. Some of their positions need a degree of social work, however, not all the interviewees obtained the degree. Due to the interviewees' concerns of revealing their identity, there would not be more personal details being shown.

All the interviews were conducted between March 2022 and early May 2022 and all the invitations were sent through emails attached with a description of the research and a consent form. The project started with getting in touch with the contact person and acquaintances working in non-governmental organisations and Malmö Stad. After meeting with the first batch of interviewees, follow-up emails were sent to ask for more contacts of the next batch of interviewees. The contacts were usually their colleagues, the ones they worked with or people from other departments. With two to three rounds of referrals, a total of ten social workers or practitioners were interviewed.

There is no particular reason for differentiating the social workers who work for non-governmental organisations and Malmö Stad. It is because of the job titles being different so that it would be more organised to explain it in this way. However, although they work in different organisations, they are facing more or less similar working conditions due to the policies Malmö Stad introduced.

### 5.1.2. Qualitative semi-structured interview

In order to facilitate the research goals, the interviewees must be allowed to express themselves freely yet with a structured theme of the research topic. Qualitative interviews in general take the epistemological stance that knowledge is contextual, and seeks to understand specific



experiences from the interviewees and semi-structured interviews leave lots of freedom for the interviewees to speak freely (Mason, 2018). This is particularly significant for studies of social work practice because social work is a field that deals with humans' plights which can not be easily measured by a set of questionnaires or standard scales. Therefore, a semi-structured interview was chosen as one of the data collection methods to provide a way to obtain in-depth experience from the interviewees.

Semi-structured interviews were performed in person and also through Zoom. Most of the interviews were face-to-face but only one interview was through Zoom due to interviewee's choice. Both individual and paired interviews were conducted and the duration of interviews were set between 30-45 minutes depending on each interview. Interviews were recorded and transcribed after obtaining the consent from the interviewees.

Interviewees were asked to answer a set of open-ended questions with a theme of homelessness and their social work duties. Interviews were mainly divided into three parts, namely their social work practice, difficulties faced in their work under current neoliberal policies and their opinions on the existing system including governmental and non-governmental aid to homeless people in Malmö. There were not a standard set of questions to ask the interviewees but they expressed their opinions and experiences within a structured frame of the theme, which can refer to appendices.

In order to gain a picture of what they are working on, questions like this would be asked: *"What are your job duties in relation to homeless people?"*. According to what they replied, follow-up questions about the details would be asked in order to fully grasp their work, like: *"How many clients are living in this emergency housing?"*. For the second part of a interview, it would get a bit trickier because the interviewees might not fully understand the concept of neoliberalisation, however, most of them were aware of new public management which could be a representation of neoliberalisation. Therefore, this term replaced the word neoliberalisation in some of the interviews, questions like this would be asked: *"What are the main difficulties in your social work practice under neoliberalisation, for example new public management or cut in budgets?"*. Since there are many forms of neoliberalisation to be done, they might give an answer that the

interviewer might not be familiar with, a question for further explanations would be asked. In order to get a more detailed answer from them, interviewees would be asked to tell a case from their work to illustrate better on a situation.

### 5.1.3. Other methods

Apart from qualitative semi-structured interviews, this study made use of different literature databases and academic journals as a research method as well. LUBsearch from Lund University library is one of the main databases that the study has utilised. The literature from the database that was cited in the study is mainly for conceptualising and problematising the research, which mainly is used in the part of introduction and key concept. Since the database is not dedicated to any specific field of studies and includes a great diversity of different types of literature, like reports, articles and books, it is an ideal starting point to expand the scope of housing policies and social work in homelessness.

After that, some more social work-, homelessness- or housing policies-specific searching methods are employed, for instance different academic journals. Some of the articles in *European Journal of Homelessness*, *Housing, Theory and Society*, *British Journal of Social Work* and *International Journal Social Welfare* were cited in the study to shed light on the parts of literature review in order to discuss the issue more in-depth. Current academic journals can provide new insights on the latest research angle.

Besides academic literature, reports from the authority and non-governmental organisations were used as well. To illustrate the current situations of social work in homelessness and housing policies, the latest figures and statistics could help researchers to keep a close eye on the field since the policies and numbers can change quickly. Therefore, one of the research methods is searching for up-to-date figures and policies from the authorities and non-governmental organisations.

## 5.2. Data processing and Thematic analysis

The themes used to analyse the data were set up during the course of interviews since at the beginning the whole picture of homelessness was still unclear to the researcher. With more reading and interviews, some special timeframes and events were noticed then the prototype of the themes was created. At the same time, the themes were constantly modified in the course of data collection reviewing different updates of knowledge and information.

After each interview was completed, the recorded conversation was transcribed line-by-line then would be coded and sorted under multiple themes in an analytical software Nvivo. Thematic analysis was chosen in this study with the help of NVIVO to understand the result of the data. Thematic analysis is to find out the patterns of certain elements within the interviews then draw findings out of the analysis. A theme captures something significant about the data in relation to the research problem and shows some level of pattern or meaning in the data set (Braun& Clarke, 2006). The themes were created mostly based on the different categories of challenges the interviewees were facing in their work, for example the type of system and policies. Once the data set was placed under the themes then their responses were further analysed with the sensemaking theory. Sentences from the interviews are quoted with descriptions to decide which part(s) of the sensemaking theory fit the reactions of the interviewees.

## 5.3. Ethics

The context and the topic of the research do not address sensitive issues, for instance races or any kind of criminality, however, this study employed qualitative interviews in which the conversation would be recorded and transcribed for the use of data analysis. Israel (2015) suggested that the participants involved should be informed about and agree with the purpose and design of the project as well as the importance for them to participate. Therefore, before each interview, the interviewee would receive an email invitation and a consent document that states the description of the study, their rights as participants and the data processing after the study,

which can refer to the appendices. In the consent document, participants were told and consented that all information related to them would remain confidential by codes and would be disposed of three months after the research is completed. Also, the participants were aware of the rights of withdrawing from the research before or during the interview without penalty of any kind.

Confidentiality is crucial for this study since the participants are currently or were employed by institutions like the authorities or non-governmental organisations while they expressed their opinions in the interviews, which might affect their job security. It is therefore vitally important to keep the participation anonymous to ensure that no one could identify the participants. At the same time, the participants might be asked about cases that they handle so there is a possibility of exposure of information of their client during the recording. Hence, all personal or irrelevant information for data analysis would be taken away in this study in order to protect the identity of the clients, at the same time, to ensure the authenticity of the data.

#### 5.4. Limitations of the study

Methodological considerations help to achieve the research goals, however, there are still several predicted limitations of the study in terms of sampling method, sampling size, research language, etc. These limitations might come along with the choices of research method and I would avoid them as actively as possible.

For the sampling method, snow-ball sampling is employed in the study but it might lead to sampled participants with similar background as a consequence. Snow-ball sampling relies on the referrals of the interviewed social workers or practitioners and their colleagues or workers within the same institutions would possibly be referred to us. Therefore, it might lead to high levels of homogeneity in sampled participants. In order to avoid such a scenario, I must be aware of the background of the participants and try to remind the interviewed participants that if they could refer me to potential participants with a more diverse background.

As for the sampling size, ten participants were interviewed in this study therefore the result might not be generalised but as an exploratory study. It could be a limitation for a study with small amount of participation due to the representation of the sampling population, however, the limitation could be minimised if the data is saturated during the course of data collection even with a small amount of sampling and the representation of interviewees is evenly distributed. Data saturation, representation and the sampling method chosen are interrelated. When I can ensure the diversity of the participants, even though the sampling size is relatively small, as long as the data is saturated, it could minimise the potential limitation of the study. The data came to saturation at around the eighth interviewee since the ninth and tenth interviewee started to repeat the data that I have collected.

