Attractiveness in Urban Design

A study of the production of attractive places

Erik Hidman

Architecture
Attractiveness in Urban Design

A study of the production of attractive places

Erik Hidman
Abstract

This research project investigates the production of attractive places, through theory, form and everyday life. The research study originated in a practice-based issue regarding the extensive use of the term “attractiveness” in urban planning and design. What is the term intended to mean? How is the term understood in local contexts? How is the term transformed into buildings, parks, squares, streets, homes and other built environments? The term is rarely scrutinised and criticised and the understanding of the term, its meanings and implications are diverse.

Starting from critical urban theory, the research project critically scrutinises the term and contrasts it with local citizens’ perspectives of attractive towns. The research project proceeds from the idea that places are produced not only by planning and urban design professionals, but also by people living in and visiting a place (Lefebvre, 1991). The study addresses the following research question: Which differences can be seen in how urban planning & design professionals and local citizens conceptualise and spatialise the term attractiveness; how can the term be explained to inform the future planning of attractive urban environments?

The research employs four sub-studies to investigate planning and local perspectives of attractiveness, its representations and urban forms. The studies were conducted in Kiruna and Gällivare, two mining towns in the sparsely populated Swedish north. These towns are undertaking major urban transformations due to the growth of mining activities. Both municipalities regard the transformation processes as opportunities to become more attractive for people wishing to settle as permanent residents. The term “attractiveness” was investigated through discourse and qualitative content analysis, whilst the local citizen perspective was investigated through Urban Living Labs.

The conclusion was that the urban planning and design sphere of place production defines the term “attractiveness” according to societal challenges. Attractiveness addresses the contemporary situation in which places compete with labour, companies and capital in a global market. A discourse of attractiveness occurs within three areas of interest: urban economics, social wellbeing, and urban townscapes. Attractiveness can be further explained as an approach to reinventing places as attractive through urbanisation and agglomeration.

The local citizens’ construction of attractiveness is produced through societal challenges, local opportunities and practical experiences. The production of attractiveness is affected partly by everyday experiences and
partly by assimilated knowledge about the place and society, including media reporting and official urban planning documents. As produced through knowledge, pedagogical processes also affect the idea of attractiveness. Physically, the attractive town is described as a place whose design has been carefully considered, including a legible town plan, locally distinct character, clear borders between built-up areas and nature, and coherent connections between neighbourhoods.

The studies suggest that in order to create truly attractive places, the term attractiveness should consider the views of local citizens. This statement in turn suggests an ethical concern and an opportunity. The ethical consideration is that the term “attractiveness” has different meanings for different communities and individuals; the use of the term is persuasive, with the potential to hide agendas seen as attractive according to only some viewpoints. On the other hand, there is an opportunity in acknowledging attractiveness as being produced by everyone engaged in a place; it opens possibilities for a more diverse and inclusive term with richer ideas of attractive places.

Keywords: attractiveness, urban design, critical urban studies, space production, Living Lab, participatory research
Sammanfattning


Utgångspunkten för studien är ur urbankritisk natur, med syfte att kritiskt granska begreppet som det används i stadsplanering och stadsbyggnadsgestaltning. Studien utgår från att platser inte enbart produceras av dem som arbetar professionellt med stadsplanerings- och stadsbyggnadsfrågor utan även av människor som är en del av en plats (Lefebvre, 1991). Studien syftar till att utforska begreppets användning i den professionella stadsplanerings- och stadsbyggnadskontexten i jämförelse med invånares förståelse av attraktiv stadsmiljö. Studien har som mål att besvara följande huvudforskningstvågar: Hur konceptualiseras och rumsliggör attraktivitetsbegreppet av stadsplanerare och stadsbyggare samt av invånare och hur skiljer sig perspektiven åt; hur kan attraktivitetsbegreppet förklaras för att informera framtid planering av attraktiva stadsmiljöer?


Attraktivitetsbegreppet som det används i professionella sammanhang undersökt genom en diskursanalys av publikationer och en kvalitativ innehållsanalyss av förslag i en stadsbyggnadstävling i Kiruna. Invånarperspektivet undersökt genom Urban Living Lab-methodik. slutsatsen är att attraktivitetsbegreppet såsom det används av professionella planerare och stadsbyggare definieras utifrån en ökande konkurrenssituation mellan platser, en konkurrens om arbetskraft, företagsetableringar och kapital. Begreppet kan beskrivas som en diskurs om att utveckla platser som är attraktiva för dem man vill attrahera. Det sker ofta genom urbanisering och befolkningsökning. Diskursen kan vidare beskrivas med tre
inriktningar: stärkt lokal ekonomi, socialt välbefinnande och skapande av stadsmiljöer.

Invånarperspektivet tar mer utgängspunkt i samhälleliga utmaningar, i platsens potential och möjligheter samt i kunskap om platsen och hur man praktiskt kan använda den. Attraktivitetsbegreppet definieras där utifrån vardagliga erfarenheter, kunskap om platsen – dess historia och sociala mönster samt kunskap som man tagit till sig från media och kommunernas planer för stadsutveckling. Fysiskt beskrivs attraktiva platser som genomtänkta och genomarbetade med bl.a. god orienterbarhet, lokal karaktär, tydliga gränser mellan byggd miljö och grönområden, samt genomgående stråk mellan stadsdelar.


Nyckelord: attraktivitet, stadsbyggnad, urbankritiska studier, platsproduktion, Living Lab, deltagarbaserad forskning
Acknowledgements

There are a number of people that have made this PhD possible and to whom I am greatly thankful. People in organisations, municipalities, workshop groups, people that sat down for a coffee, gave me a tour of the local church or assisted with contacts and local knowledge.

This research would not have been made possible without knowledge and support from my supervisors Kristina Nilsson and Björn Ekelund. Your guidance has been invaluable, I am greatly thankful.

I must also take the chance to thank Hjalmar Lundbohm Research Centre for the financial support and Luleå University of Technology and the Department of Civil, Environmental and Natural Resources Engineering for investing in my PhD.

Special thanks are also due to colleagues and friends being part of this journey, for all memories, laughter, new insights, and for making Luleå a more liveable place. In particular I would like to thank Eugenia Segerstedt and Jennie Sjöholm for great collaborations and discussions; David Chapman, Agatino Rizzo, and Malin Lindberg for taking your time to discuss, comment and give feedback; and Berta Morata for socialising and supporting to the very end and for assisting me with the cover image.

I would like to thank my family, my parents and sisters for all support during this journey and for assisting with watering of plants and plumber work when I have been on distance.

Finally, to my wife Mildhy, for all support, love, and patience. Five years apart is coming to an end, I’m coming home.

Erik Hidman, Luleå, October 2018
Content

1. Introduction ................................................................. 1
   1.1. Research aims and questions .......................................... 2
   1.2. Thesis outline .............................................................. 2
2. The phenomenon of attractiveness ................................. 4
   2.1. Argumentative turn of planning practice .......................... 4
   2.2. Reformulated challenges for urban areas ........................ 6
3. The case of small towns reinventing themselves as attractive places ............................................................. 11
   3.1. The reinvention of Kiruna and Gällivare ............................ 12
   3.2. Kiruna ........................................................................ 14
   3.3. Gällivare ..................................................................... 16
4. Theoretical framework ..................................................... 18
   4.1. Production of urban place .............................................. 20
   4.2. Attractiveness idealised, socialised, and visualised .......... 22
5. Research design, methods and implementation .................. 24
   5.1. The role of the researcher ............................................. 26
   5.2. Methodological approaches ......................................... 27
   5.3. Implementation of sub-studies ....................................... 31
6. Summary of papers and studies ......................................... 42
   6.1. Paper I: Attractiveness in Urban design .......................... 42
   6.2. Paper II: Attractiveness in Urban design practice ............ 43
   6.3. Paper III: Producing space in Living Labs ...................... 43
7. The discursive character of the term attractiveness ............ 46
   7.1. Urban economic dimension .......................................... 47
   7.2. Citizens wellbeing dimensions ....................................... 48
   7.3. Urban townscapes dimension ........................................ 49
8. The term attractiveness in urban design proposals ............. 50
9. Local citizens’ perspectives of attractive urban environments 55
   9.1. The Urban Living Labs of citizens in Kiruna and Gällivare ........................................................................... 55
   9.2. The Urban Living Lab of Vassara-Sandviken .................. 58
   9.3. Conceptualisations of attractiveness in the real sphere ....... 61
   9.4. Spatialisations of attractiveness in the real sphere .......... 63
10. Production of attractive places ......................................... 65
   10.1. Idealised attractiveness ............................................. 65
   10.2. Socialised attractiveness ............................................. 67
   10.3. Visualised attractiveness ............................................. 68
   10.4. Concluding reflections of attractive place production ....... 70
11. **Conclusions** ................................................................................................. 71
   11.1. The potential of Urban Living Labs for co-creation of attractiveness .......... 75

12. **Discussion** ................................................................................................. 77
   12.1. Attractiveness and social inequality ........................................................... 78
   12.2. Attractiveness as a mean of change ......................................................... 79
   12.3. Attractiveness and urban form ................................................................. 79

13. **References** .................................................................................................. 80

**Appendices**

Appendix I

Appendix II

Appendix III

Appendix IV
1. Introduction

This thesis investigates the production of attractive places, through theory, form and life of these places. In recent years “attractiveness” has become an everyday term in Swedish urban planning and design context. The term is used to promote existing places and design proposals but is also used in visions, objectives or strategies for urban, regional and national development. Some examples: Bästads kommun (2017) writes in their vision that they want to be “an attractive role model, in all contexts”; Gothenburg has an environmental sub target of “Attractive building structures” (Göteborgs Stad, 2018); Stockholm County Administrative Board uses the term in relation to their equality strategy – “The county is a globally leading and attractive region of growth…” (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2016); the Government Offices of Sweden has a strategy called “Attractive, innovative, and sustainable – strategy for a competitive agricultural and garden industry” (Regeringskansliet, 2015).

Henri Lefebvre (2003) points out that “knowledge of a society is impossible without a critique of this society”. The argument of this study is similar, that the meaning of the term attractiveness as of today is ambiguous and that little effort has been made to critically assess the term and the idea of attractiveness. What is the term intended to address? How is the term understood in local contexts? How is the term applied to built environments? Clarifying this type of question opens up the possibility of better understanding the term and advancing the thinking behind attractive urban environments.

As will be explained in Section 2.2, the term has a connection to urbanisation processes, with the “urban” as a norm, ideal image or place of investigation. The term is however applied in places not necessarily considered “urban” in the sense that their locations and qualities differs from the qualities of dense urban and regional areas. Two such places are the towns Kiruna and Gällivare, the case studies used in this thesis, described further in Sections 3.2 and 3.3. When attractiveness is used in such a context the question of what attractiveness means therefore arises. The research aim is to investigate the perspective of attractiveness as an urban planning and design construct, and attractiveness as a local citizen construct, in order to better understand conflicting and common interests regarding the idea of attractive urban environments in a given context. The purpose is to critically scrutinise the term in order to advance the understanding and thinking of attractiveness as an objective, vision, or goal. The critical
approach acknowledges that certain actors, such as urban planners and designers, have greater power to implement their agendas in the production of attractive places (Brenner, Marcuse, & Mayer, 2012; Harvey, 1989; Lefebvre, 1991). The term as implemented from an urban planning and design context might have specific meanings not necessarily shared with local citizens. The aims of the research are to critically investigate and to shed light this potential conflict, and to discuss future perspectives of the term attractiveness.

1.1. Research aims and questions

The starting point of this study originated in a real-world observation regarding the extensive use of the term “attractiveness” in urban design. This observation suggested the following research questions: *Which differences can be seen in how urban planning & design professionals and local citizens conceptualise and spatialise the term attractiveness; how can the term be explained to inform the future planning of attractive urban environments?*

The urban planning and design perspective was studied through interpretative approaches scrutinising the term attractiveness in urban planning and design contexts. Two studies were conducted to address the sub-questions: *How is the term attractiveness conceptualised and used in publications by urban scholars and professionals?* and *How is the term attractiveness conceptualised and spatialised in urban planning and design contexts?*

The perspective of local citizens was studied through Urban Living Labs inspired by participatory action research (Herr & Anderson, 2014). Four labs were set up in the towns of Kiruna and Gällivare to construct local conceptualisation and spatialisation of the term. The Living Labs provided input to the local planning processes in the towns and, in terms of research, helped to answer the sub-question: *How is the term attractiveness conceptualised and spatialised by local citizens?*

As research focusing on local understanding and participatory approaches, a third sub-question will be addressed in the conclusion: *How can the Living Lab approach be useful to support co-creation of attractive urban environments?*

1.2. Thesis outline

The thesis has the following structure. Following the above introduction, Chapter 2 outlines contemporary opportunities and challenges for cities, setting the context for the study of how the term “attractiveness” is used in urban planning and design. Section 2.1 discusses urban planning as argumentative and rhetorical art. Section 2.2 discusses contemporary
competitive challenges for cities and the motivation for cities to attract people and capital.

