

## **Voluntarism in Urban regeneration**

Civic, charity or hybrid? Experiences from Danish area-based interventions

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# Voluntarism in Urban regeneration:

Civic, charity or hybrid? Experiences from Danish area-based interventions.

## Abstract

*Area-based-initiatives (ABI's) is a frequent used strategy within contemporary urban regeneration policies to tackle physical and social challenges in deprived neighborhoods. A central characteristic of their approach is active involvement of local stakeholders as part of making robust and lasting improvements. The claim raised in this article is that urban regeneration mobilize citizens through a narrow perception of "voluntarism" that tends to exclude vulnerable and socially marginalized citizens. The article presents a typology of voluntarism that makes a distinction between a) social voluntarism, b) civic voluntarism and c) hybrid voluntarism, combining non-paid voluntarism with pro-profit activities. Empirically, we draw on studies from ABI's in Denmark where collaboration with charity organisations and hybrid organisations have been used to mobilize marginalized citizens in the urban regeneration areas. We find that collaborations with charity-based and hybrid organisations are sparse and small-scale so far, but appears promising with regards to involve socially vulnerable groups.*

Key words: area-based initiatives, marginalized citizens, interest-based voluntarism, charity-based voluntarism, hybrid voluntarism

## 1. Introduction

Voluntarism has become a central part of social welfare policies in most western societies (Bartels, Cozzi, & Mantovan, 2013). The emphasis on mobilising volunteers into public service provision is also mirrored in many European urban regeneration policies, where active involvement of local residents in deprived neighbourhoods is considered to be a corner stone in their strategies (Atkinson, 2008; Tosics, 2015). Many policy makers, consider

transformation of deprived neighbourhoods' as one of the major challenges for cities today (see e.g. European Commission, 2015; United Nations Development Programme, 2016). The challenges that cities and in particular deprived neighborhoods are facing, are characterized by being a combination of social, physical, economic, institutional and environmental problems that are visible in the form of lack of social inclusion, poverty, job-losses and physical degradation (European Commission, 2017).

Area-based interventions (ABIs), i.e. public-led and place-based programs are in many European countries regarded as a central urban regeneration tool for tackling these multiple and complex problems (Atkinson, 2008; Rhodes, Tyler, & Brennan, 2005). ABIs can take many forms, but some of the core characteristics is that they apply integrated approaches, i.e. combine physical and social interventions simultaneously in neighbourhoods with a low socio-economic status (Agger & Jensen, 2015). There is a growing recognition in both the practice- as well as the scholarly field within urban regeneration that in order to meet these challenges, these ABI-programs, although publicly generated, needs to include local and external actors, and especially to mobilize local stakeholders, such as citizens, residents, local business as well as volunteer organizations and interest associations (Tosics, 2015)). However, it has also been pointed out that marginalized citizens participation to a much smaller extent participate in such programs, compared to citizens with more resources and longer educations (Andersen & Pløger, 2007; Ferilli, Sacco, & Tavano Blessi, 2016; Jones, 2003) which might imply an exclusion of the marginalized groups from decision regarding the development of the neighborhood (Agger & Larsen, 2009).

Whereas much literature on ABIs has focused on involving the civil society in more general terms (Atkinson, 2008; Dekker, 2007; Goodlad, Burton, & Croft, 2005) then there have been less attention to how ABIs can work strategically with different kinds of volunteers and volunteer organizations (Agger & Jensen, 2015; Foord, Ginsburg, Boddy, & Parkinson, 2004). Nevertheless, in several ABIs' it has been an ambition to identify voluntary organisations and to cooperate with them. There is among some of the ABIs' an recognition that these voluntary organisations, and in particular those with a social focus, can help the ABIs' to get access to vulnerable groups such as e.g. homeless, people with disabilities or social problems (Lawless & Pearson, 2012). These groups represent voices that are often not heard in formal participatory processes (Andersen & Pløger, 2007),

but their views are considered important to include when designing e.g. new public spaces. Furthermore, many ABI planners express that they find that voluntary organisation can act as “anchor institutions”, i.e. as a permanent institution carrying on initiatives being established under the urban regeneration process (Agger, Roy, & Leonardsen, 2016; Henderson, 2015).

In this article, we present three perceptions of 'voluntary forms of engagement'. Empirically, we look at how “voluntarism” is understood in practice amongst planners involved in ABI programmes in Denmark.

Furthermore, we analyse how ABIs work with the different forms of voluntarism in practice, and discuss potentials and barriers of each type. We believe, that a better understanding of the distinctive kinds of volunteering can help urban planners to act more strategically when they want to mobilize local residents and other stakeholders in the ABIs.

