E-government and E-governance

Local Implementation of E-government Policies in Sweden

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E-GOVERNMENT AND E-GOVERNANCE:
LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF
E-GOVERNMENT POLICIES IN SWEDEN

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¹ A Swedish association of municipalities for joint development of e-services.
Abstract

It is recognized in international research that the public sector has been transformed into a networked, open and more flexible, informal and interactive governance structure. This is described as a transition from “government to governance”. Sweden is one of the international leaders with regards to e-government development. The objective of this thesis is to provide a deeper understanding of how e-government policies are implemented in an e-governance context, through empirical case studies in Sweden. The focus is on the local level. The overall research question is: How is e-government policy put into practice when focusing on the local level? This is reported in four articles.

Case study methodology is used as research method, including interviews, focus group interviews, document studies, and some participatory observations. The analysis is partly based on an inductive methodological approach, since this is a new, emerging field of innovative policy and practice.

The analysis arrives at three overarching conclusions: (1) In practice, when e-government policy is implemented and translated at the local level, it tends to happen in an e-governance setting conducted by policy entrepreneurs or promoted by entrepreneurial behaviour in public administration. E-government policies are implemented in relation to local cultures, norms and economic structures. (2) Implementation of e-government and e-governance initiatives requires trust in the service provision among public administrators as well as among citizens. Efficiency and citizen-centred approaches in the redesign of information relationships between public administration and citizens to create some sort of added value are crucial. (3) The thesis indicates that there are two main implications of municipal contact centres (CCs): they localize public services and they combine different services into a one-stop practice striving to provide “holistic” services to the individual citizen. However, although the use of ICT is essential for the organisational transformation, the results indicate that the organisational settings and internal anchoring are greater constraints than new technology for implementation of local e-government and e-governance initiatives in the form of contact centres. One example for potential added value is the source of information of citizens’ issues through the implementation of municipal contact centres, which may have a positive impact on the conditions for local planning.

Keywords: e-governance, e-government, implementation, policy entrepreneurs, municipal contact centres, policy networks, New Public Management, Sweden.
**Sammanfattning**

Enligt internationell forskning har den offentliga sektorn omvandlats till en nätverksliknande, öppen och mer flexibel, informell och interaktiv ledningsstruktur. Detta har ofta beskrivits som att det skett en transformering från "governmnet till governance". Sverige är ett av de ledande länderna när det gäller utveckling av e-förvaltning. Syftet med denna avhandling är att ge en djupare förståelse för hur svensk nationell e-förvaltningspolicy implementeras i denna styrningskontext genom empiriska fallstudier. Den övergripande forskningsfrågan är: Hur implementeras nationell e-förvaltningspolicy med fokus på den lokala nivån?

Analysen baseras på fyra artiklar. Fallstudiemetodik används som forskningsmetod, inklusive intervjuer, fokusgruppsintervjuer, dokumentstudier och vissa deltagande observationer. Analysen är delvis byggd på en induktiv metodstrategi, eftersom detta är ett nytt, innovativt framväxande område och ny praxis.

Analysen kommer fram till tre övergripande slutsatser: (1) När e-förvaltningspolicy genomförs på lokal nivå, tenderar det att ske i en e-governance praktik och implementeringen utförs till stor del av policyentreprenörer eller främjas av entreprenöriellt agerande av administratörer inom den offentliga förvaltningen. Genomförandet sker utifrån lokala kulturer, normer och ekonomiska strukturer. (2) Införandet av e-förvaltningsinitiativ kräver tillit och förtroende i serviceutövandet av såväl anställda inom offentlig förvaltning som bland medborgarna. Effektivitet och medborgarcentrerade strategier i den nya utformningen av relationer mellan den offentliga förvaltningen och medborgarna för att skapa någon form av mervärde är central. (3) Det finns två huvudsakliga konsekvenser av kommunala kontaktcenter: de lokaliserar offentliga tjänster och de kombinerar olika tjänster till en ”one-stop praktik” i en strävan att ge en helhetsservice till den enskilda medborgaren. Även om användningen av modern informationsteknologi är av väsentlig betydelse för den organisatoriska transformeringen, tyder dock resultaten på att den interna organisationen och förankringen är större begränsningar än ny teknik för att implementera lokala e-förvaltningsinitiativ i form av lokala kontaktcenter. Ett exempel på potentiellt mervärde genom införandet av kontaktcenter är att samtliga ärenden registreras. Denna information om medborgarnas frågor, kan ha en potentiell positiv inverkan på förutsättningarna för lokal planering.
List of appended articles

This thesis is based on the work presented in the following four articles:


Preface

In addition to being a lecturer in media and communication studies at University West, I have been working with local and regional development issues for several years. Since 1998 I have organized and coordinated an annual scientific international conference in regional science and entrepreneurship named “Uddevalla Symposium”. In 2002 the research theme concerned innovations, regional development and public policy in the digital economy.

My first concrete experience studying e-governance and e-government issues related to local and regional development actually was discussed and planned in 2008 at the Uddevalla Symposium. I was asked to participate in a research project and make a case study on the use of an innovative public e-service: an electronic application system for upper secondary schools in Fyrbodal – a county of West Sweden. This case study was made in early 2009 and later on the same year I presented a paper based on the analysis and results at the European Regional Science Association conference.

The second concrete experience studying local e-government and e-governance policy implementation was when I had the opportunity to work within a three-year e-government research project financed by VINNOVA from 2009 to 2011 at University West. I evaluated and analysed the implementation of municipal contact centres and public e-services in five Swedish municipalities. This was one of several reasons for applying for PhD studies. I started my PhD studies in planning and decision analysis at KTH in 2010 when working in this research project. I wanted to deepen the understanding, focusing on the local level, regarding the emerging development of reforming the public sector by using ICTs as a platform for communication with and providing services to citizens and businesses.

As I have been aware of several unanswered research questions after having finalized this doctoral thesis project, there is room for doing further research. Hopefully there will be a continuation to this research.

Uddevalla, September, 2014

Iréne
1. Introduction
Since the late 1990s, we have witnessed an increasing interest in reforming the public sector by using information technology (ICT) as a platform for communication with and providing services to citizens and businesses. This rapidly growing phenomenon is internationally labelled “e-government” (Ho, 2002; Heeks, 2006; Löfgren 2007; Worrall, 2011; Rabiaiah and Vandijck, 2011; Meijer and Bannister, 2011; United Nations, 2012; Norris and Reddick, 2012). E-government has over the past decade been considered an important managerial public reform (Rose and Grant, 2010; Lee et al., 2011) as governments have sought new ways to control costs and improve organisational efficiencies (Gil-Garcia and Pardo, 2005; Worrall, 2011; Larsson and Grönlund, 2014). Different concepts have been used to characterize this era: the “information economy” (Heeks, 1999), the “knowledge economy” (Stough, 2006; Westlund, 2006, 2013), the “digital revolution” and “the new economy, information age and network society” (Castells, 1996; 2010), “Digital-Era Governance” (Dunleavy et al., 2005), the digital economy or “New Public Governance” era (Osborne et al., 2012). It is further argued that there has been a shift from a “managed” economy toward an “entrepreneurial” economy in this era (Audretsch and Thurik, 2000).

The European Union and all other levels of government in Europe form policies, which are translated at the various levels to manage the praxis of e-government. Implementation is the process of turning policy into practice. To better understand the implementation process it is argued that it is relevant to discuss the context of the implementation (Löfgren, 2007). The implementation of e-government initiatives is claimed to be in a governance context as researchers seem to agree that the public sector has transformed to a networked, open and more flexible, informal and interactive governance structure (Montin and Hedlund, 2009; Sørensen and Torfing, 2008; Torfing and Triantafillou, 2011). This idea is rooted among many scholars arguing that a fundamental shift has taken place in most Western countries regarding governing, organisation and methods of working in the society and that there is a movement of regulation and implementation of policies from central government to other levels and social spheres (e.g. Pierre and Peters, 2000; Löfgren, 2007). This shift is characterized by a process opening up government towards broader governance of partnerships and network-oriented decision-making in an intricate interplay among public, private and non-profit organisations (Wihlborg and Palm, 2008). The role of local government then changes. Governance structures have developed in response to the state’s increased need to mobilize actors and their resources outside their formal context to e.g. implement public policy. This change is recognized in the international research and then described as a transition from “government to governance” (Pierre and Peters, 2000; Cars and von Sydow 2001; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Kjaer, 2004; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007; Gjelstrup and Sørensen, 2007; Healey, 2007). However, some researchers (Pierre and Sundström, 2009; Jordan et al., 2005) claim that governance has not replaced government – rather, government provides the framework within which governance exists.

Several researchers emphasize that this emerging information society challenges the relations between public institutions and citizens as well as within the organisations in many ways
which has led to change in the role, work and function of public administration in recent years (e.g. Bannister, 2001; Beynon-Davies and Williams, 2003; Heeks, 2006; Worrall, 2011; Jansson, 2013). It is further argued that within public administration there is a growing integration of public and private collaboration, public procurement and project management as expressions of New Public Management (NPM) (Homburg, 2008; Hall, 2011). In this context within the information society, contemporary entrepreneurship takes place (Castells, 2002). The networked governance of NPM is formed and developed by entrepreneurial actors in the networked governance context (von Bergmann-Winberg and Wihlborg, 2011).