Language could be another potential limitation of this study because the research question is contextualised in Malmö, Sweden and Swedish is one of the main languages for the related literature, like academic journals and reports, and the working language for the interviewees. I have to be familiar with the Swedish language with good comprehension in reading. In this study, I personally obtained between B2 to C1 level of the Swedish Language, which could process different Swedish literature rather accurately with or without language tools. However, there is still the possibility of miscomprehension of literature due to various reasons. The risk of miscomprehension could be minimised with the help of online translation tools.

There could be limitations of the study concerning the choice of methodology and language capability of the research, however, most of the limitations can be avoided when I am aware of certain areas and with language aids.

## 5.5. Reliability and Validity

As for the reliability of this study, interviews were recorded with a smartphone and digitally stored in a laptop and drive. Transcription was further performed with the digital files of recordings and the transcripts were double checked to ensure that they are the direct quotes from the interviewees. Therefore, there is a high accuracy of representation of qualitative data from

the interviews. However, due to different levels of proficiency in English and that an interpreter is lacking in this study, the interviewees might not be able to fully express their thoughts. But all the interviewees acquire professional level of English hence this is not a major issue regarding reliability and the data is as accurate as possible under the circumstance.

For the validity, this study is to optimise it with diversifying the participants and respondent saturation. In order to avoid biases in investigating the opinion from the social workers, this study invited social workers with different backgrounds, for example workplace, title and job nature. It could minimise possible error or biases through different angles. On the other hand, the data collection reached a saturation that interviewees started to repeat the data, which the interviewees confirmed the data collected beforehand. Due to limited time and resources, an external skilled facilitator is lacking in this study nevertheless, social workers are used to conducting interviews, all of the interviews hence were held in a structured and orderly way. Therefore, the validity in this study is maintained at a trustworthy level with limited resources.

## 6. Results and Analysis

This chapter is divided into three parts according to the themes of the study then the responses from social workers and the analysis of their responses are followed in the same part. The first theme of the study is the new handling guide on the categorisation of homelessness, which includes the new handling ways for the social and structural homeless. The second theme is New Public Management, which mentions not only the cutback on projects but also different communication problems regarding sourcing out of social services. The third theme is about how the framing towards homeless people causes difficulties in organising programmes for them. According to the responses from the social workers and practitioners, the aforementioned sensemaking process framework is applied to analyse their answers to understand how they react to the challenges posed by the neoliberalisation of housing policies.

### 6.1. New handling guide on categorisation of homelessness in Malmö Stad

Homelessness is attributed to multiple reasons, for example different types of abuse or mental illness, according to Malmö Stad (2019a), the homelessness in Malmö consists of two types, namely social homelessness and structural homelessness. Social homelessness means individuals who have social problems in terms of abuse and/ or mental illness, whereas, structural homelessness is caused by different structural factors, like divorce or young adults moving out from home, the lack of supply in job market and housing market, and debts, which hinder an individual from being approved by landlords (Malmö Stad, 2019a).

According to 4 kap. 1 § SoL (the social service law), an individual who is unable to meet their own needs or cannot have them met in another way (tillgodose sina behov eller kan få dem tillgodosedda på annat sätt) is entitled to assistance from the social welfare board for their

support of life and for their way of life in general (har rätt till bistånd av socialnämnden för sin försörjning (försörjningsstöd) och för sin livsföring i övrigt).

The management of labour market and social administration (arbetsmarknads- och socialförvaltning) in Malmö published a new guide concerning the categorisation of homelessness on 23th May 2019 (Malmö Stad, 2019b). The document clarified who has the rights to assistance according to 4 kap. 1 § SoL. It also listed two criteria that have to be met in order to be granted housing aid. Clients must be completely homeless (helt bostadslös) and have special difficulties to obtain their own housing (speciella svårigheter att skaffa en egen bostad), which means structurally homeless people might be no longer eligible for assistance. Instead they might be granted emergency housing after emergency assessment (nödprövning) according to 4 kap. 1 § SoL with help of 2 kap. 1 § SoL. In usual cases structurally homeless people are granted emergency housing for a week of time and they would be assessed on a weekly basis, as a interviewee mentioned:

“If you are structurally homeless, ... there is a problem that you are allowed housing but in a form of “emergency housing”. That means you only get housing like one week at a time so you have to apply every week to retain your housing for the next week. You have certain criteria to fulfil, like actively seeking houses.” (MS2)

### 6.1.1. Difficulties in rendering help to clients

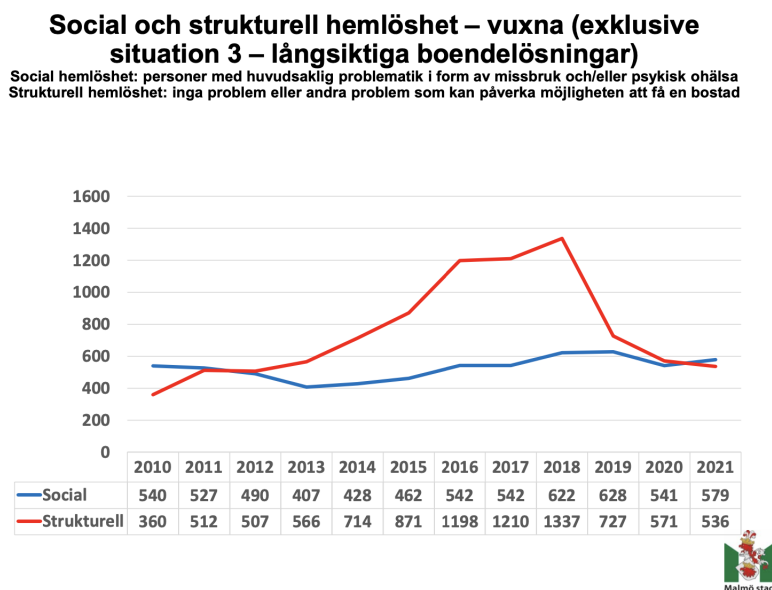
After Malmö Stad announced the new handling guide for different categories of homelessness, one of the interviewed social workers was shocked that structurally homeless people might no longer receive help from the municipality just because they do not have abuse and mental illness. And the social worker expressed the surprise over the new interpretation of the social service law, quoted below:

“... probably it is because all of a sudden there was a lot of structurally homeless people and also ... someone actually read the law a little bit



closer and like “Oh we have been doing it wrong, giving houses to all these people that do not have the right to have this place because they do not have drug abuse or mental illness”.” (MS1)

According to Malmö Stad (2021), in 2018 structural homelessness took almost 70% (1,337 cases) of all homeless people that the Malmö Stad was handling, however, there was a significant decline in the number of structural homelessness in 2019 after the new handling guide was released. The drop consisted of a total 610 cases within one year, which means it dropped 45% in the category, as follow:



**Figure IV.** Malmö Stad (2021)

Malmö Stad (2020) described it as a decrease in homelessness (minskning av hemlöshet), however, instead it should be comprehended as a decrease in the cases they were handling. There is a possibility that some of the structurally homeless people in those 610 cases did not get help from the social services because of the shift and other reasons, given that the number of structurally homeless people becomes less and less each year until 2021. Therefore, for those homeless people without abuse and mental illness, it is harder to seek help from the municipality.

