Place branding stigmatised residential areas

A study of narratives in Swedish medium-sized municipalities.

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ABSTRACT

Stigma has for a long time been an issue in residential areas that have social and economic impediments, which has a detrimental impact on the local population. The thesis examines how institutions such as the police, municipalities and real-estate companies has shaped the area image through their selected initiatives. According to previous research, this is a gap that has not been filled yet; there are some. To gain insight into the challenges and efforts that exist, this study has been based on three perspectives of three actors, (1) the police, (2) the municipalities and (3) the real estate companies as these actors who are mainly the ones who influence the image of residential areas. Through semi-structured interviews and policy documents collected the material, which I in turn analysed through the concept of place branding. The concept of place branding has been used by municipalities and regions that have previously had a negative reputation. To change their image, actors have chosen to marketing places to attract investments, projects, and skilful people. The results based on this study show that some actors have put plans in place to market the brand that the residential areas have, and interesting initiatives taken. Similarly, there are indications that classification which leads to stigmatization of residential areas benefits certain actors.

Keywords: Stigma, place branding, Vulnerable areas, socio-economic challenges, marketing
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Dirie Abukar
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PERSONAL REFLECTION

It became obvious to identify what I should write about in my master thesis. Living in stigmatized neighbourhoods for most of my life has influenced the decisions I've made in life. That itching feeling of finding a solution of changing the precipitation of stigmatized residential area, has permeated my choices in life, the choice of studies, career, and my personal commitment in these residential areas. In hope that this thesis should culminate in finally finding a glimpse of hope.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The world has undergone significant changes in recent decades. Much of it since the world has become more interconnected and, in large part, caused by the effects of globalization. Andreas Öjehag-Petterson describes that “globalisation is a process which makes national borders less significant as communication, trade and access to other countries increase and job markets and economies become more and more integrated” (Öjehag-Petterson, 2011, p.129). Öjehag-Petterson describes that due to globalization, regions, cities, and society in general have faced challenges but argues that globalisation also has created opportunities. He believes that the creation of the EU has resulted in the passage of legislation allowing for free movement. Which has brought about an influx of foreign nationals seeking employment in the Swedish labour market, many of whom are non-EU residents. Öjehag-Petterson emphasizes that this phenomenon is responsible for forcing municipalities to compete in a new global economy. To be successful in the global economy and have a chance to negotiate, municipalities must be attractive to investors, multinational corporations, and citizens (Öjehag-Petterson, p. 129-130).

Municipalities' main target has been people because it is people who invest capital, but also the unit that runs companies and offers municipalities their expertise. What municipalities need to be able to attract skilled individuals to their city, according to Öjehag-Petterson, is offer a decent community to live in with appealing possibilities for housing, employment, health, and leisure (Öjehag-Petterson, p. 147).

It's not just municipalities that market themselves, but regions do that too. Öjehag-Petterson claims that several Swedish regions seek to enhance their image by branding and marketing. Region Halland's marketing message is an example that Öjehag-Petterson highlights. The Region communicates its message and advertising by instructing inhabitants of Halland that it is critical to change the negative image of Halland by strategically communicating the positives in the region both internally and externally, through media and the internet (Öjehag-Petterson, p. 150).

According to the Delegation against Segregation's [DELMOS] annual report, from 2021 on the development of housing segregation in Sweden it has been concluded that it has increased since
the 1990s (Delmos, 2021, p. 10). In 2018, more than half of the population, 60 per cent of Sweden's population lived in a municipality that is more segregated than the average segregation level for the whole country in 1990. DELMOS annual report illustrates that segregation is particularly extensive among Sweden's 10 largest municipalities (Ibid, 2021). The Swedish government has noted that housing segregation gave rise to overcrowded homes that, in turn, generated uncomfortable living conditions (Regeringskansliet, 2018, p. 21). The government of Sweden concludes that housing segregation has had negative effects on people who live in segregated residential areas in their opportunities in life (Ibid, 2020). Delmos, on the one hand, emphasises that segregation may not be a negative thing in and of itself. However, when segregation creates an environment of too uneven living opportunities is when challenges emerge (Delmos, 2021, p.14-36).

In parallel with the development of the Delegation against Segregation since 2018, the media and social policy debate has largely been characterised by discussions regarding the so-called vulnerable areas. Vulnerable areas are a concept developed by the National Operations Department [NOA1] which is a department within the Police authority in Sweden (Polismyndigheten, 2021). NOA produces annual situations report where residential areas that are perceived to be either vulnerable, risk areas or particularly vulnerable are assessed. The classification of residential areas stems from characteristics such as low socioeconomic status or whether criminals have a significant impact on the local community (Ibid, 2021).

Many municipalities have coined the NOA list as a success, while on the other hand, it has been criticized by researchers and politicians as they believe that the NOAs list has spurred stigmatisation which has escalated segregation. The municipality of Uppsala has appeared in NOA's annual report, as well as the municipality of Gothenburg (Polismyndigheten, 2021). According to NOA, the latter was home to five particularly vulnerable areas. The municipality's chairman, Axel Josefsson, has attributed the NOA's list of residential areas has put pressure on local officials, which is viewed in the positive limelight (Runnberg, 2021). It's also why the city decided to spend 11 billion Swedish SEK to revitalise these vulnerable residential areas to get Gothenburg free of residential areas on the NOAs list. The chairman of Uppsala municipality, who was initially critical of the list, now praises the list and says it has helped the city work more closely with the police (Ibid, 2021).

On the other hand, there has been a critical assessment of how NOA classifies which residential areas should be considered vulnerable areas. One of the strongest critics, Stefan Holgersson a police researcher at Linköping University sheds light upon the non-transparency in how NOA

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1 NOA is an abbreviation for the National Operations Department and is a department within the Police Authority. The purpose of the department is to support and lead police activities nationally and internationally and to assist various police regions. NOA is also the department that collects and compiles regional intelligence to get a national situation assessment. Through these regional intelligence assessments, residential areas are assessed based on four categories. Non-exposed, vulnerable areas, risk areas or particularly vulnerable areas.
assesses and classifies residential areas (Dagens Nyheter, 2021). He illustrates that the NOA report is uncritical and subjective.

"It's entirely up to the police. It is easy to succeed when it is you who decides. It becomes even more difficult when the police have a lot of pressure to show action that they have succeeded (Dagens Nyheter, 2021)."

During an interview with SVT (2021), Niklas Borg, the municipality of Linköping's chairman, also appropriated the same argument. He has a critical viewpoint of the list provided by NOA; however, Niklas Borg goes further by stating that it promotes stigmatisation and endangers residential areas (SVT, 2021).

In a reportage conducted by SVT in the residential area Tjärna Ängar in Borlänge, which is on the NOA list and classified as a risk area, the reporters met young boys from Tjärna Ängar who were frustrated and disappointed with the media's reporting of the residential area. One young boy stated:

“You have to say good things about this area [...] it's you who come here and like this you just have to focus on the positive, just, trying to find problems, there are problems everywhere [...] you come here for different TV programs and stuff. They only film students. We are the ones who live here. These people know nothing. They have been living here for some years. Then they're back. We are the ones who remain here” (SVT, 2022; e.d authors own translation)

The researchers Andersson and Holmqvist pinpoint that segregation gets highlighted when people think and believe how it is to live in a residential area (Andersson & Holmqvist, 2019, p. 22). At the same notion, the government of Sweden states that it is of importance to avoid generalising residential areas that are suffering from socio-economic challenges (Regeringskansliet, 2018 p. 21). According to the government, there is a significant risk with denominations such as ‘vulnerable’ because it could lead to stigmatisation (Ibid). Other researchers have also described risks with stigmatisation. In the article “The whole city - break segregation” Susanne Urban illustrates that local efforts which are implemented to uplift vulnerable areas also tend to point out these residential areas as problem areas. According to Urban, this tends to create more risk and damage than the intended effort (Sarnecki et al. 2017, p. 5). The researchers have also discovered that the political leaders' description of the neighbourhood has a stigmatising impact. It leads to the designated areas being less attractive to on-site consumers, as well as those who live there. This implies that the stated objectives, vision, and goal of the initiatives to be carried out contradict one another.

The reputation of a residential area is linked with numerous undesirable consequences. Researchers such as Andersson & Holmqvist (2019) and Backvall (2019) have found that stigma can have a negative influence on people both at a personal and professional level. If a neighbourhood has an unfavourable reputation, it also influences what kinds of employment possibilities are available. A bad reputation in residential areas also damages the attractiveness
of an occupation or profession as it makes them less desirable. Stigmatization also has an impact on the types of services accessible (Andersson & Holmqvist, 2019, p. 28; Backvall, 2019).

But what actions are taken to change the stigmatisation which has developed surrounding these residential areas? Many public- and private-owned real estate companies have sought to change the narrative of a stigmatised district by refurbishing the physical environment of the residential area (Boverket, 2010; Sigtuna kommun, 2021; Dagens Nyheter 2020; Regeringskansliet, 2020; Linköping kommun, 2018). This could be through the construction of new apartments, working with the outdoor environment or refurbishing existing apartments. These efforts are said to be done to boost the sense of community and identity in these residential areas. Although, these efforts do have an effect as there are other elements to consider when working in socio-economically distressed areas.

According to the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning (Boverket), it is critical to provide the conditions for individuals who live in these areas to take pride in living there (Boverket, 2010, p. 43). Furthermore, Boverket emphasizes that it is crucial to market the regeneration projects, to ensure create positive news in a stigmatised residential area. Negative media coverage can stigmatise a residential area's reputation and lower the area's status (Boverket, 2010, p. 58). According to Boverket, this also lowers people's self-esteem. On the other hand, Boverket argues that residents in these residential areas do not see the negatives which are portrayed in the media. As a result, Boverket advises that active actors could mitigate the negative assumption and stigma spiral that exists in these residential areas through marketing and branding (Boverket, 2010, pp. 57–60).

Even though the concept place branding is a marketing theory it is well equipped and used in urban planning (Berglund, 2013, p. 24). The authors Dastgerdi and De Luca highlight that “urban planners or place managers use a range of marketing methods and techniques that create the brand identity of the place” (Shirvani Dastgerdi, 2019 p. 2). As mentioned before, for years, municipalities and regions have utilized the concept of place branding to compete with one another to attract capital and innovative and skilled inhabitants. Being viewed as a beautiful and vibrant municipality/region is crucial. Berglund highlights that several Swedish cities and villages, as well as internationally, have transformed their reputation from being associated with high unemployment and industrial closures to that of a cultural and healthy metropolis through the concept of place branding (Berglund, 2013, p. 37).

1.3 DISPOSITION

In chapter 1, I described my (1.1) personal reflection on why I think this topic is significant, and through my (1.2) problem statement, I demonstrated why this topic is essential to study. In the following second section (1.4), I will elaborate the (1.4.1) aim of this thesis, my (1.4.2) research questions and (1.5) the delimitation of this study.

In the second section I will elaborate on my literature review as this will serve as a backbone throughout this thesis. The literature review is divided into subsections. I will start with a background (2.1) discussing the history of housing segregation and how that has resulted in
stigmatization. In (2.2), I'll delve into socio-economic housing segregation and how it affects those with a lower socioeconomic status. In (2.3), I'll talk about stigma, what it is, the negative effects it has on people, and how that is related to socio-economic housing segregation.

In section (3) I discuss my theoretical framework which is place branding. This thesis has been driven by the theory of place branding as a theoretical framework (3) which I will analyse my material with. The concept of place branding is a huge topic, and I've narrowed it down to five key ideas (3.1.1) within the theory.

In the method and material section (4), I divided it into seven sections. I began with my methodical approach (4.1), followed by the study design (4.2) that was used to conduct my research, how I acquired my data (4.3), the way I analysed it (4.4), and ethical considerations (4.5). In this section, I've also covered the reliability and validity (4.6) of my research, as well as lastly assessing the limitations (4.7) of this study.

The results and findings (5) are divided into four chapters and sub-categories. The chapters are divided into (5.1) background, (5.2) police, (5.3) municipality and (5.4) real-estate companies. The first chapter (1) background is mainly based on background information in order to answer whether the residential areas were stigmatized. Chapters (5.2) police, (5.3) municipality and (5.4) real-estate companies will generate knowledge of how actors attempt to improve or might be part of producing the stigmatization in the case studies chosen in this thesis. The sub-categories are divided into case studies. I have also chosen to finalize each chapter with a summary to encapsulate key points. Finally, based on the material, I chose to take on the theory of place branding to analyse the material based on what the theory advocates, while at the same time, I will use the researcher from Uppsala University interview to understand how actions might lead to stigmatization.

1.4 AIM & RESEARCH QUESTION

1.4.1 AIM

The aim of this thesis is twofold as the first part of my aim is to generate knowledge of how municipalities, real estate companies and police attempts to improve or might be part of producing the stigmatisation towards residential areas with socio-economic difficulties. The second part of the aim is to examine the possibility of changing the narrative in stigmatised residential areas through the theory of place branding.
1.4.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on this aforementioned aim, two research questions have been formulated:

1. How do municipalities, real estate companies and police attempt to change the narrative of residential areas with socio-economic challenges?

2. How can narratives about stigmatised residential areas be understood from a place branding perspective?

1.5 DELIMITATION

Delimitation is necessary as many residential areas have a negative stamp and are stigmatized. The main delimitation is based on the residential areas that the police have identified as particularly vulnerable in Sweden. According to the authorities, particularly vulnerable residential areas are judged according to the police to have social challenges and a criminal presence, which has resulted in a behaviour that is has been normalized and which is now judged to be serious (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p. 7). According to Delmos (2021), previous research has mainly focused on studying housing segregation in larger Swedish municipalities (Delmos, 2021, p. 51). Because of that this study intends to investigate and study medium-sized municipalities. The case study objects in this thesis are Norrby in Borås, Skäggetorp in Linköping and Gottsunda in Uppsala in an attempt to get a geographically dispersed and an average population of 100,000 - 250,000. All these residential areas are within NOA’s list of particularly vulnerable residential area (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p. 30). Since Linköping and Uppsala have one residential area which is considered particularly vulnerable, Borås has two, Norrby and Hässleholm/Hulta. This thesis has chosen to delimit by studying Norrby because of Norrbys geographical location which is close to the city centre (Borås Stad, 2019, p. 14). This decision was taken because, in comparison to Gottsunda and Skåggetorp which are viewed as geographically separated from the city centre (Linköping kommun, 2021; p.2; Uppsala kommun, 2019, p. 50). In addition, the thesis intends to investigate what initiatives actors in Skåggetorp, Gottsunda, and Norrby implement and have in the pipeline.

The theory section is divided into two parts. The first part will present the history and important concepts which have had an impact and resulted in stigmatizing residential areas. The second section will focus on the theoretical framework, which in this thesis will be the theory of place branding.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section will also view how authorities view and their assessment in stigmatised residential areas. This will serve as a backbone throughout this thesis. This section will also aim to clarify the concepts such as socio-economic segregation and stigmatization to clarify the ongoing challenges in these residential areas.

2.1 BACKGROUND

Spatial planning is crucial from a segregation standpoint, according to the Government (Sveriges Allmännytta, 2016). The Million Homes Program (MHP), a housing project initiated by the government began in the 1960s, building housing in residential areas that are now classified as socio-economically vulnerable (Regeringskansliet, 2018, p. 21). The main objective of this program was to overcome a severe housing and to assist impoverished families (Molina, 1997; Regeringskansliet, 2018, p. 21). The government, on the other hand, feared that it would promote social and economic segregation, which would in turn result in stigmatisation (Regeringskansliet, 2018, pp. 20-21). The government chose to construct high-rise areas with big-scale properties, largely consisting of rental apartments, because of the MHP expansion (Ibid).

However, the account of the MHP began on a good note, because at that time, the housing project satisfied society's demands. This changed, however, when the middle class fled from these massive high-rise buildings (Regeringskansliet, 2018, pp. 20-22). According to research, two crises drove the middle class away: the oil crisis in 1974 and the economic crisis in 1990. These problems resulted in declining home values, allowing the middle class to invest and move from the high-rise buildings. During the economic downturn in 1990, many immigrants arrived in Sweden and flocked to the empty flats. This led to both social and ethnic segregation in terms of housing segregation (Delmos, 2021 p. 34-36). As a result, these residential areas have decreased in attractiveness because of the negative exposure in media and debates (Ristilammi 1994; Molina & Ristilammi 2000). That has resulted in a bad reputation which is a mechanism of how deprived communities become ostracised and neglected (Regeringskansliet, 2018, pp. 20-22; Backvall, 2019).

These towering structures which were the MHP are what is currently associated with “segregated areas” or “vulnerable areas”. Over the last 20 years, Backvall claims that the perception of socio-economically vulnerable housing areas has been negative. These locations are thought of as not being a part of Sweden, which has resulted in residential areas being considered failures (Backvall, 2019). Furthermore, Gerell, notes that when actors categorise an area exposed, the district may be stigmatised (Gerell, 2020).

However, Andersson et, al (2010), who conducted a study in order to evaluate what have accomplished, found that certain initiatives taken by actors have had a beneficial impact such as increasing the number of people who have access to the job market and raising the educational level. On the other hand, Andersson et al, claims that these efforts which were
directed towards reducing segregation has had a detrimental influence and impact. Similarly, Karlsson (2016) has completed comparable research and obtained the same result however, the author adds that these initiatives were hampered by a lack of cooperation with those who live in the residential area.

