

## **It's possible to join affordability and sustainability in new housing according to new thesis**

Research concerning environmental justice (EJ) in the city has historically focused on the negative consequences of toxic waste sites and polluted areas. Recently, however, the discussion has shifted to the study of the negative consequences of *urban greening projects*, such as park creation, and programs focused on environmental sustainability. A thesis conducted in fulfillment of a master's program in Environmental Science, Policy, and Management ([mespom.eu](http://mespom.eu)) investigated EJ in the city of Malmö. The research took on two parts, first following the impact on EJ as Malmö has transitioned from an industrial city to a knowledge-based city, and next assessing green amenities in present-day municipal housing developments in context of EJ issues. EJ – ensuring equity in access to environmental amenities as well as to tools that reduce an individual's environmental impact – is extremely important as Malmö's self-presentation has been heavily based in sustainability. Guaranteeing that everyone in the city has access to the benefits of the sustainability agenda is of utmost importance.

The thesis author collected information about residential buildings built by the city's municipal housing company, MKB, focusing on the energy efficiency, mobility options, and presence of green roofs. Findings indicate that MKB's housing built during the Miljonprogrammet project attempted to ensure equity and livability in modernised housing that was accessible to the masses. Unfortunately, energy standards in Miljonprogrammet housing today need to be updated in order to meet and exceed environmental standards; this is a way to ensure that populations across the city are receiving equitable tools for reducing their environmental impact, especially as Miljonprogrammet housing is often disproportionately inhabited by lower income populations.

Further, it is important to note the possibility of including sustainable measures in affordable housing. The study of MKB's current stock of housing shows that environmental amenities are evenly integrated in housing projects across the city. Projects like Rönne, an MKB Kombohus project in the generally less wealthy neighbourhood of Katrinelund, demonstrate that it is possible to join affordability and sustainability-related elements such as car pools and high energy efficiency. Creating incentives and working with the city planning department can motivate greater construction of similar projects across the city's neighbourhoods. Constructing affordable housing across the city's neighbourhoods is especially important given Sweden's housing shortage problem.