Sweden is one of the international leaders with regards to e-government (United Nations, 2012). The Swedish government has had a strong policy aspiration in this progress. In 1999 the Swedish government stated that their ambition was to become an internationally leading information society accessible to all, 24 hours every day and aiming to improve efficiency (Government Bill, 1999/2000). The Swedish government stressed that the needs of the users are to govern the development of e-government (Regeringskansliet, 2008). In 2010 a national policy was proposed under the title, “As simple as possible for as many as possible – from strategy to actions for e-administration” (SOU, 2010:20). The concept of e-government is here translated as a part of the development activities of public administration that not only benefits from ICT, but also ensures that the development will lead to necessary organisational changes and training of employees within public administration. The key words of the policy are “simple, open, accessible, efficient and secure e-government” (SOU, 2010:9). Sweden today has a relatively high rate of Internet use (Findahl, 2011; 2012) which in a way may allow for and thus also demands improved and developed governmental services on-line.

In Sweden, public polices cannot be forced on regional and local public agencies, because public administration relies on the dual governing approach, with strong, constitutionally mandated regional and local autonomy. Instead, European and national policy statements become soft policy instruments in the regional and local context, and their implications rely on regional and local uptake in the specific setting, and on the competencies of the professionals in regional and local public administration. National as well as European Union grants are examples of financial instruments in order to implement the policies in the desired direction and create good examples.

Although there is a large amount of earlier e-Government research (Larsson and Grönlund, 2014), there is relatively little systematic research undertaken focusing on the local level (Deakins et al., 2010). A case study of implementing e-government at the local level in Serbia indicates that appropriate managerial and technical backgrounds, careful planning, and competent and strict management of implementation plans based on precise goals led to speedy development of e-Government even under severe financial constraints (Paroski et al., 2013). Swedish research shows that there is a need for deeper investigation of the consequences for the organisational structure of public agencies when local e-government initiatives are implemented (Lindblad-Gidlund et al., 2010). A study of the implementation of two contact centres in Sweden uncovers a range of management and organisational issues including the self-protecting attitudes and actions of staff who feel threatened by technology.
(Bernhard and Grundén, 2013). In an in-depth study of local e-government implementation in a Swedish municipality the analysis shows that e-government reforms contribute to new practises, in which the development and application of IT is becoming increasingly central for the local organisation and provision of public services that contributes to a reorganisation of actor roles and relationships (Jansson, 2013). Another case study showed that the prefix “e” as rhetoric has entered and settled within the organisation but not yet merged within the whole municipality. Some parts of the concept of e-government have been adopted (Giriti Nygren, 2009a). In a case study of the implementation of a Swedish municipal contact centre, focusing on the social aspects of the public administrators, the results show that there were some negative attitudes from the public administrators at the back office of the municipality (Grundén, 2010). A related study (Andréasson, 2011) – a case study of the implementation process of a new ICT tool for health information within the e-governance context in a Swedish county council – indicates that the new ICT tool contributes to blurring the line between public and private. Another indication is that introduction of new IT systems has broad importance for the organisation of public organisations (Andréasson, 2011). Research focusing on policy entrepreneurs in the implementation of local e-government initiatives has been analysed by a few case studies (von Bergmann-Winberg and Wihlborg, 2011; Wihlborg, 2011).

1.2 Research objective
The research objective of this thesis is to provide a deeper understanding of how e-government policies are implemented in an e-governance context, through empirical case studies in Sweden. The focus is on the local level which means that it is a bottom-up perspective rather than a top-down perspective.

The overall research question and sub-research questions in this thesis are:

How is e-government policy put into practice when focusing on the local level? followed by the three sub-research questions (SRQ):

1. What is the role of policy entrepreneurs in the implementation of local e-government initiatives in Sweden?
2. How does the implementation of e-government and e-governance initiatives affect trust in public service provision?
3. How does the implementation of local municipal contact centres (CCs) affect the work of the public administrators in terms of their role as suppliers of public service?

The aim and the research question’s relation to the four articles and the cover essay is described in Table 1 on the following page.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>SRQ</th>
<th>Main conclusions of the articles</th>
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<tr>
<td>SRQ 2,3</td>
<td><strong>Article 1: Trust in secure public e-services - translating policies into use.</strong>&lt;br&gt;The cases studied indicate that there have been openings for local construction of meanings promoting security and relating to citizens’ trust in that context and the specific public e-services. The analysis indicates that the local entrepreneurs within public administration use the opportunities for local translation and adoption of public e-services into the specific context in which they act. Further, the study indicates that the organisational settings of multi-level governance are greater constraints than new technology for implementation of public e-services. The reformulation and localization of general policies are realized through the praxis. The policy ideas are co-produced through networks of technology, human actors, organisations and governmental structures.</td>
<td>Aim&lt;br&gt;<strong>To provide a deeper understanding of how e-government policies are implemented at local level, through empirical studies in Sweden.</strong>&lt;br&gt;The overall research question is:&lt;br&gt;How is e-government policy put into practice when focusing on the local level?</td>
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<td>SRQ 1</td>
<td><strong>Article 2: Policy entrepreneurs in networks - implementation of two Swedish municipal contact centres from an actor perspective.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Local policies are implemented in relation to local cultures, norms and economic structures. The networked governance structure demands entrepreneurial actors to combine resources and interests into a change. In the article two types of such entrepreneurial actors, both theoretical and practical, are identified.</td>
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<td>SRQ 1,2</td>
<td><strong>Article 3: Regional E-Governance: Promoting Entrepreneurial Behaviour in Public Administration.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Public e-services bring about innovative organisational changes for the new e-society and bridge formerly unseen digital divides. However, such changes demand innovative behaviour among people in professional roles which are usually strictly and formally defined. In the analysis it is found that the professionals in public administration acted as entrepreneurs and improved the intended benefits of the public e-service.</td>
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<td>SRQ 2,3</td>
<td><strong>Article 4: Local e-government in Sweden – municipal contact centre implementation with focus on public administration and citizens.</strong>&lt;br&gt;The study implies that efficiency and citizen-centred approaches in the redesign of information relationships between the public administration and citizens to create some sort of added value are critical. Another result is that the registering of all issues from the citizens in a common database may in a sense be viewed as a citizen-centred aspect. This information source implies knowledge about the citizens’ needs for municipal service. It indicates that there is a potential for positive impact on the conditions for local planning through the implementation of municipal contact centres.</td>
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1.3 Delimitations
Although the thesis and analysis includes the implementation of a common ICT tool (e-service) in two Swedish municipal regional associations, the focus is on the local level. This is due to the fact that some Swedish municipalities - the empirics are limited to include five municipalities – have recently implemented local e-government initiatives in the form of new organisational units named contact centres (CCs). Although e-democracy tools are supposed to have the advantage of being easily accessible and flexible to individual demands in order to be used to increasingly engage the inhabitants, e-democracy is not in focus in this thesis. However, e-democracy, here defined as the relationship between the electorate and the elected, is discussed theoretically but not analysed empirically.

1.4 Thesis organisation
After this introduction, a discussion regarding context of the study will follow in section two. Section three includes discussion of key concepts with a description of the Swedish settings. The thesis will then proceed with the research design in section four. Section five discusses the results and section six presents limitations of this thesis. Section seven demonstrates the contribution of this thesis to research as well as to policy followed by directions for potential future research.

2. Context of the study
2.1 From government to governance
Since the early 1990s, many researchers claim that a fundamental shift has taken place regarding governing, organisation and working methods within public administration and that there is a movement of the regulation and implementation of policies from the central government to other levels and social spheres (e.g. Pierre and Peters, 2000). This change is recognized in the international research and then described as a transition from “government to governance” (Pierre and Peters, 2000; Cars and von Sydow 2001; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Kjaer, 2004; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007; Gjelstrup and Sørensen, 2007; Healey, 2007). The phrase “from government to governance” emphasizes, among other things, that government operations have become more comprehensive and differentiated, and that they connect in increasingly complex ways, not just with each other but also with actors and activities in the surrounding community or society (Sundström and Pierre, 2009). In certain cases it is argued that this is the result of formal policy decisions, while in other cases it is more the result of an organic and unpredictable development (Elias et al., 2011). A central governmental type of control refers to the formal institutional process operating at the national level to maintain public order and facilitate collective action. Ehn (2001) argues that a traditional hierarchical governing and control will only work in exceptional cases today. As already stressed above, it is argued by some researchers that governance has not replaced government – rather, government provides the framework within which governance exists (Pierre and Sundström, 2009; Jordan et al., 2005). In terms of gathering and processing information Löfgren (2007) stresses that the government is still very much in a central position “in its capacity of being the single actor holding legitimate authority to make and enforce binding decisions across a wide range of societal actors, and equally hold a central ability to gather and process information” (2007:338).
There is no single definition of the term “governance” that most researchers would agree on (Jordan et al., 2005; Löfgren, 2007). The term contains a lot of meanings. Bekkers et al. (2007) argue that governance is understood as that public administration is not one entity. It is made up of several actors, that other actors apart from the public try to influence societal development and that the public administration acts in policy networks where power, resources and strategy are important components (Bekkers et al., 2007). Von Bergmann-Winberg and Wihlborg (2011:5) define governance as “steering in cooperation, and the network governance that is characteristic of modern societies”. Governance opens up new types of behaviour. According to Peters and Pierre, (2006:6) the idea of governance emphasises decentralized processes and networks and is a concept capturing the institutional change from “a government-centred model of governance to a market-based or network-based governance model”. This means that the steering takes place in the interaction of many different actors (Gjelstrup and Sørensen, 2007). Pierre and Sundström (2009) claim, however, that the steering does not always take place within networks. From being a top-down activity where government agents have had a clear role and responsibility, a dependency relationship between the public and private has been strengthened. Thus there has been a shift from public bodies to private (Cars, 1992; von Sydow, 2004).

Researchers claim that there are several explanations, which may be seen as macro theories, for the development from government towards governance (Pierre and Sundström, 2009). The current era of increasing globalization, economization, delegation, professionalization, etc. has meant that the idea of hierarchical management ideals has increasingly been questioned. Alternative governance ideals have gained ground. The market, with its strong idea of competition, is one. Policy networks, which are based more on the idea of collaboration and discussion, are another (Sundström, 2005).