The structure of the article is as follows: In section 2, we begin by outlining commonly used definitions of voluntarism, and based on this, present a typology capturing three different types of voluntarism. In section 3, we present the Danish context for urban regeneration and area-based initiatives and in section 4 our methodology. In section 5, we present our findings, based on a survey on how voluntarism is being used practically understood in urban regeneration programs, and in section 6 we outline examples from Danish ABI's illustrating the three types of voluntary engagement. In section 7 the findings are discussed and finally in section 8 we draw conclusions.

## 2. Perspectives on voluntarism

Following the research literature, it is clear that the concept of *voluntarism* is a cross-disciplinary research field that is covered in journals varying from sociology, political science, anthropology, psychology, social sciences to marketing studies (Milligan & Conradson, 2006). Thus, '*voluntarism*' is as a phenomenon that carries a multitude of meanings. A common feature across the different fields is, that volunteer work take place in what is labelled as *the informal -, third -, non-governmental, non-profit sector or civil sector/ society*. The weakness of using these terms is that it stands in the way for seeing voluntarism as a part of the public and private sectors, which is a main purpose of this article.

In our quest for more elaborated perspectives of different forms of voluntarism, the research literature offers both typologies as well as categories of voluntarism and voluntary organisations. One distinction is for example purposive-activity typologies versus others more analytical-theoretical typologies that address motivations for conducting volunteer work (altruistic, interest based, non-profit) or they refer to the context (formal versus informal settings). From the academic literature we identify three forms of voluntarism where we distinguish between a) *Social voluntarism*, b) *Civic voluntarism* and c) *Hybrid voluntarism*.

We will outline the differences in the following subsections and comment on how they can be relevant to include in relation to ABIs. Central issues is to distinguish between how the different types of voluntarism leads to engagement of different types of citizens, and also how the activities in the urban regeneration are anchored and continued after the end of the ABI.

## 2.1. Social voluntarism

We define *social voluntarism* in relation to the classic form for volunteer work, as unpaid work provided to parties, to whom the volunteer have no contractual, familial or friendship obligations (Wilson & Musick, 1997). Furthermore, it is defined as work, that benefit others typically in relation to welfare-oriented work e.g. in form of social work, e.g. mentoring, helping particular groups e.g. social marginalized people, or with integration. This is often carried out in the context of charity organisation. These tasks have in a Scandinavian context increasingly been taken over by the state, but in other European countries we are witnessing a rise in semi-professional NGO's or private business that through their Corporate Social Responsibility policies are playing a role in relation to this type of voluntarism (Andersen, 2012; Henriksen, Smith, & Zimmer, 2012). These charities are characterized by having two types of resources that are relevant for the work of the ABI's. One resource is, that the charity organisations are often – but not always - located and present in the localities where the ABI's takes place. Some of them do also have a long history in the neighbourhoods and thereby have access to many of the local networks. Others are national charities that over the years have built up strong resources in form of knowledge and experience in reaching out to particular groups and often in particular access to socially vulnerable groups (e.g. homeless people, lonely people or people with drug related issues). Moreover, these

institutions have a more permanent function in the neighborhoods of the ABI, meaning that they can principally function as “anchors” for the continuation of the initiatives started under the ABI (Henderson, et al 2018). There might however be challenges in such partnerships, for instance in relation to how to appoint the right organisations to collaborate with (Osborne, 1998). Reversely, for the voluntary organisations there might a risk of losing their independence voice, or legitimacy if they collaborate too closely with the ABI’s or local authorities (Foord et al., 2004).

## 2.2 Civic voluntarism

The second form of voluntarism is *civic voluntarism* that we define as voluntary work carried out in clubs, associations, organisations, communities etc., where you meet with peers to engage in hobbies and shared interests. This form of engagement differ from the altruistic-based voluntarism since it is not oriented at helping others, but consists of participation in activities that are related to interests, leisure activities or attachment to wider social courses (Durose et al., 2016). The context for this type of engagement can be both in relation to membership in formal interests based associations and organisations related to hobbies. It also cover activities in more informal contexts where common action or activities is the departure of engagement (e.g. networks that gather to collect garbage in public spaces, or helping at activities related to support cultural or sport events).

