Sustaining future business growth: a qualitative study of diversity management within a Swedish state-owned company

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List of abbreviations

CE Civil Engineering
CEO Chief Executive Officer
CSR Corporate Social Responsibility
E&D plan Equal opportunity and Diversity Plan
HRP Human Resources Policy
HQ Headquarters
NIT New Institutional Theory
SCB Statistics Sweden (Statistiska Centralbyrån)
SSI Semi-Structured Interviews
VP for HR Vice President for Human Resources
Sustaining future business growth: a qualitative study of diversity management within a Swedish state-owned company

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30 ECTS/hp

Abstract:
Due to large influx of migrants along with a declining rate of native Swedes in working age, corporations are devoting more time and resources for diversity management today. While much attention has been directed towards the gender equality aspect of diversity, less attention has been given to the management of employees with diverse ethnicities and/or nationalities, hence the cultural aspect of diversity. This qualitative case study aims to contribute to the research field on diversity management in Swedish businesses in general but more specifically how the Swedish state-owned company Svevia is working with cultural diversity, identified as a strategic premise in order to assure future business survival. Through semi-structured interviews with employees at all organizational levels, a thorough understanding has been achieved of how Svevia works with diversity management and how the organizational culture allows for cultural diversity to thrive. A range of theoretical perspectives are combined in the for this study established conceptual framework, a framework which has enabled this study to provide an understanding of how an organization as a whole system, and not just fragments of organization, operationalize diversity management. Focus was given to study the processes that underlie the translation towards an intended more diverse workforce and the shape this process takes within the company. The results show that the processes through which information is being transferred within the organization, allowing for a flexibility that enables the company to evolve influenced by society’s constantly shifting demands. Svevia’s management efforts in the area of cultural diversity is not as well developed as that of gender equality. This, in a combination with a rather fragmented organizational culture indicates that there is still room for improvement regarding Svevia’s work with cultural diversity. Svevia, continues to be rather homogenous when it comes to the composition of its workforce, not reflecting the society in which they operate even though measures have been taken. However, if the increased commitment for cultural diversity continues, Svevia will most likely face the growth of diversity in the Swedish labor market, with more ease than companies who do not take measures to improve the organizational culture to become more including and welcoming.

Keywords: Case study, Cultural Diversity, Culture of Inclusion, Diversity Management, Sustainable Development, Svevia

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Summary:
A large influx of migrants along with a declining rate of native Swedes in working age, puts companies in a situation where the available workforce is no longer as homogeneous as it has previously been. As such, diversity management has become an increasingly pressing concern for companies. While much attention has been directed towards the gender equality aspect of diversity, less attention has been given to the management of employees with diverse ethnicities and/or nationalities, hence the cultural aspect of diversity. This thesis revolves around a case study, the Swedish state-owned construction company Svevia. Through qualitative semi-structured interviews with employees at all organizational levels, a thorough understanding has been achieved of how Svevia works with diversity management and how the organizational culture allows for cultural diversity to increase. The results show that diversity management at Svevia is growing in importance but has received an uneven amount of attention at the various organizational levels, where the issue has not completely won power at the executive management. Cultural diversity seems to have been downplayed by the executive management in favor for other focus areas, such as profit maximization and gender equality. Even though Svevia, through a range of activities are addressing, promoting and aiming at an increase of the existence of different personalities, characteristics and qualities among its employees, the rather fragmented organizational culture impedes Svevia to fully benefit from the investments made in diversity management. However, if the increased focus on diversity management continues to grow in importance, it can be assumed that Svevia will need to stand well-prepared to meet a labor force that will become even more diverse than already visible.

Keywords: Case study, Cultural Diversity, Culture of Inclusion, Diversity Management, Sustainable Development, Svevia
1. Introduction

This chapter gives a background description to the studied phenomenon. The thesis is being motivated by a short overview of the previous research within the field, ending with a presentation of the theoretical gap. Lastly, the research aim and questions are outlined followed by a description of the commission and hence the focus for this study.

1.1 Problem background

Europe is facing the biggest inflow of migrants in decades, so is Sweden. Many debates’ has lately been about how the member countries of the European Union are to cope with receiving and integrating an increased number of migrants (White, 2015). Challenges following influxes of new, unfamiliar cultures are disrupting a shaken Union that is still recovering from the financial crisis in 2008. With the argument that “the situation poses acute challenges to important functions in society” (www.regeringen, 2015) and that the “public order and internal security at present is threatened”, the Swedish Government decided to implement border controls in November 12, 2015 to lower the number of incoming migrants (ibid.). At the same time, an intensification of international mobility along with a demographic change happening in Sweden is predicted to alter the conditions for the workforce in the coming years – the number of native Swedes in working age (16-64) is predicted to continue to decrease with 22,000 people per year until 2021. Strong Swedish socio-economic development, which includes a well-functioning private sector, requires a stable supply of skills and competence in the labor market (Strömbäck, 2015). Hence, attracting personnel is crucial for companies to contribute to the society in which they operate (ibid.). An influx of people born outside Sweden bears the potential of compensating this decline to maintain the increase in the employment rate that Sweden needs for its socio-economic development (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2016). However, just as an influx of potential workforce offers tremendous culturally enriching opportunities, it also brings challenges relating to the management of a culturally diverse population (Kulik & Roberson, 2008; Montes & Shaw, 2003).

Along with these institutional changes, the business society has over the past decades witnessed a change in mind-sets of its stakeholders (Porter & Kramer, 2011) where issues rarely seen as a corporate responsibility only a generation ago, today have become questions vital for organizations to acknowledge in order obtain legitimacy (Fleming & Jones, 2013). Hence, in a situation where a tighter labor market intensifies the battle for competence and where the society demands companies to expand their social responsibilities, companies are forced to prioritize how to best attract, retain and effectively use people in a workforce that is becoming increasingly diverse in terms of ethnicity and nationality (Mor Barak, 2014). Finding key skills has been identified as one of the greatest future business challenges by Chief Executive Officers’ (CEO) around the world, where lack of future competence is a direct threat to the business growth (PwC, 2015). For that reason, 93 percent of the surveyed CEO claims that their business strategies have been adopted so to better attract and retain employees with required competence (PwC, 2014a).

Illustrated in figure 1, the above-mentioned factors combined can explain why the practice of diversity management is seen as the most challenging organizational issue of our time (Richard, 2000) and hence has received much attention and interest in business practice during the recent decades (Prasad, 1997; Pless & Maak, 2004).

1 PwC’s Annual Global CEO Survey aims to inform what the main challenges are for business and to stimulate the debate on how to face them. Thousands of CEOs around the world participate in this survey to share their views with the global society. Read more at (www.PwC.com).
To withstand a toughened business climate following an intensification of international mobility - innovation, creativity and flexibility is being required (Armstrong et al., 2010). A broad pool of experiences, perspectives and knowledge, found in a well-managed diverse workforce, are portrayed as strategic approaches of how to meet those requirements (see e.g. Cox & Blake, 1991; Jayne & Dipboye, 2004; Pless & Maak, 2004). Research on whether increased workplace diversity brings positive or negative impact on business results is however still debated (Umans, 2012). Simply increasing workforce diversity numerically have shown no sign of increased efficiency (Cox & Blake, 1991; Mor Barak, 2014).

Empirical findings demonstrate that companies that have successfully hired people with various cultural backgrounds are still faced with obstacles of how to retain their employees, especially ethnic minorities (Cox & Blake, 1991; Guillaume et al., 2013). This has inspired scholars to realize that organizations’ wishing to maximize the benefits, and minimize the drawbacks of diversity management must go beyond being ostensibly diverse, into acting diverse by generating a culture of inclusion where differences as well as similarities are being valued as beneficial for the organization (Cox & Blake, 1991; Shore et al., 2011). Hence, in order to take full advantage of investments in diversity programs, more than affirmative strategies, policies and programs to attract individuals from an increasingly diverse population are required (Pless & Maak, 2004).

1.2 Problem

In line with the trend in business management, diversity management is receiving much attention in Sweden too. Today, workplace diversity has become more than just a compliance. It is rather seen as a strategic issue for future survival, being highly prioritized at executive management level (Glans, 2010). Nevertheless, the medial reporting shows that Swedish companies, despite their communicated increased focus on diversity, are still very homogeneous when it comes to nationality and cultural background. Within the ten largest Swedish companies, the 11 board members out of 90 in total that are of non-European origin, nine of those are Americans and the other two are born in Australia (www, svt, Einarsson, 2015). In other words, it can be concluded that Swedish companies are running short to reflect the society in which they operate, at least regarding their ability to retain individuals with a foreign background and to offer them a possibility to move beyond the entry point of the Swedish workforce into obtaining leading position. A statement made by Mona Sahlin, when being the Swedish Minister for Integration and deputy Labor Minister, indicates that the problematic situation with a low representation of minorities in the Swedish workforce largely depends on Sweden’s historically narrow-minded labor market. “The misconduct could probably be traced to the labor market’s systematic inadequacy to utilize the unique skills and competences of all individuals regardless of their national or ethnical belonging”² (Bjärvall, 2000). According to several studies (see e.g. Montes & Shaw, 2003, Pless & Maak, 2004; Fägerlind & Ekelöf, 2001) it is precisely the ability to recognize, respect and seize

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individuals’ uniqueness that is needed in order to fully leverage the potential benefits a culturally diverse workforce might bring.

1.3 Empirical challenges and theoretical gap

While a significant scope of academic management literature investigating workplace diversity has been devoted to gender issues, there has been far less attention to organizations’ management of members with diverse ethnicities and/or nationalities, hence the cultural aspect of diversity (Cox & Beale, 1997). Moreover, the majority of research in the field has primarily focused on diversity management in terms of equal opportunity policies, systems and processes such as diversity-oriented recruitment processes or organizational diversity policies implemented primary to avoid discrimination lawsuits (see e.g. Jackson, 1992; Shore et al., 2011). Additionally, much attention has been directed towards explaining the outcome of workplace diversity policies (see e.g. Umans, 2008; Hunt, Layton & Prince, 2014; Guidroz, Kotrba, & Denison, 2009) all with various results, indicating that managing diversity at the workplace presents as many dilemmas as triumphs (Prasad, 1997; Cox, 2001). Less attention has been given to the processes that underlie the translation towards a more diverse workplace and the way it is expressed in the organization.

The failure to reap the benefits of investments in cultural diversity is being argued by Pless and Maak (2004) to strive from organizations’ selective approach in which companies’ management of a diverse workforce has mainly been about assimilating, meaning that minorities are giving up their cultural identity, rather than to integrate them, meaning that the cultural identity is being kept by the minorities (Berry et al., 1992). By only allowing for a more diverse workforce without valuing the differences diversity brings, increased diversity can generate costs through loss in efficiency due to miscommunication, interpersonal conflicts and higher turnover rates (Cox, 1991). Minimizing high turn-over rates requires employees to experience high levels of conformity. The level of conformity is linked to whether an employee feels recognized by their colleagues and can identify oneself with the companies values, norms and beliefs, i.e. the organizational culture (Pless & Maak, 2004). Given that cultural diversity is about norms and values (Pless & Maak, 2004) it is vital to study how the organizational culture allows individuals to feel respected and recognized at all levels of the organization. Yet, the management literature has seemingly ignored the cultural aspects of workforce diversity (Cox & Beale, 1997).

1.4 Commission

The focus object in this study is Svevia AB (hereinafter “Svevia”), a choice that is motivated in section 2.1.1. Svevia is a state-owned construction company, specialized in building and maintaining Swedish roads and infrastructure. The company is one of Sweden’s leading operating entrepreneur and largest civil construction company, hiring approximately 2000 people and had an operating profit of SEK 265 million in 2014 (www, Svevia, 1, 2016). One of Svevia’s greatest challenge is to attract personnel with needed competence, a challenge that according to Svevia’s recently resigned CEO, Zdravko Markoviski says will impact the future survival of the company (ibid.).

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3 Zdravko Markoviski possessed the position as CEO for Svevia when the data was collected but resigned 2016-04-25 due to personal reasons (www, Svevia, 5, 2016).
1.5 Aim and research questions’

The aim of this study is to explain in what way a Swedish company operationalizes cultural diversity management, identified as a strategic premise in order to attract and retain employees with desired skills. The ambition for this study is to contribute to the research field by providing empirical evidence of how the processes towards a more diverse workplace could look like. The aim is expected to be achieved by using Svevia as a study object. Identifying and describing what they say they do to increase the level of diversity and how they are working towards leveraging the benefits from a diverse workplace, will be possible if answers to the following research questions are disclosed.

1) How does Svevia work with diversity management?
2) How does the organizational culture at Svevia allow for cultural diversity?

1.6 Delimitation

Due to its aim and scope, this study is limited to investigate the contemporary expression of how diversity management is being practiced within a limited area, i.e., the development of diversity management over time is not focused in this study. Only one case is chosen as the study object, a delimitation based on Stake’s (1997) criteria’s of choosing a case with the potential abilities to teach us as much as possible about a specific phenomenon rather than choosing a case based on its generalization abilities. Hence, this is not a comparative case study. The decision to chose Svevia as the case is further motivated in section 2.1.1.

1.7 Outline of the study

Figure 2 below illustrates the different chapters this study consists of and acts as a guide for the reader to get a better understanding of the different chapters’ content and connections.

Chapter 1 contains a description of the background to the studied phenomenon. It includes a short overview of the previous research within the field ending with a presentation of the theoretical gap, which motivates the study’s aim, research questions and delimitation.

Chapter 2 provides the reader with grounds for understanding the methodological choices made for this study. A description and motivation for the selection of case and units of analysis is given followed by the presentation of the data analysis and quality assurance process.

Chapter 3 clarifies and explains central terms and the theoretical starting point. As a result of the literature review of previous research, the establishment of the conceptual framework is presented in the end of this chapter.
Chapter 4 consists of a background description of the role as a state-owned company in terms of sustainable business and diversity. A short outline of the problem of skills shortages within the construction sector provides further insights into the current work with cultural diversity at Svevia.

Chapter 5 presents the data gathered. The empirics presented will act as the foundation for which the following analysis and discussion is based on.

Chapter 6 analyses the empirical findings presented in chapter five. The, for this study established, conceptual framework (p. 22) acts as a foundation for the analysis, making sure that the empirics are analyzed according to the theoretical perspectives presented in chapter three.

Chapter 7 addresses and answers the research questions raised in chapter one. In this chapter, the result of this study is also being placed in a broader perspective in which a discussion highlights how the empirics and analysis connect to findings in other studies.

Chapter 8 intends to answer the aim of the study. It also describes the need for further research in connection to the studied subject.
2. Method

Chapter two provides the reader with grounds for understanding the methodological choices made for this study. A description and motivation for the selection of case and units of analysis is given, followed by a presentation of the data analysis and quality assurance process.

2.1 Research approach

The idea of this study is not to quantify frequencies of units but to describe a phenomenon within its context. According to Bryman and Bell (2013) an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon is therefore needed. Hence, a qualitative approach was used for this study. In qualitative research, emphasis is put on the context (Robson, 2011). As such, the phenomenon should be understood in its settings (ibid.). Since this study focuses on the practice of diversity management within a company, a single case study was chosen as the research strategy for gathering empirical data. A case study is defined by Eisenhardt (1989:534) as “a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings”. More specifically, a single case study can, according to Miles & Huberman (2013) be of any nature and has to consist of a contemporary phenomenon that appears in a limited context. According to Yin (2014), a case study is suitable when the study aims to include multiple actors where both individual and group level constructs are considered to explain a phenomenon, which this study intended to do.

When studying a real world problem exposed to constant internal and external influences, deciding on a fixed framework (deductive approach) from the very beginning of the process can be challenging (Robson, 2011). It can be equally challenging to gather data without any fundamental knowledge or understanding of previous research and theories (inductive approach) (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The difference between the context and content can be somewhat arbitrary and “the actual configurations of structures and processes are constantly changing making definite prediction impossible” (Robson, 2011: 37). Therefore, an abductive approach has been used. The abductive approach allow the researcher to move back and forth between theory, empirics and analysis (Yin, 2014). In such a way, the result gradually emerged in an iterative process, where the risk of missing relevant data occurring along the way was eliminated. However, the more flexibility a design allows for, the more space is given for the researcher’s own interpretations to affect the result of the study. To avoid excessive personal influence and bias of the author, Yin (2014) stresses the need to establish a theoretical framework. The framework is to function as a blueprint and guide for the data collection which also, to some extent, eliminates the potential risk of bias (ibid.). Hence, a conceptual framework (see section 3.5), based on the theoretical perspectives found in the literature review has been developed for this study.

Containing bias, being too subjective, lacking scientific rigidity leading to the risk of the research being merely descriptions of a phenomenon without ability to generate representative conclusions, are some of the common criticisms a qualitative approach with a flexible design must endure (Yin, 2014; Denscombe, 2016; Bryman & Bell, 2013). However, since this study does not aim at producing results that can be generalized on a broader population, the qualitative approach is deemed suitable. Additionally, the qualitative approach has allowed the researcher to gather broad and rich descriptive empirics of a phenomenon (Yin, 2014), why this method has been chosen.
2.1.1 Selection of case

When applying a flexible design, the selection of case depends on the key purpose of the study (Robson, 2011). Choosing only one study object was made with reference to Stake (1995) who argues that when a study aims at drawing conclusions based on a specific case in order to gain a general understanding of a phenomenon, an intrinsic case study approach is preferred. The intrinsic case study approach stresses that the case should be chosen depending on the case abilities to teach us as much as possible about a specific phenomenon rather than choosing a case based on its generalization abilities. Referring to Stake (1995:243) who states that it is “often […] better to learn a lot from an atypical case than a little from a magnificently typical case”. The choice of case for this study does not stem from its ability to represent a larger population to which one can make generalizations; rather it is chosen based on a motivation that this particular case can bring valuable explanations to the social phenomenon being studied.

A number of criteria for the selection of company were set to ensure that the study object would provide sufficiently detailed, in-depth and qualitative data (Jacobsen, 2002). As the starting point of this study was that Swedish companies are homogenous and unable to reflect the society in which they operate, the principal selection criteria were that the study object had to be a public company with operations in Sweden.

Since the phenomenon in this study is diversity management, the company had to indicate an ambition to embody a diversified workplace. Several companies presenting themselves as having an active approach towards diversity management were contacted by the researcher and asked if they wished to participate in this study. Svevia was the company that offered the greatest access to suitable respondents and showed the greatest engagement to participate in the study. Additionally, being a state-owned company in the construction sector makes Svevia a case of particular interest for two reasons. Firstly, they are ought to act as role-models when it comes to corporate sustainability (Regeringskansliet, 2015a). Secondly, the construction sector is already expressing an urgent need of more labor, a strategic diversity management could be one tool to eliminate skills shortages. Moreover, since Svevia additionally met the for this study predetermined requirements, Svevia was selected as this study’s case.