Chapter 3 introduces the reader to the local context in which this research project is situated. The towns selected for this investigation are Kiruna and Gällivare, two small Swedish mining towns having unusual opportunities to reinvent themselves as attractive.

Chapters 4 and 5 explain the theoretical and methodological approach of the study. Chapter 4 introduces the theoretical framework, starting from Lefebvre’s (1991) notion of that space is socially produced. Chapter 5 explains the qualitative nature of the research design, combining interpretative and participatory approaches including discourse analysis, qualitative document analysis and Urban Living Lab.

Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 summarise the papers and explores the outcomes of studies included in this thesis. Chapter 6 summarises the papers included in this compilation thesis. Chapter 7 explore the term “attractiveness” as explained in publications by scholars and professionals; Chapter 8 explore how the term is applied to urban design proposals by urban planners and designers; and Chapter 9 describes local citizens’ view of attractiveness in urban environments.

Chapter 10 analyses the sub-studies according to the theoretical framework and compares the different perspectives of the term attractiveness.

Chapters 11 and 12 present the conclusions and answers to the research questions, and discusses future perspectives of the term “attractiveness”.
2. The phenomenon of attractiveness

As explained in the introductory chapter, national, regional, and local authorities use the term attractiveness in visions, objectives, and strategies. This section will establish a framework for understanding the use of the term by arguing for two strong tendencies in society. The first being a political shift in planning practice (Section 2.1) and the second being reformulated competitive challenges for places (Section 2.2).

2.1. Argumentative turn of planning practice

It has been suggested that the language used by urban planners has become more argumentative and rhetorical over the last 60 years due to a more competitive planning environment (Friedmann, 2008). Previously, the field was assumed to be based on rational thinking and decision-making, where decisions were taken based on analysis and logical reasoning. Planning was based on the idea that each sector of a city, such as infrastructure systems and land-use regulations, could be analysed separately and improved in accordance with its own requirements. Or as Healey (2007) puts it: places were understood as consisting of “integrated unities with a singular driving force”. It led to a planning culture where each professional field worked as segregated, autonomous units each working to improve their respective units’ performance.

The shift to contemporary planning language was gradually introduced with the idea that each unit affected the other units in the system as a whole. Rather than considering discrete units individually, planning gradually became a *whole society process* (Friedmann, 2008) where ‘integrated unities’ need to be understood in a holistic manner. This shift has given the field of planning a more complex nature in which experts associated with each unit need to collaborate, and possibly compete, to achieve their respective objectives. This affects the way planners think, act, and talk. It has changed the language of planning and the nature of planning theory has become complex and interdisciplinary. Healey (2007, p. 22) writes:

> As a result, the ‘places’ of cities and urban areas [...] are instead complex constructions created by the interaction of actors in multiple networks who invest in material projects and who give meaning to qualities of places.

This ideal image of what contemporary planning is, or should be, gives an impression of ideal collaborations between the different areas of expertise associated with urban planning. But there is also competition between
interests, a competition that nurtures a political approach in order to get one’s agenda prioritised. Friedmann (2008) describes how planning practice has become a political art where the planners are political actors.

The notion of planning being a political art in contemporary society is well documented, and has been variously called the argumentative or rhetorical turn (Throgmorton, 1993; 1996), the communicative or participatory turn (Healey, 1993; 1998), and the story turn (Sandercock, 2010). In short, the political aspect of modern urban planning has changed the role of planning, and planners must therefore master skills in argumentation and rhetoric (Majone, 1989). Thus, language has become far more important in the field of urban planning and design. Before, language was seen merely as the interface between technical analysis and decision-making; it was supposed to be objective, in order to adequately inform decision-makers. But as planning has become more political, planners have re-evaluated their use of language. As Majone (1989, p. 1) puts it: “As politicians know [...] public policy is made of language. Whether in written or oral form, argument is central in all stages of the policy process.”

The risks associated with “political planning” were identified by Lefebvre’s (1991) reasoning and his critique of the structuralist society. He argues that ideological and empirical knowledge in this type of society prevails over other types of knowledge. In other words, political actors have a certain power to push through their own agendas when ideological and empirical knowledge are the basis for planning decisions. In effect, as ideologies are merely lingual constructions, language has become an inherited setting for shaping urban environments.

The opening line in the Editors’ Introduction to the book The Argumentative Turn: in Policy Analysis and Planning sets the scene: “What if our language does not simply mirror or picture the world but instead profoundly shapes our view of it in the first place?” (Fischer & Forester, 1993, p. 1). This idea of language as more than just a descriptive tool is shared with some philosophical fields of interpretation and language. In the context of hermeneutics, Hans-Georg Gadamer (1994) argues that language must be seen as an integrative part of experience and, as such, an integrative part of our shaping of environments. From the perspective of semiotics, Preziosi (1979) argues for this relation between language and existentiality in a similar way, asserting that language is a necessity for the creation of the built environment and that communication is a fundamental cornerstone in the building process. Taking these worldviews into account, the importance of discussing, scrutinising and criticising the use of language in planning is highly relevant. It affects the way we understand the world and has a significant effect on the physical reality we are to live in. But there is
also the dilemma of different meanings and interpretations, where the political language is used to seduce and convince rather than inform about decisions. In reality, language has the potential to mask hidden agendas by exploiting the multiple meanings a certain formulation can have.

From the brief discussion above it is obvious that the use of a term like “attractiveness” has benefits in contemporary planning practice. It is a word that speaks to people, developers, municipalities, with a convincing nature and a positive connotation. Everyone has an individual idea of the meaning of something attractive. To sum up this section it is possible to raise some key concerns regarding the term. It is used in an ideological way, and it validates decisions and actions based on some ideological agenda. Different users explain the term differently and there are multiple ideas of what attractiveness mean. The idea of attractiveness differs between individuals, fields, and communities, and the term can be assumed to have specific meanings in urban planning and design contexts. The range of meanings ascribed to the term gives rise to the possibility of hidden meanings and, as a result, particular agendas being implemented in urban design and planning proposals. For these reasons, the term would benefit from being critically scrutinised in order to develop an understanding of the multiple meanings of attractiveness.

2.2. Reformulated challenges for urban areas

The idea that competition gives rise to a planning language of argumentation and seduction could well be extended beyond planning practice. Just as the subfields of urban planning and design have competing interests, it is acknowledged by authors such as David Harvey (1989) and Richard Florida (2002; 2005) that contemporary technical and economical possibilities create competition between places as well. The phenomenon stems from a more globalised, mobile world society, where people and capital have opportunities to travel, consume and work at distance, and choose where to live not only based on job opportunities, say, but also based on the type of qualities a particular place can provide. In other words, people have, more than ever before, the opportunity to live in, what they consider to be, an attractive place.

In effect, places, such as cities, regions, and tourist destinations, may now be regarded as being in competition for citizens and tourists. And it has been argued that these competitive challenges change the approach to planning. Gospodini (2002, p. 60) argues, “the key process is an increasing competition among cities to upgrade their status in the hierarchies of the global urban system”. She calls this phenomenon “inter-city competition” (Gospodini, 2002).
Harvey (1989) delineates how inter-city competition may manifest itself by pointing out four types of competitive planning actions. The first one is *competition of spatial labour* that he explains as an organisation of the city as a workshop. He argues that physical and social infrastructures are provided to support education, labour opportunities and robust infrastructure systems that facilitate continuous production. The second one is labelled *competition of consumption* and is explained as competition by tourism, provision of life-style, construction of community, and organisation of social space. He argues that, among others, amusement options and gentrified living environments that fit certain life-styles are created to attract a consumer base to a place. It is further about appearing innovative and exciting as a place. Thirdly, he considers *competition for command functions*, which he explains as a competition for governmental institutions and high finance. It gives a competitive advantage of financial and governmental power. The last aspect is that *competition for redistribution*, explained as channels for economic power. Among others he discusses private and governmental systems, such as trade unions, charity organisation and professional associations.

Although there are several forms of competition, the first two modes of competition presented by Harvey (1989) have attracted most attention in the more recent debates. Among others they have initiated an increased interest in several planning concepts aiming for competitive advantage of people and business, such as the creative class movement (Florida, 2002; 2005), place-making (Cervero, 2009; Friedmann, 2010), and place-branding (Kavaratzis, 2005; Papadopoulos, 2004; Van Ham, 2008). The common idea of these concepts is to provide the qualities, or the appearance of having the qualities, that people and companies are attracted by, such as high-quality leisure time for individuals (Glaeser, Kolko, & Saiz, 2001) and a high-quality workforce for commercial organizations (Florida, 2002; Scott, 2014). In short, good urban design and high-quality urban environments have become a prerequisite for the economic success of a place. Gospodini (2002, p. 60) argues for a reversed situation from previous planning epochs:

“While for centuries the quality of the urban environment has been an outcome of economic growth of cities, nowadays the quality of urban space has become a prerequisite for the economic development of cities; and urban design has undertaken an enhanced new role as a means of economic development”.

7
However, Harvey (1989) identifies a couple of concerns regarding competition in the context of urban design. First, he argues that the political focus of competing for labour reduces the time given to questions such as equity and social justice. Rather than addressing social questions, competition is about providing the high-end qualities that attracts citizens and business. This is also what Florida (2017) argues in his latest book. From being a proponent of place competition he now identifies how places not being able to compete suffers from increasing inequality, segregation and alienation.

Second, Harvey (1989) sees an issue with how competitive agendas operate through the concept of creative destruction. Creative destruction refers, according to Harvey (1989), to the processes capitalist actors engage in to increase economic growth, such as relocating business to other places in the world (globalisation) or investing in infrastructure and features that makes a particular location more attractive to citizens and business (urbanisation). The word “destruction” refers to the nature of competition where new innovations destroy the value of past innovations. The risk according to Harvey (1989) is that places, in their ambition to reinvent themselves as attractive places, forget about existing qualities and citizens. Instead the focus is on reinventing themselves as competitive places.

There is also a strong connection between competition and urbanisation. The focus on urbanisation could be explained through the connection between mobilisation, production and economical surplus (Brenner, 2014; Harvey, 1989; Lefebvre, 2003). Harvey (1989, p. 54) describes how urbanisation can be a result of competition, but that it is also through urbanisation that “surpluses are mobilised, produced, absorbed, and appropriated and that it is through urban decay and social degradation that the surpluses are devalued and destroyed.” The interest in the urban goes beyond the scale of urban environments and towards urbanisation processes in general that gives rise to surpluses of capital and population. This focus is easy to read in Florida’s (2002) theorisation of cities being places that creative people are attracted to. According to him, creative people are the people with the greatest potential to develop and bring economic success to a place. And, in his theory, high quality urban environments is something to foster and promote in order to attract the creative people, as they are attracted by an urban lifestyle.

Another impact of the strong focus of urbanisation is what has been called “implosion-explosion processes” (Lefebvre, 2003). The implosion process occurs as people move to cities and urban areas. But as these places grow, larger land-areas need to be exploited to provide the urban areas with materials, food and other commodities – the explosion process.
Lefebvre (2003) argues, therefore, that the world is heading towards total urbanisation. That mines, farms, power plants, and other facilities often located outside of the urban areas are all parts of the urbanisation process since they provide urban areas with necessary commodities.

Except for the extraction of commodities, Lefebvre (1991) also points to another contradiction of the implosion-explosion process, a contradiction of *spaces of consumption* and *consumption of spaces*. The former are spaces, such as cities, in which production and consumption takes place. The productive demands, however, give rise also to a counter place, a place for leisure and unproductive forms of consumption. Such spaces are typically undeveloped areas possessing natural beauty. What Lefebvre (1991) argues is that there is a recreational form of the explosion process as city-people leave the productive city to revitalise on the countryside.