Montin (2007) argues that neither the state nor the municipalities in Sweden have enough resources or expertise to realize their goals on their own. This is one explanation of the formation of networks and partnerships of various kinds within the internal and external public sector and the transition from government to governance (Montin, 2007). It is argued that EU structural funds have been particularly important for the impact of a partnership model in Sweden (Ehn, 2001). This is mainly because the cornerstone of the system of EU structural funds is work in partnership. Ehn (2001) claims that there are roughly the following two sets of partnerships: partnerships that are primarily of economic/financial nature and other types of partnerships. A common name for the former type is Public-Private Partnership (PPP). PPPs are identified as a particular form of governance. In detailed planning and development projects in Sweden, for example, public–private partnerships and market actors have an active role (Mäntysalo et al., 2011).

Another theory explaining this development is that today’s society is said to be so complex that no single actor manages to steer and coordinate on his own, and therefore governance models that bring together a large number of players on both sides of the border between private and public spheres are sought (Pierre and Sundström, 2009). At the same time trust in politicians is low, which has resulted in a growing interest in forms of governing that are built
on participants acting from outside the sphere of politicians. Furthermore it is argued that the turn to a neo-liberal society in many countries, particularly in Great Britain and the U.S., has created a need to find solutions in order to give citizens the same public service as before but with reduced costs for the public sector (Pierre and Sundström, 2009).

The Swedish government emphasized that coordination and cooperation between different actors has become increasingly important and argued that globalization, increased international competition and rapid technological change were factors that contributed to the development from government to governance (Ehn, 2001). This was increasingly important for regions, and according to the government, every region needed better opportunities to stimulate its own economic and social, cultural and environmental conditions/characteristics. Such a development had to be developed in close cooperation among the region’s various actors and must therefore primarily be based on the local and regional level (Regeringen, 1998). This changing regional policy, in addition to the economic crisis and unemployment, should partly be seen as a result of and frustration over a failure of the traditional governmental regional policy to achieve growth and growing political and administrative power at the local and regional level.

2.2 Networks and policy networks in governance settings
Networks have become an important organisational form both for policy formation issues and implementation practices (Ehn, 2001; Sorensen and Torfing, 2007). According to Hajer and Wagenaar (2003) an important aspect is that network-based forms of governance do not have codified rules and regulations that shape or define participation and identify the exact domain or arenas of power, which is a difference from those associated with egalitarian, pluralist democratic rules and codes. The concept of a network is an example of a term that is interpreted, defined and used differently in different academic disciplines (Ehn, 2001). Some disciplines see the network as only horizontal, while others argue that all organisational structures are indeed a type of network, including vertical organisations (Westlund, 1999). For example, the analyses in the business literature describe various types of the verb “networking”, such as subcontracting, entrepreneurial networking, and network management or governance (Fuller-Love and Kilkenney, 2012). Ehn (2001) argues that there are many definitions of networks. A description, according to Ehn (2001), of what usually characterizes a network is that the networks either can be spontaneously or consciously created. They are characterized by the lack of a formal cohesive structure between the interacting participants, which is perhaps the most important difference compared with traditional organisations. Without a formal unifying structure they are tied together through networks of interdependency. Further, networks are considered non-hierarchies with mutually dependent actors and usually an open exit from a network. Actors participating in networks have to exchange resources and negotiate shared purposes (Ehn, 2001). The networks, according to this definition, are based on voluntary participation and a minimum of formal regulations.

The policy networks are forming new alliances and structures to promote policy or organisational changes. Cooperation and coordination in networks are seen by actors sharing the same policy interest as the best way to achieve common interests (Börzel, 1998). The view
of the Swedish government in this changing role of government, assumes that the state today is an institution well woven into the surrounding community. The state is often one actor among others, but one of the most important. An important task in this new role is to act in networks and create venues where both public and private actors can meet (Ehn, 2001).

2.3 Implementation of policy in a governance context
With regard to policy, implementation is the process of turning policy into practice, which implies a processual view of implementation (Schofield, 2001; Barrett, 2004). Understanding how (or why) policy is put into effect has been conceptualized as implementation theory (O’Toole, 2000; Schofield, 2001; Barrett, 2004). However, recent research claims that in spite of many years of research, there is no single theoretical approach that can capture all dilemmas concerning implementation (Löfgren, 2012). The top-down model is one of the common approaches (Buse et al., 2005; Hill and Hupe, 2009). Another approach is the bottom-up model of policy implementation. Both of these emphasize the importance of actors and groups of actors during implementation, although research on the bottom-up approach tends to focus more closely on policy networks (Schofield, 2001). The top-down approach emphasizes the separation of politics and administration and has been viewed as a normative ideal for putting policy into effect (Barrett, 2004). A hallmark of top-down perspective is primarily a prescriptive ambition that seeks to generate better knowledge for decision makers to help them avoid the classic implementation mistakes and achieve greater control over outcomes of a given policy (Barrett, 2004; Löfgren, 2012). In terms of this thesis it is more of a bottom-up perspective since the focus is on the local level.

The concept of “translation” appears to be a growing approach to make meanings from implementation, as it includes and problematizes the local context as well as it allows for local actors’ interpretations of a policy (Herbert-Cheshire, 2003; Rövik, 2008). Research claims examination of the process which takes place between decision and results may be compared with opening the “black box” (Hill and Hupe, 2009). The black box is explained as the process in the public administration after a policy has been created. Out of the box come results in the form of action. The conditions of the policy process change within a governance system. Although even in a “government system” it cannot be taken for granted that the policy process follows neat “steps”, or that the policy is always created within the political sphere (Hill and Hupe, 2009). But in a governance system, implications of that system indicate that the whole policy process needs to be viewed in a different way. Research claims that policy can begin to be formulated outside the walls of city hall, and can be implemented by actors other than public ones (Bekkers et al., 2007). It is therefore argued that the study of implementation needs to change (Andréasson, 2011). The author stresses that implementers could nowadays be private firms, non-profit organisations or anything in between. The policy network takes a central place both in formulating and carrying out public policy. As already stated above, a shift from government towards governance is one sign of change in the current era. An example of e-government policy implementation in a network governance context is the implementation of CCs (see the articles in this thesis) that takes place in a networked governance structure, formed through networks in an integrative and flexible way. As can be
read in article two, the actors forming and developing such networks are the policy entrepreneurs.

2.4 Governance creates openings for policy entrepreneurs

The term entrepreneurship is considered to be multidimensional, although many of the general definitions of the term are centred on the creation or discovery of business opportunities and the gathering of resources to exploit them (Westlund, 2012). Consequently entrepreneurial behaviour has been studied by scholars in a range of contexts across a range of disciplines (Mintrom and Norman, 2009). Entrepreneurship within or connected to the public sector is defined by some as political or policy entrepreneurship (Buchanan and Badham, 1999; Harris and Kinney, 2004; Pozen, 2008; Chatterjee and Lakshmanan, 2009). According to Oborn et al. (2011) there is still a need to clarify the definition of the concept policy entrepreneur. Mintrom (1997) defines policy entrepreneurship as entrepreneurship seeking to initiate dynamic policy change by attempting to win support for ideas for policy innovation. Policy entrepreneurs work in networks and they build networks (Mintrom, 1997). According to Kingdon (1984/1995), policy entrepreneurs are distinguished by their focus on policies – issues or structures – on a more aggregated level. They differ from traditional policymakers, since they act in governance settings rather than government structures. As network builders they are innovative and creative in finding new connections and opportunities. Thus, according to Kingdon (1984/1995) they are neither driven solely by economic profit-making nor individual career focus. When policy-making becomes characterized more by networked governance than strictly governmental steering (Peters, 2007), there are new interfaces between politics and markets, creating openings for policy entrepreneurs (von Bergmann-Winberg and Wihlborg, 2011). However a policy entrepreneur may also act within a public institution (Kingdon 1984/1995; Weissert 1991). Weissert defines a policy entrepreneur as a person willing to use their own personal resources of expertise, persistence, and skill to achieve certain policies they favour. The analysis of policy entrepreneurs is contemporary and related to the shift from government focus to a governance perspective on public policy. However, the role of policy entrepreneurs is becoming more crucial the more policy-making becomes characterized by network governance (Wihlborg, 2000). Policy entrepreneurs can be said to make governance work in practice. In other words, the more governance settings there are the more space there is for policy entrepreneurs.

According to von Bergmann-Winberg and Wihlborg (2011), the networked governance of New Public Management is formed and developed by entrepreneurial actors in a networked governance context. The most germinal classification of policy networks is the ideal-typical division of “issue networks” and “policy communities” by Rhodes and Marsh (1992). The policy networks are thus neither entirely one type or the other, but it is a simple way to show the typical differences. By combining the policy network literature to the policy entrepreneurial approach there are two “ideal-typical” types of policy entrepreneurs – the issue entrepreneur and the political entrepreneur (Wihlborg, 2011). Issue networks bring together actors having a certain opinion on a question, a problem or an issue. The issue as such is in focus for the actors joining the network (Rhodes and Marsh, 1992). Issue networks normally dissolve when the issue is handled. The purpose of the network is no longer an
issue. Policy entrepreneurs in issue networks are thus driven by the subject matter – the issue. It is the issue or policy that is the driving force for involvement in the network. They have their own resources and can easily move in or out of the network. Thus they may be named issue entrepreneurs. The other, tighter ideal type of policy network is called policy community, in Rhodes and Marsh’s (1992) central theory. These networks build on long-term collaboration among actors with similar basic value systems. They have common motives to create and participate in the network, sustain it over time, and care for their common values and norms on how policies develop in the political structure. These networks then become denser, more closed and survive over different policy issues. In this type of network the participants can rely on each other over longer periods of time, and they share resources and develop common values. Thus there is also a settled power balance among the actors in the policy community (Rhodes and Marsh, 1992). Values and norms are in focus in the policy community and thus they continue to work together. For the same reason there are also entrepreneurs in political structural change focusing on the politics rather than the particular issue. These are named political entrepreneurs, as the other ideal form of policy entrepreneurs.