#### 6.1.1.1. “Should I start taking drugs instead?”

Within a year, all those structurally homeless clients from being eligible of getting assistance turned into a group of people who should take care of themselves, as one of the interviewees mentioned:

“If you are structurally homeless, it is up to you to solve the problem.”

(MS4)

As for the shift in 2019, social workers expressed their worries that it is not a simple question to just categorise them into two groups to determine who might need certain kinds or levels of help. The action of categorisation was described by the interviewee as “to deem if one is a worthy or unworthy homeless”. If one does not end up in a more difficult situation, one might not be “worthy” enough to receive help from the government.

“The social services have to deem “Are you a worthy homeless or an unworthy homeless (to receive help)”, “Is your homelessness resulting in a harder time finding a place to live.” or “because of usage of drugs.”

First of all, it is not black and white. ...” (MS2)

No matter which types of homelessness, the situations and conditions that they are in are unique and incomparable so a systematic method might not fit its complex nature of homelessness. Worse still, it might create a sentiment that homeless people might think it is unfair if they are homeless but not getting help as others do. This is the situation in which some of the interviewed social workers explained that they got questions about if the client would get help from the municipality once the client starts to take drugs.

“It is really hard to help this group. We hear that a lot in (*our organisation*) that we tried to help the people who are categorised as structurally homeless but the socialstjänsten (social services) rejected. Many people tell us that it is better if they start to take drugs or alcohol

abuse then they can be transferred to be socially homeless and get help.”  
(NGO1)

Even for professionally trained social workers, they might have a hard time answering the questions. Since the truth is if homeless clients have abuse or mental illness, they have a higher chance of getting help from the municipality than those who do not, however, social workers cannot encourage the clients to take drugs in order to get help. On the other hand, social workers could not even convince themselves over the decision in their work, let alone explaining to their clients who think this is unfair. The new handling guide has trapped social workers in an ethical dilemma that made an interviewee quite frustrated at work.

“When a client said that to me like “I just want to work and take care of my kids. I do not have any problem. ... What should I do to get help? Should I start to using drugs? So can you help me then?” and should I say Yes? What are you going to answer? “No, do not do that but if you do, you can get help.” ... For some people might think that “I do not do drugs and why can those who do drugs can get help?” ... People think it is unfair and I can see that.” (MS1)

According to Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen (2019), the duality of systemic power is both constraining and enabling actors (Clegg et al., 2006) and knowledge structures influence the observations and beliefs that actors attend to, either constraining or enabling the set of possible understandings. With the above frustrating experiences, if not helpless, social workers encountered a set of information with knowledge structures that they cannot solve or resist. That is a kind of systemic power holding greater constraining power over actors (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). The shaping effects over the actors are hegemonic discourses that provide ready-made hegemonic structures through which actors normalise the situation. Even though the social workers identified the problem, they still could do nothing to improve the conditions. The only thing they could do was tell themselves “it is what it is” (MS1).

### 6.1.1.2. “What? Where is my job?”

The new handling guide did not merely affect the beneficiaries of the assistance from the municipality, social workers working with structural homelessness were as well affected. Since the cases that the municipality was handling experienced a dramatic plunge in 2019, the municipality might no longer require an extra labour force of social workers. Some of them were transferred to different departments in the municipality. As one of the interviewed social workers who encountered such change at work expressed a sense of surprise over the decision, described as followed:

“I have worked in (*different departments*) in Malmö Stad. ... I have been working on each side and 2018. I applied for a job that the job description was (working with) structural homelessness. Then I went on leave. I came back and they (Malmö Stad) said there was no more structural homelessness. I was like “What? Where is my job?” ... When I was on leave, everything changed. ... According to the law (socialtjänstlagen), you can see clearly in the law that ... structurally homeless people have the right to get something (assistance) from the city. ... In other paragraph in the law says that it is the “kommun’s” (municipality’s) responsibility that everyone has a place to live. It is very political.” (MS1)

The constant evaluations to the information given by the environment, like the social worker attributed the problems to politics, represents the traits of improvisational processing that actors provisionally apply heuristics and attempt to explore alternative understanding of the situations (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). Even the social workers could not attend to the problems with too many personal beliefs because of the systematic structures, like the decisions made by the higher management, the social worker still tried to find ways to explain and make sense of the situations and to help the people in different positions under the institution within the set frameworks. That shows the traits of improvisational processing within an institution as a social worker.

### 6.1.1.3. “We cannot always grant them what they want.”

With less and less resources allocated to structurally homeless people, it could be harder and harder to advocate their right to claim the assistance from the municipality. As a social worker revealed that before the shift each district (stadsdel) has staff working on both social and structural homelessness but now only one department is handling structural homelessness. Usually different non-governmental organisations have social workers giving advice for the clients on social assistance. As an interviewee shared a colleague’s experience, they sometimes might assist the clients in advocating their rights. However, with the tightening resources spending on structural homeless, it could be hard for both sides during the course of negotiation.

“We do not really have that much contact with them (NGOs) but when we do, ... the colleagues in the other teams said sometimes they can get a bit of confrontations because we represent our authority and we make decisions. They are usually the driving forces next to the clients to advocate for their rights and their needs. So in that case, we can clash a little bit sometimes because we need to work according to the rules and legal systems. So we cannot always grant them the help that they want.”

(MS3)

Social workers within the institution have to follow the law and guidelines, meanwhile, social workers assisting clients want to strive for the best for them. As the social worker described, it could be confrontations between social workers on each side because they cannot always offer what they wished.

The colleague of the interviewed social worker who makes the decisions represents algorithmic sensemaking, which captures the more rationalising accounts and carries out a predictable algorithm provided by specific discourses or narrative templates (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). Because of their job nature being regulation-specific, they have to make decisions according to a set of systematic guidelines set by the higher management. Also, the knowledge structures and identities shape their sensemaking with hegemonic discourses, which

the law and handling guide are the only references to make decisions, and therefore the actors normalise the situations.

### 6.1.2. Clients in “between” social and structural homelessness

While the authority divided the case handling among social and structural homelessness, only homeless people who meet the aforementioned two criteria are entitled to housing aid, which in most cases are social homelessness. Structurally homeless people might get deprived of their assistance that they used to be granted, meanwhile, categorisation in real practice is not always an easy process in terms of administrative perspective. Since homelessness is a multifaceted social issue, one might end up on the streets with multiple reasons, both structural and social factors, which can be hard for case workers to categorise clients’ type of homelessness.

A street-level social worker working at Malmö Stad has encountered cases that people who should be categorised as socially homeless, in their experience, were deemed as structurally homeless for different reasons by other case workers. That means the clients can only stay in the housing for a week with possibility of extension. However, they revealed that it is a challenge to make a plan and execute it in such a short amount of time. The clients might not be granted emergency aid the other week, which makes it impossible to work with clients with drug abuse or mental illness.

“We have seen a shift that clients we see as socially homeless have been deemed to be structurally homeless. They have places here but one week at a time and this made our job very difficult because we cannot really work with anything. ... If they are granted one week at a time, we sit down and talk. After one week, they go back to homelessness. The only thing you want to work with is to get a longer period of time. ... So it is really impossible to work with this kind of group. ... We cannot make a realistic plan to work with them.” (MS2)

Another social worker working at Malmö Stad shared similar perspectives that clients which fit right in between might not completely follow the plan or programmes that case worker created for them because of their background, for example abuse or signs of mental illness. This makes their work more difficult and tricky to handle this type of client.