The increased competition of places frames an understanding of the term attractiveness as a communicative and competitive tool for cities and “urban” areas. The tendency is that this type of competition is connected to urbanisation, partly built on the idea of migration to cities. But, like Lefebvre’s (1991) notion of a need for consumption of spaces, urbanisation breeds lifestyle migration in the opposite direction as well. Some people rather migrate towards the “non-urban” (Benson & O’Reilly, 2016) and this type of migration could also be discussed in terms of attractiveness and lifestyles. Such migration is, however, not the focus of the place competition described above but it illustrates the ambiguous meaning of the term “attractiveness” and how it is a matter of individual interpretation.
Figure 1. Gällivare in snow and the view towards Dundret that is present in the townscape.

Figure 2. Traditional Bläckhorn housing typology in Kiruna with view towards the Kiirunavaara mine.
3. The case of small towns reinventing themselves as attractive places

As argued in Section 2.2, urbanisation processes affect both “urban” and “non-urban” places. According to Brenner (2014) on-going global urbanisation changes the idea of cities to become a borderless urbanisation. His argument is that as cities and urban areas grow through densification and sprawl in the urbanisation process, the same process affects rural areas as they are increasingly exploited to supply cities with food, materials, and energy etc. The process of non-urban areas being utilised for the benefit of the urban justifies the label of urbanisation also being used to describe traditionally non-urban areas. Lefebvre (2003) predicted such phenomena and called them implosion-explosion processes; implosion of people in the city and explosion of production and supply chains stretching well beyond the city. Some areas in the northern part of Sweden face the challenge of explosion effects.

The northern part of Sweden, Norrland, can be introduced through the eyes of two of the most active journalists documenting the problems and challenges facing Norrland: Arne Müller and Po Tidholm. Norrland covers about 60% of the area of Sweden, yet is home to only about 12% of the current population of the country. Moreover, the number of people living in the interior of Norrland is dropping due to migration to the coastal cities in the region. Journalist Po Tidholm believes there is a conflict between the centre and the periphery in Sweden, a conflict based on an urban norm. People value Norrland for its natural resources, its natural beauty and the opportunities for leisure and recreation it provides. But, according to Tidholm (2014), Norrland is being drained of natural resources, whilst tax money, being based on inhabitants rather than business, never benefits the municipalities. With increased mobility, he adds, employees prefer to commute long distances rather than live where they work.

Another concern for these areas rich in natural resources is the increased efficiency with which these resources can be extracted and exploited. Journalist Arne Müller has for several years scrutinised the mining industry, its environmental impacts and risks (Müller, 2013), and the claims of welfare and employment it makes (Müller, 2015). Several municipalities in the north hoped that employment opportunities from mining activities would arrest the decline in their populations. But, according to Müller (2015), in reality, more efficient mining processes and
increased mobility of labour, may lead to fewer job opportunities and fewer permanent settlers.

Thus the municipalities of the north have had to find new ways to attract businesses and people. In order to sustain and potentially enlarge their populations, they utilise natural resources such as ore, water and forests; their strategic setting for datacentres and wind power plants; as well as their natural beauty for tourism. This illustrates urbanisation as a process of explosion: Norrland is seen as a supporter of “urban” rather than a competitor.

3.1. The reinvention of Kiruna and Gällivare

Two towns in the north have extraordinary opportunities to reinvent themselves: the mining towns of Kiruna and Gällivare where the mines are doing very well economically. The possibility of reinvention comes from challenges caused by the mining industry. The presence of large quantities of iron ore beneath the towns’ means that major urban areas need to be relocated in order for mining activities to continue, thereby providing opportunities to create new and more attractive built environments, an expressed objective of both municipalities (Gällivare kommun, 2018; Kiruna kommun, 2014).

Today these towns face the problem that labour markets are flourishing and able to offer well-paid employment, but people often do not settle permanently in them (Müller, 2015). Both the local authorities and mining companies want to increase the number of permanent settlers in order to improve commercial and social services, increase tax bases and raise the local commitment among employees. These urban transformations and the possibility of reinvention as attractive places provide incentives to investigate how these towns can be reshaped to attract new residents while at the same time maintaining attractiveness according to existing residents. A map showing location of the towns is shown in Figure 3. The following sections will introduce those towns and the challenges they face in more detail.
Figure 3. Location of Kiruna and Gällivare in the peripheral subarctic north of Sweden © Blom
3.2. Kiruna

Kiruna is a town and a municipality in the far north part of Sweden. The municipality borders Norway and Finland, as well as two municipalities of Sweden, Pajala municipality and Gällivare municipality. 23 116 citizens were registered in Kiruna municipality territory in 2017, of which 16 936 were living in the town of Kiruna. Figure 4 shows the town of Kiruna and the planned relocation of the town centre.

Kiruna was established as a mining town in the early 20th century. The iron ore deposits in the mountains of Kiirunavaara and Luossavaara was known from the 18th century, but mining in larger scales did not start until the state-owned mining company LKAB (Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara AB) was founded in 1890. Hjalmar Lundbohm was the local manager of LKAB from 1887 with the mission to establish a mine and a town for the mine workers.

In 2004 it was announced that the town of Kiruna would need to be moved because the iron ore deposits of Kiirunavaara extend underneath the existing town; an announcement that received international attention (Sjöholm & Nilsson, 2011). In 2011 a decision was taken to build a new town centre east of the existing town and during 2012-2013 an urban design competition was conducted in order to establish a roadmap and plan for the relocation. In the summer of 2018 the first part of the new city centre – the new town hall – was completed.
Figure 4. The town of Kiruna and its proposed process of relocation from red to white.

Figure 5. View towards the Kiirunavaara mine from the town centre of Kiruna.
3.3. Gällivare

Gällivare municipality borders Norway and Kiruna municipality, as well as Pajala, Överkalix, Jokkmokk, and Boden municipalities. The municipality had a population of 17,825 people in 2017, and most inhabitants live in the two main settlements located only 5 km apart, Gällivare with 10,417 inhabitants and Malmberget with 2,967 inhabitants. Figure 6 shows the towns of Gällivare and Malmberget and the areas affected by the redevelopment of the town.

The settlements of Gällivare and Malmberget have a shared and intricate history, Malmberget as the mining town and Gällivare as the church town, market place and administrative centre. Mining activities started in Malmberget as early as 1736, but large-scale mining started when the railroad to Luleå was opened in 1888. Since the mine workers considered Gällivare to be too far from Malmberget to live, the population of Malmberget started to grow. However, living conditions were poor which in 1899 led to the development of a town plan for Malmberget. Five years earlier, in 1894, a town plan was adopted in Gällivare (Sjöholm & Nilsson, 2011).

In the 1950s it was decided that the Kaptensmalmn, the iron ore deposits underneath the existing town of Malmberget, were to be mined. In time, the mining activity caused deformations above ground and the Kaptensgropen (an open pit that today divides Malmberget in two) has grown (Sjöholm & Nilsson, 2011). In 2009 some new areas of Malmberget were closed by a fence due to the risk of new deformations. In 2010 a vision for the relocation of the town was devised with the inhabitants and in 2011 three areas for development were identified: the town centre, Vassara älv, and Repisvaara. In 2016 a number of buildings were moved from Malmberget to Koskullskulle, north east of Malmberget, as the first phase of the relocation. At the same time, the development areas began to grow. During 2016 a fourth development area was suggested in Vassara-Sandvikken and between 2016-2018 a development plan for a new neighbourhood was developed.
Figure 6. The towns of Gällivare and Malmberget and the proposed process of relocation from red to white.
4. Theoretical framework

The starting point of this study is that a place is produced “by the interaction of actors in multiple networks” (Healey, 2007, p. 22). Politicians, urban designers, citizens, architects, scholars, property developers, journalists, for example, all contribute to produce the complex context of places through their communicated knowledge, social relations, interactions with and hands-on shaping of the physical environment. Lefebvre (1991) has theorised the complexity of places, arguing that the production of place occurs simultaneously in ideal and real spheres of society. The ideal sphere comprising the professional spaces where ideas of design, research, and ideology influence the built environment. The real spheres being the spaces of everyday life where social and physical interactions give the built environment content and meaning.

In the process of physical place production, some actors have more advantages and greater power than others. The physical built environment, being controlled by regulations, political decisions, design decisions, and money etc. is to a high degree controlled by actors belonging to the ideal sphere. These actors have power to implement their visions, objectives, and strategies in the production of places. The actors of the real sphere have little control over the production of places and are, to be blunt, merely subjects who interact with the physical outcome. It should however be said that there is increasing pressure from actors usually associated with the real sphere to be included in planning decisions (Sandercock, 2010).

The theoretical starting point is inspired by Lefebvre’s thinking and the field of critical urban studies (see Brenner, Marcuse, & Mayer, 2012; Harvey, 1989; Lefebvre, 1991). The field of critical urban studies questions top-down planning structures, and particularly the influence of capitalistic power in planning. It is argued that capitalistic space production has a tendency to reformulate itself in times of crisis rather than fading out for the benefit of other interests (Brenner et al., 2012). Such reinventions have been said to entrench ongoing modes of urbanisation processes such as “implosion-explosion” (Brenner, 2014; Lefebvre, 2003) and “creative destruction” (Harvey, 1989), introduced in Section 2.2. Critical urban studies challenges this capitalist space production to make way for more democratic, socially just, and sustainable urban production processes (Brenner et al., 2012).

The critical approach provides certain epistemological and ontological conceptions. It acknowledges, for example, that knowledge comes from the local context, its way of working, organizing itself and
utilizing its resources. In other words, an acknowledgement that the world is socially constructed and that knowledge comes with cultural and historical “baggage”. According to Brenner et al. (2012) the role of critical theory is then to abstract these local processes, as well as to “inform the strategic perspective of progressive, radical, or revolutionary social and political actors.” As such, critical theory is not neutral in its way of describing the world, it has a focus, an assumption that certain actors have more power than others in the production of space.

The aim of this study is not necessarily to critically assess capitalist urban space production but rather to critically assess the enforcement of attractive urban space coming from the ideal sphere of place production through the term attractiveness. The starting point of the research project make use of a statement from Lefebvre (1991) saying that without a unified theory that combines both spheres of place production, it will be impossible to “give rise to a knowledge of space” (p. 7). This study seeks a more common knowledge of attractive space by contrasting and comparing the perspectives of ideal and real spheres within a specific context. There is an understanding that certain actors have power of the term attractiveness and its content, and that opposing ideas might occur in other spheres of society.

The ontological and epistemological starting point is thus that the world is socially constructed, that knowledge about the term attractiveness and its meaning is constructed by social processes and in multiple spheres of society. It is acknowledged that these social constructions have the power to affect the physical environment and social reality (Collin, 2002). Burr (2003, pp. 2-5) has summed up four key premises of social constructionism. The first one is that social constructionism includes a critical stance towards taken-for-granted knowledge. She explains how knowledge about the world cannot be considered to be objective truths, how knowledge is affected by our categories and worldviews through which we experience the world. Drawing on one of her examples, what is perceived as ‘attractive’ or ‘unattractive’ is not in the nature of the object itself, it is a meaning we have assigned by our constructed categories. The second premise is historical and cultural specificity, that our understanding of the world is tied to categories and concepts derived within historical and cultural contexts. Our idea of attractiveness is a construction that emerges from our historical and cultural attributes. The third premise is that knowledge is sustained by social processes, that knowledge is derived in interaction with people. The idea of attractiveness is produced and sustained, or reproduced, through these social interactions. The last premise is that knowledge and social action go together, that from a given worldview follows certain ways of acting, This
means that there are numerous social constructions, and hence, numerous ideas and meanings assigned to attractive urban environments.

This means that depending of the context, the understanding of attractiveness will change. As will be seen in the research design explained in Chapter 5, the objective here is not to trace historical and cultural context in order to better understand the meanings. The objective is rather to understand existing meanings in order to challenge the dominant meaning determined by the ideal sphere. The next section introduces Lefebvre’s notion of production of space as a basis for the analysis in this study.

4.1. Production of urban place

Before introducing the concept of production of space and its application in this research project, it would be wise to introduce some general thoughts on Lefebvre’s thinking.

The first one is the notion already introduced of space being produced by multiple actors, simplified by Lefebvre (1991) to the idea of ideal and real spheres. The ideal sphere is the sphere of professional and theoretical actors, thinking, designing, and developing an ideally produced space. Conversely, the real sphere is the space of social practice, the content of the space, the actors using and living in the space. Lefebvre (1991) argues that the labels of the two spheres are of less importance, it is the distance that separates the ‘ideal’ from ‘real’ that is of interest. But there is also a mutual relationship between the spheres: “[i]n actuality each of these two kinds of space involves, underpins and presupposes the other” (p. 14). The spheres simultaneously have attributes in common and diverse historical and cultural contexts and hence there are both shared and diverse values in the spheres.

