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Let the right ones in?

Employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement

DANIELLA PETERSEN

Department of Technology Management and Economics

CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract

Sweden faces problems with social exclusion and unemployment, where Swedish cities are becoming increasingly segregated, where many neighbourhoods, often built during the 1960s and 1970s, are dilapidated and in need of refurbishment. At the same time, the construction sector is facing a lack of construction workers, which hinders the large upcoming building investments planned in Sweden. In order to mitigate these issues, employment requirements – meaning procurement criteria aimed at creating employment opportunities for unemployed people – are increasingly implemented in Swedish construction procurement. Employment requirements come with an experimentation with work practices and organisational complexities, in terms of new ways of thinking, working, and collaborating. In response, this thesis aims to examine organisational implications for the construction sector, its organisations, and its individual actors, when employment requirements are increasingly implemented.

This thesis builds on a qualitative research design, where institutional theory, and in particular the practice-oriented theoretical lens of institutional work, is used. Considering the phenomenon's novelty in practice and scarcity in research the findings in this thesis are important for both theory and practice. Firstly, a new type of actor is emerging, the "employment requirement professional", who work with designing, implementing and spreading employment requirements and related practices. These employment requirement professionals can be characterized as institutional entrepreneurs, but currently do not enact a coherent, distinct professional role. Secondly, a wide variety of new work practices are created, which aim to support an up-and-coming institutional domain of social procurement and employment requirements. However, different approaches to implement employment requirements have not yet converged into one shared practice. Lastly, the implementation of employment requirements has spurred new ways of thinking in the construction sector, concerning what responsibilities, roles and values should be included in construction procurement, which seems to lead to ambiguity for actors working in the construction sector. As such, even though employment requirements are becoming increasingly prominent in the Swedish construction sector, there are barriers, both practical, theoretical and value-laden, that hinder the implementation, and subsequent institutionalization, of employment requirements. Having said that, when actors in the construction sector reshape exiting roles and traditional logics in the industry, for example, by using narratives, employment requirements, and social procurement, may be a full-fledged institution in the future.

Keywords: construction sector, employment requirements, institutional work, social procurement.

List of appended papers

Paper 1: Employment Requirements in Swedish Construction Procurement: Institutional Perspectives

Petersen, D. and Kadefors, A. (2018)
Accepted for publication

This paper was written by Daniella Petersen and Anna Kadefors. Petersen conducted the data collection for the paper, and conducted most of the writing. Kadefors contributed by jointly designing and editing the paper with Petersen.

The first version of this paper was a peer-reviewed and published conference paper: Petersen, D. and Kadefors, A. (2016) Social Procurement and Employment Requirements in Construction. *In*: P W Chan and C J Neilson (Eds.) *Proceedings of the 32nd Annual ARCOM Conference,* 5–7 September 2016, Manchester, UK, Association of Researchers in Construction Management, Vol. 2, 1045–1054.

The paper was invited to be developed for a special issue on value for money in housing in the *Journal of Facilities Management.* The developed paper was accepted in February 2017, and is planned for publication in Q3 2018: Petersen, D. and Kadefors, A. (2018) Employment Requirements in Swedish Construction Procurement: Institutional Perspectives. *Journal of Facilities Management*, 16 (3). DOI: 10.1108/JFM-09-2016-0038.

Paper 2: Populating the Social Realm: Professional Roles Arising from Employment Requirements in Procurement

Petersen, D. and Gluch, P. (2017)
Under review for possible publication in Construction Management and Economics

This paper was written by Daniella Petersen and Pernilla Gluch. Both authors jointly contributed to the paper, but Petersen collected the data.

The first version of this paper was a peer-reviewed conference paper that was presented as a working paper: Petersen, D. and Gluch, P. (2017) Examining New Professional Actors Related to Employment Requirements. *Presented as a working paper at the 33rd Annual ARCOM Conference,* 4–6 September 2017, Cambridge, UK, Association of Researchers in Construction Management. The paper was invited to be developed for a special issue based on the ARCOM conference in the journal *Construction Management and Economics.*

Paper 3: Employing the Unemployable: Practices for Implementing Employment Requirements

Petersen, D. (2017)
Working paper

This paper was written by Daniella Petersen. Supervisors Pernilla Gluch and Anna Kadefors contributed by reviewing the paper.

The paper was presented as a working paper at a conference: Petersen, D. (2017) Examining practices related to employment requirements in procurement. *Presented as a working paper at the 24th annual NFF Conference*, 23–25 August 2017, Bodö, Norway.

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I wanted to become a PhD candidate because I have always been better at studying than working, and have always been curious to learn. After roughly two and a half years as a PhD candidate, it is obvious to me that this is in fact work – a lot of work. But it is the best job in the world, and I wouldn't want to do anything else, even though it's becoming clear that the more I learn, the more I realise how much I have left to learn.

There are many people I would like to thank for supporting me over the last few years. First of all, although it is somewhat unorthodox, I would like to give myself a big pat on the shoulder, because I am quite pleased with what I have accomplished so far. I would also like to thank my two supervisors, Pernilla Gluch and Anna Kadefors, for having patience with my far-too-long reading material, for guiding me along the way, and for giving me the opportunity to live my dream. Thank you to the rest of my colleagues at SML and TME, like my examiner Ida who always provides encouragement, to Jan who is kind enough to send me newsletters in French I can't understand, to Ingrid for being there to discuss my ideas and everything else that has nothing to do with work, and to the rest of the PhD students who inspire me to become better and are always there when I need a laugh. Thank you also to my "colleagues from another mother" at Construction Management.

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Thank you everybody, and thank you to myself. Halfway done, halfway to go. Can't wait!

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"Sure, we can sit and wait for some grandiose solution to appear, but there won't be a grandiose solution. However, employment requirements are one solution to solve [the problem of social exclusion]."

- Sustainability manager

1. Introduction

This chapter provides the background to the research. This is followed by the research aim, the research questions, and the scope of the research. The chapter ends with an outline of the thesis.

1.1. Background and problem formulation

Sweden faces societal issues, like problems with social exclusion. Brännström (2004: 2516) defined social exclusion in a Swedish context as "*a multidimensional disadvantage that can occur in many areas of life such as education, work, employment, housing and social participation*", which means that social exclusion covers more than just income, but also factors like "*a wide range of non-monetary outcomes as indicators of social exclusion, such as education, employment, receipt of social assistance and criminal status*". The issues with social exclusion have been further aggravated by the 2015 refugee crisis. Many Swedish cities are also becoming increasingly segregated, where many neighbourhoods, often built during the 1960s and 1970s, are dilapidated and in need of refurbishment. The people who suffer most from social exclusion are often those who populate these "disadvantaged" neighbourhoods (Edling, 2015). At the same time, the construction sector is facing a lack of construction workers, which hinders planned building investments, like the refurbishment of run-down housing stocks. Therefore, just like socially excluded and unemployed people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods need employment, contractors need more workers in order to bid on construction projects and to have the capacity to refurbish these dilapidated neighbourhoods (Enochsson and Andersson, 2016; Bennewitz, 2017). Thus, the construction sector thereby has the opportunity to mitigate social issues and create an inflow of new workers, and has been targeted as a suitable sector for social procurement initiatives like employment requirements (Almahmoud and Doloi, 2015; Sutherland et al., 2015).

The construction sector has previously been weak at promoting social sustainability, but is now shifting towards strategically solving social issues, in order to mitigate some of these societal challenges (Ruparathna and Hewage, 2015). Private and public organisations have started to use their purchasing power and procurement functions as a strategic tool to create additional benefits for communities (Barraket et al., 2016). One such strategic tool is to implement employment requirements in construction procurement, in order to create employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups like immigrants, youths and the disabled. However, even if organisations in Sweden are experimenting with different approaches to implement employment requirements, these approaches have significant room for development (Sävfenberg, 2017). Employment requirements in Sweden most often entail offering employment to the tenants living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, through internships, apprenticeships, or temporary employment, in construction projects such as refurbishment investments (see Lind and Mjörnell, 2015). In effect, implementing

employment requirements when procuring construction projects can spur new ways of thinking; new roles, new actors and responsibilities; new practices, knowledge and coordination needs, as well as new business opportunities for the various organisations involved (for list of organisations, see chapter 2.2) (see Barraket et al., 2016; Lind and Mjörnell, 2015).

1.2 Aim, scope and limitations

Even though employment requirements have been increasingly discussed in research, politics and the construction sector, there is still little empirical, theoretical, or conceptual examination of employment requirements, and the scarce research that does exist is mainly descriptive (Walker and Brammer, 2012; Amann et al., 2014; Barraket et al., 2016; Loosemore, 2016). In addition, employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement is a quite new empirical phenomenon. This means there are many possible avenues for research. This thesis is based around the empirical phenomenon of employment requirements, rather than on a discovered gap in research; therefore, the research aim and questions derive from the empirical world, and are mainly inductively designed. The aim of the research is ***to examine organisational implications for the construction sector, its organisations, and its individual actors, when employment requirements are increasingly implemented***. This aim comes with a specific scope and some limitations.

Organisational implications in this thesis refers to changes in the way work is organised in projects and organisations in the construction sector, pertaining to work practices, professional work roles, logics for how to run an organisation or projects, and how to collaborate with other actors in the construction sector. The implementation of employment requirements as part of a social procurement process can be summarized as follows (see Figure 1). The client (1) defines the specifications for the work they want done, then (2) collects tenders from different contractors who are interested in conducting the work. The client then (3) reviews the tenders, and awards the chosen contractor the contract. The winning contractor is then (4) connected to a third party, like a social enterprise or the Employment Agency, which helps in the recruitment process of the targeted unemployed groups. The third party (5) selects a handful of candidates based on the contractor's wishes, from where the contactor decides who to hire. (6) If the unemployed needs any training before starting his/her assignment, this is usually provided by either the contractor or the employment agency. The worker/s then (7) start the internship or temporary employment, and (8) after the duration of the internship/employment, the outcome for the project and newly employed is sometimes evaluated.
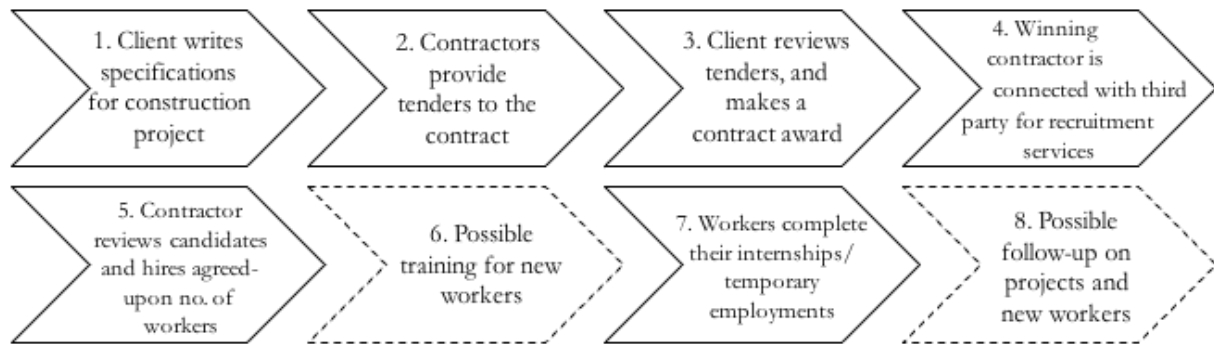
Figure 1: General process of implementing employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement.

This research focuses on the empirical context of the Swedish construction sector. To examine the novel practice of implementing employment requirements as it unfolds provides a unique opportunity to study (institutional) change and the emergence of a new phenomenon in real time, rather than in retrospect. Further, employment requirements in Sweden are almost solely implemented in the construction sector. Therefore, a study of employment requirements in Sweden must involve studying the construction sector. However, even though this research focuses on Sweden in its empirical examination, previous international research that this thesis builds upon also cover other industrial contexts.

The unit of analysis of the research focuses on the organisational level, investigating organisational change, organisational actors and practices. Thus, the focus is not on the unemployed, but rather on the employing and procuring organisations and the actors who set the agenda for how employment requirements should be implemented.