2.5 Swedish settings
In Sweden there are 290 municipalities. They are considered to be the closest to the citizens in terms of public service as together with the regions and counties they account for about 70% of all citizen contacts (Regeringskansliet, 2008; SALAR, 2011:3). This implies that the development of e-government in Sweden is very much a municipal issue. Their condition may be changed by decisions of the Swedish Parliament, although the multilevel governance system with national, regional and local/municipal levels is meant to strengthen the local autonomy of Swedish municipalities. It is often stressed that Sweden has a long tradition of local autonomy (Gustafsson 1999; Petersson, 2001) although it is argued that there has been a development from government to governance (Montin, 2007). Research on municipalities today uses terms such as governance, network communities and network democracy to describe the trends in municipal development. Other typical keywords within municipalities in the 2000s are partnerships, networks and regionalization (Montin, 2007).

This thesis also includes case studies at the regional level. However, it is not within the autonomous county council level, but instead at a regional level consisting of two networks of municipal associations in two Swedish regions. The county councils are also called secondary municipalities and their main obligations concern health care and regional development, based on the strong constitutional local autonomy given to Swedish municipalities. In contrast to these dominant regional actors, municipalities in most regions have formed alternative regional organisations for collaboration and coordination. These alternative regional associations constitute legal entities wherein the municipalities can form collaborative arrangements and there are ongoing debates regarding their formalization. Both regional settings studied are such self-governing collaborations organised from the bottom up.

3. Key concepts
The process of implementing e-government policies has been widely studied within different
disciplines such as information systems, organisational behaviour and public administration (Löfgren, 2007; Jansson, 2013). Research in e-government can be seen as being at the crossroads between a number of other research domains (Heeks, 2007) and there is a lack of a guiding theory or unifying theoretical framework for understanding the phenomenon (Grönlund, 2005). One likely explanation for this is the lack of a common definition of e-government. Garson (1999) claims that theories in e-government frameworks involve several theoretical areas such as the potential of using IT in decentralization and democratization processes, theories on two-way interaction of technology and the organisational/institutional environment, as well as theories of global integration. In this study, the research domain e-government overlaps to a great extent between governance, policy implementation, policy entrepreneurs and New Public Management, but it also relates to other research fields such as planning. Within the field of urban and regional planning theory, the focus is both between “development” and on “governance processes” (Healey, 2012).

3.1 New Public Management in the digital era
The e-government development is often seen as a result of the emergence of an ideology in the public sector called New Public Management (NPM), although this reform was already implemented in the 1980s (Osborne, 2006; Bevir et al., 2003; Norén Bretzer, 2010). According to Hedlund and Montin (2009), NPM is one trend in governance as the authors conceptualize governance in Swedish settings by gathering its features in five trends towards increased network governance, one of which is increased elements of market-based governance within public institutions often called NPM. When introducing NPM there are also possibilities for increasing partnerships and collaboration in different forms and the implementation is also referred to as new modes for decision-making: partnerships in a networked governance context (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003). There is no single definition of NPM, although NPM is frequently described “as an umbrella term of management ideas from the business sector implemented in a public sector context” (Persson and Goldkuhl, 2010:52). According to Peters and Pierre (1998) NPM is an organisational theory while Barzelay (2001) refers to NPM as being both a practice and a theoretical conceptualisation rooted in different research fields with diverse directions. In this paradigm, cost effectiveness and applying market principles to enhance efficiency become the dominant considerations for how the public sector is run (Pollit and Bouchaert, 2004). This leads towards a focus on more efficient public services (Giritli Nygren and Wiklund, 2010; Worrall, 2011; Hall, 2011) and a trend in which citizens get other roles as users and often will be viewed almost as customers of public services in a market rather than as citizens with rights and duties (see e.g. Cordella, 2007; Montin, 2007; Hedlund and Montin, 2009). Previous research demonstrates that NPM has been challenged (Christensen and Lagreid, 2007) and that e-government mainly has been used as a tool to enforce the economic values of market-oriented reforms in public administration associated with NPM (Hood, 1991; Homburg and Bekkers, 2005; Heeks (2006); Giritli Nygren, 2009a, Homburg, 2008; Hall, 2011). According to some researchers, it is argued that NPM has been a transitory stage in the development from traditional public administration to what is named New Public Governance (NPG) (Osborne, 2006; 2010; Osborne et al., 2012). By referring to earlier research such as Haveri (2006) the authors argue that the increasingly fragmented and inter-organisational context of public service delivery necessitated not just a
focus solely upon administrative processes or solely upon intra-organisational management (NPM). Rather these foci must be integrated with a broader paradigm that embeds them in a new context that emphasizes both the governance of relationships within the public organisations as well as the efficacy of public service delivery systems rather than separate public service organisations (Osborne et al., 2012). According to some researchers such as Cordella (2007) and Jos and Tomkins (2009), this transformation of citizens into customers is problematic due to that citizens have rights and duties. Cordella (2007) also criticizes NPM for using a reduced set of values when limiting the scope of the agenda to business-like measures of change. Gjelstrup and Sørensen (2007) describe NPM as market-based forms of organisations that enhance competition between producers of public services that contribute to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of public governance. To explain the need for increased citizen perspective by using the metaphor of customer orientation, in line with the New Public Management paradigm, is to mix two perspectives and may therefore be criticised. There is a difference between being a customer and a citizen. Referring to Minzberg (1996), customers buy products but citizens have rights, and the priority for them is more than a customer in the government sector. Therefore, in this thesis the view of the citizen is based on citizens having rights and duties rather than being customers interested in obtaining as much service as possible for the lowest costs achievable.

3.2 E-government and E-governance

Putting an “e” as a prefix to both the concepts of government and governance refers to governing with the help of electronic tools. The development in using ICT to provide e-services on the Internet and using other forms of information and communication technologies are basic components of e-government. However, an analysis and comparison of e-government definitions shows that the term e-government is defined in different ways and there is no universally accepted definition of the concept (Yildiz, 2007). According to Giritli Nygren, (2009b), the concept e-government is moving at the boundaries between the public sector, new technology and changed administrative forms (Giritli Nygren, 2009b). Heeks (2006:1) defines e-government as “all use of information technology in the public sector”. Heeks’ definition is used here to encompass all use of digital information technology in the public sector, which means that it consists of technology, information and human beings who give the system purpose and meaning, and the work processes that are undertaken.

According to DeBenedictis et al. (2002), e-government can be defined as the use of primarily Internet-based information technology to enhance the accountability and performance of government activities. These activities include a government’s execution of activities, especially service delivery; access to government information and processes; and the participation of citizens and organisations in government. E-government is also expected to have a potential to reduce costs and improve services. Moreover, an important stimulus for e-government is to bridge the gap between government and citizens (Homburg, 2008). There is also a strong emphasis on internal administrative efficiency in the development of e-government (Homburg, 2008). In this perspective Grant and Chau (2006:80) identify three core activities of e-government:
(1) to develop and deliver high quality, seamless, and integrated public services; (2) to enable effective constituent relationship management; and (3) to support the economic and social development goals of citizens, businesses, and civil society at local, state, national, and international levels.

E-government in this context is further referred to as the redesign of information relationships between the administration and citizens, in order to create some sort of added value. Based on this discussion three core types of relationship in e-government among different actors can be identified (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Three relationships in e-government**
Source: Bernhard, 2013. Adapted from Wihlborg (2005:7)

The three cores are composed of (1) e-democracy (relationships between the electorate and the elected, i.e., the political interplay of citizens and elected politicians), (2) e-services (the relationship between the public administration and citizens), and finally (3) e-administration for the internal usage of information technology tools within governmental organisations to provide reports and support for decision making (Wihlborg, 2005). This relationship is in line with Grönlund (2005) and Giritli Nygren and Wiklund (2010), who argue that it is possible to distinguish these three dimensions of the term e-government. However, in many definitions e-democracy is excluded from e-government (Jansson, 2011). The main driving force behind e-services is often explained by efficiency, an ambition to decrease costs in public administration and making services more readily available and accessible. E-services are similar to e-commerce in many ways and the same consultants often work in both fields. The supply of private e-services can constantly be adapted to the demands expressed on the market. But public services, with or without the e-, lack such market information structures at the same time as they lack visible prices for the “consumer” (citizen). The supply and mix of public services are instead limited by the public resources available (taxes and fees), democratic decisions (prioritization) and legitimate implementation. Thus digital divides regarding public e-services are the result of divides other than that of economic resources. In Sweden, welfare services are usually provided locally according to the subsidiary principle. E-administration can either be used as an added layer on the ordinary administration or to bring about a radical restructuring of the administration (Vintar et al., 2003:133).
indicates that e-administration could facilitate new relationships within bureaucracy. The technical systems are given power in their relationships with others through the way they are designed and the accessibility of the information they provide. There is potential to make the administration more effective, since there are incentives to save on personnel resources in administration in favour of computerized resources. E-government is often considered to build on principles of de-bureaucratization, decentralization and marketization which are quite similar to NPM (Cordella, 2007). Thus, by providing a solution to what has been regarded as the inefficient, bureaucratic structures of public administration, e-government is considered to follow in the footsteps of NPM. According to Norén Bretzer, (2010) this is also the fact in Sweden as the goal of the Swedish e-government policy initiatives is not only to bring about increased IT use in the public sector but also to promote change in the administration and realization of NPM-type reforms.

