

When the Global Becomes the Local

A Case Study about Aalborg Municipality's International Relations

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Abstract

This master thesis will revolve around a single case study and seeks to explore and understand why Danish municipalities engage in an international context, using Aalborg Municipality as a case. The aim of the thesis is therefore to create an understanding of how the municipality is acting abroad and why, analyzing the rationales and reasons behind the decision to act abroad. In order to do so, qualitative data will be used consisting of documents, such as websites, showing the activities conducted by Aalborg Municipality. Furthermore, conducted interviews consisting of civil servants from the international group, being a representative from the different departments within the municipality, will be analyzed to see how they understand the reasons behind acting abroad. Additionally the theories; logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness will be used as a way to deepen the answers that the interviewees give, by justifying different decisions and explaining why people act in a certain way. The theories can further be used as a way to understand how some decisions are made, explaining the reasons behind Aalborg Municipality's international engagement. Additionally, different concepts or areas of studies in regard to the internationalization of local governments will be used to broaden out the findings, showing that Aalborg is not an isolated case.

From the findings, it can be concluded that the focus of the international activities is mostly within an economic dimension, as a way to secure growth to Aalborg Municipality and to the local businesses and local communities. As such the activities are stretching from investments in Africa, to participation in networks and projects and mostly within a EU sphere, participating in different EU financed funding programs and projects. It can further be argued that one of the main reasons behind the international engagement is a rational reasoning weighing the expected cost against the potential benefits, with most of the activities being conducted because it is regarded as the best alternative. As such, the activities do have to make sense by outweighing the barriers such as the activities being secondary to the core task that they have to solve. It can thus be concluded that Aalborg Municipality's international relations is where the municipality is benefitting from the globalized world, cooperating and participating where it makes sense in terms of what direction the municipality wants to go domestically.

Table of content:

1. Introduction	1
2. Problem formulation	5
2.1. Definition of concepts	5
2.2. Limitations to the thesis	6
2.3. Literature review.....	8
2.4. Structure of the thesis	10
3. Design	12
3.1. Philosophical science approach	12
3.2. Case design	13
3.3. Choice of theory	14
4. Methodology	15
4.1. Documents.....	15
4.2. Interviews	17
4.2.1. Presentation of interviewees	17
4.2.2. Interview guide	19
4.2.3. Transcribing.....	20
5. Theory	21
5.1. Logic of Consequences	21
5.2. Logic of Appropriateness.....	22
5.3. Combination of the logics.....	24
5.4. Relevance to the thesis	25
6. The internationalization of local governments	26
6.1. City diplomacy	26
6.2. European integration and local governments	28
6.3. Town twinning	30
7. Presentation of case – Aalborg Municipality	33
7.1. Legal framework	33
7.2. Political structure	34
7.3. Aalborg Municipality's international strategy	36
8. Strategy for the analysis	38
8.1. Coding.....	38
8.2. Display	39
9. Analysis	41
9.1. Aalborg Municipality's international activities	42
9.1.1. International activities	43
9.1.1.1. Global.....	43
9.1.1.2. Twinning	45
9.1.1.3. Arctic/Nordic	47
9.1.1.4. EU	49
9.1.2. Comparison to the literature.....	51
9.1.3. Sub-conclusion	53
9.2. Reasons and rationales	54
9.2.1. International strategies.....	54
9.2.2. A globalized world.....	56
9.2.3. The decline of twinning.....	58

9.2.4. Networks & projects	61
9.2.5. Problems & barriers	65
9.2.6. Sub-conclusion	68
10. Discussion of the findings	69
10.1. Causes and effects.....	69
10.2. Reflection on the theories	71
10.3. Reflections on EU	72
11. Conclusion	75
12. Recommendations.....	77
13. Bibliography	79
14. Appendix	84

1. Introduction

As globalization is altering the traditional understandings of world politics, the global sphere now has an influence on the local sphere and has provided local governments and cities with opportunities to go abroad to pursue own interests. These tendencies can also be seen in Denmark and thus, this master thesis seeks to explore and understand why Danish municipalities engage in an international context, using Aalborg Municipality as a single case.

Globalization can be defined as *"(...) the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness (...)"* (McGrew, 2014: 16), or as *"(...) the dissemination, transmission and dispersal of goods, persons, images and ideas across national boundaries (...)"* (Plujim & Melissen, 2007: 8). This global interconnectedness has become evident over the last three decades, as new modes and infrastructure for communication have organized people across the world accelerating the pace of global interactions. Furthermore there has been recognitions of transnational problems such as climate change and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (McGrew, 2014: 15-18). As such globalization can be described as a process where international issues become national issues (Plujim & Melissen, 2007: 8). As the world is becoming smaller, the traditional understandings of world politics are being questioned and difficult to maintain, as the cut between domestic and international relations and politics becomes blurry (McGrew, 2014: 15-16).

This diminishing cut between international and domestic politics can also be seen in the way of internationalization, referring to the growing interdependence between states and in the way of regionalization especially. Being one aspect of globalization, regionalization can be conceived as a way to accommodate within the globalized world order, concerning integration among states that are geographically proximate (McGrew, 2014: 20; Best & Christiansen, 2014: 414). As an example, EU can be described as a gradual process of integration. EU can also be seen as a system of multilevel governance, giving room for other than the traditional state actors, with actors operating on different territorial levels such as the supranational, national and sub-state level (Best & Christiansen, 2014: 411-412; Hooghe & Marks, 2014).

Since the European Union or the European Community was created in the 1950s, the notion of European integration has advanced in many ways. One of the ways is through treaties. An example is the 1992 Maastricht treaty, creating the new organization of the European Union. Another example is the 2007 Lisbon treaty, where focus was on continuing the patterns of both institutional and policy integration. Further, through the EU enlargement process the number of members has been gradually increased reaching a number of 28 members as of 2017 (Nugent, 2010: 27-33). As the integration has intensified, a system of governance without government can be said to have taken place, being non-hierarchical and 'sui generis', being fundamentally different from other cases. Therefore, within the system of multilevel governance, central governments are losing control, not only to the EU Commission, but also to local and regional governments, proving a shift of authority (Pollack, 2010: 35-37).

As such, some scholars claim that due to the rise of territorial non-state actors, states "(...) *have lost their monopoly over social, economic, and political activity in their territory.*" (Plujim & Melissen, 2007: 8). Thus, national governments are not the only actors on the international diplomatic stage conducting foreign affairs. The Westphalian image of a unitary state are therefore being displaced, being increasingly divided and shared between local, national, regional authorities (McGrew, 2014: 28-29). The interconnectedness of the world has made way for NGOs, multinational corporations, regions, municipalities and cities, as the economic, political and cultural dimensions of globalization have worn down the responsibilities and functions of the state (Plujim & Melissen, 2007: 7-8).

The effects of globalization, and the rise of trading regimes such as the EU, have thus eroded the old distinctions between domestic and international affairs (Aldecoa & Keating, 1999). Due to the overlap more and more municipalities and cities, especially in the European countries, are becoming engaged in municipal foreign affairs. Kresl and Fry define it as "(...) *carrying forth with activities which transcend national boundaries in an effort to protect and enhance the interests of the constituents they represents.*" (Kresl & Fry, 2005: 48). The focus of the municipalities is therefore to enhance development at the local level,

with the most common expression being twinning relationships with foreign cities or the opening of offices abroad such as in Brussels, being closer to the EU (Kresl & Fry, 2005: 59-62). A more controversial part of this interaction is municipal foreign policy, where municipal leaders are engaging in formulating or implementing own versions of foreign policies, thus providing the possibility of contradicting national foreign policy (Ibid.: 49).

These tendencies can also be seen in Denmark as the municipalities have become more focused on the international sphere, providing a new way to secure development in their own local areas. In Denmark in the 50's and 60's, Nordic cooperation and twinning was the only decentralized sign of the internationalization, focusing on cultural understanding and solidarity. As the globalization and regionalization processes have increased, the international aspect has become more important with the focus mainly being on the European level, establishing contacts and cooperating with other local governments within the EU (Klausen, 1996: 16; Klausen, 1995: 166). With the end of the cold war and the increasing start of the European integration process, the number of Danish actors conducting foreign affairs has dramatically increased. Further, due to structural reforms, the Danish municipalities now have a size that allows them, on their own, to practice diplomacy throughout Europe and the world (Marcussen, 2016; KL, 2008: 7).

Thus, as the international aspect has moved into the local areas, the municipalities now have a new way to achieve development dealing with new policy areas. As an example, Aalborg Municipality has developed an explicit strategy concerning the international sphere. Aalborg's international strategy is an initiative to effectively make Aalborg a globalized city. Through five themes, concerning the global, EU, Arctic, Nordic and the twinning relationships, the goal is to create international growth in the city, getting the world to Aalborg and Aalborg out to the world, thus making it a globalized city (Aalborg Kommune, a).

As stated, more and more Danish municipalities are becoming aware of the international sphere. But as the literature about Danish municipalities engagement with the international relations is scarce, how do they engage on the international scene and why? What

rationales are behind the decision for a municipality such as Aalborg to engage in the international sphere? As it is a rather open and unknown research area, it is relevant to investigate why a Danish municipality such as Aalborg is acting abroad and examine which rationales, ideas or perhaps lack thereof, there are behind these international relations. Further when engaging in the international sphere, either by participating in networks, EU programs or cooperating with other cities, what possible gains can be achieved? Additionally, does dealing with the international aspect matter, and are there some potential problems or barriers in regard to the internationalization and to the fact that municipalities are now becoming independent actors in an international context?

These questions will be dealt with, throughout the master thesis, using Aalborg as a single case, trying to understand the 'how and why' of the international relations of a Danish municipality. When investigating the international relations of Aalborg Municipality, characterizing it, and if it is international or just regional relations within the EU, an understanding about municipal decentralized foreign affairs/policy can be obtained.

2. Problem formulation

The considerations above about the area of study has led to the following problem formulation and sub-questions, which will guide the thesis:

Why does Aalborg Municipality engage in an international context?

- *How does Aalborg Municipality engage in the international context?*
- *Which reasons and rationales are behind the international engagement?*

Based on the research question this master thesis seeks to investigate why Aalborg engages in an international context. The purpose of the sub-questions is to structure the answering of the problem formulation, providing a more detailed explanation of why a Danish municipality decides to act beyond its own local borders. The first sub-question is due to the importance of outlining the different activities that Aalborg has done, to understand how Aalborg engages in an international context. Further as the international activities performed by Danish municipalities differ from each municipality an outline of Aalborg's activities is necessary (KL, 2008: 8). The second sub-question is centered on the rationales and reasons behind the activities. By using the theories, logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness, it will be analyzed how the decisions to act abroad can be characterized, thus answering why Aalborg Municipality is engaging in an international context.

In order to achieve a common understanding essential concepts and limitations relating to the problem formulation will be defined and elaborated in the next sections. Further a literature review will be presented, as to show the literature, in which the master thesis takes its starting point. Finally figure 1 will show the structure of the thesis, providing with an overview.

2.1. Definition of concepts

International context/engagement: The international context or engagement is, in this thesis, defined as any diplomatic activities performed outside the local border of a municipality and the national context. This can be participation in European or international networks, participation in EU programs/projects, cooperating with other cities as a way to pursue own interests, twinning relationships etc.

Municipality & City: In this thesis the term municipality will be defined as “(...) *the lowest level of local government structure.*” (de Villiers, 2005: 11). Thus throughout the thesis, terms such as municipality, subnational government and local government will be used interchangeably. Furthermore, the term city will be defined in the same way as a municipality. A city can be defined as an area, that also includes the local communities and the business sectors in said area (Ibid.: 10). As the focus in this thesis is on Aalborg Municipality and its international relations, the local communities and the business sectors will be included, as some of the activities with the municipality being the facilitator of the said activities are aimed towards getting the business sector and the local communities out in the world.

Internationalization: In the literature concerning Danish municipalities, internationalization represents all contexts where there is an international orientation with the need to address new internationally oriented patterns of action (Klausen, 1995: 166). Further it can be defined as a process which, is going faster and faster. But the process is not irreversible meaning that it can either be selected or deselected, depending on the different activities and the situation (Thaarup et al., 1996: 10). As such integration within the EU is one way in terms of Internationalization, also called regionalization (Klausen, 1996: 15-16). In this thesis, globalization and internationalization are used interchangeably, as they refer to the same processes with regionalization being one aspect of it, concerning a specific geographically area.

2.2. Limitations to the thesis

Due to the different and many activities that Aalborg Municipality has undertaken over the years, a timeframe is needed as to maintain an overview. Focus will therefore be on activities and initiatives that are being undertaken in 2016-2017, and a few activities/initiatives that have already been concluded, but still have an importance in the way Aalborg is acting in the international sphere. Therefore, in order to answer the first sub-questions, the map over the different activities will mostly be centered on what is going on right now.

Another limitation is the choice of actors within Aalborg Municipality. Within the municipality two types of actors can be characterized, being the politicians and the civil servants. While both represent the local communities providing public services, the politicians are more directly tied to the public since they are concerned about publicity and upcoming election, also deciding the overall decisions for the direction of the municipality. The civil servants are more tied to the policy making, being in the 'machine room' of the municipality. Further as they are the policy makers in the different departments, their willingness in terms of the international activities can have important implications for the decision to do it (Thaarup et al., 1996: 34). As the purpose of this thesis is to find out the rationales behind the international activities, the civil servants have been chosen as the unit of study due to the fact, that they are the ones working more directly with the aspect.

Additionally, it is important to distinguish between inward and outward activities in regard to Aalborg Municipality's international activities. Outward activities can be linked to Aalborg engaging in an international context, as stated in the 'definition of concepts' section. Inward activities, while still focusing on the international sphere, are more focused on making Aalborg a more globalized city. Throughout the thesis, focus will mostly be on the outward international activities of Aalborg Municipality, with only few examples of the biggest inwards activities being mentioned.

Later in the thesis, relevant concepts concerning the internationalization of local governments will be presented as a way to broaden the perspectives of Aalborg Municipality's international activities. Some concepts, while still relevant, have been deselected and the argumentation for this and a short presentation of the concepts will be presented below:

- Global cities: A concept focusing on global cities or 'world cities' such as London and New York and their important status in the world economy and their political decision-making power and status in global affairs due to the process of globalization (Acuto, 2013; Sassen, 1991). The deselection of the concept is due to that Aalborg Municipality does not have the size and the decision-making power to affect global affairs.

- Para diplomacy: An area of study describing the increasing involvement of sub-national governments and especially regions within federalized systems in the international

arena. Focus is on the external activities of regions both economically and politically, sometimes suggesting an element of conflict between the national and sub-national levels (Soldatos, 1990; Duchacek, 1990; Aldecoa & Keating, 1999). As focus is on regions, it can be questioned if it could explain the internationalization of municipalities.

2.3. Literature review

The purpose of this chapter is to establish what has been written before within the chosen area of study and to argue why this thesis is important, and how it will contribute with new knowledge. The focus will be on describing the literature of municipalities acting abroad in a Danish context.

The literature about Danish municipalities international activities was scarce until the 1990s. Klausen (1995) wrote about the internationalization with a focus on the deepening of integration in EU and the effect it had on the local level and on Danish municipalities and regions. He stated that the area was not new, but that the EU integration has developed the internationalization and the twinning agreements, which was now prioritized more than Nordic cooperation, also focusing on strategic economic development. Focus was on what EU integration could provide in terms of municipal activities and how the international activities had developed, focusing on EU initiatives and cooperation with other European subnational governments (Klausen, 1995; Klausen, 1996). This could spur a potential conflict between local and central governments, with the arguments being the dispute over decision-making authority (Klausen, 2000). Further in the adaptation of EU integration and internationalization, the Danish municipalities can be argued to have different behaviors such as being; passive, counteractive, reactive or proactive (Klausen, 1997).

Through a quantitative questionnaire of all the Danish municipalities, Klausen & Jensen (1993) described how the municipalities and their international activities had developed in terms of the internationalization and integration processes. They further described and argued what future tendencies could be, such as regional cooperation across borders becoming more important (Klausen & Jensen, 1993). Along the same lines Gjelstrup et al. (1996) described what the barriers and challenges were in terms of the internationalization such as internal political conflict and how to best work with this new aspect (Gjelstrup et al.,

1996). Thaarup et al. (1996) argued that the activities could be divided into three categories; the more traditional twinning arrangements, international cooperation focusing on limited, specific and targeted projects and system export focusing on economic rationales (Thaarup et al., 1996). They further described different incentives for participation in the international activities, such as promoting business development in the municipalities, contributing to intercultural understanding and, learning to become better through inspiration (Ibid.: 24).