“I think it is the biggest issue for us when we have those cases that fit right in between. They are not completely structurally homeless ... while they are not meeting the criteria fully to be considered socially homeless. It gets tricky because while we do have our own types of resources (for structurally homeless people), they do not always get that types of programmes that we have, which does not suit people having trouble reaching out to different authorities ... ” (MS3)

#### 6.1.2.1. “Not a black and while decision!”

With the above experiences told by the social workers, they explained the situations with multiple cases in their work, which even provided more information about their reactions and thoughts. The social worker tried to point out the logical fallacy of forcing a client to do something that the client did not want to in order to receive the help the client needed. They think that it is not an ideal way to help a client, if not problematic. The categorisation of being socially homeless becomes a step to get the assistance from the municipality or even the social worker mentioned “to deem if you are a worthy homeless (to receive help)”. They reflected that it is not a black and white question that one can decide who can get the help or stay longer in the emergency housing. With the complexity of a homeless client, classification of two types of homeless could not conclude the help or assistance they might possibly need and the diverse reasons they end up on the streets.

“I can give a fairly recent example. A person only admitted to have cannabis usage but we pretty soon noticed signs of heavy usage and psychic illness. For the social services to transfer *them* from structurally homeless to socially homeless, the client had to apply for treatment. But

the client did not want to stop the drug usage. To force *them* to go into treatment to be deemed as socially homeless to stay longer is a fallacy.”  
(MS2)

When social workers realise there are problems in their work, sometimes they might find it difficult to voice it out within an institution. A social worker revealed that even for those who work within Malmö Stad, they have a hard time voicing out their professional judgments to the ones who made the decisions on a higher level. They all are trained and experienced social workers in the field, however, when they find problems in the institution, they might not be able to correct it or reflect upon it. As a result, they might just put up with the problems in their work as they come.

“Internally for us it can be hard to reach out saying that we do not believe that person is structurally homeless. There are sometimes problems for us to justify their needs to those who make the decisions.” (MS4)

Although they had a hard time reflecting on their professional judgements to the higher level, they are still critical on the issues. One social worker mentioned that they reported and discussed the issues to a higher level, though it might not be much helpful, they still voiced out what they thought through different channels, for example this research project. They kept spotting the logical fallacy in the decisions that the higher level made.

“If the social services decided this person is eligible to live in the house then they cannot be structurally homeless. It is a logical fallacy because it is a place for socially homeless people.” (MS2)

The social workers MS2 and MS4 presented the type of reflective processing in sensemaking processes (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). This type of sensemaking process gives both conscious attention, for example beliefs, to information or inferences and continuous evaluations to inferences. It involves the deliberate consideration of multiple alternatives which are linked to observations, relevant existing beliefs and future or past actions, which contributes to evaluations (Abolafia, 2010). In their work, they constantly reflect upon the duties and the validity of their or



others' decisions. They hold a provisional attitude towards the information given by the higher level so that they do not take their decisions or information for granted, instead they constantly evaluate the situations in their work to keep themselves critical. Since they pay more conscious attention to inferences, their evaluation involves more personal beliefs and observations. For example, they think that assessing the needs of homeless clients could not be black and white decision because of their observation on the complexity of homelessness. Provisional attitude and conscious attention give them a reflectional mind in their sensemaking.

### 6.1.3. Analytical summary

Regarding the challenges that have been brought to social practices with the decision on categorisation from Malmö Stad, social workers in different positions represent dynamic types of sensemaking and the systemic power within an institution has different shaping effects and influences on the actors' sensemaking as well (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). Social workers showed three types of sensemaking processes, namely improvisational, reflective and algorithmic sensemaking. The social workers worked for different positions within the city and handled different parts of social services. Therefore, they might have received different information and knowledge with systematic power. For example, the systematic power has shaping effects over the actors that provide ready-made hegemonic structures in order to normalise the situation (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). This also explains the frustrations from most of the interviewed social workers that they identified the problem however they had no power to change the ongoing situations. Hence, the knowledge structure have shaping effects on them to normalise the problem.

## 6.2. New Public Management

Aforementioned, New Public Management is an inseparable concept to neoliberalisation that allows the government to replace the rigid and bureaucratic classical public management in order to gain efficiency and be more cost-saving. The business-like management model was seen as

being flexible on decision-making and better quality of services. During the economic crisis the Swedish government was facing in the 70s, NPM was regarded as a relief for the costly welfare system, therefore, in the 90s the neoliberal housing policies that reduced the public responsibilities were introduced, which could be regarded as NPM in search of cost-benefits efficiency.

NPM has brought different impacts to social work practice as the part literature review has covered. Social workers are required to face the challenges of performance crisis, growth in internal and external criticism, increased pressure to innovate, procedural conformity and so on (McDonald, 2006). Some of the social workers within NGOs have responded about their social work practice under the outsourcing model of Public-private partnership under NPM.

Public-private partnership (PPP) does not have a concrete definition but there is a description which is widely accepted that is a long-term contract between a private party and a government, for providing the public good or service, in which the private party bears significant risk and management responsibilities, and remuneration is linked to their performance (Hodge & Greve, 2007). Under NPM, a portion of programmes and facilities are outsourced or in partnership with a private party or NGOs, for example the operations of some housing facilities are outsourced to Förenade Cares AB and different programmes are financed by NGOs in Malmö. Within this theme of NPM, the responses from social workers and analysis will be shown at the following.

### 6.2.1. Limited resources on programmes

One of the goals of PPP is to achieve cost-benefits efficiency that the government could reduce the operational responsibilities in running certain public facilities or public services with a market price which is lower than public operations. It creates a great variety of benefits for the government in terms of public spending, public responsibilities and public management.

Seemingly the neoliberal management model is beneficial in the administrative perspectives, however, it has brought up different concerns over the partnership among the government and the contracted parties as the interviewees mentioned.

“(Has anyone required more funding for the programme?) Yes, but we have to be pragmatic. We get funding to run *(the programme)* during *a period of time*, it is still better than nothing. Yes it is a compromise. The best thing would be we have *the programme* to open all year around. ... If we can find a place for longer period, then we would be able to create something better.” (NGO1)

The interviewee mentioned it was a compromise that they could not run the programme for a longer period of time due to limited resources from the municipality, however, the best scenario is to be able to run the programme all year around. Due to different operational limitations, for example renting venues, having funding for shorter term made their work way harder. Renting a place for a longer period is easier than a shorter period and they have to figure out this problem every year, given that renting a place for programmes for homeless people is already a challenge.

#### 6.2.1.1. “ Sorry, we are close and you have to go back to the streets again.”

With limited resources, programmes are forced to run on a smaller scale than the ideal, nevertheless, it created different unnecessary operational difficulties to the programme coordinators as well. The interviewee mentioned they only got funding to organise the programme for months each year, therefore, they have to negotiate with different landlords to rent places each year after the programme ended. For most of the landlords, a shorter term of rental might not be ideal for business, plus there were more challenges in terms of stigmatisation of homeless people in society. Basically the process of finding venues has taken up a lot of their work organising the programme. On the other hand, constantly switching places for the programme is not beneficial for programme planning and the clients neither. This made their work harder however they still have to be pragmatic and make necessary compromises.