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The value for the ABIs of engaging civic actors in volunteer activities through interest-based activities in both formal and informal settings is manifold. Voluntary representatives from local associations, clubs, and organisations are able to mobilize resources in relation to the regeneration process, they can contribute with viewpoints and knowledge about the locality and thereby contribute to better implementation of projects. Moreover, they represent an “anchoring” possibility, i.e. the organisation might continue to work with the initiatives or agenda’s established under the urban regeneration programme (Agger et al., 2016). It is not all interested-based volunteers that are part of formal associations, others participate due to their interest or because they want to make a difference. Some, scholars have attempted to capture the characteristics of the latter type of participation, whereas e.g. the notion of the ‘everyday maker’ (Bang & Sørensen, 2001). Everyday makers are typically not in a formal association, but action oriented individuals that prefer to volunteer with concrete actions

on themes close to their everyday life. They participate in the ABIs meetings, steering groups, work-groups etc., contributes to events, and act as voluntary workforce in establishing parks, playgrounds, meeting places etc. The benefit for the ABIs with the recruitment of this type of citizens is that their performance might benefit others e.g. the local community, in form of increased level of social and political participation and activism. The challenge is though, that it is often resourceful citizens that are not necessarily representative for their locality (Jensen *et al.*, 2010). Nevertheless, the voluntary engagement of representatives from the civil society creates an important in-put legitimacy for the urban regeneration process, characterised as a consensus-based and not necessarily representative type of democratic engagement (see for example the work of (Engberg & Larsen, 2010).

### 2.3 Hybrid voluntarism

A third form of voluntarism can be labelled as *hybrid voluntarism*. This type of voluntarism is seen as a combination of non-profit and for-profit participation, where volunteer work is combined with income-generating activities within the same organization or within a persons' engagement in volunteer actions. Often, they have a strong social profile, e.g. aiming at employing groups of people with different types of handicaps or abusers, typically by offering them a job in the company, supported by the public subsidies offered to these groups. This approach makes them interesting partners in urban regeneration projects since they take place in areas where many of its residents are outside the labor force. There is however no exact wide definition of hybrid organization, but a common consensus in the research literature is that hybrid organization is an organization that "possesses significant characteristics of more than one sector" (Billis, 2010, p. 3). In practice, this means that the variety of organizational types is huge (Bassi, 2014; Billis & Rochester, 2020). Hybrid voluntarism might also be associated with a rising number of work forms, where people are engaged voluntary or less voluntary in project-based or temporary contracts or more precarious forms of work (Kalleberg, 2009).

The terms 'Hybrid organisations' and 'social enterprises' are often used simultaneously, or even parallel to 'voluntary organisations or third-sector organisations' (Czischke, Gruis, & Mullins, 2012). There is an increasing interaction between third sector organisations, social enterprises and hybrid organisations that crosses and mixes the well-known borders between public and private by combining non-profit and for-profit as well as non-paid

voluntarism and paid management (Defourny, Hulgård, & Pestoff, 2014). In an Anglo-Saxon context there is a more wide spread tradition for incorporating voluntary and third-sector organization in urban regeneration activities (Bailey, 2012; Murtagh & McFerran, 2015). In this context, and under the slogan of “Big-society” policy agenda in the UK, voluntary organizations and third sector organisations, such as social and hybrid organizations, have had a more central place in the urban regeneration. Critical voices have been raised e.g. by Murtagh & McFerran (2015) on the role of social enterprises in the regeneration in Northern Ireland, formulated as part of Big Society campaign, placing a high responsibility for social welfare amongst social enterprises parallel to a general cut-down of public welfare services.

In the literature on ABIs there is however little research that looks at the role at the for-profit element of voluntarism which we find problematic. On the one hand, we find that hybrid organisations and forms of engagement, holds a potential for the ABIs – with regards to create job opportunities for residents in deprived neighbourhoods. On the other hand, we also note that hybrid – forms of volunteer engagement in social enterprises do also lead to challenges – and confusion of motives and expectations that needs to be more transparent and debated (Froggett, 2015).

In the table below we have summarized the three types of engagement and their characteristics and potential for the ABI. The three forms of voluntarism are to be regarded as typologies, meaning that they are not exclusive, but might – in the real world – overlap in various forms.

Table 1. Three types of voluntarism with principal potentials for the area-based urban regeneration. The potential potentials functions as practical hypothesis in the studies of voluntarism in the Danish ABI's.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Social Voluntarism</b> <b>(Altruistic-based)</b>	<b>Civic Voluntarism</b> <b>(Interest-based)</b>	<b>Hybrid Voluntarism</b> <b>(non/for profit –based)</b>
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<b>Characteristic</b>	Helping socially disadvantaged groups without receiving payment or benefits.	Non-paid work and <i>activities</i> in organisations or with peers, which strengthens the local social capital in the community	Mix of non-profit and for-profit; voluntarism with socio-economic and ethic aim. Socio-economic enterprises, hybrid organisations etc.
<b>Potentials for ABI</b>	Link to disadvantaged groups and individuals  Anchoring of social initiatives at the end of the ABI	Participation and voluntary work in ABI-activities  Empowerment of individuals  Anchoring networks after the ABI programme	Creating jobs for disadvantaged groups and individuals  Anchoring of social initiatives at the end of the ABI