1.3   Outline of thesis

The thesis started by presenting the situation in Sweden that has led to the increased implementation of employment requirements, and also the aim and research questions. This introductory chapter is followed by an overview of previous research on employment requirements, both nationally and internationally. This also includes a deeper description of the empirical context. After the frame of reference, the theoretical framework of institutional theory is introduced, which provides the theoretical lens though which the research has been analysed and understood. This is followed by the research methodology, which illustrates what, how and why the research design and method behind the research was chosen. After the methodology, a summary of the appended papers is provided, followed by a discussion based on the aggregated results from my research. Lastly, conclusions covering theory and practice implications are provided, along with suggestions for future research.

2. Previous research

This chapter reviews previous research on social procurement and employment requirements. As previous research on employment requirements is scarce, the frame of reference is mainly based on extant research on social procurement in general. Much of the research on social procurement is translatable to employment requirements, as employment requirements are among the main features of social procurement (cf. Walker and Brammer 2012; Zuo et al., 2012; Dean 2013; Loosemore 2016). The chapter ends with a description of the empirical context.

2.1 Social procurement and employment requirements

2.1.1 Social procurement in the past and today

Social procurement is a wide term that encompasses a range of issues, which can be described as: "*the use of purchasing power to create social value*" (Barraket and Weissman, 2009, p. iii). This includes activities related to buying from women- and minority-owned businesses, buying from local small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and ensuring health and safety, as well as employment requirements for disadvantaged groups (cf. Walker and Brammer, 2012; Zuo et al., 2012; Dean, 2013; Loosemore, 2016). Thus, social value can be seen as values pertaining to good living environments and local communities, social inclusion, good health, equality, diversity, fair trade, and accessibility (see Newman and Burkett, 2013).

Procurement and social (employment) policy have been combined since the early 19th century. The building sector has historically been one of the main target industries for such policies (McCrudden, 2004). Social procurement first revolved around stipulating work hours and fair wages, as well as fighting unemployment through public work financed by government contracting. Requirements to benefit disadvantaged people like minorities, disabled and women were mainly introduced in countries like the United Kingdom after WWI and WWII, when employment opportunities were created for disabled veterans (ibid). In 2012 the UK introduced the Social Value Act, which states how public contracts must acknowledge economic, environmental and social well-being (British Government, 2016). Since 2014 there is also the EU directives (European Union, 2014), which open up for using social procurement practices to a wider extent. Considering the introduction of the UK Social Value Act and the EU directives, the aim to achieve social values and goals is further emphasised. In the United States, social procurement was used in the affirmative action policies already in the 1960s, and Australia and Canada currently have legislation aimed at benefiting the indigenous populations (McCrudden, 2004; Loosemore, 2016). In Belgium, public contracts above a certain cost must include social clauses in which at least one unemployed person is offered employment in the project (McCrudden, 2004). However, even though new legislation

has promoted and supported the implementation of social procurement and employment requirements, there has been little insight into how the construction sector can effectively engage with social procurement (Loosemore, 2016).

2.1.2 Current research on employment requirements

Previous international research on employment requirements includes a survey study of construction contractors in the UK and their perception of different socially sustainable clauses, conducted by Eadie and Rafferty (2014); as well as a study of a pilot project in Northern Ireland aimed at increasing employment of disadvantaged groups (such as minorities) through public construction projects, conducted by Erridge (2007). Both of these studies reached similar conclusions and found that contractors have many concerns regarding employment requirements, which they often find difficult to justify cost-wise. The studies found that contractors often need additional financial incentives to implement employment requirements, as there is a perception that projects become so expensive – for example, considering training for the unemployed – that there is lower value for money to hire apprentices or unemployed workers (Erridge, 2007; Eadie and Rafferty, 2014). Also, in Eadie and Rafferty's (2014) study the contractors claimed that employment requirements did not benefit their brand or reputation to any considerable extent. Similarly, other scholars have found that perception of cost and a lack of knowledge are major barriers for social procurement (Walker and Brammer, 2009; Zuo et al., 2012). There was also concern from the contractors that the requirements to hire unemployed displaced ordinary workers (Erridge, 2007).

Another barrier facing employment requirements is weak evaluation processes both in supplier selection and follow-up of results. Barraket et al. (2016) explain that employment requirements are complex and difficult to evaluate compared to price or quality criteria. In a government report commissioned by the Swedish Competition Authority, Anxo et al. (2017) concluded that follow-up and evaluation of projects using employment requirements in Sweden is rare, and that evaluation processes are often unspecified and non-existent. Anxo et al. (2017) suggest that, in order to mitigate this problem, evaluation processes, purpose of implementing employment requirements, the goal of implementing employment requirements, target groups, employment form, and ultimate goals of the project should be stated and anchored in the planning phase of the procurement (Anxo et al., 2017).

Currently, the procurement process might not be a completely conductive channel through which to implement employment requirements. Barraket et al. (2016) claim that institutionalized cultures and norms hinder the further development of employment requirements, as well as obtuse bureaucracy in the procurement process (Barraket et al., 2016). Furthermore, Erridge (2007) argues that the traditional overemphasis on commercial goals often limits the possibility to achieve socio-economic goals through

procurement. Contracts that include employment requirements should be more carefully selected and, to maximise the effect of the contracts, they should focus on areas with high unemployment rates in order to ensure a more efficient job creation (Erridge, 2007).

Thus, it would seem that there are quite a number of difficulties and barriers to overcome in order to implement employment requirements, although some organisations have taken measures to facilitate the implementation. In Scotland, for example, the use of "community benefit clauses" (employment requirements) has become "business as usual" for many organisations within the construction sector. Both clients and contractors are creating professional work roles dedicated exclusively to working with the implementation of employment requirements, and contractors are extending the scope of employment requirements by including their subcontractors and office functions, while trying to build competence regarding how to best implement employment requirements (Scottish Government, 2014; Sutherland et al., 2015).

Another way to engage in social procurement, which is common in countries like Australia and the UK but uncommon in Sweden, is through contracting social enterprises. Social enterprises are hybrid organisations that have dual goals of social and financial sustainability. Social enterprises aim to fulfil social purposes like employing marginalised groups, as well as financial purposes by distributing profits back to the community and other beneficiaries rather than to shareholders. In the UK and Australia, social enterprises are growing in numbers (Barraket and Weissman, 2009; Loosemore, 2015). However, an interview study by Loosemore (2015) revealed that even though engaging with social enterprises may help contractors and clients to fulfil their corporate social responsibility (CSR) agenda, there is a lack of trust from contractors and clients. In general, both contractors and clients prefer traditional subcontractors whose business models are more easily understood. Barraket and Weissman (2009) found similar results in their literature review of academic and policy literature aimed at informing social enterprise development in Australia. They found that the main obstacles for social procurement are government culture, procurers' lack of knowledge about social enterprises, the fact that social value is difficult to measure, and that social enterprises lack knowledge about public procurement and have difficulties articulating the added value from their business. In order to mitigate these barriers, Barraket and Weissman (2009) suggest to educate procurers and social enterprises, to design more strategic social enterprise objectives, to extend procurement opportunities, and to have closer dialogue between clients, government, suppliers and other parties.

On a positive note, social procurement and employment requirements improve collaboration and knowledge sharing. In a literature review Barraket et al. (2016) found that the implementation of social procurement has spurred changes in governments, third-sectors, and private markets, where social procurements have led to a deeper

collaboration between sectors and across organisational boundaries, where organisations are increasingly sharing knowledge throughout their supply chains. In order to achieve efficient use of employment requirements, benefit from scope and scale, and to be able to deliver social initiatives as a high-quality service, collaboration is necessary (ibid).

Overall, studies have found that construction sector professionals are willing to and positive about making social considerations in their projects (Erridge, 2007; Zuo et al., 2012). In their study of sustainable procurement practices in English housing associations, Meehan and Bryde (2011) found that the three main drivers for sustainable procurement are reputation, ethical considerations, and leading best practice, while cost savings, customer pressure and third-party pressure were the weakest drivers. Future legislation is also a strong driver, suggesting that external rather than internal drivers will be important going forward. Eadie and Rafferty (2014) found that contractors felt that social consideration had internal beneficial effects, such as lower absenteeism and improved productivity, improved work environment and less employee turnover. In an evaluation report of a Swedish construction project where employment requirements were implemented, Nilsson and Nilsson-Lundmark (2016) found that a small investment in implementing employment requirements could produce considerably greater socio-economic financial benefit in terms of reduced welfare costs and increased tax incomes. Drivers and barriers for implementing social procurement and employment requirements described in research literature are summarised in Table 1.

2.1.3 (Social) procurement as a strategic tool

While the implementation of employment requirements faces both benefits and barriers, there is, overall, potential to use procurement to achieve social goals. Both public and private organisations engage in social procurement, although according to Walker and Brammer (2009, 2012) public authorities are more likely to promote social sustainability than private organisations as they are concerned with the well-being of society. Due to their procurement power, they may achieve such goals by demanding socially responsible services (Walker and Brammer, 2012). Thus, government actors can attempt influence the market through their purchasing power in order to achieve social policy outcomes. This is accomplished, for example, through awarding contracts under certain conditions, qualifications of contractors, and contract award criteria (see McCrudden, 2004; Walker and Brammer, 2012; Amann et al., 2014; Barraket et al., 2016).

Social procurement can be used to fulfil specific social outcomes and public policies (Grandia and Meehan, 2017). Based on a pilot study of the Women in Construction project, Wright (2015) argued that the UK Social Value Act can be used in social benefit clauses (employment requirements) in public construction procurement in order to mitigate the gender inequality in the construction sector. Due to the skewed gender representation in the construction sector, and the subsequent wage gap, public

procurement can be used as a tool to mitigate these specific problems. In the UK, public procurement has been used to promote both gender- and race equality on and off since the 1980s (Wright, 2015). Further, both public and private organisations increasingly use (social) procurement to fulfil other organisational agendas, such as CSR goals of ethnic diversity in the workplace, and to find innovative ways to use social procurement for identifying and exploiting new business opportunities (Erridge, 2007; Zuo et al., 2012; Sutherland's et al., 2015; Barraket et al., 2016). There is thus a strategic element to social procurement and employment requirements.

Table 1: Overview of drivers and barriers identified in the literature

Drivers/Benefits	Source
Benefiting disadvantaged groups	McCrudden, 2004
Collaboration, knowledge sharing and building competences throughout supply chain	Scottish Government, 2014; Sutherland et al., 2015; Barraket et al., 2016
Reputation, ethical considerations, leading best practice, and future legislation	Meehan and Bryde, 2011
Improved working environment (lower absenteeism and turnover)	Eadie and Rafferty, 2014
Socio-economic benefits	Nilsson and Nilsson-Lundmark, 2016
Barriers	**Source**
Perception of higher cost/less value for money	Eadie and Rafferty, 2014; Erridge, 2007; Loosemore, 2016; Walker and Brammer, 2009; Zuo et al., 2012
Lack of knowledge and/or trust	Barraket and Weissman 2009; Walker and Brammer, 2009; Zuo et al., 2012; Loosemore, 2015
Do not benefit brand/goodwill enough	Eadie and Rafferty, 2014
Displacing ordinary workers	Erridge, 2007; Barraket and Weissman, 2009
Evaluation difficulties	Barraket et al., 2016; Anxo et al., 2017
Institutionalized cultures, norms (overemphasis on commercial goals) and bureaucracy	Erridge, 2007; Barraket and Weissman, 2009; Barraket et al., 2016

2.2 The Swedish construction sector and procurement

In the EU, the construction sector is labour-intensive and employs 18 million people. Construction constitutes approximately 19 per cent of the EU's GDP, and is growing

(EU Commission, 2016). In Sweden, the largest building investment ever (64 Billion EUR) has just begun, in which 700,000 new homes shall be built by 2025 (Business Sweden, 2017).