![Figure 2: Three dimensions of e-governance](source: Bernhard, 2013. Adapted from Wihlborg, (2005:7))

As mentioned above, the terms e-government and e-governance are often treated as synonymous and used interchangeably in most of the literature (Rossel and Finger, 2007; As-Saber and Hossein, 2008). They provide definitions for e-government that encompass almost the same elements as those argued to be in the realm of e-governance. However, some researchers argue that there is a difference in the perspectives between the two (Saxena, 2005; Michel, 2005; Rossel and Finger, 2007; Collins, 2009; Misuraca and Viscusi, (2013); Larsson and Grönlund, 2014). According to scholars such as Grönlund and Horan (2005), Rossel and Finger (2007), As-Saber and Hossein (2008), Collins (2009) and Jayashree and Martandan (2010) and Larsson and Grönlund (2014), e-governance is a broader, more encompassing concept that involves not only public institutions but private ones as well. E-government is then more limited than e-governance and focuses on resource coordination and distribution in the public sector alone. Following Gjelstrup and Sørensen (2007), this means that the steering takes place in the interaction of many different actors although with the help of ICT.
Following these discussions three key dimensions of relationship in e-governance among different actors may be identified (Figure 2).

In a very simplified form, but useful for this thesis, some characteristics of e-government and e-governance can be shown as in Table 2:

Table 2: Some characteristics of e-government and e-governance settings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>E-government</th>
<th>E-governance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of organisation</td>
<td>Hierarchic</td>
<td>Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key actors</td>
<td>Formal policymakers</td>
<td>Policy entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main view of the individual</td>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>Customer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E-government is here explained in terms of hierarchic organisations with formal policymakers as key actors and the individual as citizen. In e-governance settings, characterised by networked governance, the key actors here are policy entrepreneurs and the main view of the citizens is as customers. E-governance may then be viewed as different from e-government. The governance of NPM is formed and developed by entrepreneurial actors in the networked governance context (von Bergmann-Winberg and Wihlborg, 2011). This means that e-governance is related to theories of NPM as it takes place in NPM governance settings.

Researchers in e-government show different views of the individual citizen. Scholars, e.g. Bartot, Jaeger and McClure (2008), Axelsson, Melin and Lindgren (2010) and Alsaghier et al. (2009) view the individual citizen more as a user in e-government contexts. Michel (2005:216) stresses that e-government reflects “a vision of a relatively passive citizen-agent, who responds to his duties”. In this perspective, electronic voting is the most appropriate tool, she claims. In the e-governance settings, the citizen is considered an active agent of local democracy. The citizen is here considered a source of ideas and initiatives that provides mutual enrichment (Michel, 2005). On the contrary, as explained earlier, it is argued by some scholars that there is a trend in viewing the citizen in e-government context as a customer which is in line with NPM (Cordella, 2007; Montin, 2007; Hedlund and Montin, 2009; Hall, 2011; Rövik, 2008). Thus, according to these scholars, the view of the citizen in both e-governance and e-government settings is more related to customers rather than citizens having rights and duties. In terms of this, I suggest sorting the concepts as follows in this thesis:

E-government is considered to follow in the footsteps of NPM and refers to the governmental bodies’ use of tools and systems made possible by ICT that affect the organisation of public administration. It aims to provide improved internal efficiency as well as better public services to citizens and businesses.

E-governance refers to the ICT-based networks of services and administration in NPM settings including both public and private actors.
3.3 Municipal contact centre
The main function of a Swedish municipal CC is to supply services to citizens more efficiently, primarily by using the telephone and ICT (e.g. e-services) to handle citizen contacts (Figure 3).

![Figure 3: Conceptual model of a Contact Centre in relation to citizens and businesses, and public administrators at the back office](image)

When CCs are implemented in municipalities, the work of the public administrators in the municipality is supposed to become more efficient, as they will not be disturbed by phone calls involving “simple questions” from citizens. The different organisational units (back office) are also supposed to cooperate in resolving citizens’ matters, in order to simplify the citizens’ contacts with the municipality. The CCs aim to contribute to increased citizen access to municipal services through multi-channel service like ICT in the form of telephone, Internet (municipal websites) and Web-based applications (e-services), and generally they are also open for personal visits. The municipal website is a main electronic resource for information to citizens and organisations within the municipality and the municipal e-services are published on the website. The CCs function as a gateway to local government, as front offices with extended opening hours and staff with broad competencies to answer, supervise and re-direct citizens to the right section of public administration and/or on the Internet. They also have the competence to reach into back-office functions to resolve standard questions (Bernhard, 2011; 2014). All issues are registered in an information system for internal handling of matters. Public administrators at the CC also initiate issues, when needed, which are transferred to public administrators at the back office using the IT tool for handling of matters.

The introduction of a municipal contact centre – a new organisational form, new tasks and new technical practices – can be seen as a new phenomenon within the Swedish local e-government context. Public e-services as such may be seen as non-commercial innovations in each new context – even if the service itself existed before – as they are a new way of producing and organising the service (Potnis, 2010). The term innovation is inherently ambiguous and has been defined differently by a number of research studies (Potnis, 2010). The concept of innovation has developed mainly around private business and is often measured in terms of the number of patents filed. For Schumpeter (1934), an innovation could be a new product, a new production method, a new technology, the opening of a new market or a new organisation of existing production factors. The innovation could take many forms. The premise was that there were one or more contractors who could push the idea forward.
Entrepreneurship is thus a prerequisite for innovation, according to Schumpeter. Other scholars argue that innovation in public services is harder to define but may be linked to institutional renewal, new forms of governance, organisational improvements or to digitisation (Koch and Hauknes, 2005; Cunningham and Karikasidou, 2009; Potnis, 2010). Thus, I define new public e-services in this context as innovation. They may be referred to not only in the relationships between public administration and citizens but also to e-administration for the internal usage of ICT to provide reports and support for decision making.

Referring to my definition of e-government (Table 2), this study indicates that the implementation of municipal contact centres may be seen as an example of local e-government. They are hierarchic organisations with formal policymakers as key actors and the implementation of more public e-services in the relationship between the public administration and the citizens refers to the e-government context. However, in the dimensions of e-services, it may be argued that the implementation of CCs may also refer to the e-governance settings. This is because public e-services are developed in an NPM governance setting. The public e-services are similar to e-commerce in many ways, and the same consultants often work in both fields (both public and private). Besides, referring to research arguing that the main view of the citizen as a “customer” within the NPM governance settings (Cordella, 2007; Montin, 2007; Hedlund and Montin, 2009) it may also refer to the e-governance settings. Thus, according to the definitions of e-government and e-governance, the implementation of Swedish CCs may be referred to as an example of a mix of both e-government and e-governance.

4. Research design

This chapter summarizes the research design and the research strategy used to answer the research questions and describes the research methods of each of the four articles. The last part of the chapter provides a summary of the articles including specific aims, arguments and conclusions. The articles are appended after the references.

4.1 Case study methodology

Yanow (2003) claims that how the researcher acts in order to achieve results is an important methodological issue. She argues that it is about how to come close to the studied object and let the context-specific social reality speak for itself. Case study methodologies are preferred when you want to come close to the studied object and study an actual phenomenon in its real context. Case study is used as a research method in social science disciplines like public administration, political science, business and marketing and evaluation (Yin, 2009). Case studies are based on direct observations of the phenomenon and on interviews with people who have experience in the actual case. The case study methodology’s particular strength is that it allows handling of many different kinds of empirical data such as documents, artefacts, interviews and observations. According to Yin (2009) case studies are classified as a meta-methodology as when studying a phenomenon in its context different methods or techniques are required in order to get various types of data. In comparison to quantitative studies,
qualitative methods are an alternative way of looking at knowledge, meaning, reality and truth in social sciences. According to Kvale (1996), focus is on understanding important relationships in their specific context. Examples of what a case can be is a single organisation or a single location (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The criteria for all authorities included in this study is that they should be forerunners in the development of e-government implementation. In addition, the criteria for the CCs chosen in this study was also that the municipalities were members of Sambruk². When designing my study the choice of case study methodology was connected to the aim of the thesis. In the process of gathering empirical case data, I used a qualitative research method approach with interviews, focus group studies, document studies, and some participatory observations. The analysis is partly based on an inductive methodological approach (Article 1), since this is a new, emerging field of innovative policy and practice. This means that theory may be developed on the basis of the cases (Eisenhardt, 1989; Gilham, 2000; Stake 1995; Yin, 2009; Alvesson and Kärreman, 2011). In this article the approach focused on the translations in multi-level settings of safety, technically and organisationally. The theoretical framework of policy and technology translation allows inclusion of this broad process of change. Furthermore, the analysis is partly based on (Article 2) an abductive research approach (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2000/2009). Abduction, as explained here, alternately moves between theory and the collection of empirical data and thus allows the understanding of the study area to gradually emerge. In this article the analysis took off from field work of two case studies of CCs where the initial research focus was the implementation process of the two CCs in general (Bernhard, 2011). However, the key actors stood out as critical aspects of both processes. Thus I went back to the cases focusing on the policy entrepreneurs by adding the extended meanings of policy entrepreneurs.