### 3. The context: Area-based initiatives in Denmark

Area-based interventions (ABI's) were introduced as a tool in the Danish Urban Regeneration Act in 1998. It gave the municipalities options to operate 'between the buildings', also with non-physical elements (for instance cultural and youth activities, crime prevention and social policy elements), and requested collaboration between the municipality and with local actors. Whereas several European ABI's have a focus on fighting social exclusion, poverty and unemployment (Batty et al., 2010; Couch, Sykes, & Börstinghaus, 2011), these elements are less emphasised in the Danish ABIs, which mainly focus on the mix of physical, social and competitive degradation in urban areas and villages, and on improving the attractiveness of the built environment, in terms of the physical and economic conditions in the area (Atkinson, 2008; Agger & Jensen, 2015). Therefore the Danish ABI's are typically anchored in technical departments in the municipality, where there is little tradition for using volunteers.

The ABI's are 5-year programs, co-financed between the state and the municipalities. The programs target derelict areas in need of urban development, with a multitude of problems. In practice, the areas need to have

both dwellings with lack of maintenance, derelict meeting places, and socially vulnerable citizens. According to the Act of Urban Renewal, municipalities have to engage with local actors. Their participation is seen as vital for depicting the core challenges, and in ‘anchoring’ the initiatives, with regards to financing and maintaining projects after the ABI stops. The local actors typically include residents, industries, public institutions, housing organisations, clubs, networks etc. Thus, voluntarism is a central issue for the urban regeneration programmes, as well as voluntary organisations, in terms of mobilizing and anchoring the initiatives under the ABI’s. However, the practical use of the term “voluntarism” and what it covers is often not very clear.

#### 4. Research aim and methodology

The aim of our study and intentions with this article is to shed light on prevalent understandings of voluntarism in Danish area-based urban regeneration, and to investigate the strengths and weaknesses in the different types of voluntarism being part of the ABI’s.

The empirical data for this paper is based on: a) document studies of urban regeneration<sup>i</sup> programmes and a survey to all area-based urban regeneration in specifically selected neighborhoods in the period 2006-2010 and b) 3 case studies based on qualitative data in three selected cities with area-based urban regeneration programmes. The empirical studies are based on previous and ongoing research of the Danish ABIs. Parts of this has been reported earlier in (Larsen, Jensen, & Agger, 2012; Agger & Jensen, 2015; Kjærulff, Rex, & Jensen, 2017). Our approach in these studies have been explorative in the sense that we aimed to investigate *how the ABIs perceived "Voluntary engagement" – and how they collaborate with civil society and hybrid organizations.*

In the document study, we analysed programmes for all 61 ABI’s in operation<sup>ii</sup>. Such programs are mandatory for all ABI’s and contain the initial ideas with the ABI, the area, the visions, collaboration partners, and the budget, and in this way outlines the ideas and intentions of the urban regeneration. In all documents we made word search for “voluntary“, “voluntarism”, “volunteers” and “voluntary organisations”. Having identified these, we studied how the area-programmes phrased their initiative and perceived the role of volunteers and voluntary organisations.

In the survey on voluntarism we sent a questionnaire to 41 municipal planners, being responsible for the 61 ABI projects running at the time in Denmark (in the period 2006-2010), and having formulated a written program<sup>1</sup>. This represented 33 different municipalities; many municipalities have more than one program, and in some municipalities the same public administrators are managing more than one regeneration project. The survey consisted of six questions concerning on whether voluntarism is an issue in their ABI, how they defined voluntarism, the purpose of using voluntarism, initiatives to strengthen voluntarism, and experiences with voluntarism. In the free-text part of the survey, respondents were asked for concrete examples on use of voluntarism in the urban regeneration, as well as positive experiences and challenges. 20 out of the 41 respondents (49%) answered the survey.

Three case studies were made of ABIs in a small town (Gedser), a medium-sized town (Skive) and a larger city (Frederiksberg) in the metropolitan area. These cases were chosen as they represented different types of urban areas. This study included 24 qualitative interviews with voluntary organisations and municipal planners. As a supplement to illustrate the use of hybrid organisations in the ABI we have included an example from a later study from the Copenhagen Fuglekvarter (Agger & Kahr Andersen, 2018).

## **5. Analysis of the perceptions of volunteer work and volunteers in the Danish ABIs**

In this section we present our findings on how the ABI work with voluntarism based on the document analysis and the survey amongst ABI planners.