When it comes to the composition and organisation of the construction sector, the construction sector is project-based, where multiple actors collaborate together to, for example, build housing, commercial buildings, or infrastructure, to conduct landscaping, facilities management (maintenance of the buildings), renovation, or waste management. The organisation of construction projects is characterised by decentralisation of decision making, standardisation, coordination difficulties, independence, dispersed responsibility allocation, independent specialised work tasks, and efficiency in time, cost and scope (Dubois and Gadde, 2002; Gluch, 2005). The main actors are clients, contractors, technical consultants like engineering experts or architects, other suppliers (Gluch, 2005); in the case of employment requirements, other support organisations working with recruitment, like the Employment Agency, are also relevant.

The clients, which order and contract the buildings or infrastructure being built, could be housing companies, municipalities, government organisations like the Swedish Transport Administration, or other private or non-profit organisations. Contractors are hired to conduct the work, and they usually hire smaller, local sub-contractors, which are specialists in their respective crafts, to conduct part of the work, to supply the materials needed, and to design the buildings and engineering work (Buckley et al., 2016; EU Commission, 2016). In fact, 95 per cent of all construction sector companies in the EU are micro or small or medium enterprises (EU Commission, 2017). Due to the high degree of subcontracting, there can be ambiguity in the sector regarding what each actor is responsible for, in terms of follow-up, health and safety, employment conditions, etc. (Buckley et al., 2016).

When it comes to the procurement process, private actors have the option to contract their contractor of choice directly, which makes for quite a straightforward procurement process. When it comes to public clients that want to implement employment requirements, there is legislation that influence the procurement process, which concerns procedures for notification of the specifications, selection of tenders, and evaluation of tenders (Amann et al., 2014). There are also certain traditional procurement practices and logics in the construction sector that influence procurement processes for both private and public organisations. There is considerable emphasis to use price and quality-focused criteria, which often are easier to measure than non-price criteria concerning e.g. sustainability (Sporrong et al., 2009; Sporrong, 2011). In chapter 4.1, a general outline of the implementation of employment requirements, from procurement to follow-up, is provided.

3. Theoretical framework

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework, which has been used to analyse the results in the three appended papers by providing a lens to study and understand the empirical data.

3.1 Choice of theoretical framework and relation to empirical field

The theoretical framework for this research is based on institutional theory. As I aim to examine an emerging phenomenon in real-time, and its implications for a specific institutional field (the construction sector), as well as the organisations and individual actors in that field, institutional theory and its sub-theories are useful. Institutional theory is one of the most used theoretical perspectives in organisational studies. One reason for its popularity could be its usefulness in understanding inter-organisational and societal processes (Lawrence et al., 2011). Institutional theory provides a framework that can be used to understand change, actions, and beliefs throughout an entire industry (Lawrence et al., 2011; Battilana, 2006). According to Bresnen (2017), although institutional theory is a prominent theory within organisational studies, institutional theory has rarely been applied to research pertaining to the construction sector and construction management. He suggested that researchers within the construction management field could be well-served in applying institutional theory, the sub-theories of institutional logics and institutional work, as well as looking into professional work and identity work in studies of the constructions sector, for example to study change (Bresnen, 2017). Therefore, institutional theory and its sub-theories can be useful for studying the construction sector and the implications spurred by the increased implementation of employment requirements.

An institution can be described as "*widely diffused practices, technologies, or rules that that have become entrenched*" in an institutional field (Lawrence et al., 2002: 282), like the institution of the state, democracy, family or capitalism (Friedland and Alford, 1991). An institutional field is a constructed system with shared beliefs, values and norms, like an industry (for example, the construction sector) or a market (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Beckert, 2010). In the institutional field, social activities and prevailing long-lasting, taken-for-granted institutions are chronically reproduced, and in turn govern the actions and beliefs of organisations and individual actors in an implicit rule-like manner (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Selznick, 1992; Czarniawska, 2005; Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009). Thus, institutions constrain actions through normative social and cultural forces, driven by aspirations of legitimacy, which is necessary in order to create long-lived organisations (Meyer and Rowan 1977). Having said that, not all institutional environments are equally tightly institutionalized, and not all actors are equally constrained by the institutionalized

structures (Selznick 1992; Battilana, 2006; Lawrence and Suddaby 2006; Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009; Zietsma and McKnight 2009).

As an example, Kadefors (1995) highlighted several institutions that govern behaviour in the construction sector, and that drive homogenisation and institutionalization of shared and prescriptive practices. For example, the construction sector is highly regulated, so government regulations serve as institutions because they homogenise behaviour. The construction sector also encompasses several distinct and separate professional roles with strong values and norms, which dictates behaviour in prescriptive ways. Moreover, the tendering system homogenises behaviour and drives institutionalization in the industry by providing a template for how to make and price tenders, often based on previous experience and price lists (Kadefors, 1995). Furthermore, Urup (2016) pointed to collaboration, coordination, cost optimisation and minimisation, and efficiency also being institutions in the construction sector.

The institutional perspective includes a multitude of different sub-theories that focus on different levels within an institutional field. Collectively, institutional theory and its sub-theories provide an analytical lens to examine organisational implications of implementing employment requirements in the construction sector, at the sectoral, inter-organisational, organisational, and intra-organisational levels. Thus, the different theoretical perspectives within institutional theory are "nested" in each other and relate to and mutually reinforce each other. For my research, two sub-theories within institutional theory have been used for the theoretical examination of the implementation of employment requirements: *institutional logics* and *institutional work*. These are outlined in the following sections.

3.2   Institutional logics

Recent years have seen increased interest in studying the relationship between micro and macro phenomena and how individual actors and institutions mutually influence each other. Studying institutional logics is one way of examining this mutual influence (McPherson and Sauder, 2013; Bévort and Suddaby, 2016). Institutional logics can be described as the result of "*shared beliefs and values in a community of individuals*" (Bévort and Suddaby, 2016: 33), which shape meanings, appropriateness and legitimacy, influence change, determine what issues and problems are salient, and what solutions are worth pursuing (Thornton, 2002). Thus, institutional logics influence what is perceived as rational behaviour and serve as a source of stability and legitimacy (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Reay and Hinings, 2009). Besides being a source of stability, (conflicting) institutional logics can also be a source of change. Several institutional logics may co-exist in parallel for a long time, and change often originates in conflicts and contradictions between such different institutional logics (Friedland and Alford, 1991). Thornton et al. (2005) provided an example of institutional logics pertaining to the construction sector:

the logics of the architect. Architects have been said to embed two opposing logics in their professional role. First, there is the aesthetic logic, which is concerned with the architect's role as an artist and the importance of design and beauty of the built environment. The second logic is the efficiency logic, which is concerned with the importance of producing safe and useful buildings and solving building problems cost effectively. An architect must then handle both these logics simultaneously in their work (Thornton et al., 2005).

The construction of social identities and professional roles is closely connected to institutional logics, where some institutional logics are strongly related to specific professional roles and prescribe meaning, purpose and actions to that role (Lok, 2010; McPherson and Sauder, 2013; Blomgren and Waks, 2015; Bévort and Suddaby, 2016). Lok (2010: 1308) presented a useful definition of (social) identity: "*institutional notions of who or what any social actor might or should be in a particular institutional context, and – by implication – how the actor should act*". Thus, social identities are conditioned by the institutional environment and social categories as gender, race, class, and social positions within the institutional field. This social identity is also influenced by a person's self-identity. Similarly, in a sociological sense the term 'role' is used to express a social behaviour that is expected from a particular social category and indicates status or positions in formal systems (Lynch, 2007; Kabiri et al., 2012). Although pre-defined identities and roles often exist, individual actors also choose the extent to which they may take on, adopt or reject a specific identity or role (Simpson and Carroll, 2008; Reay and Hinings, 2009; Lok, 2010; McPherson and Sauder, 2013; Bévort and Suddaby; 2016; Currie and Spyridonidis, 2016; Abdelnour et al., 2017). This means that certain logics, identities and roles that belong to professional roles other than the one someone formally holds, can be used and enacted strategically by individual actors to achieve different goals (ibid). For example, actors can translate contradictory institutional logics into actions through their day-to-day work in order to handle institutional complexity, sometimes by 'hijacking' institutional logics belonging to another professional role (McPherson and Sauder, 2013). In the construction sector, for example, contractors typically embed the identity of someone "who knows how to build" (Löwstedt and Räisänen, 2014).

3.3   Institutional work

3.3.1 What is institutional work?

Institutional theory has been criticised for only focusing on field-level dynamics, forgetting the actors who are actually conducting institutional change (Lawrence et al., 2002). The perspective of institutional work anchors the experiences of individual and collective actors with institutional structures and thereby takes a micro-perspective (Battilana, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2011), and acknowledges how actors affect the

institutional structures, while simultaneously being affected by the same institutional structures (Lawrence et al., 2011).

The perspective of institutional work departs from the notion that it is the work of individual and collective actors that is important. Institutional work is concerned with how agentic actors purposively work on a day-to-day basis and how, through their daily mundane work, they change, manage, destroy or create institutional structures, and how this in turn constructs their relationships, roles and habits (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). This agency also means that actors are aware and can reflect on their own institutional embeddedness (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998; Garud and Karnøe, 2003). My research adopts Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) perspective that agency comes from and is conditioned by culture, social structures and intra-personal characteristics, and that agency is both constrained by and enabled within the institutional environment. This means that individual actors can purposively shape institutions while institutions are simultaneously shaping them (Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009).

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) defined three main types of institutional work: creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions. However, Smets and Jarzabkowski (2013) explained that actors often lack intentionality when creating, maintaining and disrupting institutional structures, but that the creation, maintenance and disruption of institutions are still outcomes of their daily work. As employment requirements are a novel phenomenon, my research focuses particularly on work resulting in the *creation* of new institutional arrangements, pertaining to the implementation of employment requirements. Actors can create institutions in three main ways: (1) by overtly reconfiguring rules and boundaries, (2) by constructing identities and normative networks and associations, and (3) by reconfiguring meaning systems. As an example of institutional work in the construction sector, Gluch and Bosch-Sijtsema (2016) highlighted how environmental experts in the construction sector conduct considerable institutional work when trying to drive their respective organisations towards more environmentally friendly practices. For example, environmental experts create new institutions related to green building by teaching their colleagues in the organisation about green sustainability, and by using artefacts such as graphs and assessment methods to trigger change. They maintain institutions by displaying their role as less authoritative, and by taking on a "service" role. They disrupt institutions through insistent nagging to move beyond minimum compliance regulation.

When it comes to the intricacies of what institutional work actually entails, there are several different perspectives for explaining the substance of institutional work. These include studies of **institutional entrepreneurs** and the creation of **proto-institutions**. These two perspectives have been particularly useful for studying the novel and currently

unfolding development and implementation of employment requirements. The two perspectives are outlined next.

3.3.2 Institutional entrepreneurs

Individual actors who break with institutional logics and practices can be characterised as institutional entrepreneurs (Battilana, 2006). Beckert (1999) proposed that institutional entrepreneurs play a powerful role in institutional change and saw institutional entrepreneurs as strategically acting in an agentic, rational, and planned manner. Divergent behaviour from institutional entrepreneurs is more likely when the institutional environment is stable and uncertainty is low, as a stable environment enables institutional entrepreneurs to take calculated actions and to anticipate the result of these actions. In an unstable institutional environment, divergent behaviour would be too risky, as outcomes of divergent actions would be difficult to predict. Having said that, it might be an institutional entrepreneur who created the instability in the first place through their divergent behaviour, thereby creating a cycle of stability, disruption and re-embeddedness (Beckert, 1999). Thus, institutional entrepreneurship is one way to explain institutional change (Battilana, 2006). However, even though institutional entrepreneurs might act in a planned, strategic manner, this is not always the case. These entrepreneurs might not be willing to break with prevailing institutional logics, or even be aware of doing so, but if their work results in changing the institutional environment, they are still institutional entrepreneurs. Further, actors who attempt to break with institutional structures but do so unsuccessfully can also be considered institutional entrepreneurs (Battilana, 2006).