Table 3. Overview of phases and the methods used in the case studies included in the different articles in this thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/phase</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Data used in article(s)</th>
<th>Done by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>East Sweden study: Interviews, focus groups interviews and document studies.</td>
<td>Article 3</td>
<td>Co-author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>West Sweden study (follow-up study): Interviews, focus groups interviews and document studies.</td>
<td>Articles 1,3</td>
<td>Author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Telephone interviews with citizens</td>
<td>Article 4</td>
<td>Author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/2011</td>
<td>Interviews, direct observations and document studies.</td>
<td>Article 2</td>
<td>Author (mainly), and a researcher within Innoveta project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/2010/2011</td>
<td>Interviews, direct observations and document studies.</td>
<td>Articles 1,2,3,4</td>
<td>Author (mainly), and researchers within Innoveta project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² In 2009-2011 the author studied the implementation of CCs in Swedish municipalities in a research project. Swedish Association of municipalities for joint development of e-services (Sambruk) was one of three parts. At the time of the study 80 municipalities were members of Sambruk although just a few of them had implemented CCs (however, more and more municipal CCs are now being implemented or are planned).
All studies except one were done from 2009 to 2011 with partly different perspectives due to their aims. The interviews for studying the implementation of the Common Application e-service to the upper secondary schools in the regional municipal association of ÖSTSAM were done in 2006. For an overview, see Table 3 above.

4.1.1 Document studies
Referring to Yin (2009) and the case study methodology’s particular strength in handling many different kinds of empirical data, a number of public documents have been studied such as policy documents from regional and local levels, pilot report studies, revision reports and results of municipal customer surveys. These analyses served to give an overall understanding before doing the interviews. The documents have been used both as a background study of e-government practice and to get an overview of the background of the implementation of the e-government process. Some of the documents such as results of customer surveys were made by private organisations. When critically examining these documents I had in mind who had written them and for what purpose.

4.1.2 Interviews
One of the main sources of data related to the case study methodology consists of the qualitative research interview (Yin, 2009). Through the interview, construction of knowledge and negotiations of meanings take place between two partners about a topic of mutual interest (Kvale, 1996:42). The questions have more of an open character, e.g. the interviewer can ask key actors about facts as well as about their opinions regarding these facts (Yin, 2009), and an interview is a conversation that has a structure and a purpose (Kvale, 1996; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). In some situations, the researcher may ask the respondents to formulate their own opinions and ideas about a particular phenomenon and then use this as a basis for the continued interview. This is in line with using qualitative interviews as they always include some degree of flexibility and thus I used semi-structured interviews as format3 – one of mainly three different types of interview methods (Bryman, 2008:436). The respondent may also suggest other people to be interviewed and also indicate where additional information, e.g. regarding a particular matter can be found (Yin, 2009). In terms of this study some of the interviewees were selected throughout the documentation of the process and through recommendations – a so-called “snowball” selection. The interviews were planned in accordance with Kvale (1996:88) who highlights seven steps of an interview study – thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting – as these are important to bring up to achieve scientific quality.

Altogether 64 semi-structured interviews within the municipalities, and the two municipal regional associations including an interview with 1 employee at a computer firm, as well as five focus group interviews with 12 students and eight guidance councillors and 21 telephone interviews with citizens were conducted. In addition three semi structured interviews were made with an ICT manager and top managers at the Swedish Transport Agency4.

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3 The questionnaires are available in Swedish from the author.
4 These were carried out by co-author and are also described in Wihlborg et al., 2010.
The case study in West Sweden was introduced in January 2009 during a key interview in the central administration as a follow-up to the case study in East Sweden (Article 3). Except for three focus group interviews (see 4.1.3), two additional interviews were conducted, one with a guidance councillor at a secondary independent school and another with the head of the e-service unit at the Upper Secondary School Admissions Office.

The interviewed personnel categories within the municipalities were employees from contact centres (“front offices”) and from different divisions within the municipalities, what is called the “back office” of the municipal local administration as well as from the top management of the five municipalities. All interviews focused on the consequences of the e-government policy that resulted in the implementation of the contact centres seen from different perspectives. The respondents were e.g. asked to describe their experiences and their views regarding the development of the contact centre and change in the work of the public administrators, how they had participated in the development process, their opinions regarding the results of the implementation of more e-services, the re-organisation of the work, and the municipalities and their opinions regarding the organisation of the process and methods used (for cons from different perspectives). In order to cover the changing working conditions and reorganisation within the municipalities, representatives from the unions were also interviewed. It was important not only to include different personnel categories but the number of respondents in qualitative studies must be large enough to assure that most if not all of the perceptions that might be important are uncovered. However, if the sample is too large, data becomes repetitive (Mason, 2010). According to Glaser & Strauss (1967), the sample size in the majority of qualitative studies should generally follow the concept of saturation but many researchers do not suggest what constitutes a sufficient sample size (Mason, 2010). According to Ritchie et al. (2003) qualitative samples often are below 50 while Green and Thorogood (2009) state that the experience of most qualitative researchers is that very little “new” in interviews comes out after interviewing 20 people or so. That this thesis consists of a total of 57 interviews within the five municipalities was a result mostly due to saturation. Each interview with personnel from the municipalities took about an hour and was tape-recorded and transcribed.

The 21 interviews with citizens were based on semi-structured telephone interviews, primarily using open-ended questions with predefined alternatives, to which some open-ended questions were added. These interviews were held about four weeks after the contact centre was implemented in late 2009. When citizens (14 female and 7 male) who had been in contact with the public administrators at the contact centre ended their phone calls, they were asked if another person (a researcher) could call them back and conduct an interview asking about their attitudes to the newly established contact centre, their knowledge about this implementation, their opinions of the service delivered by the new municipal contact centre, if they had access to or used the Internet and public e-services and about how this implementation has affected their access to local municipal service in general.

4.1.3 Focus group interviews
The focus group as a research method is a group interview that usually involves at least four interviewees and typically emphasizes a specific theme or topic that is explored in depth.
The focus group method is based on open-ended group discussions that examine a particular set of relevant issues with an emphasis on the questioning of a particular topic. In some respects they are expected to have characteristics that are similar to spontaneous and informal discussions (Marková et al., 2007). A focus group is effective if there is not much obtainable information concerning a specific phenomenon, so that the interpretations and meanings of the issue come into focus. Focus groups can be combined with other methods, such as interviews, direct observations and document studies (Wibeck, 2000), which are used in this thesis. The focus groups’ discussions often take place in cafés, pubs or on the street, as stringent methodological criteria stress the importance of finding a suitable context for the discussion in order for the focus group to become as “natural” as possible (Kitzinger et al., 2004). In my case we met at their local and regional offices and in schools. The groups were free to decide the location of the meeting. At the case study in East Sweden one focus group was arranged among the guidance councillors in the two main municipalities of the region and four students were selected for a focus group based on recommendations from the guidance councillors. The councillors were selected and invited through the regional network of guidance councillors. In the West Sweden study there were three focus group interviews – two with students and one with a group of guidance councillors from different secondary schools within the main municipality. Eight students (four male and four female) participated in the focus group interviews. They were selected by the guidance councillors from schools that differed in size and profiles. All focus group interviews focused on the interpretations and usage of the common application system that had been implemented. Each interview took about an hour and was tape-recorded and transcribed.

4.1.4 Direct observations
A case study should take place in the natural setting of the “case” (Yin, 2009) and some direct observations, e.g. field studies were made in my study. I observed the work of the public administrators at the contact centres in four of the five municipalities although I spent more time directly observing the work of the public administrators, social setting and activity in one of the contact centres. The observations gave a more direct and unmediated access to local practices and improved the coherency of the ambitions and organisation promoted by policies and described in the interviews (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2011).

4.2 Paper summaries
Article 1: Trust in secure public e-services: translating polices into use
Article 1 stresses that the emerging information society challenges relations between public agencies and citizens in many ways. E-services as such may be viewed as innovations as they are a new way of producing and organising the service. For secure use and successful implementation of innovations in public contexts, the innovation must be considered legitimate and related to policies. The European Union and all other levels of government form policies, which are then translated among the various levels to manage the useful, secure praxis of e-services. Translation in organisational terms takes place across governmental levels in the multi-level governance chain and secondarily from technical to administrative settings. Since Swedish public administration relies on a dual steering approach, with strong, constitutionally mandated regional and local autonomy, such policies cannot be forced onto
regional and local public agencies. Instead, European and national policy statements become soft policy instruments in the local context, and their implications rely on local uptake in the specific setting and on the competencies of the professionals in local public administration.

In order to visualize the relation to praxis, three strategic case studies in entrepreneurial public administrative settings were selected and conducted. These organizations were all forerunners with high uptake of the new policies on e-services. The cases were selected to illustrate the different levels of government. The Swedish Transport Agency - a national authority - formed to meet several different actors through e-government arrangements. The regional level was illustrated by collaborative student counselling for secondary high schools in West Sweden. Finally, the local level was represented by a municipal contact centre. The case studies include interviews with key actors, text analysis and some participatory observations.

The cases studied indicate that there have been openings for local construction of meanings promoting security and relating to citizens’ trust in that context and the specific public e-services. One short example was the indication of trust that appeared from both parents and students in the public e-service admission process to upper secondary schools in the West Sweden case. Before the implementation of the e-application the parents had to sign the application since the students were under age. The analysis indicates that the local entrepreneurs within public administration use the opportunities for local translation and adoption of public e-services into the specific context in which they act. Further, the study indicates that the organisational settings of multi-level governance are greater constraints than new technology for implementation of public e-services. The reformulation and localization of general policies are realized through the praxis. The policy ideas are co-produced through networks of technology, human actors, organisations and governmental structures.

Article 2: Policy entrepreneurs in networks – implementation of two Swedish municipal contact centres from an actor perspective
The emerging networked governance structure calls for improved knowledge of policy entrepreneurship both for analytical and practical improvements. The purpose of Article 2 is to elaborate on the meanings of policy entrepreneurs and through the conceptualisation analyse implementation of local municipal contact centres (CCs). The analysis took off from a field work of two case studies of CCs in two suburban municipalities in the capital region of Sweden. The selected cases were both forerunners in the implementation of CCs and since the municipalities were similar in size, structure and their suburban location the potential for comparing the processes were good. The article builds on qualitative case studies including interviews, observations and document analysis, all analysed through the perspective of policy entrepreneurs.