The document analysis of urban regeneration programmes showed that the phrases “voluntary” or “volunteer” appeared in 27 programs (44%), often in connection with words such as through phrases as “voluntary agreement”, “voluntary work”, “voluntary associations”. This indicates that “voluntarism” is a central issue for the ABI’s, and that they are paying attention to it. However, only a few programs had considerations on how to engage with voluntarism on a more strategic level, for instance setting goals for strengthening the local voluntary

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associations, or linking the ABI to the policies for voluntarism on the municipality. Moreover, it was surprising that very few programs mentioned voluntary associations as potential collaboration partners.

The survey to the ABI planners showed that 89% responded “yes”, and 11% “no”, to the question if strengthening voluntarism is a part of the ABI, and they respond positively to that voluntary organisations are important partners, as they potentially provide knowledge and networks in the local area, and acts as resources in the working groups. On the question of what they do to strengthen voluntarism, then the majority responded that they try to include volunteer organisations in the process of the ABI, although the establishment of formal partnerships between voluntary organisations and the ABI is less emphasized. This indicates that the ABI’s prefer to collaborate with voluntary organisations in relation to the agenda of the ABI, that does not always is the same as the agenda of the voluntary organisations. The focus on participation from the civic society in the ABI is reflected across the answers given in free text section of the survey on commenting how the ABI work with voluntarism, e.g.:

*“It has been one of the major goals to strengthen networks internally in the town... (Nørre Snede, Ikast-Brandø Municipality)*

*“The goal is that citizens participates in possible activities as a result of initiatives under the ABI (Esbjerg Municipality)*

*“We work broadly with voluntarism as a part of strengthening the citizens’ competences on being able to act, i.e. take initiative and execute, partly in relation to strengthening the local communities... (Sundholmskvarteret, København Municipality)*

Our study show that the notion of voluntarism is considered vital for the ABIs – as it is emphasized in 44% of the programs. When we look more in to what form of voluntarism is carried out, then the picture becomes more blurred. On the one hand, planners in the ABI seems to recognize formal volunteer associations as relevant partners with a broad outreach to socially challenged or marginalized citizens. On the other hand, the way they include volunteers in their activities, such as meetings, working – and steering groups, is mainly through civic voluntarism in form of interest–based engagement.

It is our view, that this form of engagement is problematic in relation to the involvement of socially challenged or marginalized citizens. Studies show that not only are these groups often hard to reach – and outreach work requires a special effort (se for example the work of Balfelt, 2014)). Furthermore, internal exclusion can take

place when such groups seek to raise their voices in groups with outspoken enthusiastic citizens championing for their particular interests (Agger & Larsen, 2009). The potential for the ABIs to engage these groups in urban regeneration agenda, or in working groups under the ABI, is that they might engage in activities in the neighborhood, get more integrated in the local community, and thereby find a job, leading to social as well as economic empowerment.

## 6. Examples on different types of voluntarism in area-based interventions

In this section we present and discuss examples from our case studies on how the three types of voluntarism can be activated in ABI's, and the potential benefits that can bring, including mobilization of socially marginalised groups.

### 6.1 Civic voluntarism – through interest based engagement

The first example illustrate the strength of the civic voluntarism in urban regeneration, and the apparently absence of socially disadvantages citizens. Gedser, is a village with around 800 inhabitants, located in the uttermost southern part of Denmark, and challenged by an ageing population, declining employment and closure of public institutions such as the school, library and health services. An ABI was initiated in 2011 and was focused on promoting local strategies for growth and development within tourism, based in a strong tradition for civic engagement in Gedser.

*Gedser is different compared to other places e.g. regional towns. Here, in the village there is a greater willingness to volunteer. Local residents put a lot of effort in the projects that we implement. Whereas, in the town or the city people are more anonymous to each other, there they prefer to monitor rather than participate in the projects. (interview, ABI planner in Gedser municipality).*

The primary role of the ABI in Gedser, has been to a) provide financial resources in order to strengthen the physical surroundings (e.g. better lightning on the main street) and thereby creating meeting places (a new park, a shelter on the beach as well as improvement of trails); b) constitute a village board to promote coordination of the horizontal networks around an integrated village approach.