Not all individual actors and organisations have equal agency or are equally legitimate to engage in institutional entrepreneurship (see Emirbayer and Mische, 1998; Battilana, 2006; Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Agency and institutional entrepreneurship are enabled by and conditioned upon the institutional environment, and the individual actors' position within this environment. Institutions and their subsequent norms, rules and processes provide different levels of control and access to resources, which means that, depending on your social position in the institutional environment, you have more or less power to act as an institutional entrepreneur (Battilana, 2006; Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). More peripheral, low-status actors and organisations are more likely to break with existing institutional norms and introduce new ideas than actors and organisations in the centre of the institutional environment. Actors and organizations with a lower social position have incentive to try to better their situation and place in the institutional field, while actors and organizations with higher social positions have incentives to keep the status quo. Lower-status actors and organizations may however not have the resources to enact such a change (ibid).

3.3.3 Proto-institutions

During the time it takes for practices, rules and/or technologies to be fully diffused and institutionalized, they can be referred to as proto-institutions that might become full-blown institutions (Lawrence et al., 2002). Thus, proto-institutions are "institutions in the making", and are created by different actors conducting parallel institutional work (Zietsma and McKnight, 2009). Through inter-organisational co-creation and collaboration, this parallel institutional work may converge into one, fully institutionalized, coherent institution (Lawrence et al., 2002; Zietsma and McKnight, 2009; Gómez and Atun, 2013; and Wahga et al., 2018).

Zietsma and McKnight (2009) proposed a model for how proto-institutions can be created and diffused. This model was based on a case in the Canadian forestry industry, where five iteratively unfolding "activities" were identified. In the (1) *initial development of the proto-institution,* the sponsors (creators) of the proto-institution assess their and others' needs, and consult stakeholders on how to design the institution in order to achieve legitimacy. When (2) *promoting the proto-institution*, sponsors try to spread their proposed proto-institution and gain support from stakeholders by using cognitive, normative and regulative arguments. Sponsors also try to (3) *disrupt competing proto-institutions* by publically or legally discrediting the competing proto-institution to undermine its legitimacy. Sponsors also (4) *co-create proto-institutions* by collaborating with supporters and other sponsors of competing proto-institutions by revising the proposed proto-institution according to supporters' conditional demands and by mimicking successful features of competing proto-institutions. Finally, sponsors attempt to (5) *establish maintenance mechanisms* for the proto-institutions by using cognitive, normative and regulative measures so that the proto-institution can become a full-fledged, taken-for-granted institution in the long-term.

3.4   What is the institution in focus in this research?

In this research, the overarching institution is construction procurement, and its related values, norms, regulations and practices. There are clear regulative frameworks and normative expectations in place for how construction procurement should be performed; for example, by building on a market logic of using traditional price and quality criteria (Sporrong, 2011). Although social procurement has a long history in many countries (McCrudden, 2004), it can be seen as a proto-institution nested within the wider institution of procurement. In some countries, social procurement has become a distinct domain of practice (Barraket et al., 2016), where employment requirements then can be seen as a manifestation or building block of social procurement. Within this proto-institution there are competing practices and logics regarding how social procurement and employment requirements should be designed and implemented. For example, when different sponsors (actors) promote different practices, such as employing the

unemployed through internships or temporary employment, these practices can be seen as parallel streams of institutional work (Zietsma and McKnight, 2009), which aims, albeit in different ways, to support and develop the proto-institution of social procurement, by promoting employment requirements.

The proto-institution of social procurement clashes with several institutional structures, rules and logics within construction procurement. Firstly, the traditional focus of preferring criteria based on price and quality of the building, embed different institutional logics than social procurement. The practice of using criteria based on price and quality embeds market values and logics, while social procurement embeds logics for creating social rather than monetary value (Barraket et al., 2016). These logics are not necessarily contradictory, as it is possible to procure using both price and social criteria. However, due to the different logics embedded in the different criteria, there seems to be some feelings of contradiction for many practitioners. As such, to use criteria that (1) aims to fulfil social values, (2) does not pertain directly to the object of procurement, and (3) might require increased resources, time and money from the procuring entity, government, and supplier, is perceived to clash against the prevailing practice of mainly procuring using more tangible criteria like lowest-price or quality.

Secondly, the construction sector and construction projects involve independent actors (clients, contractors, suppliers, local government, etc.) who are used to collaborating in projects while having specific areas of responsibility (Kadefors, 1995; Dubois and Gadde, 2002; Gluch, 2005). With the implementation of employment requirements, clients are suddenly interfering with their contractors' and suppliers' personnel policies, dictating who they should hire and which employment form to use. This is controversial, as employment practices are usually under the discretion of the employer (as long as basic employment terms are followed).

4. Research methodology

This chapter provides a description of the case of employment requirements in procurement, and outlines research questions and the research design of included studies. It also covers the specific methods used for data collection and data analysis. The chapter closes with a discussion on research quality and a description of how the research questions, studies and papers interrelate.

4.1   Research questions

Referring back at the aim of the thesis – *to examine organisational implications for the construction sector, its organisations, and its individual actors, when employment requirements are increasingly implemented* – and bridging that with previous research on employment requirements and the theoretical framework of institutional theory, two research questions have been devised. The research questions do not attempt to fulfil a specific gap in literature, and do not attempt to confirm any hypotheses. In that sense, the research and research questions are inductively designed and empirically driven. Having said that, the previous research does provide a frame of reference, and the theoretical framework provides some theoretical outset for the research. Institutional theory is concerned with change, work, roles, identities, logics, and practices. Thereby, even though I had little pre-existing understanding of the empirical phenomenon itself, and the research is empirically driven, there is some theory underlying the research questions and design. The aim is achieved through investigating the following research questions:

RQ1: **What drivers and barriers affect the implementation (and institutionalization) of employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement?**

When investigating the implications when implementing of employment requirements, it is important to understand what enables, drives and hinders this implementation (and institutionalization). This leads to the first research question. An understanding of the drivers and barriers for implementing employment requirements may provide an understanding of what the implementation for employment requirements implies for the construction sectors and its organisations and actors, and how they structure and organise their daily work. The second research question attempts to investigate this work specifically in more detail:

RQ2: **How are professional roles and practices changing as an implication of the increased implementation of employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement?**

Bresnen (2013) argued that it is important to understand how professionals and organisations work in order to understand how new policy initiatives, like employment requirements, may be successful. This includes understanding how professionalization is related to institutionalization processes. Therefore, previous research point to these research questions being important. For practice, many actors within the construction sector have an ambition to institutionalize the implementation of employment requirements; however, without understanding the organisational implications the increased implementation of employment requirements has on the sector and its actors, and without acknowledging what enables and drives the implementation or what barriers are in the way, this ambition could be difficult to fulfil.

4.2   Research design

Employment requirements, as an emerging empirical phenomenon, are currently unexamined, both empirically and theoretically. Because this phenomenon is emerging and unfolding simultaneously as this research is being conducted, the phenomenon is studied in real time and not in retrospect, which is something that Suddaby (2010) suggests is currently missing from studies of institutional work. Due to this "real-time perspective", an explorative outset (and inductive approach) was useful for investigating a scarcely researched and novel phenomenon (Edmonson and McManus, 2007) and for capturing interesting areas of research. An inductive approach is one of the key components of qualitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Qualitative research is also particularly relevant when studying social relations and trying to capture the intricacies of daily life, to provide rich explanations of what actors do, how they do it, and why they do it (Flick, 2014), and to capture actors' behaviour, actions and beliefs (Silverman, 2013). Qualitative research is also constructivist in nature (Bryman and Bell, 2015), which goes hand in hand with the theoretical framework of institutional work, which is based upon a constructivist ontology.

The main mode of data collection has been interviews. Collecting primary data through interviews provides an opportunity to thoroughly explore how people perceive their work and how the implementation of employment requirements affects work practices and role development (and vice versa). Semi-structured interviews also allow for variations and follow-up questions when deemed necessary, as well as allowing interviewees to give their accounts freely (Kvale, 2007). In order to avoid missing any important topics relating to the implementation of employment requirements, this interview flexibility was especially important considering the lack of knowledge about employment requirements (see Edmonson and McManus, 2007).

4.3 Reflection on ontology and epistemology

The theoretical framework used for this research implicitly come with assumptions about the nature of science and the nature of the world. As such, looking to the chosen theoretical framework, alongside the methodological approach, some ontological and epistemological assumptions can be deduced. These assumptions have implications for analysing the studies and for the final results of each paper and this thesis.

With an institutional perspective on the world, actors create, maintain and disrupt institutional arrangements, and can be more or less aware about the presence and influence of these institutions that govern everyday life. Therefore, structures can be tangible and intangible, and be represented in laws and regulations, as well as in social codes. This means that actors create and shape the social world as it simultaneously shapes them (see Battilana, 2006). As such, the institutional perspective is based on the idea that the world is made up of intangible names and labels, as well as tangible structures, thereby having a constructivist perspective of the world.

The qualitative approach for this research using interviews as a main data collection method suggests a subjective interpretive perspective, which aims to understand actors and artefacts and their behaviour, beliefs, and actions. However, Silverman (2013) argued that there can actually be objective features in a qualitative research design, which makes it possible to aim to build theory in line with positivism, even though mostly working within the subjective dimension. Having an interpretative, constructivist, and somewhat subjective view on the world and science means being practice-oriented and prescribing actors with meaning and power, such as being purposive and agentic as described in institutional work (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). This point of view surely shapes the interpretation of these actors and their work, and therefore has implications for the final results of each study. Perhaps that means I credit either the power of institutional arrangements too much, or that I credit individual actors more than I should. But it could also be that, without such a perspective, the intricacies of daily life and the complexities and implications of implementing employment requirements would not have been visible or understood.

4.4 Research method for each study

The thesis is based on literature and document studies and two empirical studies: (1) a document study of three Swedish cases when employment requirements have been implemented, and (2) an interview study in two phases. An overview of each study is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Overview of each study in the thesis

	Continuous literature and document studies	Study 1: Study of three Swedish cases	Study 2a: Interview study phase 1	Study 2b: Interview study phase 2
Purpose of study	To obtain an initial overview of the current state of research related to the implementation of employment requirements, as well as empirical accounts.	To obtain a first look into the use of employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement, to discern possible organisational implications, and identify areas for future research.	To complement the first two studies with first-hand data. Also, to find areas of interest, and to identify the main organisational implications of employment requirements.	To obtain a more detailed view of employment requirements and its implications on two of the three areas of implications identified in the first interview phase.
Data sources	Research literature, industry press articles, website documents, and government reports.	Documents on three Swedish cases/projects where employment requirements have been used.	Six explorative semi-structured interviews with eight interviewees who work with employment requirements.	11 semi-structured interviews with 15 interviewees who work with employment requirements.
Time of study	Continuous	Dec 2015–June 2016	May 2016–Oct 2016	Nov 2016–Feb 2017
Paper	Paper 1: Overview paper Paper 2: Role paper Paper 3: Practices paper	Paper 1: Overview paper	Paper 1: Overview paper Paper 2: Role paper Paper 3: Practices paper	Paper 2: Role paper Paper 3: Practices paper

4.4.1 Continuous literature and document studies

In order to obtain an initial overview of the current state of research into employment requirements, as well as some empirical accounts of how employment requirements have been used in Sweden and elsewhere, I began the PhD project by conducting a literature and document studies. These studies have been ongoing continuously throughout the PhD project, and includes a literature review of previous research, as well as studies of industry press, websites, and government reports. It was initially difficult to have a systematic approach, as search words to use in library and academic databases were difficult to pinpoint given that there is no widely accepted international terminology for

employment requirements. Therefore, in the beginning I used search words related to employment, procurement criteria and socially sustainable procurement. These more generic words led me to useful sources, which I then used for snowballing (see Flick, 2014; Bryman and Bell, 2015), where I found other relevant articles by going through reference lists and material referred to in the articles and documents I had already collected. When I had reached what I deemed was saturation, I read through each article and document, searching for common themes relating to social procurement and employment requirements. This thematic analysis resulted in two main themes: *perceptions of value* and *organisational implications*. These themes emerged from the documents as areas of interest when it came to the implications that employment requirements have for the construction sector and its actors. The literature and document studies have contributed to all of the appended papers by providing background knowledge on the phenomenon and an overview of previous research, but the two themes were particularly useful for paper 1, where the analysis was guided by these two themes.