The second one is the use of the word “production” rather than “product”. According to Lefebvre, space is not a product, space is under production. This ontological-epistemological standpoint means that space is never finalised. There could possibly be an outcome for a certain space at a certain time, but for Lefebvre one outcome is rather a starting point for new explorations, questions and critical scrutiny (Lefebvre, 2003; Soja, 1996). In that regard he has a postmodern view of reality and knowledge production (Soja, 1996). But even though he understands space as complex (produced by multiple actors) and under production (and not a product) he argues that every reality has elements that can be analysed (Lefebvre, 2003). For Lefebvre (2003) the situation needs suitable methods of investigation, such as interdisciplinary cooperation. Soja (1996) prefers the term
transdisciplinary, arguing that place production is not the preserve of specialists alone, it includes all possible perspectives.

The third is Lefebvre’s use of triad concepts. According to Lefebvre (1991), triads are important since dualism runs the risk of being interpreted as opposing standpoints, that the ideal and real spheres are two contesting entities, for example. Instead a triad provides the opportunity for negotiation between different modes of space production, and for this study, it allows for a richer critical analysis of production of attractiveness from the different perspectives of the real and ideal spheres.

The fourth is that it becomes important to differentiate between the term “space” and “place”, a critique that has been made of Lefebvre’s thinking (Unwin, 2000). In this context, “space” is understood as a wider concept than “place” as it includes knowledge about attractiveness created and shared through debates, discussions, social practice, and research as well as knowledge about the physical world and its ways of working. Space could be explained as the abstract knowledge of attractiveness, having both physical and non-physical arenas in which production of attractive urban environments takes place. Place is instead the physical, contextual expression of space; place has a geolocation and a physical and social context within which the idea of attractiveness is realised.

The three dimensions of space production could be applied in different ways. An urban designer in her or his work most likely makes use of ideological and epistemological knowledge (mental space), as well as physical and social knowledge (social space) when developing an urban design project. Citizens also have an understanding of all three dimensions when thinking about space: an idea of how they would like to live (mental space), experience in living in space (social space), and experience of interaction with the physical environment (physical space). For the sake of this study, the triad is applied as a model representing a comprehensive production process in both an ideal sphere – scholars, planners and designers – and a real sphere – citizens and commuters. As such, overlaps exist between the three dimensions, it is not a clear categorisation of different states of space production. The framework is rather a categorisation, a way to decipher place production of the different spheres for the sake of this investigation. Figure 7 illustrates the three perspectives interpretation used in this study. The following section will introduce three dimensions of place production as employed in this study, inspired by Lefebvre’s thinking.
4.2. Attractiveness idealised, socialised, and visualised

The categories described here are inspired by Lefebvre’s mental, social, and physical space, but for the purpose of this study they are reinterpreted as attractiveness idealised, attractiveness socialised, and attractiveness visualised. This section will introduce Lefebvre’s conceptual triad, and explain how it has been reinterpreted for the purpose of this study.

The mental space, according to Lefebvre (1991), is the ideal space, i.e. ideological and epistemological knowledge about space. As such, it is an abstract space, including ideas of how things should or could be. He explains that this space may include discourses, collective agreements, and concepts that humans produce or constitute through social processes.

Here, mental space is understood as the idealisation of attractiveness. The thoughts, ideas, and meanings according to the different spheres. It is the conceptual level of space production, not necessarily tied to physical realities or social life, but rather constructions of ideological art.

The social space is understood, from Lefebvre’s (1991) thinking, as the lived space in which every society produces its own space. It includes both individual and collective action and the way individuals and collectives “develop, give expression to themselves, and encounter
prohibitions” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 33). In other words, how place is lived, constructions regulating or restricting possibilities, the need to express oneself and the development of these processes.

Social space is here reinterpreted as attractiveness socialised. What are the ideas of attractive social space, how do people live, what are they seeking, what are they working towards? It relates to the physical reality and the idealised idea, but focuses on the doing or practicing of space.

Physical space according to Lefebvre (1991) is the material world, the built and natural environments in which life is lived. He argues however that the material world studied in isolation becomes an empty abstraction, instead it is the meaning and values assigned to the physical that adds social value. For Lefebvre, the built and natural environments are just objects or scenes, a background in which life is lived, and it is in the thinking of and the social interaction with the environment that gives it value and content. As a background for our lives it is simultaneously a facilitator and inhibitor for our lives. It can facilitate possibilities for an attractive life, but it can also restrict our possibilities.

Rather than physical space, this study discuss attractiveness visualised. It includes on one hand the physical built environments – the material world, its objects, boundaries and environments. On the other hand, it includes the future – visions, proposals, and projects presented by urban planners and designers or produced in the research process, for future built environments. It is also understood and studied both as object and subject. Existing environments and future proposals are seen as objective realities, a background to life. But it is through knowledge and meaning that the physical attains attractiveness.
5. Research design, methods and implementation

The research design employed in this study is qualitative in nature, combining interpretative and participatory approaches, in order to study the term attractiveness in multiple dimensions and from different perspectives (Merriam, 2009). Interpretative approaches are described to investigate phenomena in the context in which they appear (Merriam, 2009). The aim is to construct knowledge by describing, understanding, and interpreting. Participatory approaches are described to be concerned with issues of everyday life (Ledwith & Springett, 2010). Rather than interpretation, construction of knowledge is produced in collaboration with the subjects themselves. The premise of the research project is that multiple realities co-exist in this world and the critical lens is focused to study the tension that arises as a result of these different realities, in this case multiple viewpoints of the term attractiveness. The research design is based on investigating a selection of viewpoints of the term attractiveness.

The perspectives chosen for investigation relate to Lefebvre’s (1991) notion that places are produced in both the ideal and real spheres of society. The ideal sphere is here represented by publications of scholars and professionals and urban design proposals using the term attractiveness in the context of built environments. Lefebvre (1991) explains that the ideal sphere produces ideological and epistemological knowledge in its everyday practice. In particular, truth is argued to be produced through the argumentative and persuasive language of planning (Fischer & Forester, 1993). These argumentative truths are here investigated interpretatively through the methods of discourse analysis (Foucault, 2002; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000) and qualitative content analysis (Merriam, 2009). The aim is to study how attractiveness is conceptualised and spatialised in the ideal sphere.

The real sphere is represented by a group of citizens in Gällivare and Kiruna, and long distance commuters working in Gällivare, who provided their ideas of what the term attractiveness mean to them. The real sphere is not clearly expressed in documents and publications. Instead this perspective is investigated through an Urban Living Lab-methodology based on participatory action research. Participatory research is used to study the narratives of everyday concerns (Ledwith & Springett, 2010) and the Living Lab setting facilitated recurring discussions with citizens and commuters in the contexts of Kiruna and Gällivare (Ståhlbröst & Holst, 2012). The aim of the Living Lab method is to study conceptualisation and spatialisation of the term attractiveness in the real sphere.
The contexts in which the studies take place were selected in order to capture global-ideal perspectives and local-real perspectives and facilitate comparisons of attractive place production. Given the interpretative and participatory approaches to investigating contextual knowledge, defining the cases becomes an important matter in the knowledge production as well as in the understanding of the perspectives. Merriam (2009) defines a case as a bounded system, a selection of people and/or places to investigate. She argues that an infinite number of study objects would not be defined as a case as it would be impossible to map the general understanding of such a case.

From these notions, the cases included in this research project are best defined by the inclusion criteria of each study. Knowledge produced by these studies should be understood as contextual knowledge derived from the documents, people, and places that are included. It is knowledge that admittedly coexists with other realities but still embodies different viewpoints upon which a critical analysis of different conceptualisations and spatialisations of attractiveness can be performed. The inclusion criteria of the different studies, will be further explained in Sections 5.2.1 - 5.2.4.

The research project has been carried out through five sub-studies presented in Table 1. The studies are all related to sub-questions of the research project, and the table presents the methodologies and approaches used in the different studies. The following sections will introduce the studies, the role of the researcher, the methodological approaches and the implementation in each study.
Table 1. Research questions, methodologies and implementations of the research project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Summary/Appendix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is the term attractiveness conceptualised and used in publications by urban scholars and professionals?</td>
<td>Discourse analysis</td>
<td>Literature study of 37 documents</td>
<td>Chapter 6.1 Appendix 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the term attractiveness conceptualised and spatialised in urban planning and design contexts?</td>
<td>Qualitative content analysis</td>
<td>10 entries of urban design competition</td>
<td>Chapter 6.2 Appendix 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the term attractiveness conceptualised and spatialised by local citizens?</td>
<td>Urban Living Lab</td>
<td>Two groups of residents and one group of commuters</td>
<td>Chapter 6.3 Chapter 9.1 Appendix 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Urban Living Lab</td>
<td>Group of residents</td>
<td>Chapter 9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Urban morphology</td>
<td>Three selected areas based on the outcomes of Living Lab group in Kiruna</td>
<td>Chapter 6.4 Appendix 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1. The role of the researcher

The role of the researcher varied, depending on which sphere was being investigated. The conducted studies of ideal perspectives were solely based on disciplinary interpretative approaches conducted in a secluded environment at the university. The conclusions of these studies have, however, been tested through presentations, meetings and informal discussion with architects, planners, officials in municipalities, and colleagues at LTU throughout the research process.

The studies of the real perspectives however changed the role of the researcher, as these studies were conducted in collaboration with subjects in the real sphere and partly in collaboration with other researchers. The researcher’s role in the Living Labs was as participatory researcher and lab facilitator. In between and after the labs, secluded periods of interpretative research were carried out in order to provide input to subsequent discussions in the labs and derive research-related knowledge. These interpretative periods were partly conducted in interdisciplinary settings together with colleagues at Luleå University of Technology. Two of the papers included in this thesis were authored in collaboration with these
colleagues. In both these papers, equal parts have been taken in writing and structuring of the papers, whilst each researcher took extra responsibility in content related to their subject area.

5.2. Methodological approaches

The research design of this project is based on interpretative and participatory approaches. The chosen approaches aim to scrutinise each of the selected perspectives, and the different methods are combined in order to discover conceptualisations and spatialisations of attractiveness according to each perspective.

5.2.1. Discourse analysis

The concept of discourse can be described as a social construction of language use. Foucault (2002), for example, described it as a series of statements that refers to a certain phenomenon. It is not the direct meaning of language itself, it is the way language is used to construct certain meanings and expectations that is referred to as discourse (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). The concept of discourse could also be extended to include written, oral, and visual statements of a phenomenon and is constrained by these statements about the phenomenon. In other words, a discourse is defined by the statements it includes as well as the statements not included (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). This frame of inclusion and exclusion is used to form a set of rules that regulates the construction of these meanings.

Like critical discourse analysis (Merriam, 2009), this study acknowledges that discourses constitute power as the narratives of the discourse becomes a type of truth under which certain decisions and actions are taken. But it is also acknowledged that a discourse is constituted by other social practices. Through Lefebvre (1991) and the theoretical framework of this study these social practices could be exemplified as the everyday practice of social space or the hands-on practice of building and interacting with physical space. These practices consist of knowledge that affects the discourse, but discourses also have certain influence over other practices. To differentiate discourses from other practices, it could be argued that discourses are produced and consumed by discursive practices through the use and interpretation of language (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).
The application of discourse analysis in this research does not however focus on power relations or the relation to other practices. Rather, these notions frame an understanding of the concept of discourses as utilized in this project as a recognised part of the production of attractive places.

5.2.2. Qualitative content analysis of urban design proposals

A qualitative content analysis was conducted on the basis of Merriam’s (2009) notion of how documents could be used in qualitative research. According to her, documents are “ready-made source of data easily accessible to the imaginative and resourceful investigator” (p. 139). She suggests the concept of qualitative content analysis as an interpretative method to conduct research on this available data source. She compares qualitative content analysis with an interview study, arguing that documents could be treated like voices and opinions of authors (Merriam, 2009). It is however important to acknowledge that the documents are produced for purposes other than research, and hence the documents’ origins and authenticity and the authors’ respective agendas must be taken into consideration (Merriam, 2009).