2.2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC HOUSING SEGREGATION

In 2017, the Swedish government created a new agency the Delegation of Segregation (DELMOS) to mitigate housing segregation. The government recognized that Sweden has significant challenges with housing segregation and wanted to map it. At the same time, by creating Delmos, the government is hoping to discover ideas for dealing with school segregation in addition to other efforts intended to reduce housing segregation and encourage mixed populations (Backvall, 2019). The term "segregation" was coined by DELMOS as relational, which means that it is a comparison between at least two different groups of people with different backgrounds and at least two geographical areas. It is thus about both spatial and social relationships between two different areas. Thus, segregation means that there is an uneven distribution between different population groups within, for example, an urban area, a municipality, or a county (Delmos, 2021, pp. 7-8). Segregation is most often measured by sorting individuals based on educational level or income, i.e., socio-economic segregation, or on the basis that the individuals were born domestically and abroad, i.e., ethnic segregation (Ibid). Boverket definition of housing segregation agrees well with the above (Boverket, 2010, p. 20). Boverket describes housing segregation as different population groups living physically separated from each other and that these groups can be defined in different ways - commonly based on demographic, socio-economic and ethnic divisions (Ibid). Socio-economic housing segregation is about people being divided into different housing areas based on level of education, occupational group, or access to financial resources. Since the location of the home affects life chances, for example through children's access to education and adults' opportunities for work, the location is of great importance for the consequences of segregation (Delmos, 2021, p. 23). Lathi Edmark (2003) claims that when it comes to the discussion of socio-economic challenges it is not only evaluated specifically to individuals or specific groups but also as a whole housing area. As a result, the cohesion of entire municipalities is harmed.

DELMOS has also been commissioned by the Government Offices to define residential areas. To be able to explain the socioeconomic circumstances of a residential area, DELMOS has developed 5 different types of areas, each of the indicators is based on a socio-economic index whereby the data has been derived from SCB. A few examples of the indicators which DELMOS examines are the share of the gainfully employed citizens, education levels, the share of the long-term unemployed and the share of income support and overcrowding. This results in classifications ranging from 1 to 5, based on the data produced by DELMOS. If an area is classified as type 1, it indicates that it has significant economic and social problems in comparison with type 5, which implies areas with excellent socioeconomic circumstances (Delmos, 2021, pp. 7–12).

Table 1. DELMOS description of area types (Delmos, 2021, p.11)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area type 1</td>
<td>Area with major socio-economic challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area type 2</td>
<td>Area with socio-economic challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area type 3</td>
<td>Socio-economically mixed areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area type 4</td>
<td>Area with good socio-economic conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area type 5</td>
<td>Area with very good socio-economic conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area type 1 and 2</td>
<td>Falls under the collective concept of areas with socio-economic challenges.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reasons for segregation are complex. The Swedish Research Council (2018) has found that income and ethnic segregation interact and often coincide. In vulnerable housing areas, this becomes clear as the connection between the geographical concentration of low-income earners and the proportion of immigrants from countries outside Europe is strong. Forms of leasing for housing play a major role because in regions with high prices for housing and property rights, households with low incomes are often referred to rental apartments (Vetenskapsrådet, 2018, p. 32).

According to the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet, 2018, p. 32), the causes of segregation can be seen in an interplay between the structure of the housing market (housing leases, size, price, and location), the housing areas' composition of housing and community functions, and household preferences and choices. Households with limited resources also have limited opportunities to realise their housing preferences. The Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet, 2018, p. 32), stresses that the causes of ethnic segregation are somewhat more multifaceted. Income differences between minority groups and ethnic Swedish population are a large part of the explanation for ethnic segregation. Beyond discriminating behaviours, the majority population also has a pattern of action that reinforces ethnic division by moving from areas with a growing presence of minorities or avoiding these areas when moving. The minority's room to influence their choice of housing is not as studied, but research refers to the fact that many immigrants have less opportunity to choose a housing area compared to non-immigrants (Vetenskapsrådet, 2018).

Pearce (2012) discovered another interesting approach when attempting to comprehend how local residents were impacted by a poor stigma in the housing areas where they lived. The author explained that there aren't many studies done to comprehend how local people are influenced by a poor reputation in the neighbourhoods where they live (Pearce 2012, p. 1922). Andersson (2017) found that the consequences of segregation could be coined neighbourhood effects, and he claims that research on these effects has increased in recent decades (Andersson et al., 2017, p. 7). The author concludes that both Swedish and international research on neighbourhood effects finds that in socio-economically weak areas, school results and education levels are lower and opportunities in the labour market are fewer. He also explains that living habits and
health are also worse, which together results in residents having fewer life opportunities and a poorer standard of living. Andersson found examples of Swedish studies on the connection between segregation and health include diabetes and cardiovascular disease, where the results show that living in vulnerable areas is an increased risk of experiencing this type of disease. Much research is focused on socio-economic and health-related aspects as these are documented in Swedish registers (Andersson et al., 2017).

Fewer studies focus on “softer” outcomes, such as how encounters between people are affected by segregation. In addition to consequences for the individual, segregation also creates a negative spiral that affects people's housing choices (Andersson et al., 2017). Andersson explains that stigmatization of what is seen as worse and better areas affects people's motivation to move to or from an area. Those who could opt-out of a vulnerable area when choosing a home often do so. With this negative spiral, segregation deepens and in the long run, it leads to further stigma and difficulties in promoting social integration (Andersson et al., 2017, p. 7).

To counteract and reduce these negative consequences, knowledge is needed about what socio-economic housing segregation looks like and how conditions can differ between different areas (Delmos, 2021, p. 9). According to DELMOS, understanding the different socio-economic conditions in the population-based on facts and statistics is an important starting point in the work of reducing and counteracting segregation. With a knowledge base, conditions are created for producing change. Although the strength of socio-economic segregation varies between municipalities, it generally increases (Ibid). To create equal life chances, it is necessary to consider the consequences of living and growing up in an area with socio-economic challenges so that individuals have access to the right support, regardless of where they live (Andersson et al., 2017).

Research on segregation in schools is often linked to housing segregation because they partly coincide (Vetenskapsrådet, 2018). The Swedish Research Council has mapped the daily environment of children and young people to investigate the consequences of the growing-up conditions that shape future education, job opportunities and welfare. Researchers who responded to the Swedish Research Council's survey believe that there is a lack of knowledge about how housing segregation governs parents' choice of preschool (Vetenskapsrådet, 2018). The Swedish Research Council rådet found that it has increased housing segregation in Sweden and school choice are seen as decisive factors behind increased school segregation.

The proportion of young people who neither work nor study is greatest in areas with socio-economic challenges (MUCF, 2020). A new action plan for youth policy was presented in March 2021 with the goal that all young people should have good living conditions, the power to shape their lives and influence over the development of society (Regeringskansliet, 2021). Young people living in areas with socio-economic challenges are particularly vulnerable and generally, have poorer conditions of upbringing and life chances than other young people and are therefore a priority target group (Delmos, 2021).
Another explaining factor to the housing segregation is linked to the notion of the Happiness Paradox. The paradox is the result found in a study performed by Huddinge municipality, which focused on improving living conditions in socially vulnerable areas. The "Södertörn analysis" was a method that the municipality of Huddinge has used to determine that inhabitants who were strengthened by targeted efforts moved from the area. Because of this, the residential area is stuck in the same situation as it was previously (Moritz, 2022). According to Moritz, “the paradox of happiness is that individuals' pleasure from having a job, ironically, causes area misfortune of the area when they depart” (Moritz, 2022). People who acquire employment in a vulnerable area would choose to relocate away for a variety of reasons. According to Moritz (2022), vulnerable areas are considered to be a problem, because there aren't enough individuals interested in building housing careers in these social-economic sectors. This implies that people seeking for different types of housing or bigger cannot avoid relocating to another district.

2.3 STIGMA

When it comes to stigma, there are more than one vantage points from which to observe it. According to the study by Goffman (2007), stigma is only applied to how individuals evaluate others and their hardships. Goffman meant that there are three forms of stigma, whereby one attaches to individuals' physical attributes, the second type according to Goffman is attached to individuals’ character and lastly "tribal stigma" which is based on human origin, religion, or race. Goffman notes that one's status is only stigmatized if only the physical stigma, social stigma, or cultural prejudice are present. When more dimensions interact in tandems, such as characteristics of social traits and preconceptions. This results in individuals being shunned solely because they have a particularity with their appearance that others do not like. According to Backvall (2019) it is important to note this as it means that “stigma is a social construct” (Backvall, 2019 p. 37).

However, one must consider the notion of stigma as a challenge to individuals that may extend beyond affecting residential areas. Wacquant (2008), another fascinating scholar in the field of stigma, acknowledged that stigma may be applied to places and the characteristics of a neighbourhood. He coined this as a territorial stigma when people think poorly about a place. Wacquant makes the point that negative preconceptions are mostly formed based on a place being hazardous or having people of a different ethnic background, or if socio-economically weak population resides in the residential area. On the other hand, Wacquant believes that this should not have to align with how things really are if individuals believe it to be true, individuals will judge the residential area based on the perceptions they have (Wacquant, 2008). The likes of Musterd (2008) argue that while some actors may stigmatize residential areas, there are not enough research on how active actors contribute to stigma.

To comprehend negative consequences of stigmatization and how it occurs Backvall (2019) cites that “practices of stigma often employ similar methods by creating an image based on rumours and word-of-mouth reputation, but unlike an orientalist discourse, stigmatisation only produces negative representations. An orientalist discourse sometimes informs such representations, through racist conceptions of places as well as the residents, but there are also
other ideologies of power at work in creating spatial stigma, particularly the demonization of the poor”. (Backvall, 2019, p.12). Backvall, on the other hand, believes that social forces and economic interests are mechanisms that lead to how locations are perceived. Stigmatizing districts by coining them as residential segregated areas often referred to the MHP is often common (Backvall, 2019).

The actors who have the most financial incentives in these districts is the real estate companies. Ismail et al. and others in their article Do segregate housing markets have a spill over effect on housing prices in nearby residential areas? assesses that stigma and segregation have an enormous impact on property value (Ismail et al, 2021, p. 171). At the same time, research also shows that crime and inhabitants’ sense of insecurity have a significant effect on property value in residential areas that are considered insecure and suffer from crime (Wilhelmsson, 2021). Therefore, it is of interest to review how real estate companies work with the districts’ brands.

Adair (2001) states that the media is such a strong tool for influencing people's attitudes and values. Power, et al., (2013) deems that stigmatization created by the mass media is done through developing social constructions that amplify places based on negative preconceptions. As a result, residential areas acquire a bad reputation. According to the researchers, this causes both those who live in the area and people from outside of it to receive a stigmatized perception of the residential area. While at the same time research found that media representation in residential areas also have greatly affected of how people perceive their chances in life and their own self-worth (Power et al, 2013).
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, I'll go through my theoretical framework which for this study is primarily built around the theory of place branding. In the first part of this chapter, I'll define what place branding is. In the second part of this chapter, a definition of the five-core ideas in place branding is presented. Furthermore, the second part of this thesis outlines how it may be applied in practice. A discussion around why place branding is important and how various actors have utilized the theory to mitigate a bad reputation is presented towards the end of this chapter.

3.1 PLACE BRANDING

What will constitute my theoretical framework is the concept of place branding. This essay will be based on Kavaratzis foundation of the concept which consists of five central concepts within the theory of place branding. These five core concepts within place branding are *brand image*, *positioning and equity*, *brand architecture*, *brand identity* and *brand orientation*. However, it is important to note that place branding is frequently paired with other marketing ideas, such as place marketing, place selling, and place promotion. In this thesis these terms will be used interchangeable. *Place branding* is defined as "*strategies and measures for conveying specific images of a place*” (Berglund, 2013, p.12). The second part of the concept, branding, or marketing means an understanding of how the place can and should be communicated to both its residents and outsiders (Berglund, 2013; Kalandides et al, 2015). It is fuelled by the creation of a brand, which is furthered through symbol constructions, urban planning, marketing, events, and a variety of other activities. The description of branding and marketing will be used interchangeably in this thesis. Understanding the connection between what is experienced and what is conveyed is crucial for effective *place branding*. According to Berglund, *place branding* is used to boost competitiveness and appeal, the aim of the theory is to generate more positive attention, and interest, as well as attract individuals to a certain location (Berglund, 2013, pp. 11–12). Berglund states that *place branding* is used...

“As a tool for creating and communicating specific images of a place... Place branding is seen as a means of renewing cities and their image and thereby attracting sought-after target groups, not least investments, establishments, visitors, and immigrants. To stand out, create attention and "put a place on the map" is described as central” (Berglund, 2013 p.24).

While *place branding* might stem from theories found in research relating to business administration, it has however had a significant role in social science, according to Berglund. This is especially significant in community planning due to the importance of *place branding* in regions, municipalities, and cities. Prior research has mostly been concerned with the impact of globalization on site marketing. According to Berglund, *place branding* has had structural significance in Western cities’ transition processes. This has primarily focused on how these cities are valued, described, planned, and perceived (Berglund, 2013, p. 22).
3.1.1 THE FIVE CORE CONCEPTS OF PLACE BRANDING

A *brand image*, according to Gardner and Levy (1955), is a complex symbol that refers to a wide range of attributions of a place and puts far more emphasis on emotions rather than the technical or functional aspects of branding. Kavaratzis et al (2015) believes that area images are affected by the emotions associated with a place.

The second core concept of *positioning and equity* is often driven by political rivalry based on local interests. This in turn affects how one understands the positioning strategies on the attitudes of local communities (Pike, 2009). Linked to this, Zenker and Beckman believe that in terms of ambassadors as local residents, have an important impact on the positioning of a brand (Zenker & Beckman, 2013). Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2008) suggest that from an urban policy perspective it is critical to engage local actors in local communities when formulating positioning strategies.

The value of developing a holistic *brand architecture* was crucial for organizations looking to develop their brands in new markets. This was done by brand architecture used as a structure to establish their brands in different areas (Douglas et al. 2001). Brand architecture is a form building a foundation for future strategies as it provides guidance and a framework regarding the allocation of resources (Kapferer, 1997). Dinnie (2008) has also highlighted that future growth brands will need a strong brand architecture, this could be achieved through co-branding between different actors. One such practical example on co-branding is a common platform to increase the district brand (Fastighetsägare i Järva, n.d).

The significance of *brand identity* is consequential because actors must consider eminence when determining their brand's image (Kavaratzis et.al 2015). This is because places require unique identities to differentiate themselves from other places (Morgan & Pritchard, 1999). Another interesting aspect which is highlighted by Dinnie (2008) is that nations and municipalities include ideological associations to enhance their reputation and brand identity. According to Dinnie this could be through that municipalities portray themselves as sustainable to boost their reputation. One such practical example is in the municipality of Malmö portray themselves as one of the most sustainable cities (Malmö Stad, 2021).

*Brand orientation* symbolizes that people who work with branding should encapsulate the brand which they themselves communicate. Kavaratzis et al (2015), cites that brand orientation must begin with cultural change within the organizations who deliver the brand experience, in order to ensure that employees and processes across stakeholder organizations are focused on the place brand’s values.

One of the main reasons why the theory of place branding is chosen for this study is that cities who used to have a negative and stigmatised reputation have with the use of place branding strategies changed citizen perception through place branding. One such international example is in Glasgow a city with a bad reputation because it went through several industrial closures
and had high unemployment (Berglund, 2013, p. 37). Through its intensive marketing in international publications and subway posters, Glasgow radiated a strong sense of optimism. The intensive marketing campaign resulted in significant investments in culture, which led to Glasgow being able to change its narrative and was crowned in 1990 as the Europe's Capital of Culture (Ibid). By marketing the district as a city of culture, it was able to improve its negative image. It is not the only city that has undergone such a change, but also Swedish cities such as Gothenburg and Malmö have had similar journeys (Ibid). Against this background it goes hand in hand with my second part of my aim which is to examine the possibility of changing the narrative in stigmatised residential areas through the theory of place branding.

There are, however, only a few research studies on how place branding is used in neighbourhoods with a bad reputation. One such study has been done by Josefin Syssner. In her paper Place branding from a multi-level perspective (Syssner, 2010, p.38) she examines the residential area of Klockaretorpet a stigmatised residential area located in the outskirts of Norrköping with an unfavourable reputation (Syssner, 2010 p. 38). According to Syssner the district has been described as a residential area where many immigrants live. She argues that the group have had difficulties in assimilating into the Swedish society, (2010, p. 42). However, according to NOA, the trend has now been reversed and in their latest report Klockaretorpet is no longer considered vulnerable residential area (Polismyndigheten, 2021 p. 28). Tailored initiatives aiming at improving public relations seem to have been a key factor in the case of Klockaretorpet. The negative reputation has induced the municipality to undertake initiatives in the hope of being able to improve the areas image, according to Syssner (2010, p. 38). Syssner describes how the municipality of Norrköping and Region Östergötland have invested in public relations, especially when it comes to promoting the district's attractions.