4.4.2 Study of three Swedish cases

Building upon the two themes found in the initial literature and document study, the purpose of the **first study** was to receive a first look into the use of employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement, and to be able to discern some possible organisational implications. The study also aimed to find areas for future research and suggestions for possible theories that could facilitate a deeper understanding of what implications arise when employment requirements are implemented. The first study looked at three Swedish cases in which employment requirements have been implemented, building on second-hand data. For the sake of simplicity, the cases in this study are referred to as Cases 1, 2, and 3. The cases are based on two construction projects where employment requirements have been used, and one municipal guideline concerning employment requirements. Data for this study were compiled from a research anthology about social sustainability in Swedish housing refurbishment, edited by Lind and Mjörnell (2015), but also supplemented by information from a socio-economic evaluation report about the first case, as well as industry press articles about the studied cases.

Case 1 describes a public housing company in a medium-size Swedish town that embarked on a four-year project to refurbish a dilapidated neighbourhood with a high unemployment rate. This project has attracted a great deal of attention in Swedish construction industry press for being one of the first and largest projects in Sweden in which employment requirements have been implemented. Case 2 describes a private housing company in Sweden's third largest city that has employed its own tenants to refurbish the neighbourhood. Case 3 describes a large municipality in Sweden that has stated the principle that 50 per cent of all public procurements must include social considerations. This is more than any other municipality in Sweden has stipulated, which

meant that this municipality and its progressive view on employment requirements was an interesting case to study.

The cases were chosen mainly because they were all well-known and pioneering cases in Sweden, and have been extensively discussed in different industry forums and press. They also represent three different types of organisations that initiated employment requirements: one is a public housing company, one is a private housing company, and one is a municipality. The three cases are also geographically distributed throughout Sweden. Therefore, although the available information on the three cases varied, they collectively provided a good overview of different methods for implementing employment requirements in Sweden. A thematic analysis, much like that in the literature and document study, was conducted in order to identify interesting patterns among the three cases.

4.4.3 Interview study

The purpose of the **second study** was to complement the first study with primary data. In order to obtain a more detailed, yet broad view of employment requirements in Sweden, the second study is an interview study developed in two phases. The first phase included six explorative semi-structured interviews with eight individuals (one interview had three interviewees), carried out between May and early October of 2016. The second phase included 11 semi-structured interviews with 15 individuals, with two of the interviews consisting of two interviewees each. The interviews were carried out between November 2016 and February 2017.

The *first phase* of the interview study had an explorative approach, as deemed necessary due to the empirical novelty of employment requirements and scarce previous research. The semi-structured interviews covered topics such as drivers and barriers for employment requirements, perception of employment requirements for the interviewee and its organisation and stakeholders, roles and practices related to employment requirements, social enterprises, collaboration between actors, creation of employment requirements, and development of employment requirements. These topics, as well as subsequent questions in the interview guide, were chosen according to the themes identified in the initial literature and document studies and in the study of the three Swedish cases. The interviews lasted between 1.5 and 3 hours and the interviewees were given flexibility to talk about what they felt were important issues, related to employment requirements. This is important due to the novelty of the phenomenon and scarce research (Edmonson and McManus, 2007).

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and the data was coded in NVivo to systematically sort the data. For Paper 1, the rich data from the first interview phase was coded and analysed according to the two themes identified in the literature and document

study. In the analysis, the data led to separating the first two themes into three, which provided opportunities to be more detailed in the analysis. The findings from this study related to three main areas of organisational implications: *drivers and perceived value (of employment requirements), organisations and roles*, and *practices and competences*, where the first corresponds to the first theme from the document study (*perceptions of value*), and the last two correspond to the second theme from the document study (*organisational implications*). These three areas of implications provided an avenue forward in the second phase of the interviews.

The purpose of **the *second phase*** was to narrow down on the three areas of implications identified in the first interview phase. These interviews were therefore more focused than those in the first interview phase, in order to obtain a more detailed view of employment requirements in Sweden and the implications for actors in the construction sector. In order to do this, I chose to focus on two of the three initially identified areas of implications. The implications for roles respectively practices were chosen because they are closely interrelated, and because they would be easier to capture when using an interview methodology. Even though these interviews were more focused than those in the first phase, they did cover the two implications – roles and practices – in more detail, and therefore lasted between 45 minutes and 3 hours.

The first chosen area of implication concerned roles related to employment requirements and covered topics such as work experiences related to employment requirements, views on one's own role, relationships with other actors, values and characteristics prescribed to their role, and future prospects for the role. The second chosen area of implication concerned practices for implementing employment requirements and covered topics such as the interviewees' experiences with employment requirements, their daily work practices, practical difficulties, and the interviewees' view on the development of employment requirements and subsequent practices. These topics were derived from the first paper (which included Studies 1 and 2a), but were also theoretically informed by institutional theory.

The interviews from phase 2 were transcribed verbatim and then coded in NVivo for a systematic overview of the data, relating to the main implication identified for each paper. For Papers 2 and 3, both interview phases were analysed as a single cohesive study. For Paper 2, the interviews were coded according to the interview questions, which related to how the interviews create a new professional role related to employment requirements. A theoretical framework based around roles, social identity and professionalization literature was used as a lens for analysing the data. For Paper 3, the interviews were coded according to topics related to the daily work practices of the interviewees in relation to employment requirements. A theoretical framework based on institutional work concerning the creation of proto-institutions was used for analysing the data. This

framework consists of a type of iterative "stage model", through which the activities the interviewees described could be structured and understood.

4.4.4 Selection of interviewees

The interviewees represent both public and private organisations, such as clients, contractors, consultants, and municipal functions like the Employment Agency. They all work strategically with employment requirements, but many also have operative tasks related to employment requirements. The interviewees have diverse backgrounds in terms of education and previous work experiences. The majority have a degree in either engineering or business, while others are former teachers, social workers, construction workers and legal counsellors. They currently hold a multitude of different professional functions, but often work in management positions. Information about the interviewees are compiled in Table 3.

Table 3: List of interviews in interview study

No.	Organisation	Type of organisation	Professional role/Title	Codes[i]
First phase: May–October 2016				
1	Procurement Company	Support organisation	Project leader (municipal officer)	SO1
2	Premises Office	Client	Procurement officer and former contractor	C1
3	Large Swedish contractor no. 1	Contractor/ consultant	National sustainability manager	CC1
4	Swedish public housing company no. 1	Client	Head of development for new building projects, former purchasing manager (development manager)	C2
5	Swedish public housing company no. 2	Client	Procurement manager Strategic procurement officer Strategic procurement officer	C3 C4 C5
6	Large Swedish contractor no. 2	Contractor/ consultant	Development leader for social sustainability (development strategist)	CC2

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[i] SO = Support organization, C = Client, CC = Contractor/Consultant

Second phase: November 2017–February 2017				
7	Corporate group for public housing companies	Client	Process leader for employment requirements (process leader)	C6
8	Swedish public housing company no. 3	Client	Procurement manager	C7
9	Private commercial property management company no. 1	Client	Sustainability manager	C8
10	Large Swedish contractor no. 3	Contractor/ consultant	Project manager in large refurbishment and new build project implementing employment requirements	CC3
11	Employment agency no. 1	Support organisation	Employment officer working on site in the large refurbishment and new build project implementing employment requirements (same as in interview 10)	SO2
12	Architecture firm	Contractor/ consultant	Business developer	CC4
13	Swedish public housing company no. 4	Client	CSR manager Development strategist for social issues (development strategist)	C9 C10
14	Swedish private housing company	Client	CEO	C11
15	Employment agency no. 2	Support organisation	Employment officer/coordinator for the building division	SO3
16	Large Swedish contractor no. 4	Contractor/ consultant	Sustainability manager	CC5
17	State-owned commercial property management company no. 2	Client	Sustainability manager Project manager	C12 C13

Because the main purpose of the studies so far in my doctoral research process has been to obtain an overview of implications of employment requirements for actors in the Swedish construction sector, actors who work strategically with issues concerning employment requirements were identified as suitable interview objects. Therefore, the interviewees were those who were considered to be the most experienced and knowledgeable of employment requirements in Sweden, and who had an influential position to put employment requirements on the agenda. The interviewees were identified

through industry press, websites, seminars and snowballing. Snowballing (see Flick, 2014; Bryman and Bell, 2015) was useful because it enabled access to interviewees from deeper in the organisations, who might not be easily found on a company website but who had considerable experience in working with employment requirements. Also, as there is only a small clique of people working with these issues in Sweden, many of them know each other. Therefore, snowballing was sometimes used without having to ask, as many of the interviewees referred to others in the construction sector that might be valuable to interview, even if these people often worked in other organisations.

4.5 Limitations of research design

One issue with using interviews is the risk of receiving a biased, subjective view. However, Czarniawska (2014) argued that interviewees' interpretations and subjective views motivate actions, and motivation for action is part of what I aim to study. If I had used a quantitative approach instead, this could have provided an overview of employment requirements in Sweden, but such an approach would have been unable to provide insight into the rich intricacies of daily working life of individual actors, which is of interest for my research. One alternative could have been to follow a case, like a construction project or development process of a specific model. This approach could enable a closer insight into the daily work concerning employment requirements, but may have missed the opportunity to provide a more comprehensive picture. Therefore, interviews lie somewhere in between these two methodological approaches and are suitable for studying an emerging and novel phenomenon.

Most of the interviewees had a very passionate disposition regarding societal development through the mean of employment requirements, and were driving their personal agenda, both within and outside of their organisations. As shown in Paper 2, many of them even proposed their role and new responsibilities themselves. A risk when interviewing such passionate individuals is that they will provide only the positive aspects and opportunities of employment requirements, rather than giving a more problematizing view. Although this potentially one-sided enthusiasm could be a weakness of the research results, the novelty of employment requirements means that a main task when choosing interviewees was to identify and interview those with most expertise and experience. In this case, this expertise and experience goes hand in hand with their passion for the topic. Without this passion, they would likely have lacked the experience and been less able to provide useful and detailed insight into the studied phenomenon.

The research also lacks input from the unemployed people themselves. One reason for this is privacy laws and the lack of access to these individuals. Including the perspective of the unemployed would have provided a more comprehensive picture of employment

requirements and its implications, and contributed to first-hand accounts rather than the anecdotal accounts from the interviewees, which might be positively skewed.

4.6   Research quality

In order to comment on the trustworthiness of my research, I used Bryman and Bell's (2015) criteria for evaluating qualitative research. In order to establish a study's trustworthiness, it should have credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Credibility can be increased through triangulation of methods, data and researchers. This thesis is compiled by a study of three cases based on secondary data and an interview study in two phases, in addition to studies of previous research and other documents like industry press and websites. As such, there are different sources and methods for data collection. The different independent sources of data provided a basis for comparison and often reinforced the findings. Triangulation can also be achieved through respondent validation (Flick, 2014; Bryman and Bell, 2015). In an attempt to improve research quality, to validate the results, and to influence the trajectory of the research, a reference group session was conducted in November 2016. Representatives from different construction sector organisations – ranging from clients and contractors to consultants and support organisations – discussed the preliminary results of the research at that time, and commented on the findings in order to provide more input on the issues and topics identified in the interviews. This reference group feedback session took place after the eighth interview; that is, after approximately half of the interviews had been conducted (17 in total). This session was valuable for ensuring findings were relevant and "correctly" interpreted. Regarding triangulation of researchers, the analysis for Papers 1 and 2 was conducted jointly by myself and my supervisors, thereby increasing credibility.

Qualitative research is often very context-specific, which makes generalisability difficult. However, *transferability* – that is, taking the findings and applying them to another context – is more achievable; for example, by providing thick descriptions of context details. The papers are empirically driven and provide plentiful quotes, which makes it possible to deduce the line of reasoning in the analysis and enables others to judge the transferability to "their" context.

Dependability is enabled by carefully documenting data. All of the interviews in this study were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Documents and other secondary data were collected and saved. Coding structure and key concepts or words for coding the material are documented.