The written and illustrated proposals were interpreted abductively. Abductive interpretation is described as to search for differences, similarities, and tracks in the studied material in order to make logical understanding of it (Danermark, et al., 1997; Johansson, 2000). In order to better capture the analysis of spatialisation, an urban morphological framework was adapted to support the interpretation of form through illustrations. Urban morphology is described in more detail in Section 5.2.4.

5.2.3. Urban Living Labs constructing citizens’ ideas of attractiveness

The method of Urban Living Labs was adopted to investigate attractiveness together with local citizens. Living Labs can be described as an umbrella method in which researchers and citizens together investigate issues in interactive and inclusive settings (Stählbröst & Holst, 2012). Adding the label “urban” to the concept means that the co-creation and innovation processes use urban areas as test beds in the investigation of urban issues (Juujärvi & Pesso, 2013).

As an umbrella method, Living Labs can be applied in different types of research and innovation processes that would benefit from the inclusion of the voices of multiple actors. The basic idea of a Living Lab is to conduct recurring activities, such as meetings, workshops, and different types of evaluations, with the same participants using an emergent process
of study. The particular Living Lab in this study was based on participatory action research (Ledwith & Springett, 2010). Rather than conducting interpretative research on or to the subjects, participatory action research invites subjects to participate with the researchers in the enquiry (Herr & Anderson, 2014). This collaborative approach also nurtures a pedagogical dimension to the process, as learning from each other becomes part of the research design (Ledwith & Springett, 2010).

The benefits of such an approach include more democratic processes in research, practical problem identification and access to everyday and living knowledge (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). But Urban Living Labs and participatory action research also give rise to concerns about how the research is done, as there is a risk that people may not participate on an equal basis, that researchers’ knowledge outweighs knowledge of the participants, or that participants do not wish to continue participating in the recurring activities. To avoid these concerns, Living Labs were designed on the basis of five principles that aim to create open and inclusive lab environments (Ståhlbröst & Holst, 2012): value, influence, realism, openness, and sustainability.

The principle of value represents as the need to create value for all participants in order to motivate them to participate. For researchers, the value would be the generation of knowledge about a phenomenon and to perform the inquiry for its research value. For participants, value could be the possibility to influence the design of a product or to gain knowledge about an issue.

The principle of influence represents the importance of seeing all participants as equal and competent project partners. Different actors have different knowledge to contribute to a Living Lab. But if certain actors are perceived as superior, other participants might feel inferior and demotivated. Tolley and Bentley (1996) argue that participatory research requires a ‘we know, they know’ environment. Participants must have the feeling that they have knowledge and can contribute knowledge to the research process.

The principle of realism represents placing the study in a real-life context and studying real-life issues. It has the benefit of motivating participants as the knowledge produced will affect the reality they experience. The other benefit is that a real-life context is something everyone is familiar with and real-life issues are thing everyone can discuss. In other words, it is a way to facilitate discussions among different disciplines.

The principle of openness represents the importance of creating an open attitude towards each other in the study. Participants must have the
feeling that they can express their opinions in the Living Lab, and understand that multiple opinions occur. The benefit is that multiple opinions facilitate good discussions and feeds the knowledge process in the study.

The principle of sustainability represents the idea that knowledge produced should aim not only attempt to address today’s issues, but also find long-term solutions for those issues.

As Lefebvre (1991) asserts, every society creates their own space. In this study, each Living Lab group should be considered as a 'society’ in which knowledge of the term attractiveness is constructed. That also means that the knowledge should be considered valid for each Living Lab group, its participants, context and setting. Or what Nowotny (2004) argues, produced knowledge relates to the social and environmental setting of the particular 'society’. She calls this contextual knowledge socially robust (Nowotny, 2004). The recurrent activities with same participants are aimed to revisit and revise outcomes from previous activities to ensure that valid knowledge is produced.

One final point about the critical nature of participatory approaches is worth making. Participatory approaches have a critical dimension and hence challenge accepted ways of understanding (Merriam, 2009). In the case of these labs, the critical nature includes the pedagogical dimension of the labs, as the learning of others challenges the knowledge of each participant. And as will be seen in the concluding chapter, this critical nature has potential applications in the production of attractive places.

5.2.4. Urban morphological theory supporting studies of form

Urban morphological theory was employed in the research project in order to strengthen the analysis of how the term attractiveness is spatialised. Urban morphology provides an approach and methodology to study form in interdisciplinary settings (Kropf, 2018; Moudon, 1997) and has have been applied as an approach in different parts of this research project.

Urban morphology considers three basic elements: form, resolution and time (Moudon, 1997). Form is the physical reality and is commonly investigated through three fundamental elements: buildings, plots and streets (Moudon, 1997). Form can also include smaller elements such as materials, objects, as well as larger elements such as blocks, infrastructure systems, or whole towns (Kropf, 2014). The elements of form could be studied individually or in relation to other elements.

Resolution is the different scales that an urban morphological investigation may consider. Moudon (1997) describe four common scale factors: building/plot, street/block, city, and region. Kropf (2014) suggests
a more extensive list including: materials, structures, buildings, plots, blocks, and urban tissue. Similar to the form elements, the different scales can be analysed individually or in relation to other scales.

Finally, time represents the historic layers of the form, how that form is transformed and replaced over time (Moudon, 1997) and how it has been affected by, for example, economic, political, and technological development processes (Gauthier, 2005; Moudon, 1997).

5.3. Implementation of sub-studies

Based on the methodological approaches presented above, five different sub-studies were conducted to investigate the different perspectives of the term attractiveness and to address the sub-questions of this research project (as summarised in Table 1). The first two sub-questions regarding how the term attractiveness is conceptualised and spatialised from ideal perspectives is investigated through the methods of discourse analysis and qualitative document analysis. The third sub-question, of how local citizens conceptualise and design the term attractiveness, was studied through Urban Living Labs and urban morphological analysis. The following section will introduce the implementations of the studies.

5.3.1. Discourse analysis of the term attractiveness

To investigate urban scholars and professional perspectives of the term attractiveness, a discursive investigation of the term was carried out by examining publications and documents using the term attractiveness in relation to built environments.

The initial identification of relevant documents used search-strings employing relevant keywords and Boolean operators to search the international databases of Scopus and Web of Science, and the Swedish national library database LIBRIS. However, it became evident that the number of Swedish publications in the international databases was limited whilst LIBRIS only provided a small number of books on the subject. Starting from this small selection, publications were typically added by wider searches in reference lists, through the library, through contacts with people in the field, and through search engines. This resulted in a range of reports, books, and other publications from government institutions, research institutions, interest groups, consultant bureaus, and magazines, all of which used the term attractiveness in relation to urban planning and design. In total, 37 publications were included in the discourse analysis.
A careful reading and categorisation of the documents initiated the discourse analysis, and considered the following three questions: *In which context is the term attractiveness used? What is the objective of attractiveness? and How is attractiveness told to be achieved?* These questions gave an initial categorisation of the publications. Several re-readings gave a deeper understanding of the material and different focus areas started to emerge. The discursive analysis was then built on the initial categorisation and descriptions of the categories, what the categories included and excluded. From this analysis of the categories the discursive character of the term attractiveness emerged.

### 5.3.2. The term attractiveness interpreted in urban design proposals

The qualitative document analysis aimed to investigate how urban planners and designers interpret and use the term attractiveness in urban design proposals. The proposals used in the study were all part of an urban design competition that took place in Kiruna between 2012–2013. Table 2 provides a full list of all proposals and the competition teams.

The background of the competition is that the local authority of Kiruna announced in 2004 that the town would be “moved” in order for mining activities to continue. Several alternatives for the relocation were examined before a decision was made to move affected parts of the town 5 km east of the current town centre. The planning of a new town centre was initiated by an urban design competition which included a pre-qualification phase in order to identify participating teams. The pre-qualification started in April 2012 and resulted in ten entries. The competition period took place between July and December 2012, and the winner, Kiruna 4-ever, was announced in March 2013.
Table 2. The competition proposals and the teams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposals</th>
<th>Teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kiruna Arktiskt Sublima</td>
<td>KCAP Architects&amp;Planners (Rotterdam) CaseStudio (Gothenburg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Kiruna 4-ever</td>
<td>White arkitekter AB (Stockholm) Ghilardi + Hellsten (Oslo) Spacescape (Stockholm) Vectura Consulting AB (Solna, Sweden) Evidens BLW AB (Stockholm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Polar conditions</td>
<td>Bjørke Ingels Group (Copenhagen) Spacescape (Stockholm) Testbedstudio (Stockholm) Topotek 1 &amp; Man Made Land (Berlin) Resource Vision (Stockholm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. There is a crack in everything</td>
<td>Ecosistema Urbana (Madrid) Kristine Jensens tegnestue (Aarhus, Denmark) 700N arkitektur AS (Tromsø, Norway) Ljusarkitekt (Stockholm) Atkins (Stockholm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ett nätverk av urbana eldstäder</td>
<td>COBE Aps (Copenhagen) Kragh &amp; Berglund (Copenhagen and Stockholm) Moe &amp; Bredgaard (Rodovre, Denmark) Yngve Andrén Konsult AB (Stockholm) Boris Broman Jensen (Aarhus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. LUNA</td>
<td>Tovatt Architects &amp; Planners (Stockholm) Atelier Dreiseitl (Überlingen, Germany) Urban Think Tank Architects LLC (Zürich) Wenanders (Stockholm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Go North</td>
<td>BSK Arkitekter AB (Stockholm) MVRDV (Rotterdam) Grotnsj i Sverige AB (Stockholm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Den öppna staden</td>
<td>NorconsultByplan (Sandvika, Norway) Norconsult landskapsarkitekt (Sandvika, Norway) Fantastic Norway (Oslo) 0047 International AS (Oslo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Linjen och Staden</td>
<td>Tham och Videgård Arkitekter (Stockholm) Territorial Agency (London) a_zero environmental architects (London)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The aim of the competition was, according to the competition brief, to identify a proposal for a new town centre “attractive during all stages of the building process” (Kiruna kommun, 2012). The vision should consider the identity of Kiruna and provide a sustainable urban structure. It also stated that the new town should consider existing, returning, and new citizens; providing quality of life for the residents; and “opportunities for a prosperous, expansive economy in which climate and the unique natural setting are positive assets” (Kiruna kommun, 2012, p. 4).

The process of studying of the ten urban design proposals included a careful initial reading and analysis of the material where the proposals were split according to different scale-factors. This analysis was inspired by Moudon’s (1997) notion of resolution that urban form has different detailing in different scales. The categorisation of scales were derived in the process of analysis, three scales were considered: regional considerations, structure plan, districts and blocks.

The proposals were then compared and categorised in each scale through abductive interpretation combined with urban morphological approaches to consider both written descriptions and illustrated form. Illustrated form were analysed through Moudon’s (1997) notion of form, which in urban morphological analysis means to study elements of the physical reality as an objective reality. In the case of this analysis of urban design proposals, the illustrated form is analysed as an objective reality whilst written explanations add value and meaning to the form. The urban morphological analysis was used to find patterns and relationships between elements, such as buildings, plots, and streets. The urban morphological analysis was combined with more careful readings to explain value of the forms that were studied. The morphological aspect of time (Moudon, 1997), for the purposes of this study, considered the past, current, and future perspectives of the proposals.

5.3.3. Urban Living Labs of citizens in Kiruna and Gällivare

The first three Urban Living Labs in this research project began in 2015 as a collaborative project with a colleague and sociologist at the division of Humans and Technology at Luleå University of Technology. Her area of interest was social sustainability in a local context, and our mutual interest in the use of interactive and inclusive knowledge processes led to collaboration in the shape of Urban Living Labs. The aim in relation to this research project was to study the term attractiveness from the perspective of local citizens. The two terms attractiveness and social sustainability were combined themes of the workshops.
In the autumn of 2015, invitations were sent to potential participants, who were selected based on the results of a survey with questionnaire made in Gällivare and Malmberget (Jakobsson & Segerstedt, 2014; Johansson, Segerstedt, Olofsson, & Jakobsson, 2016). The survey analysed material and immaterial aspects of social sustainability in Gällivare and Malmberget, and one of the aspects included was the perception of built environments in the towns. Through mapping of the survey data (Johansson et al., 2016) it was concluded that urban areas in proximity to public buildings, such as schools and hospitals, were perceived to have lower value. The aim was to invite people living in urban areas in proximity to public buildings to participate in a Living Lab. In total 220 invitations were handed out in Gällivare/Malmberget. Invitations were put directly in postboxes of people living in housing societies of co-operative apartment tenure, or sent by mail through the assistance of TOP Bostäder, the municipal company for rental apartments. The invitations resulted in six participants in the workshop series, five of whom were more or less regular participants and one only came to one workshop. In Kiruna 190 invitations were handed out to postboxes in the chosen locations, including both co-operative apartment tenures and rental tenures. The invitations did not result in any participants. Potential participants were then invited through a visit to the high school Hjalmar Lundbohm skolan, through handouts in the mall Gallerian, and through the Facebook group Stads- och centrumutveckling i Kiruna. In the end the Living Lab group in Kiruna included five participants, all having an interest in developing Kiruna for the future.