Since the 2000s not much literature about Danish municipalities' international activities have been written. A master thesis was written about twinning in Denmark from a strategic leader perspective, focusing on the development of twinning through a single case study (Bech, 2008). Most of the literature is from local government Denmark (LGDK) 'Kommunernes Landsforening'. As the association and interest organization of the 98 Danish municipalities, its mission is to safeguard common interests and assist the municipalities with consultancy services. As such, LGDK have published a number of publications concerning the internationalization of Danish municipalities and the information is very general and descriptive. A majority of the publications is focusing on why EU matters for the municipalities, describing the structures, arguing how EU is influencing local politics and policies, and the opportunities it provides such as the EU funding programs (KL, 2004; KL, 2016; KL, 2014; KL, 2011; KL, 2006). Other publications are describing what the activities can be characterized as, such as twinning, international networks, projects, and participation in funding programs, seeking economic and cultural gains and inspiration. Focus is more on specific projects than on the traditional form of twinning which, is also becoming more strategic and economic minded. Furthermore it is argued that the activities that the municipalities are engaging in are argued to differ from municipality to municipality (KL, 2004; KL, 2008; KL, 2006).

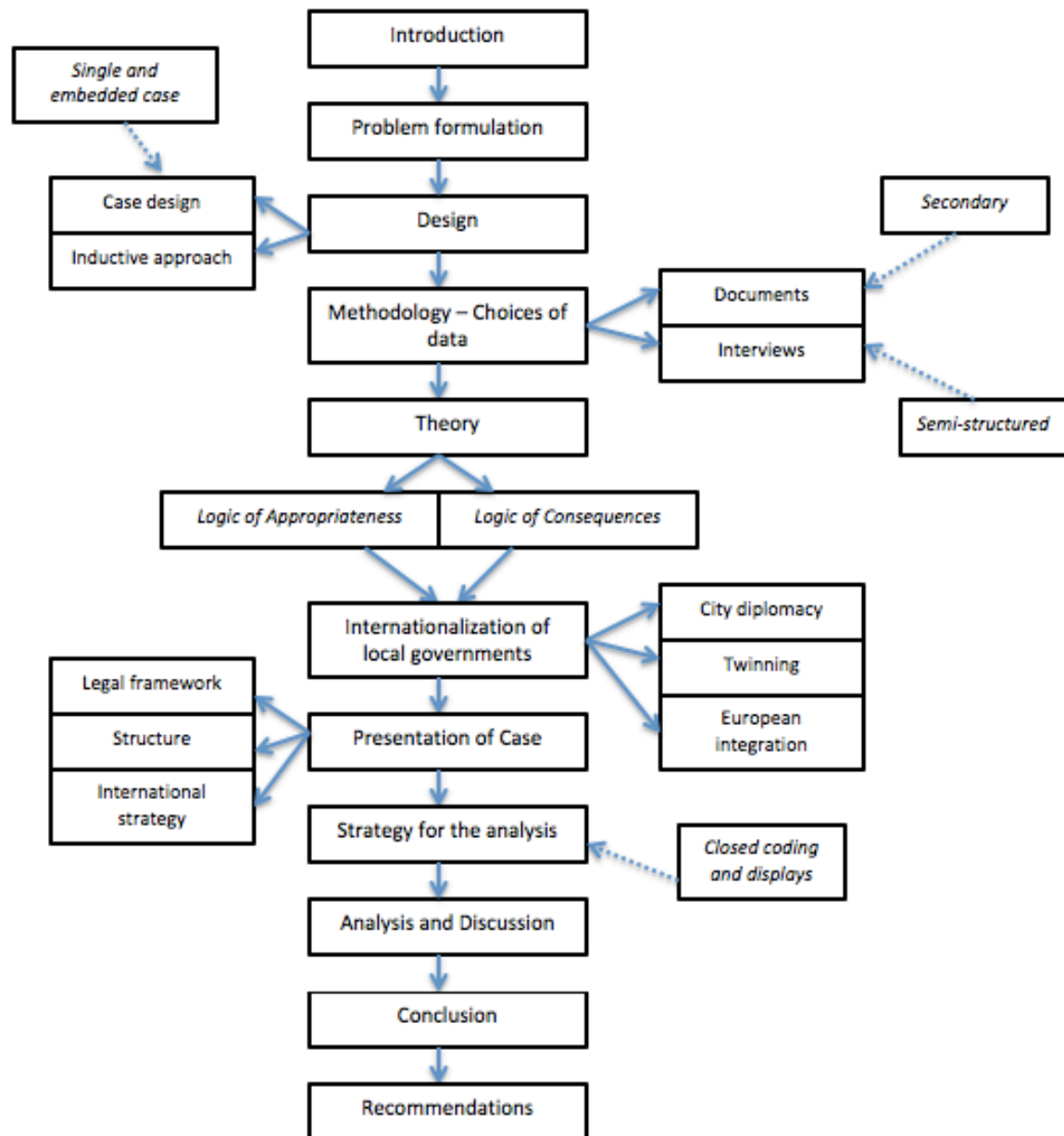
A common consensus in the literature is that there is a rise of international activities (Klausen & Jensen, 1993; Klausen, 1995; Thaarup, et al., 1996; Gjelstrup et al., 1996; KL, 2006). Further the findings have been more descriptive, focusing on the different activities and the challenges. Moreover the studies that have been conducted have mainly focused on including several municipalities, although some studies have conducted single case studies, but focusing on more specific areas in the international activities (Bech, 2008). Thus, the

relevance of this thesis is the continuation of the writings from the 1990's and analyzing through a single case study, the rationales for acting abroad and the gains and problems of these activities, conducting a more thorough and deeper analysis of the rationales and reasons behind a municipality's international relations.

2.4. Structure of the thesis

As the aim of the thesis has been presented and elaborated, it is deemed necessary to present the structure of the thesis, as to provide a reading guide for the sections central to the thesis, as they all provide knowledge that will be used to answer the problem formulation. Further it is important to create a common understanding of the structure, showing when the different sections are being presented. The structure of the analysis will be further elaborated in the analysis chapter, and the relevance of the sections will be elaborated within each of the different sections. The structure is illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 1 – Structure of the project



(Own work)

3. Design

Where methodology is how the relevant data is collected and analyzed, design is about how the methods are structured (de Vaus, 2001: 9). It can thus be said to be the blueprint of a research, guiding the research in the collection and analysis of the data, getting from here to there (Yin, 2014: 28-29). The design is explained by de Vaus as: *"When constructing a building there is no point ordering materials or setting critical dates for completion of project states until we know what sort of building is being constructed."* (de Vaus, 2001: 8). Thus, the choice of research design will be discussed for and the methodical approach and choice of theory in relation to the data will also be presented.

3.1. Philosophical science approach

Before the research design is discussed, it is deemed important to outline the philosophical science approach in this thesis, being critical realism and the reasons behind. This is due to the importance of explaining the ontological and epistemological thoughts as knowledge is being created from this worldview, thereby influencing the methodology and the overall design (Ingemann, 2013: 21).

In critical realism the ontological worldview is that the world exists independent of the observer, but that the world is complex, thus consisting of different layers. Further reality is contextual, having different terms and functions depending on historical conditions being structured into three stratum. Here the deep stratum is something that cannot be observed objectively. This has consequences for the epistemological thoughts, as how to recognize reality when it is complex? This can be obtained through deductive and inductive answers (Ingemann, 2013: 94-95). In this thesis, the international activities of Aalborg municipality are what we can observe, the objective reality. But in order to get to the deep stratum, what we cannot observe objectively and to understand the rationales and reasons behind acting aboard, the relevant theories and qualitative material will be used. As such, in order to understand and explain the complex reality of Aalborg municipality and the reasons behind the international activities, the methods will provide a way to access the deep stratum (Ibid.: 97-98).

3.2. Case design

In terms of the research design, the case design has been deemed the best option to answer the problem formulation. A case can be said to be a reproduction of something complex by investigating broader phenomena by understanding the specific parts, being a study of an in depth contemporary phenomenon (de Vaus, 2001: 231-232; Yin, 2014: 16). By using a case study design, the in-depth analysis of a few units of study can comprise more detailed answers and richness than for example a cross unit analysis (Flyvbjerg, 2011: 301).

As this thesis seeks to analyze why Aalborg Municipality engages in an international context and the reasons behind, it can be argued to be a case about Danish municipalities and how they engage and act in the international sphere as independent actors. Further it can be argued that it is a single embedded case study, focusing on the sub units in Aalborg Municipality, the different departments and how they act in the international sphere. In an embedded case study attention is to be given to return to the larger unit of analysis, when focusing on the subunit level (Yin, 2014: 53-55). Thus, when analyzing the different departments, it is important to return to the larger unit, being Aalborg Municipality in order to obtain a full picture of the international activities.

Further, it can be argued to be a unique case in the way that all the international activities that the different Danish municipalities engage in are different, thus the concrete activities are unique. On the other hand, it can also be argued to be a common case, capturing the circumstances and conditions of an everyday situation, being the international activities of a Danish municipality (Yin, 2014: 50-52; Bryman, 2012: 70). This case study can therefore provide an in-depth understanding of the relevant issue being Aalborg Municipality acting abroad and from this, unique and common tendencies about Danish municipalities acting abroad can be outlined.

In terms of the design and the overall structure of the project, the reliability of the case study should be secured by making *“(...) every step as operational as possible and to conduct research as if some were looking over your shoulder.”* (Yin, 2014: 49). Thus, by explaining the choices of methods in depth, the reliability should be secured, which will be the focus in the next chapter. In terms of validity the most common criticism is concerning external validity

and is based on “(...) *the view that one cannot generalize on the basis of a single case.*” (Flyvbjerg, 2011: 304). Generalization from a single case is not possible, but the purpose of this master thesis is not to generalize and explain broader phenomena, but to form an in-depth analysis exploring different tendencies. This approach is also called analytic generalization, focusing on the generation of concepts, theory or principles from the findings (Yin, 2014: 41; Bryman, 2012: 71).

3.3. Choice of theory

To answer the problem formulation this thesis will use the theories, logic of appropriateness and logic of consequences, as a way to explain why actors take certain actions. Further it adds a deeper level of analysis in order to understand the rationales and reasons behind acting abroad. These considerations about the relevance of the theories will be elaborated further in the ‘Theory’ chapter. Additionally concepts relating to the internationalization of local governments will be used in the analysis as a way to compare and broaden out the perspectives of municipalities acting abroad, showing that Aalborg Municipality is not an isolated case. The concepts will be elaborated and presented in the chapter ‘Internationalization of local governments’ later on.

In regard to the relationship between theory and research, it is argued that it is not in a clear alignment with either a deductive or an inductive strategy (Bryman, 2012: 24-27), and this thesis is no different, as the relationship is rather an abductive approach. In the answering of the first sub-question, the data is in focus in order to investigate the chosen phenomenon, understanding how the observations about the international activities of Aalborg Municipality fits into the chosen concepts, thus an inductive approach. In the answering of the second sub-question, some deductive tendencies can be observed, such as the theories are to a degree, structuring and guiding the second sub-question with assumptions about human behavior and action. Thus the second part of the analysis can be said to follow a rather deductive approach. As such, both deductive and inductive tendencies can be observed in answering the problem formulation.

4. Methodology

In answering the problem formulation a qualitative approach towards the analysis has been chosen. As the purpose of the thesis is to analyze the how and why of acting abroad, focus is on the different aspects of the activities and the reasons behind and subjectivity is thus important. The argument for the choice of qualitative data is based on the fact that it can capture the subjectivity of the data, as a way to focus in-depth, rather than a quantification of data. If a more quantitative approach had been chosen, a multiple case study design would have been the best option, focusing more on the broader perspectives of Danish municipalities acting abroad (Bryman, 2012: 35-36). In this thesis, two qualitative methods, documents and interviews, will be used as a way to answer the problem formulation. The two methods can supplement each other with the documents consisting of different websites describing the activities, and the interviews providing with an in depth explanation of the reasons behind the international engagement. As such, the primary qualitative data consisting of documents and interviews will be presented, and the choices of these methods and criticism will be presented.

4.1. Documents

A document can, according to Bryman, be described as something that has not been produced just for the purpose of social research (Bryman, 2012: 543). Further it can be said to be language that is fixed in text and time, but still being able to develop such as a website being updated. A document can for example be described as newspapers, websites, and academic books (Lynggaard, 2010: 138). In this thesis the documents will mostly consist of various websites, each explaining different aspects of the international activities that Aalborg Municipality engages in. The documents have a character of being secondary, already explaining things that have happened, being general and available for the public (Bryman, 2012: 13; Lynggaard, 2010: 139).

As the choices of documents can be defined by the research question, it can be useful to set explicit requirements for which documents that are relevant to the answering of the questions. Thus, the validity and the reliability of the thesis will be met, as it becomes clear, what thoughts are behind the selection of documents and enabling a possible repetition

(Lynggaard, 2010: 140-141). As the first sub-question is focused on what the different international activities of Aalborg Municipality are, secondary documents are deemed to be the best option in order to answer the question. This is due to the fact that secondary documents are easier to come by, being public and providing a description of the relevant activities and an immediate observation. As such the documents are a collection of information from the European Union, Aalborg Municipality and other places, describing specific projects and the purpose, providing an overview of different cooperation agreements and of participation in different networks.

Further, as the documents relevant to this thesis are consisting of different websites, some considerations in terms of validity and reliability are important to mentioned. In terms of authenticity anyone can set up a website. As such it is important to know the author of the websites and how representative the websites are (Bryman, 2012: 554). Further with a document analysis, it is necessary to check the credibility of the documents. According to Yin, it is important due to that *"(...) every document was written for some specific purpose."* (Yin, 2003: 87). The different documents can be said to be official documents as the authors behind are Aalborg Municipality, the European Union, or an NGO. As such the target group is the general public, with the aim of providing an objective description of the work that the organizations are doing and have done. It could be questioned, if it is really an objective truth that is being presented. As this thesis is only interested in documents that describe what can be observed, it is deemed that it is close to the reality. However, it is important to remember that it can be with a motive to present the activities as light and advantageously as possible, diminishing the challenges. This can be due to the fact that the goal of the documents is to sell the ideas to the public, arguing why it is a good idea to engage in a specific activity.

As the documents are mostly descriptive, the documents will have a character of supplementing the interviews, either complementing or contradicting what is being said in the interviews. This is also the basis for the use of the interview method, having the opportunity to ask more in-depth questions in regard to the activities and the reasons behind.

4.2. Interviews

By using the interview method, it is possible to gain knowledge that documents and statistical material cannot provide. Through interviews it is possible to gather the subjectivity, by seeing through the eyes of the interviewees that are being studied or interviewed (Bryman, 2012: 399). Thus, with a few interviews it is possible to obtain a detailed analysis of the phenomenon in focus and their perception of it (Tinggaard & Brinkmann, 2010: 31-32). In this thesis the interviews will be used as a way to gain knowledge that cannot be gathered anywhere else due to the flexible character of interviews, collecting data from a specific context (Harrits et al., 2012: 144). As stated previously, the documents provide knowledge about the international activities, providing a broader perspective. Through interviewing relevant key interviewees in Aalborg Municipality, it is possible to, acquire knowledge about the different activities, and the reasons and rationales behind these decisions, to go out conducting international affairs.

One of the challenges of using the interview method is that the analytical process is always dependent on the interaction that the interviewer is a part of. Therefore it cannot be a neutral representation of reality, as there will always be a subjectivity regarding the researcher and in the production of data (Harrits et al., 2012: 144-146). According to Harrits et al. when conducting interviews the traditional criteria of good research have to be understood in a alternative way (Ibid.: 147). Reliability is thus, if the data is consistent and not flawed, and validity is if what is being investigated also is what is actually being investigated.

4.2.1. Presentation of interviewees

In the selection of interviewees, the strategy is that the interviewee should be relevant for the research question, selecting the interviewees that can give the greatest possible insight into the chosen subject (Harrits, Pedersen og Halkier, 2012: 161). Further, as argued previously, the design is an embedded case design, focusing on the different departments in Aalborg Municipality, together providing an overview of the international activities of the municipality. As such, the best way to investigate why the municipality is acting abroad is by interviewing key persons from each of the departments. Therefore, the interviewees will be members of the international group. The international group is working with coordination

across departments and how the municipality and each employee can work more international, with representatives from the different departments (Aalborg kommune, b). As a member, it is deemed that they have the relevant experiences and perspectives, which can help in answering the research question.