This ABI is classic example of interest-based civic voluntarism, where the ABI aims to involve the local civic associations, formed around interest such as cultural heritage, nature conservation, ornithology, sport, leisure, tourism, and several forms of clubs for children, youth, and mentally disabled. The residents of Gedser have a culture for engaging in clubs, associations, organizations etc. when they want to achieve something. As one of the residents note:

*Gedser, is the village of associations. We have a rich associational life. If we need anything – we generate an association. Then it is much easier to apply for financial funding. That is typical for how it is here. If there is something you want- and really want – then you create an association (interview, resident in Gedser).*

The ABI facilitated and hosted a start-up meeting where 150 resident participated, corresponding to 20 percent of the total population of the village. The large engagement led to creation of working groups around different themes, and the formation of a village board that became an important platform for internal coordination for the diverse local interest associations, but also a proliferation of ideas that later were included in the plan for the ABI. Moreover, the ABI-program led to large external investments in the region, mainly due to the efforts from the local ABI-planner, generating linking social capital between the village, the municipality, and external bodies. Clearly, the focus of this ABI was not on empowering the marginalized citizens in the village, but to “generate some optimism” (according to the local planner) in the village, being located in a shrinking region. The case demonstrates a classic example on the strengths of working with civic voluntarism, especially in a context with a large number of interest-based organizations. However, at the same time it illustrate that in distressed areas, e.g. in shrinking regions suffering from population decline, loss of jobs, and lack of investments, the main focus will concentrate on these issues, giving less attention to empowering marginalized citizens.

## 6.2 Social voluntarism – working strategically with altruistic based charities

Due to the Danish welfare state model, then the tradition for engaging more directly with charity organizations in urban regeneration is rather limited in Denmark compared to other European countries e.g. UK. This is also

reflected in the Danish ABIs where we only found few examples. In Søndermarken, a neighborhood located in the municipality of Frederiksberg (50.000 inhabitants) in the Copenhagen region, the ABI has collaborated with nation-wide social voluntary organizations. Søndermarken area consist mainly of social housing with many residents being out of jobs, a high share of immigrants, and only few organizations and associations. In contrast to the village of Gedser then there is a low tradition for democratic participation or membership of local associations.

The main aim of the ABI was to improve physical meeting places, that could support ongoing social initiatives led by the social housing organizations targeted the socially challenged citizens, and to support social engagement in general, to prevent loneliness and promote social cohesion by mobilizing citizens to take part in activities in the area. As in Gedser, they aimed to take a 'coordinating role' in creating synergy between the various initiatives and plans in the area. Some of the physical projects they financed where local meeting place (common house, and an indoor- garden) where there were staff that could help to mobilise non-organised residents in activities. In order to seek a broad outreach, the ABI have engaged in collaboration projects with large national charity volunteer organizations (including the Red Cross and Danish Refugee Help). One example is "homework help" for pupils facilitated by the Red Cross. The concept is that retired school teachers help young people with their homework, especially those who have difficulties. Voluntary work is considered by the ABI planners to have a certain strength compared to a direct municipal effort, as it creates better relations for the pupils. As one of the planners expressed,

*We believe that some tasks are better solved by volunteers, because it is "relation-work". This is where people meet each other and preferably in "face to face level" and on voluntary basis, as it gives a better (interview, ABI planner in Frederiksberg municipality)*

The benefits of engaging with the large social voluntary organisations is obviously that they are large and professionally driven, enabling them to mobilize a number of volunteers to support the work with challenged groups in the regeneration area, for instance pupils in need of school help. This can be seen as a limited ability of the local scale to deliver the necessary resources for the challenged groups. However, there are obviously things

that are missed this way, e.g. the local attachment of the national voluntary organisation which is limited, the anchoring of the efforts, the ability to establish more permanent relations and networks.

### 6.3 Hybrid forms of voluntarism

The emergence of hybrid organizations in recent years have created possible collaboration opportunities for the ABI's. This might especially be relevant as a way to engage with vulnerable citizens who might be outside the labor market, or struggling with abuse and diseases. These groups rarely participates in the activities of the ABI's as individuals, or are members of voluntary civic organizations that takes part of the ABI. In spite of the potential for collaborating with hybrid organizations, there are relatively few organizations in Denmark (app 300), and there might not be such organizations present in the specific regenerations areas. Nevertheless, there are examples on collaborations with such organizations across different ABI's.

In Skive, a middle-sized provincial town (11.000 inhabitants) located in the municipality of Skive, the ABI was concentrated around specific physical renewal projects, typically urban spaces in the city. Although the involvement of socially marginalized citizens was absent in the program, the potential of involving hybrid institutions in the ABI was illustrated by an incidental collaboration between the ABI and the "*Blue Violet*", a hybrid organisation, operating a social meeting-place for persons with alcohol problems. As a part of the ABI, the nearby park was renovated, but at the same time a group of local alcohol abusers became permanent users of the park, and according to the municipality, were harassing visitors. Incidentally, the Blue Violet, as a part of their outreach to alcoholics, succeeded in having many from this group of alcoholic park-users, to join the Blue Violet, and thereby abandoning the park. The municipality saw this as a great achievement, as the newly-renovated park thereby became more attractive and accessible for "ordinary" users. Although this case hardly describes a collaborative effort between the ABI and the Blue Violet, it eventually appeared that agenda's of the ABI and the Blue Violet merged in this specific case, and thereby illustrates the potential large benefits in a more extensive collaboration.