Long-distance commuters were defined as people traveling to work by airplane, by train or by car and staying in Gällivare/Malmberget or Kiruna during the working week. Potential participants in this group were identified through companies in the mining and building industry known to employ commuters. It was however difficult to recruit participants since the companies did not want to give out their details and potential participants showed little interest in taking part or had irregular working hours and diverse working places. In the end, a contact at one of the companies helped to identify three commuters, all living in Luleå and working in the mining industry and commuting to Gällivare/Malmberget. They were all employed by the same company, although they held different positions in the company.

In late 2015 the first Living Lab was held in Gällivare and at the beginning of 2016 the group in Kiruna and the commuter group had their first meetings. The meetings were held in the participants’ hometowns on neutral ground in community centres or conference facilities in order to ensure a safe and open innovation environment. Apart from the emergent
study process, each Living Lab was planned to consist of five workshops and an outline of the general themes of each workshop was made, see Figure 8. The commuter group, however, asked for a reduction in the number of workshops, resulting in their third and last workshop being a full day and including the planned activities of the three last workshops.

![Figure 8. The workshop series of the first three Urban Living Labs.](image)

Even though small variations occurred in the implementation, a general plan can be outlined to represent the activities in each group. The first workshop began with all participants formulating their individual ideas of attractive built environments by answering to the questions: *What is an attractive urban environment in Kiruna/Gällivare according to you?*, *What is attractive in the existing environment?*, and *If you were to think forward, what would you improve?* The participants had as much time as they needed to write their views on post-it notes before the notes were presented to the rest of the group. The presentation was followed by an exercise where the group was asked to collaborate in clustering the various views and labeling each cluster that was identified. The clustering and views were revisited and explored in more depth in workshops 2 and 3 to ensure socially robust outcomes, as described in Section 5.2.3. This clustering exercise aimed to explore the written conceptualisation of the term of attractiveness, see example in Figure 9.
The other part of the workshop series focused on spatialisation of attractiveness. This investigation was initiated by a take-home assignment between workshops 1 and 2 where the participants were asked to take photos of environments they felt were good or bad in relation to the term attractiveness. The photos were discussed in workshop 2 where the participants were asked to present and discuss their photos and locate them on a map. Between workshops 2 and 3 a similar assignment was given, to take photos representing the categories of attractiveness derived in the workshops. These photos were discussed during workshop 3.

Workshop 4 focused on form by letting each participant draw or indicate on a map places where they would like to live, as well as indicate their view of locations based on the different categories of attractiveness. This procedure was then repeated once again, but this time the participants were asked to illustrate how the categories and their preferred location(s) could be improved for the future.

The fifth workshop aimed to summarise the Living Lab. It was conducted as a presentation of the outcomes by the researchers where our understanding of the outcomes could be reviewed. Participants were also asked to give feedback to the process, raise questions and add ideas to the
conceptualisation and spatialisation of attractiveness that somehow had been missed.

In between the workshops secluded research sessions of interpretation were conducted to analyse the material, identify gaps and questions, and prepare the next workshop and provide input to the knowledge process. The Living Labs themselves could be seen as the inquiry for research, whilst the interpretative sessions aimed to generalise and extract valid research knowledge. For every workshop, the researchers collected all material and every workshop was recorded through recording devices and a video camera.

5.3.4. Urban Living Lab in Vassara-Sandviken

The Urban Living Lab in Vassara-Sandviken was initiated during 2016 and was conducted in parallel to the development of a plan for a new neighbourhood in Gällivare, Vassara-Sandviken. The Living Lab aimed to provide the official planning process with local insights, whilst the planning office of Gällivare could provide the Living Lab with a real-life setting. The lab was thereby conducted in collaboration with Gällivare municipality, architects and planners from Warm in the Winter, and landscape architects from Urbio.

This Living Lab aimed to explore the spatialisation of the term attractiveness from a local citizen’s perspective in more depth. About 350 invitations were sent out to people having an interest in moving or being forced to move as a result of the relocation. These people were identified partly from the municipality’s plot queue, a sign-up list for people that would like to buy a plot, and partly as residents of co-operative apartment buildings in Malmberget facing demolition because of the relocation. Invitations were also sent to previous participants in the Urban Living Lab in Gällivare, described above. In total, eight citizens participated during the four workshops, one of whom participated in the earlier Living Lab.

The set-ups of the first and second workshops were similar but focused on two different scales. The first workshop focused on the neighbourhood environment as a whole, including connections to other parts of the town. The second workshop focused on the housing environment, housing typologies and qualities in relation to the home environment. The two workshops were initiated by asking the individual participants to formulate their own ideas of attractive urban environments in the first workshop and attractive housing environments in the second. The participants wrote their ideas on post-it notes that were subsequently presented to the rest of the group. All post-it notes were clustered into pre-determined categories derived by the researcher in accordance with topics
of the official plans. There was also the possibility to add new categories if participants felt it was necessary. This material provided a starting point for critical discussions about the official plans, where participants had the opportunity to make changes and suggestions for improvements to those plans.

Before the third workshop, the researcher revisited and analysed the material of the two previous workshops and made changes and suggestions to the official proposal for Vassara-Sandviken according to the participants’ ideas. In the third workshop the revised proposal was presented to the participants and printed copies served as a basis for critical discussions in small groups. Participants made changes and suggested further improvements to the proposals.

After the third workshop, the outputs of the lab were revised by the researcher according to the discussions and a second revision of the proposal was presented to the projects team for Vassara-Sandviken. From this point, the team had the opportunity to make well-informed adjustments to their proposals in accordance with the views of the local citizens before a fourth summary workshop was held for all those involved in the process. The fourth workshop began with a presentation of the latest proposal made by the project team of Vassara-Sandviken, followed by a discussion involving all the workshop participants.

5.3.5. Form analysis of attractive urban areas in Kiruna

The starting point for this study was the material developed in the Urban Living Lab in Kiruna. One of the outcomes, described in Section 5.3.3, workshop 4, was maps indicating urban areas of Kiruna viewed as being attractive in relation to different categories derived in the Urban Living Lab. The categories selected in this study for investigation were Architecture & Construction and Culture & History, as identified by the participants of the Living Lab. Together with a colleague in the architecture group at LTU focusing on urban conservation in Kiruna, a study was designed to investigate the physical form of areas in Kiruna regarded as attractive in the Living Lab and included in the official heritage lists. The purpose in relation to this research study was to analyse the urban form of these areas in order to develop a deeper understanding of built environments seen as attractive.
Three areas were selected for investigation, based on an overlay of the data from the Living Lab group with data from official heritage lists. The areas selected were those that were regarded of higher significance in terms of highlighted by participants as attractive and being officially recognised for their heritage value. Figure 10 shows the initial data and the selected areas.

An urban morphological approach was adopted for this study. The analysis focused on an intermediate scale investigating the elements of buildings, plots and streets, as well as the elements’ relationships to each other. Starting from this scale, relationships were also investigated in terms
of resolutions, i.e. smaller parts, such as details, materials, objects, and the larger system, such as relationships to other parts of the town. The analysis was iterative and combined written descriptions summarised in a table with hands-on exercises that involved map analysis, see example in Figure 11, both of which provided supplementary insights of the studied areas.

Figure 11. Example of urban morphological analysis of the company area in Kiruna.
6. Summary of papers and studies

This compilation thesis includes research from four papers that will be summarised in this section.

6.1. Paper I: Attractiveness in Urban design

The paper *Attractiveness in Urban design* will be published in the Nordic Journal of Architectural Research in December 2018.

The paper aims to investigate the term “attractiveness” as used in Swedish urban planning and design contexts. The paper starts from the observation that the term has a multifaceted character and the objective of attractiveness is imprecise. The aim of the paper is therefore to analyse and characterise the term attractiveness as a term in urban planning and design. The analysis presented in the paper included 37 documents and publications written by urban scholars and professionals that use the term attractiveness in relation to built environments. The methods of discourse analysis were used to study and analyse these documents, and thereby investigate the use of the term and the meanings associated with it in the fields of urban design and planning.

The publications were categorised according to their themes of interest in relation to the term attractiveness. The categories used were: in relation to national economic development (measured by migration patterns and willingness to pay, aim to attract social capital, aim to provide public places, and quality of life); in relation to regional approaches; in relation to branding approaches; as an objective for integrated traffic systems; as an objective of attracting tourists; and, finally, as an objective relating to place identity and participation.

The paper concludes that the term attractiveness, as studied through these selected publications, constructs a discourse of urban attractiveness that includes three focuses: urban economics, social wellbeing, and urban townscapes. The discourse is explained as having its origins in the urban economic focus. This focus is described in national economic terms or in terms of economic growth, and relates to neoliberal planning ideals. The focus of social wellbeing is explained in terms of creating places that people enjoy and are attracted to. Social wellbeing relates to the economic focus, as attracting citizens leads to a larger tax-base and a stronger local economy. The focus of social wellbeing aims to attract citizens mainly by providing a high quality of life. The focus of urban townscapes is described in terms of providing structures and aesthetics associated with “urban” environments. Finally, it is argued that the process of building attractive urban
environments must be holistic and needs to be adapted and defined in accordance with the place and its prerequisites.

6.2. Paper II: Attractiveness in Urban design practice

The paper Attractiveness in Urban design practice is a manuscript of a journal paper aimed to be submitted in Town Planning Review. The paper considers how urban planners and designers interpret the term attractiveness when developing urban design proposals. The paper is based on a qualitative content analysis of 10 entries submitted to an urban design competition to identify a new town centre for the mining town of Kiruna. The competition took place in the context of an ongoing urban transformation process in which the current town centre needs to be relocated in order for mining activities to continue. The competition brief stated that the town should be attractive at all times during the transformation process, and attractive for new, returning, and existing citizens.

To emphasise the study of forms proposed in the urban design proposals, the analysis was based on an urban morphological framework of resolution, form, and time (Moudon, 1997). The analysis characterised the proposals through different scales: regional considerations, urban structure, district design and block typologies. Urban forms were then analysed in relation to each of these scales, and in relation to time with reference to the proposals’ considerations of the existing built environment and how it would evolve during the redevelopment process.

The conclusion of the paper was that Kiruna’s location and other unique local factors should be exploited to increase the attractiveness of the town. The urban structures described in the competition entries display qualities such as a legible town plan with clear communications and landmarks, a town structure emphasising a close relationship to nature, spatial definitions, and awareness of climatic considerations. Four main structural concepts are proposed: linear, star, grid, and cluster structure. There were also opposing ideas in the proposals, such as compact versus sprawl, clear versus blurred town boundary, and top-down versus bottom-up approaches towards planning and architecture. At the scale of districts and blocks, a number of block typologies were proposed: such as perimeter block, courtyard block, and cluster block.

6.3. Paper III: Producing space in Living Labs

The paper Producing space in Living Labs: Reflexive analysis in the contexts of Kiruna and Gallivare has been submitted to Journal of Engineering and Architecture. The paper is co-authored with Eugenia Segerstedt, a PhD
student and sociologist at the division of Humans and Technology at Luleå University of Technology.

The paper aims to analyse how space is produced using discussions that took place in Urban Living Labs designed to obtain local citizens’ views of attractiveness. The analysis was based on outcomes of Urban Living Labs conducted in Kiruna and Gällivare during 2015-2016. Three Living Lab groups were included in the analysis, one group of citizens in Gällivare, one group of citizens in Kiruna, and one group of long-distance commuters working in Gällivare. The analytical framework of the paper was based on Lefebvre’s (1991) concept of production of space, and the triad of physical, mental, and social space.

The Urban Living Labs were based on participatory action research, in order to provide an inclusive and interactive collaboration environment where researchers and participants investigate certain issues together. The Living Labs were designed to construct socially robust knowledge by giving the participants time to reflect, evaluate, and bring new ideas to the table in the recurring workshops.