One member of the international group, Maria Flindt from the Department of Family and Employment did not have time for an interview, but as all the other departments are included it is not deemed to be a problem in terms of the validity. Further, Anders Du Mont is a substitute in the group, replacing Jane Stampe. Another member, Kristine Kejser suggested another person, with a more comprehensive knowledge of the activities in the Department of Care for the Elderly and Disable, being Lars Nøhr. Additionally, two interviews with interviewees not in the International group have been conducted in order to obtain a general understanding of some of the international activities of Aalborg Municipality. Thus, these two interviews have a character of being supplemented, with Søren Thorst providing with an overview of the twinning arrangements and Christina Knudsen providing with knowledge about Aalborg's international strategy. The interviewees will be presented below, starting with their name, respective department and title:

- Søren Thorst, *Mayor's Department – Aalborg Event, Event manager*
- Christina Knudsen, *Mayor's Department – Business Aalborg, International project coordinator*
- Mikkel Grimmeshave, *Department of Health and Culture, Administration manager*
- Ann Katrine, *Department of Education, School consultant*
- Lars Nøhr, *Department of Care for the Elderly and Disable, Senior consultant*
- Lene Lykkegaard, *Mayor's Department – Business Aalborg, Development manager*
- Mette Holm, *Department of Urban and Spatial Planning, Agency manager*
- Anders Du Mont, *Department of Environment and Energy, Project manager*

Due to the work that the interviewees do, being a representative of their respective departments international activities and having knowledge about the activities, a challenge can occur. The challenge is the asymmetry of the interview situation with the interviewee having the upper hand due to the knowledge they have. It is thus difficult to know if what they are saying is true, or if they are just stating the viewpoint they feel is relevant to communicate and promoting their own interests (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015: 171-172). This is a common criticism of the interview method. As a way to assess the plausibility in the responses that the interviewees give, it is important to have a comprehensive knowledge of

the themes relevant to the interview. It is thus easier to ask more precise questions and even out the asymmetric relationship (Harrits et al., 2012: 152). By having the empirical data generating the interview questions, as will be discussed in the next section, it is deemed that this knowledge can serve as a counter, balancing the relationship between researcher and interviewee.

4.2.2. Interview guide

In the structure of the interview guides (Appendix 1) the questions will be generated from an inductive approach. From a read through of the different international activities that can be found from the different websites, questions can be asked about these activities as a way to supplement what is already known. This will provide a deeper knowledge and what the gains and reasons behind these decisions and activities were. This is in accordance with the considerations made in the last section, as this entails a gathering of factual information before the interviews are conducted, as a way to counter the interviewee and checking the plausibility (Harrits et al., 2012: 152).

Further three interview guides will be created. One concerning the members of the international group, which will have the same structure throughout the six interviews, but it seems most logical to ask specific questions depending on the department. The other interview guides are focused on either Aalborg Municipality's international strategy or the twinning arrangements. The difference is minimal, but it makes sense asking different questions, as to uncover the whole story, answering the problem formulation.

As a way to structure the interviews the semi-structured interview will be used. By using the semi-structured interview, the interview guide is divided into different questions and topics that needs to be covered (Bryman, 2012: 471). Being different from the structured interview, it is important to let the interviewee talk and give the option to ask follow-up questions, as a way to give the interviewee the possibility to talk about topics, which is not initially covered in the interview guide (Tinggaard & Brinkmann, 2010: 37). This means that it cannot be reproduced 100 percent, but it is possible with the follow-up questions to validate if the answers have been understood correctly (Harrits et al., 2012: 150). As the interviews in this thesis do have certain topics that needs to be covered, it is also important

not to rule out aspects that can be relevant in terms of the rationales and reasons behind acting abroad. Nevertheless, during the interviews the researcher have to be sure about the end goal of the interview, and keep the respondent on track by having a good understanding of the topics in question (Tanggaard & Brinkmann, 2010: 37-38).

4.2.3. Transcribing

To transcribe means “(...) *to transform, to change from one form to another.*” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015: 204). Some of the important decisions in regard to the transcription of the interviews are about whether to transcribe only parts of the interview or every word (Harrits et al., 2012: 171). In this thesis, most of the interviews have been transcribed fully, as it has been deemed relevant to the thesis by providing the necessary information. More importantly, as the interviews were conducted in Danish, relevant passages being included in the analysis need to be translated into English. Thus, in order to make the translation easier, some words were left out, such as fillers and words specific to a Danish dialect. This can hurt the reliability due to the possible differences in repetition, but as this is not a discourse analysis it is not deemed to be a problem. Further, if specified words were not left out as stated above, the validity could have been hurt, creating misunderstanding about what is really being said.

5. Theory

As the approach in answering the research question is both inductive and deductive, the theories will not be the controlling factor. Nonetheless the theories will be used as a way to deepen the answers in the analysis and used as a tool in terms of understanding the data, explaining why people act in a certain way. Two ways of conceiving decision-making behavior and human action will be presented, being logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness, where focus is on the actors. The logics relevance will be mainly to answer the second sub-question; 'Which reasons and rationales are behind the international engagement'.

5.1. Logic of Consequences

Within logic of consequences the decision-making behavior is seen as an intentional and consequential action. Actions are thus attributed to anticipated cost and benefits, where rules and interpretations are treated as alternatives. It is a framework where actors operate under fixed preferences, trying to maximize interests and gains by selecting the most efficient means. As such actions is based on four things:

- A knowledge of alternatives – what are my alternatives?
 - A knowledge of consequences – What are the consequences of alternative actions?
 - A consistent preference ordering – What are my values, by which alternative consequences can be compared?
 - A decisions rule – Choosing the alternative that has the best-expected consequences.
- (March, 1991: 97; March & Olsen, 2006: 691).

Considered an analysis-based action, focus is on consideration of alternatives, an assessment of their outcome and the calculated choices between alternatives. Actors that are driven by logic of consequences are thus analyzing different alternatives through rational calculations to evaluate future consequences of the decisions they are making. The actors are thus driven by; self-interest & rationality and fixed preferences & identities (Schulz, 2014: 2). In full rationality it is assumed that all alternatives, the probability of consequences, and the subjective value of the possible consequences are known due to a high degree of information processing. Further all possible consequences of every alternative are known, making it possible to compare the different alternatives in regard to the consequences. A choice is thus made, by selecting the alternative that has the highest

expected value (March, 1991: 97; Winter, 1991: 359). The best alternative will thus always be found.

As such, a rational choice logic is where preferences are stable, subjectively absolute, consistent, exogenous and precise, guessing future consequences of the current actions (March, 1991: 99). A critic of logic of consequences, and rational choice, is that it is a simplified account of human thinking and that it sees preferences as exogenous. Further it is stated how most choices are made without thinking about preferences, and that the preferences are inconsistent and change over time, making it difficult to predict future preferences and consequences (March, 1991: 99; Goldmann, 2005: 44).

Due to the fact that full rationality assumes that all alternatives need to be accounted for, a more realistic logic of consequences was coined by Simon Herbert called bounded rationality. Drawing from the literature of psychology, Herbert states that:

“Bounded rationality is simply the idea that the choices people make are determined not only by some consistent overall goal (...), but also by the knowledge that decision maker do and don't have of that world, their ability or inability to evoke that knowledge when it is relevant (...). Rationality is bounded because these abilities are severely limited.” (Simon, 2000: 25).

As an actor, individual or a collective, only limited information is available because the human mind has limited capacity, and there is a limited amount of time and limited economic resources, thus not all alternatives and consequences can be considered and processed before a decision is reached. While still believing in achieving and finding the best alternative, bounded rationality prescribes that the search for the best alternative stops, when an alternative is found mostly satisfying (Winter, 1991: 361; March, 1991: 98).

5.2. Logic of Appropriateness

As a perspective, which was coined by James March and Johan Olsen, logic of appropriateness stands in contrast to the logic of consequences. Following logic of appropriateness people in organizations follow rules, also when it is not in their own self-

interest, as behavior is specified by different procedures, cultural norms, and institutional structures (March, 1991: 105). Further, actions are driven by rules of exemplary or appropriate behavior, which is ingrained into institutions (March & Olsen, 2006: 689). Focus is then more on rules than on consequential choices. As such, instead of weighing the different alternatives and preferences in the pursuit of self-interests, decisions involve finding appropriate rules matching the situation and identity. When making a decision three elementary questions can be asked in order to take a reasoned action:

- How do I define what kind of a situation this is?
 - What kind of a person am I?
 - What is appropriate for a person like me in a situation such as this?
- (March, 1991: 105; March & Olsen, 2006: 690)

Thus, the logic of appropriateness highlights how actors and human action is rule following, doing what is seen as appropriate in a specific type of situation, because the rules are regarded as legitimate and expected, embedded in a social collectivity (March & Olsen, 2006: 689-690). The concern is if the actions are seen as legitimate and *"To act appropriately is to proceed according to the institutionalized practices of a collectivity, based on mutual and often tacit understandings of what is true, reasonable, natural, right and good."* (March & Olsen, 2006: 690). The rules are followed because they have perceived them to be adequate for a specific task at hand (Olsen, 2007: 3). The rules are thus translated into behavior and change or action is made when it seems appropriate, with consideration of the social context they are in and of the consistent rules. The rules can be defined as both tacit and explicit forms of actions, including; intuition, roles, routines, habits, institutions, norms, laws, capabilities etc. (Schulz, 2014: 2-3).

Further, humans can maintain different roles and identities, providing different rules of appropriate behavior in relevant situations, guiding how they are interpreted (March & Olsen, 2006: 690). The rules, which determine the appropriateness, are institutionalized within the organization, linking roles/identities, accounts of situations and prescriptive practices and rules (Ibid.: 691). As the institutions are stable over long periods, these 'best practice' and standard operating procedures are taken as a fact and a normal way of action, providing parameters for appropriate action (Ibid.: 695). However, the rules and identities are not set in stone and are assumed to evolve over time, as new experiences are coded

into the existing rules and less attractive alternatives are being eliminated, incrementally based on feedback from the environment (March & Olsen, 2006: 697; March, 1991: 106). In search of new legitimization and conceptions, the existing rules of appropriateness, institutions and the collective self-understanding can be challenged, having difficulty in accounting for the new experiences and settings. Thus, in time it cannot be able to provide adequate answers to what is right or wrong (March & Olsen, 2006: 699).

The logic of appropriateness has been an important factor in explaining how organizations function providing with order and stability, but as the logic relies on the matching of situations to rules, it is often based on intuition. As an intuition-based action, it is inherently inaccurate because of the possibility of misinterpretation of the rules, which might lead to wrong decisions being made (Schulz, 2014: 3). Further it has also been associated with rigidity, inefficiency and incrementalism (Balsiger, 2007: 539).

5.3. Combination of the logics

Logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness can be said to be components of all meaningful action, and action without either of the logics can appear as random and senseless (Schulz, 2014: 3). The two logics have, as stated a fundamental different mode of action, with the logic of appropriateness guided by prior actions, and the logic of consequences guided by considerations of future alternatives and consequences (Ibid.: 9). Thus, logic of consequences is a rational theory and logic of appropriateness is an institutional theory. As they describe different behaviors, and how human actions are perceived in an organization, it should however not be seen as two ideal types with only one of the logics being able to explain the actions taken in an organization. Instead of being distinct, competing or one dominating, the logics do overlap by complementing each other (Goldmann, 2005: 36; March & Olsen, 2006: 702). Further *“A dilemma is that proper behavior sometimes is associated with bad consequences and improper behavior sometimes is associated with good consequences.”* (March & Olsen, 2006: 701), which is why the two logics do complement each other.

As such the two logics are available for every possible action and can follow one or the other, predominantly. Further it is also common within organizations that shifts can occur

between the logics (Schulz, 2014: 3). As Schulz describes it *"Action can travel along paths that can be seen as following sometimes one logic and another at other times."* (Schulz, 2014: 4). Even March & Olsen, the theorists behind logic of appropriateness, agree to some degree that *"Action is rule based, but only partly so (...). Behavior is driven by habit, emotion, coercion, and calculated expected utility (...)"* (March & Olsen, 2006: 701). These shifts can occur both accidentally or intentionally, and when elements of the other logic become prominent in a specific and given situation (Schulz, 2014: 7). A shift from logic of appropriateness to logic of consequences can occur, when new situations that arise cannot be matched with the existing rules within the organization, thereby giving an incentive to reflect on alternative future actions and their consequences. On the other hand, a shift from logic of consequences to logic of appropriateness might occur in terms of routinization, when actors are reacting to situations and the following encounters with that situation (Ibid.: 7-8).

5.4. Relevance to the thesis

The relevance of the two logics to this thesis is due to their way of justifying different decisions. It is an understanding of how different actors behave and will be used as a way to understand how decisions are made, and it can be used to explain some of the decisions Aalborg Municipality has made in regard to their international activities. Analyzing why Aalborg Municipality engages in an international context, the two logics can explain what the rationales and reasons are behind these decisions. Through logic of consequences and bounded rationality, it can be analyzed if the acting abroad of Aalborg Municipality is regarded as the best alternative and the best rational option in terms of other possible future actions. Thus, every international activity would be undertaken, because it is perceived as the best possible alternative. On the other hand, using logic of appropriateness, it can be investigated if the actors within Aalborg Municipality have some institutionalized practices, some collective ways of doing certain actions. Instead of rational decisions there might be some roles proscribing the appropriate way things are done, thus not always producing the most rational outcome, but the most appropriate outcome in terms of acting abroad. Further, as stated in the previously section, it is possible that both logics can be found within Aalborg Municipality.

6. The internationalization of local governments

The purpose of the chapter is to present different areas of study in regard to the internationalization of local governments. The aim is to create a link between the activities of a Danish local government and local governments throughout the world, as to investigate if Aalborg Municipality can be described as an isolated case, or if the tendencies can also be observed in other cases. By presenting different aspects of the internationalization of local governments, it can be used in the analysis as a way to compare it to the activities of Aalborg Municipality and deepening the answering of the first sub-question. The absence of some areas of study has already been discussed in the 'limitations for the thesis' section. The terms that will be presented below are 'City diplomacy', 'European integration & local governments' and 'Twinning'.

6.1. City diplomacy

The term city diplomacy has been used and applied to describe different types of international actions. A narrow description of the concept is focusing on local governments, in peace building abroad, and the issues that foreign governments can face in conflict areas, promoting social cohesion and conflict prevention and resolution (Musch & Sizoo, 2009). Drawing from examples of case studies showing local authorities involvement in peace building outside their own region, the concept has been defined as *"(...) the activity whereby a municipal authority in a conflict area receives support from one or more municipal authorities outside of the area."* (Musch & Van Veldhuizen, 2008, In Musch & Sizoo, 2009: 5).

A broader description by Pluijm and Melissen define city diplomacy as *"(...) the institutions and processes by which cities, or local governments in general, engage in relations with actors on an international political stage with the aim of representing themselves and their interests to one another."* (Pluijm & Melissen, 2007: 6). By conduction interviews, and drawing on examples from municipalities in the Netherlands and from a preliminary exploration of the concept, they seek to categorize the modalities and domains where cities can perform international relations (Acuto, 2016: 4). The view, that states have lost

monopoly over diplomacy, has given rise to non-central actors such as cities, municipalities and local governments.

In the literature there is an agreement that, a clear cut between domestic politics and international relations is non-existing, as it is often entangled (Brown, 2002: 212; Putnam, 1988: 427). As such a more precise definition of the relationship is harder to come by. When talking about cities and their involvement in diplomacy, one view is that it is parallel, also called para diplomacy, as stated previously. As such, international activities by any sub-national actor can be defined as complementing, challenging, supporting or duplicating the macro diplomacy by the central government (Soldatos, 1990; Duchacek, 1990). Thus, states and cities are operating in different worlds and separate routes. Rather it is argued that city diplomacy should be seen as multilayered diplomacy, where regions and cities are not trying to detach from its national setting, but more to pursue their own economic and political interests, in a complex system that are blended together with changing relationships between states and sub-states (Hocking, 1993: 4, 34; Pluijm & Melissen, 2007: 9).

Thus, the concept of city diplomacy should be seen as multi layered and as a decentralization of international relations with cities as the key actors (Pluijm & Melissen, 2007: 11). It is stressed how the legal context is important in terms of the diplomatic activities, as it can be different from country to country, where some can be hindered by the national law (Ibid.: 14). Further, some of the reasons of engaging in city diplomacy are described as personal influences, serving the interests of their own city and communities, pressure from the citizens, and out of solidarity with other cities. Other external factors can be described as the resources that cities have, the state system and the linkages between central governments and the cities (Ibid.,: 15-16). Pluijm and Melissen further operationalize six dimensions of city diplomacy, providing an insight of the different ways of engaging in city diplomacy. They state, that it should not be seen as a complete picture but more, seen as an insight of city diplomacy. The six dimensions will be presented below.

The first dimension is security concerning conflict resolution, peace building and conflict prevention before, during and after conflicts. As cities know best about localities, it is argued that there is a role for cities to play in this dimension. The second dimension is

focused on development and development assistance projects. The leading motive behind this is international solidarity, and the same arguments as in the first dimension are used. The third dimension, economy, is different from the first two dimensions focusing more on self-interest than solidarity. Economic gain is important and can be one of the driving forces and leading motives of city diplomacy, either by attracting tourists, investments, exporting services and knowledge, or entering into partnership agreements with other cities. Branding is also an important factor in order to attract economic gains. The fourth dimension is centered on culture. The interactions of different cultures can be in the form of city twinning, as culture is shared. The fifth dimension is network where city twinning is a common way to network, but also representation in different transnational networks consisting of cities and projects focusing on sharing information and technology can be common. The last dimension, representation, is the representation and participation of cities at international organizations such as the EU with both formal and informal influence decision-making power (Pluijm & Melissen, 2007: 19-31; Acuto et al., 2017: 15).