Another example is from the ABI in the neighbourhood of "Fuglekvarter" in Copenhagen that was running from 2013 to 2018. The area is renowned for it's high degree of socially marginalized citizens, and a lack of



tradition for public participation. A main ambition of the ABI was to promote social entrepreneurship as a way to create local jobs. The ABI facilitated in various ways the creation of social enterprises and entrepreneurs, and acted as mediators for finding local jobs for local citizens outside the labour market, and thereby enhancing local collaboration and networks in the area (Agger et al., 2016). Potential entrepreneurs were encouraged to start a company, and were given free consultancy. Moreover, start-up grants were donated to the most promising candidates (valued by a board of established local companies). Another line of initiatives in the ABI was to create links between vulnerable citizens and local hybrid organizations (SocialRespons, 2017). One example on such link is a local social entrepreneur ("*Tag-tomat*") working with urban gardening on roof-tops, who arranged training of homeless people and residents from a local hostelry to enable them to act as gardeners for local companies. This came partly as a response to a wish amongst some of the local companies in the area who wanted to share their facilities, and especially wanted to hire shared local assistance to maintain greenery (trees, grass, bushes), instead of each company hiring their own gardener from outside the neighborhood (interview, ABI-planner at Fuglekvarteret) .

In this way, different agendas were combined in a place-based perspective, in principle creating a local win-win between local companies, marginalized citizens, and the social entrepreneur.

Such activities by the ABI's might be seen as small scale experiments, but they have the potential to be transferred to a larger scale, e.g. implemented as a general policy in the municipality. The ability of the ABI's to penetrate the municipal administration with such a policy is however also highly uncertain, and depends e.g. on what municipal department the ABI are located in. Typically, they are under the auspices of the technical and planning department (and not departments for jobs, integration, social and cultural affairs etc.). As a consequence, there were many of the ABI projects- that contained cross- cutting subjects – that interfered with the municipal silo structure.

## 7. Discussion

In this section, we will discuss the potentials and limitations of ABIs work with the three forms of voluntarism and their appearance in the ABI's, focusing especially on their ability to reach vulnerable groups, and their potential as anchoring institutions.

As stated earlier, the civic voluntarism through interest-based participation has an absolutely dominant position on the Danish ABI's. Our study revealed that this sort of engagement is easier in smaller communities as the ABI has a much more visible position (as the example from Gedser illustrated) than in neighbourhoods in larger cities (Søndermarken and Fuglekvarteret) where people have less place-attachment or tradition for participation (Agger & Jensen, 2015), it is also clear, that ABI approaches are centered on interest-based participations have difficulties in reaching marginalized citizens, who rarely attend public meetings. Therefore, it can be strategically beneficial for the ABIs to collaborate with actors that engage in other forms of voluntarism (charity and hybrid) as a way to get a better outreach to these marginalized groups. Collaborations with professional charity organisations, as illustrated in Søndermarken ABI, brings in resources and knowhow about socially vulnerable groups, and these charities are able to mobilize a number of volunteers to participate in social work with these groups. There are several examples from Danish ABI's that marginalized citizens are often seen as potential "spoilers" of the improved urban environment, and are handed in a reactive manner, whereas a more constructive and pro-active approach that the altruistic based charities apply might be more beneficial (Stender et al, 2010).

In general, the involvement of charity organisations in Danish ABI's is very limited compared to other Western countries. One explanation is that the ABI's often are located within the technical departments in the Municipalities, and thus have a limited focus on social marginalization. Another explanation is that national charity organisations might not see it as their agenda to "solve municipal problems"; especially if the charity organisations have not been invited to participate in formulating the challenges for the neighborhood where the ABI takes place. Although we note that these type of collaborations holds many potentials we also find that there are some challenges. The larger charities are more professional, and have the capacity to mobilize volunteers, but their local attachment is limited. However, local departments of voluntary organisations might have some

potential, as the example with the Blue Violet in Skive shows. However, the Blue Violet also had the weaknesses of a charity approach, i.e. offering abusers and marginalised citizens a place to stay, get warm food etc., but could not offer them job training, or other types of empowerment to get them “back on track”.

The ABI in Fuglekvarteret actively supported establishment of small socio-economic enterprises and local job-creation, and the case shows that the hybrid organisations in Fuglekvarteret managed to reach out to vulnerable citizens, leading to local job training and a better image in the neighbourhood, in ways that had not been possible by their traditional approaches. It is however uncertain how stable these socio-economic enterprises are, and to which extent they will be able to establish jobs and activities for the vulnerable citizens in the long run. Although the local attachment of the hybrid organisations is typically strong, and part of the identity of the organisation, they also struggle to maintain a solid economic foundation, and need to look for financial support and business cases beyond the neighbourhood. A main challenge of this type of collaboration is the limited number of social enterprises in Denmark.