Through the framework of physical, mental, and social space the Living Labs explored how space is produced. Physically, participants were able to add value through historical and social knowledge of the place. Buildings in poor condition but having a history as “projects with ambitions” were explained in positive terms. Other buildings or places without the same type of history were negatively perceived. The importance of a coherent impression of the built environment was also stressed. Mentally, participants drew on knowledge about the place in the past and considered how it will change in the future. Old store names and memories of how the places looked in the past are part of the contemporary experience of place. But also projects of the ongoing urban transformation affect the impression of contemporary place. Places with no future are negatively perceived, while places subject to transformation are positively perceived even though their current state may be poor. Socially, different places are given meaning through their use. A concrete stair and a part of a sidewalk were important and positively perceived meeting points for some, whilst others did not pay much attention to these places.

The conclusion is that space is produced by different timelines and experiences that are woven into the contemporary experience of the place. In the discussions between participants conflicting ideas are identified. The Living Lab process, being based on participatory action research, encourages negotiation and common agreements rather than increasing conflicts. In that regard, the workshop format gives good possibilities to co-create knowledge and solve potential conflicts.

The paper Urban conservation and Urban morphology in Kiruna, Sweden has been submitted to the journal Urban Morphology. The paper is co-authored with Jennie Sjöholm, a colleague expert in urban conservation at the division of Architecture and Water at Luleå University of Technology.

The paper aims to study the interaction of urban conservation and urban morphology in the light of the urban transformation process in Kiruna. The paper also aims to study the form of urban areas in Kiruna regarded as being attractive by participants in an Urban Living Lab and included in the official heritage lists.

The paper describes an urban morphological analysis of three neighbourhoods in Kiruna. The areas were selected based on the criteria of them being highlighted as attractive by residents and officially recognised in for their heritage value. The three selected areas were all described and scrutinised by written descriptions and hands-on drawing studies based on maps.

The analysis shows that there are some common features of these neighbourhoods. These include open, green, and collectively used plots and areas, rather than private ownership; they are visually integrated with surrounding areas; and their physical expression incorporates visible time layers. Other aspects include use of wood as material, co-ordinated colour scheme, and small-scale buildings.

The conclusion of the study is that urban morphological approaches are useful in describing and classifying features important for the character of the urban environment. It also concludes that the areas considered in the study lack urban design ideas of containment relationships – that there is no logic of containment between streets, plots, and buildings, and enclosure. These elements of urban design seem to be of less importance in relation to the idea of attractive urban environments in Kiruna.
7. The discursive character of the term attractiveness

This section will explore the term attractiveness as a discourse in built environments based on a selection of publications by scholars and professionals, presented in more detailed in Section 5.3.1. The purpose is to reveal conceptualisation and spatialisation of attractiveness, and specific meanings that are produced in planning fields by the use of the term. The section will address the sub-question of how is the term attractiveness conceptualised and used in publications by urban scholars and professionals?

The discursive character of the term attractiveness focuses, with few exceptions, on attractiveness in the context of cities and towns, rather than rural areas. As focusing on the urban it can be explained as a discourse of urban attractiveness. The objective of the term should be seen in the light of inter-city competition and urbanisation (Harvey, 1989; Gospodini, 2002). The term addresses the challenges of a world that is mobile, competitive, and global; and it aims to guide decision-makers in a competitive society (Andersson, 1998).

The inclusion criteria of the discourse of urban attractiveness could be explained as growth of economy and population. These inclusion criteria support the idea of attractiveness being intended to address urbanisation. As Harvey (1989) points out, urbanisation leads to competition between places, but urbanisation process also create surpluses. Or as he states it, “surpluses are mobilized, produced, absorbed, and appropriated” through urbanisation (p. 53). This gives incentives not only to focus on growth itself in order to attract people and business, but also to focus on other qualities of urban environments that residents expect to be provided.

The discourse of urban attractiveness includes three sub-discourses: urban economics, social wellbeing, and urban townscapes. They should be seen as three perspectives that can inform the creation of attractive urban environments. And they are perspectives of negotiation as they include both conflicting and common ideas. For example, from an economical perspective, a high trade index is considered to be a measurement of attractiveness. A high trade index could, however, be associated with out-of-town shopping centres rather than shopping in urban areas, a type of environment not included in the descriptions of attractiveness.

Figure 12 illustrates these sub-discourses as a triad of physical, social, and economical dimensions.
Before describing these three sub-discourses in more depth, two recurring aspects should be stressed. First, there is the aspect of attractiveness as a holistic approach to urban development. Single interventions could add to the attractive image, but the attractive place has to have a common idea of how attractiveness is created. The second aspect is that attractiveness as a concept needs to be understood in relation to the specific place to which it is applied.

### 7.1. Urban economic dimension

The economic dimension of the discourse of urban attractiveness can be explained as having a focus on national economic decision-making and the aim of economic growth. Andersson (1998), one of the first authors to use the term attractiveness in relation to urban economics, explains how the economic dimension should be understood. According to him, “the content of attractiveness” aims to guide decision-makers in making strategic choices when creating more attractive urban environments. It is about guiding smart investments and providing a strengthened, public or private, local economy. Andersson (1998) argued that it is in the nature of each municipality to try to increase the attractiveness of its city, and that attractiveness is political and therefore dependent on political will. He argued that in order to achieve the attractiveness that politicians desire, attractiveness needs to be defined and measurable to validate some type of progress.
In the publications and documents included in this study, numerous definitions of attractiveness based on economic parameters exist. One such definition is derived from the idea that attractiveness could be measured by some socio-economic index (Rådberg, 2000) or high property values (Bernow & Stähle, 2011). Attractiveness would then be defined by the property prices that people are willing to pay to live in the area. Another definition suggests attractiveness could be measured by net migration to an area (Bernow & Strömquist, 1995; Bernow, Pleiborn, & Strömquist, 1996) or national economic decision-making (Andersson, 1998). This definition would then be that attractiveness is the values of many people. By applying the economic dimension in place production, attractiveness becomes an objective of growth of economy or population.

7.2. Citizens wellbeing dimensions

The social dimension of the term attractiveness focuses on providing the qualities that attracts people to a place. The aim of socially attractive places is not necessarily one of creating democratic, equal, safe and enriching places. Rather it is one of creating regions, cities, public places, and residential units that people are attracted by.

One such example is provided by research on migration patterns and motives for migration (Bernow, Pleiborn, & Strömquist, 1996; Bernow & Stähle, 2011; Kairos future, 2016). These studies present urban qualities that attract people, such as good communication and transport facilities, urban lifestyle, up-to-date retail opportunities, culture and retail destinations, clearly communicated visions, and career possibilities. Even though the general discussion relates to “urban” qualities, such studies note that qualities of green and safe areas where children can play also form part of the idea of an attractive city (Engström, 2014). This is confirmed by Bernow, Pleiborn, and Strömquist (1996) in their study of Gothenburg, a city with positive net-migration where people choose to live in the suburbs for the quality of life.

Another aspect of the social focus of the discourse is welfare, which is explained through reinterpretations of Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of human needs, saying that in order to enjoy the extra qualities of life, basic needs must first be satisfied. Basic needs include safe and affordable homes (Niedomysl, 2010) or a feeling of safety and maintained buildings and areas, and good transport options (Kairos Future, 2016).
Although the focus of the social wellbeing is about the general qualities of places that attract people, there is also a notion of place adaptation. Boverket (2015) proposes a method of cultural planning designed to take account of the local citizens’ perspective of attractiveness in the process of becoming more attractive.

7.3. Urban townscapes dimension

The publications considered in this study provide ideas on how attractiveness is spatialised, including aspects such as mobility, accessibility of public places and streets, and a unique character of the built environment. Ideas on how attractiveness is spatialised are derived from theories about urbanisation and place competition. One example is Antoni, Kruth, and Björnberg (2015) that suggest qualities such as well-designed public places, good communication and transport facilities, aesthetics, mixed use areas and an authentic profile of the place. Other ideas of spatialisation are derived in studies of, for example, high net-migration and willingness-to-pay. One example is Bernow and Stähle (2011) who identify eight reasons for high property values in Stockholm: urban block typologies, access to parks, proximity to the city centre, proximity to station for metro and commuter trains, access to pedestrian networks, access to urban amenities, and proximity to water. The overall impression is, however, that an attractive place provides an urban environment that includes lively central areas and open green areas in the outskirts.
8. The term attractiveness in urban design proposals

The term attractiveness also has an influence on the development of urban design proposals. Since municipalities in their vision statements commonly use the term, it becomes a term for urban planners and designers to relate to. One such case is the use of the term attractiveness in the competition brief for Kiruna municipality (2012), as described in Section 5.3.2. This chapter will explore how the term attractiveness is interpreted and used by urban planners and designers in competition entries. The full list of competition entries is found in Table 2. The following section will address the research question *How is the term attractiveness conceptualised and spatialised in urban planning and design contexts?*

Attractiveness is conceptualised in terms of competition, branding, identity, local culture and local citizens. Competition entries typically explore the region and town, its people, natural and economical resources and location in the world in the search for a concept. This concept becomes the frame in which the proposals take shape. In that regard, more general ideas of attractiveness are adapted to the local context and its values. The conceptualisations found in this analysis could be explained in terms of three approaches, used to various degrees in the different proposals.

One approach develops from a desire to make Kiruna a competitor in the region. The approach is to locate Kiruna as the centre in its region and suggests how Kiruna could communicate its presence. In the proposal *Polar conditions* it is suggested that Kiruna could become a hub in the north, or “the Arctic portal”. The proposal also suggest that Kiruna should be the place from which tourists can explore the northern part of Sweden, and that tourist attractions, such as a mining museum and a panoramic restaurant, should be developed. Another example is found in *Kiruna Arktiskt Sublima* where tourism is balanced with other business opportunities, such as knowledge, culture, and creative industries.

Another approach develops from Kiruna’s identity, local culture and local citizens, as studied by the architects and planners behind the proposals. In *Ett nätverk av urbana eldstäder* an idea is presented of building ‘the arctic town’. The proposal suggests working developing concepts and ideas associated uniquely with Kiruna, making use of modern architectural techniques and integrating those techniques with the natural environment. Other proposals typically build on the citizens’ close relationship with nature or the presence of Sami culture in the town.
The third approach develops through the citizens of Kiruna. One of the proposals, *There is a crack in everything that’s how the light gets in*, is more or less a narrative of an architect spending time with people in Kiruna, asking about their lives and needs, and experiencing their cultures and events. The conceptual idea is based on the idea of developing a new town plan in collaboration with existing citizens.

The proposed urban structures display a range of forms resulting from the conceptual ideas in the respective proposals. Proposals based on the premise of a local mind-set in close relation with nature typically aim for a town structure that facilitates outdoor lifestyles. Such a town structure can have the expression of an expansive town that invites the natural landscape into the urban areas, or a compact, dense town having clear borders with the surrounding landscape, providing both urban qualities and proximity to nature. There are also proposals aiming to let the citizens participate in the development of the urban structure plan, where the structure is subordinated to democratic development processes.

In order to help achieve the desired qualities, four main structural concepts are used in the proposals: linear, star, grid, and cluster structure, see Figure 13.

Figure 13. Urban structures found in the analysis of the urban design proposals.
It is possible to identify some common urban design elements shared between the proposals. One such element is legibility, that the town structure is recognisable, easy to read and easy to navigate. Legibility is facilitated through the structural concepts as presented above, and through urban design elements such as spatial definitions between built and unbuilt areas and contrast of common housing areas and accentuated landmarks.

A second element is a town structure that can emerge in accordance with the relocation process. For instance, the cluster structure in Go North is argued to be beneficial since “one cluster can be finished at a time”, so that certain parts of the town are not construction sites throughout the relocation process.

Another element is accessibility and movement as an integrated feature of the urban experience. It is commonly spatialised as paths and movement corridors that provide the main modes of transportation, such as public transportation, walking and bicycles, and motor vehicles. In the proposal Go North there is a suggestion of supplementing the network of streets by connecting built areas with paths through unbuilt areas, for the use of pedestrians and bicycles, as well as for snowmobiles in the winter.