6.2. European integration and local governments

In the introduction it was stated that one of the main components of the internationalization of local government in a regional perspective is the gradual integration of the European Union. Within the system of multilevel governance the integration has enabled local governments within the EU to move beyond their own local borders. As Aalborg Municipality is engaging in the European system, it is deemed relevant to present this area of study.

As internationalization occurs throughout the world interdependence between states, regions, and cities is especially strong in the EU due to the European integration, affecting local governments across the region (Guderjan, 2012: 105). According to Goldsmith and Klausen the development of the European Union has had an impact of the behavior of local governments throughout Europe (Goldsmith & Klausen, 1997: 1). The impact can be divided into two categories, being the increased legal impact on the local governments, stemming from the EU regularities and legislation, and the new European structures, such as the structural funds, funding projects and programs in different EU countries. This is providing the local governments with new windows of opportunities in terms of promoting local

concerns, interests and influence policies at the European level (de Rooij, 2002: 449-450; Guderjan, 2012: 106). As such, the changes at the EU supranational level have led to an increased focus from local governments towards Brussels, crossing the national boundaries and by-passing national governments dealing directly with EU (Goldsmith, 1993: 683, 698).

Therefore, for the local governments, in terms of grasping the process of European integration, activities can be described as: exchange of best practice and innovation, twinning, transnational networks, and participation in funding programs as stated above, believing it to be mutually beneficial (Guderjan, 2012: 107; Ercole et al., 1997: 219). Further the opening of local offices in Brussels “(...) *provides a base for meetings; the collection and dissemination of relevant information; a listening post able to pick up the appropriate Brussels gossip, and a mechanism through which bids and practice can be coordinated and disseminated.*” (Ercole et al., 1997: 231). Therefore, while not being the major actors in the European Union, the European integration process has created policy areas where players from different levels interact, giving incitements to the local governments to act abroad, pushing the processes of integration incrementally forward (Guderjan, 2012: 108; Klausen & Goldsmith, 1997: 252-253).

Furthermore, in their book ‘European Integration and Local Government’ Goldsmith & Klausen investigated the impact of EU at the sub-national level, defining European integration as “(...) *the process by which systems and relations of mutual dependence develop.*” (Goldsmith & Klausen, 1997: 5). By conducting studies in different European countries such as Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and Britain etc., they argue that the behavior of local governments in terms of interacting with EU can be divided into four categories existing across border and countries, as also presented in the literature review (Klausen & Goldsmith, 1997: 239). The local governments can thus be counteractive; stating EU is of little importance, passive; doing only what is required by the law, reactive; being more followers than leaders and proactive against the EU; leading the way for more internationalization (Ibid.: 239-241). The different categories are due to factors such as national history, tradition, political will and political & administrative structures (Ibid.: 249).

6.3. Town twinning

As town twinning has a long history in Denmark, it is deemed necessary to outline how the term is defined. The term town twinning can be traced back to the aftermath of the Second World War (Tavares, 2016: 31), as a way for EU and its municipalities to promote peace, mutual understanding and European integration, especially with countries from Central and Eastern Europe (European Commission, 1997: 18; Clark, 2009: 497). The term has been widely used in official documents from EU, defining it as a structure in which to foster relations and cooperation with partner towns and municipalities in a different country through formal agreements. Solidarity and mutual understanding is still important with activities including exchanges within sporting, cultural and educational events, and exchange of information and experience, seeking solutions to common problems together (European Commission, 1997: 18-24; European Commission, 2014). In the American literature the town twinning or as it is called, sister cities phenomenon, began in 1956 due to former US president Dwight D. Eisenhower proposing a national initiative of people-to-people program to increase international understanding, having a more global reach (Tavares, 2016: 31; Cremer et al., 2001: 380).

Within the broader literature, the concept has been used to define different activities with no settled definition of town twinning (Clark, 2009: 497). A broad definition could be argued as a long and formal relationship between local governments from different countries (O'Toole, 2001: 403; Zelinsky, 1991: 4). This has also been defined as city-to-city cooperation covering *"(...) all possible forms of relationship between local authorities at any level in two or more countries which are collaborating together over matters of mutual interest, (...)"* (UN-Habitat, 2001: 6). The same definition can be related to municipal international cooperation, referring to cooperation between different local municipalities (De Villiers, 2005: 64). According to de Villiers a difference between the terms can be that twinning is also referring to the communities 'civil society, business, education' in the respective cities (De Villiers, 2005: 75-76).

Zelinsky further argues that the choices of twinning cities is not a random process, but more based on criteria such as shared historical, cultural, economic, recreational and ideological concerns (Zelinsky, 1991: 1). It has also been widely argued that the twinning relationships

starts as a cultural friendship and cultural exchange, but in time develop more economic bonds through creating economic activities, having a more strategically relationship (Zelinsky, 1991: 28; O'Toole, 2001: 403; Cremer et al., 2001: 383; Ramasamy and Cremer 1998: 449).

These arguments can be found in O'Toole's article, which in an Australian context, divided the development of Australian sister city types, motives and partners into three phases. The first, the associative phase, was aimed at establishing international friendships, cultural exchanges and international awareness in general. The second, the reciprocative phase, twinning is based on people and educational exchange, focusing more on developing skills among the participants and not just on symbolic activities. The last phase is the commercial exchange, which is based on economic development, and where focus is to take advantage of the processes the first two phases gave to further the local economic aims (O'Toole, 2001: 405; de Villiers, 2005: 68).

In addition Ramasamy and Cremer argue in an analysis of sister cities in New Zealand, that economic development in the sister-city relationships is becoming more important, which fits with O'Toole's third phase. They go on to argue that culture is still important, *"(...) that neither a purely culture-oriented ('warm-fuzzy') nor a purely economic ('hard-nosed') approach to managing a sister-city relationship might have great chance of success in the long run."* (Ramasamy and Cremer, 1998: 458). As cultural understanding is important for trade, and trade can create cultural understanding, an integrated approach to twinning is important (Ramasamy and Cremer, 1998: 449-450). From this, a greater recognition should be given to what Cremer et al. call municipal-community entrepreneur ship. This entails community participation and support, provided at a local governmental level, in order to take advantage of all the opportunities that the sister-city arrangement gives (Cremer et al., 2001: 389-390).

In regard to the overall benefits of the town twinning relationships, Cremer et al., argue that these include benefits of international trade, cultural and educational exchanges, tourism and investments and exposing the citizens of a city to different cultures (Cremer et al., 2001: 393-394). On the other hand, the criticism is centered on three categories. The first is that

people are unaware or that they don't care about these relationships. Second is on the strange choices of the selected cities, with the similarities between the cities being hard to see. Third and final is that the connections only represent free trips for politicians on the expense from taxpayer's money (Dupuis & De Bruin 2000; In Cremer et al., 2001: 394). Further, Tavares argues that town twinning is the least successful instrument for subnational governments foreign activities with agreements being too short, too general and mostly symbolic (Tavares, 2016: 32-33).

7. Presentation of case – Aalborg Municipality

Before the analysis it is deemed necessary to present the case more thoroughly, by describing the structure of Aalborg Municipality and in depth explain Aalborg Municipality's international strategy. This is due to the relevance of creating a common understanding about the structure of the municipality due to the embedded design in this thesis. Further, by explaining the international strategy, it is a way to explain some of the things they do. It can also be used in the analysis to explain what they want to do in terms of the international activities. Further it is also important to present the legal framework in which Aalborg Municipality is conducting foreign affairs. This will be presented below, followed by the presentation of the structure of Aalborg Municipality, and afterwards a presentation of the municipality's international strategy.

7.1. Legal framework

When a city, or a municipality, operates in an international context, it is operating in two legal spheres, the national and international. Plujim & Melissen argues that, *"Whereas a city in one country can act rather autonomously in engaging in international political activities, a city in another country can be hindered by national law in its international aspirations."* (Plujim & Melissen, 2007: 14). As such it is deemed necessary to outline the legal framework in a Danish context. Furthermore, one thing is what Aalborg Municipality wants to do in terms of the international activities, but under what legal framework are they acting, and what does the Danish legislation say about Danish municipalities acting abroad? When establishing what is legal, and what is not, in terms of the international activities, it can be used in the analysis as a way to explain which legal framework they are working in, which in turn defines which actions they can take.

In the Danish constitution there is not an explicit section about municipalities and their international activities and engagement. In the constitution it is stated in §82 *"The right of municipalities to manage their own affairs independently, under state supervision, shall be laid down by statute."* (Folketinget, 2013). Thus the constitution and section 82 ensure that the municipalities are autonomous within a legal framework, and the municipalities can make certain financial decisions without statutory authority (Revsbech, 2010: 29;

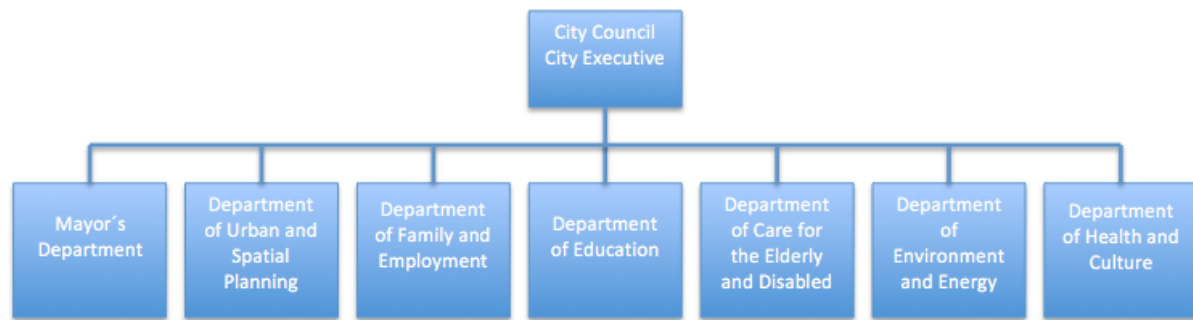
Folketinget, 2013). The freedom over some of the economic resources is called municipal authority (Revsbech, 2010: 45). Certain criteria regarding the municipal authority are important such as the activities being general and addressed to the public living in the local area. An activity can only be supported or are performed if there is a local interest, and the local citizens benefit of the said activities (Ibid.: 51-53). Further, the locality principle states that the municipalities can only undertake or support activities that are defined by the territory of the municipality and that the activities should have an interest that are linked to the municipality (Ibid.: 58-59).

Thus it is legal for a municipality to engage in international activities, as long as it is in the interest of the citizens living in the local area of the municipality. Due to the locality principle municipalities cannot use their financial means on foreign policy activities, as it is only a task for the central state. However it is legal to deal with aspects of the task as long as the interest is attached to the municipality and the local area. Activities such as twinning and international cooperation concerning municipal affairs are therefore legal, as it is bounded to a local interest (Revsbech, 2010: 61, 271-272).

7.2. Political structure

The political regime of Aalborg municipality is structured in such a way that the highest authority is the Aalborg City Council, which has the overall responsibility for the activities that the municipality is undertaking. The City Council further designates a mayor and six councilmen, being the top management of the municipality. They further sit in the City Executive, being in charge of budget compliance, and for the responsible management of the administration. Below the City Council there are seven departments each having a specific area of responsibility, implementing the policies decided by the City Council (City of Aalborg, 2016: 20). The structure of the municipality is illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 2 – Political structure of Aalborg Municipality



(Aalborg Kommune, c)

As the focus is on how the different administrative actors in the departments is engaging with the international sphere as explained in the section 'limitations for the thesis', each of the departments will be briefly explained as to create an understanding about the responsibilities, that each of the departments have:

Mayor's Department:

This department is responsible for coordinating the different activities that makes the municipality function as a whole. There are different offices such as the mayor's office, Business Aalborg and Business development (City of Aalborg, 2016: 21; Aalborg Kommune, c).

Department of Urban and Spatial Planning:

The focus is on making Aalborg a dynamic, attractive and sustainable municipality to live and work in, being the driving force of the development of the more physical framework. There are four divisions within the department, consisting of Planning and Development, Traffic and Roads, Parks and Nature, as well as Construction and Digital Service (City of Aalborg, 2016: 22).

Department of Family and Employment:

The objective is to provide services for people with difficult living conditions and create the best framework for the local citizens everyday life. The jobs range from childcare to children and young people with social problems or disabilities (City of Aalborg, 2016: 23; Aalborg Kommune, c).

Department of Education:

The responsibility is on the different schools in the municipality, being the primary and lower secondary schools, continuations schools, special schools and educational guidance and cultural schools (City of Aalborg, 2016: 24).

Department of Care for the Elderly and Disabled:

The focus is on the social and health issues concerning the elderly and residents with disabilities with the aim to promote an independent lifestyle for the residents in question. There are three offices; the authority office, Elderly and Health, and the Disability office (City of Aalborg, 2016: 25).

Department of Environment and Energy:

The main objective of the four offices; Environment and Energy Planning, Environment, Aalborg Waste, and Administration and Service is concerning sustainable development, environment and energy & waste (City of Aalborg, 2016: 26; Aalborg Kommune, c).

Department of Health and Culture:

The job of the department is to deal with issues related to culture, health, leisure, libraries etc. The main objective is to allow citizens to live a good and healthy life by creating the best framework and conditions as possible (City of Aalborg, 2016: 27).

7.3. Aalborg Municipality's international strategy

The creation of Aalborg Municipality's international strategy is due to three arguments. Firstly it is to create a better city, making Aalborg a globalized city and getting the world to Aalborg. It is additionally about getting Aalborg to the world, contributing to the growth and development of the municipality, through international relations. Secondly, it is to create better businesses, creating opportunities for international growth, and development for the business communities in Aalborg. Lastly, it is creating better services, developing and delivering better services to the citizens living in the municipality (Aalborg kommune, b). The strategy goes through all of the departments and has five main areas. All the areas are already reflected in the different departments international activities and initiatives

(Aalborg Kommune, a). Thus it can be used as a way to structure the first part of the analysis, dividing the activities into the five themes, which will be presented below:

Global:

The goal and ambition is to increase the international orientation in terms of cooperation, development and knowledge sharing. Further the goal is also to make Aalborg a better city for the international citizens, attracting international labor (Aalborg Kommune, a).

EU:

The focus is on participating in different EU-programs as a way to launch bigger projects. Further the goal is to gain access to different funds in regard to relevant projects, and to participate in different cooperation projects and networking with other EU countries, as a way to develop Aalborg Municipality and create growth (Aalborg Kommune, a).

Nordic:

As the Nordic countries have many similarities such as similar languages and short distances between them, the potential for cooperation is huge. Thus the Nordic perspective is based upon networking and cooperation with other Nordic cities, taking advantage of the funds and other financial instruments that are associated with the Nordic perspective (Aalborg Kommune, a).

Artic:

The focus is on Greenland and that the cooperation with different Greenlandic cities should be prioritized more. As Aalborg Municipality has many relations with Greenland and a long history, the potentials for especially the Greenland harbor in Aalborg should be in focus, benefiting the business communities and educational institutions (Aalborg Kommune, a).

Twinning:

Aalborg has a long tradition with twinning. As such the ambition is to work more strategic with the established twinning cities, promoting intercultural understanding and creating activities in favor for the citizens, the municipality and the business communities (Aalborg Kommune, a).

8. Strategy for the analysis

As stated in the methodology chapter, the data in this master thesis consist of websites providing factual information about the different activities, and interviews providing a deeper explanation of the activities and the reasons behind. When qualitative material is in focus, an analysis strategy is needed, as to not lose track and systematically analyzing the data. This is also done in order to secure a clear understanding of how the collected empirical data will be analyzed in order to answer the problem formulation and the sub-questions, and how the collected material is showed.

8.1. Coding

The overall strategy for the analysis will be based on codes. Coding is a process where “(...) *data are broken down into component parts, which are given names.*” (Bryman, 2012: 568). It thus serves as a way to organize and separate the data. The approach in this thesis will be a closed coding with the coding based on already established codes (Jakobsen, 2012: 182). A critic of the approach is the potential of losing the context, as a part of the whole is taken out (Bryman, 2012: 621). As a way to overcome the critique, when coding and reading the documents, an open approach to new themes will be included as a way to secure that interesting perspectives are included. In this thesis the analysis is divided into two parts each answering a sub-question. As such this demand different strategies and thus the coding is a mix of already predefined empirical and theoretical codes.