An example which Syssner highlights is Stadsdelsparken. The municipality brands to Stadsdelsparken as the oasis of Klockaretorpet, which is marketed as a location for play, sports, and games. Places with difficulties are also advertised. Syssner indicates that Klockaretorpet centre is a place with challenges but that the municipality promotes it as needing renovation (2010, p. 40). This method is not unique, nor new, symbolic buildings have been utilized by industrial cities to change their public image, according to Griffiths (1998). Similarly, Ashworth (2009) believes that architectural buildings attract media attention and makes places famous. In this regard attaching the communication of a place through the symbolism of nature, buildings or similar can create excitement and a sense of novelty.

In her study the researcher also points out that the municipality and region are not marketing based on any of Klockaretorpet's characteristics, such as its diversity. According to Syssner, there is a need to conduct several studies which evaluates how socio-economically vulnerable residential areas could be affected by brandings of cities, regions, and nations (2010, p. 45). The question posed by Syssner is what I want to conduct in my study and hope may contribute to.

One of the main reasons the theory of place branding is chosen in this thesis is to understand how narratives about stigmatised residential areas can be understood from a place branding perspective. According to Berglund (2013), researchers have found that people's rationale for
selecting residential areas have changed over time. In the past, accessibility to employment was a decisive factor ruling the choice of residency. However, investigations show that there has been a decline in this practice and that more people now choose their housing based on the perspective of whether the residential area can enhance their quality of life (Berglund, 2013, p. 37). Niedomysl & Hansen (2010) states that what contributes to the attractiveness of locations and why people migrate and move to specific residential areas according to the concept of place branding, is by improving the appeal of places and linking them to peoples' needs, demands, and preferences. However, according to Niedomysl & Hansen (2010) appeal of places also correlates with people's life cycle which is nonetheless constantly in motion and transformation.

Another interesting choice for the theory of place branding is that according to Kavaratizis (2004), the brand of places is influenced by what Kavaratizis terms place consumers. Kavaratizis supposes that anything on the place and all activities that take place communicates how others perceive the location and how much attention it receives. This is an interesting aspect to understanding how the actors operating in stigmatised residential areas understand and communicate in their residential area from a place branding perspective. It is also interesting that Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2008) criticize how planners have struggled to include various groups in community planning due to their communication strategy. They argue it remains critical if the aim is to be able to increase the desirability of places that are developed through either direct or indirect communication with citizens.

However, there are criticism raised against the concept of place branding. Critics emphasize that place branding does not promote collective interests but more individual interests (Berglund, 2013, p.13). The assumption is that place branding benefits the wealthy at the expense of vulnerable groups in a society. According to Berglund, what several researchers emphasize and demonstrate when criticizing place branding is the significance of city centres in Western cities, which have resulted in "spectacular playgrounds for affluent groups and that place branding, thereby, both give rise to and makes visible injustices in society (Berglund, 2013, p. 31)". The challenge is that place branding has been criticized for how it depicts locations whereby the identity of places is lost since the images which are chosen to advertise are prejudiced. In the case of place branding the underlying idea is that it is focused on developing a favourable and desired picture rather than an uninvited and trouble-causing image. According to the scholar Muktar-Landgren (2005), place branding is defined by political activities and challenges, the idea of authority to define a place. Mukhtar-Landgren emphasises that politically and economically strong groups in a society are also the target group that interprets places for weaker groups (Mukhtar-Landgren, 2005). Another common criticism is that there isn't enough knowledge about the effects of place branding. Several academics have recognized that many municipalities lack measurable targets, which has resulted in governments neglecting to follow up on their campaign results (Berglund, 2013, p. 47).
4. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The following chapter is divided in seven sections. The first section covers the methodical approach (4.1) whereby I discuss why I have chosen a qualitative approach instead of a quantitative. In the subchapter study design (4.2) I discuss why I chose case study for my research design. In 4.3 I discuss how I have acquired my data (4.3), and in 4.4 how I have analysed it. In 4.5 I review my ethical considerations, while in 4.6 I cover the reliability and validity of my research. This chapter will finish of my assessing the limitations (4.7) of this study.

4.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Since this thesis studies how the theory of place branding can change and improve the reputation of stigmatized residential areas it has influenced my decision to pursue a qualitative study. Due to the nature of the aim of this thesis, a qualitative research design is the most appropriate to gather material for this thesis. To achieve the aim of the study the individual accounts of representatives from the respective sector will prove to be most useful. This follows the nature of qualitative research which is centred around nuances, perceptions, and accounts of individuals (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014).

Secondly, in order to explain how the chosen actor’s in this thesis attempts to improve or might be part of producing the stigmatisation towards residential areas with socio-economic difficulties a study with an explanatory nature is preferable. My primary collection of data will mainly be obtained through semi-structured interviews and policy review, as it is preferable to obtain that through a qualitative study. The semi-structured interview approach is opposed to the structured approach more prone to allow for lengthier responses from the respondents. While at the same time being structured around a set of key questions derived linked to the research question at hand (Bryman, 2017).

While the respondents will be a main source of information and which allows me to reach the purpose of the study, to further develop the analysis a literature review is added. For the literature review I have used Swedish government data, for example from the Delegation against Segregation, Delmos, as well as official statistics from the Swedish Police Authority. This data has already been reified and confirmed by other authorities and researchers, so I see no need to utilize a quantitative approach as I'm more interested in the actor's actions and their motives.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN – MULTIPLE CASE STUDIES

The research design I have chosen to conduct is a case study to investigate my collected material. Yin (2014) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context” (Yin, 2014, p. 16). The cases chosen for this study are three residential areas socio-economically vulnerable residential areas in Sweden. This study should therefore be viewed as multiple case study. Due to the
design of this research study and its descriptive characteristics of its purpose the study should be regarded as a descriptive case study. Yin (2014) state that descriptive case studies are opposed to explanatory case studies not focused on examining cause and effects. They are descriptive by nature; in essence the identified cases are by their uniqueness subject to explore descriptions of them. The aim for this study is to determine what measures municipalities and real estate companies can take to combat stigma. The descriptive nature of this multiple case study lies within describing and exploring what measures the municipalities and real estate companies take.

The three selected cases for this study are Norrby a residential area in Borås, Skäggetorp a residential area in Linköping and Gottsunda, a residential area in Uppsala. The multiple cases will be described individually, and their uniqueness have been motivated by a number of reasons. Primarily the selected cases are all stigmatized areas in Sweden. All three are classified by the Police as particularly vulnerable according to NOA’s classification system. While they share this in common, they are unique when comparing to other residential areas of Sweden who do not share these challenges. However, there are unique characteristics are mutually unique in different ways. The details of this have already been elaborated upon in the section covering the background of each residential area. The particularly vulnerable areas classified on NOA’s list is to a large extent residential areas in big cities in Sweden. Borås, Linköping and Uppsala are relative to the size of the three largest cities in Sweden, Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö medium-size cities. The three selected cases correspond to medium size cities which is in line with the delimitations of this study.

The fact that this research utilized case studies is important because the study is based on reality, and case studies provide researchers with a wealth of information. Another appealing feature of case studies as a technique is that it allows to test hypotheses and develop theories. Eckstein stated that “case studies are valuable at all stages of the theory-building process, but most valuable at that stage of theory-building where least value is generally attached to them: the stage at which candidate theories are tested” (Eckstein, 1975 p. 80).

4.3. MATERIALS
The devised strategy was through an interview guide as to how I would derive material from interviews. The following are some of the important concepts in the interview guide to illustrate strategies taken during the collection of data: marketing, stigma, efforts, and collaboration. I would also like to note that, because all my case studies were conducted in Swedish municipalities and residential areas, I acquired all my data in the Swedish language. At the same time, it's worth noting that all literature and policy material also were in Swedish. To avoid any misunderstanding, I conducted my analysing phase in Swedish, before translating it into English.

4.3.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS
The benefit of the semi-structured interviews is that they allow for increased flexibility (Bryman,2018). The sampling strategy employed for this thesis is a combination of purposeful
sampling together with snowball sampling. According to Bryman (2018) purposeful sampling within qualitative research is developed through the development of a list of key characteristics which feed into a sampling profile. The sampling profile is intended to guide the researcher in finding the appropriate participants to achieve the aim of the study and respond to the research questions. Snowball sampling is on the other hand a method which entails a process where the researcher contacts a number of possible respondents. They then guide the researcher into finding new possible respondents by suggesting other potential participants (Bryman, 2018).

In total 11 interviews were conducted for this study. I decided based on my selection of cases to focus on three actors. Municipalities, private real estate companies, academia, and representatives from the Swedish Police. A complete list of the respondents can be found in the final section in this chapter.

Within academia, a researcher from Uppsala University was interviewed who has conducted research in the field of stigmatisation in Swedish residential areas. Because there aren’t many studies conducted in this field the researcher gave valuable material to analyse my material. Municipalities were chosen because they have a huge influence and responsibility in the selected residential areas. This mainly applies to the initiatives taken such as endeavours and investments in residential areas. At the same time municipalities have a holistic responsibility for the growth and improvement of residential areas.

In addition, I considered it was necessary to include the perspective of property owners, as they also, have a responsibility to their renters. At the same time, Wilhelmsson, (2021) & Ismail et al. (2021) found that property value is influenced by residential areas with high levels of crime and are in socio-economically vulnerable residential areas. Another interesting aspect which led me to choose real estate companies is that municipal real estate companies also have an even greater responsibility for the general public good. This is because municipality owned real estate company have a responsibility for integration and equalize between different social groups (Sveriges Allmännytt, 2016). Another reason I choose to collect material from real estate companies is that they have a financial incentive in terms of enhancing their property value and rental income.

Another notable actor is the Swedish Police. This is largely since the Police's input on how residential areas are classified of residential areas. This led me to find it important and critical to include the police's view of how their presence affects media portrayals but also to understand their opinion of how NOA's list influences the image and reputation of residential areas.

As I explained in my de-limitation chapter, I've chosen the municipalities of Borås, Linköping and Uppsala. All these municipalities have residential areas, which are socioeconomically disadvantaged and according to NOA's list labelled as particularly vulnerable. The selection of the residential areas within the three municipalities are as follows, Norrby (Borås), Linköping (Skäggetorp), and Uppsala (Gottsunda). The selection is also influenced by the fact that there are a lot of development, initiatives and investments taking place in these residential areas owing to these labels (Particularly vulnerable and Socio-economic vulnerable).
I needed to discover individuals to interview who have the capacity and influence to act in each residential area. As for municipalities, I believe that it was important to interview individuals who work in the field of social sustainability and are responsible in each municipality for the efforts that are aimed at raising the area's image. As for the real estate companies, I chose to interview executives who oversee promoting and communicating the image of residential areas, as well as having the power to act and take action. Finally, I decided to have interviews with police who work in these residential areas. According to NOA, the classification is determined based on intelligence gathered by local police. These is the main reason I picked to conduct interviews with them. In contrast to the structured interview which is usually referred to a survey with few options for the respondent to elaborate fully and the unstructured interview which is not guided by a set of questions. The semi-structured approach is a middle way between the two (Bryman, 2018). The officials and researchers were contacted via email to book the interviews. To be able to carry out the interview, I produced an interview guide, which can be seen in Appendix 1, which was based on the purpose of the essay. Farthing (2016) explains that interviews are useful because it allows the interviewer to get access to data from individuals who are linked or involved. Interviews also contextualise data that is gathered from research, policies, and media statements. Semi-constructed interviews will greatly benefit this thesis to review and understand how stigmatisation affects different actors within the designated residential areas and the actions that are taken to mitigate the risks associated with increased stigmatisation. However, this thesis main objective is to observe if there is a need to brand these residential areas. Semi constructed interviews also allow the respondent to have the freedom to answer while at the same time it is of utmost importance to stay in the theme of what actions do the actors take and how place branding might contribute to mitigating stigmatisation. Semi-structured interviews are also a good method to use because it gives me moments whereby, I can ask further questions and probe for further details (Farthing, 2016). Because of the location in which these municipalities are geographically located, I also used telephone interviews and digital tools such as Teams to overcome the challenge of not meeting the respondent. According to Farthing telephone interviews are also seen as a practical advantage because it is simple to use and gives flexibility to the respondent to participate in the interview (Farthing, 2016).

The interviews were conducted under the period of 7/4-2022 to 27/4-2022 and were all conducted by me. The timespan which the interviews took was between 20 to 30 minutes and all the interviews were recorded and transcribed. One of the respondents wanted to receive the questions before the interview, while another wanted to receive their transcription to know what parts will be presented, in order to give me feedback and corrections. All these requests were granted which increases the reliability of this study. Some of the interviewees wanted only to respond based on their role while others based their interviews on their experiences. In table 1 below I present the list of my interviewees. I have chosen to code their identities; the coding process stems from the administration they are working in and in which municipality they come from.
4.3.2 POLICY REVIEW

Stigmatisation is inscribed within literature and policies which makes it relevant to review them. Policy and literature reviews also sanction the definition of different concepts and policies which is central in this thesis. To understand the concept of socio-economic housing segregation I will review and follow the guidelines set in the report Segregation in Sweden written by DELMOS (2021). To grasp what is considered a “particularly vulnerable area I will review NOAs (2021) latest report Situation assessment over vulnerable areas. To further nuance the findings from the interviews the report uses other reports published by the Swedish Police and the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ).

Policy documents and body of work by administrations will serve as a beacon to analyse if and how municipalities counteract stigmatisation. It is also expressed by Farthing (2016) that literature review allows this thesis to analyse why particular policies have come to fruition.

Similarly, to better understand the context of each residential area the interviews with the municipalities will be supported with brief contextual information. The source of this material is reports and studies retrieved from the municipalities themselves. Namely Borås Stad, Linköpings Kommun and Uppsala Kommun. In addition, in the case of Norrby(Borås) a report conducted by Urban Utveckling with the head of the Centre for Knowledge and Security (CKS), will be used. This is due to the fact that it explicitly covers the issue of housing segregation in the case of Borås.

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Tabell 2. The participants for the interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODENAME</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ADMINISTRATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ML1</td>
<td>Development strategist 1</td>
<td>Municipality of Linköping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ML2</td>
<td>Development strategist 2</td>
<td>Municipality of Linköping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Social sustainability process leader</td>
<td>Municipality of Borås</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MU</td>
<td>Social sustainability process leader</td>
<td>Municipality of Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL</td>
<td>Area developer</td>
<td>Real-estate company (Viktoriahem, Linköping)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Communication manager</td>
<td>Real-estate company (Bostäder i Borås)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RU</td>
<td>Sustainability specialist</td>
<td>Real-estate company (Uppsalahem)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Area police</td>
<td>Police (Linköping)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PB</td>
<td>Municipal police</td>
<td>Police (Borås)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PU</td>
<td>Area police</td>
<td>Police (Uppsala)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUU</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Academia (Uppsala University)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.3 MEDIA

This thesis will also collect data based on news reporting to further understand the case objects and their challenges. Farthing (2016) illustrates that there are enormous resources and data which could be gathered through text-based documents. Backvall argues that media research has concluded that how neighbourhoods are portrayed in the media results in stigma and is also an important factor why I chose to encapsulate them in my thesis (Backvall, 2019, p. 74). Against this background, this thesis will review how Norrby, Skäggetorp and Gottsunda are described in news reporting to get a picture of how districts are portrayed and stigmatized. In table 2 I showcase the news article used in this study.

Table 3. The news articles used in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Published &amp; updated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aftonbladet</td>
<td>Skola övertänd – två flickor misstänkta för mordbrand. Forskare kritiserar polisens lista över utsatta områden</td>
<td>2018-10-08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagens Nyheter</td>
<td>11 miljarder ska få bort Göteborgs särskilt utsatta områden: &quot;Vi behöver djärva mål&quot;</td>
<td>2020-07-03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastighetstidningen</td>
<td>Borås storsatsar på social hållbarhet</td>
<td>2022-04-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVT</td>
<td>Här börjar upprustningen av miljonprogram i Göteborg</td>
<td>2020-11-06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVT</td>
<td>Sex åtalas för skottlossning i Borås</td>
<td>2020-08-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVT</td>
<td>Niklas Borg (M) vill se fler poliser i Skäggetorp, Berga och Ryd</td>
<td>2022-01-02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVT</td>
<td>UG-referens: Riskområde: Tjärna Ängar</td>
<td>2022-02-08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hem &amp; Hyra</td>
<td>Rasistisk eller modig? Rapporten Lägesbild Norrby upprör i Borås</td>
<td>2020-04-07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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4.4 METHODS FOR ANALYSIS

Due to the descriptive design of this study the method for analysis is based upon a process of analysing transcribed data. Kvale and Brinkmann (2014) suggest that there are various ways of analysing interview data and that there is no “one size fits all approach” to analysing semi-structured interview data. According to Bryman (2017) semi-structured interviews should in light of a deductive approach be analysed through the use of the interview guide. The development of the interview guide for this study was developed with the key concept place branding and the results from the literature review in mind.