Svevia AB

Figure 3 below illustrates the organizational structure of Svevia. Svevia is a decentralized company consisting of three divisions; Road Management, Surfacing and Civil Engineering (www, Svevia, 1, 2016) in which the latter division is of focus for this study.
The reason for narrowing down the selection to only focus on the Civil Engineering (CE) division was primarily made due to the fact that the CE division recently launched an internal project called ‘an including workplace’, which aims to implement a behavioral change among the employees in order to establish a more inclusive culture (Bennewitz, 2015). With reference to Stake (1994) who states that the chosen variable for a study should be able to teach us as much as possible about a specific phenomenon, the CE division was of particular significance for this study. Studying the entire organization of Svevia would probably have brought even more valuable data, but due to time limitations, this choice was made with the above motivation.

2.2 Data collection

Both primary and secondary data was collected as a part of the case study. After being collected, the data form the basis for the interpretation process (Yin, 2014). Studies aiming at understanding and interpreting are described as grounded on a hermeneutic perspective (Denscombe, 2016). Hermeneutics is the doctrine of interpretation and understanding (Helenius, 1990). By using a hermeneutic perspective, opportunity is given to provide detailed, but thus simplified interpretations of how a wicked problem, described as a problem with countless causes which lack one simple answer since it is often interconnected with other issues (Camillus, 2008), is understood in a complex reality (Denscombe, 2016). Another advantage of the hermeneutic approach is that it is suitable when limited data is used, allowing for a more detailed description of the stories behind the wicked problem (ibid.).

According to Yin (2014) it is advisable to explore a phenomenon with interest for both individuals and structures, using different sources for data collection. Together with Yin’s recommendations in mind and the framing of the aim for this study to explain how a Swedish company operationalize diversity management, multiple sources of information, not just from

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4 In Swedish ‘En inkluderande arbetsplats’
people at different levels of the company, but also from secondary sources was gathered. This approach is called triangulation and increases the creditability of the study since the result does not rely on one single source for data collection (Yin, 2014). Primary data was gathered by using semi-structured interviews and secondary data was extracted from sources such as internal documents, webpages and reports. Both general and more specific data was also gathered by the researcher’s participation at various seminars and events in which the topic of diversity was being discussed. Lastly, the context in which the phenomenon is found has been studied through applying elements of observations as a method, allowing the researcher to take account for how the settings might affect the phenomenon being studied (Miles & Huberman, 2013).

2.2.1 Primary data

Conducting interviews with employees at Svevia was considered as the most appropriate main method for gathering primary data since the method has the potential to provide rich and helpful information about a real-world phenomenon (Robson, 2011). Semi-structured interviews (SSI) were chosen prior to fully structured or unstructured interviews. This decision was made since SSI allows for greater flexibility in the data collecting process, allowing for modifications in the questioning process during the interview. Stated by Robson (2011), such a flexibility enables the questions to stay consistent with the evolving theoretical framework. Even though flexibility is in this case required, it is important that the interviewer seeks and extract the intended and most valuable information, hence ensures a high level of validity (Leech, 2002). Therefore, an interview-guide was established (see Appendix 1) in which open-ended, easily understandable and non-leading questions were stated. Stressed by Yin (2014), there should be a clear linkage between the theoretical perspectives and the empirics being gathered. Therefore, the questions in the interview guide are all linked to theoretical perspectives which is outlined in Appendix 1.

2.2.2 Units of analysis

A fundamental problem when conducting qualitative interviews is that one can rarely examine all relevant information for the identified phenomenon (Jacobsen, 2002). Conducting SSI is time-consuming, requiring the researcher to make an informed and motivated selection of respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The selection of respondents in qualitative studies is often purpose-driven, which means that the chosen units of analysis are based on the principle that they are the most appropriate in order to highlight the phenomenon (Jacobsen, 2002). Since qualitative studies never aim at saying something generalizable or typical, but rather to reveal information about the unique and special, the research quality cannot be said to correlate with an increasing number of respondents (ibid.). Hence, nine respondents (see Table 1) were identified as key persons possessing important information about the phenomenon being studied.
In Table 1 the respondents’ positions at Svevia, when the interviews were conducted and when the validation took place are indicated. According to Yin (2014) it is important to anchor the selections of interviewees with the theoretical perspectives to increase the reliability of the study. Hence, respondents were selected in accordance with the conceptual framework, which is further explained in section 3.5.1 after the theoretical perspectives has been clarified and explained.

All interviews were recorded in agreement with the respondents, transcribed to written documents and sent back to the respondents for verification. All respondents, except one verified the transcripts by either sending a confirmation email or by informing the researcher by phone. Mikael Bosma indicated early on, prior to when the final transcript was sent to him that he would not have any problems with verifying the transcript. This verification never took place, probably because it was forgotten or that there was a lack of time. Some respondents made additional comments or corrections which was added to the final version of the transcripts. Each interview lasted between 40 to 60 minutes and was all conducted face to face at one of the company’s premises. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2014) the researcher can increase the validity during the interviews by frequently asking follow-up questions during the interviews. This technique has been used throughout all interviews in this study. Interviews and transcriptions were carried out in Swedish. Translation to English in the thesis has been the responsibility of the researcher.

2.2.3 Secondary data

When studying a phenomenon, it is important to become familiar with the available literature in the field in which the studied phenomenon is found (Yin, 2014). Therefore, a literature review in which articles, books, dissertations and other research reports connected to the studied object have been examined and analyzed. Considering previous empirical insights and the way these have emerged, trends, theoretical gaps and other points of interest were identified. These has contributed to the researcher gaining a broader understanding of the theoretical perspectives which has acted as the foundation for the conceptual framework used in this study.

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When studying a phenomenon, it is important to become familiar with the available literature in the field in which the studied phenomenon is found (Yin, 2014). Therefore, a literature review in which articles, books, dissertations and other research reports connected to the studied object have been examined and analyzed. Considering previous empirical insights and the way these have emerged, trends, theoretical gaps and other points of interest were identified. These has contributed to the researcher gaining a broader understanding of the theoretical perspectives which has acted as the foundation for the conceptual framework used in this study.

In table 1 the respondents’ positions at Svevia, when the interviews were conducted and when the validation took place are indicated. According to Yin (2014) it is important to anchor the selections of interviewees with the theoretical perspectives to increase the reliability of the study. Hence, respondents were selected in accordance with the conceptual framework, which is further explained in section 3.5.1 after the theoretical perspectives has been clarified and explained.

All interviews were recorded in agreement with the respondents, transcribed to written documents and sent back to the respondents for verification. All respondents, except one verified the transcripts by either sending a confirmation email or by informing the researcher by phone. Mikael Bosma indicated early on, prior to when the final transcript was sent to him that he would not have any problems with verifying the transcript. This verification never took place, probably because it was forgotten or that there was a lack of time. Some respondents made additional comments or corrections which was added to the final version of the transcripts. Each interview lasted between 40 to 60 minutes and was all conducted face to face at one of the company’s premises. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2014) the researcher can increase the validity during the interviews by frequently asking follow-up questions during the interviews. This technique has been used throughout all interviews in this study. Interviews and transcriptions were carried out in Swedish. Translation to English in the thesis has been the responsibility of the researcher.

### Table 1. The interview process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Interview date</th>
<th>Verification sent</th>
<th>Validation received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bosma, Mikael</td>
<td>Project Manager, CE division</td>
<td>2016-04-05</td>
<td>2016-04-19</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gustavsson-Roos, Magnus</td>
<td>Production Manager, CE division</td>
<td>2016-04-05</td>
<td>2016-04-24</td>
<td>2016-05-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoof, Charlotte</td>
<td>HR Partner, CE division</td>
<td>2016-03-15</td>
<td>2016-03-23</td>
<td>2016-03-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lundman, Erik</td>
<td>Division Manager, CE division</td>
<td>2016-03-18</td>
<td>2016-03-29</td>
<td>2016-05-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenkel, Pia</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>2016-03-15</td>
<td>2016-03-23</td>
<td>2016-03-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rydberg, Max</td>
<td>Foreman, CE division</td>
<td>2016-04-22</td>
<td>2016-04-25</td>
<td>2016-04-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandström, Charlotte</td>
<td>Communication Manager</td>
<td>2016-03-18</td>
<td>2016-03-28</td>
<td>2016-04-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundelin, Martin</td>
<td>Production Manager, CE division</td>
<td>2016-04-04</td>
<td>2016-04-06</td>
<td>2016-05-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wretskog, Elisabet</td>
<td>Competence Manager</td>
<td>2016-03-15</td>
<td>2016-03-23</td>
<td>2016-04-04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Peer-reviewed articles from leading journals in business management such as the *The Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Management* and *the Journal of Business Research* have been studied to get the full picture of frequently cited articles within the field of diversity management. Since sustainable development and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has to do with the legitimacy of business, journals within the field of business ethics have also been studied. Search words such as *diversity management*, *workplace diversity* and *organizational culture* has been used when searching for relevant articles. Additionally, reports and business research such as PwC CEO Survey, McKinsey’s ‘Diversity Matters’ and World Economic Forum’s ‘The Business Case for Migration’ have been studied in order to anchor academic findings in current business practice. By building the study on previous academic and practical contributions, the trustworthiness of the theoretical perspective and the conceptual framework is improved (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

### 2.2.4 Quality assurance

When conducting a qualitative case study, it is important that the researcher carry out appropriate checks to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the findings (Robson, 2011). Quality assurance measures were undertaken throughout the research process, and some have already been touched upon in the previous sections. Table 2 below, based on Riege (2003:78-79), displays the techniques used for establishing validity and reliability.

*Table 2. Techniques for establishing validity and reliability in case studies based on Riege (2003:78-79)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study design test</th>
<th>Case study techniques</th>
<th>Applied in this research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construct validity</strong></td>
<td>Use multiple sources of evidence in data collection</td>
<td>Triangulation applied - data has been collected through different sources; SSI, document studies and observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish a chain of evidence in data collection</td>
<td>All interviews was transcribed and clustered in a table of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have key informants review draft report</td>
<td>Respondents were requested to read, verify and validate transcripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal validity</strong></td>
<td>Ensure that concepts and findings are systematically related</td>
<td>The conceptual framework is applied for all sources of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use illustrations and tables to assist explanation</td>
<td>Frequently applied. See e.g. on page 14, 26, 32 and 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External validity</strong></td>
<td>Compare evidence with present literature</td>
<td>An abductive approach, allowing for the process to be iterative, is applied where the analysis is built on theoretical perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Define scope and boundaries in research design</td>
<td>See section 2.1.1 and 2.2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliability</strong></td>
<td>Give full account for theories and ideas throughout the research process</td>
<td>Accomplished through applying an abductive approach following an iterative process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure replication of method used</td>
<td>An interview guides was established, see Appendix 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assure congruence between the research issues and features of the study design</td>
<td>Done throughout Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Record data and observations as mechanically as possible</td>
<td>All interviews were recorded and notes where taken during the interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop case study database</td>
<td>A database to organize data was established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assure meaningful parallelism of findings across multiple data sources</td>
<td>The conceptual framework is applied for all sources of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use peer-review examination</td>
<td>Peers examined research proposal and manuscript throughout the writing process. Final manuscript were evaluated and reviewed by opponents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to construct a high level of *validity*, meaning that the intended and most important information is extracted (Leech, 2002), data has been collected from a various range of sources, all interviews was transcribed and also clustered in a table in order to find the most
relevant information. To avoid systematic error, i.e. increasing the internal validity, both interviews and secondary data have been approached with the same conceptual framework in the analysis chapter. For the readers’ convenience, graphic models are used throughout the research to assist explanation. The chosen flexible research approach has allowed for a constant matching of gathered data with current literature, increasing the external validity of the study meaning that the gathered data is not just picked by chance or due to the researchers’ curiosity, but rather relates to previous studies (Riege, 2003). A number of techniques has been used to ensure reliability, meaning that the methods used when gathering data are trustworthy (ibid.). To assure that the research issue is in accordance with the study design, all method choices has been transparently presented throughout chapter two. Moreover, the data has been recorded and documented, the same conceptual framework has been rigorously applied and lastly, letting peers review and examine the research throughout the entire process has also increased the level of reliability. If all these actions are taken into consideration, the case study can be said to be of good scientific quality (Riege, 2003).

2.3 Ethical considerations

When conducting qualitative research in which individuals are being interviewed about their perceptions of the studied phenomenon, the researcher has to carefully consider the possibility to harm the respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2013). To avoid harming anyone, it has been important to inform the individuals being interviewed about their role as a participant in a study that will be publicly accessible. All respondents, including Mikael Bosma, agreed to have their name and position published in this thesis whereby the verification process in which respondents was given the opportunity to delete, add or change any information revealed, has been of importance. Not allowing respondents to be anonymous could affect the reliability of their answers. Primarily since knowing that any colleague, or for the company important stakeholder could access the information. This could cause the respondent to avoid to fully answer certain questions (Bryman & Bell, 2013).

In cases where the researcher could be exposed to sensitive information that might imply the potential of causing respondents’ future harm, the researcher is recommended to weigh the gains this information gives, if published, against the potential loss (Bryman & Bell, 2013). Respondents have been informed about the researcher having this approach in order to build a relation of trust between the researcher and the respondents. This approach has also reduced the problematic situation that might arise when interviewing people about a topic they perceive as containing too private characteristics or if they feel stressed not knowing as much as they wished about the studied phenomenon.

2.4 Data analysis

The analytical process in a case study is according to Yin (2014) one of the most difficult and least developed aspects in the research process. This since analyzing qualitative data implies looking for meanings through an iterative process rather then to categorize numbers as in quantitative research (ibid.). Jacobsen (2002) describes the process as consisting of three phases; description, systematization and categorization and combination, phases that not necessarily has to strictly follow each other in time.

For this study, the description consisted of transcribing the recorded interviews and observations to written data. The transcripts where then commented and clustered by the researcher as a way to systematize and categorize the large amount of data. According to Jacobsen (2002) systematization is a way to simplify the information gathered and reduce the complexity to transmit what the researcher has found. The systematization of data allowed the
researcher to interpret the data according to the established conceptual framework, thus to combine empirics with theoretical aspect.

2.5 Limitations

Event though it is nearly impossible for a researcher to avoid all consequences every choice of method implies, it is still very important to have them in mind throughout the research process (Robson, 2011). As already touched upon, by only using one single case to study a phenomenon, the abilities to generalize the result to a broader sample is impossible (Yin, 2014). Hence, no attempts of generalization are made in this study made.

Choosing a case study as a method when studying a phenomenon found in a constantly shifting environment, has been argued as an advantageous approach (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). However, awareness has to be raised regarding the potential moral responsibility to an organization the respondents’ might have. It is possible that these kinds of sources reward only the positive aspects and outcomes of what is being studies (Bryman & Bell, 2013).

Likewise, interviewing people generates perception, not facts (Yin, 2014). However, peoples’ understanding and perceptions of the reality being studied is exactly what the researcher needs in order to understand the phenomenon (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009).

Lastly, as mentioned earlier, this is not a longitudinal study. It should rather be seen as a valuable insight into the contemporary shape of a phenomenon within a limited context. Having that said, this study still contributes with insights of value for the future development of diversity management within the private sector in Sweden.
3. A Theoretical Perspective

In this chapter, central terms and theoretical starting points are clarified and explained. A literature review of previous research has been conducted which has resulted in the establishment of the conceptual framework used in the study.

3.1 Central terms

Table 3 below gives the reader a short description of frequently used terms. Following, based on existing literature, a more in-depth description of cultural diversity, being the most frequently used term in this study is given. Lastly a description of the different organizational constructs being referred to in this study is presented.

Table 3. Description of recurring terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>There is no universally accepted definition of the word ‘diversity’ but in its broadest sense, it can be explained as “a mix of people in one social system who have distinctly different, socially relevant group affiliations” (Cox &amp; Beale, 1997:1) where in management literature the differences are separating the minority from the majority (Fägerlind &amp; Eklöf, 2004).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>In 1954 Drucker used the word strategy when highlighting the need for an active approach to management with planning, defined activities and related goal as the way to shape an efficient firm (Drucker, 1954). The term has since the 1960s been used by the business society and is being identified as one of the most important determinant of a business performance, acting as a guide of the business’ strive for success (Heracleous, 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational culture</td>
<td>Described as an organizations belief system, organizational culture captures the underlying, unobservable set of shared assumptions and contains values and visions along with norms and language (Cameron &amp; Quinn, 2005). Affecting the overall performance of the company, these norms act as a way to define the appropriate behavior of organizational actors contributing to how the working environment and atmosphere at a workplace is perceived (Ravasi &amp; Schultz, 2006). In this study, working climate and atmosphere are being used as synonyms with organizational culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>People with some sort of organizational and/or production responsibility and/or personnel management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project/working site</td>
<td>Where Svevia currently is carrying out construction work such as building a new bridge or tram station. Hence, the workplace for the respondents not based at the HQ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees/workers</td>
<td>All people assigned as currently conducting a mission for Svevia, whether being employed and based at the headquarter or as an entrepreneur spending most of their time at a project site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.1 Cultural diversity

In line with the increasing international mobility, and with today’s geopolitical landscape a person’s ethnic and religious belonging becomes more central when identifying cultural differences among a group (Stahl et al., 2007; Umans, 2012). According to the British Encyclopedia (2016) the word ethnicity refers to “the identification of a group based on perceived cultural distinctiveness that makes the group into a ‘people’”. The Swedish Discrimination Act (2008: 567) §5, state that ethnicity is referred to as one individuals "belonging to a group of people who have the same national or ethnic origin, race or color”. A country, an organization or a working team are all examples of different social system and gender, age cohort, physical conditions, nationality or ethnic identity are examples of different group affiliations (Cox & Bale, 1997).