In the answering of how Aalborg Municipality engages in an international context, focus is on mapping out the international activities of the municipality. As previously stated, the international strategy of Aalborg Municipality is divided into 5 areas, as it is stated that this entails all of the international activities of the municipality. As such, through a closed coding, using the five areas as codes, a structure will be provided for this part of the analysis with the activities being divided into the different themes. When coding the documents and interviews, it can be analyzed what area the activities can be characterized as.

In the answering of which reasons and rationales are behind the international engagement already established theoretical codes will be used. The codes will be categorized and

structured into themes deriving from the interviews. With the main codes being logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness, the sub-codes will be based on words and sentences relating to each of the theories. As such the data will be analyzed to uncover patterns and themes, which can form the basis for theoretical interpretation (Lynggaard, 2010: 144). In regard to closed coding Jakobsen argues that the codes should have a clear and precise definition in order to secure a high validity (Jakobsen, 2012: 182). The codes relating to sentences and words about how actions are perceived within each of the logic, is illustrated in the table below. If these considerations relating to the logics can be found in the data, it can be said to be in alignment with that logic:

Table 1 – Theoretical codes

	Logic of Consequences	Logic of Appropriateness
Sentences:	What are my alternatives?	What is appropriate for a person like me in a situation such as this?
	What are the consequences of alternative actions?	What kind of a person am I?
	What are my values, by which alternative consequences can be compared?	How do I define what kind of situations this is?
	Choosing the best-expected (satisfying) alternative.	Choosing appropriate rules matching specific situations.
Words:	<i>Cost & benefits, satisfying alternatives, future consequences, maximization of self-interests.</i>	<i>Rule following, cultural norms, appropriate behavior, identity, habits, institutions, routines.</i>

(Own work)

8.2. Display

In order to process the amount of data that has been gathered, displays will be used as a way to present the data. The argument for using displays is that in most qualitative studies, the qualitative material is not showed and the receiver is left to the author's own impressions and interpretations. This is also called 'exemplifying' where only examples, which is supporting the point in question, is being presented (Dahler-Larsen, 2012: 189). Using displays and following the 'inclusion rule' all data that is within a given code is presented. This is to avoid the problems described above and discover potential anomalies (Ibid.: 192). A display will be made for every interview and will be divided into the empirical and theoretical coding and will be showed in appendix 2-9. Thus, it will illustrate all that has been said in regard to the different codes. The displays will be in Danish with the relevant

passages showed in the thesis being translated into English. An example of a display is illustrated below:

Table 2 - Example of display

Empirical coding	
<i>Artic:</i>	
<i>Nordic:</i>	
<i>EU:</i>	
<i>Global:</i>	
<i>Twinning:</i>	
Theoretical coding	
<i>Logic of Consequences:</i>	<i>Logic of Appropriateness:</i>

(Own work)

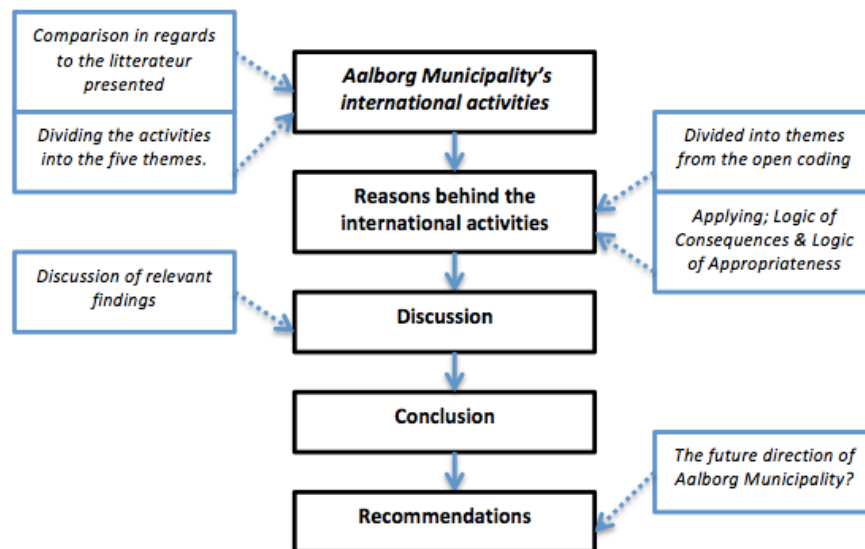
9. Analysis

The qualitative analysis in this thesis will be structured in two parts, each answering a sub-question giving the means to answer the problem formulation; *‘why does Aalborg Municipality engage in an international context’*.

The first part of the analysis will answer the first sub-question *‘How does Aalborg Municipality engage in the international context’* by describing and analyzing what activities the municipality engages in. As previously stated, this part will be divided into five themes, being ‘EU’, ‘Arctic’, ‘Global’, ‘Nordic’ and ‘Twinning’, thus investigating how the municipality is working with the areas and what activities that have been undertaken. It is important to remember that some of the themes are interrelated for example Nordic activities can also be European activities and twinning can also be categorized as a global activity. Further as the number of activities is vast, the activities will be shown in tables with some of the activities being presented in the text. Finally, the activities will be compared and discussed in accordance to the concepts and terms introduced in the chapter ‘the Internationalization of local government’, as to broaden out the findings.

The second part of the analysis is answering the second sub-question: *‘Which reasons and rationales are behind the international engagement’*, finding reasons and rationales behind the activities presented in the first part of the analysis. Further potential barriers in regard to the international engagement will be analyzed, as they can have an influence on the rationales behind acting abroad. Using logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness it can be analyzed if the logics can explain some of the reasons behind. The structure of this part will be divided into different themes, being generated from the first read through of the documents. Afterwards a discussion will be conducted in regard to the relevant findings from the analysis, discussing the results and how it can be explained. Finally the conclusion will be presented, and based on this, recommendations on the future direction of Aalborg Municipality will be discussed. The structure of the analysis is illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 3 - Structure of the analysis



(Own work)

9.1. Aalborg Municipality's international activities

As stated, this part will be divided into the five themes each describing an aspect of Aalborg Municipality's international activities. Thus the sections will be, 'global', 'Arctic/Nordic', 'Twinning' and 'EU'. The Arctic and Nordic will be under the same section, as the arctic activities are minimal. In Aalborg Municipality the activities are vast and many of the activities are not well documented, as they are either small or part of a specific branch in a department. Thus not all activities will be accounted for, but as the biggest activities are accounted for, this will be the focus. The structure of this part, as previously stated, will start with an overview of the activities with examples being addressed in the text. Afterwards the activities will be compared in regard to the terms already presented, arriving at the sub-conclusion.

9.1.1. International activities

9.1.1.1. Global

In the global sphere the activities are concentrated on sustainability, attraction of labor and in investments both at home and abroad. The activities are listed below:

Table 3 – Global activities

<i>Global</i>		
Name:	Type:	Description/Purpose:
<i>International House North Denmark</i>	Service	Attracting and keeping international labor, providing services, and offers advice to international citizens in Northern Jutland (Aalborg kommune, a).
<i>Acces2innovation</i>	Platform - Member	A platform for new partnerships, working out solutions to problems in the developing world, allowing business partners to access new markets (Acces2innovaiton).
<i>Invest in Aalborg</i>	Platform	Attracting and keeping foreign investors to the city of Aalborg (Aalborg kommune, b).
<i>KIMO - Denmark</i>	International Organization - Member	Committed to a better development of sustainable coastal communities, representing local authorities at an international and national level (KIMO, 2017).
<i>Aalborg Care Consortium</i>	Platform for Co-operation	Working with a special nursing home concept, focus is on export of know-how about technology in home care and staff training (Fremtidens plejehjem).
<i>The Aalborg Charter (1994)</i>	Declaration - Signed	An urban sustainability initiative, inspired by the Rio Earth Summit, signed by more than 2700 local authorities from around the world (CGO).
<i>The Aalborg Commitments (2004)</i>	Declaration - Signed	Ten years after the Aalborg Charter, the purpose was to develop a common and action-oriented understanding of sustainability, signed by 700 cities and towns (CGO).

(Own work)

The platform Acces2innovation is the only activity conducted in Africa, and the platform is for Aalborg Municipality something that *“(...) means that we can take the companies from Northern Jutland and from Denmark to Africa, down to the places where there are some development projects and where there is an opportunity to invest (...)”* (Appendix, 4). As an example, the municipalities of Frederikshavn and Aalborg, together with Aalborg University, entered into an agreement with the Kasese district in Southwest Uganda, focusing on sustainable solutions and giving unique opportunities for the local business partners and researchers in the municipalities (Acces2innovation, 2013). Another activity is the Aalborg Care Consortium. The arguments for this are *“(...) that we have the experience of running*

nursing homes, we are those from the public who have the best experience of running elderly care.” (Appendix 5), and “One can say that the interest in the Danish model around the elderly, is actually quite big.” (Appendix, 5). The Consortium consists of, amongst other, an architectural firm and the department of Care for the Elderly and Disable. As they are working with a special nursing home concept, a deal was made with the Chinese company Rong Hui Group Ltd, opening up for export of know-how to the Chinese market (Fremtidens plejehjem).

Other activities worth mentioning are the Aalborg Charter and the Aalborg commitments. Being the European cities and municipalities answer to the 1992 Rio Declaration about sustainability, Aalborg has given name to the two European declarations about sustainability (CGO). In a newsletter to ICLEI, an international environment organization that Aalborg is also a member of, the mayor of Aalborg Municipality, Thomas Kastrup-Larsen, states that the initiatives are meant to inspire on a global scale with cities taking the lead in the sustainability agenda (CityTalk, 2017). As an important step following the declarations, the Basque Declaration was approved in Bilbao, also signed by Aalborg, pursuing more concrete solutions to the issues of sustainability (Ibid.).

In cooperation with the Basque Country and ICLEI, Aalborg Municipality has created a platform called sustainablecities.eu, which will support and guide the international sustainability work at a local and European level (CGO). As such, an interviewee stated that *“Aalborg has really become a front runner, it may be that it was not in 1994, or in 2004, but we have really come a long way and have begun to be the city that other cities reflect themselves in.”* (Appendix 2). Another interviewee agrees with this statement and argued that Aalborg *“(…) has a very strong brand in regard to Aalborg commitments and the Aalborg Charter. We are simply more ahead, than many others.”* (Appendix 6). So according to the interviewees Aalborg has a strong brand in this area, and the data suggest that there is something about the talk.

9.1.1.2. Twinning

As the activities in this area are not well accounted for the table will show the different twinning partnerships, illustrating the vast selection of twinning cities:

Table 4 – Twinning partnerships

Twinning partnerships:		
City/Country/Agreement since:		
Almer, Holland, 1984	Antibes, France, 1967	Bûdselsdorf, Germany, 2007
Edinburgh, Scotland, 1964	Fredrikstad, Norway, 1951	Fuglefjord, Faroe Islands, 1987
Galway, Ireland, 1997	Gdynia, Poland, 1966	Haifa, Israel, 1972
Hefei, China, 1986	Innsbruck, Austria, 1967	Karlskoga, Sweden, 1963
Lancaster, England, 1977	Lerum, Sweden, 2007	Liperi, Finland, 2007
Nordurthing, Iceland, 1966	Nuuk, Greenland, 1963	Scoresbysund, Greenland, 2002
Orsa, Sweden, 2007	Orust, Sweden, 2007	Osno Lubuskie, Poland, 2007
Pushkin, Russia, 1971	Racine, USA, 1965	Rapperswil-Jona, Switzerland, 1968
Rendalen, Norway, 2007	Rendsburg, Germany, 1967	Riga, Latvia, 1989
Riihimäki, Finland, 1961	Solvang, USA, 1971	Tulcea, Rumania, 1970
Warna, Bulgaria, 1976	Vilnius, Lithuania, 1979	Wismar, Germany, 1961

(Aalborg event)

With 33 twinning agreements Aalborg is that city in Denmark with most twinning partners. The first agreement was made in 1951 between Aalborg and Fredrikstad in Norway and these international relations, ranging from Israel to China, have had a historic impact on the international engagement of the municipality (Aalborg event). As for now increasing the number of twinning cities does not have high priority for the municipality (Appendix 17). In the newest document showing Aalborg Municipality's twinning activities from 2012-2013, the activities are centered on cultural activities, study and exchange tours with the Aalborg 'youth games', which is held every four years, being the biggest activity (Aalborg, 2013). Further, twinning partners such as Galway, Edinburgh, Riga, Gedigne and Fredrikstad are the ones that are being prioritized, with Aalborg working more strategically with these cities (Appendix 17). In terms of business it is argued that China would be the ideal place in terms of using the twinning arrangements (Appendix 17). Here the twinning partnership with Hefei in China is ideal *"Because if we did not have this agreement, we would never have gone through with Hefei, because they would not have cared about us."* (Appendix 9).

In the 1970s, in the municipality, there was a special focus on twinning towards Eastern Europe, promoting solidarity (Appendix 17). However, in regard to the use of twinning partners today, it has changed in the way that *"(...) in the past there were three full-time employees working with twinning partners. That is not how it is anymore."* (Appendix 9). This is, according to the same interviewee, because *"(...) we do not have so many clubs, associations and school classes traveling out, they may be doing it, but it's not always that they travel to some of our twinning cities."* (Appendix 9). Thus, the level of activities has been declining. Further in the different departments, the use of twinning cities is not as common as illustrated in the displays (Appendix 2-9). In the Department of Education some schools are taking trips to some of the twinning cities (Appendix 11), but as argued the whole process *"(...) is tremendously time consuming, it is really bureaucratic."* (Appendix 3). In the Department of Health and Culture an interviewee further stated, *"(...) the whole twinning sphere does not mean anything for the way we work internationally."* (Appendix 8). So historically the twinning relationships have had a huge impact in the way of Aalborg Municipality's international relations, but as of right now it is not an area that is being prioritized and used as much.

9.1.1.3. Arctic/Nordic

In the Arctic/Nordic sphere the activities are focused on participation in networks and EU financed programs. The activities are listed below:

Table 5 – Nordic/Arctic activities

Nordic/Arctic		
Name:	Type:	Description/Purpose:
<i>Nordic City Network</i>	Network - Member	Focus is on urban development and citizenship, developing city space and urban business with other Scandinavian cities (Aalborg kommune, a).
<i>Nordic Safe Cities</i>	Network - Member	Working with other Nordic cities, focus is on prevention of radicalization and extremism, creating safer cities for the citizens (Aalborg kommune, a).
<i>Arctic Consensus</i>	Platform	By communicating knowledge and reinforcing cooperation the goal is to promote growth and development in Greenland and Northern Jutland (Arctic consensus, a).
<i>Buinessbroen Norge-Norddanmark</i>	Platform	Supporting the building of business and knowledge broker between Norway and the northern parts of Jutland, benefiting companies and citizens (Buinessbroen).
<i>Green Building A-Z</i>	EU program - participation	Cooperation with Norway and Sweden, working for the construction of more sustainable and energy efficient public buildings (Aalborg kommune, a).
<i>TechNordic</i>	EU program - participation	Cooperation between the IT industries in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, attracting investments and employees (Aalborg kommune, a).
<i>Pendlerbroen</i>	EU program - participation	Increasing the opportunities for working and studying across Nordic regions through digitally and physical commuting (Interreg, 2017).

(Own work)

In terms of the arctic activities the creation of Arctic Consensus is seen as a natural consequence of a long-term cooperation with Greenland, and an interviewee stated that *“Historically, we have close ties between Aalborg and especially Nuuk, but also in general, in Greenland, because we have had the Greenlandic traffic, so all transport to Europe goes through Aalborg port from Greenland, to Greenland.”* (Appendix 6). The platform is a cooperation agreement between Aalborg Municipality, Region North, Aalborg University and Aalborg Harbor. Some of the initiatives of Arctic Consensus are the Arctic Business network, an association of companies in Denmark and Greenland, which have a lot of cooperation across borders (appendix 14). Another initiative is a focus on developing

Greenlandic export production, lifting Greenlandic industries and further creating growth in North Jutland, providing with logistics and financing help (Arctic Consensus, b).

In terms of specific projects within the areas all of them are EU funded within the same program. The EU program is called Interreg Øresund-Kattegat-Skagerak and is focusing on Scandinavian cross-border cooperation. Focusing on cross-border challenges, such as the development of green economy, sustainable transport and labor attractiveness, the EU initiative supports joint Scandinavian projects linked in the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy, which is aiming at smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Interreg, 2016; Aalborg kommune, a). This is benefiting Aalborg Municipality in terms of receiving funding and solving local problems.