The method for my analysis began with reviewing the activities connected to communication and marketing in order to determine whether place branding had been used by the identified
actors. The material that I deemed unimportant were generally activities that had nothing to do with marketing or were not intended to elevate the brand of the residential area. Since the two research questions are of a descriptive character, in the sense that they target the views of municipalities, real estate companies and the Police concerning residential areas with socio-economic challenges. The analytical framework as such has a number of variables which all feed into collecting the narrations of these key actors. To begin with the concept of segregation is used to explain the situation for socio-economically disadvantaged residential areas. Through the lens of segregation this study will be able to explain the situation in the residential areas which have been chosen as the cases for study. It is through segregation furthermore the narratives of the identified key actors (1) municipalities, (2) real estate companies and (3) the Swedish Police can be understood. The term stigmatization is a tool to better understand the societal view on these residential areas and furthermore understand in which ways they are viewed by the majority of society as different and the citizens of these areas are viewed, internally as well as externally. The main concept of this study and which is to be analysed is how place branding is used to fight stigmatization and segregation in the socio-economic disadvantaged areas. The narrations from the three aforementioned actors will help in this regard to understand how;

1 Whether place branding initiatives do in fact exist in Gottsunda, Skäggetorp and Norrby?
2 Whether Place branding is effective in targeting issues around stigmatization and segregation.

Table 4. – Analytical framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Operationalisation</th>
<th>Method of analysis</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Place branding</td>
<td>Strategies and measures for conveying specific images of a place</td>
<td>- Extent to which actors have employed strategies and measures</td>
<td>To examine the possibility of changing the narrative in stigmatised residential areas through the theory of place branding.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Communication campaigns used</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Values and images used for key messaging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brand image</td>
<td>Attributions of a place and emotions linked to its perception (Kavaratzis et al,2015).</td>
<td>Public perception of residential area</td>
<td>Key component of place branding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positioning and equity</td>
<td>Level of engagement of local communities in urban planning and enhancement of local ownership (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008).</td>
<td>- In which ways the area is marketed</td>
<td>Key component of place branding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Existence of collaborative marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand architecture</td>
<td>Holistic approach to strategic formulation of place branding (Kavaratzis et al,2015).</td>
<td>Strategies and guides for place branding</td>
<td>Key component of place branding</td>
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To better respond to the above-mentioned questions this study will set the stage through a narrative description of the socio-economic situation of each residential area. The use of policy review will in this regard serve this purpose. Lastly the narrations from the Police, municipalities and real estate companies will be the main source of information to respond to the research questions and the analytical questions mentioned in above.

4.5 ETHICAL REFLECTION

One crucial aspect that the Swedish Research Council emphasizes in terms of excellent research ethics is how to treat the participants who take part in my study, as the Swedish Research Council advises protecting these persons and not harming or offending them because they took part in the study (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017, p.12). This is something I’m quite familiar with and have taken into consideration when conducting my research, especially as I study critically how organizations work and communicate in order to enhance the reputation of a residential area. Through conducting interviews, I will also interact with people to ask about their obligations, communication strategies or if they are involved in certain activities to improve the image of a certain residential area. Likewise, the participants might not fully agree with their organization or opposite assigned assignments or be critical of their organization's efforts. This is something I fully understand, and one approach that I have used is to anonymize the individuals' names in my results and findings. The reason for the anonymity is because their names are not of interest, but their organizations are. While at the same time I do not want to be the cause exposing any harm to my participants. (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017, p. 41). Another approach that Anna J. Sector highlights in Gomez (2010) Research methods in geography: A critical introduction is to give individuals the opportunity to take part in a summary of the interview they have undergone (Gomez et.al, 2010, p. 203). This is for the purpose of enabling my participants to provide me feedback if I have perceived them right. As I have mentioned before, one respondent has requested this and been granted the opportunity to read through the interview transcript before I did my analysis. I believe that it is critical to give the opportunity to my respondents since I do a kind of screening on their company which might be sensitive.

Another important aspect that I want to raise, and highlight is my background. Because I was raised in stigmatized residential areas, it gives me a deep understanding of their communities and in some ways, I do feel that I have strong sense of belonging. However, this is something I have come to terms with and while collecting data, I should strive to be objective. Like Anna J. Sector, Dixon writes in Gomez's (2010) book on the importance of understanding what one studies. One aspect which she highlights is the so-called radical geographer, a researcher who
attempts to understand and study issues that are linked to social inequality. However, Dixon does emphasize that this might lead to anger or passion. (Gomez et al., 2010 p. 419) Dixon believes that one way to counteract this is by being clear about who you are. This is something that I have considered, and through a short biography in my introduction, I choose to describe a bit of myself to prevent any misconception (Ibid, p. 417).

4.6 VALIDITY & RELIABILITY

According to Bryman (2002), he points out that in quantitative studies, reliability and validity significance in qualitative studies are difficult to achieve. The concept of reliability means a way to get a measure of how one has proceeded to get a result. This can change a lot in my study because the main approach in my study to obtain data or material is through interviews. People's understanding of what the situation looks like is very context-based. Likewise, I will apply my theoretical framework and create my own understanding, which can lead to if someone else does the same, they can come to a different result.

Validity, according to Bryman, refers to the extent to which a study actually assesses what it intends to measure through contrived measurement techniques. When it comes to measuring, the validity of qualitative research is typically low and restricted in terms of outcomes (Bryman, 2002). Against this background, my study does not really intend to measure but to examine the possibility of changing the narrative in stigmatised residential areas through the theory of place branding, which makes it restricted to have high validity.

4.7 LIMITATIONS

With regard to the limitations and restrictions with this study, they are largely connected to resource constraints. One critical factor is the limited time that I was given to work on the research project. I would have liked to increase the number of respondents, particularly those with more anchorage and responsibility for marketing and communication. This was due to the fact that respondents were unable to respond to my questions at certain points, but rather referred me to communicators. Furthermore, I only spoke with one individual from each organization / company during my interviews. With an increased representation of employees from organizations and other real estate firms in the residential area, nuances in their responses may have been found. This is essential because I conducted a qualitative study and semi-structured interviews, and it is conceivable that the respondents embellished the facts and perhaps do not reveal how things really are. I would also want to emphasize that this was something I have been working on.

I reached out to representatives from all the major housing providers and municipalities, of which one communicator agreed to be interviewed. In the end, I was told by the other communicators to whom I have reached out that they did not feel as though they had as much expertise and anchoring in the subject of place branding and social sustainability. The communicators instead suggested that I contact individuals who were experienced in social sustainability. Another disadvantage that I have experienced and believe should be included is
a different viewpoint to complement the project. At the same time, I also believe this research has the ability to adapt and extract information from those who live in these residential areas, which is not feasible due to constraints on time. I also believe that it would have been possible to include journalists' and media personnel's views in order to gain a better knowledge of how they reason and whether or not they grasp the degree of power that they have over the area's image. On the other hand, I've tried to anchor these viewpoints by relying on what previous researchers have discovered and concluded.

In the latter part of my research, an unexpected situation occurred that had an impact on some of my respondents: they were concerned that riots would break out and there were riots in certain residential neighbourhoods owing to a visit from a right-wing politician. One may gain a sense of how the media image has coloured their viewpoint by looking at the responses from the respondents, especially those that address perceptions about the media image.
5. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The division in this chapter begins firstly with a brief background of my selected case studies. This is because I want to provide contextual understanding of each residential area and their challenges. In the subsequent chapters the results captured from the interviews with the selected actors will be presented (4.2) police, (4.3) municipality and (4.4) property owners. I will present the actors’ perspectives and their perceived challenges; their narrative will be accompanied with policy documents that are accessible. In chapters (4.2) police, (4.3) municipality and (4.4) property owners there are also sub-chapters which stems from the case study objects. I have also in each chapter concluded with key points. The material gathered will also be analysed through the concept of place branding and the interview conducted with the researcher from Uppsala University.

5.1 BACKGROUND

5.1.1 NORRBY

Norrby is located northwest of the city centre in Borås. Most of the residences are owned and managed by Bostäder i Borås, it is also a location with a high proportion of tenancies (MB; RB). In an interview with Bostäder i Borås, it was stated that the buildings were in terrible condition and dilapidated (RB). The district is also heavily trafficked, resulting in the creation of social boundaries. By this, the municipality implies that publics in Borås are unable to meet individuals who resides in Norrby, while at the same time, residents in Norrby are shielded from other residents in Borås (RB; PB).

Norrby is also an area inhabited by a large group of people who have migrated. All the interviewees from Borås believes that this has created negative elements and challenges in the form of clan- and honour concerns. This is similar to territorial stigma which I previously mentioned. Norrby is characteristically inhabited by a large population with a low income or are foreign-born. This is in line with Wacquant (2008) theory on what influence stigmatization of a residential area. In addition, Norrby is according to the respondents isolated from the rest of Borås, according to one respondent it is also polarized: "Norrby is split into something called upper and under Norrby, where the upper part is a bit calmer” (RB). Many occupants consider Norrby to be a residential neighbourhood with huge potential because of its geographical location (RB). There is also a strong beneficial force in the local civil society in being able to take part in area development with the police, municipality, and property owners (MB).

Norrby has been designated as a particularly vulnerable area in the municipality, where efforts are made in collaboration with the general public and civil society (Borås Stad, 2021, p. 31). Based on the Delegation against segregation measurement in terms of the demographic current situation of the area, it is characterized by a high socio-economic index of 31.6% and is classified as area type 1, an area with major socio-economic challenges (Delmos, n.d, a).
According to the municipality of Borås' findings, based on the data they have compiled, there are significant differences in living standards when compared with other districts in the city (SSPL, Borås). All the respondents during the interviews from Norrby felt that the district has significant socioeconomic difficulties (SSPL, Borås; RB; PB). For example, respondents highlight that the median income is low and overcrowding and unemployment are widespread (Borås Stad, 2013).

Previously, I spoke about the media's significance in spreading negative preconceptions that lead to neighbourhood being stigmatized (Power et al., 2013). This notion is something that is addressed by the municipality of Borås, in terms of how the media portrays the residential area of Norrby which comprises an understanding of having negative events and circumstances is often emphasised (PB). The municipality of Borås also affirms this picture (Borås Stad, 2013 p. 1). Norrby is also seen as a stigmatized residential area by all the respondents. Linking the issue of stigmatization with the theory of place branding one can understand that it has a strong influence on the public perception of the area. In extension this means that the stigmatization which affects Norrby is clearly linked to a bad connotation which creates emotions, perceptions and builds into the branding of Norrby as a residential area. This can be validated by the definition of Kavaratzis et al (2015). One person responded when asked if Norrby is a stigmatized residential area in the following manner;

“Yes, it is clearly stigmatized since it has a rather negative reputation, at the same token, the school in the neighbourhood has also a bad reputation. You notice the area's reputation as soon as there is an event in Norrby; how people talk about it on the internet and in comments sections” (PB).

It was also interesting to find that during the same interview the respondent mentioned that: “People from within Norrby also want to stigmatize the residential area, keeping it as a tiny island of its own to ensure that the rest of society do not have a lot of influence” (PB). The concept of place branding emphasizes the significance of considering people who reside in the area, as they are the ones with the power to enhance and produce a residential area's image (Berglund, 2013 p. 37). In the recent interview, I discovered that the respondent was frustrated by some elements in Norrby who tend to stigmatize the residential area. On the other hand, it is critical for the municipality to engage those people who live in Norrby so that they may become ambassadors and make a positive impact on their neighbourhood. The approach by which actors engage the civil society and other local stakeholders can be linked to the positioning and equity component, within place branding. The importance of local ownership for residents to engage in urban policymaking has previously been raised by Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2008). This result affirms in line with Kavartzis and Ashworth (2008) that in the municipality of Norrby have made considerations to engage civil society to combat stigmatization and reshape the image of the Norrby brand.

At the same time, the municipality assumes that Norrby's negative reputation is based on a belief that it is a problem area and is described "ugly, uncomfortable, and hazardous" (Borås Stad, 2013). The municipality has in fact determined that crime exposure is low, although the
perceived fear of crime is high in Norrby (Borås Stad, 2013; Borås Stad; 2021 pp. 47). This might be interpreted as I stated previously that stigma may lead to the development of a false belief that may not even be true, but which encourages people to stigmatise residential areas on the basis of preconceptions they already had.

The background is that Norrby has been a particularly vulnerable area since 2017, classified by NOA (Polismyndigheten, 2017, p.41). Witnesses and victims are threatened with silence, making it difficult for the police to do their job. While at the same time it is described that Norrby has a parallel social society in which religious extremism and violence restrict residents' freedom. According to the Police Authority's most recent poll, Norrby has not altered (Polismyndigheten, 2019, p. 30). To sum up the classification of vulnerable area in which Norrby belongs to seem to have further consolidated the public perception of Norrby as a problematic area. Thus, the classification contributes to the brand image of Norrby in line with the definition of Gardner and Levy (1955). The classification in this regard be said to contribute with attributing the characteristics of a problematic area to the public perception of the area.

According to a study conducted by Urban Utveckling (Brå, 2022), the majority of drug sales in Borås are concentrated in Norrby. During the interview conducted by Urban Utveckling with the head of the Centre for Knowledge and Security (CKS), it is revealed how criminal networks have taken a grip of Norrby (Brå, 2021). CKS is a department within the municipality of Borås and have written a report of Norrby with the ambition to understand the area and the inhabitants in Norrby. While at the same time the intention of the report was to remove Norrby from the police list as a particularly vulnerable residential area. The municipality of Borås has characterized the area as a parallel society, which has attracted harsh criticism from civil society in Norrby (Ibid). This, in turn, has generated a great deal of interest within media, which I will get into later.

According to another respondent, the municipality has put a lot of effort into good development efforts in Norrby, which has taken place over an extended period owing to Norrby's significance within public health-related concerns (MB). The interviewee corresponded that this has mainly been done through a new action plan, Socially Sustainable Borås. The respondent highlights that the problem of integrating current and future development efforts in Norrby has been coordinating previous and future initiatives (Ibid). According to the Police's understanding and view on the present scenario is determined as a "cautious positive development," (PB). While another interviewee described Norrby current situation by referring to an article that was released by a researcher who had studied Norby and believed that the condition is now even worse than it was two years ago of the radicalization of Norrby (RB).

### 5.1.2 SKÄGGETORP

The district Skäggetorp was built between 1965 and 1975 (Linköping, 2021, p. 2). Based on the Delegation against segregation measurement in terms of the demographic current situation of the area, it is characterized as Norrby by a high socio-economic index of 32.6% and is also classified as area type 1, an area with major socio-economic challenges (Delmos, n.d. b). The
municipality of Linköping, as I previously said, has established an action plan to combat segregation. According to the municipality, the action plan must function as a networking tool for how the municipality may collaborate across departments to raise awareness about segregation (Linköping, 2022). To make this feasible, Linköping Municipality has established an action plan for the development of Skäggetorp. However, the municipality have acknowledged that this action plan must be put to fruition and improve, (Linköping kommun, 2021). Based on a citizen dialogue that Linköping municipality carried out in connection with developing the plan program for 2016–2017, the citizens in Skäggetorp informed the municipality that they are happy and enjoying living in the district (Ibid). By this understanding of the residential area, it was highlighted in a more positive light was the fact that there is a vibrant community in Skäggetorp (Ibid).

Skäggetorp, unlike Norrby, was established separately from the road system, resulting in no motor vehicles on the residential block. Rental apartments in Skäggetorp are at 86 percent of all the properties in the district (Linköping kommun, 2021). According to a participant's description of Skäggetorp physical design, they feel that the following is accurate;

“It is almost exclusively tenancies, there is a small amount of congestion with condominiums but there are no villas and there is no mix, if any truth to it, and if there's any research to show it, I'm not sure. But there's something different about Skäggetorp in comparison to other districts where it is not diverse in terms of structure, although it is nevertheless compact houses. Whereas the outdoor environment, it is green, and foliage filled. However, there are many condo complexes, as well as a lot of people who live here". (RL)

The municipality describes Skäggetorp as an "own city in the city" and has both physical and mental barriers (Ibid). The municipality senses that Skäggetorp is separated from the rest of Linköping because it is located on the outskirts of the municipality. It's also stated that at present, the area lacks a natural beauty and attraction, implying that people are not interested in visiting or moving to Skäggetorp (Linköping kommun, 2021).

One respondent explains that Skäggetorp has become a place that symbolizes the "negative aspects of society" (ML2). Furthermore, the interviewee states that because Skäggetorp has such a terrible reputation, people have chosen not to live or move to the residential area rather seeking to live elsewhere, resulting in that the individuals living in Skäggetorp are those “who cannot afford to live elsewhere (Ibid)”. It is interesting that the interviewee understood that Skäggetorp has become the negative aspects of society, this correlates with how residential areas who have territorial stigmatising are shaped through negative preconceptions which are formed through residential areas being dangerous or having people of a different ethnicity, or if it is situated in an economically impoverished area very much in line with the theory of Wacquant (2008).

This was also stated by another interviewee who notifies me that if she informs her friends about Skäggetorp, they will not want to live there because they have an unfavourable image of
The municipality of Linköping has also conducted and analysed the relocation in the district, according to which one participant claims it is based mostly on the Happiness Paradox (ML1). Interestingly the respondent could reference the effect of the happiness paradox in line with the results found in the study of Moritz (2022).