Cultural diversity has been defined in multiple ways in which the concept of cultural has been portrayed in race, nationality or ethnicity (Stahl et al., 2007). A majority of the American-based researchers use the term differently from European researchers, were the former has investigated the area in terms of racial differences (Umans, 2002) and the latter has primarily
examined cultural diversity in terms of nationality (ibid.). Both approaches carry implications. Firstly, race is a biological attribute of a person or a group and not necessarily tied to that person’s ethnic affiliation, assumed to be the cultural identity of a group within a nation state (Grosfougel, 2004). Secondly, a distinction can be drawn between a person’s legal nationality and the same person’s experienced ethnic affiliation (Umans, 2012). Umans (2012) continue the discussion about nationality and explains that nationality is closely tied to an individual’s cultural belongingness, determined by the nationality of the country where a person has spent most of his/her childhood. The nationality of a person therefore represents both the behavior and language, forming the culture of that person which is referred to as the underlying personal characteristics such as values, assumptions and beliefs (ibid.).

With reference to above discussion, cultural diversity is in this study being referred to as both visible and underlying characteristics such as race, nationality and/or ethnic affiliation that differentiates an individual from the others, creating minority and majority groups. As stressed by both Stahl et al., (2007) and Umans (2012), the term nationality (being foreign-born or not) has proven to be a rewarding instrument to explore cultural differences and captured people's cultures in a fruitful way. This is well suited for the study’s purpose given the issues’ relevance in a time in which Sweden is witnessing an increase of immigrants, identified as possessing race, nationalities and/or ethnic affiliation that differs from the norm. The norm in this study is white Caucasians, born in Sweden, identifying oneself with a Swedish culture. It is also of relevance to mention that a person with a foreign background or with a foreign culture is used simultaneously in this study. A person with a foreign background is either born in Sweden with one domestic and one foreign-born parent, or born in Sweden with two parents born in Sweden (www, SCB, 2016).

3.1.2 Organizational constructs

At the highest level of a company, the executive management is responsible for fulfilling and realizing the company’s mission by outlining the direction of the company to ensure future survival (Ackoff, 1990). The executive management team plays a crucial role since they are to define the organizational culture, making critical decisions and function as role models for other parts of the organization, certainly when implementing new strategies (Schein, 2004; Widell & Mlekov, 2013). At this level, referred to as the strategic level, decisions are made that affect the organization as a whole (ibid). If the strategic level is concerned with long-range objectives, the tactical level is concerned with shorter-run goals and means for reaching the overall long-term objectives (Ackoff, 1990).

Tactical decisions are generally concerned with the period within which performance of the organization is evaluated by the external environment. The external environment is defined as “all elements outside the boundary of the organization” (Daft, 2016: 20) that the company has to acknowledge and sometimes adapt according to. Here, policies, principles, strategies and structures are established to govern the activities carried out to pursue the objective (Ackoff, 1990). Hence, “tactics is fighting and strategy is planning where and how to fight” (Sills, 1968: 281).

The performance of a company that the public have the easiest access to evaluate is the actions carried out at the operational level (Dauber et al., 2012) where focus is on how the organization is behaving in present time and in the immediate future (Ackoff, 1990). Consequently, the behavior of these individuals is crucial to the organizations ability to be seen as legitimate and hence impacts the overall performance (DiMaggio, 1983). The individuals’ personal backgrounds shape their behavior, meaning that their own perceptions and perspectives of values, rules and norms are being brought to the organization along with their employment (Cox & Blake, 1991).
3.2 Cultural diversity in New Institutional Theory

The doctrine of New Institutional Theory (NIT) offers understandings as to why and how organizations change, for example by initiating diversity management. NIT aims at understanding how the society affects organizations and their behavior (DiMaggio, 1983). According to NIT, the organizations structure, its responsibility, and the regulation of the organizational actors are all results of a conviction toward how an organization should be, a conviction constructed according to the existing organization’s institutionalized behavior (Jönsson, et al., 2011). Greenwood et al. (2008) defines institutionalized behavior as a collection of social behaviors that has evolved through social exchange over a long time. These interactions are over time taken for granted and eventually construct a normative system within the organizational culture which dictates how actors within the organization are to behave (Greenwood, et al., 2008). Starbuck (1976) explains that this process creates institutional rules, easily taken for granted and supported by the public opinion, or the force of law, and functions as a way to legitimize organizations which hence is defined as the optimal behavior of organizations. Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that these institutional rules, what they define as myths, gets indoctrinated to the extent that organizational strategies and actors follow them without question and recognition. Referring to Meyer and Rowan (1977), an organization’s decision to focus on diversity management can therefore be seen as a response to the societal demands.

3.2.1 Cultural diversity in Theory of Legitimacy

In line with NIT, the theory of legitimacy argues that an organization can only exist if the society in which it operates believes that the operations are carried out in a legitimate way (Deegan, 2002). Since the society constantly evolves, existing norms are being questioned, new rules are set and trends are shifting, so the organization must evolve as well (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996). The society constantly evaluates the organization’s actions, giving them not many choices than to adapt to the external demands in order to survive (Deegan, 2002). If an organization does not adapt to its surroundings, it will appear as nonchalant and illegitimate, most likely leading to a decrease in popularity and consequently a loss of profit (Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2009).

Organizations that are operating within the same society, exposed to similar evaluations’ are becoming more and more homogeneous, defined by Meyer and Rowan (1977) as the process of isomorphism\(^5\). Through acting in a similar way, organizations can more easily conduct transactions, recruit career-oriented staff and be perceived as legitimate (Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2009). If an organization is very successful, e.g. with attracting and retaining employees, the likelihood that others will follow in same direction is high (Deegan, 2002). The theory of legitimacy hence explains why an increased number of organizations pay attention to diversity management and many times decide on similar strategic actions, moving in a common direction within a certain issue area even though no evidence has been identified that the particular actions will lead to more efficiency in operations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

3.2.2 Cultural diversity as a part of Corporate Social Responsibility

The increasing number of organizations adopting CSR strategies over the last decades (Schaltegger & Burritt, 2005) is one example of isomorphism. Traditionally, economists have stated that companies should have the ultimate goal of maximizing profits (see e.g. Friedman, 1970). Because of that, stakeholders in the past have only required a company to provide fair

---

\(^5\) The concept of ‘isomorphism’ aims at explaining why organizations tend to mimic each other (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). DiMaggio and Powell writes: “a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions” (1983:66).
and reasonable prices and good quality in order to legitimize the company (Dixon, 2004). Today, stakeholders demand more, judging the company’s ability to combine profitability with socially and environmentally responsible manners (Mark-Herbert et al., 2010). Issues that a generation ago were rarely seen as a corporate responsibility, have today become questions vital for organizations to acknowledge in order to obtain their legitimacy. Consequently, CSR and its practice have over the past decades moved beyond philanthropy towards that of a strategic view, ensuring the survival of the company (Fleming & Jones, 2013). For example, obesity as a global health issue (Shah, 2010) has been described as the responsibility of the consumers and not at all a strategic concern for companies within the restaurant sector (Zadek, 2004). Over the last decades, as a reaction to customers increased concern for health issues, there has occurred a growth of healthy-meal alternatives at restaurants defined as a strategic way for companies to respond to the demands by the society (ibid.). Age cohort, or other characteristics that diversify people, is another issue that companies currently only have to acknowledge through complying with current discrimination laws. However, in an era of demographical shifts and geopolitical instability affecting the international society as a whole, companies have to be able to predict the society’s shifting awareness of particular issues and thus allow for addressing pressing societal problems such as the shift to a more diverse population and its consequences on the society as such (Zadek, 2004).

3.3 Strategic cultural diversity management

Diversity management was identified in the early 1990s as a key factor in taking advantages of the benefits and to tackle the challenges that an increasingly diverse workforce brings (Cox & Blake, 1991). Ever since, more and more companies are implementing specific policies and programs to improve recruitment and retention of employees with diverse backgrounds (Mor Barak, 2014). Wise and Tschirhart (2000: 387) describe diversity management “as a programmatic approach affecting the policies, culture and structure of an organization that incorporates a diverse workforce as a way to enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness”. A similar explanation is given by Mor Barak (2014) who emphasizes the organizations ability to address, promote and increase the existence of different personalities, characteristics and qualities among its individuals. Described as holding the potential of generating a strategic competitive advantage, Cox and Blake (1991: 47) provides a brief description, outlined in Table 4 below, of how an organization potentially can benefit from diversity management.
### Table 4. Possible advantages of diversity management (Cox & Blake, 1991: 47) with minor modification made by the researcher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Argument</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost argument</td>
<td>As organizations become more diverse, the cost of a poor job in integrating workers will increase. Those who handle this well will thus create cost advantages over those who do not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource-Acquisition Argument</td>
<td>Companies develop reputations on favorability as prospective employers for women and ethnic minorities. Those with the best reputations for managing diversity will win the competition for the best personnel. As the labor pool shrinks and changes composition, this edge will become increasingly important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Argument</td>
<td>For multinational organizations, the insight and cultural sensitivity that members with roots in other countries bring to the marketing effort should improve these efforts in important ways. The same rationale applies to marketing to subpopulations within domestic operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity Argument</td>
<td>Diversity of perspectives and less emphasis on conformity to norms of the past (which characterize the modern approach to management of diversity) should improve the level of creativity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving Argument</td>
<td>Heterogeneity in decision and problem solving groups potentially produces better decisions through a wider range of perspectives and more thorough critical analysis of issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Flexibility Argument</td>
<td>An implication of the multicultural model for managing diversity is that the system will become less determinate, less standardized, and therefore more fluid. The increased fluidity should create greater flexibility to react to environmental changes (i.e. reaction should be faster and at less cost).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cox and Blake (1991: 45-46) separate the first two items in the table from the rest, defining the items of “cost” and “resource acquisition” as the “inevitability-of-diversity”. Resource acquisition relates to the ability for a company to retain competence and is therefore linked to avoiding cost. When the labor market, as well as the workforce, simultaneously are getting tighter and more diverse, competitiveness is affected and the need to hire more minorities increases (Cox & Blake, 1991). The last four rows in the table are called “value-in-diversity-hypothesis” and is explained as the net-values that sound diversity management brings to the organization (Cox & Blake, 1991: 46).

The development of equal rights legislation has brought attention to the topic and raised the number of organizations implementing affirmative policies which has certainly contributed to minorities’ ability to access positions within organizations that were previously unavailable to them (Mor Barak, 2014). Although positive, Mor Barak (2014) argues that this development lacks substance to real change. By just allowing the previously disadvantage group to access an organization by applying more inclusive recruitment processes does not accomplish the benefits that diversity management can offer (Mor Barak, 2014). This is well illustrated by Cox and Blake (1991: 50) who state, “Just having diversity, however, is not sufficient to produce benefits, [w]e must also manage it”. Hence, diversity has to go beyond acknowledgement; it has to be valued by the organization in order to reach its potential (Cox & Blake, 1991). If the efforts of diversity management end with getting minority employees to board the company at entry level, the likelihood of retaining these individuals within the organization is close to non-existent (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2015). To develop a business case for diversity, the recruitment processes along with the development and retention of a diverse workforce has to be linked to the organization’s business objectives (Kossek et al., 2006). As such, the strategy emphasizing the need for cultural diversity has to be consistent with other aspects of the company’s overall strategy, culture and structure (Daniel & Bushardt, 2005). Hence, successful diversity management is reached only through a fundamental organizational change where cultural diversity is being incorporated at strategic, tactic and operational level impacting the organizational culture as well as strategies, structure and behavior of people (Ferdman, 2013).
3.4 Cultural diversity in organizational culture

As outlined above, societal demands highly affect the management of an organization (Mark-Herbert, et al., 2010). However, scholars such as Cameron and Quinn (2005) explain that the success of organizations cannot merely be clarified by the management of specific external impacts such as the demands for more diverse organizations. The sustained success rather “has had less to do with market forces than with company values, less to do with competitive positioning than with personal beliefs, and less to do with resource advantages than with vision” (Cameron & Quinn, 2005: 4). As such, organizational culture is identified as an essential influential factor to establish competitive advantages (see e.g. Barney, 1986; Cameron & Quinn, 2005) or the impact the organizational culture has on the overall performance (see e.g., Gordon & DiTomaso, 1992; Marcoulides & Heck, 1993; Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983). As such, organizational culture acts as a guidebook for how members in the organization are to behave in which “unwritten and often unspoken guidelines for how to get along in the organization” effect the overall stability of the organizational system (Cameron & Quinn, 2005: 16). Organizational culture has also been identified as a moderator effecting the success rate of organizational changes where the neglect of the organizational culture has been identified as the most frequently cited reason to why an organizational change fails (Cameron & Quinn, 2005).

In sum, the literature suggests that in order to succeed with reaching the defined goals with diversity management, key is to identify and acknowledge the demands made by the society (Deegan, 2002) but also to conduct appropriate reflection work of how the existing organizational culture is being translated into strategies, structures and the behavior practiced by all individuals in the organization (Mor Barak, 2014). Therefore, it is of importance to have a conscious approach to the role organizational culture plays within diversity management and its abilities to realize the established objectives with an increased cultural diversity (Pless & Maak, 2004).

3.4.1 A culture of inclusion

Developed on the one hand as a reaction to the many disappointments stated by organizations that has been unable to handle the challenges of increased diversity (Pless & Maak, 2004), and on the other hand as a response to the lack of knowledge of ways to generate organizational settings in which cultural diversity is allowed to strive (Guillaume et al., 2013); the concept and practice of inclusion has become central within the diversity management literature. Establishing a sense of inclusion within its workforce is today seen as the key approach of how to benefit from diversity across multiple levels of an organization, placing the concept at the forefront of contemporary diversity practice (Ferdman, 2013). Ferdman (2013:5) gives a clear definition of this type of organizational environment stating that:

"Inclusion is grounded in what we do with that diversity when we value and appreciate people because of and not in spite of their differences, as well as their similarities. More important, it involves creating work contexts in which people are valued and appreciated as themselves and as integrated and complex - with their full range of differences and similarities from and with each other."

But just incorporating a culture of inclusion itself, neither increases the diversity at an organization, nor retains the talented people with diverse background. In other words, “doing” diversity, also requires “being” diverse (Pless & Maak, 2004: 130). According to Milton Gordon (1964), famous for his work on assimilation of immigrants in the United States\(^6\), there

\(^6\) Milton Gordon’s 1964 book “Assimilation in the American Life”
are dimensions along which the integration of individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds into an organization should be analyzed. Gordon’s work acted as the foundation to Cox’s (1991:37) model that categorizes organizational types according to the level of integration of individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds. Table 5 below is a modification of that model, outlining different organizational cultures and their approach to individuals with different cultural backgrounds.

Table 5. Organizational types according to Cox (1991:31) with modifications made by the author

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of Integration</th>
<th>Culture of Exclusion</th>
<th>Culture of Plurality</th>
<th>Culture of Inclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experienced level of being valued for its uniqueness</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced level of belongingness with the organization</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of structural integration (e.g. overall presence of people with different cultural background in the organization)</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of people with different backgrounds into informal organizational structure (e.g. joint lunches, coffee breaks etc.)</td>
<td>Virtually none</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational identification</td>
<td>Large majority-minority gap</td>
<td>Medium to large majority-minority gap</td>
<td>No majority-minority gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree if cultural bias (e.g. discrimination of negative prejudices about a colleague based on his/her cultural background).</td>
<td>Both discrimination and prejudice is prevalent</td>
<td>Progress is seen on both discrimination and prejudice. Both continue to exist</td>
<td>Both discrimination and prejudice are eliminated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of integration of people with a different cultural background</td>
<td>Exclusion</td>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How individuals are treated within a company, and the signals sent through the overall organizational behavior affects the outcome of diversity management (Cox, 1991). In opposition to a culture of exclusion, a company that embraces a culture of inclusion acknowledges differences such as uncommon languages, unfamiliar religions or new traditions and sees them as unique, contributing to the overall performance of the organization by e.g. reaching new customer bases or spurring innovation. What separates a culture of plurality from a culture of inclusion is the level of belongingness an individual with a different cultural background feels with the organization (Cox, 1991). In culture of plurality, individuals are seen as unique but due to the organization being relatively homogenous the degree of structural integration is only partial or minimal which hampers an individual belonging to the minority, to express ideas or to communicate with others due to e.g. language barriers. These differences might also affect the level of informal integration where people with a different cultural background seldom participates at activities outside office hours. Consequently, this situation effects this person’s organization identification and might create large or large to medium majority-minority gaps within the organization increasing the degree of cultural bias where discrimination and prejudice are widespread or at least existent.

At a diverse workplace that embraces a culture of inclusion, all individuals no matter background are seen as unique, invited to all sorts of activities, do not face any discrimination due to his/her background and experience a high level of belongingness with the organization. Hence, instead of trying to assimilate a person belonging to a minority group, i.e. by constantly insisting on him/her to learn the common language in order to be acknowledged in the organization, a culture of inclusion values these differences, sees them as a beneficial contribution to the overall organizational performances and therefore strive at fully including
these individuals’ and his/her characteristics into the organization (Cox, 1991). The more people feel included within the organization, the greater is the likelihood of individuals’ feeling career optimism, increasing the chances for this person to stay within the organization (Friedman, et al., 1998).

### 3.4.2 Behavior in a culture of inclusion

According to a majority of researchers within the field of workplace diversity (see e.g. Ferdman, 2013; Mor Barak, 2014; Pless & Maak, 2004) important is that all organizational actors at all organizational levels works jointly for a culture of inclusion to thrive. To be able to analyze whether diversity management at Svevia has had the ambition to make people feel included, an analytical lens used to operationalize the theory of inclusion in a more practical setting was needed. A combination of Ferdman’s (2013: 42) list of ‘Inclusive Behaviors for Everyone and for Leaders; Inclusive Organizational Policies and Practices’ based on previous research and practice within the field of cultural of inclusion (see e.g. Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group, 2011; The Hartford 2006; Pless & Maak, 2004; Ferdman et al., 2009) together with Pless and Maak’s (2004: 140) list of ‘Competencies for Inclusion’ was being used as an analytical lens for this study, outlined in figure 4 below. The actions are divided into three segments in line with the conceptual framework (see section 3.5) created for this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic level - Organizational Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Embraces respect, fairness, justice, and equity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fosters transparency throughout the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fosters continual learning and growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Invites engagement and dialogue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactical level – Structure and Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provides a framework for assessing and implementing cultural diversity policies and practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Builds systems, processes and procedures that support and sustain inclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promotes engagement and dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allows a flexible work approach to encourage actors to realize their full potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encouraging open and frank communication by openly share information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strives to create a diverse organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understands and talk about how inclusion connects to the mission and vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhance individual and collective competence to collaborate across cultures and groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operational level – Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Show respect, appreciation and recognition for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Holds oneself and others accountable for creating an inclusive culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are curious and willing to learn and be influenced by others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dare to lean into discomfort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Acknowledge, connect, and engage with everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shows signs of self-awareness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 4. List of behaviors and/or actions for a culture of inclusion based on Ferdman, (2013:42) and Pless and Maak (2004:140).