9.1.1.4. EU

Within EU the activities are vast and are concentrated on EU projects, partnerships, networks and environmental agreements. The activities are listed below:

Table 6 – European activities

EU		
Name:	Type:	Description/Purpose:
<i>North Denmark EU Office</i>	Office, funding	The purpose of the office is to help the North Jutland's companies in the European area and attract EU funding for projects (Aalborg kommune, a).
<i>Covenant of Mayors</i>	Agreement - Environmental	An initiative where local authorities and Aalborg Municipality are invited to lead towards the EU energy and climate goals, which is a reduction of 40% greenhouse emission by 2020 (Aalborg kommune, d).
<i>Northern Connection</i>	EU project - participation	A partnership of 20 cities, regions and clusters working together to create innovations through a platform for knowledge sharing (Aalborg kommune, a).
<i>Jutland Corridor</i>	Partnership	A Danish-German initiative to promote the regions comparative advantages, focusing on closer collaboration and the deepening of European integration (Hamburg).
<i>EUniverCities</i>	Network - Member	A network with medium sized cities with the aim to exchange knowledge, experience and expertise in regard to city-university cooperation across Europe (Aalborg kommune, a).
<i>Civitas</i>	Network - Member	Launched by the European Commission, CIVITAS is a network of cities dedicated to better and cleaner transport in Europe through funding and knowledge exchange (CIVITAS, 2013).
<i>eTwinning, School Education Gateway</i>	Platforms	Promoting school collaboration in Europe and offers opportunities for online professional development for educators (Appendix 3).
<i>Horizon 2020 – Smart city</i>	EU funding – Application	As an integrated part of the SMART Aalborg initiative the EU Horizon 2020 application is a way to secure co-financing for the activities, making the city of Aalborg smarter and more energy-efficient (Aalborg Kommune, E).

(Own work)

In regard to carrying out EU projects, Aalborg Municipality have in decades participated in several European programs with a focus on sustainable city transport, from 1993, with the participation in the JUPITER project, promoting the concept of an energy efficient city, to the latest participation in the EU financed project CIVITAS-ARCHIMEDES. With Aalborg being one of the lead cities focus was again on sustainable urban transport with initiatives such as busses running on biofuels (City of Aalborg: 8-17).

In terms of North Denmark's EU Office, it is a cooperation agreement between region North Jutland, the municipalities within the region and Aalborg University. The purpose of the office is that *"(...) they are doing a lot of lobby work, finding some EU programs and opportunities that we can participate in."* (Appendix 2). Further *"One can say that they have a pretty good feeling of what is happening at a European level (...). So that's something they can contribute with."* (Appendix 7). It is stated in their annual report that in 2016 the office collected 80 million DKK. in EU-support, kick-starting projects throughout the region and contributing to the development of Northern Jutland (NordDanmarks EU kontor). Thus it is a way to obtain some of the opportunities that EU provides, finding relevant EU programs and funding.

Another opportunity in the European sphere is the participation in European networks. For example Aalborg Municipality and Aalborg University together form a membership in the network EUniverCities (Aalborg Kommune, a). Being a co-founder of the network, the purpose of the network is *"(...) how to get more international students into the city and get them integrated. It may be how to develop a campus, so that it also becomes more integrated with the rest of the city (...)"* (Appendix 4). Thus, by inspiring each other the goal with the participation is to make Aalborg a more attractive city.

As a part of Aalborg Municipality's smart city initiative a Horizon 2020 application is underway. The Horizon 2020 program is a EU initiative aiming at innovative projects and making European cities more economical, smart and energy efficient (Aalborg Kommune, e). In Aalborg Municipality a SMART City *"(...) means that it has a strong sustainability element and it is the broad sustainability concept, as in social, economic and environmental sustainability."* (Appendix 6). There are also elements of technology and digitalization, but sustainability is prioritized in order to obtain a better and smarter city and *"It is like the umbrella and we have a long string of initiatives and some of the initiatives are then incorporated in this application to Horizon."* (Appendix 6). In cooperation with Aalborg University a demand from EU is that the application should be done in cooperation between three lead cities, or also called lighthouse cities, from different EU countries. As such the application is done with Bologna and Freiburg, with Freiburg taking the lead in the

application. By being a lighthouse in the application, it is required that the projects receiving the funding have to be completed in the respective lighthouse cities, thus benefiting other EU cities in terms of inspiration (Byrådet, 2017).

9.1.2. Comparison to the literature

As stated previously the aim of this section is not to generalize, but to broaden out the findings as to show that Aalborg Municipality is not an isolated case in terms of the internationalization of local governments. When comparing the activities of Aalborg Municipality to the presented terms, it is important to remember that not all activities are covered and consequently does not paint a full picture. The literature being discussed in comparison to the activities, will be about City diplomacy, Twinning and European integration.

In the 'internationalization of local governments' section it was presented how city diplomacy is defined as *"(...) the institutions and processes by which cities or local governments in general, engage in relations with actors on an international political stage with the aim of representing themselves and their interests to one another."* (Pluijm & Melissen, 2007: 6). As such it can be argued that Aalborg Municipality is engaging in City diplomacy, representing themselves in relations with foreign actors on an international political stage, whether that be home or abroad. It can further be seen as multilayered diplomacy, not trying to detach from its national setting due to the Danish legal framework and the locality principle. The principle states that only activities that have a local interest, benefiting the local community and citizens, are legal. Examining the activities of Aalborg Municipality it can be observed that none of the presented activities contradict this principle, all being in favor of the local communities and citizens.

It was also presented how city diplomacy could be divided into six dimensions. Within the six dimensions of city diplomacy it is mostly the economic dimension that is the leading motive in regard to describing the activities of Aalborg Municipality. It could be argued that the Acces2innovation platform is a part of the development projects dimension, but as the leading motive is on foreign investments, more than it is on international solidarity, there is still an economic reasoning behind. Further it is clear from the cooperation agreements with

cities in different programs, and in the export of knowhow to other cities that economic reasons are important for Aalborg Municipality in their engagement with the international sphere. Further it can also be illustrated in the attraction of investments and citizens to Aalborg Municipality and implementing local economic policies for a better environment, through for example Aalborg Commitments. Within another dimension networking is also important with Aalborg Municipality engaging in both Nordic, European and international networks, where focus is on sharing information, technology and inspiration.

In another dimension, cultural, these aspects of Aalborg's international engagement is mostly associated with the twinning arrangements, sharing culture in the forms of study and exchange trips both for schools and politicians. In the literature presented about twinning it is stated how the relationships start as mostly cultural exchanges, but in time develop more economic bonds. Mapping the twinning activities into O'Toole's three phases, Aalborg Municipality can be argued to be in between the reciprocative phase, focusing on people and educational exchanges and the commercial phase focusing on economic development, but leaning mostly towards the reciprocative phase. The relationship with Hefei in China and the more strategic prioritization of selected twinning cities can be argued to be an economic and commercial relationship, and it is stated that the relationships is only due to the cultural exchanges with the cities in the past. As most of the twinning relationships are focusing on cultural aspect, or not being prioritized, a full out move to the commercial phase seems unlikely. This is mainly due to the declining support from the different departments and in the local communities in terms of using the twinning arrangements.

As such an integrated approach to the twinning arrangements focusing on both culture and economics, as proscribed by Ramasamy and Cremer, is not likely. Further, as the community participation and support in terms of the twinning arrangements is declining, a municipal-community entrepreneurship is not likely to be created either. Therefore from this perspective, as focus is not on this aspect of Aalborg Municipality's international relations, the municipality is not taking advantaged of the opportunities that the twinning arrangement can provide.

Most of the activities conducted by Aalborg Municipality are within a EU sphere as illustrated. This is due to EU providing different possibilities such as structural funds, funding projects and programs, thus providing new windows for tackling local concerns at the European level. This can be seen in the way of North Denmark's EU Office in Brussels, the participation in Interreg programs, and in the application for the Horizon 2020 program. With the application for the Horizon 2020 program and the other programs, EU is demanding cooperation with other European cities in regard to the participation in the different programs and in order to receive funding. As such, this moves the integration of the EU and the internationalization of local governments forward, as can be observed in Aalborg Municipality. In terms of the behavior of Aalborg Municipality towards their interaction with EU, using Klausen & Goldsmith's four categories, it can be characterized as reactive, taking full advantage of the benefits that EU is making available, but is more a follower than a leader, not lobbying or pressuring the EU in terms of taking different or specific directions.

9.1.3. Sub-conclusion

In terms of how Aalborg Municipality is engaging in an international context, their activities are diverse and the engagement is on many frontiers, stretching from investment in Africa to drawing investments and international citizens to the city of Aalborg, trying to make the city a globalized city. Aalborg has also made a name for itself in the sustainable agenda with the Aalborg Charter and the Aalborg Commitments. Most of the activities are within an economic dimension with the international engagement being conducted in order to secure economic growth to Aalborg Municipality. These opportunities are especially focusing on the European level with most of the networks, projects and partnerships being within the European Union, as the EU is trying to strengthen the European integration by providing funding opportunities through different programs. Within the EU programs Nordic cooperation is also prominent, facing similar challenges. The cultural aspects of the activities are mostly concentrated in the twinning arrangements, but this area is in decline as other opportunities are perceived to be more beneficial, with only a few of the 33 twinning partner cities being prioritized.

9.2. Reasons and rationales

With the first part of the analysis showing how Aalborg Municipality is acting in an international context, this part will analyze which reasons and rationales are behind the activities, answering the second sub-question. The following will not be a review of what all the interviewees have said about the topics, as such only the most important will be presented. As stated, this part will be divided into different themes generated from the interviews as a way to structure the part of the analysis, finding out why they go out and use the theories to deepen the answers. The sub-sections will be; *'International strategies'*, *'A globalized world'*, *'The decline of twinning'*, *'Networks & projects'* and *'Problems & barriers'*.

9.2.1. International strategies

As stated in the chapter *'Presentation of case'*, Aalborg Municipality has initiated an international strategy with the goal to make Aalborg a more globalized city both inwards and outwards by getting the world to Aalborg and Aalborg to the world. The reasons behind the strategy is according to Christina, the coordinator for the international strategy, that:

"It was five years ago or something that I think they started to look at what it really is, in regard to the international activities and initiatives that we have, and we could see that there was a large net of international activities around the departments (...). I think that was what caused it, that you could actually see that were a lot of involvement, but we did not have an overview of what we were involved in." (Appendix 4).

Thus, the reason behind the strategy in the first place was as a way to organize and obtain an overview of the international initiatives and activities. It can further, from the quote, be argued that there has been a shift in logics. Shifting from logic of appropriateness, with no overview of the activities as the reasons behind the activities was more due to habits and routines in the different departments. As the new situation, being the international engagement could not be matched with the existing rules within the organization, the reasons behind the strategy can now be described as logic of consequences. This is illustrated as Christina further argued that *"If you initiate major [international] initiatives that may cost a lot of money and participation in projects (...) it is better if it is within a*

larger strategy, in terms of what you really want with the international." (Appendix 4). As such, future consequences are now important stating that every alternative have different future consequences in terms of economic resources. Having an overview of the different activities and initiatives thus means that it can be weighed in terms of cost and benefits.

Another interviewee supports these statements by stating that the reason behind the strategy is that, *"(...) is a support strategy that will help us to achieve, as best as possible, our goals, which is a better city, a better and more successful business community and some better services from the municipality to the citizens."* (Appendix 8). Thus the strategy and the municipality's international relations is not a goal in itself, but it is seen as the most satisfying alternative in the way of achieving other goals. The reason for the strategy is therefore thoughts about future consequences and a maximization of self-interest in terms of the other goals the municipality has.

Another international strategy that has been implemented is within the Department of Education, where *"(...) the purpose is to ensure that we achieve intercultural competencies and gets the courage to participate in the world (...) that we work actively and organizationally with the international involvement and that we form the basis for the students further international education."* (Appendix 3). As opposed to the overall international strategy, focus of this strategy is more on educating the young students in order for them to behave appropriate in different situations and developing the students' competencies in terms of languages, norms and values.

Thus, focus is on logic on appropriateness, although on their website, it is stated how, attractive secondary schools are important in terms of attracting international citizens (Aalborg Kommune, f). Therefore, the reasons behind can also be about future consequences. Still, the main reason behind the strategy is according to Ann Katrine, who is working at the department and with the strategy that *"I think it is a condition, it is a condition to make the children ready, it is a condition that the world is changeable, and that we must relate to that."* (Appendix 3). Therefore, the reasons behind are not on weighing different alternatives, but more on how to act appropriate, and Ann Katrine further argued, *"I do not think you should compromise with your own values, but you must know the rules of*

the game in other countries. And I think that's one of the school's tasks, trying to figure it out.” (Appendix 3). It is thus a way to educate the young students in the municipality, to act appropriate in the international sphere, being able to define different cultural situations and engaging with other people in an appropriate way.

The reasons behind the strategies are different depending on who is the receiver. With the overall international strategy focusing on finding the best-known alternatives in regard to achieving other goals, benefiting the Aalborg area as a whole, the international strategy for the Department of Education is more focused on developing an appropriate behavior for the young students in their meeting with the world both inside and outside the municipality.

9.2.2. A globalized world

In terms of the reasons and rationales behind the international engagement, one of the arguments that some of the interviewees have put forward is that acting abroad, in terms of doing projects and participation in networks and EU programs, has become easier. This is due to a changing and globalized world and an interviewee argued that:

“I think it has changed in the way that the world has changed. We have become more global, more coherent and it is easier to get around to each other. We have got technologies that are working in the way that you can keep in touch (...). So in that way it is really more natural today, than it was when I started 27 years ago.” (Appendix 5).

In the quote it is illustrated how the habits, institutions and routines have changed over the last decades making it, more appropriate in terms of the different situations that can occur when there are opportunities for acting abroad. The rational decisions can still be a factor in terms of acting abroad, but as the quote illustrates it is also due to the changing world and that it has become more appropriate for the civil servants in the municipality to suggest acting abroad in order to solve a problem. Further, another interviewee argued, *“(...) that the international has come to stay, we have to relate to the fact that there is a world which is changing all the time, and it is a condition that we now work with the international. We cannot close our eyes.”* (Appendix 3). This statement is supplemented with *“I think that's the trend that is happening (...). I think it will become an increasingly integrated part of our way*

of working, and we are becoming more international. I think that is the way it is going (...)" (Appendix 6). As such, it has become a condition working with the international sphere with the new experiences codded into the existing rules, thus making it more appropriate and attractive going abroad. Furthermore, the quotes reveal a desire for more international engagement and a hope that Aalborg Municipality will work with it in a more integrated way in the future.

Therefore, in terms of taking advantage of the changing and globalized world, two arguments can be made. The first argument follows a logic of appropriateness in the way of educating an appropriate behavior into the young students *"(...) we need to make sure that our primary school students understand that there is a global world and that people look different (...) and how we interact with other cultures so that it is seen as natural to meet others, whether it is home or abroad."* (Appendix 4). The second argument is more in alignment with logic of consequences as acting abroad:

"(...) is also about funds. We cannot continue to develop for zero. So we must see where there are opportunities for seeking funds. And then I think it is healthy that we get pushed to work across national borders. Because it's very comfortable just working the way we usually do (...). But are we then developing?" (Appendix 6).

Therefore, it is also a search for economic funds and a search for the best alternative, choosing the best-expected or most satisfied alternative. As a municipality it makes sense thinking about future consequences and on the development of the municipality, as the goal for the organization is to provide the best services for the citizens in the area. This is further illustrated in the next quote, as an interviewee stated that, *"Especially, when we have to cut all possible places, locally (...) you have less and less money. So, we'll have to find investments and funds elsewhere, and that's probably good enough. It forces us into some other priorities that may be quite healthy."* (Appendix 2). As it is a search for the best alternative, these quotes can also be argued to be talking about a new logic of appropriateness because they are being pushed across national borders, as the search for the maximization of self-interest is becoming institutionalized into new norms and habits.

It needs to be clarified that just because the world is changing it does not mean that a Danish municipality automatically acts abroad. There are other reasons behind such as economic reasonings, but also the size of the municipality is important. An interviewee argued that:

“We have been used to for many years, being outgoing and cooperating internationally (...) and that it not something everyone is doing, and I think that is primarily larger municipalities that have the capacity to network and be more outgoing, it can be difficult for smaller municipalities that do not have so many employees (...)” (Appendix 7).

It can therefore be argued to be a reasoning of the consequences of alternative actions. Smaller municipalities have less employees, who are covering broader working areas and have a smaller economy, thus the consequences of acting abroad are likely to be higher than the expected outcomes. As Aalborg Municipality is the forth-biggest municipality in Denmark, this means that it has a bigger economy and more employees covering smaller and more specialized areas. As such the costs are lower, which is likely to be lower than the expected outcome in terms of doing international activities. Thus it can be a possible explanation to one of the reasons of acting abroad, simply that Aalborg Municipality has the organizational size to take advantage of the opportunities that the globalized world offers. As an example the North Denmark EU office, which is collaboration between the northern Danish municipalities, can be seen as a way for the smaller municipalities to engage in the international sphere by sharing the costs.