“What we have been doing the last couple of years is open it for months and close, find a place somewhere else and negotiation again. Every year is some places new, for the people they have to meet new staff and go to new area of the town. It does not feel safe for them and it would be easier

to create something more sustainable. And we can prepare better when we know the venue and the people know the address and the area. ... It is a very energy consuming process to be some places new.” (NGO1)

The interviewee also pointed out that having an unstable venue for the programme affected the clients the most since the clients have to get used to the new areas and feel safe, which might take a lot of time. This was not ideal neither for the programme coordinators or the clients. Another interviewee expressed that homelessness is not a problem which only exists in winter, however, programmes were only funded during the winter months. The homeless people had to go back to the streets after the programme ended. It might create an even bigger problem. Some of the homeless people might end up trespassing in residential areas or businesses because they have nowhere to stay at night. The interviewee mentioned that it is very difficult to make people understand it is an ongoing problem that needs efforts from the municipality and the citizens to deal with and people should not ignore it.

“I do not believe this group only needs help months a year when it is cold. It is always the same problem that we are always getting back to. ... By the end of the period, ... we have to send out people to the streets and they will disappear in a couple of months and come back. ... The difficulty is to actually make people understand that this is a ongoing problem and you cannot just cover your eyes that they do not exist. Just because the street is clean and nice does not mean there is not people suffering.” (NGO2)

The social work practitioners represented traits of improvisational processes since they came up with alternatives to challenge or enrich the existing knowledge instead of giving a taken-for-granted response without conscious attention to the knowledge (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). Their professional judgement on the limited resources is making compromises, however, they still tried to think of alternate ways to improve the programme and to channel their suggestions. The knowledge structure impacted on their sensemaking as tacit evaluation criteria, which is shown through their judgement on the existing cooperation model

with the municipality that they might not have a lot of control on the allocation of resources (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019).

### 6.2.2. Lack of closed communication and aid

One of the common concerns for PPP is lack of communication between the outsourcers and the outsourced. Since the public good or service is outsourced, the contracted parties are able to take a high extent in the decision-making process so that the public responsibility from the government is somehow reduced. The separation of public responsibility from the government might lead to issues in communications. Nevertheless, lack of communication might create disparity in the expected outcomes or forms of collaboration.

One of the interviewed social work practitioners shared the experience of such issues at work. The interviewee works for an NGO in which they provide services to the residents at the emergency housing. A difficulty that the interviewee was facing is the lack of help and communication with Malmö Stad. As it is quoted below, the interviewee had to take up the work which they were not responsible for because there were not the needed aids from the municipality for the residents who lived in that emergency housing.

“The name of this housing area is called emergency housing without support. ... There used to be a social pedagogist, like a person helping them with the process but now it does not exist anymore. That person finished the job then no one new is coming in. We are taking over this role actually but we are not meant to do that..” (NGO4)

The interviewees also mentioned the lack of communication had led to other extra work that they had to take over because the municipality did not complete the duties they have promised beforehand. The expectation gap between the outsourced and the government created challenges in social work practice, which is explained more with the responses from the interviewees.

### 6.2.2.1. “I cannot even reach the contact person.”

As mentioned above, the interviewee said that they lacked the help from the municipality, which was promised to complete. They ended up taking up extra work in order to finish the job. They noticed the problem some time ago and they expressed their concerns in meetings with the municipality, however, nothing concrete was improved. The interviewee was frustrated about how to handle the situation and how long they have to do the jobs that they were not supposed to do. They tried multiple times to reach out to the contact person from Malmö Stad, however, the efforts were in vain. The interviewee tried to make sense of the situation and sort it out but it was beyond their reach.

“(How do you deal with the frustration?) I will talk to my supervisor then try to find other contacts above. It is frustrating because even when we need something for activities, they promised they would take care of the premises. ... We cannot even reach them when we need to. So we have to use our own money to pay for these things. ... I do not really know the reason behind.” (NGO4)

The interviewee still kept a positive stance over collaborations with government, however, the interviewee emphasised the importance of communications within collaboration and that the municipality still has the responsibility even if they outsourced the service. With the experience in their work, the interviewee felt ignored and helpless with bad communications among the different parties.

“It is okay to collaborate. There must be collaboration and communication between each organisation. So you cannot just give this funding to do something and then you do your things. This is also how I feel, I feel ignored. Just because we have this project going on and I cannot even reach my contact person from Malmö Stad. What is going on? ... It is about communication and collaboration.” (NGO4)

Lack of communication seems that the institution does not convey any messages to the actors, however, on the contrary not sending out messages is a kind of message itself that the institution has the authority or power over the actors without providing any responses to their requests. According to the situation described by the interviewee, systematic power is casting shaping effects as taken-for-granted responses over actors' sensemaking (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). The institution of Malmö Stad hindered the actors to create alternative understanding towards the situation by not responding, which somehow conveys a message that the only choice they had is to stick to their work and take over extra jobs.

### 6.2.3. Lack of governmental support to non-swedish or EU migrants

According to Sainsbury (2012), citizenship within a welfare state is usually used as a means to determine if one is entitled to public welfare. Malmö Stad is not an exception in respect of this criteria to obtain governmental aid for the homeless but in several exceptions they might be eligible to the assistance from the municipality, for instance family and children. However, in most cases, homeless people without citizenship in Sweden, for example EU migrants, are not entitled to governmental aid, hence they have to seek help from local non-governmental organisations in Malmö, like Skåne Stadsmission, Röda Korset, Pingstkyrkan and so on.

Since the homeless without citizenship are not entitled to the assistance from the municipality, the statistics about homelessness provided from Malmö Stad each year might not include this group of homeless people. Therefore, the number of homeless people has a high chance of being underestimated (Knutagård, Kristiansen, Larsson, & Sahlin, 2020).

The municipality might not grant them governmental assistance, however, this group of homeless people might seek help from some of the NGOs and programmes funded by the municipality since the operation of NGOs is more flexible than governmental organisations which are restricted by law and regulations.

One of the interviewees mentioned that the programme they organised did not have any requirements for the clients to participate in and everyone was welcome. Therefore, most of the homeless people who were denied help from the municipality had the opportunities to at least have a haven.

“They always drop in. They come and we never ask any questions why they are there, what brought them there. So it is open to everyone. We just assumed that the ones who show up need help because to be frank, it is not a place you would go if you had an option.” (NGO1)

#### 6.2.3.1. “We are taking care of those who are rejected by institutions.”

Most of the interviewees held a positive attitude towards collaborations with Malmö Stad but there should be a boundary for the responsibilities the government should take instead of purely relying on the NGOs. NGOs are taking care of most of the homeless people who are not eligible for governmental assistance since they are more flexible in operation, as the interviewee mentioned that doing things in a different way than the municipality. By a different way, it means they are not restricted by certain laws, like socialtjänstlagen, and they do not make decisions based on regulations or handling guidelines.

“From having a programme totally organised by volunteers to actually having covered economically now. I think it is a big step. ... You as a visitor who chooses to come or not, will never be sent and the social security (services) are not allowed to send us anybody. ... We are taking care of those who are rejected from all the other institutions and so on. They are not taking their responsibility? Yes, of course because everybody should be the municipality’s responsibility. At the same time, it is very important for the social work sector (social services) to do these things but we are doing it in a different way.” (NGO2)



Another interviewee mentioned an advantage of collaborations between municipality and NGOs is that the clients would feel more comfortable and relaxing in NGOs because the social workers there do not make any decisions and do not tell the client what they have to do. Although the interviewee described NGOs as the “good guys”, the municipality cannot rely on the NGOs to deal with the problem of homelessness. The municipality might not handle some cases of for example structural homelessness and migrants without citizenship and the clients go to NGOs for help. The interviewee expressed that the group of people is still the responsibility of the municipality and NGOs can only be extra.