The purpose of describing behaviors and actions for a culture of inclusion is, according to Ferdman (2013) to provide guidance for how organizational actors are to behave in a way that allows for inclusion. If a majority of the above attributes are coherent with how the company acts in regards to its diversity management, the greater is the likelihood that a culture of inclusion is present and hence the chances for a successful diversity management increases.
3.5 A conceptual framework

Chapter three has presented the theoretical starting points for the study. It has also explained how the traditional paradigm of businesses has shifted. From initially being solely profit maximizers’, businesses are today also accounting for its social responsibility towards the society in which they operate (Zadek, 2004). Explanatory factors to why such a large part of businesses are changing towards a more CSR-oriented mindset have been outlined through new institutional theory and the theory of legitimacy. The chapter also presented a review of the current state of knowledge regarding diversity management to address future challenges such as lack of competence needed for businesses to survive.

Illustrated in figure 5, the conceptual framework has captured the main theoretical concepts and illustrates the understanding of the theoretical framework, which also indicates the connections and interactions between the theoretical concepts. The conceptual framework is based on Dauber et al. (2012) “Configuration model of Organizational Culture” (see Appendix 2) and is to embody the specific direction by which the research will have to be undertaken. By reason of this study’s focus on the practice of diversity management throughout the various segments of a company, the conceptual framework is chosen as a relevant analysis model to explore the relationship between the strategic, tactic and operational level of the company. Hence, the model allows for analyzing the dynamic relationship between the organizational culture, diversity strategy and structure and behavior of inclusion (internal environment) and the impact the society in which the organization operates in (external environment) has in terms of acting as a legitimizer of the organizational operations (Dauber, et al., 2012). The ability to provide an understanding of the relationship between the different organizational levels has been identified as this model’s strengths (ibid.). Hence, the conceptual framework meets the requirement of representing whole system and its operationalization of a strategy (ibid.).
The conceptual framework separates between *domains* (ellipses) and *processes* (arrows) where domains such as strategy, structure and performance, found within the regular organizational segments and are described as upholding the organization activity, all affected by the organizational culture. Processes are described as feedback-loops, explaining how and why organizations change (Dauber, *et al.*, 2012). Through these feedback-loops information is being transferred within the organization, allowing for a flexibility that enables the company to evolve with the external society’s constantly shifting demands. In such way, the values identified in the organizational culture act as a *guidance*, impacting the framing of the structure and strategy which through the process of *operationalization* will navigate the behavior of the organizational actors in a meaningful way, assuring that the behavior complies with the defined culture and strategy, towards the stipulated objectives (*ibid.*).

The organizational behavior is described as artefacts, i.e. the organizational activities that are visible for the external environment (Dauber, *et al.*, 2012). According to the theory of legitimacy, a company can only survive if its external environment believes that the company is behaving in a legitimate way (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). As such, a stipulated objective cannot be seen as achieved if the external environment condemns the organizational behavior. Through a *performance assessment*, existing organizational behaviors, either condemned by the society or identified as insufficient by the organization not delivering the desired performance, can be revealed. Changes in the structure and strategy are carried out in order to avoid these behaviors to change. If the problem of not reaching the preset goals stays after tactical adaptions, the problem is most likely to be found in conflicting underlying assumption that counteract changes to occur. If so, Dauber *et al.* (2012: 10) suggest that the organizational culture has to be questioned and/or changed. Hence, the organizational culture is directly influenced by the society through their evaluation of the employees’ behaviors (Dauber, *et al.*, 2012). In sum, the conceptual framework illustrates how the cultural, strategic, and structural operations are unfolded through the behavior of the company’s’ employees (*ibid.*).

The configuration model of organizational culture is being used in this study to fulfill the research aim, since it is applicable when studying organizational culture and its effects on a phenomenon tied to strategy and structure (Dauber, *et al.*, 2012). Additionally; since successful diversity management requires that all levels of the organization are involved and that all actors acknowledge the need for a culture of inclusion (Pless and Maak, 2015) the configuration model, which accounts for a systemic view of the organization, is well suited (Dauber, *et al.*, 2012).

### 3.5.1 Selection of respondents in accordance with the conceptual framework

Bryman and Bell (2013) argues that respondents should be selected on the basis of the study's research question. Yin (2014) also states that it is important to anchor the selections of interviewees with the theoretical perspectives to increase the reliability of the study. Illustrated in figure 6 below, this holds true for this study base on two assumptions. Firstly, to collect information about how diversity is being managed throughout the organization, respondents had to be selected from different organizational levels. Secondly, organizational culture and diversity management are two interconnected issues motivated from top-management (Umans, 2008). Hence, three participants in the executive management were selected. Commitment from top-management is crucial but not sufficient, engagement from lower organizational levels is also needed (Cox & Blake, 1991), therefore, respondents at lower levels, such as tactical and operational level at Svevia where selected.
As described in the figure above, the nine respondents have been selected on the basis of the study’s research questions. In order to find answers to the first research question - *How does Svevia work with diversity management?* respondents from different levels of Svevia had to be selected. Important was to assure that respondents who owned some sort of responsibility for diversity management at Svevia were selected. Hence Elisabeth Wretskog, the one who produced the Equal opportunity and Diversity Plan (*E&D plan*) was selected along with Pia Lenkel who is the executive management participant who signed the E&D plan. A range of people from various level of the CE division was selected, since they were the one possessing experience of how diversity management was being operationalized further down in the organization.

In order to seek answer to the second research question - *How does the organizational culture at Svevia allow for cultural diversity?* it was important to select respondents from the executive management since they are ought to define the organizational culture and to function as role models for other part of the organization (Schein, 2004; Widell & Mlekov, 2013). Hence, Charlotte Sandström and Erik Lundman, both participants of the executive management, were selected. All other selected respondents possessed vital information about the organizational culture since they all are employed at Svevia and hence contributors to the organizational culture.
4. Background for the empirical study

*This chapter consists of a background description of the role as a state-owned company in terms of sustainable business and diversity. A short outline of the the problem of skills shortages within the construction sector provides further insights into the current work with cultural diversity at Svevia.*

4.1 Sustainable business for state-owned companies

Svevia is a state-owned company, which means that they are governed by the Swedish Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation but ultimately owned by the Swedish tax-payers (Regeringskansliet, 2015a). The Swedish Government stresses that the state-owned companies should be managed in a professional manner and to have value-creation for the society, as their overall mission (Regeringskansliet 2015b: 3). The state-owned companies are required to act as role-models and set a good example within the field of sustainable business and otherwise act in a way so that they receive public legitimacy (Regeringskansliet, 2015a: 12). As a part of the state’s definition of sustainable business, diversity is being identified as one out of seven priority areas (ibid.:32). Moreover, it is clearly outlined in the State’s Ownership Policy (Regeringskansliet, 2015b: 125) that “[s]tate-owned companies shall take the aspect of diversity into account in their operations and personnel policies”. The overall goal for how state-owned companies are to manage diversity “is that the competence and experiences of all present and future staff are to be made use of in the activity”. However, the state-owned companies are not yet fulfilling this ambition since according to an investigation carried out by SVT and published online, only 1.3 percent of the board members in the 10 largest state-owned companies are of non-Scandinavian descent and none is born, or has any origins outside Europe (www, svt, Einarsson, 2015). Moreover, in these 10 largest companies’ executive management, only two individuals are of non-European descent (ibid).

The state, has for many years, been actively promoting gender equality. The State has been signaling its serious focus on reaching gender equality whereby objectives has been outlined, ought to be fulfilled by all state-owned companies. For the board of directors, the proportion of each sex should be at least 40 percent (Regeringskansliet, 2016a). This active approach has given results: in 30 of the 49 state-owned companies’ boardrooms, the gender distribution is 40-60 percent women and men (ibid.: 21). In the 2015 Annual Report for state-owned companies, equality or balanced gender distribution is being mentioned more then twice as often as diversity (82 times compared to 29). Gender equality is also one out of three areas for which statistics for continued development is disclosed for all state-owned companies. Nowhere is there a sign of any objectives of cultural or ethnical diversity. Only one state-owned company has a key performance indicator for diversity (ibid.;:79). This is being acknowledged by the responsible Minister and his State Secretary who acknowledge that there still remains a lot of work to be carried out in terms of raising the level of diversity among the board of directors for the state-owned companies (www, svt, Einarsson, 2015). The two former Ministers are being self-critical and admits that more should have been done in terms of diversity. They also reveal that priority was given to balancing the gender representation, less focus was hence given to diversity in terms of ethnicity or cultural belonging (ibid.). No where at the section in which Svevua us being portrayed in the 2015 Annual Report is either equality or diversity being brought up.

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7 The other six goals cover the areas of; environment, human rights, working conditions, anti-corruption, business ethics and equality (Regeringskansliet, 2015a:32).
8 Original text in Swedish, translation made by the researcher
4.2 The talent battleground

In PwC’s 18th yearly global CEO-survey, in which 1,344 CEOs from 68 different countries participated, CEOs identified finding key skills as one of the greatest future challenge (PwC, 2015: 20). Some 60 percent of the respondents said that the lack of future competence is a direct threat to their organizations growth (ibid.). The same worry is seen among Swedish businesses. According to the Recruitment Survey conducted by the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise in 2014, in which a total number of 16,210 Swedish companies participated, more than 50 percent of the participants expressed that they are facing difficulties in attracting demanded competence (Karlsson, 2014). Furthermore, two out of three Swedish business leaders argues that the difficulties in finding the key competence are a direct threat to the sustainability of the company (PwC, 2014b). Companies’ inability to recruit workforce with needed skills could result in cuts in production due to lack of human capital resulting in declined orders. Ability to sustain profitability is impacted since business opportunity is lost, leaving little room for the company to grow or to meet the market demand (Karlsson, 2014).

4.2.1 Shortage of engineers

The administrative agency Statistics Sweden (SCB9) predicts that in the year of 2030, Sweden will have a shortage of approximately 100,000 engineers, a number which also includes engineers with a lower level of education such as a degree from a technical high school (Dahlberg, 2008). Is is predicted that there will be a future lack off engineers specialized in road management, construction and aerial surveying. Higher demands for engineers is identified as one influential aspect but not the main reason for the future deficit. Rather, the main reason is that the number of engineers with a lower level of education that will retire until 2030, is twice as large as the prospected addition of newly graduated engineers (ibid.).

SCB has also investigated how the proportion of people with a foreign background employed in the construction sector looks like, illustrated in figure 7. In 2014 the number of employees in the construction sector with a foreign background was 10.9 percent compared to 15.6 percent for the entire workforce at the same year (www, Sveriges Byggindustrier, 2016).

![Fig. 7. Foreign born in the construction sector compared to other sectors in 2004-2014 (www, Sveriges Byggindustrier, 2016).](image)

Shown in the figure above, one can however see a positive trend. In 2004 the proportion of employees with a foreign background in the construction sector was 5.4 percent compared to 11.4 percent for the entire workforce meaning that the differences where 6 percentages. Ten

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9 SCB stands for ‘Statistiska Centralbyrå’ in Swedish
years later, the percentages between the proportion of employees with a foreign background in the construction sector compared to the entire workforce decreased to only 4.8 percentages (www, Sveriges Byggindustrier, 2016). Due to an increased international mobility, the number of foreign companies in Sweden is also increasing, especially seen within the construction sector. This brings added competition both regarding the ability to win projects and to attract the labor available. The number of foreign competitors is also believed to increase since a wish from the government is to make it easier for foreign companies to be able to tender for projects in Sweden (www, regeringen, 2014).

4.3 A brief presentation of Svevia

Svevia was formed in 2009 when Vägverket Produktion\textsuperscript{10} was corporatized (www, Svevia, 2, 2016). Today Svevia is an independent and result-driven state-owned company with financial profitability as an ultimate goal (www, Svevia, 1, 2016). Transforming from being a state agency with less demanding requirements on generating financial profit, into getting exposed to competition has been acknowledged as a challenge for the company in terms of generating profitability (pers.com., Lenkel, 2016; Bosma, 2016). Despite a lot of adaptation, Svevia did not manage to generate a profit during their first years as an independent company (Svevia, 2016). Partly due to this transformation, Svevia has undergone an organizational change where major cuts in Svevia’s workforce have been executed. Due to poor financial results, approximately 1000 employees has had to leave the company throughout the last couple of years (pers.com., Lenkel, 2016).

Today, the company is recovering and is now in need of recruiting new staff. As a part of Svevia’s strategy to become a more profitable company, one objective is to lower the average age of its employees (Svevia, 2016: 24). Svevia’s overall corporate vision is to be considered the number one in construction and maintenance work of roads and other infrastructure work in Nordic countries (Svevia, 2016). In order to reach that goal, the company’s recently resigned CEO states that attracting and retaining talented personnel is key (Internal doc., Svevia 4, 2015). As a part of this focus, increased diversity management is identified as a strategic approach where increasing the level of people with a foreign background is one aspect among the wider definition of increasing diversity at Svevia (Internal doc., Svevia, 2, 2016). Although successful recruitments have been carried out, which has led to a renewal in the composition of the staff over time, still the level of employees with a foreign background remains low. As such, Svevia is not an exception in terms of lack of cultural diversity among its workforce. A quick look at the board of directors at Svevia, a quite homogenous picture is given where no one seems to originate from other than Nordic countries (www, Svevia, 6, 2016). The same goes for the executive management (\textit{ibid.}) with only one exception - Zdravko Markoviski, Svevia’s former CEO who is born in Macedonia (Internal doc., Svevia 4, 2015). The company’s entire workforce can be divided in to two bigger categories; administrative officers and skilled workers where the former mostly spend their working hours at offices while the latter are mainly found in the production line. Out of approximately 2000 employees, the number of foreign-born\textsuperscript{11} employees was in 2014 only 6 percent (Internal doc., Svevia 2, 2016:3).

\textsuperscript{10} Vägverket Produktion was a part of Vägverket, a formal institution responsible for Swedish transport. Today, parts of the institution lie under the Swedish Transport Administration. Vägverket Produktion was responsible for road management and maintenance of other infrastructure-related issues in Sweden (www, Svevia 2, 2016)

\textsuperscript{11}
5. **Empirical data**

In this chapter, both primary and secondary data gathered is presented. The first part of the chapter describes the identified statements, with strategies and actions taken in relation to diversity management at Svevia. The data is in the first part presented in accordance with the different organizational levels; strategic, tactical and operational level, for definition, see p. 15. The second half explains how the current organizational culture is realized and perceived by the respondents.

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5.1 Cultural diversity at the *strategic level* of Svevia

The ultimate responsibility for Svevia’s diversity management lies with Svevia’s CEO (Internal doc., Svevia 2, 2016). At the section in the 2015 Annual Report, in which the CEO, the current CEO, Zdravko Markovski stresses the importance of widening the company’s horizon to increase the level of diversity as one way on “the route forward” for Svevia (Svevia, 2016: 34). Markovski states that the foundation for a successful company lies in attracting talented people, why Svevia’s future is determined by the battle for talents (Internal doc., Svevia 4, 2015). This has to be done “not just by rewarding, but also by praising, increasing the employees’ visibility, challenging them and to get people to develop and grow within the company” (*ibid.*: 13).

In order to reach Svevia’s corporate vision, one important aspect identified at the strategic level is to be acknowledged as the most attractive employer for whom ever wish to work with infrastructure (www, Svevia 3, 2016). This ambition is verified by the Vice President for Human Resources (*VP for HR*) who states that being acknowledged as an attractive employer is a strategically prioritized area for Svevia’s long-term survival. Business leaders at the strategic level are convinced that a welcoming climate in which a good leadership spurs engaged personnel is key. Along with this outspoken ambition, sustainability issues under which diversity is being placed, has received more attention at the management meetings today compared to before (pers.com., Lenkel, 2016). As a member of the executive management, the VP for HR thus underlines that there is always room for improvement in terms of sustainability engagement, and especially for a more evident focus on diversity management. Discussions about the persistently low number of women and people with a different background entering the company, has been existent. Discussions that too frequently has ended with members of the executive management stating that “Svevia is not worse than other companies within our sector” (sem., Lundman, 2016). In comparison with other business objectives, such as to become more business-like and result-driven, the focus on diversity is described as slightly left behind. Respondents states that “we have not been able to pursue these issues in a clear and straightforward way, it has rather been raised a little bit from below” (pers.com, Sandström, 2016). The ambition is however that the executive management are to become more well-defined about what they mean with diversity (*ibid.*).

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5.2 Cultural diversity at the *tactical level* of Svevia

At the tactical level of Svevia, it is being stressed that Svevia is taking an active and operational approach towards increasing the numerical diversity as well as to establish routines, such as policies and action plans to reduce the turn-over rate (pers.com., Wretskog, 2016; Lenkel, 2016). The foundation for Svevia’s diversity management is found and described in the Human Resource Policy (*HRP*). This policy describes Svevia’s approach towards generating an attractive workplace, where an inclusive environment is viewed as a given and as a business critical focus (Internal doc., Svevia 1, 2015). For Svevia, it is
important that clients, suppliers and employees associate the company with ethical and responsible business practices and respect for human rights so that trust, respect and confidence is retained in order to establish long-term business relations (Svevia, 2016:32).

In the HRP, diversity is being emphasized as an asset for the company as a whole. This assertion is further developed in Svevia’s recently renewed E&D plan which was approved by the executive management in January 2016. In the E&D plan, valid until 2018, the definition of diversity is outlined where ethnic belonging is identified as one among seven other aspects. It is emphasized that the E&D plan should not be viewed as something new and unfamiliar by Svevia’s employees. Neither should it become a separate document on top of the other business activities, therefore a great extent of the objectives and action points found in the plan, stems from the overall business- and action plan (pers.com., Wretskog, 2016). The E&D plan includes objectives and actions to be carried out as a way to assure that all employees has equal rights, possibilities and responsibilities. Objectives are identified regarding gender equality but no objectives have yet been identified for diversity. Frustration over the difficulty of setting goals in the field of e.g. cultural diversity is being expressed by respondents (ibid.). In the E&D plan it is stated that “working from a gender and diversity perspective is to understand, appreciate and exploit the differences in ourselves and people around us” (Internal doc., Svevia 2, 2016: 2). As such a greater diversity among Svevia’s employees is considered to generate a greater variety in terms of skills, more innovation and broader range of perspectives. Moreover, it is stated that equality and diversity is all about how to best attract new staff, capture the employees’ skills and retain the most competent employees. To achieve this Svevia aims at creating an inclusive climate at the workplaces to ensure that the company fulfils its overall goal and legal requirements in terms of equality and diversity (ibid.).