9.2.3. The decline of twinning

As the globalization processes have provided with opportunities to act abroad, other international activities are not being prioritized as much as they once was. In the first part of the analysis it was argued that while there was an increase in international activities and initiatives, the activities concerning the twinning arrangements were in decline, not being used and prioritized as much as they had been. It is argued that the rise of the globalization processes has made it less important to have twinning arrangements, as it has become easier to make other and more specialized arrangements with other cities (Appendix 17).

As such, Aalborg Municipality has 33 twinning partnerships, being the municipality in Denmark with most partners. The reason behind this is because of the last municipal structural reform in 2007. In 2007 Aalborg Municipality merged with three other smaller municipalities, thus taking over their twinning partnerships, which were matched specifically for their own local areas (Appendix 17). Søren Thorst, who is in charge of the twinning arrangements, argued that *“(...) suddenly, we have twinning cities in Sweden and in Finland, cities with 2200 citizens, and it does not match Aalborg at all. But we write nicely to them, and they write nicely to us.”* (Appendix 9). Consequently, it can be questioned if it is really necessary to have 33 twinning cities, since it is only a fraction of the agreements that is being prioritized and used. The reason behind it is that:

“You can ask whether it should always be such that it is something you can measure, in terms of what do we get from it and why we are doing it. I do not think that should always be the case because it is just a matter of being good friends. Then if we can use each other for something, then that is really good, otherwise we can just let it be.” (Appendix 9).

Thus, it can be argued that, through logic of appropriateness, that the arrangements are kept due to the history behind them and that it is the most appropriate thing to do. As mentioned it is about being good friends, and as the focus in the start of the twinning arrangements was on solidarity, the arrangements are therefore kept. On the other hand, it can be argued that *“(...) saying, now we do not want to be friends with you anymore. But why should you do that, it does not have any value. It is really cozy, and that is the way it is.”* (Appendix 9). Due to the arrangements having no costs in terms of keeping them, it does not matter if there is an arrangement or not, as illustrated in the quotes. Therefore, the cost of having the partnerships is low, while there is still the possibility to obtain any future benefits from the partnerships. For example, the twinning agreement with the Chinese city Hefei is now being used for economic reasons and as it was stated in the first part of the analysis the only reason this was possible was due to the twinning agreement from 1986.

The benefits can further be observed in the way of the prioritization of twinning cities in terms of cooperating possibilities and where it makes sense as *“(...) we have some prioritized cities, such as Edinburgh, Gedigne, Riga and Galway, cities that we really want to*

work with because they remind us a bit of ourselves, and they can do some things, for example Edinburgh, they are a huge event city (...)" (Appendix 9). Another interviewee further argued that the point of the twinning relationships is that *"(...) we turn it towards, prioritizing the twinning relations, where it makes sense and where we believe that the cooperation with them, provides a better city, a better business community and a better municipal service."* (Appendix 8). Thus, taking advantage of the arrangements that makes sense and with the cost being low in terms of keeping the arrangements, it can be argued that it is considerations about choosing the best-known alternatives and what the twinning relationships can provide. Therefore only the cities that have something of interest for Aalborg, such as the city of Edinburgh, will be prioritized and can be seen as a way for Aalborg to maximize its own self-interests.

However, the twinning arrangements are in decline, not being politically prioritized compared to other international activities and initiatives and not used as much in the local communities and by the politicians. One of the reasons behind is that *"(...) we can almost be sure that when he [Politician] returns home, the press is seeking access on that trip and questions whether it is really necessary to go there for a day and a half (...). You experience the fact that many politicians, simply do not want to do it anymore."* (Appendix 9). Thus, it can be argued that the cost is outweighing the benefits of going on trips to the different twinning cities. It can further be argued that as the politicians are asking 'what are the alternatives' and with the media questioning every trip abroad to the twinning cities, other alternatives such as staying home is seen as a better option. Thus it means that:

"All this with media access and policy, has meant there is no focus on twinning any more, and that is of course reflected in the administration, because if it is not interesting at the political level, then it does not help that we think that it is really interesting at the administrative level (...)" (Appendix 9).

As the politicians do not think that twinning should be prioritized, as it does not make sense anymore for them, it is not seen as an appropriate behavior if the administrative level keeps working with it, as the politicians decide the overall direction of the municipality. Within the departments, Ann Katrine, who is working in the Department of Education, stated that *"(...)*

it is tremendously time consuming, it is really bureaucratic (...) so it is much easier to use E-twinning or School Education Gateway.” (Appendix 3). Same considerations are illustrated here, as the cost of using the twinning arrangements is higher than other programs such as the E-twinning program, the search for the most satisfying alternative is thus the reason for the decline in use of the twinning cities.

Therefore, the use of Aalborg Municipality’s twinning cities and the reason behind the decline is mostly a reasoning of the different consequences outweighing the potential benefits, thus making an incentive to look for better alternatives, but as the history about the relationships is important the arrangements are kept.

9.2.4. Networks & projects

As the twinning arrangements are in decline and globalization has provided new opportunities in terms of acting abroad, these activities are mostly concentrated within participation in networks, projects and EU programs as illustrated in the first part of the analysis. When talking about globalization the interviewees in the different departments stated that it is more natural today acting abroad than a decade back. However as the next quotes will illustrate acting abroad is not something that is done just because it is appropriate or exiting, there is also a rational reasoning behind.

Being the coordinator for the international strategy of Aalborg Municipality, Christina argued that in terms of the different departments going abroad *“(...) it is not because everybody has to go out and participate in big activities or big projects because that's not what fits in, everywhere, but just that you have a sight on the international sphere (...)”* (Appendix 4). Thus the reason behind is that it has to make sense in terms of engaging in international activities. As is further illustrated, another interviewee argued that, *“(...) you should never do an international project about something, you would not have done in the first place to some degree (...). So you should do it because you can see that it is something that you can build on something that you would already have done.”* (Appendix 8). As such, following logic of consequences, it is all about cost & benefits. In regard to weighing the expected costs and the potential benefits, according to the quotes, when choosing if an international project is okay it is by choosing the best satisfying alternative. Thus as an

example, the Horizon 2020 application, is an application for funds to an already established initiative in Aalborg, the Aalborg smart city initiative, thus securing that the activity is in line with something the municipality is already working with and that the potential outcome should be something that the municipality can build on.

Another interviewee from the department of Urban and Spatial Planning further stated that *“(...) if you are doing something, without having the underlying planning in order and knowing what it is you want, there is a high risk of failure and that you do not finish.”* (Appendix 7), and *“We have used it a lot within the field of transport, to move further than we could otherwise have achieved within that time period.”* (Appendix 7). As illustrated from the quotes, the reasons behind acting abroad and doing projects are mostly within logic of consequences. When acting abroad the considerations behind is; what the consequences of alternative actions are. Thus, a specific project or EU program is being chosen if it is seen as the most satisfying alternative, trying to maximize self-interests. As such from these quotes, it can be argued that acting abroad is only perceived as being beneficial when the costs of the activity is lower than the potential benefits. Furthermore the activity has to support projects that are already undertaken at home.

When engaging in projects, trying to get EU funding, branding can be an important tool in order to make Aalborg Municipality an attractive place in terms of attracting investments and funding. In Aalborg Municipality *“(...) we have a really strong brand in Europe, in sustainable cities and sustainable urban development and green cities. And we may not have been that good to exploit it earlier (...)”* (Appendix 4). In order to do that the branding of a sustainable city is done, by using the Aalborg Charter and Aalborg Commitments, as already presented (Appendix 10). According to Anders Du Mont from the Department of Environment and Energy, which is working with the brand, the reason behind the branding is to *“(...) making it look good in Europe. And that is a win-win situation. It is a very small investment in regard to the potential outcome.”* (Appendix 2). Thus, the considerations behind is in terms of weighing the cost and benefits, and as the brand of a sustainable city is already established the cost of using the brand is low, thus making an incentive to use is more actively. Further it is also considerations about future consequences, trying to attract investments and funding to the city of Aalborg.

Therefore, the use of the brand is *"(...) to maintain Aalborg's brand and good name, and make use of it, to create a greater focus on Aalborg and attract more investments and more funding."* (Appendix 2). Thinking about future consequences, the brand is a way to make it easier to obtain investments, funds and new partnerships benefiting the municipality. The reason behind using the brand is, according to Anders Du Mont, that *"(...) it is because of the big saving rounds that have occurred in the municipalities, so we do not have much money to solve the problems, so we have become aware that we have to go out and find it [money], and it is about being as attractive as possible."* (Appendix 2). As such, the acting abroad can be due to the savings round, finding economic resources abroad. Further the brand is a way for the municipality to make it easier obtaining the funds, thus contributing to act abroad.

Therefore, one of the reasons for participating in the different funding programs and partnership projects is a consideration about economic resources. Another rationale for acting abroad is focusing on the gathering of inspiration around the world and that *"We can always sit here in Aalborg and think we are the smartest in the world, but we are not always that, sometimes we can learn from others."* (Appendix 6). Further it is stated *"(...) there are other ways to do things and they can be as good as the ways we do it, and sometimes they may be better."* (Appendix 8). Thus the search for inspiration is a two-way interaction, as already stated in the first part of the analysis, where politicians and civil servants from Aalborg go on trips to other countries searching for inspiration, and people from other countries travel to Aalborg in order to find inspiration to specific policies. In terms of going on trips to other countries, Lars Nøhr from the Department of Care for the Elderly and Disable stated that you only go on trips if:

"You have a high probability of gaining something from it (...), you must be able to come home with something that you can translate into an [Aalborg] everyday life. Otherwise you do not leave. It has to be something that you cannot only get by mediating with one another or by going to a website." (Appendix 5).

In terms of asking what are my alternatives, the same logic of consequences and rational thinking as with the participation in partnerships can be observed as the main reason

behind going abroad and gather inspiration. The benefits have to outweigh the costs of acting abroad, otherwise you do not do it. The same thoughts can be observed in the participation in networks, which is an essential part of how the municipality is engaging with international relations. When participating in different networks it should be *"(...) where it makes sense, and don't [participate] when it does not make sense (...). If it cost 100.000 a year, then it should really make sense for participating."* (Appendix 4). Another interviewee further illustrates this by stating that *"(...) we will always assess it individually, if there is contact from such a type of network, we will always consider whether, it is something we need to be included in and what the cost is of being included in it (...)"* (Appendix 5). Thus, it is again about the potential outcomes versus the expected costs with only the most satisfying alternative being selected. In regard to the previously presented quotes about savings rounds in the municipalities, it makes sense to calculate if spending money on a network can be translated into benefits for Aalborg Municipality in the long run.

As with the exploitation of the branding of Aalborg as a sustainable city, it is also stated how the reasons behind the participation in various networks can be due to a strategic exploitation of the networks. This can be done in the way that *"(...) If you through the networks that you have, already have contact with some cities in that geography or with the same challenges as you, you may as well use them instead of searching for others, where you do not know them and you do not know if they will deliver (...)"* (Appendix 4). Thus, it is believed that by establishing partnerships with already known cities in the different networks the most satisfying alternative can be found, and again it can be illustrated how acting abroad is focused on thoughts about future consequences, thinking about cost and benefits.

It can be argued how the reasons and considerations behind the participation in networks and projects are from mostly a logic of consequences perspective. But some of the considerations are also about that *"(...) there is also some courage in daring to open up, and daring to share knowledge and experience, because you cannot know in advance if we get as much as we give to the others. You cannot always assess that in advance. But one thing is certain, you will always be wiser on the journey."* (Appendix 6). As such, it is not just about the expected outcome, it is also sometimes about just acting abroad and if it is seen as

appropriate. Further it is also about that it has become easier due to globalization as already stated. Furthermore, in the Department of Health and Culture, the local libraries are a part of a network and it is stated that *"(...) it is not something where we as management sit and say, 'what did we get out of that membership' (...). It is just a part of the way you act in the world of libraries (...)"* (Appendix 8). As it is a part of the routines and habits of the libraries in terms of participating in the networks, it is not a place where it needs to have an expected outcome, it is more a part of how the libraries act.

However, as stated in terms of the participation in various networks, projects, EU programs and initiatives, the decisions behind is mostly from a logic of consequences perspective, searching for the best alternative with calculations of cost and benefits, only doing the activities which are expected to have the best potential outcome in terms of what the municipality wants to do, thus outweighing the expected costs.

9.2.5. Problems & barriers

Throughout the analysis the different activities and the reasons behind them have been analyzed and presented. As such, from what have been presented, it could be concluded that it is easy and always the best option to go abroad. However as this section will show, there are some problems and barriers that need to be taken into account when acting abroad and conducting or participating in activities and initiatives.

One of the barriers has already been touched upon as an interviewee stated that *"If the entire City Council cannot see the rational reason for this and does not see it as important as I do, then it falls to the ground (...)"* (Appendix 2). Another interviewee further argued that, *"There are some reasonable strict rules for what I can do as a municipal civil servant. As soon it is about going abroad, it is going to be on my political boss table."* (Appendix 5). As the unit of analysis in this thesis is the civil servants, it is important to remember that it is the politicians in the municipality, who decide the direction of the municipality. Further in terms of acting abroad *"(...) politically speaking, there are different winds blowing. Some think we have enough in ourselves and others think it is right to come out and look."* (Appendix 5). As such, the most appropriate for the civil servants is to follow the lines

decided by the politicians even though it can be against their own self-interest, and can thus be a potential barrier in terms of engaging in bigger international activities.

Another barrier which, has also been discussed in the previously sections, is the savings rounds in the Danish municipalities. As such *"With all these budget cuts from the state, fewer and fewer people will solve the tasks that we must solve as a municipality. We cannot cut down on (...) the government duties we have."* (Appendix 2). Therefore, with fewer people to solve the problems that they by law need to do, acting abroad and conducting international activities can be characterized as *"(...) things we want to solve. But only if we have the resources to do it."* (Appendix 2). Therefore, the barrier is that the international activities are initiatives outside the primary goals. From a logic of consequence perspective, as have been observed throughout the analysis, the benefits have to exceed the costs, if the activities are to be approved, thus making it harder engaging in international activities. The next quote illustrates these considerations as a problem with international activities:

"(...) is that it takes time. It is lot of resources that must be invested in international collaborations, and it will quickly be a reflection on, if you think you can get enough profit from it, compared to what you invest, typically in time, but it could also be in crowns." (Appendix 8).

As illustrated from the above quote, a problem is that most of the time it may not be the best option to act abroad if the expected costs exceed the potential benefits. However acting abroad can be time consuming and if the consequences are too high it is not seen as the best option. Another problem, as pointed out by most of the interviewees, is the time-consuming EU programs. As previously illustrated, participation and applications for EU programs are a big part of Aalborg Municipality's activities in order to receive funding and solve local problems. It is argued that *"It is a big process to apply [EU funding], I did not do anything else, when I spent a year making Aalborg part of the Horizon 2020 application."* (Appendix 2). Thus, applying for EU programs can be complicated and *"It has been known for the last years, that it has become more and more complicated, and the commission is increasingly demanding more and more documentation, paper work and registration (...)"* (Appendix 7).

As such, the EU applications and the participation in EU programs is seen as a problem if it gives the civil servants more work, which prevents them from doing the core tasks that they were supposed to do in the first place. As an interviewee stated *"There are no employees or not many employees (...), who have the sole task of doing international collaborations and seeking funding."* (Appendix 2). This can be seen as a problem, as with the EU programs, there is *"(...) a lot of administration. You should really want to do it. You must be sure, that you can allocate the resources needed."* (Appendix 7). Therefore, the rational reasons and considerations behind acting abroad make sense as the cost is high and if there is not a clear goal behind the activities, this can prevent the civil servants from doing the tasks that they were supposed to do in the first place.

Another barrier can be the cultural differences and Lars Nøhr explains the problem that can occur when going out looking for inspiration in that way that, *"It may be that there are some good ideas in another country, in another city, which cannot just be copied-pasted, and then used at home. And it is always challenging, that you have to take into account the differences that can be legally, culturally and in every way possible."* (Appendix 5). Thus, it is argued that it can be challenging to convert ideas from one country to Aalborg due to the many differences between them. He further made the argument that *"I do not think, you will go far away to be specifically inspired by something you would like to implement back home."* (Appendix 5). As such, due to cultural differences, it is easier to be inspired from someone where you look alike on different levels. Another interviewee further argued that, *"(...) if we agree that we are talking about apples, then it turns out that you thought of an red apple, and I thought of a green apple."* (Appendix 3). Through logic of appropriateness, due to the different norms, rules and habits in the different locations, it can be difficult to copy paste something from one location to another, as it is not perceived as appropriate.

As a last problem or barrier for more international work, it is stated by some of the interviewees, that *"(...) it is a bit of a challenge, to take something international and make it an automatic part of the workflow in some departments, where you have some core task, and an understanding of that, and that is how it is working (...)"* (Appendix 8). As such, the staffs in the different departments have their own routines, identities and habits.