“For the social services, many people have a bad view about them. The clients were being misheard, forgot about, .... In that case, you can go to the church, the red cross, stadsmissionen. That is easier because they are only the good guys. They do not make the decisions and they do not tell you what to do. ... But I do not think we should rely on those NGOs to be here so that Malmö Stad do not take the responsibilities. They can be extra but we are here to take the responsibility and do the job.” (MS1)

An interviewee shared the same point of view and added a point on the collaborations that purely relying on NGOs is risky because NGOs might not be as stable as authorities. Some of the small-scaled NGOs could disappear during a short period of time. One of the interviewees mentioned that they tried so hard to search for a venue for their organisation and they could barely find only one building which will be torn down in years. This can explain that it is risky if the municipality entirely depends on NGOs to provide public services to the homeless people.

“I just think it is risky (to rely on NGOs to provide services). If we start to depend on other organisations to take responsibility for social problems, tomorrow they can shut down. ... So I think it is important that they are just complement. ... Like offer legal advice or ... sort of community for these people, some help and extra support that is not the government’s job to do.” (MS4)

From the quote above, it shows that interviewee NGO1 possessed the characteristics of reflective processing and how systematic power acted as shaping effects in the form of rationalities. The social worker involves deliberate consideration of alternative accounts and is also relating to own observations, beliefs and future or past actions (Schildt, Mantere & Cornelissen, 2019). The systematic power from the institution serves as rationalities since the interviewee did not work according to certain regulation so that the interviewee could reflect upon the knowledge structure provided by hegemonic discourses, which then restrict algorithmic sensemaking.

#### 6.2.3.2. “We should also trust our colleagues and the decision.”

For the issue that the municipality might not offer help to homeless migrants without Swedish citizenship or residency, some of the interviewees thought it was understandable with different reasoning. But, at the same time, they also had a hard time understanding the decisions, however, they also mentioned it is better to comply with the rules and try to achieve the best result out of the limitation.

“I think it is tricky. ... But on the other hand, when our boss talks about that, they have a good point about that. If we keep helping them to stay here without permits, it is not gonna be good for them in the long run. ... It might be better if they can settle somewhere else in their home country. ... I think it is tricky. But i think it might be not so good if we fight another authority’s decisions. Maybe just try to “Okay, this is the decision that we have to find the best way out of that”.” (MS4)

Instead of doubting the decisions others made, an interviewed social worker thought they could trust their colleagues as much as they trust themselves. Based on the law and regulations within the country, system and authorities, they could trust the ones who made the decisions were trying to achieve the best goods out of the limitations.

“I think that if we put trust in our own judgments, we should also trust our colleagues and the decision that they made based on the knowledge

about the legal systems. It won't be too good if we work against that.”  
(MS3)

The responses from the social workers represent the conservative influences of systematic power within an institution. The information, environment and structure conveyed by the institution included salient knowledge structure and identity as a civil servant so that they have to adhere to and obey the regulations and law. Plus, an interviewee mentioned the message from their boss, which represents a hierarchical communication practice. The influences would induce more committed forms of sensemaking over the actors within an institution.

#### 6.2.4. Analytical summary

As for the sensemaking of the interviewees facing the challenges from NPM, they showed the characteristics of improvisational and reflective sensemaking processes. As the analysis shows, the interviewed social workers have shown mostly improvisational and reflective sensemaking which might be due to the job nature of social work. Under NPM, administrative duties and documentation became the new norms of their work, however, social work is human services which carry out social impact on clients that might not be measurable. Therefore, social workers fit in the type of sensemaking that actors work flexibly within a framework or limitations. For those social workers who might not need to follow as many rules or regulations in other organisations, they could even process reflective sensemaking, which uses personal belief and observations in sensemaking instead of restricted professional knowledge. Nevertheless, all of the interviewees also experienced systematic power from institutions, for instance conservative influences. In order to help the actors to handle unexpected issues more easily, institutions usually have conservative influences to restrict the actors' alternative thinking. Therefore social workers are working in an environment which is constantly shaping them into committed processing.

### 6.3. Shortage in public housing and Stigmatisation

Aforementioned, while the conservative coalition government led by Carl Bildt took the office in the 90s, a series of neoliberal housing policies started to be carried out in different terms of government afterwards. It began with the demolition of the ministry of housing then discontinuation of general subsidies, targeted investment grants, financial risk with building commissioner, targeted housing allowances, “housing on market conditions” (Hedin, Clark, Lundholm & Malmberg, 2012) and deregulation of laws for housing supply (bostadsförsörjningslagen), housing allocations (bostadsanvisningslagen) and the land’s terms (markvillkoret) (Clark, 2013) were followed. The impacts of the neoliberalisation includes decline in housing production, public housing companies shutting down or shifting to profit-making, privatisation and so on (Hedin, Clark, Lundholm & Malmberg, 2012). According to Boverket, 240 of 290 (83%) municipalities suffer from great shortage of rental housing, especially affordable housing (Boverket, 2019). The neoliberal housing policies have also further weakened the municipalities’ possibility to influence housing supply and the possibility of the homeless to get stable housing (Sahlin, 2016).

Meanwhile, another policy shift and political discourse has contributed to stigmatisation of the homeless people. The government has changed the discourse of homelessness from housingless (bostadslöshet) to homelessness (hemlöshet) during the 90s (Sahlin, 2013), which implied the cause of homelessness went to the individuals instead of the lack of public housing. Also the government put the responsibility of tackling the issue entirely on the department of social services even though the department has no authority to allocate any regular housing (Sahlin, 2004). The impacts of these changes have remained until now therefore the homeless can hardly be assigned housing or find a stable place on the market.

#### 6.3.1. “How long will you be sober if you do not have a place to stay?”

With the effects of neoliberalisation in housing policies, decline in housing production, increase in housing demand and rental control, the house price has been increasing in recent decades. At

the same time, lots of municipal housing companies (allmännytan) were privatised or shifted to profits-oriented, hence municipalities lost control over public housing. With the rocketing housing price, more landlords would only approve tenants with a good economic background, on the other hand, public housing in Sweden does not target the homeless people (Sahlin, 2020).

Therefore, the social services try to adopt a more neoliberal way to solve the lack of public housing, however, as the interviewee said, there were not lots of housing companies that buy the idea. Also, the amount of the housing allowance was not enough to afford nowadays rents. With other administrative bureaucracy, like housing deposits and so on, the homeless people are facing a hard time searching for housing even with the help of social services.

“Their money comes from social services. ... You can only pay 8,000 in rent. So all these new apartments they are building, everyone that have the money from the service cannot afford it. ... Many of the rental companies do not accept people that have the money from the social services. Only four companies accept people that pay the rent with the money from the social services. They are very much excluded.” (MS1)

Housing First is a policy that provides a stable housing to the homeless first then other social support, which is adopted in different countries including Sweden. The principal is as the interviewee described, the clients need a stable place first otherwise it is very hard to effectively deal with social problems which come along with homelessness.

“If they have social problem like abuse and mental illness. To keep that as a minimum and to be healthy and well, you need a place to stay. Your mental illness will not be better to move around with short contract. If you had an addiction and you are sober right now but for how long will you be sober when you do not have a safe place to stay.” (MS1)

The interviewee possessed the characteristics of reflective sensemaking as above sections have already covered, which they provide multiple alternative reasoning to a situations with personal observations and beliefs. Since the interviewee constantly evaluated the insufficiency of the

amount of housing allowance, it shows that the interviewee thought out of the box. Plus, the policies and information conveyed from the institution served as rationalities that the actor reflected upon.