The result indicates that local policies are implemented in relation to local cultures, norms and economic structures. This is exemplified through the implementation of two contact centres (CCs). The contact centres are organizational innovations developing the practices and management in public administration. However, they do not simply appear. The CCs have to be locally formed and anchored in policy-making before being implemented. They were implemented in different ways adhering to the local cultures, norms and economic structure in
the different municipalities. The networked governance structure requires entrepreneurial actors to combine resources and interests into a change. Here two types of such entrepreneurial actors are identified both theoretically and practically. The outcome of the processes differs depending on what type of policy actor was driving the process of change. The issue entrepreneur focuses on the issue as such and on the solution to a single problem. The political entrepreneur, on the other hand, focuses on core values and long-term structural changes. The findings may provide useful information for municipal e-government planning specifically when planning for implementing contact centres. The study enriches the existing literature on policy entrepreneurs in networks expanding the roles to include also local e-government contexts.

**Article 3: Regional e-governance: promoting entrepreneurial behaviour in public administration**

Article 3 demonstrates public e-services as technical innovations which enable organisational changes. The basic pre-conditions for e-services in the public sector differ in several respects from e-commerce in the private sector. When the “customers” are citizens, the distribution of, access to, and use of the services are not based on an open market distribution. Public e-services bring about innovative organisational changes for the new e-society and bridge formerly unseen digital divides. However, such changes demand innovative behaviour among people in professional roles which are usually strictly and formally defined. The case studies in this article focus on the development of the service from an organizational perspective based on interviews with staff in public administration and firms, document studies and the use of IT based on focus group interviews with users of the systems in different phases of the process. Two such cases are the e-governance of the common application systems for upper secondary schools in the county of Östergötland and the county of Fyrbodal in West Sweden. The conceptual e-governance model developed in this article discussed the differences of e-services, e-administration and e-democracy. Following this model, the common application systems as an illustrative case of a public e-service on the Internet, was presented and analysed. The systems were developed in collaboration between the municipalities and the county and have been in use for a few years. They are both administrative and are used as a service for potential students when gathering information and filing applications. This complex e-service was used to illustrate the conceptual discussion on e-governance and the entrepreneurial behaviour that occurs when such innovations are implemented in public administration.

The study showed how actors in public organisations act entrepreneurially in different relationships and how they promoted changes, such as the implementation of an e-service also functioning as an e-administrative tool and improved the intended benefits of the e-service. This is exemplified through the guidance counsellors taking on slightly different entrepreneurial roles over the academic year. They adapted their actions in relation to the situation in order to achieve maximum outcome in the process and also to maximize the use of available resources. At the information and application stage, the guidance counsellors became real guides, both for the e-service and for the students. They used the same e-governance as an e-administration tool for coordinating the schools. They had the ability to
use the common application systems as an information system, an e-service and an administrative tool in order to fulfil their different duties during the academic year.

Article 4: Local e-government in Sweden – municipal contact centre implementation with focus on public administrators and citizens

In Article 4, I analyse the implementation of municipal contact centres (CCs) which is a new phenomenon within the Swedish local e-government context and which may be seen as a practical result of the Swedish e-government policy. The study is a study of the implementation of four Swedish municipal CCs, as well as of an interview study with citizens from one of the municipalities. The focus is on internal organisation as well as on citizens. A criterion for being chosen was that the municipality should be a forerunner in the development of e-Government and the implementing of a CC.

Based on a theoretical discussion of e-government and New Public Management (NPM) in the digital era, this study indicates that the implementation of CCs may be viewed as a result of the theories of NPM in the keywords of efficient public services, introducing market mechanisms and customer orientation. An example of this is the implementation of more e-services. Critical aspects related to efficiency are, however, work approaches and competence development possibilities for the public administrators at the CCs, internal anchoring and a need for increased focus on the work of public administration at the back office. The study indicates that there are two main implications of CCs: they localize public services and they combine different services into a one-stop practice striving to provide a “holistic” approach to the individual citizen in her local context. The study implies that efficiency and citizen-centred approaches in this redesign of information relationships between the public administration and citizens to create some sort of added value are critical. The redesign appears e.g. in an ambition to bridge the silos of local public administration and shows that there is a need for a process organisation as design of technology and organisation are interrelated. Another result is that the registering of all issues from the citizens in a common database may in a sense be viewed as a citizen-centred aspect. This information source implies knowledge about the citizens’ needs for municipal service and can be used for planning purposes.

5. Discussion

This section relates the findings back to the research aim. This is done through organising each subsection in accordance with the research questions. The purpose of the present study is to provide a deeper understanding of how e-government policies are implemented in an e-governance context, through empirical case studies in Sweden with focus at the local level. The overall objective is to describe and analyse how is e-government policy put into practice when focusing at the local level in Sweden with the three following sub-research questions:

5.1 What is the role of policy entrepreneurs in the implementation of local e-Government initiatives in Sweden?

The second article’s results indicated that local entrepreneurs within public administration used the opportunities for local translation and adoption of public e-services into the specific
context in which they act. This is possible since Swedish public administration relies on a dual steering approach, with strong, constitutionally mandated regional and local autonomy, national or supranational policies cannot be forced onto regional and local public agencies. Instead, European and national policy statements become soft policy instruments in the local context, and their implications rely on local uptake in the specific setting and on the competencies of the professionals in local public administration. Building on the classification of policy networks by Rhodes and Marsh (1992)\(^5\) to the policy entrepreneurial approach the results indicate that the actors identified as policy entrepreneurs in two of the cases of implementing municipal contact centres were active in these processes by implementing new ideas and forming networks.

However, the policy entrepreneurs promoted the implementation of the CCs from different perspectives and with varying ambitions. In one of the studied cases - case A - the core values of inclusion and participation grounded the design of the contact centre, while in the other case the issue as such was key – a new organisational approach. This is explained as two illustrations of different approaches of policy networks and entrepreneurial behaviour. The issue entrepreneur focused on the problem to transform policies relating to the practical issues and problems of daily administrative routines which dominated the processes. It was here mainly one person who took on the role of being an issue entrepreneur and settling the changes. In the other case, on the other hand, there were several people together acting as political entrepreneurs to formulate and anchor the idea on the political agenda and using the more stable and dense policy communities. They took off from the municipal core value when opening the policy window for changes. The outcome of the processes differs depending on what type of policy actor that was driving the process of change. When the issue of the CC was in focus, the externally recruited issue entrepreneur had good knowledge about CCs and competence to help implementing it, but was not integrated into the organisation and municipal values. The issue entrepreneur in case A had a network of actors with interests in CCs in general.

On the other hand in case B the core values of the policy community were in focus. The political entrepreneurs took on the role of implementing and realising the CC in line with the organisational tradition and models of their municipality. The political entrepreneur had a dense local network within the municipal administration and among local policy makers. This indicates that if changes are supposed to carry on core values and integrate the organisation there is a need for political entrepreneurs. But if the objective of change is a limited issue that quickly has to be implemented there is a need for an issue entrepreneur. By focusing on the actors in their context there are also opportunities to understand their setting and how they co-create the contextual setting that makes up a pre-condition for all other actors there and then, even within public administration. Policy entrepreneurs can expand the range of options for other actors by providing changes and opening for extended networks. The result indicates that policies are implemented in relation to local cultures, norms and economic structures.

\(^5\) See section 2.4
The analysis of Article 3 found that the professionals in public administration acted as entrepreneurs and improved the intended benefits of an e-service. Besides networking, the guidance counsellors in both regions – consisting of associations of municipalities – functioned as entrepreneurs, promoting and using the common application systems. The emphasis was put on the demands expressed by the students and that this was in the students’ interest. They found ways in the process to make the system work and build trust both in the e-service and the regional collaboration. According to the definition of policy entrepreneur by Mintrom (1997), the student counsellors were taking on the roles of implementing and integrating the technical application. This may be explained in terms that as a consequence of the e-governance context there was room for policy entrepreneurs. In these cases the guidance counsellors functioned as policy entrepreneurs. They promoted the application and adapted it to the organisational setting. As entrepreneurs, they had the ability to use the common application systems as an information system, an e-service and an e-administrative tool in order to fulfil the different aims of their duties during the academic year. They acted in a local context where policy-making takes place and integrated ideas in the specific phase of the process.

This complex e-service illustrated the conceptual discussion of e-governance and the entrepreneurial behaviour which occurs when such innovations are implemented in public administration. The systems were developed locally in the region based on Swedish local autonomy, so even if they have exactly the same approach, the systems as well as their use differed between the two regions. This indicates that the policy entrepreneur has to consider the different local conditions within the specific part of the society when implementing successful e-governance.

To conclude, results imply that, in practice, when e-government policy is implemented at the local level, it tends to happen in e-governance settings that are conducted by policy entrepreneurs or promoted by entrepreneurial behaviour in public administration.

5.2 How does the implementation of e-government and e-governance initiatives affect trust in public service provision?

The result of Article 1 indicated that there have been openings for local construction of meanings promoting security and relating to citizens’ trust in that context and the specific public e-services. This is related to the Swedish so-called “dualist model” of civil service where the local and regional authorities hold a considerable high level of autonomy vis-à-vis the national government and where supranational or national policies cannot be forced onto regional and local public agencies. In more general terms the cases studied in this article indicate that policies are translated and given contextual meaning in the situations in which they become praxis. The local knowledge is critical for the creation of what is seen as security in the specific context.