Linköping municipality has determined that people are leaving the location and families with socio-economic difficulties are moving in as a result of performing a similar study. One participant explains that this is since the district is stigmatized and has a bad reputation but also that there is a limited supply of housing based on tenancy forms in the area (ML1). Preferences is something which could be linked to what the municipality of Linköping describes the challenges in the significant relocation in Skäggetorp, owing to the area's poor reputation, which has resulted in many wanting to relocate when given the opportunity (Linköping kommun, 2022). This very much reflects the view raised by Niedomysl (2010) on the importance of citizen’s needs and preferences. The municipalities inability to meet the preferences and needs of the citizens can therefore be seen in this light to explain why citizens do not have preference to live in Skäggetorp. Skäggetorp, unlike Norrby, was classified as a vulnerable residential area in 2015 (Polismyndighet, 2015, p. 41). The municipality's current situation analysis (2021) notes that the district has serious challenges with criminals which has caused an unsafe residential neighbourhood (Linköping municipality, 2021). The police in Linköping claim that they have "a serious problem, essentially in Skäggetorp" (PL), which has resulted from criminal networks forming in the residential area but also homicides. An interviewee corresponded that…”yes, the current state is a bit worrisome; we should not linger under the chairs and perhaps even the last year-and-a-half to two years, the progress has unfortunately been in a negative trend. On the other hand, the respondent believes that if he goes "a couple of years back, it has actually been a wonderful development” (RL).

One resident adds that owing to Skäggetorp's designation as a particularly vulnerable residential area on the police's list, it stands out in comparison with other neighbourhoods in Linköping (ML1). In the report Open drug scenes (Brå, 2021), Skäggetorp is described as a hub for drug sales in the municipality, which in turn has resulted in affecting other nearby districts in Linköping. All respondents agree that Skäggetorp is a stigmatized residential area. One respondent remarked that he has been active in Skäggetorp for a long time, and his view on the residential area is that;

“That the district has a very unjustified and undeserved negative reputation ... at the same time as his opinion is that ..., it does not take much to write a single issue where an article is written, and it is rarely positive“ (RL).

Regarding the underserved negative reputation, it correlates a lot with what I found in the interview with the researcher from Uppsala University and her take on the media. She states that;

“Yes, the media is perhaps the most exploratory aspect of the problem with stigmatization, and it's a huge portion of studies that look at particular areas.
Stigma has been researched precisely in media reporting because partly for this reason it is readily accessible. It is simple to study, but also because it has such an extremely large role in spreading perceptions and trends in society. The media has a significant influence in determining what we concentrate on. We who are the majority of society, from common citizens to the political level, are talking about this. Even if the media may like to present themselves as neutral or present themselves as if they depict reality” (AU).

Regarding how the media image of Skäggetorp differs from other residential areas in Linköping is described by another respondent. She mentioned that she had looked up Skäggetorp on Google to get a sense of the portrayed media image associated with the area. She found that after conducting her search, that it wasn’t a positive image which was portrayed but a rather a negative one (ML1). While another interviewee from Skäggetorp explains that there has been an incident while reflecting on the district's media image. "It was a person who was shot at the Skäggetorp centre, and then there were photographs of many gangs after that, but also many photographs were taken of the area during the latest riot” (PL).

5.1.3 GOTTSCUNDA

In terms of the present situation in Gottsunda, the municipality feels that the district has a long history of multiculturalism, and it is greatly appreciated by residents in the district (Uppsala, kommun, 2019, p. 16). This is also confirmed by another interviewee which explains that during a citizen dialogue, that the citizens of Gottsunda appreciate that it is close to nature, there are many who value both large natural areas and intrusive vegetation (MU). Bridging the concept of place branding with the response from the municipality of Uppsala, we can derive that the municipality views Gottsunda as an attractive residential area. It can according to the municipality be explained by the areas closeness to nature, its richness in diversity. These attributions can be viewed through the lens of its brand identity, in line with the municipality is in this regard the one who wishes to market the brand of Gottsunda in this way The notion of creating a brand identity as described by Kavaratzis et.al (2015) and Morgan & Pritchard (1999) is therefore in line with the case of Uppsala Municipality in its attempt to brand the residential area of Gottsunda.

The Gottsunda development was constructed in the 1960s and 1970s, and it is Uppsala's largest Million homes program. Like Skäggetorp the area is divided from the roadways (Uppsala kommun, 2019, pp. 14–16). The layout that was implemented in the 1960s and 1970s is extremely airy, with many parks and other settings. As a result, preserving the greenery is something that many people want (Ibid).

Based on the Delegation against segregation measurement in terms of the demographic current situation of Gottsunda, DELMOS has divided Gottsunda into three RegSO areas whereby all of them are characterized by a high socio-economic index of between 16.2% – 31.7% whereby two of the areas are classified as area type 1 and the other as type 2, which suggests areas with socio-economic challenges (Delmos, n.d. c). This was also something all the respondents during
the interviews from Gottsunda alluded to, concerning that the district has significant socioeconomic difficulties (PL; PU; RU). The municipality of Uppsala, like DELMOS, has also conducted a study of the district's socioeconomic challenges. One respondent who is responsible for the overview states that;

“If you look at what we in Uppsala refer to as the social compass, you may see that it varies based on district and even small geographical regions. The outskirts of Gottsunda, the socio-economic level is very low, high unemployment, a lot of individuals who rely on financial assistance” (MU).

An interviewee claims that Gottsunda is suffering from prejudice which is a result because of the physical attribute of Gottsunda, which he describes as being "extremely run down both on the inside and outside” (PU). Conversely, the municipality of Uppsala has confirmed that Gottsunda is developing and expanding, nevertheless it has seen a negative trend in recent years as social instability and greater gaps between demographic groups have arisen (Uppsala kommun, 2018). This was considered in the master plan. As a result, an action plan for Gottsunda/Valsätra was created in 2018 based on increasing social tension and extensive development. According to the Uppsala Municipality, eastern Gottsunda/Valsätra is based on escalating social unrest and significant development activity in the area as well as an internal lack of a uniform and cohesive overview of present circumstances (Ibid). As a result, the established action plan for Gottsunda 2021–2030 aims to develop a long-term and broad collaboration between the municipality and active actors in the area (Uppsala kommun, 2021). This will aid in the coordination of more short-term decisions, efforts, and activities with longer-term planning. Collaboration is expected to improve the capacity to manage difficult situations and contribute to a variety of projects and processes, resulting in greater impact (Ibid).

Gottsunda, like Norrby, was classified as a vulnerable residential area in 2017 (Polismyndigheten, 2017, p. 41). The Police Authority is concerned about organized crime's influence on criminal activity in Gottsunda. NOA's most recent analysis concluded that there was a negative trend in Gottsunda (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p. 30). However, this is something that the respondents do not all agree on. One of the respondents who is the group manager for area police in Gottsunda claims that;

“The current situation I would think that it is in quotation marks relatively good. There has been no special and no particular concern or too many shootings or so. A lot of efforts are being made now together with Uppsala Municipality and the police and property owners” (RU).

Respondents also shared their thoughts on whether Gottsunda can be considered a stigmatised residential area. One participant describes Gottsunda as follows: “Stigma is like a negative reputation, Gottsunda is clearly defined with a negative reputation” (MU). Simultaneously, the respondent understands that if an area has problems in various ways. It's possible that there are many people who like living in Gottsunda and the residential area has a lot of great qualities about it. But that isn't evident to others who don't visit there as frequently. “If you think about
it when you hear about Gottsunda, what contexts do they come up more often, it is often more negative than positive” (MU). In addition, another respondent states that:

“Over time, there have been some stories written about events that occur, which have led to the impression that significant crimes are taking place. As a result, Gottsunda have acquired and gotten a poor reputation and ended up on the map, people acquired a negative reputation because of it. I have had the impression that if others who don’t live in Gottsunda and have never been there would say they would never go there” (PU).

Regarding context whereby residential areas appear is shaped by the media according into the interview with the researcher from Uppsala University stated that

“After all, the media always have a choice in where they choose to highlight and how they choose to portray it, which gives them an enormous influence on society, that is why they are so very crucial.” (AUU).

To summarize the municipality of Uppsala wishes to market Gottsunda as an attractive residential area with its parks and closeness to nature. However, the residential area has a tarnished reputation and is referred to be as being stigmatized. The stigmatization of the area reflects the negative connotations the area has in the eyes of the public. The stigmatization has a direct effect on the image of the Gottsunda brand which is contrary to the brand identity. The reason behind this disconnection between the realization of the brand identity and the stigma associated with the area, seems to be linked to a lack of proper investments into the physical environment according to PU. The point raised by MU seem to indicate that the brand identity is not reaching part of its intended target audience, as suggested people living outside of Gottsunda. Changing the public perception of Gottsunda seems therefore to be hindered firstly by insufficient outreach. Secondly, by the inability to increase other factors which may affect the brand image such as projects in current real estate properties in the area. Lastly, the social unrest further drives the brand image to continue to be associated with high levels of crime, poor socio-economic status, and other negative connotations.

5.2 POLICE

As described in my problem statement stigmatization could occur through the Police's classification of residential communities. In the discussion surrounding the police classification, one respondent from Borås claimed that stigma becomes a sort of prediction and creates truth when you apply a bad description to an area. The respondent identified that;

“If we talk about Norrby as a bad district, messy and criminal, then yes it leads to stigmatization. Then what do we give these children who grow up here, a picture of themselves with their self-worth. We know of course that children lose
faith until much earlier in Norrby in comparison to other districts. It will most likely be because I come from Norrby that I will not have the same circumstances as others, therefore it is self-evident that it exists; just like all sorts of stamps assure there is a danger in any event that you meet or exceed what is expected of you” (RB).

A modification for 2021 is that the government has assigned NOA, like DELMOS, to obtain and provide assessments on the current state of residential areas' condition. The main responsibility of NOA is to update, describe, and present a general picture of vulnerable residences, which is largely based on the perspective of law enforcement. NOA highlights that the evaluation carried out by the police shall be based on as objective viewpoints and relevant criteria (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p. 6).

According to NOA, their residential area's assessment is based on three definitions. The lowest degree of in the assessment criteria is a location referred to as a vulnerable residential neighbourhood. NOA's definition of the term means; "a geographically delimited area that is characterized by a low socio-economic status where the criminals have an impact on the local community (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p. 7, translated from Swedish)."

According to NOA, this is a serious situation. The impact of criminals on a local community is largely influenced by the social structure, which makes a residential area vulnerable. This has generated a sense of insecurity in the residential area and, as a result, fewer residents are not reporting offenses or not participating in legal procedures. Furthermore, NOA considers that actions that are direct or indirect, such as; "threats and extortion, public acts of violence that risk harming third parties, drug trafficking that is conducted openly and an outspoken dissatisfaction with society (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p 7, translated from Swedish)", results in an area being considered vulnerable.

The notion of a particularly vulnerable, NOAs highest assessment highlights that the area has an acute problem. NOA assumes that there is a general perception of not participating in legal proceedings because there is a systematic threat and acts of violence against witnesses in the residential area. Because of these challenges, the police authority has had to make frequent modifications to its operating process or their use of equipment because of current challenges in the residential area. Furthermore, NOA believes that one of the major difficulties is that residents in the residential area are unaware of their situation. This could be through, for example, “parallel social structures, extremism, such as systematic violations of religious freedom or strong, fundamentalist influence that restricts people's rights and freedoms, people who travel to participate in combat in conflict areas a high concentration of criminals (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p.7)”.

The middle level of the assessment is defined as a risk area. This implies a zone with all the same threats as a vulnerable residential area. However, the challenges, according to NOA, is serious but not severe enough to be considered a particularly vulnerable area (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p.7).
With regard to the methods for obtaining the national situation and local situation, NOA gathers data from the local police. These situational pictures are based on countrywide evaluation criteria utilized in the assessment and classification of a residential neighbourhood. The following indicators are derived from NOA (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p. 13-14).

1. Shootings in, or in connection with, exposed areas
2. High priority event reports (HR) (1 and 2)
3. Number of reported drug offenses
4. Number of reported gun crimes
5. Number of reported crimes of vandalism (by car fire or fire on another motor vehicle)
6. Number of reported illegal threats (not internet related)
7. Number of reported crimes of abuse in court
8. The geographical spread of the shootings in Sweden in and outside areas included in the collection
9. Proportion of connected Encrochat telephones

This is completed with a strategic map that serves the function of being able to assess social and economic conditions and demographics-related difficulties. NOA believes that there is a clear correlation between socio-economic challenges and crime. With regard to the strategic map's development, NOA collaborated with Malmö and Lund University to create a map that depicts the residents' life situation based on socio-economic criteria. In terms of indicators on which the strategic map is based, similar indicators are used as in DELMOS.

To be able to address these issues, the Police use a stage model, in which all local police departments respond to an inquiry about whether the police authority has challenges in a residential area. According to NOA, the stage model attempts to describe problems that have arisen in terms of crime in the residential neighbourhood, which has created a sense of insecurity among its residents. Through the stage model, NOA considers areas that have problems with crime on occasion are considered to be vulnerable (stage 1). Residential areas where crime is likely to increase in perpetuity are considered to be dangerous (stage 2). If a crime is so widespread that people and visitors avoid certain locations, the residential area is considered to be fragmented (stage 3). NOA points out that if the condition in a residential area is deteriorating, the residential area is deemed to have been dissolved (stage 4) (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p. 9–12).

The stage model generates a survey that results in residential areas classified as stages 3 and 4 being marked on a map, which the police must answer 80 questions based on an assessment scale of 1–5. Whereby 1 means that there are no difficulties and 5 poses a severe problem. This is further bolstered by a so-called assessment scale that rates the respondent's uncertainty which also has a similar scale (1–5) (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p.12).
Another unique approach that NOA employs to evaluate a residential area is to map persons linked to organized crime. NOA uses the cylinder model which separates people into four categories: A, B, C, or D (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p.12).

**Tabell 5. Cylindermodellen (Polismyndigheten, 2021, p. 12).**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Older criminals rooted in the living environment who have a strategic ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Criminal actors in the living environment who handle and guard criminal interests in the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Outspoken actors in the living environment who have developed problem behaviours and copied the elderly's criminal norms and behaviours. They assist the criminals by supervising and performing services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>The risk group in the living environment who have begun to develop norm-breaking behaviour and have high exposure in the living environment by often staying in the same places as the criminal actors</td>
</tr>
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</table>

After the material has been acquired, it is combined and evaluated by NOA. As a result of this, NOA develops the country's overall development situation. Areas are classified as non-exposed, vulnerable, risk, or particularly vulnerable (Ibid).

In all interviews with the police, it is made clear that they are working hard to be in the places they operate. All the police in the interviews stated that being present in a community helps them to get closer to its people while also boosting security in the neighbourhood (PB; PL; PU).

**5.2.1 NORRBY – POLICE**

The media representation of Norrby could be viewed through an article written by SVT (2020b) in which a gang's turf battle is depicted between one side based in Norrby and the other side based in Hässleholmen/Hulta. There have been reports of shots fired into the air and shots into a restaurant following shootings in Norrby. The attacks resulted in children and adults seeking refuge in shops (SVT, 2020b). Furthermore, many people in Norrby are unhappy about the gang violence. People who grew up there claim that it is peaceful and secure if you grew up there, whereas others state that it is terrible that the gangs have such great power and express dissatisfaction with the police because they "Do nothing" (Ibid). Another interesting scenario mentioned by a respondent from Bostäder in Borås was an ongoing conflict in Norrby that has attracted media attention between the Somali and Arab inhabitants of Norrby.

"There was a fairly well-known quarrel that occurred last year which got media attention by TV4 and SVT. That had started out modestly, so it has evolved into a gang fight between hundreds" (RB).
In my interview with the Police in Norrby explained to me that he works as a municipal police officer and focuses on strategic issues. He claims that the municipality is cautious about how it promotes Norrby, where they do not want it to be seen as an "exotic" location but rather as part of Borås (PB). Interestingly this stance would be an interesting positioning strategy. While Morgan & Pritchard (1999) emphasize that places need uniqueness to differentiate themselves create a unique brand, the case of Norrby seems to go against this principle. The views of the Police officer in Borås seem to indicate that the municipality wishes to market Norrby as an ordinary residential area.

Furthermore, like other respondents from Borås, he also points out that Borås Tidning has employed a reporter. The journalist's duty is to be in Norrby and display a nuanced view of Norrby, she has already produced several pieces that have highlighted the advantages of Norrby in order to alter the image (PB). He points out that he finds it sad that the positive in the area has not been lifted before but that the negative has been constantly lifted.

To counteract the stigma, the Police in Norrby believe that the entire city needs to be integrated. This applies to both residents of Norrby and other residents of Borås. The respondent believes that it is important that the human encounter between people leads to the possibility of changing the human behaviour of holding preconceived notions (PB).

However, what I found fascinating was that he went into NOA's classification of particularly vulnerable residential area without me asking about it, he states,

"From the police's point of view, we are very careful to say that even though it is the police who classify [certain areas], it is NOA who classifies them as particularly vulnerable areas. It is clear that there is a stigma attached to this classification, but we use it in order to have a present policeman working in this residential area. We know that we have a lot of challenges and crime in Norrby, which means that we need to be there, but we are aware that the classification comes with stigmatization” (PB).