Confirmability is achieved through openness about potential biases. As discussed in the subchapter about limitations of the research design, the interviewee bias might be

problematic, even though choosing other interviewees would have been difficult when striving for finding the most experienced and knowledgeable interviewees. As author, I could be biased in my interpretations of the data, as it might be easy to be enthused by passionate interviewees. However, as the papers reveal, employment requirements are not only positive or negative, and both opportunities and difficulties are discussed in each paper and in this thesis. Therefore, biases in this research have hopefully been cleared away as much as possible.

4.7 Interrelation between research questions, studies and papers

Figure 2 illustrates the interrelation between research questions, studies and papers. In Paper 1, which broadly aimed to identify areas of implications related to the implementation of employment requirements, three different areas of implications emerged (drivers and perceived value, organisations and roles, and practices and competences). Two of these implications were chosen for further studies.
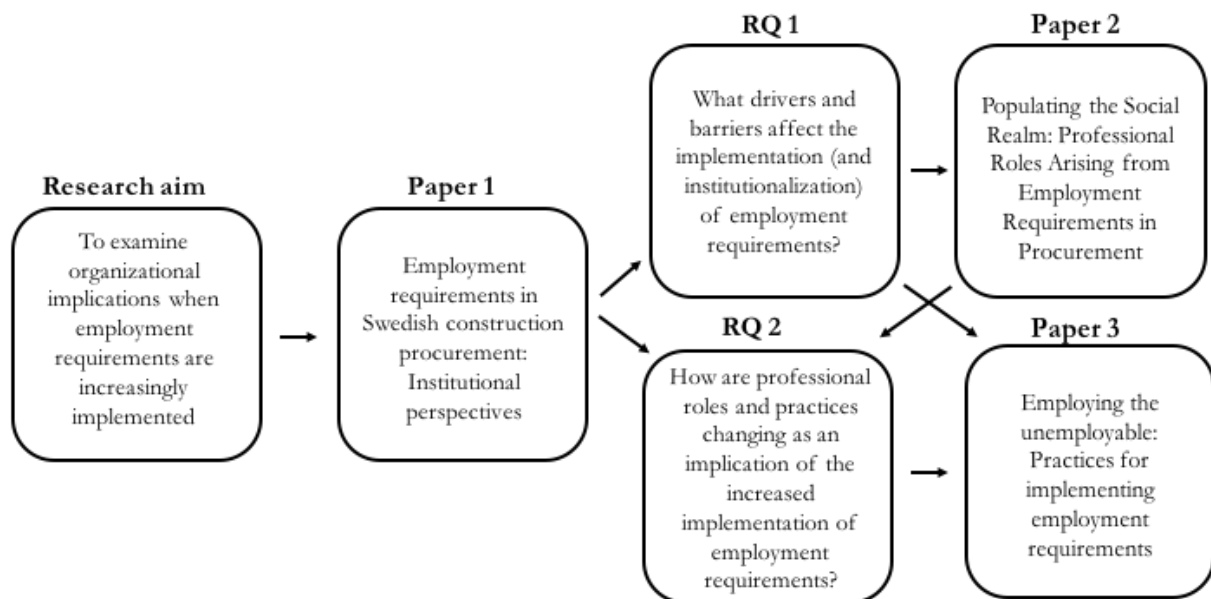

Figure 2: Interrelation between the aim, research questions and appended papers.

The remaining two appended papers are thus a product of study 1 and 2a and the first appended paper, and illustrate in more detail what organisational implications arise when employment requirements are increasingly implemented.

5. Summary of appended papers

This chapter summarises each of the three appended papers.

5.1 Paper 1: Employment Requirements in Swedish Construction Procurement: Institutional Perspectives

Paper 1 explores the use of employment requirements and its organisational implications in Sweden in order to obtain an initial overview of this novel phenomenon, and to suggest a possible theoretical approach for investigating this phenomenon in the future. Findings, which build on interviews and secondary data on three Swedish cases where employment requirements have been applied, show three types of organisational implications. The first is traditional procurement logic, where value is perceived as a function of cost and quality of the physical product is increasingly co-existing and competing with a logic in which social value plays an important role. This has created *new drivers and perceived value*. For housing companies, employment requirements can help ensure rent incomes and raised property values; for municipalities, employment requirements can decrease welfare expenditures and increase tax incomes; for contractors and other suppliers, employment requirements can function as a recruitment tool. Secondly, *new organisations and roles* dedicated exclusively to employment requirements have emerged. The interviewees explained how existing roles within their respective organisations have been modified in order to cope with the complexities of employment requirements; they also described how new organisations are developing with the business idea of supplying unemployed people for social construction projects. Lastly, new procurement strategies and related business models have emerged, as well as a call for deeper collaboration, resulting in *new practices and competences*. However, collaboration can be complicated, and there are a number of practical issues to overcome due to the collective lack of knowledge, such as preferred employment form, qualification criteria and/or evaluation processes. These three implications show that, due to the increased use of employment requirements, the construction sector may currently be experiencing initial stages of a process of institutional change, which is shaped by industry actors and their ongoing institutional work. It is somewhat unclear who the important actors are in terms of driving this institutional change, but even though there is a general lack of knowledge about employment requirements in the construction sector, the joint opinion of the interviewees is that employment requirements are a lasting and long-term initiative.

For practice, an institutional perspective on the implications of employment requirements could enable a rich explication of processes, practices and roles, which might help individual practitioners and organisations to purposefully work towards an informed and effective use of employment requirements. For theory, this paper takes a first step towards understanding the implications of implementing employment requirements, and

towards theorising employment requirements in construction procurement, which is currently scarcely examined both theoretically and conceptually. Jointly, the perspectives of institutional logics and institutional work capture changes and processes on both an individual and a collective level, and can help explicate and conceptualise the meanings and wider effect of these changes. Thus, an institutional perspective could be a suitable analytical lens to study employment requirements and its effects on organisations and actors in the construction sector.

5.2 Paper 2: Populating the Social Realm: Professional Roles Related to Employment Requirements in Procurement

Employment requirements create increased coordination needs, forcing actors working in the construction sector, both on the client and contractor/consultant side, to adapt their practices. In order to manage the complex implementation of employment requirements, there are indications that new roles dedicated to working with employment requirements have emerged.

Paper 2 investigates how increased use of employment requirements nurture a new type of actor in the construction sector: the "employment requirement professional" (ERP). Building on a practice lens and professional identity literature, this paper investigates how a new type of actor populates a new professional space within construction procurement, and how this role is framed in terms of knowledge domain, social identity and work practices. Although the interviewees who work with employment requirements have different professional roles and diverse backgrounds in terms of work experience and education, they fit into three broad professional categories: t*he coordinators* that work across boundaries to make employment requirements manageable while working administratively as their main responsibility; *the sustainability experts* that often work with other sustainability areas, like environmental issues; and *the procurement experts* that typically work with procurement in their daily work. Many of the interviewees have personally proposed the need for their own role in their organisations and filled it, iteratively and ad hoc, with substance. However, they struggle to fulfil their strategic responsibilities, while colleagues throughout their organisations demand operative support. From the interviews three different kinds of social identities can be distinguished: *the idealists* that want to be good builders of societies and want to act as role models; *the problem solvers* that want to find a recipe for making employment requirements both sustainable and commercially feasible; and *the bureaucrats* that are committed to employment requirements due to political or company policy reasons. The interviewees and their work with employment requirements are fuelled by these social identities and personal driving forces. The interviewees also engage in three types of activities, which they use shared metaphorical terms to describe. They work *operatively* to make employment requirements manageable for others; they refer to themselves as *teachers* as they engage extensively in promoting

employment requirements within and outside their organisations; and they work as *gardeners* to "plant seeds" and "grow people" to create collaborative space across organisational boundaries. These professional roles, adopted social identities, and metaphors for explaining their work reinforce each other, and they seem to be able to enact and wield these identities, roles and practices in a modular fashion, in order to cope with their complex work related to employment requirements.

All in all, due to an immature knowledge domain, missing competencies among the "employment requirement professionals" (ERPs), ad hoc learning, and problematic knowledge transfer between actors, the paper conclude that there is no established profession or a distinct knowledge domain yet, although the ERPs are underway of creating a space for themselves and their role within their organisations. The paper contributes to an understanding of the implications that employment requirements have on the roles and identities of construction professionals, and how a new professional domain, new social identities, and new collaborative work practices are being established. For practitioners, this insight may create an understanding of what their future professional space might be, potentially clarifying collaboration across organisational boundaries. This could subsequently enable a dissemination of practices, and facilitate an establishment of a specific knowledge domain. For theory, the paper contributes to a deeper insight into the seldom-investigated concept of employment requirements. The findings provide a detailed account of who works with employment requirements and how and why they conduct their work, thus helping explain how professionalization could be hindered due to issues with knowledge domains, conflicting demands on responsibilities, and ad hoc, iterative development of roles and work practices.

5.3 Paper 3: Employing the Unemployable: Practices for Implementing Employment Requirements

Procurement is increasingly used as a strategic tool for accomplishing social values and goals, yet there are few guidelines for how to best implement employment requirements. This has led to actors experimenting with different approaches for implementing employment requirements, resulting in scattered practices throughout the construction sector. Paper 3 examines practices related to the implementation of employment requirements. For theoretical examination, the theory of institutional work and a model for creating proto-institutions – meaning "institutions in the making" – are applied for its practice-oriented perspective.

Findings from 21 interviews show that actors within the Swedish construction sector are well underway with creating practices to support the proto-institution of social procurement. The sponsors (creators) of the proposed practices conduct considerable preparatory work, where they consult stakeholders in their design of new practices for

implementing employment requirements. This is important for ensuring both internal and external legitimacy. The interviewees then describe how they promote their proposed practices and try to gain support. They use cognitive, regulative and normative arguments, and especially lean on a commercial discourse. They also conduct a new type of promotional activity – emotional promotion – which appeals to supporters' empathic nature by talking about the "unemployable" themselves, and the positive change employment requirements can have for their and their family's lives. However, even though the interviewees talk extensively about the unemployable, they have not consulted the unemployable in the design of the employment requirements and have not promoted their practices to the unemployable. This is now problematic as it becomes increasingly difficult to recruit unemployed people to construction projects using employment requirements.

In the process of spreading their proposed practices for implementing employment requirements, the interviewees also disparage competing practices, especially with regard to using internships vs. temporary employment, while simultaneously showing an openness and willingness to learn from competing practices. The interviewees then go on to collaborate with supporters and emphasise the need for dialogue in their development and spread of their proposed practices. Also, the interviewees are inspired by other "competing" practices but in a non-combative manner. Finally, the interviewees attempt to establish maintenance mechanisms aimed at upholding their practices and the proto-institution of employment requirements. However, there are few of these in place today, even though ISO systems, for example, might be important in the future for the long-term sustainability of employment requirements and related practices. Currently, there is little convergence of practices.

The paper provides a conceptual model based on the implementation of employment requirements, which point to the complex and emerging nature of this phenomenon. For theory, the findings illustrate how seemingly powerless and disadvantaged people can be vital agentic supporters when creating new practices, who can impact the spread of employment requirements and related practices. Findings also show how a new type of promotional activity – emotional promotion – can be very persuasive when arguing for employment requirements. Practitioners could further develop practices related to the implementation of employment requirements by acknowledging, and perhaps consulting, the "unemployable", as well as using emotional promotion strategically to spread their practices.

6. Discussion

Based on studies presented in this thesis and in three appended papers, this chapter discusses the findings and their implication for practice and theory. The findings illustrate some main implications when implementing employment requirements. Institutional theory has proven useful for understanding the change spurred by the implementation of employment requirements. The findings in this thesis are important considering this phenomenon's novelty in practice and its scarce coverage in research literature.

6.1 Drivers and barriers that affect the implementation of employment requirements

In this section, I have discussed findings that relate to the first research question; *What drivers and barriers affect the implementation (and institutionalization) of employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement?* The findings highlight several barriers that hinders implementation and institutionalization of employment requirements in the construction sector, many of which corroborate previous research (see Table 1) (McCrudden, 2004; Erridge, 2007; Meehan and Bryde, 2011; Eadie and Rafferty, 2014; Scottish Government, 2014; Sutherland et al., 2015; Loosemore, 2016; Barraket and Weissman, 2009; Walker and Brammer, 2009; Zuo et al., 2012; Barraket et al., 2016; Nilsson and Nilsson-Lundmark, 2016). The findings also point to other barriers and drivers that impact the implementation, and subsequently the institutionalization, of employment requirements, which will be discussed more in detail in the section below.