Further, the results of the e-governance implementation of the common application systems to upper secondary schools (Article 3) showed that the public e-service required a high level of trust among all users although there were different grounds for trust for the administration.
personnel at the admissions office, the schools and the students. In the focus group interviews, the students were the only group that expressed a high level of trust in the application system. One of the students formulated it clearly when making this comparison of e-services: “This is the municipality and you sort of have to trust them. It is not like buying something from ‘cheap Charlie’ or something, if I say”. Maybe this expression of trust was a little too positive, but it works as long as his trust relies on the satisfaction with using the system. However it is not the design of the e-service that inspired trust but the municipality as a trustworthy organisation. However, this may affect trust in service provision even for the actors using the system in terms of e-administration although they base their trust on security, management by the rules and their own professional competence, and they were more sceptical toward the system. Some of them still saw the system as a beta version they had come into contact with when it had first been launched.

When the e-service application was implemented in the West Sweden case (Article 3), the Fyrbodal municipal association decided to cancel the identification part of the application process – “signature of the guardian (parent)” – for underage students. The administration here acted entrepreneurially as they saw it to improve trust. They were of the opinion that it was legal and not necessary. Their interpretation of security in the process was that by providing the necessary log-in codes to parents or guardians, this at least guaranteed (to some extent) that parents would take part in the application process of their child.

The implementation of municipal CCs (Article 4) which in this thesis is an example of a mix of both e-government and e-governance initiatives, with a single telephone number to all municipal services and more public e-services (self-service and more specific information on the municipal websites) indicates increased accessibility for citizens to municipal service which should affect trust even if it does not necessarily mean that there is increased citizen trust in public service provision. However the findings indicating that a simple touch-tone technique (a digital tool for telephones that may be referred to as a kind of e-service) contributed to access to municipal services for citizens may be seen as an indication of trust, especially for certain groups of citizens. The touch-tone technique can affect trust in the public service provision as it can be problematic for the elderly, and contribute to less access and less trust in the public municipal service provision. A simplified touch-tone technology contributed to more citizens (for example those who are unwilling or unable to deal with touch-tone technology) being able to easily contact the CC and gain access to municipal services which should affect trust in public service provision positively. A similar positive aspect affecting trust to include more citizens by increasing their access to municipal services was the implementing of a special CC for issues regarding care of the elderly as shown in Article 4. These groups of citizens did not have to use the touch-tone technology in order to contact specialists in elderly issues.

5.3 How does the implementation of local municipal contact centres affect the work of the public administrators in terms of their role as suppliers of public service?

The results of the third sub-research question regarding how the implementation of local
municipal contact centres affects the work of the public administrators in terms of their role as suppliers of public service is that their work conditions in some ways have changed (Article 4). They can provide different services, combine them and even bridge different administrative domains from a citizen-centred perspective. However, the result implies that the work of the public administrators within the front office as well as in the back office will be more efficient if more work processes are transferred to the front office (CC) provided that the public administrators at the CCs have mandate and knowledge to respond to the issues. Critical aspects related to efficiency are, however, work approaches and competence development possibilities for the public administrators at the CCs. The results also imply that there is a need for increased focus on the work of public administrators at the back office. Thus this implementation is a process that benefits from being grounded in values of inclusion and meeting the needs of citizens that includes facilitating a reorganisation of back-office procedures in order to optimize the efficiency aspects.

Further, the results point out that it is vital to anchor the CCs in policy making and within the municipalities before implementation. The CC implementation, including e-services and e-administration, cannot be seen as a separate part of the organisation. Although the use of ICT is essential for the organisational transformation, the results thus indicate that the organisational settings and internal anchoring are greater constraints than new technology for implementation of local e-government and e-governance. The result implies that efficiency and citizen-centred approaches in this redesign of information relationships between the public administration and citizens to create some sort of added value are critical. The redesign appears e.g. in an ambition to bridge the silos of local public administration and shows that there is a need for a process organisation as design of technology and organisation are interrelated.

Another result of the implementation of the contact centres is the new source of issues from the citizens gathered in one common database (Article 4). This may affect their role as suppliers of public service more citizen-oriented due to the fact that planners and decision-makers within the municipality may use this information as a potential source for planning purposes and to get knowledge about the citizens' needs for municipal service. The municipal services could then be localized and adjusted to the citizens' needs (and to different communities of citizens), and hence the production of municipal services would become more citizen-governed than before the implementation of the CCs. According to recent literature within planning theories it is important to involve different citizen groups in order to plan for a sustainable municipality (Sandercock, 1998; Friedmann, 2011; Healey, 2012). The idea of planning has a normative dimension and the core of planning is to be seen as a form of collective action or governance and emphasizes e.g. the attribute of liveability for the many, not the few (Healey, 2012). Furthermore, Clifton and Díaz-Fuentes (2010) argue that citizens’ perceptions are important because they constitute the infrastructure necessary for economic and social development.
6. Limitations
As in any research project, there are limitations in this thesis. Some are theoretical, while others are related to the fit between the study cases and my research questions.

6.1 Theoretical limitations
As mentioned above research in e-government can be seen as being at the crossroads between a number of other research domains (Heeks, 2007) and there is a lack of a guiding theory or unifying theoretical framework for understanding the e-government phenomenon (Grönlund, 2005). This research takes place between several different fields such as municipality research, management, e-government and e-governance, informatics, planning and regional issues. Although I have knowledge about these research fields, theories in this thesis are limited to theories on policy implementation, e-government and e-governance, multi-level governance, policy entrepreneurs, policy networks and organizations. Related theories are limited to planning and translation theories.

As this thesis takes place in a Swedish context and concerns e-government and e-government initiatives on the local level (Swedish municipalities), the analysis and conclusions are limited to Swedish contexts.

6.2 Data limitations
In article one the selected cases appeared in different policy fields due to the fact that the cases selected should be innovative organizations and forerunners in the implementation of e-government initiatives. This limited the analysis and an explicit comparison across the levels in a specific policy field could thus not be done. This problem could probably have been solved by doing this study a few years later as more municipal contact centres have been implemented.

The focus groups (Article 3) in the follow-up case study of West Sweden were limited to two focus group interviews with students at different schools due to timing limitations. An ideal situation would have been to do more focus group studies with students. However, the timing of the empirical sampling mattered. The study had to be done within a short time period (about a month) after deadline for application when students recently had used the e-service in order to get an actual discussion regarding the application process.

The case study with citizens (Article 4) was limited to an explorative study to investigate the citizens’ attitudes to the newly established contact centre in one municipality. This limitation was due to time and financial limitations within the research project. If the conditions had been ideal a broader follow-up citizen study could have been done in the same municipality as well as another citizen-study in at least one of the other municipalities that had implemented contact centres if the time conditions were more favourable.

7. Contribution
The research results contribute to the general knowledge of e-government and e-governance in the perspective of implementation of e-government policies that benefit policymakers and
public administrators. The results are also of value for researchers interested in areas that relate theories on entrepreneurship to policy implementation. The final part of this section presents potential further research directions.

7.1 Relevance for research
The results help bridging the research gap on how e-government policies are implemented in Swedish local governance context in practice. The results also enriches the research by conceptualizing the terms e-government and e-governance.

Further the results enrich the existing literature on policy entrepreneurs in networks expanding the roles to also include local e-government contexts. This research demonstrate the relevance of using the concept of policy entrepreneurs in Swedish context as well as to increase the understanding of the concept.

Findings also have relevance for research within public administration management as the results from this thesis indicate that what is described as New Public Management has developed into what is named New Public Governance (Osborne et al., 2012).

Further this research has relevance for local and regional planning or “development” as the concept of planning implies a mode of governance articulated by policies (Healey, 2004).

7.2 Relevance for policy
The research results are valuable to policy makers at the national, regional and local level although especially for those at the local level. The results are also valuable for planners and decision-makers in municipalities when planning to implement contact centres including more e-services, e.g. to learn about different approaches to implementing CCs.

The results illustrates and make sense of the many complexities involved when implementing an e-service in a local and regional context, where many actors and users are concerned and different values compete, which has relevance for policy. Results contribute to the knowledge that implementation of e-government and e-governance initiatives in the public sector places great demands on their implementers. Implementing professionals must act in highly creative ways. Although the use of IT is essential for the organisational transformation, the results indicate that the organisational settings and internal anchoring are greater constraints than new technology for implementation of local e-government and e-governances initiatives in form of contact centres.

Results from this thesis implies that, in practice, when e-government policy is implemented at the local level, it tends to happen in an e-governance settings that are conducted by policy entrepreneurs or promoted by entrepreneurial behaviour in public administration. These results could be valuable and exert a positive influence on local/regional development as Sweden has such a big public sector, especially on the local level – this could exert a positive influence on local/regional development (cf. Westlund, 2012).

7.3 Potential further research directions
This research has resulted in several potential further research directions. One future
interesting area of research is to study the hypothesis launched in this essay indicating that to implement local e-government policies, the policy entrepreneurs or public administrators with entrepreneurial behaviour in public administration have to navigate in e-governance settings.

The findings also indicate that there may be a possible source for planning and a basis for decision-making as well as for citizen impact on the conditions for local planning through the implementation of municipal contact centres. This could lead to a possibility for planners to have valuable input from citizens on decisions e.g. regarding the outdoor environment. This refers to the concepts and norms of Swedish welfare and democracy as well as to the concept of spatial planning that includes urban and regional planning.

Potential research questions would then be:

- Does the implementation of municipal CCs affect local planning in terms of better serving the interest of citizens? If yes, in what way?
- How may the implementation of CCs contribute to processes used in deliberative attempts to influence spatial planning?

Also future interesting research questions to analyse are:

- What are the barriers for e-governance at the local level?
- Is there a gender dimension of e-governance/e-government?
- How does the implementation of municipal contact centres affect citizens?
8. References