This has several harmful outcomes, as it stigmatizes residential areas and damages the community's reputation, which is repaid by the police receiving more resources. It is interesting to note that the police cannot get resources unless an area is classified as particularly vulnerable. The reflections from the police officer falls well in line with the findings of Roelof & Solnen (2019) which have found that the classification may lead to stigmatization in of itself. The accounts made from the PB seem to indicate that there is a clash between the two interest's resources and risk of further stigmatization.

Even the respondent from Researcher had her views on the police classification of neighbourhoods:

“So here it is, I would say, especially the concept of vulnerable areas and particularly vulnerable areas has also been captured very much in politics. At
the same time, Backvall emphasizes that municipalities are now in this rhetoric about getting off the list and you should not have any exposed areas. It has had an incredibly large impact simply in how politics views the task, views the challenge. Now it's not so much anymore, it's my impression to maybe help the areas, but now it's about not exposing vulnerable areas. This means that no one really knows, but only if you are not on the list and only if you are not exposed, everything is fine” (AUU).

The researcher highlights that the classification made by the Police can have an effect on allocating resources in addressing societal issues in a residential area such as Norrby. However, it can as a consequence and as indicated be associated by not addressing societal issues in residential areas before they make the list of particularly vulnerable areas. From the case of Norrby, we can derive that in this regard the actions taken can already have had an effect on further damaging the brand image of residential areas.

5.2.2 SKÄGGETORP – POLICE

In a conversation with the Police from Skäggetorp (PL), explained that she works as an area police officer and works more operationally in the area. She says that the media image of the area is often negative. She also thinks, like many others, that the good forces in Skäggetorp are not given enough attention in the media. She maintains that they have a significant issue with crime;

“I notice that this in Skäggetorp people do not report crime in the same way. In my experience the collective responsibility to report crime is quite bad in Skäggetorp, when citizens see someone who does something wrong, they don’t intervene but are afraid of the consequences, for example in daring to testify. I also see a certain impact that this has on both school, health centre and family centres, so other parts of the community may be affected by this. I don't experience it to the same extent in other areas. But I believe there have been several violent crimes in the past that have enabled the formation of certain criminal organizations” (PL).

When asked if the police have a strategy in how to communicate Skäggetorp to the rest of citizens in Linköping, she responded that as an area police officer, she does not have direct strategies for how to communicate Skäggetorp. She refers me to the communication department instead. While at the same time, she claims to work on the police's social media with her co-workers where they discuss what is going on in the neighbourhood (PL). This is important to highlight because the police are also an important actor which shapes the image of a place. To have a strategy in how to communicate is therefore highlighted as important by the police officer, especially so that they do not contribute to the stigmatisation (PL).
Another interesting aspect that was highlighted in the interview with the Police is on her opinion regarding if the police's classification of areas as particularly vulnerable possibly leads to stigma. She explained that;

“There may be a disadvantage to it being stigmatized but at the same time, we must highlight the issues that exist in order for someone to be able to do anything about it; completely different measures are required in an area that is particularly vulnerable to another area in Linköping. It requires a completely different commitment from all actors involved - municipalities, real estate companies, police etc. I think it is important that you lift this issue up and shed light on it. The challenges we have here are that there are few reported crimes, although while it is a particularly vulnerable area. This depends on people who do not dare to report. It is very important that it is illustrated as well” (PL).

Like in the case of Norrby, the police in Skäggetorp do understand that the classification could lead to stigmatisation. However, it is important to note that she does highlight that this label leads to more resources.

An intriguing point to consider is that the participant from Skäggetorp belongs to a task force - Effective coordination for safety (EST) a network that includes several actors. She says that the purpose of the collaboration forum is to follow up on the week's events and, in consultation with several actors, carry out an assessment of the area from a security perspective. She believes that this has resulted in rapid action being taken on the challenges that exist and which places are considered unsafe. She says that;

“It's been fantastic. We have a lot of team members that are there, or the fields are there and willing to assist and work, in this way, I believe it works well. We're expanding EST further; it's a never-ending process of development that you must keep doing. So, we're doing it right now, so I'm hoping that it will be more successful in the long term. You hear about researching yourself and trying to do things better and better all the time” (PL).

5.2.3 GOTTSSUNDA – POLICE

In my encounter with the Police from Gottsunda, he served as a group manager for the region police in Gottsunda. He stated that in order to counteract the bad reputation of the area, law enforcement must demonstrate that they are present and visible throughout the region. Furthermore, the Police in Gottsunda claims that this has been communicated;

“We have also worked a lot with social media and contacting regular media to get positive news about the work and show that, yes, not bad things happen at all, but we are there anyway. We are here to show that we have been able to keep you safe without anything terrible happening. We're trying to assure people that the cops are there and everything's OK” (PU).
Another point worth noting in the interview, is that they have increased the number of personnel in their communication department. “He states that they utilized positive news and so on when we're doing positive things. I have access to the police's Facebook and Instagram pages, where we can promote things. We were very active, in 2019, especially when we began working with the group. Then there were a few postings as well from 2020 - 2021 but it has decreased somewhat since then” (PU).

It is intriguing that the Gottsunda Police have chosen to invest and increase the number of communicators. As I have stated previously, the police are a significant actor who have shown how their categorization has resulted in stigmatization on numerous occasions. As a result, it is even more critical for the police to hire competent personnel who hopefully grasp the value of communication and how it could be used in raising the image of an area.
4.2.4 KEY POINTS

1. It's critical to note that the police are aware of their role in shaping the area's image. An interesting discovery made was that several respondents recognized the NOA categorization has a negative connotation and leads to stigmatization of residential areas. The task of the police is to increase security in the residential area, at the same time they need resources, which several respondents have confirmed that through the classification, the police get resources. It is important to note that this classification to a certain extent passes to other residents and harms their chances in life. In light of place branding, this study indicates that the classification has an effect on brand image. The effect of stigmatisation contributes to further consolidate the public image of the residential areas who have been classified.

2. Another important element in terms of how marketing, communication and branding initiatives are implemented, several respondents have utilized the social media channels of the Swedish Police to inform the public about their efforts and the situation without having a clear communication strategy. As a result, there's a danger that targeted communication initiatives will have a reverse effect and generate stigma. However, according to the respondents' the assigned communicators are an essential component to counter this. One respondent points out that the police in his municipality have chosen to invest in their communication staff and expand it. The use of place branding by the Swedish Police seems to be limited to few communication initiatives without a clear cohesive communication strategy. In this regard, it is questionable whether the Swedish Police employs a brand architecture to change the public image of the selected residential areas covered in this study.
5.3 MUNICIPALITIES

Every municipality wishes to overcome the problems it is experiencing in its districts. They feel that it is critical to be able to communicate and convey their difficulties in a way that is appropriate. But how you convey is critical, especially when it comes to place branding.

5.3.1 LINKÖPING KOMMUN – SKÄGGETORP

According to the theory of place branding it is crucial that organisations have a solid strategy to market themselves. An interviewee from the municipality of Linköping described that Skäggetorp as a district is stigmatized, and the municipality must "consider how we communicate about the area within the municipality" (ML1). I was intrigued by how the municipality chooses to acknowledge their challenges, while simultaneously recognizing that they may contribute through their communication to the formation of negative stereotypes.

However, one positive action which has been taken to counteract this, is that the municipality of Linköping has implemented a more active strategy for communicating about the district (Ibid). The respondent further notes that the municipality used;

"... a very limited and restricted vocabulary, or I'd call it an incomplete vocabulary. To characterize the district, we've utilized words such as vulnerable area and socially parallel society. We didn't have an overall definition. How we communicate and operate as a municipal body is crucial, we must ask ourselves what terms we currently use. And I believe that DELMOS intended to call those with areas with social-economic difficulties, which they defined as having five distinct levels - and we attempted to utilize DELMOS terms, but we are not united to do this in the municipality" (Interview, 4).

It is important to note that Linköping municipality has however, planted a seed by creating a communication plan in an attempt to not stigmatize the community and market the residential area. This is not collaborative at present, implying that certain actors within the municipality may be stigmatizing Skäggetorp through their incoherent communication strategy. The strategy employed by Van den Berg and Braun (1999) is in line with the strategy of Skäggetorp, Linköping Municipality. How Linköping municipality employs place branding seems to be through the development of an incoherent brand architecture.

The respondent from Linköping municipality highlighted how such a development area may be improved…"for example, communication is an overall perspective that should permeate all work. Action plans are being drawn up to strengthen the municipality's internal communication and collaboration." Which has in turn led the communication staff in the municipality to develop measures in the action plan against segregation in their communication strategy.
surrounding Skäggetorp (Linköping kommun, 2022; ML1). The respondent further notes that "...this information has not previously been collected at a strategic level" (ML1). The municipality should be more accessible through better communication with those who live there (Development strategist Linköping, 1). She highlights that it is critical to emphasize the area's benefits and the community that exists as a counterweight to the negative news reporting. The municipality of Linköping understands that there is negative news coverage, and because they realize this, the municipality have also identified their own shortcomings when reporting on events (Ibid). As a result, there is a need to develop a plan, which is something that the communication staff who are placed at a strategic level is developing (ibid). During this segment of the interview, I found it fascinating that the municipality understands that there is a need to create a marketing strategy for the district to uplift the brand of Skäggetorp. They also suggest that the marketing association plan should act as a balance to bad publicity which is something emphasized by the concept of place branding.

The respondent also explains that the Linköping municipal group have a meeting with all communicators so that they may have various themes, and, in the spring, the topic will be linked to work against segregation, among other things for a knowledge-raising purpose.

“I'll be there to talk about how we collaborate in the municipality, so you can get more out of it. I think this will serve and be utilized as a filter to all communicators in the municipalities for knowledge. Maybe this will be in their mind when developing strategy” (ML1).

One example which the respondent highlights to showcase how the municipality of Linköping communicates is for example that "the children 100% of the children in Skäggetorp made an active school choice, last year. And we try as well to lift these things in the municipality's news channels, among other things" (ML1). This is an example which shows how the municipality through key messaging tries to manifest the brand identity of Skäggetorp.

5.3.2 BORÅS STAD – NORRBY

The municipality of Borås have through their department, CKS conducted a report which I described earlier. The purpose of the report was to get an overall picture of the area and came to terms that it could be deemed as a parallel society. However, the municipality ambition was to remove Norrby from the Police's list of particularly vulnerable areas. The municipality's intentions were criticized in the study, which focused on the Somali target group in Norrby, making those people feel targeted (Wedberg, 2020).

CKS's chief executive, Peder Englund, stated in an interview that one of the biggest challenges in the district is a lack of confidence and trust in the local authorities (Wedberg, 2020). While at the same time acknowledging the risk in that the citizens from Norrby trust in society has been harmed due to releasing their report. He claims that he is more willing to take that chance if it results in addressing the challenges in the residential area (ibid). The report has drawn the ire of not only the Somali community. The municipality's study may exacerbate prejudice and
stigmatization, according to the researcher Moa Bursell in Wedberg (2020). She understands how the Norrbys Somali population is reacting to the municipality study. When asked by Wedberg how Peder encounters this criticism, he said, “It may have been stupid to include an appendix on Somali culture and customs, (Wedberg, 2020)”. 

As I noted before, the objective of this paper was to improve Norrby, but it got a different reception from the local community. According to the concept of place branding, individuals who live in a location should be ambassadors and co-producers in promoting its image (Berglund, 2013, p. 57). However, if the trust between the municipality and its residents has been destroyed, it becomes more difficult to alter the narrative. As Bursell pointed out, this study might lead to stigmatization (Wedberg, 2020). In the interview with Backvall (2019), she explained her understanding of what stigma is and how it is shaped by the ones who are in power.

“The concept of stigma in very simple terms could be defined as a negative stamp. But what I think you do not get very far with is because that definition loses as much as the process that is stigmatization. So, I prefer to see it as a process, a step-by-step event that begins with differentiation and as well as identification of differences between people and between residential areas, and then how to proceed in this process then also begin to evaluate these differences and say that some traits are better and other traits are worse. This is where we begin to get into what then becomes a stigma. When you say that it is not only the case that people are different, and residential areas are different, but it is also the case that some people are better, and some people are worse. It is there that we come into this negative value that is stigmatization, stigmatization of those who are different. The next step will be this division between us and those we like to call this type of categorization. Where it becomes like a group that is the good group and a group that is the bad group, about a little simplified. That's why I'm also talking about power in this context. Because it takes power to be able to make that kind of division and say that there are those who are better, and those who are worse. It is almost impossible to do if everyone is valued equally and not everyone has the same type of influence in society” (AUU).

This goes very much hand in hand with how one group is particularly highlighted in one area. As the municipality who is in power, it is important not to categorize between different groups within a residential area because it might lead to stigmatisation. As noted, before, target efforts could very well be counteracted when description of the neighbourhood has a stigmatising impact which in turn leads to the designated areas being less attractive for the general public but also for those who live in these areas. According to CKS report which stated that the objective and the vision was to remove the area from NOAs list could very well be contradicted due to releasing this report.
It also became quite evident that the interviewees based their knowledge of the neighbourhood on the CKS assessment. As one of the respondents from Borås based her understanding of Norrby:

“That there are difficulties, but there are certain forces in the residential area that want to stop progress and development... that are oppose to some extent the development efforts there and here you usually talk about but yes it is like a parallel society that and is not a part of society and that is probably something that is also a challenge that exists in Norrby that differs if you look at challenges vis-à-vis in other areas” (MB).

Similar to Linköping, the municipality of Borås gathered in recent months its forces to determine how the city should communicate its social sustainability efforts. A respondent emphasizes that Socially Sustainable Borås is a new project, and since August, a communicator has been employed who is responsible for communicating the efforts within the project (MB). Communication is the foundation of the concept place branding. The strategy employed by Borås very much falls in line with Kavaritzis view on place branding (2004). To through the use of marketing, key messaging and PR-work strengthen the communication of ongoing initiatives or campaigns with the aim to improve the public perception.

Another interesting aspect that the respondent observed is the medias effort to mitigate the negative news coverage of Norrby. The respondent states that...

"If you look at the local media over a longer period, you may notice that there have been many negative stories written about the neighbourhood. The media have chosen to highlight these unpleasant occurrences, such as rioting against police and automobile fires. I think this is something that not just we as a city intend to turnaround, but also the local press in Borås, which is our major newspaper in town, who has recently hired a reporter who focuses on writing positives about Hässleholmen and Norrby to raise awareness about it. During the previous six months, I think it was fantastic and positive aspects are shown about Norrby by media” (MB).

She also explains that the relationship between the municipality and Borås Bostäder as the real estate company jointly advocate for a good relationship with the local population in Norrby. She states that “we will use their channels both website and newsletter to reach out with collected information, but it is for housing, so it is not the media image. But yes, I would say to the coordination also adds that we make a move forward towards the more positive” (MB).

This is a fantastic illustration of how the media has an impact on how we perceive communities. At the same time, it is good to see that Borås Tidning has taken responsibility, and this might indicate that the media in Norrby has realized that constant negative reporting is harmful to residents in districts such as Norrby. Likewise, I think it is of interest that this report has even
changed the respondent's view of the district whereby she first had a negative view of the media which has been altered. As she describes good elements are recently highlighted.

Another interesting point that the respondent referred to as part of the municipality of Borås new communication strategy, which has been achieved through close collaboration between communicators and officials within the social sustainability department. According to the interviewee (MB) is that it has helped them with their public image;

"We need to have close contact with each other to figure out what needs to be lifted to residents in the area, and what we see as important is lifting outwards through press releases and media channels” (MB).

However, the implementation of the new routine hasn't taken place in practice yet in the municipality of Borås new communication strategy. The respondent raised that;

"We will work with a coordinator who will take in information about what we see as necessary to get out there and write the texts, which will then be passed along to communicators at Bostäder i Borås so that they post it on their platforms. This way, we can have different roles described as making it work. It's not totally established yet” (MB).

5.3.3 UPPSALA KOMMUN – GOTTUNDA

As mentioned Gottsunda's growth is presently in a period of rapid expansion, during which the municipality has established a planning strategy to take a long-term holistic approach to development in the region. In 2015, a citizen dialogue was begun in the area where the program outcomes have been utilized as the basis for program work completed in 2019. What is fascinating about Gottsunda is that the municipality has recognized there are several urban development concerns that must be addressed such as; more housing, more space for broadened business life, four train tracks to Stockholm, sustainable transport, and taking advantage of nature (Ibid). The Overview Plan from 2016 (Uppsala kommun, 2019), details how this should be done. The municipality wanted to review the conditions for densification that allow more people to live and work in the area (Uppsala kommun, 2019).

This was highlighted by a participant from the municipality of Gottsunda who was questioned about the present condition in residential area.

“Gottsunda is in an excellent location in the city, and it is near to the water as well. Despite its location outside of the city, Gottsunda will be known as a city node, as well as the heart of southern Uppsala's expansive phase, and it is also planned that a railway track will run through it. In Gottsunda, in the future, the municipality want to develop a new school and thousands of new houses. In that way, Gottsunda is an expansive district in the municipality planning strategy” (MU).
This could be a wonderful method to rejuvenate the area by transforming it into a node. A means of supplementing, as in this instance Gottsunda could be through symbolic buildings. Which is in line with the reasoning of Griffiths (1998) and Ashworth (2009) to interlink place branding with promotion of a district’s ongoing developments.