5.2.1 Employee development

One way to retain employees at Svevia is to offer them more than just financial remuneration (Internal doc., Svevia 4, 2015). Figure 8 below illustrates how a team of employees at tactical level are assigned to focus on developing processes and strategies to ensure and maintain needed skills and competence.

![Diagram](image)

Fig. 8. The researchers understanding of the various focus areas for competence development and supply is managed at Svevia.
For the internal skills development, the Svevia Academy offers leadership development, trainings regarding certifications and standards, and various ways of competence development for employees. To assure skills supply, actions to increase gender equality and diversity management is being outlined as a priority in policies and plans’ such as in the E&D plan (pers.com., Wretskog, 2016). Respondents have stated that Svevia is offering employees flexibility in terms of providing a chance to change projects or assignments. Changes sometimes occurs naturally when new projects arise, but changing a persons’ position is also identified as a possible solution when someone indicates dissatisfaction with his/her current position or task. Respondents also report that they feel comfortable in being assigned new tasks if getting the opportunity, proven by one of the respondents who recently moved from the division of Road Management to his current position within the CE division (pers.com., Rydberg, 2016). Being promoted from a lower position into a management position is not given, but occurs quite frequently.

5.2.2 Leadership
Proper leadership is stated as essential for the company’s overall performance and long-term success (Svevia, 2016). Managers at Svevia has to first and foremost have the right attitude and ability to lead employees towards the defined business goals. Possessing the capacity to lead and follow up; working with people; have a commercial thinking and the endeavor to deliver results and achieving customer expectations are four competences listed as requirements within Svevia’s leadership model (ibid.). At Svevia it is important that managers at all levels strive towards creating multicultural working teams. Understanding and skills of how to take advantage of people’s various backgrounds, knowledge levels and capacities are needed, something that Svevia provides in their leadership programs (pers.com., Lenkel, 2016). In practice, there is an outspoken will to create multicultural teams, thus being identified as a difficult task according to respondents. Since there is an overall shortage of employees, “you take what you have” when winning a tender (pers.com., Lundman, 2016). Creating teams where a mix of people with various background becomes close to impossible since there is a lack of choices (ibid.).

5.2.3 Recruitment
To get a broader range of alternatives to choose among when establishing working teams for a project, it is expressed that Svevia has to hire more people differentiating from the norm. The entrance to a company starts through a recruitment process, a process that at Svevia is said by respondents to be completely competence-driven (pers.com, Wretskog, 2016). According to the law, Svevia is deemed to put extra effort to attract applicants of an underrepresented group when hiring (Discrimination Act (2008:567) chap. 3. 7-9 §§). This is acknowledged in Svevia’s E&D plan where three objectives are listed where one of the objectives specifically focuses on diversity. It states that Svevia “are to increase diversity in all groups and at all levels within the company to be seen as an attractive employer, to broaden the recruitment base and to attract the best skills” (Internal doc., Svevia 2, 2016:7). To reach these three objectives, four action points has been listed in which a competence-based recruitment process, applied in all recruitment processes, are to reduce the risk of discrimination (ibid.). In practice, respondents’ states that competence is the only thing they have in mind when recruiting, “how a person looks like or who they are is something that I don’t care about, that is not important” (pers.com., Hooft, 2016). Four other respondents say that the most important aspect when recruiting is whether the candidate shows signs of interest for the position or not. Thus, it is stated that the person needs to “fit into the team” (pers.com., Bosma, 2016). It has also been raised that individuals need to “think similar to how we think here at Svevia” in order for cooperation to last (pers.com., Hooft, 2016).
According to the VP for HR, there is not really any barriers for people with a foreign background to enter Svevia. Rather, the low level of diversity within the company is argued to be a result of a general lack of employable people diverting from the norm (pers.com., Lenkel, 2016). Respondents state that one potential explanation to the low level of diversity could be found where managers recruit from. Almost all respondents say that managers too often use their established networks when looking for new staff, many times consisting of a very homogenous group of people, very often middle-aged men (pers.com, Lundman, 2016).

According to respondents who are responsible of assuring financial returns on projects, the construction sector is identified as very risk-sensitive. If one project fails due to poor performance by workers, the entire company will get damaged. To avoid that, managers are hiring people they know or has been recommended by others to recruit. However, if managing to enter the company as a person not belonging to the norm, respondents describe that one is being treated as an equal even if you are unable to speak Swedish or has another cultural background. For example, within a project where a group of workers only spoke Polish, having to speak English was expressed as very frustrating and time-consuming according to the manager for the project (pers.com., Gustavsson-Roos, 2016). Attaining a more flexible and innovative approach, the project in the end succeeded and brought positive experiences of working with non-Swedish workers (ibid.). Another similar example is given by another respondent who states that “now everyone is asking me to bring those Spanish guys, since they showed such accuracy and engagement for their tasks” (pers.com., Rydberg, 2016).

All respondents are convinced that more diversity at Svevia, including people with a different background, is positive for the company. On the question why it is good for Svevia, various answers are given but the overall response is that Svevia has to “follow the societal development” (pers.com., Gustavsson-Roos, 2016) and that Svevia no longer can limit the recruitment-base to how it has always looked like (pers.com., Wretskog, 2016). Respondents believe that Svevia most likely can find a lot of needed competence if recruiting among for example the refugees and migrants Sweden has been receiving lately. This group of people is argued to act as a potential substitute to replace the older generation that is already shrinking, leaving many positions empty and difficult to fill out (pers.com., Gustavsson-Roos, 2016).

5.2.4 Internship Program for engineers with foreign degrees
The management of Svevia has acknowledged this potential opportunity and is currently running a partnership with the Swedish Employment Office in which engineers with foreign degrees are given the opportunity to carry out internships at Svevia. The idea was raised by the deputy CEO and started in October 2015 after the executive management approved the suggested action plan created by the HR team. Svevia has an ambition to offer 5-10 individuals an internship position which hopefully will end up in permanent employment (pers.com., Lenkel, 2016). An initiative like this one is seen as a “must do” since many other companies have been implementing similar partnerships (pers.com., Sandström, 2016). VP for HR thus underlines that even though this is one step in the right direction, these initiatives are time-consuming. Other respondents have also acknowledged the time aspect as hampering, but thus argues the importance of setting aside time to properly integrate new people. Moreover, one respondent has expressed the need for more flexibility within Svevia in terms of what languages to speak at the worksites. It can not be taken for granted that Swedish is the only language to be spoken at Svevia’s workplaces (pers.com., Sandström, 2016).

5.2.5 Trainee program
Another strategic way to assure future competence for Svevia has been to invest in the trainee
program. The trainee program has also been a central part in fulfilling the goal of rejuvenate the company (Svevia, 2016). During the period of 2012-2015 Svevia recruited 64 trainees, including 56 engineers in which 52 of these recruited trainees are now employed by Svevia (Svevia, 2016: 24). When selecting candidates for this program, an ambition has been to accept 30 percent women and 30 percent with a foreign background. The result is that the pool from which Svevia later on can recruit from will widen in terms of the candidates’ competence, characteristics and qualifications (pers.com., Lenkel, 2016). Highlighted by several respondents, it has been perceived as easier to get a more diverse group of applicants when announcing trainee positions, which is understood as being a result of how the Swedish society, with a more diversified population, today looks like (pers.com., Lenkel 2016; Sandström, 2016). The numbers of trainees that has signaled a wish to stay within the company after their trainee programs being finished is notably high which the VP for HR sees as a positive indication for Svevia being on the right track in terms of retaining personnel.

5.2.6 Communication about diversity
To anchor new strategies or directives in the entire organization, is by some respondents highlighted as a critical challenge for Sveivia. Therefore, “getting the new E&D plan out in the entire organization” is prioritized by the communication team at the HQ. The ambition is to avoid that the plan remains as just a plan written in a document and stored in a bookshelf (pers.com., Sandström, 2016). Workers are claiming that much of the work and ambitions carried out at the headquarter (HQ) is “empty gestures” without any association with the reality at the working sites (pers.com., Rydberg, 2016). For example, the E&D plan not being successfully integrated in the production line, was identified as one explanation to why the objectives stated in the earlier version of the E&D plan was not achieved.

The most common communication channels are Svevia’s intranet, reoccurring newsletters and the staff magazine “Vi på väg”. Priority has been given to avoid making the communication too complicated or “too far away from the production line” (pers.com., Wretskog, 2016). The Communication Manager highlights the importance of oral communication between managers and employees, where the communication team is to support leaders in how to communicate most effectively with their staff. Reminding managers about the importance of them transferring policies, strategies and other decisions taken at strategic levels, and how to communicate it to the workers, is prioritized. Skilled workers are being identified as a particularly challenging group to reach. All employees are not having a daily-access to the intranet since many of the skilled workers are spending their days outside at the working site. With the current intranet now being redesigned, importance is placed on making the intranet accessible and comprehensive on a mobile device accessible through smartphones (pers.com., Sandström, 2016). Another solution to increase the communication possibilities has been to establish more informal channels for communications such as the recently establishment of a Facebook-group for Svevia’s employees where they, in a more informal way, can get updates and communicate with others within the company.

5.3 Cultural diversity at the operational level of Svevia
A majority of the respondents at the operational level is declaring that their outer most important task is to ensure that the project runs according to plan. The outcome of a project is therefore primary whereby the process of how the project is developing, and how workers perceive the projects’ development is secondary. As a decentralized organization, the daily activities and the perception of Svevia’s operations differs between the people working at the HQ and people working out in the production line. One respondent at the operational level rejects the statement that Svevia is a flat organization where communication is easy, one is
being heard and workers’ opinions are taken into account (pers.com., Rydberg, 2016).

However, when a message is being sent from the HQ, such as for example when a new policy or plan is being launched, managers declare that they have to “make it become serious” for it not just to be seen as a forced and meaningless “thing”, lacking any real substance (pers.com., Sundelin, 2016).

Bringing up new policies or generally discussing the future of current projects, potential issues or obstacles identified, are being discussed at various meetings at the operational level. Issues such as how the working climate at the working sites is perceived has been a standing discussion point at bigger meetings where managers “simply ask how people feel” (pers.com., Bosma, 2016). Importance is placed on making “everyone heard” and that “other aspects coming from different opinions” has to be included (pers.com., Sundelin, 2016). Respondents has mentioned joint breakfasts, lunch-time, weekly meetings and workplace related gatherings\(^\text{12}\), as situations in which all employees at a certain project are to meet. The workplace related gatherings, in which all workers involved in a project are to meet, are said to occur at least three to four times a year (pers.com, Bosma; Sundelin, 2016). However, one respondent thus states that these gatherings are not happening as often as they should, or sometimes not at all (pers.com., Rydberg, 2016).

5.3.1 Workplaces

Since jobs are found wherever demand peaks, the workplace for employees at the operational level can vary a lot. As a skilled worker but also as an administrative officer, one might get stationed on a different location from one’s home. For some employees this means that for periods, one “might end up spending more time with your colleagues then with your real family” (pers.com., Bosma, 2016). Therefore, creating some sort of team spirit, assuring that people feel comfortable and that people respect each other is being argued as very important. As identified by one respondent, working in such a tight environment increases the risk of friction among co-workers (ibid.). Since the project is divided into different phases where different workers are fulfilling their tasks, workers are very dependent on each other and on others prior work to be able to carry out the next step of the project. As such, disputes can create issues and affect the work efficiency and hence the overall result of a project. Complaints from skilled workers such as “everything is so messy” and “they [the managers] lack the ability of making decisions” are given by one respondent as some examples of frustrations seen at some workings sites. One respondent describes that the mood, and the tone among the skilled workers are not always as good as the mood among the administrative officials.

5.3.2 Perceived composition of workers and their tasks

At the working site, the employees are divided into two groups: skilled workers and administrative officers (pers.com, Rydberg, 2016). There is a division of labor among the skilled workers where people are assigned different tasks at different stages throughout the project. The administrative officers spend most of their time at the local project office installed at, or nearby the working site where the actual project is being carried out. A great extent of the skilled workers are subcontractors, employed to carry through a specific part of a project. Even though not being directly hired by Svevia, they are still defined by the respondents as co-workers, seen as equals and hence as a part of the team.

In general, the typical person working as a skilled worker is perceived by all respondents to be a man. Other than that, respondents find it difficult to identify other typical characteristics

\(^{12}\) In Swedish ”Arbetsplatsträff” abbreviated as APT.
representing the majority of workers, since they express that there is a wide range of different people at the working sites. Their backgrounds can vary, “we have both women and youths and more experienced people” (pers.com., Sundelin, 2016) “and there are also workers with an immigrant background” (pers.com., Rydberg, 2016).

5.3.3 The understanding of diversity at the operational level
Respondents highlight the need and want for more diversity at their workings sites since it is said to ease up the working climate and bring more innovation. When talking about how increased diversity would create better working climates, respondents frequently refer to the increase of women when giving examples of why an increase of diversity would be good. It is also being acknowledged that the more diversity Svevia has, the less abnormal does it becomes.

Even though all managers are generally positive towards Svevia’s more active focus on diversity, they are responding with quite vague and distanced formulated answers when talking about whether a more engaged and active approach towards diversity from higher levels, will make a real difference at the operational level. Additionally, one manager describes that “diversity is nothing new” (pers.com., Bosma, 2016). The only thing that is perceived as new in relation to the more outspoken focus on diversity is “perhaps how and in what format we are to report from these meetings” (ibid.). The same manager who states that diversity has always been existent, is arguing that “diversity is not a problem; we have had all nationalities here, for me this is a non-issue […] I don’t really see the problem” (ibid.).

5.4 Organizational culture at Svevia
“A strong culture and values that provide guidance in different situations is important, particularly in a decentralized company as Svevia” (Svevia, 2016:24).

It is stated that Svevia’s way towards success relies to a large extent on how the performance by organizational actors is being carried out, and on the culture the company wish to establish (www, Svevia, 4, 2016). In the 2015 Annual Report, one can read about a culture transformation Svevia is currently undergoing, where more focus has been put on becoming a specialized organization where project monitoring, risk management, standardized report mechanism, governance and compliance has been improved (Svevia, 2016). Moreover, additional focus has been oriented towards the establishment of a clear results-oriented leadership, characterized by ownership and responsibility (ibid.). These are some features of how Svevia are to reach the vision of becoming leading in construction and road management and infrastructure. The vision is ultimately reached by Svevia’s employees who are to act in line with the core value of the organization, translated into four behaviors summarized in table 6.

Table 6. Svevia’s core value translated into four behaviors (Internal doc., Svevia 3, 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability</th>
<th>Caring</th>
<th>Innovative</th>
<th>Enterprising</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We retain trust and confidence among of our business partners.</td>
<td>We show each other respect.</td>
<td>We develop efficient and better ways to carry out the job.</td>
<td>The result is what matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As specialists, we only commit to projects where we can assure the right competence</td>
<td>We care about safe traffic environments and workplaces.</td>
<td>We are flexible to meet our customers’ needs.</td>
<td>We should have profitable projects and satisfied customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We keep our promise</td>
<td>We take responsibility for our environmental impact.</td>
<td>We see opportunities when the conditions are changing.</td>
<td>Equality and diversity among our employees contribute to profitability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The core value and the associated behaviors where framed in 2009, when Svevia was transformed from Vägverket Produktion and are defined as the cornerstones for Svevia’s trademark, corporate code of conduct and business ethics policy (Svevia, 2016: 32). Some of the values has been perceived by employees in the organization as difficult to understand and align with, certainly the one stating that employees at Svevia are to be caring (pers.com., Sandström, 2016). Even though respondents are aware of the existence of the core value and the associated behaviors, not many are able to pinpoint them or to identify them as a part of the perceived organizational culture.

5.4.1 Perceived culture
Respondents have a hard time to answer the question of how they perceive the organizational culture at Svevia. After some small talk about what organizational culture could be like, a majority of the respondents answer that they feel that the culture is “good”. Four respondents say that the organization is very open-mined and allow employees to express their opinions. “Newly hired people has told me that they feel very well-treated, that the atmosphere is open and that other employees are willing to help new employees to learn the job quickly” (pers.com., Lundman, 2016). These respondents are found at either a tactical or strategic level.

When visiting one of Svevia’s local project offices, the description of the perceived culture is confirmed. Workers present at the time were curious and wished to know more about the study. Others were inviting, trying to include others into their conversations. It was noted that workers had an easy-going approach towards each other in which sarcasm and small jokes were frequent, all with a noticed dose of friendliness. The atmosphere and mood was cheerful, relaxed and easy-going. The perception as an outsider was that this particular local project office is an office where people feel and act “like at home”. When visiting, the HQ, the atmosphere also felt very welcoming where people were acting very relaxed with each other.

Moreover, all respondents working at the HQ and a majority of the managers’ states that Svevia feels as a rather small organization where employees are being appreciated and listened to. However, this statement is not shared with the respondent working closer to the project at the operational level. One respondents state the opposite (pers.com., Rydberg, 2016). Overall, when asking about how the respondents view Svevia’s organizational culture, it is being revealed that the culture is quite fragmented. The most frequent explanation behind the fragmented culture is “because the organization is still quite young” (pers.com., Lundman, 2016) and that Svevia has recruited a lot externally. As such, the new staff with their former employers’ culture initially affects Svevia’s culture making it difficult for Svevia to unite around one specific culture (pers.com., Wretskog, 2016).

5.4.2 Organizational gap
As a company with relatively diversified business operations within the various divisions and with a differentiation of day-to-days activities between HQ and lower levels, reaching a sense of belongingness to “one Svevia” is perceived as challenging. There is a perceived gap, by some bigger then by others, between HQ-level and division levels and also between the administrative officials and the skilled workers at the working sites. The respondent with the least engagement with the HQ is expressing a frustration over how people at the HQ are “doing a lot of things that absolutely no one out here [at the production site] knows has happened or even care about” (pers.com., Rydberg, 2016). It is further expressed that the HQ are processing a lot of soft values that are perceived as irrelevant for the workers in the production line. This gap is however not specific for Svevia according to the respondent,
similar situations are seen at every other construction company that he has been working for (ibid.).