### 6.3.2. “Nobody would welcome this group.”

Stigmatisation towards homeless people is widespread in society, which might not entirely be due to the change of political discourse about homelessness, however, it has created unnecessary negative impressions out of the homeless. In the past, the Swedish government shouldered the responsibility of building affordable and quality houses for the people since they considered housing as a social right as well. But in the 90s the government attempted to change this mentality that the people ended up on the streets due to their own individual problems instead of that the government did not provide enough housing to its people. The change of the political discourse has contributed to the stigmatisation of the home people to certain extent. “There is the intention to affect the public discourse on homelessness, and, by implication, actions and activities of relevance for the homeless, such discourse control is also a way of governing” (Sahlin, 2004, p. 349).

The interviewees mentioned the search for a venue for holding events for homeless people was almost impossible. The rent being expensive might be one of the challenges, however, the biggest challenge was against the prejudices towards homeless people from the landlords. The landlords considered the homeless people as a factor that might reduce the value of the neighbourhood. The interviewee expressed that was a false impression and it might even worsen the problem of homelessness. If the homeless people have nowhere to stay or gather at night, they might stay in staircases in residential buildings. It is a vicious circle if there is no one to offer help and break the cycle.

“We have been hunting a place since last year, almost been a year. It’s been very difficult. I have been to everywhere in the city searching. The problem is not a lack of places. There are lots of places that we could

use. ... Apart from that, it is very hard to find landlords that are willing to rent the place to this kind of programme. There are lots of prejudices against homeless people. Some places are also way too expensive but this is the main issue.” (NGO1)

“We have to find somewhere to be and it is almost impossible. If you have seen all this huge amount of empty spaces that can definitely gather 50 people ... so you can see like nobody would welcome this group.” (NGO2)

The social work practitioners represented improvisational sensemaking, they reacted to the situation with professional manner that kept them searching for places even though it might be impossible as they said. While they were working within limitations, they also provided constant evaluations of the situations.

### 6.3.3. Analytical summary

In this part of shortage for public housing and stigmatisation, it can be seen that improvisational and reflective sensemaking have been come across again in the interviewees. As a result of the neoliberal policy reform in the 90s, social workers nowadays have to face a tough situation in helping their clients in terms of allocation of housing and stigmatisation towards homeless people. Through their responses on the challenges and their reactions, it showed that they processed improvisational and reflective sensemaking. Since they have no right to allocate public housing to the clients, the social workers have to negotiate with different housing companies in order to obtain a contract and rent to the homeless people in the secondary housing market with retriacter terms. Otherwise, the housing companies might not be willing to do so. It shows that social workers working in this environment need to possess improvisational sensemaking in order to work within framework and limitations. On the other hand, the interviewed social workers also evaluate the situations with personal belief and observations in order to provide better solutions to the dilemma in their work, which shows traits of reflective sensemaking.

## 7. Conclusion and Discussion

In this qualitative study, 8 semi-structured interviews have been conducted with 10 interviewees with background as social worker or practitioner working with homelessness for Malmö Stad or NGOs in Malmö. They have been asked questions concerning their social work practice with homeless people under neoliberal policies in Malmö. Their answers were further analysed with a theoretical framework of power in sensemaking processes. This study is to answer two sub-questions: 1. How have neoliberal housing policies affected the practice of social work towards homelessness? and 2. How do social workers or practitioners make sense of the challenges under neoliberalisation of housing policies? According to their responses, three themes were created to sort out the data and see the patterns, which answer the first sub-question. Then the analysis of the data with power in sensemaking processes shows how the interviewees react to and make sense of the challenges that they mentioned in the interviews. Through the framework, it has been shown which types of sensemaking processes the interviewees fit in, how systematic power changed the knowledge content and how the power influences sensemaking within an institution.

The data were sorted into three themes to answer the research questions, namely new handling guide on categorisation of homelessness in Malmö Stad, New Public Management and shortage of public housing and Stigmatisation. In the first theme, this guideline for categorisation of homelessness was introduced in 2019 by Malmö Stad, which has created several challenges in social work practice according to the interviewees. Social workers expressed their concerns that the municipality stopped providing housing assistance to structurally homeless people unless they have emergency needs. Since the municipality continued offering assistance to socially homeless people who are with abuse or mental illness, there were clients feeling unfair and frustrated about the fact that they could no longer receive aid from the authority. One of the interviewed social workers shared that they could not respond to clients who asked if they could get help if they started taking drugs. The social workers could not even make sense of the decisions made by the municipality. On the other hand, the categorisation itself has made the work in emergency housing very challenging. A lot of clients might fall in between two



categories, social workers cannot offer help or make plans for the type of structurally homeless people who show signs of abuse or mental illness who are granted only one-week long emergency housing. Therefore, the new handling guideline on categorisation of homelessness has created different challenges to social workers.

Besides that, New Public Management has reduced the public responsibilities of the municipality and the projects in cooperation with NGOs have been affected by the neoliberal shift.

Interviewees working on certain projects have experienced limited budgets on different programmes collaborating with the municipality, which has created frustrations within the NGOs. Social work practitioners might think that the decisions were unreasonable because homelessness is an ongoing social issue but not seasonal, however, budgets from the municipality might only cover a period of time in a year. Hence, the programme coordinators might have to send the homeless people away after the programme budget ran out in that year. Although they thought that it was hard to understand, they had to be pragmatic. Apart from limited budgets, communications between the municipality and the NGOs were considered as another problem in NPM. Through Public-private-partnership (PPP), the expectations of the outsourcer and the outsourced might not be aligned in different aspects, however, in this type of partnership the authorities are freed from their public responsibilities. An interviewee expressed that the municipality were not as responsible as they thought on the duties that they have promised. For EU-migrants, asylum-seekers and those without ID, they are not entitled to any assistance from the municipality therefore they have to turn to NGOs' help. Without governmental assistance, it is a huge workload and challenge to help with such a big group which the municipality tried to turn a blind eye on.

Furthermore, neoliberalisation in housing policies has led to multiple problems in Sweden, including shortage in public housing and stigmatisation. Because of limited housing supply in the housing market in Sweden, it favours the landlords to gain more power on selecting tenants with better economic and social background. At the same time, lots of municipal housing companies were privatised, switched into "business-like" operations, and the social services have no control on allocating social housing to the needy. Therefore, homeless people have to rent a place with a special contract (usually harsher terms) through the social services in the secondary housing

market or stay in emergency housing. With the special terms in the rental contract, it created different kinds of housing models, for example the staircase model. Housing first is one of the models that is adopted by some municipalities, which emphasise that stable housing should be settled before dealing with other social problems. Some of the interviewees shared the same point of view that if the homeless people could find a stable dwelling, otherwise it is very hard to handle other problems, like abuse and mental illness. On the other hand, political discourse on homelessness has contributed to stigmatisation of homeless people. The public responsibility of tackling homelessness shifted to individual level and the social services. Some of the social workers have expressed that it was impossible to find a venue for programmes for the homeless because of the bias and stigma in society.

The framework of power in sensemaking processes was applied in order to analyse the interviewees' sensemaking on the challenges under neoliberalisation on housing policies. This study has found that the social workers or practitioners have revealed mostly two types of sensemaking, improvisational and reflective sensemaking, which fits their job nature. These two types of sensemaking have a common trait that provides alternative reasoning and criticism in order to challenge or enrich that information or knowledge they obtained from an institution. The difference among them is that reflective sensemaking would utilise personal beliefs and observation during the course of sensemaking, meanwhile, improvisational sensemaking tends to depend on their professional judgement and work within a framework or limitations. Facing different challenges in their work, most of them show the quality of critical thinking that they would criticise the status quo in order to find the best solution or results out of the limitations for their clients.