The interviewee from Uppsala municipality states that the municipality has a... “strong political will to work long-term with the entire city, as well as being a great city. All districts should be pleasant places to live in; the municipality puts a lot of effort into improving, but it is also crucial, and I believe it's critical to acknowledge that Gottsunda will be the core of the Southern Uppsala region, which is a huge development with lots of infrastructure and housing possibilities. There are significant processes that the municipal government wants to establish and which they also believe in” (MU).

However, according to the respondent from the municipality they note that they have collaborated with a researcher specializing in stigma, in order to develop their communication strategy. This demonstrates the importance of working with communication. At the same time, it indicates that the municipality have learned by collaborating with an acknowledged expert in the field of stigma that miscommunication leads to stigmatization. The respondent states that;

"We'd want to talk about nice things that are happening in Gottsunda, and I believe that with the assistance of the researcher, we have grown a little more aware also of how we should communicate the efforts we do in Gottsunda” (MU).

The respondent also says that through the collaboration with the researcher it has also given the municipality an understanding that it might not be a good idea to communicate about initiatives that focus on area development, as it might not help to nuance the negative image, but it can also strengthen the negative image (MU). Another way to do that might be “communicating Gottsunda’s values instead which is not compensation of something, instead we let the stories take up more space” (MU). Which correlates with how the concept of place branding emphasises the importance of marketing the attributes of a place.

Boverket claims that it is critical for renewal efforts to be advertised externally in order to generate good news about communities that have challenges (Boverket, 2010, p. 58). When asked whether Gottsunda municipality promotes the brand Gottsunda, the Uppsala interviewee responded that;

“On your question, if we market the brand Gottsunda, we need to market Gottsunda because if this railway would to come in handy and if builders are to build in Gottsunda, we also need to show what values Gottsunda has. Because it is not only the municipality that builds all homes but also it would come from the contributions of the private actors as well in the development of Gottsunda” (MU).
5.3.4 **KEY POINTS**

1. The municipalities believe they have an obligation and are accountable for the development of the residential area. There are no clear strategies in how to market the residential areas. Some municipalities have previously had difficulty with communication, which has damaged trust in the local population. At the same time, it also shows that without a clear understanding and strategy in how to communicate municipalities can stigmatize residential areas through their communication.

2. The municipalities have recently comprehended the importance of communication. Some municipalities have drawn up plans and strategies in how to communicate the residential areas to the general population. Some have brought in external actors to support them in developing a strategy in how to communicate and market.

3. As for the branding of the residential area, one municipality believes that working with the physical environment will reinvent the image of a residential area. Simply put, much of the efforts taken by the municipalities are very much based on a defensive approach, where the efforts are more about not stigmatizing the residential area.
5.4 **REAL-ESTATE COMPANIES**

5.4.1 **BOSTÄDER I BORÅS – NORRBY**

The real estate company AB Bostäder in Borås, has invested significantly in terms of social sustainability in the Norrby residential area. Over 30 persons were employed on the project Socially Sustainable Borås. Furthermore, based on project Socially Sustainable Borås', the real estate company has engaged an area developer to improve its social work efforts (Fastighetstidningen, 2022). However, a few years ago Bostäder in Borås had an area office. One respondent from Bostäder in Borås stated that;

“For various reasons, the company opted to shut down the site before I joined the firm in favour of centralizing the offices. I believe that hasn’t benefited Norrbys since. We've allowed the forces within Norrby to shut down the district and if you have no cause to visit a residential area you won't (RB)”. However, in present time the real estate company has invested considerably more in the area and tries to be present and available (Ibid).

In terms of communication, the Bostäder i Borås interviewee explains that they have begun to utilize it more actively. However, this also implies that Bostäder i Borås has previously had challenges with its target audience and is now recognizing the need to improve their relationship. As noted, before urban planners have struggled to include various stakeholders in community planning (Berglund, 2013, p. 67). This has often depended on the communication approach used. According to the researchers, communication, and engagement with the community, have a significant impact on how appealing places become (Ibid). An approached used by Bostäder i Borås to establish a relationship with its renters is for example by delivering newsletters to residents. In addition, Bostäder i Borås has collaborated with Sweden's Allmännytta which their trade association in a project.

“We have done a pilot project where we utilized Facebook to deliver targeted ads around a survey on what language our renters want their information presented in to understand better. This will give us a better understanding when it comes to what our renters want. I believe in the idea that we'll have newsletters in various languages, but we haven't done so to a significant degree previously” (RB).

The aim of this initiative, in large part, is to increase residents' self-esteem and foster the area's sense of identity. However, this suggests that Bostäder i Borås has not previously understood its target audience and must now prioritize the importance of increasing people's confidence. At the same time, Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2008) criticize how planners have struggled to include various groups in community planning due to their communication strategy. It is critical if the aim is to be able to increase the desirability of places that there are developed a direct or indirect communication with citizens.
Furthermore, the interviewee believes that communication is essential for connecting with renters. She claims that; “What we do is, we work with the written language, but we also have our graphic designer on site who is fantastic at illustrations, and it's a method we use as well. However, we must speak to individuals for us to get any assistance from our residents for information purposes. We also need to have a lot of stairwell dialogues and there it is usually not us who carry them out in our department, but we provide material to our development leaders or project managers who carries out this task. We devote more time to ensure that we highlight these things we do right now in Norrby, and then release a press release and handle the media in such a manner that we believe is satisfying for the residential area” (RB). I found this intriguing that real estate company understand the importance to communicate positive aspects of Norrby but also to interact and create good relationship with the residents.

Unlike traditional media platforms, AB Bostäder in Borås frequently leverages its social media channels. She claims that the real estate firm employs a comprehensive approach to its social media, establishing distinct groups to promote positive images of Norrby. According to the concept of place branding communicating through different media avenues is highly recommended to reach out to different audiences when marketing places (Berglund, 2013, p. 71). The respondent claims that by making these efforts, the real estate firm may transform Norrby as a brand. However, she understands that this is a long-term endeavour and requires a solid plan.

In this case of Bostäder in Borås, I interviewed the person in charge of communication in real estate company who had a great deal of understanding of how vital the area's media image is. I found it interesting how the real estate company have decided to interact with the media to establish a good relationship to create positive image of the residential area. As the interviewee from the municipality of Borås the respondent highlights the importance that the Borås Tidning have taken ownership in creating positive image of Norrby. She adds, that Borås Bostäder are trying to change the negative narrative.

"I work very closely with journalists; I always try to find ways to invite and give a little extra. It can be anything from that we can show a new production house before someone else gets to see how it is, and it becomes a bit like a strategy. Borås Tidning has just also hired a local reporter who will only work towards Norrby and Hässleholmen / Hulta which we have as particularly vulnerable areas and there we also have had a good relationship since before. For we have worked together before, so we have a relationship” (RB).

In this case, I think that their relations aim to encourage journalists in writing good news stories about Norrby and boosting the district's brand. At the same time, the respondent consents that it is critical for change to occur. She suggests that to be successful, the real estate company may need to alter fundamental elements of the community to make this shift a reality.
“It's all about the fact that you need to press down the image of what you don’t want to demonstrate, to get from one state to another state. Because we must constantly show that we’re doing this because we care. It is of importance to understand that a transfer of a brand is not possible all the time. People must be exposed to it and convinced that it's genuine before anything changes. And it's only when you do both of those things and become ambassadors that change happens. But then we can't also have people who sell drugs or little boys who are used to be accomplices for these criminal networks. But they need to be in schools so there are so many things it becomes so complex. We can construct bigger flats, but we may not have people who could afford to pay the rent that would be required” (RB).

Bostäder i Borås, like the other real estate companies, states that it is attempting to alter Norrby's reputation and wants to get locals involved in creating the residential image. At the same time, Bostäder i Borås has a point that there are difficulties such as criminality and socioeconomic vulnerable population which creates some sort of frustration in their attempt to develop the residential area. Another aspect which was highlighted during the interview with the respondent from Bostäder in Borås, was the attempt to use the branding of Norrby in relation to cultural attractiveness. She explained that the company have invested in branding Norrby in collaboration with other actors. The interviewee states that;

“We have a lot of street art in Borås, as well as moral paintings and other things like that, and we organized the NO-limit festival which was previously only in the city centre. We were asked whether we could line up with our properties in Norrby, so we did that. There were international artists who painted the facade with huge cool moral paintings for two weeks, after which they organized trips around the area, providing a unique perspective in Norrby to those who only read about the residential area in the news or the local newspaper” (RB).

When asked if this was a good experience, the interviewee reported that it was...

“very positive since it's a really big painting, after all. It's world-class paintings and the inhabited in Norrby were the ones who guided the trips. We also had guided tours in different languages so that the visitors could absorb the information in a good way. Norrby is a beautiful district in some parts, and it's obvious that not all homes are fantastic or lovely. Because there are so many Million program housing. However, the district has a lot of greenery” (RB).

This really demonstrates the power of the concept of place branding can have. The campaign and initiative demonstrated by Bostäder i Borås indicates that people who had preconceptions about a certain residential area have gotten a new perspective on it and its residents. What I also found interesting was my follow-up question of whether this had a positive effect in the area, and the responded told me that it did. This is an excellent illustration of how art, culture and marketing may change a residential area's reputation, especially a residential area which is stigmatized.
I would also like to highlight that this example also shows how housing companies in conjunction with residents could create the identity of the place. As she stated, that since they are a real estate firm, they cannot solely focus on enhancing the Norrby brand. She thinks that to move forward, they need to collaborate with present actors (RB). This is something else I referred to in terms of the need for many strong actors, such as private-, municipal- and political, to work together to improve a place's identity. Berglund points out that when these actors come together, they can concentrate on generating growth and attractiveness (Berglund, 2013, p. 24).

Most of the challenges reported by the Bostäder i Borås which they wish to overcome, are due to their property portfolio which the respondent considers is worn out (RB). Similarly, the real estate firm believes that how their properties are constructed causes insecurity. When asked if they have any intentions of rebuilding or renovating their properties, the respondent highlights that Bostäder in Borås has a maintenance plan in place, which implies that the real estate firm may demolish part of its property portfolio (RB).

5.3.2 VIKTORIAHEM – SKÄGGETORP

Similar to the case of Gottsunda, the residential area of Skäggetorp, there are plans in place to construct the district alongside the rest of Linköping to mitigate the physical barriers (Linköping kommun, 2021). The municipality feels that to fulfil the planning program, it must produce detailed plans in collaboration with real estate companies interested in developing new properties in Skäggetorp (ibid). Viktoria Park, which now goes by the name of Viktoriahem is a real-estate company and a significant actor in development of Skäggetorp and have already built tiny apartments from its property portfolio in the last year (ibid). Furthermore, in 2022, a more comprehensive design will be implemented which will empower Viktoriahem significantly and expand their size of property pool with approximately 250 new apartments (Linköping kommun, 2021).

As in both Gottsunda and Norrby the challenges are similar in Skäggetorp regarding people who haven’t been in the area stigmatising it. The area manager for Viktoriahem in Skäggetorp states that the district has an undeserved negative reputation. He understands, nevertheless, that Skäggetorp has socioeconomic challenges (RL). To describe his understanding of the area, the interviewee explained that:

“You constantly must defend your decision to work or reside there against individuals who haven't even set foot in the residential area. They have so many preconceived ideas that it's infuriating how they have the audacity to tell you what they believe by those who have never been there and had no prior knowledge of the residential area. It's obvious that this understanding is maximised when there are shootings and riots which break out. But it is still just a tiny number of people who are the harmful element; but most of them are fantastic” (RL).
As stated, before in 4.1.2 regarding the Happiness Paradox, the respondent in (RL) also finds that people who get better off based on socioeconomic parameters tend to move from the area, and people who have socio-economic challenges move in. This indicates that the real estate company has failed in many ways to attract resourceful groups to the area. The respondent also acknowledged stigmatization stems from that Skäggetorp has been a district in which people who have faced socio-economic difficulties, have resided in the area throughout the years. The respondent believes that this has resulted in a harmful environment (RL). He also feels that the media has a significant impact on how people perceive the area. He claims that when "a little occurrence becomes a half-page in the press, it attracts the trolls on social media, and it begins to spin" (RL).

But how could this be mitigated? The answer could very well be found in the concept of place branding as it suggests that it is of importance to mitigate negative images through marketing the positives. Regarding the marketing the positives in Skäggetorp to other residents, the interviewee says that;

“When they are seeking for an apartment, we usually tell them that they will be living in a residential area close to everything: you'll be near to town, to Tornby, and to the small centre where most of your amenities are. You'll have access to nature right next door. There is a lot of everything; it's quite thorough. Close to excellent public transportation. It's one thing; it's a complete district. We try to explain the advantages of living so close” (RL).

This is an excellent example of how a real estate firm uses place branding in its marketing to promote the area's assets. The property firms (Viktoriahem, Stångåstaden, Willhem, and Lejonfastigheter) in the residential area had a strong motivation to move Skäggetorp in a positive direction. It led to the property owners in Skäggetorp establish a so-called real estate association to work on socioeconomical variables. The respondent state that;

“We don't work based on any pre-conceptions, it also means that we can talk a little with each other, and you can talk a little about security and this type of development, lighting and waste management, everything that helps our area but also in the whole district” (RL).

This is a great case to illustrate what is also highlighted in the research literature on place branding that cooperation between multiple actors spanning administrative boundaries is critical for establishing positive place identities. Berglund emphasizes how collaboration is utilized by small municipalities to compete with larger municipalities, as small municipalities do not have the same resources to compete with larger cities and regions (Berglund, 2013, p. 56). Similar thoughts may be drawn; housing areas are smaller, and housing companies in undesirable housing areas need to cooperate to make areas appealing if they want to compete with other residential areas to attract people with high socioeconomic status.

As for the area development, the interviewee indicates that Viktoriahem does a lot of development in the area. The responder claims that we completely renovate the apartment and create a completely new standard whenever someone leaves (RL). This implies that it improves
the quality while also ensuring that the property firm understands that there will be greater rental rates. According to Viktoriahem, this is a method to improve the residential area because apartment renovation raises both the level of displacement and demands on who will move in but also on neighbours in the neighbourhood. The respondent claims that;

“We emphasize to market this type of upgrade and improvement during our renovations. But we cannot market only that which has be done within the apartments. We take a holistic approach such as developing and marketing the outdoor environment, playgrounds, stairwells, and basement. We try lift the whole district which is a process” (RL).

Viktoriahem have a taken a holistic approach by working with the physical environment, which leads to individuals with a stronger socio-economic standard moving into the area. This is also something I described earlier those industrial cities have rekindled their brand through renewing the area's qualities so that they can profile themselves as being in a process, change and dynamic city in order to attract skilled people and investments (Berglund, 2013, p. 46).

5.4.3 UPPSALAHEM – GOTTSUNDA

As mentioned before, Gottsunda is in the midst of a large growth period, with the municipal board approving a planning program for the area in April 2019. The planning program for the district, according to the municipal board, will contain at least 5,000 new homes as well as a railway that it is hoped will create jobs in the residential area. The municipality of Uppsala also wants to develop several new parks and city streets in the area. As for the Gottsunda downtown area, the municipality also aims to transform it into a city node for the southside of Uppsala (Uppsala kommun, 2019). In an interview with Upssalahem, the respondent explains that “the municipality has wanted to expand it. more but there has been no demand (RU).”

Regarding the fact that there is no incitement in Gottsunda to invest in the district is something that can be attributed to the researchers Falkeby and Westholm (2008) who describe that place branding is one of several tasks that municipalities are responsible for. It means the municipality’s responsibility to attract investors to Gottsunda. Falkeby and Westholm, on the other hand, have stated that this is difficult because it puts significant demands on municipalities, and marketing places is expensive. Similarly, the researchers also confirm that municipalities lack knowledge in how to brand places (Falkeby, et al. 2008, pp. 66-67).

However, this becomes difficult when the respondent illustrates the property stock consist of…"tall houses, which on the one hand are quite okay for the brick but on the other hand look incredibly worn and shabby, which makes you think that you pass a war zone almost if you go past there. That pulls the area down, of course, how and what one thinks about Gottsunda” (RU). Marketing a residential area with worn property portfolio will be difficult as has enormous effects and reduces the area image. At the same time, Gottsunda finds itself in limbo as it has plans to be able to renew the area and attract investors.
Another aspect which I found interesting is that Uppsalahem does not promote its properties in the area. The responder notes in the interview that "Because there are 17,000 apartments in all of Uppsala, in all different locations, you do not generally market them; however, it is about perhaps sometimes crisis management” (RU).

According to the interviewee (RU) also highlighted that because of the stigma that is attached to Gottsunda have resulted the residents in the neighbourhood do not feel proud to live there. While the public perception of Gottsunda area is that it is not well-visited, which is compounded by the fact that most inhabitants who have a negative view are also the ones who don’t live there. In response to this belief, the respondent believes that it is critical for more people who do not live in Gottsunda to wish to visit the district.

"You don't see anybody come there and the inhabitants from Gottsunda don’t go out from the district. The different populations never meet each other. Gottsunda is located around eight kilometres away, which has resulted in many people living in Gottsunda feeling as though they are in their own little world” (RU). Furthermore, she claims that if she is working in Gottsunda people tend to assume that the… “residents just shoot at each other. This is like a media-based truth” (RU).