5.4.3 A sectorial culture
Being a quite homogenous workforce is also not specific for Svevia. Respondents confirm that the numbers portrayed in figure 7 (p.26) where the number of foreign born workers is significantly smaller then the number of native Swedes, is how the reality looks like at Svevia as well. Workers with a foreign background do exist, but are not seen as often as a Swedish middle-aged man. Respondents states that the situation looks quite similar no matter which construction company you visit. The reason to why is described by respondents as a result of an existent sectorial culture. Stated not just by respondents at Svevia, the sector is famous in the general public for being quite rough and harsh, dominated by strong, middle-aged men (Hallstedt, 2003). This type of culture and sometimes type of people working at a construction company, respondents argue, might not be viewed as very pleasant by people who does not identify oneself with that category of people. Even though a lot of work has been done to wash away the so called “macho-behavior” (pers.com., Bosma, 2016), and to highlight the positive aspects the sector has to offer, there is still a relatively tough climate at the working sites where respondents has stated that employees not always treat each other friendly. There has to be a continuous work with people’s attitudes and one need to constantly remind one’s peers of how one is to behave at Svevia (pers.com., Lundman, 2016).

The positive trend where the number of foreign workers are slowly but steadily increasing, also illustrated in figure 7 (p.26) is experienced by respondents at Svevia too. They are thus surprised that the percent of people with a foreign background working at Svevia is still as low as six percent (pers.com., Gustavsson-Roos, 2016). One manager says that there is a “trend shift” being spotted which is welcomed and very positive (pers.com., Lundman, 2016). However, the further down one gets in the organization, the level of diversity is gradually decreasing, “it gets more homogenous the closer the project one gets” (ibid.).

5.4.4 Project: Inclusive workplaces
With the overall goal of attracting more women and workers with a foreign background to Svevia and to the sector as such, a project called ‘an inclusive workplace’ was initiated during the fall of 2014 at the CE division of Svevia. The project also aims to illuminate and raise the problems that can arise due to the harsh jargon identified at Svevia’s workplaces. One of the initiator behind this project states that Svevia is convinced that a more diverse workforce generates more productive workplaces and hence brings financial profit (pers.com., Hooft, 2016). To create a diverse workforce, Svevia has to broaden their pool of skills and think “differently” (ibid.). If the actual treatment of co-workers at Svevia is being discussed in a more systematized way, it is believed that this initiative will result in workplaces where employees feel a high level of well-being and pride. Stated by another respondent involved in the project, if a group is very homogenous, it gets more challenging to identify the jargon or the unwritten rules a group might have, making it difficult for someone new who might not share much with the established group, to get integrated and to feel belongingness (sem., Lundman, 2016).

“It happens things out there at our working sites, perhaps not things that are a victimization of anyone, but rather minor tings that some of our co-workers have to endure on a daily basis, those things that one not always dares to discuss” (sem., Hooft, 2016).

People at the worksite has to dare to stand up for the company’s core values where unpleasant comments and behavior do not belong. Respondents state that they are trying to think
carefully about what they say but that they “don’t always enter the fight when someone says something inappropriate” (pers.com., Rydberg, 2016).

Referring to the tight competition within the construction sector, one respondents acknowledge that all big companies are fighting to position themselves as a leader within a certain area, where for example one of Svevia’s competitors are profiling themselves being the leader within safety management (pers.com., Lundman, 2016). The same respondent continues and states that Svevia should aim at being profiled as the more welcoming and inclusive company to work for. This position is according to the respondent not yet taken by any other company, hence still available for Svevia to conquer (sem., Lundman, 2016).

According to one respondent, a reason to why this project was initiated was due to the result of internal evaluations which followed the completion of a trainee-program. At the evaluation, trainees indicated that a cultural change among the employees was needed (pers.com., Hooft, 2016). This statement is confirmed by VP for HR who states that a sort of “cultural clash occurs when well-educated trainees enter our work sites” (pers.com., Lenkel, 2016). Discussions started regarding what type of language employees at the working sites are using, how welcoming it is, what type of comments these trainees are exposed to and so on (ibid.).

In order to seek assistance and guidance of how to initiate a project like the project an inclusive workplace, the Swedish Construction Federation was contacted as a first step. Secondly, the person in charge of the project spent much time consulting the literature written (pers.com., Hooft, 2016). After that, several project groups were established consisting of a broad range of people such as foremen, production managers, representatives from the work environment department, the union and the communication department, where the task was to discuss concrete actions of how to carry out and implement the project. A request was also sent out to managers within the CE division asking them if they wished to recommend someone suitable for the project to be asked to join the project group. After several meetings, it was jointly decided that the practical implementation was to consist of local workshops in which workplace-related dilemmas are to be brought up and discussed. These dilemmas (see example in the box below) are based on real-case situations where employees have been asked by the managers at the divisional executive management to submit dilemma’s portraying a situation that they have experienced in reality at the working sites (sem., 2016, Lundman).

“Start-up process of a project is rushed and the establishment is not in order when the project starts. In other words, there is a chaos at the working site. Hence, the group of workers decides to name the place “Serbia” since they consider it to look like a war zone. One of the co-workers originate from Serbia and feels offended.”

In January 2016 the project was launched, and during one month, nearly 80 out of the approximately 450 employees at the CE division received education through participating in these workshops. At the workshops, it is being explained that the participants are to talk about what they think is a good workplace and how they together can create a working place as such (sem., Hooft, 2016). The project is planned to continue for the time being where the number of employees participating are to increase.

5.4.5 Transforming towards result-orientation

“Making Svevia an enterprising company where profitable projects and customers are key since the result is what matters” (Svevia, 2016: 6).

13 The Swedish Construction Federation, in Swedish "Sveriges Byggindustrier” is the trade association for private construction companies and employers. The association is a member based organization including more than 3,100 members representing over twenty corporations with more than 100 employees, and some 1,400 companies with under ten employees (www, Sveriges Byggindustrier, 2016)
The transformation process from being a formal institution with a consensus-driven culture into becoming a result-oriented and business-driven organizations is according to respondents still an ongoing and noticeable process. Much focus has been put on the core value “Enterprising” (see p. 34 for the others) where the result is required to be put at the center of every project. What also is listed as describing the core value is that “equality and diversity among our employees will contribute to profitability” (Svevia, 2016:6).

Respondents mean that they are more down to earth compared to other companies within the construction sector. It is explained that “the culture from where [Svevia] came from, that [they] were an institution and not so result-driven before” (pers.com., 2016, Sandström), could be one explanation to why Svevia is down to earth, which a majority of the respondents agree with. According to respondents at tactical level, Svevia has to become more “business-like and to charge our customers for the work that was agreed upon” (ibid.). Respondents also stresses that the culture when being Vägverket Produktion was probably a bit stronger and that the “tremendously strong link to the company is not there to the same extent” today (pers.com., Wretskog, 2016). However, according to another respondent, this can also be explained with the change in attitude regarding an employee’s loyalty towards its employer in general. “Moving to another company within the sector today is seen as more okay compared to when we where Vägverket Produktion” (pers.com Sundelin, 2016). This reality is acknowledged by all respondents, stating that the decrease in loyalty makes it even more critical to assure that one is satisfied, feels recognized and welcomed at Svevia’s workplaces.

5.4.6 Transformation as a result of nagging

As expressed by several respondents at the HQ, there seems to have existed a shift at the working sites where managers today “are with us, thinking like we do and spreading similar messages as we do” (pers.com., Sandström, 2016). This is confirmed by one respondent working at the production line who agrees that they have been invited to the HQ to discuss and develop ideas. Being a part of the decision making process has made it easier to deliver the initiatives to workers as a manager (pers.com., Sundelin, 2016). However, managers express that one constantly has to remind one’s peers about different procedures that are highly prioritized by people at HQ level. Such routines are exemplified by the security-related routines, or that Svevia is not allowed to cut corners regarding its diversity management. “But the work with diversity is probably more based on how we, the administrative officials, deliver the information, how to earn acceptance at the final stage, to gain understanding from the others, that is probably the toughest” (pers.com., Sundelin, 2016). Moreover, the respondents compare the focus on diversity with the company’s focus on safety issues and claim that they share many similarities but that the safety aspect becomes more concrete and arguable than the focus on diversity. Some respondents, all at the operational level thus feel that whatever problem identified as motivating the initiative ‘an inclusive workplace’, seems to have been perceived as less existent further down in the organization. One respondent argue that emphasis has to be put on explaining the reason and motivation behind the focus on diversity and to make workers realize the positive gains of a more focused work with diversity (pers.com., Sundelin, 2016). Another respondent states that the objective with ‘an inclusive workplace’ is probably to increase the number of women, a conviction that many respondents seem to share. Respondents states that more time has to be set aside for diversity, both in terms of highlighting diversity through carrying out the above mentioned workshops linked to the project ‘an inclusive workplace’ but also in terms of “checking upon people, making sure that they attain a sense of belongingness” also during stressful periods (ibid.). It has also been highlighted that it is important to assure that the workers at the production sites knows what the executive management are striving for, what Svevia’s shared goals and ambitions are.
6. Analysis

In this chapter the empirics presented in chapter five are being further analyzed. The chapter is structured in accordance with the Fig. 5 where the titles of the chapters paragraphs are named after the domains and processes that the conceptual framework consist of. The chapter ends with a brief conclusion of the analysis.

6.1 Commitment at a strategic level

At the highest level of Svevia, the executive management is responsible for outlining the direction the company has to take in order to realize the overall business vision (Ackoff, 1990). What they communicate and how they act will have an impact on how structures and strategies are formed, and on how the organizational actors behave, all impacting the overall performance of Svevia. When new strategies, policies or procedures are presented, it is important that these are aligned with the already existing strategies and hence declared as a part of the overall business strategy (Daniel & Bushardt, 2005). Found in both secondary data, such as in the 2015 Annual Report and on Svevia’s website and highlighted during several interviews with respondents at the strategic level, Svevia signals a clear ambition to integrate diversity management into its overall business strategy and everyday operations. The fact that diversity, as a part of Svevia’s CSR commitment, has been receiving more attention at the executive management meetings today compared to before, strengthens that finding. Moreover, the CEOs has declared that the company not just need to win the battle for the talents, but also to succeed with retaining needed competence within the company by offering employees more than just financial returns. This indicates that diversity management is a part of Svevia’s overall business objectives for long-term survival. According to Gotsis and Kortezi (2015) a company has to do more than raise the level of diversity numerically in order to retain the employees who might differ from the norm. Being convinced that a welcoming climate, expressed by participants at the executive management, has to be created at Svevia’s working sites, were people wishes to stay, further gives signs that Svevia are at least aiming at moving beyond just increasing diversity numerically.

These findings together are all indicating that Svevia is doing diversity at the strategic level. However, to be able to maximize the benefits of diversity management, a company also has to be diverse (Cox & Blake, 1991; Shore et al., 2011). In terms of the numerical cultural diversity, Svevia’s executive management is completely or to a large extent homogenous which is also the case for Svevia’s overall workforce. Cox and Blake (1991) explains that if the overall presence of people with a different cultural background in the organization is minimal or partial, the people belonging to this group of minorities will most likely feel a very low sense of belongingness with the company, hence increasing the risk of them leaving.Outlined in table 5 (p. 20) minimal or partial degree of structural integration and low experienced level of belongingness are both signs of a culture which is more excluding or plural, rather than including (Cox, 1991). This might however also be explained by external factors, such as a true lack of people possessing the right level of education, or the skills needed for the job, an issue that has been raised by respondents.

6.1.1 Providing guidance by acting as role-models’

Establishing a culture that provides guidance in different situations is according to Svevia’s CEO seen as important since the success of the company is said to rely to a large extent on the culture the company wish to establish. This goes in line with what the theory suggests, namely that the success of a company can not only be explained with market forces,
competitive positioning and resource advantages (Cameron & Quinn, 2005). For successfully managing a company’s overall performances, focus also needs to be directed towards a company’s values, personal beliefs and vision, hence the organization’s culture (ibid.). As such the executive management are to act as role-models for others to get inspired by (Schein, 2004; Widell & Mlekov, 2013). In reality this means that if the executive management expresses engagement for a certain issue, the likelihood that others follows in the same direction increases (Cameron & Quinn, 2005). In the case of Svevia, much focus has been directed towards making Svevia more result-oriented, a focus that is also been visualized at the operational level where respondents’ states that the outcome of a project is primary whereas the process of how the project is developing, and how workers perceive the projects’ development is secondary. As such, it can be said that the executive management’s focus is being listened to at both tactical and operational level with great significance.

In terms of acting as role-models for the increase of cultural diversity at Svevia, not many indications from the executive management is given. Rather, one seems to be satisfied with the fact that other companies in the same sector is also experiencing problems with raising the level of diversity which makes Svevia no exception. That Svevia is not worse than any other company in terms of the low percent of people with a foreign background seem to lower the executive management’s engagement.

Having objectives or key indication performances for gender equality and age cohort but not for cultural diversity at Svevia could also be viewed as a rather passive approach. Not having a clear objective to strive towards could signal a lack of commitment leading to the question not being taken serious at lower levels of the organization. Moreover, the executive management seems to have been paying more attention to the core value “enterprising” rather than to all four core values jointly. Sandström (2016) explains that the issue of generating profit maximization has been perceived by Svevia as the foremost important aspect for future survival, leaving less time for defining and promoting diversity.

6.2 Strategies and structures at a tactical level

Realizing shorter-run goals in order to reach the overall vision by navigating the behavior of organizational actors, is the responsibility of employees working at the tactical level (Ackoff, 1990). Tactical decisions are generally concerned with the period within which performance of the organization is evaluated by the external environment (ibid.). At the tactical level of Svevia, several actions, both regarding processes, behaviors and implementations are listed with the purpose to steer all employees towards the goal of being the best company in attracting, retaining and using the competence needed for the future survival of Svevia. Some examples are the way Svevia is, or plan to communicate with its employees, how the recruitment process is to acknowledge the need for more diversity and by having a robust structure in place of how to work with employee development. These actions are all part of the E&D plan, created with the purpose of operationalizing the vision of making Svevia a more diverse organization established at the tactical level and approved by the executive management.

6.2.1 Operationalizing the vision

The plan, along with other policies have recently been revised in order to evolve along with the societal (external environment) changes. Monitoring mechanisms are also given in the E&D plan to make sure that the performance by Svevia’s employees goes in line with the core values, acting as the foundation for the organizational culture Svevia wishes to establish. As such, the E&D plan can be considered a framework for implementing cultural diversity policies, and practices which according to the theory is one important aspect to complete in
order to increase the success of diversity management (Ferdman et al., 2009; Pless & Maak, 2004). However, values, norms and actions framed and packaged in structures and strategies at the tactical level in order to steer the organizational actors towards the overall vision, does not always seem to be transferred throughout the entire organization of Svevia. Previous communication problems, which are still existent to some extent, are said to be one explanation to why previous attempts with implementing the former E&D plan did not fall out as one wished to. Yet, diversity has always been a topic for discussion at all levels of Svevia according to respondents. Measures has been undertaken before with the ambition of bringing more diversity to a sector that has for a long time been defined as very homogenous, facing difficulties to attract personnel in general. This effort is paying off, more women are represented and a slightly positive trend regarding workers with a foreign background is seen. However, the situation in terms of the composition of staff with a foreign background at Svevia has remained quite unchanged in relation to the effort made.

6.2.2 Diversity management operationalized through ‘an inclusive workplace’

Stated by Cox (1991), an organization that accomplish to handle the integration process of its workers in a proper way will generate cost advantages compared to companies who are not focusing on integrating its employees. In the case of Svevia, this could be translated to being able to include all employees, both newly recruited either belonging to the norm or not, and employees that has been a part of the organization even before the transformation from Vägverket Produktion. Such ambition is exemplified in the case of Svevia with the project ‘an inclusive workplace’. When fully implemented in the entire organization, the project aims at establishing a climate where the process of integrating newly hired workers, is expected to be easier and hence more cost effective. If falling out as planned, the project could potentially increase Svevia’s popularity among people possessing demanded competence, who are looking for an employment. It could probably also raise the level of belongingness for newly hired, including people with a foreign background. As such, the initiative ‘an inclusive workplace’ can be viewed as one example of how the diversity strategy and structure at Svevia supports and sustain inclusion. Establishing system and processes to support and sustain inclusion is according to Ferdman (2013) one action needed in order to steer actors towards a culture of inclusion.

Creating more inclusive workplaces is believed to wash away the harsh jargon and making Svevia’s workplaces friendlier and hence strengthening the well-being and pride among the employees. Again, if people feel comfort at their workplaces, the likelihood that they stay, hence being loyal to the company, increases (Cox, 1991). What is said to increase the level of loyalty is the level of employers’ perception of being needed, and having the ability to impact the future of the company (Mor Barak, 2005; Shore et al, 2011). Some respondents feel that they have a role to play in impacting decisions made at a higher level, and that they think that employees at Svevia feels recognized and listened too, while the respondent working furthest away from the HQ level, expressed the opposite. According to the result, this is again not a Svevia-specific situation. The level of company loyalty is said to have decreased within the entire construction sector, making it even more critical to assure that one is satisfied, feels recognized and welcomed at the workplaces of Svevia.

Moreover, companies that succeeds to develop a favorably reputation as a prospective employer will win the battle for talents when the composition of available labor changes and the labor pool is shrinking (Cox & Blake, 1991). This is a development that Svevia is trying to seize. Svevia expresses that a more active diversity management is inevitable in the light of a lack of engineers willing to work in the construction sector, preferably as a skilled worker, and when an increase of people with foreign background in seen in the Swedish labor. Stated
by Cox and Blake (1991:47) the “inevitability-of-diversity”, a more active diversity management is again proven to be a way for Svevia to avoid cost, cost related to personnel matters. Working proactively to assure that the climate allows for a diverse workforce where everyone feels included, which is the objectives with the initiative ‘an inclusive workplace’, can hence be seen as a strategic approach, ought to change the culture and structure of the organization. Such approach is argued to increase the organizations efficiency and maximize the benefits of a diverse workforce (Wise & Tschirhart, 2000). This finding indicates that Svevia is not just aiming at having diversity but to manage diversity as a potential profit-generator.

6.3 Behavior at an operational level

Not all respondents at the operational level share the same understanding as the employees at the tactical level of what is needed in order to change the employees’ behavior towards a more inclusive behavior. Respondents who has been a part of the development of the initiative ‘an inclusive workplace’ has expressed a greater conviction that this is the right way to go, compared to respondents who has not been involved. If the employees are not made involved in processes affecting the future of the company, the strategies and structures runs a risk of being viewed as disconnected from the workers’ reality (Ferdman, 2013). Convincing workers that diversity management should receive more priority could therefore become difficult which by respondents has been expressed as being the case at Svevia. A majority of the managers signals, in one way or another, that there is difficult to set aside time for a project like this. Why it has been difficult to motivate workers to engage more in diversity related matters might be explained either by the lack in time and resources needed, or that the managers themselves are lacking a conviction that initiatives such as ‘an inclusive workplace’ is needed for Svevia.