However, through the theoretical framework it is found that there were several effects and influences affecting their sensemaking via systemic power. The influences and shaping effects are usually directing the actors towards committed processing and conservative influences in order to keep the institution running smoothly. For instance, the structure and the identity of the knowledge have shaping effects on the social workers, which remind them that they are working in a system they could not change and they have to obey the rules and decisions made by the superiors. This routinised sensemaking process helps actors to handle unexpected issues more

easily, nevertheless, it also restricts their critical thinking. Within this complex power structure and sensemaking types, some of the interviewees had a hard time making sense of the information and decisions made by the senior management, which has directly caused challenges in their work.

Regarding the sensemaking of social workers, Hirschman (1970) has contributed a theory among exit, voice and loyalty, which could be applied to understanding the reaction of social workers confronting challenges or decline in their work more deeply. When people who are members within an organisation, for example business, nations or any kinds of human grouping, perceive a decrease in quality or benefits in an organisation, they have two choices: exit (withdraw from the relationship) or voice (attempt to repair the relationship). There is also a factor affecting the actors' choice which is loyalty to the organisations. When it applies to the context of social workers, it can be studied to understand the choices social workers make when facing deteriorating working conditions and injustice in their work.

During the course of the interviews, I have discovered the challenges that are showcased above and there was another question in my mind that if the municipality had already recognised the problems faced by the social workers. If yes, I wondered what the reasons were to not address them directly. Is it because of budgets or bureaucracy? In theory, NPM is problem-solving oriented management which supposedly can improve service quality, however, I wonder if it turned into a kind of a mix of system of NPM and bureaucracy, which requires documentation and service quality assurance but when it comes to problem-solving, it goes back to the days of bureaucracy. To figure out this matter, the theories of account would come in handy to analyse each stockholder, like the council at Malmö Stad and social workers, which would help to unveil the reasons behind the decisions. One of the limitations of this study is that there is not enough data collected in order to analyse the accounts of either social workers or other stockholders. Because of that, this study could only provide insights from social workers' perspectives in their work, which is the goal of this study. However, it would contribute more to the knowledge if one could find out the conflicts of values between different stakeholders through their accounts.

Also, it would be intriguing to research on how social workers channel their voices. A great deal of the interviewees told me that they have ever voiced out to their superiors or collaborating partners, however, their efforts were in vain. When it comes to other occupations, they could go on strike organised by the labour unions, nevertheless, social workers, morally speaking, can never go on strike, like disciplinary services, because it is not optimal to leave their clients suffering. They still have rights to bargain for their labour rights then what are the ideal ways for them to channel their opinions in terms of work conditions and environment? It would be a moral dilemma between public and individual rights to discuss.

As for the sample size, this is a rather small-scaled study focusing on social workers in certain fields and it only explored the experiences of the interviewees in this study. Therefore, it might not be optimal to generalise the results. For future studies, a larger size of sample is needed to be employed in order to find out the wider scope of experiences. Also it would be beneficial to include interviewees from the labour unions to provide insights on labour rights and general situations in the fields.

For the implications of this study, both homeless people and social workers suffered from the neoliberal policy reforms. The aftershock of neoliberal housing policies in the 90s has lasted until now, homelessness has reemerged and been worsened in Sweden because of housing shortage, in which 240 of 290 surveyed municipalities experienced shortage in quality rental housing, etc. (Boverket, 2019). Meanwhile, the social services have to deal with homelessness themselves, having no legal rights to allocate housing to their clients. With more and more municipal housing companies being privatised or switched to business oriented, their work became harder and harder. Worse still, Malmö Stad, from 2019 on, only offers assistance to certain types of homeless people who fulfil several criteria, which has created a sort of categorical inequality which Tilly (1999) discussed in his book *Durable Inequality*. This decision has led some interviewed social workers very frustrated in work and homeless people being unqualified for governmental assistance, however, both social workers and the homeless clients do not have ways to channel their frustration. On the other hand, Malmö Stad might be able to better allocate the budgets they have saved from the homeless clients and show a better homelessness statistics of the city. As the interviewee said, “This is a ongoing problem and you

cannot just cover your eyes that they do not exist.” (NGO2), and the first step to tackle the problem is to face the problem honestly and treat them with care and love, the last thing that they need is abandonment.

## 8. Appendices

### 8.1. Consent document

#### **INFORMATION SHEET**

##### **How has the Neoliberalisation of housing policies in Sweden affected homelessness in Malmö in Social Workers' perspectives?**

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by Eric Yin Leung Lo, who is a master student of the School of Social Work in Lund University. This project is supervised by Dr. Verner Denvall, Professor in Social Work.

The aim of this study is to understand the impact of policy changes, for example budget cut-down on social services, towards homelessness in Malmö from social workers' insights. The study will involve completing a semi-structured interview, which will take about half an hour. The interviews will be conducted in English. It is hoped that this information will help to understand how homelessness is affected by the existing housing policies on social workers' perspectives.

Conversations within the interviews will be recorded and transcribed. All information related to you will remain confidential and will be identifiable by codes only known to the researcher. All data, including recordings and transcripts, will be disposed of three months after the research is completed. You have every right to withdraw from the study before or during the interview without penalty of any kind.

If you would like to obtain more information about this study, please contact Eric Yin Leung Lo (email: [yinleunglo@gmail.com](mailto:yinleunglo@gmail.com)).

If you have any complaints about the conduct of this research study, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Verner Denvall (email: [verner.denvall@soch.lu.se](mailto:verner.denvall@soch.lu.se)), stating clearly the responsible person and department of this study.

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study.

Eric Yin Leung Lo  
Master student  
MSc. Welfare Policies and Management  
School of Social Work  
Lund University

## 8.2. Project details and Interview questions

### **Project details**

#### Problem statement

During 90s, Sweden has gone through a series of neoliberalisation or marketization on housing policies because of switch of governing parties in order to cut down the budgets on social spending and save Swedish economy from economic crisis in the 90s. Multiple policies have been done by abolishing previous welfare states' housing policies and laws. The policy change has allegedly burdened social workers and impacted on their practical works.

Homelessness is, with no doubt, one of the most affected social issues by the shift of housing policies, including changes in framing of the issue, combating measures and shift of responsibility between different stakeholders. This research is dedicated to explain how the policy changes in housing policies have affected homelessness from the knowledge of social workers.

#### Interview's questions (might differ):

Format: Semi-structured interviews

Time: 30-45 mins

Interviewees: Social workers or professionals in the field of homelessness in Malmö

#### Content:

The interview is looking for practical information about different projects or cases that social workers are/were handling in terms of homelessness. Through the process, it can be studied that how the policy changes have been affecting the practical works on social workers.

Further questions about measures/ services towards homelessness, framing of homelessness and workloads of social workers might be raised during the interview.

#### Framing of Homelessness and responsibility

How does the society see Homelessness (as an issue and the clients)?

#### Measures/ Services towards homelessness

What are the methods tackling homelessness adopted by Malmö municipality? What do you think of effectiveness of the measures?

#### Impacts

How does it affect the workloads for social workers?

Any difficulties in helping homeless? Stigmatisation?

Financing the projects? Willingness of helping from the society?

Anything information or insights regarding the topic are most welcome.

Thank you!

### 8.3. Interviewees

Malmö Stad	NGOs
MS1	NGO1
MS2	NGO2
MS3	NGO3
MS4	NGO4
	NGO5
	NGO6



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