Furthermore, it is important to state that the civil servants interviewed in the thesis are civil servants working with the international aspect, being a part of the international group and *"(...) it is a barrier because you may not know how to get started, if you do not belong to those who work with it, more or less on a daily basis."* (Appendix 8).

Thus, a barrier in terms of engaging in the international sphere is that the civil servants in the different departments do have other core tasks and their own appropriate way of doing things. If their own routines and habits prevent them from acting abroad, it can be a challenge to make it more appropriate acting abroad in order to solve local problems. As such it may be that the globalization has made it easier to go abroad, but if it is not a part of the normal way of working in the respective departments, and with only a few people working with it, it can be hard getting it implemented in the different departments.

9.2.6. Sub-conclusion

In regard to the reason and rationales behind the international engagement of Aalborg Municipality, it is illustrated how the reasons behind also are diverse and different. It is stated how the processes of globalization have made it easier for Aalborg Municipality to act abroad, having the organizational size to take advantage of the opportunities that the globalized world gives. On the other hand, this development has made the twinning city agreements redundant. Nevertheless, acting abroad does have some barriers such as the EU programs being very time consuming and administrative. Further, with the activities being secondary to the core task, it is illustrated how most of the activities have to make sense in terms of comparing it to the expected cost and potential benefits.

As such, the EU programs do provide necessary resources in order to solve local problems, thus outweighing the cost. The same rational reasons behind the activities can also be seen in the participation of different networks and projects and in the prioritization of twinning cities, where it is a search for the best alternative, calculating the cost and benefits of acting abroad. This is seen as a way to maximize the self-interests of the municipality. On the other hand, some activities do not have these considerations as focus is also on educating the young students in the local area to better tackle the outside world.

10. Discussion of the findings

In this chapter, the purpose is to discuss the findings from the analysis in terms of what can explain the activities and the reasons behind. It is thus a discussion of the data, what it can explain, and how I have arrived at the results presented in the analysis. Further, a discussion of what the theories can explain and what explanation power the EU has in terms of Aalborg Municipality's international activities will be presented.

10.1. Causes and effects

In the problem formulation chapter, it is presented how the goal of this master thesis is to investigate how and why Aalborg Municipality engages in the international sphere. As such, it is analyzed how the activities and initiatives are diverse and that the reasons behind are, according to the interviewees, mostly that it must make sense and pay off, weighing the cost and benefits. In terms of the international activities, it was stated in the 'limitations for the thesis' that the focus was on activities that are being undertaken right now. As such it can be difficult to investigate if the activities really make sense from a logic of consequences perspective, as the effects can be hard to measure. Consequently, it can be hard to determine the effects as they can be long term and might not show any impact for another ten years. Furthermore, measuring the effects is not just about numbers as it can be blurry with the effects being direct and indirect and can be economically, culturally or politically.

As such, it can be questioned if for example the branding of Aalborg Municipality as a sustainable city really has meant that Aalborg *"(...) has begun to be the city that other cities reflect themselves in."* (Appendix 2). As stated it can be hard to investigate if the branding is working in terms of attracting new partners and funds for the municipality. Further, how can it be measured if the branding is working in terms of cities and municipalities looking up to Aalborg as a leading sustainable city? It was also stated in the analysis that the twinning cities are being prioritized in terms of cooperating where it makes sense, but is that to be measured in terms of contact between the cities or in concrete agreements, and how can it be measured if it is more about finding inspiration? In terms of the EU programs it can be measured if the applications for funding was approved, but again how is the money then being used?

It is illustrated that measuring the effects can be difficult. However, as the goal of this thesis is not to investigate what the effects of the activities have been, as that is a project in itself, but more on investigating how the activities are being undertaken and how the interviewees understand the reasons behind, it is not seen as a problem. Still it is deemed relevant to make it clear that it can be hard to investigate, if it makes sense from a logic of consequences perspective.

Another aspect, which is deemed important to discuss, is the causes in regard to it making sense when conducting international activities. As illustrated throughout the analysis, the activities are concentrated within participation in networks and projects, but also selling of know-how and gathering inspiration is important. In regard to the activities, what are the causes behind engaging in international relations and that the activities have to make sense? As a municipality, it is important to state that they do not work for themselves as:

“We must always remember that we are here for our businesses, municipalities do not exist for ourselves. We do not have any justification if we do not create a value for our businesses, so it is for their sake that we are becoming smarter and better (...). And secondary the citizens, all of the other administrations work for them.” (Appendix 6).

As the interviewee is from Business Aalborg, a section in the Mayor's Department, the focus is mainly on business, but the quote can be related to the work of the other departments as well. As such, the end goal of the activities is that it should benefit either the citizens or the businesses in the local area. As previously argued, they do follow the law and the locality principle with the activities bounded in a local interests. Thus, a big cause behind the activities, and the reasons for acting abroad, is that in some way or another it always has to benefit the citizens and companies, hereby a local interest. Another explanation could be that, as the citizen's pay taxes to the municipality, it does have to make sense economically so the money is not wasted. Therefore it is not deemed likely that Aalborg Municipality will engage in foreign policy, as it is illegal in regard to the Danish law, and it can be hard to justify how it can relate to the citizens interests, which is the goal of a municipality.

It can always be discussed when and if an international activity is in the interest of the local citizens and the local businesses. As argued the effects can be blurred and long termed, thus not always clear. For example the sustainable agreements, being Aalborg Charter and Aalborg commitment, what interest does the local citizens have in that? In terms of Aalborg Municipality's branding and promotion of Aalborg as a sustainable city, if that can attract partnerships and investments to Aalborg, then it would benefit the citizens and the businesses in the long run. Thus, as the causes behind, are more on using it to attract investments to the city, it can still be in the interest of the businesses and the citizens in the municipality.

In terms of the branding, it seems that the focus is mostly on branding on the European level as some of the interviewee states *"There are not many from Aalborg who knows what the Aalborg Charter and Aalborg commitments are (...). I think it is important that they know how big of a name we are on the sustainable scene. But the primary is in regard to the other cities in Europe."* (Appendix 2), and *"Aalborg Municipality has not been so good at promoting itself in Denmark."* (Appendix 7). As such, it may be that it is in the interest of the citizens, but as the citizens do not know what name their city has on the European sustainable scene, it can quickly be disregarded. On the other hand, it can also be discussed what interests the citizens have in knowing what Aalborg Municipality does in terms of their international engagement, as long as the benefits still reach the citizens or the businesses.

10.2. Reflection on the theories

The use of theories in this thesis was due to the fact that logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness could justify different actions and decisions, deepening the answers of the interviewees in regard to the reasons and rationales behind the activities. Throughout the second part of the analysis, it has been clear that the theories can explain different factors in regard to the activities. Through logic of consequences it can be explained how the stand is towards most of the activities, as it is a search for the best alternative, weighing cost and benefits. Through logic of appropriateness the explanation is more centered around how the activities are conducted. Thus, the logic can explain most of the barriers towards more internationalization in the municipality, how the municipality has turned more towards the

international sphere, and why Aalborg Municipality is focusing on educating the young people in engaging with the world.

Thus, they complement each other and should not be seen as two separate ideal theories, as they each explain different factors in regard to reasons behind Aalborg Municipality's international engagement. It is surprising how well logic of consequences can explain the behavior of Aalborg Municipality in regard to the international activities, as the theory is mostly being criticized for being a simplistic version of how an organization work and of human thinking. Of course it is possible that the reasons for the rational thinking is also caused by different institutional factors behind, but as stated throughout the analysis and the discussion it does makes sense for Aalborg Municipality to have a rational behavior.

10.3. Reflections on EU

In the 'literature review', it was presented how most of the literature on the internationalization of Danish municipalities was focusing on what EU integration could provide in terms of opportunities, and how it had affected the Danish local level. Further, in the chapter 'Internationalization of local governments', it was stated how the EU integration has enabled local governments within EU to move beyond their own local borders. This can also be observed in Aalborg Municipality as proved and illustrated in the first part of the analysis. Throughout the first part it was argued how most of the activities conducted by Aalborg Municipality are within an EU sphere, either in participation of EU programs such as Interreg and Horizon 2020, participation in EU sanctioned networks and initiatives such as CIVITAS and E-twinning and running the Northern Denmark's EU office in Brussels. Most of the activities are a way for Aalborg Municipality to receive funding as to solve local problems.

As most of the focus of Aalborg's international activities are within EU, how can EU be understood? It is clear that EU as an institution is helping in dissolving state boundaries and getting the local governments and municipalities to work with each other. An interviewee stated, in regard to the EU programs *"(...) it is the terms, that if you want to apply for the EU funds, and it is both them [Horizon] and also the Interreg funds, than you have to be cross borders and be partners from different countries."* (Appendix 6). As such it is the case that

“(...) if you do not want to work with other cities, and have their experiences then there are not many EU funds to pick up (...)” (Appendix 4). Thus, if a municipality wants to receive funding and participate in a EU program, it is a condition that a partnership must be formed with cities from different European countries. As an example, the Horizon 2020 application, which Aalborg Municipality is a part of, was done in cooperation with the cities Bologna and Freiburg. The reason behind the demand of cross border cooperation is, according to the interviewee Christina, that it is a way for EU to further strengthen the integration:

“That’s the rationale behind it. And it is very relevant in these times, in regard to Brexit and the election in France. That is what they want from the EU, with the different EU programs and projects, where you can get funding, it is to put people together and working together across borders to see that we can use each other for and that we need each other (...)” (Appendix 4).

From the perspective of EU, it does make sense trying to strengthen the integration between the member countries, especially at the local level. In regard to multilevel governance integration is not just about integration between state borders, but also within and between different local borders. In the Horizon 2020 application it is also a demand that the three cities *“(...) each stands for the development of elements that should be aggregated to the other lighthouse cities, but actually also to other cities in Europe. EU must have something out of it (...)”* (Appendix 6). So, from the point of EU, the funds are a way to further the integration of EU, but also use the different projects throughout Europe to further develop the different European cities. Therefore, the funding does come with some demands as a way to secure that EU benefits from it, as well as it is benefitting the relevant cities.

In the analysis, it was stated that most of the interviewees complained about the administrative level of EU, arguing that applying for EU programs such as the Horizon 2020 program was very complicated, taking away time from the core tasks. As stated the Horizon 2020 application is one of the bigger activities Aalborg Municipality is conducting as of right now, with many departments included and many resources invested. Looking at the European Commission’s Horizon 2020 online manual, it is understandable why the

interviewees complain over the application process. As a part of the application a budget breakdown is needed and an ethical evaluation from the conceptual state of the proposal is needed. Further, a list of up to five relevant publications and a list of up to five previous activities connected to the relevant subject of the proposal are also required, and a description of any relevant infrastructure and technical equipment tied to the work is also required (European Commission; European Commission, 2017: 5). As such the application is something that requires a lot of planning and resources, and it is not done overnight.

The applications are complicated and take a lot of time. However as Aalborg Municipality is still participating in EU programs, it can be argued that Aalborg still sees it as beneficial, participating where the money is as to solve local problems and develop further. As EU is also benefitting from the programs, in terms of greater integration between European cities, it can be questioned what Aalborg Municipality's international activities would look like if there was no EU, or if they did not provide funding opportunities and programs, which they have done for many years. It is important to state that as not all activities of Aalborg Municipality are covered, it may not be the full picture. However, as most of the bigger activities are within an EU sponsored sphere, it is mostly a regional perspective of the internationalization of Aalborg Municipality that can be gathered. Thus one of the major reasons behind the international activities could be the participation in the possibilities that EU provides, strengthening integration with other European cities, municipalities and local governments.

11. Conclusion

As the processes of globalization have altered the traditional cut between domestic and international politics, the purpose of this master thesis was, through a single case study, to investigate why Aalborg Municipality is engaging in an international context, interviewing key persons in the different departments. As a way to structure the answering of the problem formulation, two sub-questions were created.

Before determining why the municipality acts abroad, the thesis outlined how Aalborg engages in an international context, answering the first sub-question. In terms of the activities Aalborg Municipality is engaged in, it is important to remember that it is not all activities that have been covered. It can be concluded that there is a decline in the twinning arrangements, which can be argued to be the first historical signs of the municipality's international relations. Instead focus is mostly on activities within an economic dimension in order to secure growth to Aalborg Municipality and to the local communities and businesses. The activities are stretching from investments in Africa, participation in various networks to branding Aalborg as a leading actor in the local sustainability scene. Further, most of the activities are within an EU sphere in terms of participation in EU financed projects and programs and always having a look on what opportunities EU can provide.

In the second part of the analysis, it was analyzed why Aalborg is engaging in the above described activities. The reasons behind are vast, but one of the main reasons is caused by a rational reasoning, weighing the expected costs and potential benefits of acting abroad, with the selected activities being chosen because they are seen as the best alternatives, maximizing the self-interests of the municipality. The reasons speaking against acting in the international sphere are mainly centered around the EU programs being time-consuming, bureaucratic and a fear that participation in the activities will make the core tasks of the municipality secondary, making it a potential barrier. As such, the activities do have to make sense, outweighing the barriers. Other reasons behind are not based on rational reasonings, but more on the fact that the globalization processes have made it more appropriate acting abroad and that there is a need to educate the young students living in the local area, so they can better and more appropriate tackle the outside world.

It can thus be concluded that Aalborg Municipality's decentralized foreign affairs and international relations is where the municipality is benefitting from the globalized world, cooperating and participating where it makes sense in terms of what direction the municipality wants to go domestically. It can further be concluded that the international activities are diverse with most of them being within an EU financed sphere. As such, if the EU continues to provide funding opportunities, and Aalborg Municipality keeps seeing it as the best alternative, the international relations of this local Danish municipality will in the future become a more integrated part of how they work, still providing the best possible services for the citizens.

12. Recommendations

The purpose of this master thesis has been to investigate the activities and the reasons behind Aalborg Municipality's international engagement. As such the purpose of this section, based on the findings from the thesis, is to present recommendations on the future international direction of Aalborg Municipality. It is the hope that Aalborg Municipality can use these thoughts and recommendations in the next revision of their international strategy, as a way to move the municipality forward in terms of their international engagement.

It is recommended that Aalborg Municipality continue in the direction it is headed now in terms of focusing mostly on EU and participating where it makes sense. It further makes sense weighing the costs and benefits, as all of the activities in the end have to benefit the local communities and the businesses. Another recommendation is that the branding of Aalborg as a sustainable city should not only be outwards, but also inwards so it can be used, not only used as a way to attract citizens to Aalborg, but also as a way to make the citizens in Aalborg aware of their city's strong brand in Europe.

In the analysis it was described how one of the barriers in terms of more internationalization was the civil servants, who is not used to looking "outside", because they do not perceive it as being an appropriate behavior. As such, a focus should be on making it more normal so the staff knows the possibilities and what to do in terms of acting abroad. The international group is working with this subject, but it is recommended that it should be the main focus area. This can be done in many ways, for example through 'theme days' as a way to show the staff in the different departments the possibilities there is when acting abroad. Additionally, a possibility could be to look into creating and implementing specific international strategies in the different departments as the Department of Education have done. As such, these strategies could promote a more appropriate behavior towards the international sphere and guide the departments in the direction where it makes sense for each of the departments.

Further, in terms of the twinning relationships, if a more strategic aim is desired, then it may be a good idea to keep the cities that are being prioritized and let go of the other cities, as with 33 twinning partners, can make it hard to maintain an overview. As such it is recommended to consider looking into establishing twinning partnerships with cities in for example Latin America and Africa, as to further the cultural aspects with regions that Aalborg Municipality is not as much engaged in, opening the doors to these regions. Also focus should be on cities and municipalities with roughly the same organizational size as Aalborg as a way to make sure that the goals are aligned.

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14. Appendix

All appendices will be uploaded separately to DE (Digital Eksamen). An overview will be illustrated in the table below:

Interview guides	
Appendix 1	Interview guides
Displays	
Appendix 2	Anders Du Mont, 'Department of Environment and Energy'
Appendix 3	Ann Katrine, 'Department of Education'
Appendix 4	Christina Knudsen, 'Business Aalborg, Mayor's Department'
Appendix 5	Lars Nøhr, 'Department of Care for the Elderly and Disable'
Appendix 6	Lene Lykkegaard, 'Business Aalborg, Mayor's Department'
Appendix 7	Mette Holm, 'Department of Urban and Spatial Planning'
Appendix 8	Mikkel Grimmeshave, 'Department of Health and Culture'
Appendix 9	Søren Thorst, 'Aalborg event, Mayor's Department'
Interviews	
Appendix 10	Anders Du Mont, 'Department of Environment and Energy'
Appendix 11	Ann Katrine, 'Department of Education'
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Appendix 17	Søren Thorst, 'Aalborg event, Mayor's Department'