What all respondents thus agree with is the need for a numerically increase of diversity. And the numerically increase is what is being prioritized. The most important underlying motive for why Svevia focus on diversity management is due to the potential it possesses in raising the available workforce. As brought up in chapter one, to withstand a toughened competition that comes along the increase of foreign companies competing for the same projects as Svevia, innovation, creativity and flexibility, found in a well-managed diverse workforce, is being required (Armstrong et al., 2010). Hence, with reference to Cox (1991) to reap the benefits of a numerically increased level of diversity, the different personalities, characters and perspectives being brought to Svevia has to be embraces and valued. Respondents argue that there are no barriers for people differing from the norm to enter the organization. Yet, when asking respondents involved in recruitment processes, it is being revealed that a person that wishes to work for Svevia has to “think similar” to how people at Svevia think. If deviating from the “common way” of behaving, there is a risk for misunderstandings and hence no good ground for a long-term collaboration. It has also been mentioned that one has to fit into the team, a team that according to Svevia’s current composition of workforce, most likely consists of a group of middle-aged or slightly younger, Swedish men. It is however being stated in the E&D plan that more innovation and different perspectives are requested.

6.3.1 Assessment processes

As stated above, the outcome of the former E&D plan did not fall out as one wished to whereby an assessment of the previous E&D plan was recently carried out. The previous plan was identified as too loosely connected with the overall business strategy and objectives. Moreover, not many employees knew about the plan, it was rather a corporate document being stored somewhere and just an act of “ticking the box”, having a plan in place if
someone would ask. By assessing and evaluating, continual learning and growth is being fostered (Ferdman, 2013) and according to the conceptual model, assessment of existing organizational behaviors, either condemned by the society or identified as insufficient by the organization not achieving defined objective, can be revealed.

Another assessment which can be said has contributed to how Svevia are to reach their overall objective, is through the evaluations of their trainee-programs. During such an assessment, in which trainees were asked about their perception of Svevia, it was revealed that a dissatisfaction with how one was being treated and how people behaved at the worksites existed. As an outcome, employees at the tactical level working at the CE division have been able to motivate a more ambitious and concrete work to be carried out in order to improve the working climate and change the outdated jargon the sector frequently, and for too long have been identified for having. The initiative ‘an inclusive workplace’ was the result and is one identified action for how Svevia addresses, promotes and aiming at increase the existence of different personalities, characteristics and qualities among its employees. This goes in line with how the theory defines a strategic cultural diversity management.

### 6.3.2 Organizational change

According to Ferdman (2013) a fundamental organizational change has to be carried out for the company to succeed with its diversity management. In Svevia’s Annual Report from 2015, one can read about the “culture transformation” Svevia is currently undergoing. However, what is being brought up as prioritized in this transformation is for Svevia to become a more specialized organization where project monitoring, risk management, standardized rapport mechanism, governance and compliance has been improved. That a transformation has happened or is happening, regardless of character and focus, is being confirmed by all respondents. Focus has however been oriented towards the establishment of a clear results-oriented leadership, characterized by ownership and responsibility (Svevia, 2016), which has also been confirmed by respondents.

### 6.4 Culture of inclusion at Svevia

Even though it seems important that workers think similar to how one thinks at Svevia, there seems to be room for flexibility in term of how the work is being carried out. Employees at Svevia report that changing existing work processes according to the composition of the team and the different competences available, is not viewed as problematic. Using different ways to communicate, such as in English instead of Swedish is said to work out fine, even though it might create some frustration initially. Overall, employees are willing to learn, are trying to connect and engage with everyone and dare to lean to discomfort through being exposed to new cultures, which according to Ferdman (2013) and Pless and Maak (2004) are indicators of behaviors that supports a culture of inclusion. As outlined in the result, workers at the operational level is being described by others as very welcoming and curious. Managers are also emphasizing that they actively work with ensuring that employees respect each other and does not talk bad about someone behind ones back. However, indicated by several respondents, workers are not always showing their appreciation for one another, neither do they hold others accountable for creating an inclusive culture. Therefore, one important objective as a part of the project ‘an inclusive workplace’ is to encourage employees’ to stand up for Svevia’s values and to dare to question if an inappropriate behavior is detected.
6.5 Legitimization

Since the overall focus on diversity is explained as a way to eliminate the future risk of running short of competent personnel, the ability to be viewed as legitimate by potential recruits is of great importance for Svevia. Stated by Zadek (2005) companies has to become more flexible and able to evolved according to the societies shifting demands. A statement that is being brought up also by the respondents who describes that Svevia has to focus on diversity related question since the Swedish society and demography is changing. According to NIT the way a company is structured and the way it acts is a result of how the society thinks a company should look like and behave (Jönsson, Persson & Sahlin, 2011). Svevia’s more targeted focus on diversity management can be explained as a response to a societal demand were Svevia as a state-owned business is expected to take certain responsibilities towards the society in which they operate. This is acknowledged by respondents who explains the increased focus on CSR at the higher level of Svevia, as something that is demanded by the society in order to be able to make business. The NIT can also be applied at the case of the internship program for engineers with foreign degrees. Respondents states that it is a must-do since other companies has committed to similar projects. This is a clear case of isomorphism, not being proven to actually bring any direct profit or increase efficiency, but since other companies acting within the same environment has committed to these type of engagement, others will follow (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). If not applied in Svevia too, the company risks to be viewed as nonchalant and hence illegitimate by the society (Deegan, 2002). Additionally, focusing more on the trainee-program could also be one such thing since Svevia is specifically searching for younger employees. Moreover, it can be assumed that the strategic focus on transforming the working climate, creating more inclusive workplaces has had something to do with the evaluations made by trainees indicating their dissatisfaction with the way people behaved at the working sites. Hence, being identified as a less popular employer, where people are not being kind towards each other will directly impact Svevia’s legitimacy and as such the overall performance since the trainee-programs is one common way for Svevia to find potential recruits. The NIT would argue that Svevia’s increased focus on diversity management could be a result of others success stories (Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2009). Hypothetically speaking, it would in practice mean that since competitors to Svevia have successfully managed to to attract and retain employees, managing to eliminate the business risk with a skill shortage, Svevia is copying their actions. This is however not the case as revealed in this study. According to the respondents, the position as the company acknowledged for having a clear focus on diversity and on inclusive workplaces is still available since no other companies has managed to conquer it yet. Not even Svevia.

6.6 A conclusion of the analysis

In sum, with the assistance of the conceptual framework, this study shows that Svevia both communicates and implement an active approach towards its diversity management, thus with various levels of engagement and with varying degrees of conviction. The commitment for diversity is expressed at the strategic level, albeit only in certain selected and given communication channels such as in the Annual Report or in employee magazine’s. Hence, some of the processes through which the information ought to transform a company towards a desired performance, is not as well-functioning for Svevia’s diversity management as it is for other focus areas, such as e.g. the work with making Svevia more enterprising. Illustrated in figure 9 below, it could be stated that the executive management has not fully managed to provide a guidance in the establishment of the diversity strategy and structure.
The convincing and noticeable commitment to diversity management is most evident at the tactical level. Here policies, processes and action plans are established with a clear and communicated ambition to operationalize the overall objectives with diversity management to the operational level. These activities are showing a potential to steer a somewhat negligent group of people towards changing their behavior for the company to be viewed as an even more welcoming workplace than today.

Segments of diversity are incorporated into strategic areas such as the recruitment processes, communication and employee development. It can therefore be argued that Svevia has a clear ambition to make diversity management an integrated part of business operations, not just a document that employees need to know about in order to comply with the requirements as an employee. However, for strategies and action plans to become reality, the people for which they are created, has to be convinced that the procedures that follows the implementation of the strategies and action plans are the right way to go. Nevertheless, these procedures are faced with some resistance mainly as a result of Svevia being a decentralized organization where the distance from the highest level is perceived as quite far. Employees further down in the organization seem to be reluctant to fully agree that there is a need for the activities planned to be carried out to reach the objective of attracting and retaining workforce in order to fulfill the company’s vision. Some are not convinced that there has to occur a change at all.

Meant to change employees’ behavior, which is affected by the organizational culture, the activities might face obstacles if not being motivated from higher levels (Schein, 2004; Widell & Mlekov, 2013). The organizational culture is to act as a “guidebook” in which the company’s underlying assumptions, values and norms are to guide the behavior of all actors. The empirics has thus revealed that the organizational culture is conversely described as fragmented and not as present as one wished. Hence, a culture of inclusion, explained by the conceptual model as urged from the top of an organization, is not yet fully achieved at Svevia.
7. Discussion

In this chapter, the research questions raised in chapter one are being addressed and answered. A discussion about Svevia’s current approach and engagement for diversity management ends with the authors’ thoughts of Svevia’s future work with diversity management. Lastly, the chapter ends with a note on the data quality of this study.

7.1 How does Svevia work with diversity management?

The how and the way Svevia works with diversity management has been described throughout both chapter five ‘Empirical data’ and in chapter six ‘Analysis’. This thesis has revealed that the focus on diversity management in its broader context has been existent for a while within Svevia. Gender equality and age cohort has throughout the years received more focus at all organizational levels of Svevia than the cultural aspect of diversity. However, due to changes in the composition of the population that currently takes place in Sweden more focus has been directed towards the aspect of cultural diversity. The primary goal for Svevia is to find more workforce and since the Swedish workforce is increasingly made up of people with a different cultural background than Swedish, cultural diversity has to be prioritized by Svevia in order for them to reach their long-term vision. Different actions have been undertaken in order to first and foremost increase the currently low percent of employees with a foreign background but also to create workplace conditions that are more welcoming and including than what has previously been the case at Svevia. On the one hand, on can say that Svevia in general is working very well with diversity management but on the other hand, when breaking up the company into the three different organizational levels, the commitment and engagement varies.

7.1.1 Lack of superior engagement

Increased demand on the state-owned companies in general regarding sustainability has made the question of CSR more existent at the highest level of Svevia. Since the definition of sustainable business for state-owned companies include diversity as separated from gender equality, focus on these issues should have been brought to the boardroom too. However, the objectives for cultural diversity outlined by the state, being the ultimate owner of Svevia, is placed on an arguable low level. In the State’s Ownership Policy, it is outlined that “[s]tate-owned companies shall take aspect of diversity into account in their operations and personnel policies” (Regeringskansliet, 2015b:125). The overall goal for how state-owned companies are to manage diversity “is that the competence and experiences of all present and future staff are to be made use of in the activity” (ibid., 125). Taking aspect of something or integrating it into a policy is two remarkably low hanging fruits. Assuring that all employees competences and experiences are acknowledged could perhaps be a bit more difficult since it requires some sort of system-change by an organization. For example, the working language might have to be changed or holiday periods might not look the same as they have always done. However, the last statement is relatively easy to comply with, as long as the numerical cultural diversity remains low or non-existent, which has been the case for many state-owned companies for a while now (www.Einarsson, 2015) including the case of Svevia too.

7.1.2 What type of diversity?

Revealed in the empirics and stated in the analysis, in terms of diversity, the focus on gender equality seems to have been given priority throughout the entire wire of decisions, leaving less focus on cultural diversity. Examples being brought up by the respondents when asking them how diversity could be good for Svevia, the answer is often that a better working
climate is reached with an increase of female colleagues. This is also seen in previous research, where more focus in the literature has been given to gender equality (Cox & Beale, 1997). Perhaps, this could be one explanation to the seemingly low attention cultural diversity has received. If the academics focuses more on one certain issue, (in this case gender equality) that might have an effect on what state representatives are prioritizing, hence sends a signal to companies, particularly the state-owned, on what areas that are to be prioritized.

The analysis has further shown that the focus on cultural diversity at Svevia has been hidden behind a more outspoken focus on profit generation, which can be argued is a result of the lack of engagement from even higher instances, i.e. the state. This might explain why the commitment, or the ability to scale up the focus on cultural diversity has been relatively low at the executive management level. Seen not just in the case of Svevia, the lack of cultural diversity among all state-owned companies, including Svevia, could be argued as a result of how the State has failed in terms of signaling the importance of cultural diversity. A true commitment by all organizational actors can be argued as becoming more difficult if the initiative is not introduced by the highest level of the organization. Certainly when employees sense that the focus on gender equality or profit maximization is valued as more important. It should thus be highlighted that the initiative is just in its starting phase, which might affect the respondents’ attitude towards the efforts made. On the one, it is however very welcomed that the state-owned companies today are more equal in terms of gender then what has been the case before, but on the other hand, the focus on gender equality should not affect the ability for other underprivileged groups to be acknowledged.

7.2 How does the organizational culture at Svevia allow for cultural diversity?

In section 6.1 (p. 39) the organizational change that Svevia has, or is still undergoing was analyzed. It was revealed that the “cultural transformation” as the CEO defined it, seems to solely focus on making Svevia more business-oriented and professional. The focus on profit maximization is several times highlighted at a strategic level, hence signaling that the other organizational actors should also focus more on those objectives. So, on the question whether Svevia has undergone a fundamental organizational change affecting the culture, the answer is yes. Whether the result has generated a more including culture is questionable. Moreover, it has been shown that the organizational culture is rather fragmented. Organizational culture has been identified as a moderator, effecting the success rate of an organizational change where the neglect of the organizational culture has been identified as the most frequently cited reason to why an organizational change fails (Cameron & Quinn, 2005). It can therefore also be questionable whether the organizational culture as such has had any impact on the cultural diversity at Svevia, neither positive or negative.

Analyzed in section 6.3 (p. 42) it has also been indicated that the predetermined way of thinking and acting at Svevia is cemented to the extent that it could potentially hinder people that differs from the predetermined way to enter the company. In a situation where neither the norms, values, beliefs and thus the behaviors are rooted to the extent that a deviation from them is unthinkable, it could be argued that a recruit has to assimilate to the predetermined behaviors in order to survive in the organization (Cox, 1991). A company trying to assimilate employees, i.e. steering them towards a performance which is defined as most appropriate by the company, could potentially lead to employees lacking a sense of conformity with the company (Pless & Maak, 2004). Low levels of conformity is explained by previous research to lead to higher turn-over rates which goes completely against Svevia’s overall goal with diversity management, namely to reduce a risk of skills-shortsages. If one is not allowed to bring in new perspectives to the company, hence not fully included, less innovation, creativity
and flexibility will be spurred, hence hindering Svevia from conquering an advantageous position among its competitors.

### 7.3 The future for cultural diversity at Svevia

The overall perception of Svevia’s approach towards diversity management in general, and more specifically towards the increase of cultural diversity, is perceived as positive. Employees, no matter where in the company, all agree that increased diversity, hence a decrease in homogeneity, would do good for the entire construction sector and as such, also for Svevia. More specifically, an increased focus on diversity management is believed to in the long run potentially raise the available workforce for Svevia. The strategies steering the increased focus on diversity management has thus been accepted and welcomed by the employees at Svevia. The feeling conveyed by respondents is that if the cultural diversity would increase numerically, it would very likely be well received. However, it can be argued that Svevia really need to profile itself as receptive towards a more diverse workforce and really set aside time to include differences. Such profiling would potentially cost time and money, something that might not be seen as easy to justify right now, in terms of the company’s earlier fare economic setbacks. But since Sweden no longer can be determined as homogeneous in terms of its available labor force, the argument “they do not exist” will pass its expiry date sooner then later. The fact that Svevia has already started the work with changing the culture to become more including, shows good and promising visions.

### 7.4 Data quality in the study

As emphasized in the method chapter, the quantitative approach when doing research contain traces of deterioration (Yin, 2014). So has the case been for this study. Conducting interviews with employees at Svevia increased the possibility for the researcher to illuminate how cultural diversity is being operationalized in reality within a company. Due to their moral responsibility to the organization, it is possible that these kinds of sources reward only the positive aspects and outcomes of their work (Bryman & Bell, 2013). As such the information gathered might contain traces of bias, an insight that has been acknowledged by the researcher when analyzing the information gathered. However, conducting interviews with employees at Svevia made it possible to extract information that would have been nearly impossible to get by only using secondary sources. To minimize the risk of bias, as a result of a limited number of interviewees, the study would have benefitted by extending the number of respondents. As mentioned in section 2.1.1, interviews were only carried out with employees at the CE division which might have excluded certain valuable insights. Hence, since this study only examined one division of Svevia, and in which a limited number of respondents have taken part, the results of this study can not be considered valid for the entire company Svevia. However, this study provides valuable insights on how one part of Svevia is currently working with diversity and how this work is experienced by a number of carefully selected employees.
8. Conclusions

This chapter intends to answer the aim of the study. Enabling factors for cultural diversity management is presented as well as a conclusion of the potential implications cultural diversity management at Svevia might have on the wider society. Moreover, a short note that ties back to this thesis title is given. The chapter ends with suggestions for future research.

This research was initiated with the aim of explain how a Swedish company operationalizes cultural diversity management, identified as a strategic premise in order to attract and retain employees with desired skills. The state-owned construction company Svevia was used as a study object in order to realize the aim. By identifying what Svevia do and how they work with diversity management, this study has contributed to the research field by providing an empirical example of how the processes that underlie the translation towards a more diverse workplace could look like. The results of this research has described how diversity management at Svevia is being operationalized by the implementation of a various activities all aiming at increasing the level the numerical level of diversity.

8.1 Enabling factors for cultural diversity management

Answers to the first research question has indicated how Svevia is addressing, promoting and aiming at first and foremost raising diversity numerically, both in a wider aspect and in terms of cultural diversity more specifically. In order to succeed with such mission, previous studies have emphasized the importance of an organizational change affecting all levels of a company, a change that has to be filled with an inclusive organizational culture that allows for cultural diversity to thrive. This has been shown necessary also in the case of Svevia where the currently fragmented organizational culture is not yet fully filled with elements of inclusion.

One potential enabling factor for cultural diversity management is a more concrete conviction that a more cultural diverse workforce is of positive gain. For Svevia, this has to be shown more concretely from the highest governing body of a company. If a company are to reap the benefits of the investments made in diversity management, the owners, the executive management and the managers have to lead the way by first and foremost framing concrete ambitions and objectives signaling the importance of a more culturally diverse workforce. If employees are constantly reminded with why this is important for Svevia and its future survival, the easier it will get to convince people that are to operationalize this ambition, to set aside valuable time for it to become reality. If not, diversity management tends to remain as a strategic incentive taken at higher levels, lacking illustrative relevance for the people who are to implement the strategies at lower levels.