6.1.1 Builders becomes social workers

One barrier for implementing employment requirements, which is built upon a logic of social value, is that it is perceived by many practitioners to partly clash against the prevailing logics of the construction sector, which focuses on price and quality of the building (see Sporrong, 2011). For example, the contractors are builders, but are now suddenly supposed to be social workers. The same applies to the professionals working with implementing employment requirements. Professional roles and social identities are prescribed with values and norms (Lok, 2010; McPherson and Sauder, 2013); in the construction sector, these are strongly defined as "someone who knows how to build" (Löwstedt and Räisänen, 2014) rather than "someone who is a social worker". Although actors can enact several different identities at once (Lok, 2010; Bévort and Suddaby; 2016; Abdelnour et al., 2017), the actors in the construction sector may not be ready or able to do so. The sector is establishing new roles or adding responsibilities to existing roles in an attempt to deal with the implementation of employment requirements and the embedded logics of social value. However, it is uncertain whether the construction sector and its organisations are changing on a deeper level. The question is whether the construction sector and its organisations are actually changing the way they think and work, or whether

they just employ someone who can "handle" the contrasting logics for them. This issue of changing to accommodate sustainability issues is something that also Bresnen (2013) claimed is difficult in the construction sector.

6.1.2 Collaboration difficulties and unclear drivers

Previous research (Barraket et al., 2016) found that social procurement and employment requirements lead to deeper collaboration between different actors and organizations. This finding is corroborated in all the appended papers, where collaboration is emphasized as important for the implementation of employment requirements to be successful. However, in Sweden collaboration concerning the implementation of employment requirements seems to be difficult, even though the interviewees describe efforts to make collaboration possible. For example, papers 1 and 3 showed that there are many differing opinions about which practices to use when implementing employment requirements, about what employment form to use, about who should be responsible for evaluations, and whether to use negotiable or non-negotiable criteria. Paper 2 shows that the ERPs feel alone in their role, but that they try to co-create collaborative space across organisational boundaries, while working in an unclear knowledge domain. Paper 3 shows that ERPs consult stakeholders like contactors, subcontractors, clients, municipalities, and industry organisations when designing their practices for implementing employment requirements. The ERPs are inspired by "competing" practices, and are open towards collaborating, but that it is difficult to exchange information in the sector. Further, many of the interviewees who represent contractors claim that there is a general lack of support and formal procedures on a national and on a project level for how to best implement employment requirements. Also, the collaboration with the Employment Agency has had varying success throughout the country, either helping or hindering the implementation of employment requirements for many contractors. Clients feel that it is unnecessary for contractors to demand a premium for being required to hire new workers when the contractors need more staff anyway considering the current worker shortage.

Thus, even though all the interviewees indicate a strong promotion, prevalence, and need for collaboration, a chasm remains between the client and supplier sides in understanding each other's difficulties, abilities and agendas. This means that even though clients and contractors maintain that collaboration and dialogue are important, it is uncertain how deep and genuine this collaboration actually is. Previous research has found that collaboration is the key to creating new institutions and implementing social procurement initiatives like employment requirements (Lawrence et al., 2002; Barraket et al., 2016), meaning that these issues might hinder the implementation and institutionalization of employment requirements.

The above-mentioned challenge with collaboration is related to drivers or benefits and costs not being fully established for every actor engaged in the implementation of

employment requirements. As found in Paper 1, both public and private housing companies have clear commercial business opportunities. When their tenants move from unemployment to employment, housing companies ensure rent payments, tenants are more able to handle rent increases, neighbourhoods receive better ratings when social exclusion decreases, and neighbourhoods are safer and suffer less vandalism when tenants work in the neighbourhood. For local and national government, increased employment rates mean less welfare expenditures and more tax incomes (Nilsson and Nilsson-Lundmark, 2016). This produces clear commercial drivers for government and many organisations on the client side.

For contractors, or other suppliers and consultants, the drivers are less obvious. The idea amongst the interviewees was that the main benefits for suppliers are that contractors and consultants can use employment requirements as a recruitment tool, that proactiveness in implementing employment requirements can serve as a competitive advantage and create goodwill, and that employment requirements can fulfil CSR agendas like becoming more diversified. However, these benefits may be difficult to quantify. In addition, the construction sector in Sweden has cleared away most of the low-skilled jobs and people working in the sector today are well-educated. This can make it difficult for contractors to simply use employment requirements as a recruitment tool, as many of the people recruited for the projects lack the proper education and work experience to work in the sector. The small number of low-skilled jobs may make it difficult to find the unemployed a useful space in the projects where they can work independently and contribute to the success of the projects. The findings show how unclear drivers and costs of implementing employment requirements could hinder the legitimisation, and subsequent institutionalization, of employment requirements, rather than the perception that social procurement is expensive, as found in previous research (Erridge, 2007; Walker and Brammer, 2009; Zuo et al., 2012; Eadie and Rafferty, 2014).

6.2 Changed roles and practices as an implication of increased implementation of employment requirements

In this section, I discuss findings that are related to the second research question; *How are professional roles and practices changing as an implication of the increased implementation of employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement?* The findings corroborate much of the previous research, which has found that both roles and practices are being created and reshaped in order to accommodate the, often complex, implementation of employment requirements (Barraket and Weissman 2009; Scottish Government, 2014; Sutherland et al., 2015; Loosemore 2015; Barraket et al., 2016). These implications will now be discussed in greater detail than previous research has done, thereby increasing the understanding for the complexity of employment requirements.

6.2.1 Institutional entrepreneurs and institutional work

The findings of Paper 2 show that many organisations within the construction sector are creating completely new roles dedicated to social procurement, or have redesigned and assigned new areas of responsibility related to social procurement to existing roles. This corroborates what Sutherland et al. (2015) found in Scotland. These roles are often proposed by the role-holders themselves, which means that the initiative to create a new role or new responsibilities and practices did not necessarily come from management. The characteristics of the interviewees in my research – including passion, drive, and innovative thinking – coupled with their propensity to enact change, suggest that they are good examples of institutional entrepreneurs (Beckert, 1999; Battilana, 2006).

The interviewees showed a great deal of agency when creating space for their own role, and strategically "planted seeds" within management in order to establish their role within their respective organisations, much like Beckert (1999) proposed. In addition, many of the interviewees have a managing position within their organisations, or at the very least work foremost strategically rather than operatively. Their social position within their organisation and the institutional field as a whole, where they usually hold a management role or work across organisational boundaries with many internal and external contacts, could thereby have enabled them to enact this change in the first place. If they would have had less access to resources or people, their "seeds" might have never had the opportunity to grow. Their social position could also allow them to spread the practices related to the implementation of employment requirements, making such efforts legitimate due to their social position, in line with Battilana's (2006) perspective.

Looking to the findings presented in Paper 3, considerable work is being done by actors who might not be characterised as institutional entrepreneurs; namely, the unemployed. These may not be the type of actor to which institutional theory would typically acknowledge or accredit agency. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) stated that institutional work revolves around the daily work of agentic individual actors, and described institutional work as 'purposive'. Battilana (2006) and Battilana and D'Aunno (2009) suggested that agency and institutional entrepreneurship are enabled by and conditioned upon the institutional environment and the actors' positions within this environment. Having said that, the distinction between what types of actions that can be labelled institutional work, or who can be labelled an institutional entrepreneur, is less clear (Battilana, 2006; Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006).

Previous research has neglected to acknowledge the institutional work of actors with what could be assumed to have "weak agency" due to their low social position in a specific context (Battilana, 2006), and the same can be said for my research. When it comes to the implementation of employment requirements, actors with weak agency would presumably be the unemployed, due to their social exclusion and low social position. The

interviewees, who describe how they designed and spread their proposed practices for implementing employment requirements (see Paper 3), have not made systematic efforts to consult or seek support from the unemployed in this process, even though they did so from many other stakeholders. The interviewees seem to have assumed that the unemployed would support the implementation of employment requirements and/or thought the unemployed had little agency or role to play in institutionalizing the implementation of employment requirements.

However, as discussed in Paper 3, by turning down the employment opportunity offered through employment requirements, the unemployed are hindering the implementation and subsequent institutionalization of employment requirements. The unemployed are probably not purposively hindering the implementation of employment requirements – they are simply turning down a job offer – but the effect is still a breakdown of the proto-institution of social procurement. Thus, the unemployed seem to conduct considerable institutional work, thereby affecting the implementation of employment requirements, through their (sometimes) non-participation. So, what does it mean when seemingly powerless actors actually have the power to disrupt a sector-wide phenomenon by their unwillingness to participate in the institution?

Therefore, is it the results of the work or the intentions of the work that are important for actions being labelled institutional work? Are results or intentions – that is, purposiveness – the main characteristic for calling certain actions and behaviours institutional work? The unemployed perpetuate the predominant institutional structures through their non-participation and passivity – is this not institutional work? The effect is still a strong, chronically reproduced perpetuation and maintenance of prevailing institutional structures. This corroborates Smets and Jarzabkowski's (2013) findings that actors often lack intentionality, at least in the sense of being purposive and aiming to either create, maintain or disrupt institutions. When going about their lives, they might simply be upholding the institutional structures in place in the process.

In the case of the implementation of employment requirements, and the role of the unemployed, there seem to be different "levels" of institutional work and institutional entrepreneurship. The unemployed might not be institutional entrepreneurs as they do not engage in divergent behaviour or attempt to enact institutional change (Beckert, 1999; Battilana, 2006), but they might still conduct institutional work, as they maintain institutions and disrupt proto-institutions through non-participation. The unemployed might use passive, rather than active, agency in their daily (institutional) work/life. These findings would suggest that there is a distinction between (1) active, purposive, reflective agency of institutional entrepreneurs who work diligently to create, maintain or disrupt institutions (the employment requirement professional), and (2) the less reflective actors who, through their daily work, maintain institutions through their passive agency.

Battilana (2006) argued that not everyone who has agency is an institutional entrepreneur, which corresponds to this line of reasoning. In the case of implementing employment requirements, the unemployed and their institutional work illustrate the difference between actors conducting institutional work (the unemployed) and institutional entrepreneurs actively driving change in their institutional work (the interviewees/ERPs).

6.2.2 Narratives as a tool for institutionalizing practices and logics

Paper 3 showed that there are a multitude of different practices emerging in an attempt to implement employment requirements in a successful way. The interviewees describe how they engage in activities corresponding to those that Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) suggested underlie the creation of institutional work, such as constructing identities and normative networks (as found in Paper 2 by the roles and identities the ERPs enact), and by changing normative associations and reconfiguring meaning systems (as in Paper 3 by emphasising the need to become good builders of society and through emotional promotion). Considering the different propositions for how to best implement employment requirements, such as the value of using internships rather than temporary employment contracts, and vice versa, these can be seen as narratives that can be used as tools of persuasion.

The findings from my research show that people who work to design, spread and implement employment requirements spend a great deal of time and effort convincing others and providing narratives and arguments for implementing employment requirements. These narratives seem to be necessary for legitimising the implementation (and institutionalization) of employment requirements. Firstly, actors in the construction sector, who are used to collaborating while maintaining their own separate identities (Dubois and Gadde, 2002), are now facing a situation where clients are interfering with contractors' personnel policies, and telling them who to hire and what employment form to use (internship or temporary employment). Secondly, actors within the construction sector are used to negotiating contracts using tangible, calculable criteria like price and quality (Sporrong, 2011), but must now include complex and hard-to-measure social criteria in their tender procedures. In order to overcome these complexities, and to be able to spread and establish practices related to the implementation of employment requirements, narratives seem to be useful.