One approach that the respondent believes will hopefully change the image they have of Gottsunda is the new rail line. The respondent believes that it will probably be a positive injection in changing the negative view of the district as more people will visit Gottsunda. Another strategy that the respondent indicates and believes in is;

“My definite opinion is that you should take more events, so we have in Uppsala municipality to Gottsunda. For example, the celebration of the national day you could do in Gottsunda instead of the city park in Uppsala, so it would be great to be able to talk about things like the country you live in and what we have to offer here. Another event which should be brought to Gottsunda is the November lights whereby different artists showcase their art and the lights are exhibited. We have several events who are strong and already have a large audience. These events could bring more people to Gottsunda” (RU).

When I then inquired if this is something that happens today, the responded replied, "No. This is what gets boring since you'll never get there if you don't go to Gottsunda centre or know anyone there, so there's no exchange" (RU).

This is something that, on the other hand, should be looked at in Gottsunda and try to find a solution. Boverket (2010) explains that creating events, such as markets and music festivals, is one way to improve the area's status among other residents. Boverket also emphasizes that events should primarily focus on attracting a larger number of audiences to visit the residential area. Berglund adds that events are a powerful form of place marketing which at the same time is beneficial for reshaping a locations brand. (Berglund, 2013, p. 49)
The respondent believes that the school in Gottsunda is an important element to attract more people to the area, and it is important that it regains its position, but was unfortunately burned down in 2018 (Hansson, et.al. 2018; RU).

“Many people from the socio-economically better areas around Gottsunda put their children in that school because it was very good. It is also very important for an area if you want to get more people to want to move there, as well as having a good school on site” (RU).

When it comes to deciding where people should live, Berglund has discovered that prior generations picked a location where there was work (Berglund, 2013, p. 37). This view, however, has altered significantly because individuals now choose their locations based on the quality of life in the area. As a result, it is critical for the municipality to invest in rebuilding Gottsunda School to its former glory because it contributes to the area's image and quality of life. At the same time, the school enables more children and young people with different socioeconomic conditions to have a different perspective on the residential area, which is beneficial. I would also like to point out whether more homes are to be built in the area, which I have anointed to before, then the school is an important piece of the puzzle in attracting more investors in the area to build new properties.

On the one hand, the Police in Uppsala had a different perspective, illustrating how negative public opinion and stigma can have an impact on the municipal institutions. He states that;

“Gottsunda school is next door to the Gottsunda centre, and there is a certain culture of silence. It's still one of Sweden's top schools for being in a particularly vulnerable residential area, where students achieve excellent results. But the school are terrified of their reputation” (PU). He further notes that; “Today, you must pick a school based on the needs of your children. If you believe that their current school is placed in a terrible residential area and will expose them to crime on the route to and back from school as a parent, you think twice before sending them there. This in turn affects the schools as, the school doesn't want to report crimes in the same manner as other schools, and they are afraid of developing a poor reputation for it” (PU)
5.4.4 KEY POINTS

1. All real estate companies believe that the challenge of stigmatization stems from the fact the people who do not live in the housing area and do not visit the neighbourhoods. An effective way to counteract this challenge is through events, preferably events that draw a large audience, which is considered a fantastic tool to get more people to meet. Other key insights based on the material collected are that the real estate companies want to brand the residential area through, for example, culture, the outdoor environment, building new apartments and indoor renovations.

2. In the residential areas where there are plans to develop the residential area, the municipalities want real estate companies to be attracted to the site and build. However, there are indications that real estate companies do not want to invest in the residential areas which indicates that the residential areas' bad reputation, socio-economic challenges and crime lead to the residential area having difficulty attracting real estate companies. There is a great need to build the residential areas' physical attraction according to the interviewees to enhance the brand of the areas. At the same time, the housing companies believe that they have direct contact with individuals living in the area, which also leads to co-creation. And if there are several housing companies in the area, it has been used through collaboration to coordinate efforts to raise the housing area's brand.
6. CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was twofold as it aimed to;

I) Collect knowledge of how municipalities, real estate companies and police attempts to improve or might be part of producing the stigmatisation towards residential areas with socio-economic difficulties.

II) To examine the possibility of changing the narrative in stigmatised residential areas through the theory of place branding.

Three residential areas were used as unique cases for this study. Namely Norrby in Borås, Skäggetorp in Linköping and Gottsunda in Uppsala. All three residential areas are characterized as stigmatized and labelled as vulnerable areas according to NOA’s classification of socio-economically vulnerable residential areas. To respond to the research questions formulated in this thesis a representation of real estate companies, municipalities and the Swedish Police were interviewed.

The purpose of these interviews was to collect accounts from the above-mentioned stakeholders on:

1. How do municipalities, real estate companies and police attempt to change the narrative of residential areas with socio-economic challenges?
2. How can narratives about stigmatised residential areas be understood from a place branding perspective?

The key findings from this study and how it contributes to the current knowledge of socio-economic vulnerable areas in Sweden and the efforts made to change public perception through the use of place branding.

How do municipalities, real estate companies and police attempt to change the narrative of residential areas with socio-economic challenges?

All respondents stated that the residential areas were entangled with a negative reputation due to the insignia designated by NOAs classification as a particularly vulnerable residential area. However, virtually all of them stated that there is an unjustified poor reputation in each neighbourhood and that there are numerous efforts currently in place in order to improve it. To which extent these efforts had a direct impact on changing public perception or not is ambiguous, when reviewing current research in the context of Sweden.

At first, it became relatively clear that some actors are ahead of other actors in branding their residential areas. I believe it is vital to emphasize that actors are driven by various motives and objectives, which must be considered. The findings of this study go in line with previous research by confirming that households with limited resources have
less choice in where they choose to reside. This implies that people who are facing socio-economic difficulties get an underserved poor reputation, which in turn has an impact on the entire neighbourhood, which may be seen by the fact that Sweden's Research Council has witnessed housing segregation also shift to school segregation. (Vetenskapsrådet, 2018, p. 32).

It became obvious that the Swedish Police is a contributing factor to the stigmatization of residential areas, it became clear that it is critical for the police that neighbourhoods remain classified regardless of whether it leads to stigma to ensure and receive additional resources. At the same time, there are signs of interest to enhance the image of these places by interacting with and utilizing communicators. The Swedish Police seem to base on the relatively small sample of respondents indicate that the organisation is well-aware of the risk of stigmatization arising from their classification. However, all respondents representing the Swedish Police was invested in changing the public perception of the residential areas in which they work. The findings of this study indicate that the Swedish Police while have a vested interest, are challenged by constraints in their ability to contribute to bringing about this desired outcome. One reason is explained by their need to address societal issues in the residential areas, an effort which requires drawing attention to the situation of these residential areas. The classification serves the purpose of attracting necessary funds and investments in curbing the effect of socio-economic vulnerability. Due to this motivation, as an effect the Swedish Police can be explained to either consciously or unconsciously employ a brand architecture which counters the brand identity.

Although the interviewees had access to and utilized the police social media channels, they did not have clear methods and strategies. The contesting interests between increased resources for the police and the effect of classification on the increased stigmatizations can through this study explain the Police role in further stigmatizing the residential areas. This is in line with previous studies that show efforts to address and mitigate present challenges also lead to residential areas being labelled as problem areas. Some researchers have gone so far as to claim that these efforts cause more issues than they should solve. (Sarnecki et al. 2017, p. 5).

Unlike the police authority, the municipalities have created strategies for brand development in residential areas. Within the framework of this study, it can also be concluded that two out of three municipalities have developed plans for the development of residential areas, such as comprehensive plans that specify how they want to reinvent the residential areas for example by making them into nodes, improvements in the external and internal environment, and building residences. These plans can be described as part of building the brand of the residential areas in the municipalities in line with the definition of Berglund (2013) who defines place branding as "strategies and measures for conveying specific images of a place”. The strategies developed by the municipalities can furthermore be identified as part of the brand architecture in line with the concept of brand architecture as described in the
Theoretical framework of this study (Dinnie, 2008; Kapferer, 1997). The action plans were used as guiding tools to provide guidance for how the municipalities could work with changing the brand image of the residential areas.

The residential companies in the case of Borås, was noted for working with publicizing positive news through influencing media coverage. Bostäder I Borås could reference their close relationship with the local newspaper and leverage the use of sharing information on new housing projects in Norrby. Another way of improving the public image of the neighbourhood was leveraging the company’s own social media platforms, dissemination of newspapers and similar. The aim of this was explained as controlling the narrative and through creating a brand identity change the image and associations with the residential areas brand. While these efforts are commendable in reshaping the brand image, they may not be sufficient with innovative marketing campaigns. In the case of Uppsalaem and Gottsunda, the physical environment limits the company’s ability to market it properly. This study can therefore conclude that the place branding of socio-economically vulnerable areas require further research into how the physical environment may affect public image. Furthermore, through the lens of place branding future research should have a particular focus on examining the importance of changing physical environment for reshaping brand images. The finding of this study indicates that the initiatives in terms of communication may come short if the physical environment remains an obstacle for real estate companies. The theories covered in this thesis does not cover this aspect and future research may contribute to bridging the current knowledge gap.

There are several indications in the material that the municipalities feel a bond when it comes to raising these residential areas. At the same time, it is also evident that the efforts conducted before had previously stigmatized the residential area.

As for the real estate companies, it shows that they have come the furthest in terms of area development and the building of the brand for their respective residential areas. There are many indications that there is a direct financial impact on real estate companies that they are affected directly financially by poor reputation. In terms of area development and the construction of a residential neighbourhood, real estate firms have made the greatest progress. At the same time, this study has found that real estate companies have a more personal connection with residents in their communities in comparison with municipal employees and the police. There are several initiatives taken by the real estate companies which, according to the respondents have shown to be successful. On the other hand, the real estate companies believe that to improve the reputation of their residential areas, they need to do so in collaboration with the municipality. An explanation to this can be linked to the economic incentives which are linked to the investments made by the real estate companies. Increasing the attractiveness of their residential areas, may in this regard increase the number of new tenants in the neighbourhood.
Lastly, the study covered three real estate companies among two of them were owned by the municipality, which may have affected the results for this study. The real estate companies and their ability to invest in projects to upgrade the status of the residential areas may have had an effect on their ability to invest in changing the public image of the residential areas. For future research the sampling should consider expanding the number of respondents from private real estate companies.

**How can narratives about stigmatised residential areas be understood from a place branding perspective?**

The concept of place branding has previously been explained through five core concepts in this study—*brand image, positioning and equity, brand architecture, brand identity and brand orientation*. This study has found that stigmatization has a direct effect on the brand image of the place, which in our case are the socio-economically vulnerable residential areas.

To which extent the employment of place branding strategies is helpful in reshaping the public image of socio-economically vulnerable areas are according to research debatable. As highlighted previously the concept of *place branding* has been criticized, researchers have emphasized that the concept is mainly used by groups that are already doing well. Researchers also believe that *place branding* is used to conceal problems and focus on showcasing the positive rather than the difficulties that exist, and that wealthy groups and individuals with power are the ones who define the places (Berglund, 2013). In essence controlling the narrative may undermine the severity of already existing problems in society.

As for the criticism that has been raised, the findings of this study suggest that place branding may have an effect on the effect of stigmatization. Place branding strategies seem to be occurring among the interviewed stakeholders as a tool to fight stigmatization. Prior to outlining this I will briefly argue why these place branding strategies matters in the first case. Firstly, since these residential areas do have major socio-economic challenges. Secondly, when it comes to hiding the negative, the arguments raised through the interviews show that these residential areas need just that, as they suffer from stigma and that the attention showcased by the media highlights most of their events based on the negative. As a result, these residential areas, in particular, need to be protected to a certain extent, which could be achieved by counteracting and focusing on raising the positive together with residents.

But how can narratives about stigmatised residential areas be understood from a place branding perspective? This study can point to that *place branding* is a concept that is currently utilized to some extent. Creation of brand identities through key messaging exists in all three residential areas. The creation of brand identities is often linked to increasing the attractiveness of the residential areas through communicating attributes
such as closeness to nature, a residential areas closeness to the city centre or for its richness in diversity. The creation of brand identities is manifested through initiatives made by the municipalities and the real estate companies. Although these unique brand positionings can be found in the interviews with the representatives from the municipality and real estate companies, in all three residential areas the stakeholders who have been interviewed actively market the residential areas as attractive choices for residents. However, the public image is quite different from the brand identity. This study can confirm that as for the case of the socio-economically vulnerable areas Norrby, Skäggetorp and Gottsunda the brand image is negative. Nonetheless, it is difficult to assess whether the place branding initiatives which have been highlighted are fruitless or to which extent they have an effect. As noted by one respondent from Bostäder i Borås, she highlights that this is a long-term endeavour. With a view into the limitations of this study’s design in only using accounts from real estate companies, representatives from the police and municipality. To better respond to the question of how narratives of stigmatized residential areas can be understood from a place branding perspective, it should take into account the effects of these initiatives. Recommendations for future research should have a more analytical study design and conduct a post-initiative evaluation to understand the effects of place branding.

The conclusion from this study is that place branding initiatives do exist in the context of reshaping the brand image of the residential areas used as cases for this study. The actors interviewed for this study use the core concepts of brand identity creation, positioning and brand architecture to some extent. The findings of this study could not determine whether brand orientation was ever employed by the actors themselves. Neither the municipalities, real estate companies or Police could confirm whether they in accordance with Kavaratzis et al (2015). To which extent the actors themselves encapsulate the brand they communicate was never found as a result for this study. The core concept may be difficult to apply to the chosen respondents since they are to some extent detached from the brands they are creating. By this statement my reference is to the fact that the staff members of these organisations may not live and be directly affected by living in these residential areas.

On one hand, the concept of place branding also exposes current flaws in actors in their attempt to enhance the brand of residential areas, which they wish to improve. In several interviews, the actors suggest they wanted to apply key insights that highlighted the concept, such as by promoting the area's brand through events or creating an attractive physical environment. At the same time, this study also highlights that many actors who are currently working to improve the area's brand lack knowledge of how to proceed, but that there is a will to be able to do so. On the other hand, I would like to emphasize that I do not suggest that promoting a local brand only will extinguish underlying problems in the residential areas, such as crime or socio-economic challenges. However, as previously stated, the concept has aided cities with a stigmatized and negative reputation; this should not be ignored when attempting to help residential areas with comparable issues.
The solution that I would like to share is that there is a greater need to establish a collaboration between actors to *co-place brand* the residential areas to improve their reputation. The cases reviewed in this study point to the direction that the Swedish Police is somewhat disconnected from these initiatives. Berglund (2013) argues that that effective *place branding* stems from when there are multiple actors who collaborate to improve a brand of a place. While at the same time researchers have found that to achieve this there is a need to have an organizational capacity to execute effective branding of a place (Van de Berg & Braun, 1999). In this study, I have presented that there are several residential areas whereby the property owner and municipality join forces to boost reputations in their communities. At the same time, there are signs that indicate that law enforcement, which is a key actor and has a significant influence on the areas image, is not addressed to the same extent. Hence, I argue that the concept of *place branding* can be applied and extended to some type of *co-place branding* to get more actors to change the undeserved reputation of the area. Co-place branding could in this regard not only address the primary issue of reshaping the public image and minimize stigmatization. I argue that co-place branding should be explored to which extent it may a useful tool to strategically strengthen self-esteem and sense of pride among residents in these residential areas. When place branding is employed efficiently with local ownership in mind as suggested by Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2008) it can be a critical factor for creating long-term attractiveness of residential areas.

Lastly, I would conclude with stating that all actors cited during interviews and in their governing documents put emphasis on their desire to improve the areas reputation. The aim and goal for these areas are mutual, however, there is a need for a joint venture between multiple actors in order to achieve the desired success.
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APPENDIX 1 – INTERVIEW GUIDE

The current situation

1. How do you perceive the current situation in Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda?

2. How does Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda stand out compared to other districts in Borås / Linköping / Uppsala?

Stigmatization & Media image

3. Would you describe Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda as stigmatized?
   a. If so, what do you think contributed to it?

4. How does Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda stand out in the media sphere compared to other districts in Borås / Linköping / Uppsala?

5. What is the main reason for that?

6. What are the main factors that the police look at in order for an area to be considered a vulnerable, risky or particularly vulnerable area?

7. What factors are you looking at so that Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda is not considered a particularly vulnerable area?

8. Can you describe what the work looks like with designating an area as a particularly vulnerable one?

9. Are there factors in how Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda is physically designed that affect the media image?

10. Which property owners are most important in this?

11. How do you market Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda?
   a. New tenants
   b. Other residents

12. How do you market Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda?

13. What strategies have you adopted?

14. If not; Are there plans for that in the future?

Measures If the respondent answers that there is a negative media and general image of the area.
15. How do you and your organization work to change the negative media / public image in Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda today?

16. What are the main challenges in breaking the stigma in Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda?

17. What measures do you think are appropriate? (Social and physical)

18. What positive values do you think are valuable to build on in Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda?

19. Which actors do you think should be involved in changing the media image of Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda?

20. Is there a collaboration today to change the media image of Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda?

21. And if - in what way are you involved in this?

22. Which possible roles and / or actors lack representation or influence in breaking stigma in the district?

23. Is there anything in your role that makes it difficult to change the picture in Norrby / Skäggetorp / Gottsunda?