In order to avoid this, the answers to this study’s second research question has disclosed that there is an ongoing work at Svevia where the ambition is to establish a more inclusive culture at the workplaces. This culture is believed to be created through an awareness-raising project, aiming at changing the employee’s behavior. Previous studies have acknowledged that one of the most common explanations to why a change within an organization fails, is because of a neglect of what the current organizational culture is stating and how this might affect the implementation of new strategies aiming for a change. Revealed through this study, there are room for improvements regarding Svevia’s work with its organizational culture, a culture that is perceived as not particularly strong or present at the time being.
8.2 Sustaining future business growth

Svevia, along with many other corporations in Sweden and Europe are today witnessing a decrease of people in working age as a result of the demographic change. At the same time, the effects of an influx of migrant streams, the composition of people in the pool of labor from were to recruit are changing. An increase of people in working age coming from outside the Swedish boarders can therefore be declared as a benefit for a country like Sweden, compensating for the decline of people in working age.

In the case of Svevia, this thesis has shown that a more directed focus on diversity management are believed to solve some of the issues that might come along with an increase of diversity within the workforce. Proactively working with the behavior of existing personnel is ought to ease the integration of people that previously has not been identified as a typical employee at a company within the construction sector, such as people with a diverse cultural background for example. As such, the more targeted focus on diversity management at can be viewed as one way for Svevia so sustain future business growth.

8.3 Implications of cultural diversity management

If a company such as Svevia succeeds with its diversity management in general and more specifically with cultural diversity, the Swedish society has probably a lot to gain. If Svevia, and other Swedish companies, are to become more open and prepared for a more diverse workforce, the integration process of migrants would potentially become more smooth. Opening up for people with a culturally different background to enter the Swedish workforce and to offer them a possibility to contribute to the Swedish society, would lower the societal costs that comes along with having a large group of people standing far away from the labor market. Moreover, if Svevia and other Swedish companies achieves to reap the benefits of a more diverse workforce, creativity, innovation and flexibility would potentially increase among Swedish business. This could give Swedish businesses a competitive advantage in comparison to international competitors in a globalized world in which the international mobility is predicted to increase. Moreover, if Svevia through its diversity management stands more prepare for an increase in cultural diversity, it will not the least assure a more reliable access to future workforce, eliminating the fear of running short of needed competence.

8.4 Suggestions for future research

More empirical evidence is needed within the field of diversity management in general, and more specifically within cultural diversity. Future studies could benefit from applying a more comparative approach. Studying how two companies, within the same sector relates to a workforce that either is, or is about to become more diverse would most likely reveal findings that this study, due to its scope, has been unable to reveal. That sort of study can bring additional nuance and an even deeper understanding of the phenomenon on a bigger scale. It would also be of value to apply a study like this one, using a similar conceptual model, to a case where the composition of workers already mirrors the society in which it operates. Such a study could potentially reveal the underlying factors to why a diversity management succeeds or not.
Acknowledgment

I want to sincerely thank the best supervisor one can ever imagine – Cecilia Mark- Herbert. Your endless support, wise comments and inspiration and most of all, your thoughtfulness has really meant a lot and has certainly contributed to what this study today has become.

Further, I would like to thank the employees at Svevia for your time and contribution to this study, it has been invaluable for this study. A special thanks to Elisabet Wretskog, who has been my contact person at Svevia.

Last but definitely not least, I want to direct a special thanks to my friends, class mates and especially my family for all support, encouraging words and warm thoughts I have received from all of you during my studies and the writing process. To Sandra for being the best friend one can ever ask for. To Balázs, there are no words that can describe how thankful I am to have you standing by my side throughout these two years. To my sisters, I would not hold a master degree in Sustainable Development without your endless support throughout my five and a half years of studies. Thank you.
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2. Vår historia (2016-05-11)
   http://www.svevia.se/gemensamma-sidor/om-svevia/vision-affarside--varderingar/var-historia.html
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Personal messages

Bosma, Mikael
Project Manager, CE division, Svevia
2016-04-05

Gustavsson-Roos, Magnus
Production Manger, CE division, Svevia
2016-04-05

Hooft, Charlotte
HR Partner, CE division, Svevia
2016-03-15

Lenkel, Pia
HR Manager, Svevia
2016-03-15

Lundman, Erik,
Division Manager, CE division, Svevia
2016-03-18
Rydberg, Max  
*Foreman, CE division, Svevia*  
2016-04-22

Sandström, Charlotte  
*Communication Manager, Svevia*  
2016-03-18

Sundelin, Martin  
*Production Manager, CE division, Svevia*  
2016-04-04

Wretskog, Elisabet  
*Competence Manager, Svevia*  
2016-03-15

**Seminar**

Seminar at Sveriges Byggindustrier. Presentation made by Charlotte Hooft and Erik Lundman about *'Inkluderande arbetsplatser at Svevia'* March 2016 Available at: https://www.sverigesbyggindustrier.se/nyheter/inkluderande-arbetsplatser__6071 [2016-05-15]
Appendix 1 - Interview guide

This appendix contains the different interview guides that was used when conducting interviews. Since all interviews were carried out in a semi-structured manner, some questions where added during the conversations. As illustrated below, the interview guide is established according to the conceptual framework and hence grounded in the theoretical perspectives identified during the literature review. All interviews were conducted in Swedish and translated by the researcher alone.

General, introductory questions

1. For how long have you been employed by Svevia AB?
2. What are your main assigned tasks as an employed?
3. Please tell me more about the organization/department you are working within looks like and operates?
4. What and how is your understanding of the staff composition at your company?
5. Why do you believe it this is the case?
6. What does the term diversity mean for you?
7. What are your thoughts regarding diversity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactical level, participants in the executive management – HQ</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Empirics</th>
<th>Theoretical grounding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How would you describe the organizational culture at Svevia?</td>
<td>Does the culture embrace respect, equality and justice?</td>
<td>(Ferdman, 2013; Pless &amp; Maak, 2004)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>If you think of any employee at Svevia, that according to your perception fulfills and embraces the organizational culture – could you please describe this person?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>If you think about how you experience the organizational culture today compared to how you perceived it a while ago (e.g. when you got your employment) to what extent would you say that the organizational culture is changeable?</td>
<td>Does the culture promote continuous development? Does a person with a different background will have to assimilate to the culture or are there opportunities for the culture to include new ways of thinking, hence including diversities?</td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012; Ferdman, 2013; Mor Barak, 2004; Shore et al., 2011)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In what way would you say that employees at Svevia does identify themselves with the the organizational culture? In what way would you say that employees with personnel management work with employees to feel united with the culture?</td>
<td>Does one talk about how the company’s vision advocates inclusion?</td>
<td>(Ferdman, 2013)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What areas would you say should be strategically prioritized in order for a long-term survival for Svevia?</td>
<td>Are the outlined ambitions with an increased diversity a part of</td>
<td>Daniel &amp; Bushardt, 2005,</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong> Regarding strategies and the introduction/implementation of such, – how would describe that process, both out of a time aspect and regarding who’s involved looks like?</td>
<td><em>Svevia’s overall business objectives?</em></td>
<td>Mor Barak, 2005)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are more voices that the executive committee heard when establishing and deciding on new strategies?</td>
<td>(Pless &amp; Maak, 2004)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong> When, and under what circumstances do you as a participant in the executive management come in contact with other employees in the organization outside the HQ?</td>
<td><em>Does the executive management and hence the organizational culture invites and encourages participating in the decision making process and is the process transparent?</em></td>
<td>(Pless &amp; Maak, 2004)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7.</strong> In what way would you say that diversity is good for Svevia? How do perceive the discussions regarding Svevia’s diversity management? What are the motives behind and what has the focus on diversity meant for the organization?</td>
<td><em>What is the goal with diversity management? Is there consensus around why and in what way diversity are to contribute to the organization?</em></td>
<td>Daniel &amp; Bushardt, 2005, Mor Barak, 2005)</td>
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<td><strong>8.</strong> How does Svevia communicate the work with diversity internally and externally?</td>
<td><em>Is guidance regarding diversity management provided?</em></td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012).</td>
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<td><strong>9.</strong> How would you say that Svevia’s focus on diversity management has had an impact on the external environments perception of Svevia as a company?</td>
<td><em>Are there any ambitions that diversity management will boost the competitiveness of Svevia? How?</em></td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012).</td>
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<td><strong>10.</strong> Is there anything else on top of what already been discussed that you would like to add?</td>
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## Tactical/Strategic level – HQ

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Question</strong></th>
<th><strong>Empirics</strong></th>
<th><strong>Theoretical grounding</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> In what way do you believe diversity is good for Svevia?</td>
<td><em>What is the goal with diversity management? Is there consensus around why and in what way diversity are to contribute to the organization?</em></td>
<td>Daniel &amp; Bushardt, 2005, Mor Barak, 2005)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Can you please describe how the process for which Svevia wishes your diversity management to run according to looks like? What does it contain? In other words, how are Svevia to work with diversity management?</td>
<td><em>How does the operationalization process look like? Are there any frameworks that ensures the implementation and assessment processes?</em></td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> How was this process established and why does it look the way it does?</td>
<td><em>Is opportunity given to others to impact the strategy? Where there any dialogue and/or transparency prior to the establishment?</em></td>
<td>(Ferdman, 2015)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> In order for Svevia’s diversity management to generate positive</td>
<td><em>Does the strategy allow for flexibility, does it encourage</em></td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Source(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome and bring positive result for the company as such, what do you</td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012).</td>
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<td>think is required by the organization as a whole but also by the</td>
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<td>individuals working at Svevia to reach that profit generation?</td>
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<td>If you as one of the authors of the strategy acknowledge that the desired</td>
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<td>results or objectives are not met, what are your actions then?</td>
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<td>Teamwork and participation? Is there any possibilities for the strategy</td>
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<td>to “understand and learn” and hence change according to the outcomes?</td>
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<tr>
<td>**5. How does Svevia communicate the work with diversity internally and</td>
<td><strong>Is guidance regarding diversity management provided?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>externally?</td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012).</td>
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<td>**6. How would you say that Svevia’s focus on diversity management has</td>
<td>**Are there any ambitions that diversity management will boost the</td>
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<td>had an impact on the external environments perception of Svevia as a</td>
<td>competitiveness of Svevia? How?**</td>
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<td>company?</td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012).</td>
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<td><strong>7. How would you describe the organizational culture at Svevia?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Does the culture embrace respect, equality and justice?</strong></td>
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<td>If you think of any employee at Svevia, that according to your perception</td>
<td>(Ferdman, 2013; Pless &amp; Maak, 2004)</td>
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<td>fulfills and embraces the organizational culture – could you please</td>
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<td>describe this person?</td>
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<td>Does the culture embrace respect, equality and justice?</td>
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<td>**8. If you think about how you experience the organizational culture</td>
<td><strong>Does the culture promote continuous development?</strong></td>
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<td>today compared to how you perceived it a while ago (e.g. when you got</td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012; Ferdman, 2013; Mor Barak, 2004; Shore et al., 2011)</td>
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<td>your employment) to what extent would you say that the organizational</td>
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<td>culture is changeable?</td>
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<td>Does the culture promote continuous development?</td>
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<td>Does a person with a different background will have to assimilate to the</td>
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<td>culture or are there opportunities for the culture to include new ways</td>
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<td>of thinking, hence including diversities?</td>
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<td>**9. In what way would you say that employees at Svevia does identify</td>
<td><strong>Does one talk about how the company’s vision advocates inclusion?</strong></td>
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<td>themselves with the the organizational culture?</td>
<td>(Ferdman, 2013)</td>
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<td>In what way would you say that employees with personnel management</td>
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<td>work with employees to feel united with the culture?</td>
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<td>**10. Is there anything else on top of what already been discussed that</td>
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<td>you would like to add?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Empirics</td>
<td>Theoretical grounding</td>
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<td>1. Which aspects would you say are the most important ones when recruiting new personnel or creating a working team with already employed personnel? Let’s visualize that Svevia just won a bid and a project is to be started. You are responsible for putting together a team of 5-10 workers. What would you say is of most importance to think of in this process?</td>
<td>Are homogenous or heterogeneous groups being encouraged and promoted?</td>
<td>(Ferdman, 2013; Pless &amp; Maak, 2004)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What would you say are the most important characteristics and behaviors of an employee? Besides relevant and demanded competence, people are hired on premises such as if they can demonstrate that they have “the right” behavior and characteristics. How do you work as a leader/managers to demonstrate those characteristics and behaviors?</td>
<td>Is there any system established to promote behaviors of inclusion? How flexible is the division of labor – does the system enable engagement in more areas than just the assigned?</td>
<td>(Ferdman, 2013; Pless &amp; Maak, 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If we go back to the team you’ve just created. When you are evaluating the workers in your team, both regarding their professional achievements but also as a co-worker and a team-player, what are the aspects you take into consideration? Would you say that those aspects is based entirely on how you as a person would evaluate employees or are there any model/system available for evaluation?</td>
<td>Are the employees’ behaviors evaluated and is behavior showing signs of inclusion being encouraged in any way?</td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How would you describe the organizational culture at Svevia? If you think of any employee at Svevia, that according to your perception fulfills and embraces the organizational culture – could you please describe this person?</td>
<td>Does the culture embrace respect, equality and justice?</td>
<td>(Ferdman, 2013; Pless &amp; Maak, 2004)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. If you think about how you experience the organizational culture today compared to how you perceived it a while ago (e.g. when you got your employment) to what extent would you say that the organizational culture is changeable?</td>
<td>Does the culture promote continuous development? Does a person with a different background will have to assimilate to the culture or are there opportunities for the culture to include new ways of thinking, hence including diversities?</td>
<td>(Dauber, et al., 2012; Ferdman, 2013; Mor Barak, 2004; Shore et al., 2011)</td>
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</table>
6. In what way would you say that employees at Svevia does identify themselves with the organizational culture?  
In what way do you as a leader for a team work with your employees for them to feel united with the culture?  
Does one talk about how the company’s vision advocates inclusion?  
(Ferdman, 2013)

7. Initially we talked about diversity. In what way do you believe diversity is good for Svevia?  
What would you say is the defined goal and objective with the diversity management?  
What is the goal with diversity management? Is there consensus around why and in what way diversity are to contribute to the organization?  
Daniel & Bushardt, 2005, Mor Barak, 2005)

8. What is your role and position in Svevia’s diversity management?  
In what way do you feel included and as a part of Svevia’s diversity management?  
Are the managers at a higher level in the organization susceptible and open to inputs?  
Can already existing strategies and structures be developed and if so, are employees further down in the organization included?  
(Dauber, et al., 2012; Ferdman, 2013)

9. Is there anything else on top of what already been discussed that you would like to add?

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### Operational level – production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Empirics</th>
<th>Theoretical grounding</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1. How, when and in what way are you meeting your colleagues?  
To what extent are you satisfied with your colleagues? | Do employees participate in creating an inclusive atmosphere? | (Ferdman, 2013; Pless & Maak, 2004) |
| 2. Can you please describe how you perceive the working climate in which you are right now? How is the mood between the colleagues? | Are employees being made visible, respected and appreciated? | (Pless & Maak, 2004; Shore et al., 2011) |
| 3. How would you describe the organizational culture at Svevia? | Does the culture embrace respect, equality and justice? | (Ferdman, 2013; Pless & Maak, 2004) |
| 4. If you think about how you experience the organizational culture today compared to how you perceived it a while ago (e.g. when you got your employment) to what extent would you say that the organizational culture is changeable? | Does the culture promote continuous development?  
Does a person with a different background will have to assimilate to the culture or are there opportunities for the culture to include new ways of thinking, hence including diversities? | (Dauber, et al., 2012; Ferdman, 2013; Mor Barak, 2004; Shore et al., 2011) |
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>What development opportunities would you say you have? Both within the department in which you are currently stationed or if you think of development opportunities in the organization as a whole?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Is there signs of curiosity among the employees? Signs of development and engagement?</strong> (Ferdman, 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Do you recognize/feel/experience that you as an employee are offered a variation of tasks? How comfortable would you be with changing tasks for a while?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Does the culture established make employees feel comfortable enough to dare to try out new tasks? Does the organizational system/structure allow for this flexibility?</strong> (Ferdman, 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td><strong>It has come to my knowledge that it is currently quite harsh competition for competent personnel within the construction sector. What would do say are the most important aspect an employer has to offer you in order for you to be willing to stay at your current workplace? Do you agree with the statement &quot;everyone is been seen at Svevia&quot;</strong></td>
<td><strong>Confirmation question – does the situation described by others fit with the reality?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td><strong>After reading document, listening to seminars and talking to your colleagues, I have understood that you are currently working with something called “inclusive workplaces”, can you please tell me a little bit more about that? How do you perceive this initiative?</strong></td>
<td><strong>What type of organizational culture are employees perceiving?</strong> (Dauber, et al., 2012) (Cox, 1991)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td><strong>What would you say is the defined goals and objectives with “inclusive workplaces” and how are you working towards fulfilling that objective? It has also come to my knowledge that one of the goals are to make employees not to say things that might be interpreted differently and sometimes as a negative comment by the receiver, is this something you have acknowledged and if yes, in what way would you say that your managers are working with this?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Do employees hold oneself and others accountable for establishing an inclusive culture?</strong> (Ferdman, 2013; Pless &amp; Maak, 2004)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td><strong>In what way would you say that you can affect Svevia’s future, both operationally but also strategically?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Does employees experience that a culture of inclusion is existent?</strong> (Mor Barak, 2005; Shore et al., 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td><strong>Can you please describe how you perceive that the society perceives the work you carry out for Svevia?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Does employees perceive that the external environment has an impact on the company’s overall performance</strong> (Dauber, et al., 2012; Deegan, 2002; Meyer &amp; Rowan, 1977)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td><strong>Is there anything else on top of what already been discussed that you would like to add?</strong></td>
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</table>
Appendix 2 – Original model

This appendix contains the original model that the conceptual framework is based on. By reason of this study’s focus on the practice of diversity management throughout the various segments of a company, the model was chosen to ac as the base for the conceptual framework as a relevant analysis model to explore the relationship between the strategic, tactic and operational level of the company.

The ‘Configuration Model of Organizational Culture’ was established by Daniel Dauber, Gerhard Fink and Maurice Yolles, and published in the article ‘A Configuration Model of Organizational Culture’ (2012).