The interviewees from this study "hijack" institutional logics that are already prevalent in the institutional environment, and construct narratives around these logics in order to make cognitive appeals (cf. McPherson and Sauder, 2013; Zietsma and McKnight, 2009). By using a commercial discourse relating to the traditional procurement logics of focusing on price and quality, and by framing the implementation of employment requirements as a commercially profitable phenomenon, the actors seem to sneak employment requirements into wider accepted logics. In Paper 3, for example, both socio-economic

and commercial business opportunities are emphasised. Regarding socio-economic profits, a project manager (CC3) explained: "*When you get someone into employment instead of paying welfare, you instead receive money, so for the municipality it's a huge win; we're talking millions per year*". For contractors and other suppliers, a procurement manager (C7) said: "*You have to sell [employment requirements] to the contractors in a good way. But the larger contractors realise that if this is what the municipality wants, they can use it as a marketing tool and say they are a socially responsible 'society builder'*". Or, as one employment officer (SO3) expressed: "*They [the contractors] don't do this for social reasons, they do this [implement employment requirements] because they need competences in the organisation. It's all about business*".

These narratives might be reasonable considering that old habits (or logics) die hard, and arguing for employment requirements, although built on social values, from a commercial perspective, is the most effective narrative for institutionalizing the implementation for employment requirements. Having said that, Paper 3 found that the interviewees also use emotional arguments relating to the unemployed and their life situation in order to create empathy and support for employment requirements. For example, a procurement officer (P1) told a story about one woman who had obtained employment through employment requirements: "*[Employment requirements] produce ripples on the water. Looking back at this one woman, the ripples on the water reached her relatives first, her siblings saw that it was possible to get a job (…) This provides a strong signal outward. When her nine-year old girl came to school her classmates and teachers congratulated her that her mother had received employment, to there are ripples on the water there as well*". Maybe it is the combination of hijacked well-established commercial logics and new emotional and social logics that is required for legitimising employment requirements.

7. Concluding remarks

7.1   Conclusions

The construction sector is one of the world's largest industries in terms of number of employees and revenue, but the sector is generally perceived as weak in promoting sustainability (Ruparathna and Hewage, 2015) and as less proactive in implementing socially sustainable initiatives than other sectors (Whyte and Sexton, 2011; Loosemore, 2015). Thus, there is considerable opportunity for the construction sector to be a positive contributor to sustainable development (EU Commission, 2016), for example through the implementation of employment requirements.

This thesis provide insight into a scarcely examined phenomenon. The research corroborates much of the previous research on social procurement and employment requirements but also adds considerable detail about what working with employment requirements entails, both in terms of who does it and in what ways. The first paper illustrated that the construction sector seems to be undergoing an institutionalization process, where the increased implementation of employment requirements has created new drivers and logics, new roles and actors, and new practices and competence needs. The second paper goes deeper and illustrates who is working with employment requirements and how they create substance and space for their role through wielding different social identities. The third paper illustrates what these actors do when they implement employment requirements and how they attempt to make employment requirements taken-for-granted in construction procurement.

For theory and research on social procurement and employment requirements, the findings indicate that there are several drivers for implementing employment requirements, such as socio-economic and commercial business opportunities. However, there are also several barriers – practical, theoretical and value-laden – that are slowing down an institutionalization process of social procurement and employment requirements. In particular, actors within the construction sector are forced to adopt an identity of not only being builders, but also of being social workers, which creates ambiguity in their role and regarding what the scope of their responsibilities should be. In addition, because collaboration between actors within the construction sector is difficult, and because the drivers for and costs of implementing employment requirements are unclear, implementation and institutionalization of employment requirements may be hindered.

The findings presented in the appended papers and this thesis also show that the "employment requirement professionals" (ERPs) share many characteristics with institutional entrepreneurs, thereby giving a "face" to the ERPs. The ERPs are skilled in using narratives as tools for driving the institutionalization of employment requirements, especially by hijacking commercial logics and narratives stemming from traditional price

and quality-focused procurement criteria (Sporrong, 2011), in combination with more emotional arguments. Although the ERPs use emotional arguments to institutionalize employment requirements, they have not acknowledged the agentic role of the unemployed. This finding widens the perspective on who can be an institutional entrepreneur, and what institutional work actually entails. The current view that institutional work must be purposive and agentic (e.g. Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006) is narrow in the sense that effects of institutional work is neglected. Even though one might argue that it is the process of institutionalization that is interesting, rather than the effect, for practitioners it is nonetheless the effect of the work, either passive or active, that has a long-term impact on their daily lives.

For practice, actors within the construction sector who are interested in implementing employment requirements may benefit from identifying institutional entrepreneurs within and outside their organisations who can help drive the development, implementation, and institutionalization of employment requirements. In addition, practitioners could be well-served by including the unemployed in the design and implementation of employment requirements, if they want to achieve sustainable employment requirements and related practices. Organisations in the construction industry should also ponder whether they are thoroughly changing in order to accommodate the implementation of employment requirements, or whether they are hiring a new type of specialist, like the ERPs, to handle the implementation of employment requirements for them as a quick fix. Also, the mutual lack of understanding between different actors hinders effective collaboration in the sector – something which the multiparty-activity of implementing employment requirements needs. As long as there are practical uncertainties about how to best implement employment requirements, conflicting logics forcing actors to adopt new social identities they are unfamiliar with, and seemingly powerless actors being neglected, this institutionalization process might never be fulfilled. By looking into some of these specific issues, as suggested in the following section, these practical and theoretical issues might be overcome.

7.2   Suggestions for future research: Second half of PhD project

Looking back to the three areas of implications identified in Paper 1 (drivers and perceived value, organisations and roles, and practices and competences), the area of implications regarding drivers and perceived value, which pertains to the institutional logics of the construction sector, has not been developed into a paper yet, even though it has been touched upon in the discussion of this thesis. Therefore, investigating drivers and perceived value of employment requirements and the underlying institutional logics more in depth could be a possible avenue of research moving forward. This would make the "triptych" of the thesis' appended papers go full circle from what the first paper's

suggested research agenda (see Figure 4).

Considering the use of narratives for implementing employment requirements, language and theories on discourse could be a possible theoretical lens through which to study institutional logics. Language has generally been neglected in studies of institutional theory, even though language is key for institutionalization processes (Phillips et al., 2004), as it helps to understand the reality of everyday life. Language also defines institutional arrangements, and conversations between individual actors help to create legitimacy and maintain the taken-for-granted reality of an institutional environment (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Phillips et al., 2004). Studying the role of language in the implementation of employment requirements, how language is used as a tool in an institutionalized environment, how language influence the creation of new institutions, and how narratives and discourse are used to legitimise new phenomena would be interesting. This would, for example, build on previous work by Gluch and Räisänen (2009) who with a critical discourse-analytic approach studied the role of human mediators and mediating genres when environmental specialists communicate about green sustainability in construction projects. Suddaby (2010) claimed that one of the more promising areas of institutional theory is to examine the role of language in institutionalization processes, and specifically how language can be used purposively in order to persuade others for institutional creation and maintenance.
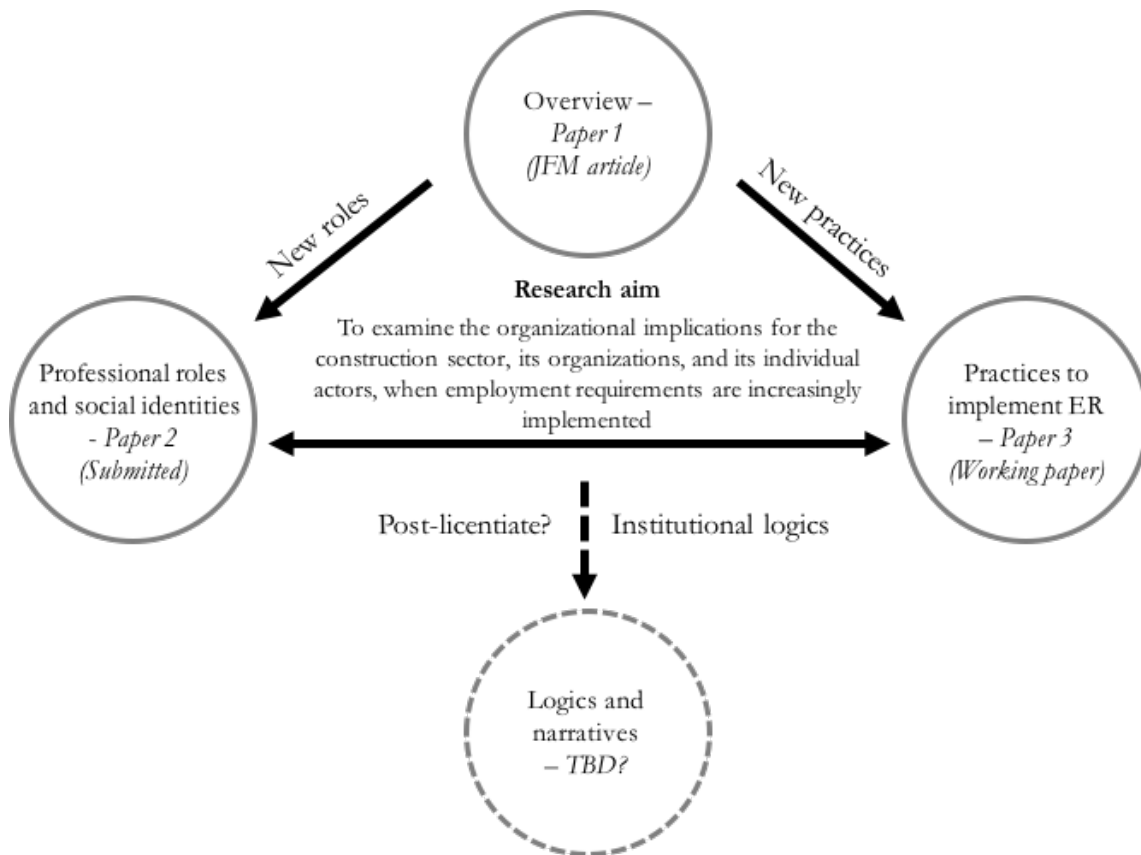

Figure 4: Result of the three studies and appended papers in the thesis.

Because the implementation of employment requirements is a multi-party activity (Barraket et al., 2016), collaboration is another avenue for future research. Inter-organisational collaboration has the potential to create (proto-)institutions (Lawrence et al., 2002), and in the case of the implementation of employment requirements, many new practices, roles and logics have emerged from collaborative activities, even though the discussion shows that this collaboration is not always easy. Future research could examine what particular activities within collaboration and what features of collaborative relationships are more or less conductive to create new institutions, to facilitate institutionalization process of a new phenomenon, and to enable adoption of new (conflicting) institutional logics. By investigating the intricacies of collaboration aimed at designing, spreading and implementing employment requirements, specific activities might be identified and the social relations between actors, such as the ERPs, can be better understood; this would benefit both practice and theory in terms of better understanding collaboration and its influence on institutionalization processes, institutional logics, and employment requirements.

Moving forward, there is good reason for including the perspective of the "people on the ground" – the site managers, construction workers, supervisors, and the unemployed themselves – potentially by studying cases through interviews and observations in real-time. Moreover, previous research within institutional theory has failed to investigate actors who seemingly have weak agency (such as the socially excluded and the unemployed) (Battilana, 2006), and the present thesis perpetuates this neglect. The scope was necessary due to the novelty of the phenomenon and lack of research, where a more general base of knowledge had to be established in order to determine which particular areas would be interesting to investigate further. The findings have shown that the unemployed are not powerless and have an important impact on the implementation of employment requirements. Therefore, studying the unemployed is a reasonable step forward; for example, investigating how they are integrated into the projects.

Relating to the title of the thesis – "Let the right ones in?" – the question becomes whether the unemployed targeted for employment requirements in Swedish construction procurement are the people that should be integrated into the construction sector. How can their employability be constructed, translated and understood into practice (c.f. Diedrich and Styhre, 2013)? Do they have the prerequisites necessary to become employable and contributing members of the sector, and if so, how can the sector itself open up to these people? Even if these questions cannot be answered here and now, the quote from a sustainability manager provided at the very beginning of the thesis provides a positive outlook: "*Sure, we can sit and wait for some grandiose solution to appear, but there won't be a grandiose solution. However, employment requirements are one solution to solve [the problem of social exclusion].*

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