In the table below we have summarised the strengths and weaknesses of the different types of voluntarism we have outlined in the paper.

Table 3. Summary of findings of different types of voluntarism in Danish ABIs, with focus on engaging vulnerable citizens

	Potentials / Strengths	Challenges / Weaknesses
<b>Civic voluntarism</b>	<p>Traditional and prevailing focus of Danish ABIs.</p> <p>Rationale: Voluntary participation is positive for the participants and for the neighbourhood, and will eventually increase the social capital.</p> <p>Individuals and interest-based organisations have a local insight and interest in the neighbourhood</p>	<p>Marginalized citizens rarely participates in urban regeneration programmes and working groups.</p> <p>Requires municipal resources.</p> <p>Resourceful individuals often dominate the agenda.</p> <p>The main aim of civic organisations is members interest, not social problems</p>
<b>Social voluntarism</b>	<u>Large organisations:</u>	<u>Large organisations:</u>

	<p>Easy to identify and contact organisations for the ABI. Professional organisations with large capacity and resources for mobilizing and facilitating volunteers</p> <p><u>Smaller organisations:</u> Typically strong local attachment and local knowledge</p> <p><u>General:</u> Organisations brings in knowledge and resources in relation to marginalized citizens</p>	<p>The local attachment of professional charity-based organisations is limited, as the organisations typically have a larger geographical scale.</p> <p><u>Smaller local organisations:</u> local focus but limited resources – looking for opportunity to collaborate with municipality</p> <p><u>General:</u> Limited tradition for Danish ABI's to collaborate with these organisations</p>
<p><b>Hybrid voluntarism</b></p>	<p>Often strong social focus, e.g. involving challenged social groups. Potential creation of local job from socially marginalized citizens</p> <p>Flexible in adapting to the local needs</p>	<p>Might be difficult to identify organisations for ABI</p> <p>Organisations are often fragile, needs an economic basis (income, funding etc.).</p>

## 8. Conclusion

The question of how to approach voluntarism in the urban regeneration is central for the ability to engage local stakeholders in the process. In this paper we have illustrated how ABI's have a large potential for mobilizing participation from civic organisations, but in line with other authors (J. Andersen & Pløger, 2007; Ferilli et al., 2016; Jones, 2003) we have argued that this type of participation has limited ability to include the marginalized citizens in the distressed neighbourhoods. We therefore argue that an increasing collaboration with other types of voluntary associations, i.e. charities and hybrid organisations, could be a way to enhance the inclusion of marginalised citizen in urban regeneration processes. Although urban regeneration in European countries have different path dependencies (Couch et al., 2011), they do share similar political conditions, i.e. decreasing public subsidies, more focus on private co-financing, voluntary engagement, and social and economic empowerment. These conditions are not necessarily in favour of making special efforts to include marginalized citizens. This is

one explanation of why the “social” or “charity” side of voluntarism has played a smaller role in recent years in Danish urban regeneration programs, potentially leading to an ignorance of marginalized citizens and their needs. With the predominantly participatory approach in the urban regeneration programs, based on collaboration and participation from civic organisations, there is a large risk that the voices of the marginalised citizens will not be heard.

Our discussion of the urban regeneration in different urban context’s has been mainly descriptive, in order to identify the challenges of working with different approaches to voluntarism, and with the different stakeholders addressed in these approaches. Defining the three different types of voluntarism (civic, social and hybrid) is a first step to carry out further critical analysis of the way the urban regeneration can balance between different agendas – to put it simply: on mobilizing resourceful stakeholders through participatory approaches and at the same time, empowering marginalized citizens socially as well as economically. For this purpose, our studies illustrates the potential benefits of working with charity and hybrid voluntarism. To upscale such approach, it is partly a matter of changing local planning cultures and competences towards paying more attention to other types of voluntarism and enabling collaboration with local charities and hybrid organisations; however, it is also a matter of establishing broader support and involvement from the city government towards recognizing the crucial role that charities and hybrid organisations can plays in the urban regeneration.

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<sup>i</sup> The programs were found on the Ministry of housings' homepage, <http://www.sm.dk/Temaer/By-bolig/Byfornyelse/omraadefornyelse/Sider/Kortvisning.aspx>, today located at: <https://byfornylesdatabasen.dk/omraadefornyelse/0/3>

<sup>ii</sup> There were 74 ABI's established, but only 61 was on a stage where they has formulated a written program