Another element is climatic comfort, typically addressed through the aspects of sun, wind, and snow. Proposals suggest using building heights and street widths that take account of the sun’s angle, choosing forms for buildings and public places that hinder winds and prevent the build-up of snow.
District design and block typologies are proposed to host different types of use such as housing, commercial activities and industrial activities. The fabric of a district and its block typologies determines the character of the district. Typically there is a distribution of dense central urban districts and open, green districts in the outskirts. In the analysis six different block typologies were identified, see Figure 14: perimeter mixed block, freestanding low-rise cluster block, perimeter and freestanding mixed block, mixed courtyard block, mixed block with street, and offset freestanding low-rise cluster block.

The perimeter mixed block is typically divided into plots and buildings aligned with streets and public spaces, creating a green inner yard. The freestanding low-rise cluster block is divided into plots of similar housing typologies, typically single-family or small-scale multi-family housing. This typology is inspired by the existing urban structure of Kiruna. The perimeter and freestanding mixed block is divided into plots of mixed housing typologies. The block also provides accessibility and movement through the block. The mixed courtyard block is typically located in saved nature where different housing typologies are placed in the perimeter of a common courtyard. The mixed block with street is typically organised as different building typologies placed along the street framing an urban street and public place. The buildings have entrances to the street as well as to the

Figure 14. Block typologies found in the analysis of the urban design proposals.
landscape. The offset freestanding low-rise cluster block consists of plots determined by the landscape and layout of roads, typically built with single-family housing.

Other concerns of the district and block scale include the provision of active streets and public places, and physical diversity. Provision of active streets and public places is typically provided as mixed-use areas, active ground floors, and green inner courtyards. In Kiruna 4-ever different types of places are suggested to have different functions and identities in order to create hierarchies and diversity among public places.

Physical diversity may be provided by dividing blocks into smaller plots, thereby facilitating the provision of a mix of existing and new buildings, or, as in Kiruna Arktiskt Sublima giving neighbourhoods a “twist and turn” character by developing appropriate street networks.

The suggested approaches to urban transformation processes may be top-down or bottom-up in nature, or a combination of the two. The top-down approach can be represented by the proposal of Polar conditions, presenting a fixed-form idea for a new town and clearly identifying different phases of development in which the municipality can control the development. The proposal Det andra Kiruna suggests that Kiruna be developed by collaborating with its citizens in a participatory developmental process.

Through the municipality’s vision-statement, as presented in the competition brief, competition entries are shaped to fulfil the requirements of place competition. But the proposals also display how place adaptation occurs as their conceptual ideas are based partly on analysis of the local identity, culture and citizens. In other words, in the development of urban design proposals, the term attractiveness contains balanced objectives of place competition and local adaptation.
9. Local citizens’ perspectives of attractive urban environments

The following chapter will present how local citizens in Urban Living Labs conceptualise and spatialise the term attractiveness. As explained in Sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4, four Living Labs investigated the term attractiveness with local citizens. The first three Living Labs consisted of citizens in Gällivare/Malmberget, citizens in Kiruna, and long-distance commuters working in Gällivare. The fourth Living Lab consisted of one group of citizens in Gällivare/Malmberget, focusing on the development of a new neighbourhood in Vassara-Sandviken. For the sake of this chapter these groups will be referred to as the Gällivare, Kiruna, commuter, and Vassara-Sandviken groups, respectively. This chapter will present outcomes of the Living Labs and address the third sub-question of this research project: How is the term attractiveness conceptualised and spatialised by local citizens?

9.1. The Urban Living Labs of citizens in Kiruna and Gällivare

The Urban Living Labs, conducted with citizens in Kiruna and Gällivare and commuters working in Gällivare, aimed to construct and describe local citizens’ view of the term attractiveness, working with written descriptions, photos and drawings on maps. This section describes the outcomes of these Living Labs.

Each of the three Living Lab groups produced a written description of the term attractiveness in the form of a categorisation of aspects describing their ideas of attractiveness, for an example see Figure 9. The categories derived by each group are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Compilation of the categories derived by each Urban Living Lab group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gällivare group</th>
<th>Kiruna group</th>
<th>Commuter group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication/Transport</td>
<td>Architecture &amp; Construction</td>
<td>Working life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities: parks/spaces</td>
<td>Public service &amp; Communication</td>
<td>Infrastructure/ Travel possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre/Closeness</td>
<td>Environment &amp; Sustainability</td>
<td>Pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment/Home</td>
<td>Culture &amp; History</td>
<td>- Nature and outdoor life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Training/sport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scrutiny of the descriptive aspects of the categories derived by the three groups, led to the categories being combined to produce seven themes associated with attractiveness, representing the outcomes of all three Living Lab groups, as described in Table 4: Communication & Mobility, Pleasure & Comfort, Qualitative built environment, Building culture & sense of place, Mind-set & Diversity, Ecological sustainability, and Working life.

Table 4. The seven themes derived by the different Urban Living Lab groups with a short description.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication &amp; Mobility</td>
<td>Included regional and interregional transport connections, as well as transportation within the towns. Most of the discussions were directed towards providing alternatives to car as they are seen as the currently prioritized means of transportation in the towns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasure &amp; Comfort</td>
<td>Included amusement and recreational activities such as shopping and outdoor, cultural and sporting activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative built environment</td>
<td>Included descriptive aspects of the participants’ idea of aesthetic and functional aspects of urban environments. Examples included colourful architecture, adaptation of buildings to the natural surroundings, more art in the public realm, maintenance of buildings and public places and seasonal adaptation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building culture &amp; sense of place</td>
<td>Included preservation of the local building culture, where aspects such as small-scale, colourful wooden buildings are included. The commuter group, however, held negative views about the “industrial character” of Gällivare and expressed a desire for new building stock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mind-set &amp; Diversity</td>
<td>Included sensivity to the opinions of local citizens and their relationship to nature and the local surroundings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological sustainability</td>
<td>Included a number of suggestions to make the towns more sustainable, such as more sustainable travel options, charging stations for electric cars, and energy generation using solar panels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working life</td>
<td>Included diversity in job opportunities and a reduction in the mining culture visible in the town of Gällivare.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, participants in the Urban Living Labs were asked to identify attractive and unattractive places by taking photos and indicating their locations on maps. An example of two buildings discussed in relation to attractiveness in the Gällivare group is found in Figure 15.

The outcomes of these Urban Living Labs are further analysed in papers 3 and 4 included in this compilation thesis.

![Example photos of buildings](image)

**Figure 15.** Example photos of buildings discussed in relation to attractiveness in the Gällivare group. Above Tempohuset in Gällivare and below Focushuset in Malmberget. Explained by the group as two ambitious buildings of their time.
9.2. The Urban Living Lab of Vassara-Sandviken

The Urban Living Lab conducted in Vassara-Sandviken aimed to construct and describe local citizens’ ideas of attractive urban environments in relation to the plans for a new neighbourhood in Gallivare, Vassara-Sandviken. The Living Lab used written descriptions and critically scrutinised the latest planning proposal from the municipality, which led to suggestions for how that proposal could be improved. This section describes the outcomes of this Living Lab.

The description of attractive urban environments created in the Living Lab was summarised in six categories, as described in Table 5: Sustainability, Mixed areas, Gallivare housing typologies, Social neighbourhood qualities, Welcoming neighbourhood form, Reliable communication and transportation.

Table 5. The themes of an attractive new neighbourhood as discussed by the participants of the Urban Living Lab in Vassara-Sandviken.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Included suggestions for how more sustainable living might be achieved in the new neighbourhood. One participant explained that the areas should be “Sustainable everything in the whole area.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed areas</td>
<td>Included physical and social diversity in the whole neighbourhood, explained as a mix of building typologies, mix of tenures, and mix of activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallivare housing typologies</td>
<td>Included ideas about the type of housing that would be suitable for the citizens of Gallivare. Suggestions included storage for winter clothes and winter equipment, tilted roofs to avoid the accumulation of snow, and small-scale and authentic buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social neighbourhood qualities</td>
<td>Included social aspects desired in the neighbourhood such as feeling safe, year-round activities, and ease of walking round the neighbourhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming neighbourhood form</td>
<td>Included the physical aspects desired in a neighbourhood, such as clear identity, views over the landscape, design for a practical life, and a welcoming character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable communication and transportation</td>
<td>Included suggestions providing support for a range of modes of transportation, such as public transport, walking paths, cycle paths, and car parking, stable internet connection and good access for emergency vehicles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This Living Lab also scrutinised the local authority proposal for the development of Vassara–Sandviken and gave suggestions as to how the proposal could be improved. Some examples are provided in Figure 17.

Figure 16. The themes of an attractive new neighbourhood as discussed by the participants of the Urban Living Lab in Vassara-Sandviken.
Figure 17. Sketched drawings of improvements for a new urban neighbourhood in Vassara-Sandviken, Gällivare.
9.3. Conceptualisations of attractiveness in the real sphere

The starting point for conceptualisations of the term attractiveness in the Urban Living Labs is different types of knowledge about society and the local context. Five starting-points from which conceptualisations were derived are found in the analysis of the material and discussions in the Urban Living Labs.

9.3.1. Societal challenges

A global perspective recognised challenges that society as a whole faced at the time of the workshops, such as climate change. The conceptualisations were built from participants’ knowledge and experience of the challenges. One participant in the Gällivare group explained how she recognises how climate change affects the climate of Gällivare, with shorter winter periods and more rain throughout the year. Starting from this type of recognition a theme of ecological sustainability emerged within the different groups.

Discussions in the groups identified everyday obstacles and opportunities to living a sustainable life and ways in which the urban transformation could remove those obstacles or facilitate opportunities.

9.3.2. Knowledge of past and future perspectives

There is an invisible timeline affecting the perception of the contemporary towns and hence affecting conceptualisations of attractiveness. Discussions with participants revealed that places that no longer existed or that had changed significantly still existed quite vividly in their minds. Moreover, the future perspective affects participants’ impression of places as the plans of local authorities and companies are woven into the narrative of current places. In this context places subject to redevelopment were viewed more positively than places subject to demolition. To give one example, a participant in the commuter group expressed that he felt sorry for people living close to a declining square in Malmberget because of its poor quality and poor prospects. The square in Gällivare that was going to be redeveloped was viewed in more positive terms even though its current state was poor.

9.3.3. Local issues

Identifying local issues was part of the conceptualisation process. Issues were partly generated by knowledge of other places and partly by individual desires. The discussions covered both physical and social aspects of the towns.

One common concern among the groups was the lack of diversity in the job market. According to the commuter group it was one of the main
reasons for not moving their families to Gällivare as their partners would struggle to find suitable jobs in the town. An associated issue is the strong mining culture visible in the town. One participant of the commuter group explained: “even at the best restaurants you see people wearing work-clothes from the mine […] I like participating in the work culture when I am at work, but I also want some distance to it when I am not at work.” For the commuter group a greater diversity of people would be desirable.

9.3.4. Social practice and everyday concerns

Another line of conceptualisation is derived from the experience of everyday life. The conceptualisation has a diverse nature, and includes values of local people, impact of the weather, and provision of basic amenities.

One example from the group in Vassara-Sandviken concerns the impact of snow clearance in their daily life. According to the group, roofs need to be cleared of snow so they don’t collapse and chimneys need to be uncovered. One participant suggested that snow clearance is one of the main causes of conflicts between neighbours as piles of cleared snow become barriers in the urban environment. According to the group, there need to be integrated strategies for snow clearance in this snowy climate.

9.3.5. Contextual discourses of urban environments

In the Urban Living Labs it was noticeable how contextual discourses of urban environments existed in the towns and contexts to which participants belonged. The participants in the commuter group, who did not live in the towns studied, were less focused on the existing built environments and expressed a more “urban” idea in their spatialisation of attractiveness. Residents, however, based their ideas of attractiveness on their towns and the local building culture.

The group in Kiruna, for example, constructed part of their discourse around their architectural heritage, built by well-known Swedish architects at the time. This heritage includes, according to the group, high-quality architecture and a small-town character having a mix of buildings, colours and collectively-owned green areas. These aspects becomes part of the desired spatialisation of attractiveness in Kiruna.
9.4. Spatialisations of attractiveness in the real sphere

For the participants of the Urban Living Labs, conceptualisations and spatialisations may be regarded as an integrated way of describing their local understanding of the term attractiveness. Conceptualisations were, in most cases, given spatial expression. This section will focus on the descriptions of attractiveness that derived from the spatial and sometimes became conceptualised.

9.4.1. Qualities of built environments

Participants discussed general ideas of qualities of the public environment, often identified by considering the shortcomings of the current environment. Discussions included aesthetical and functional aspects of the urban environment and aspects of maintenance.

One participant in the Gällivare group explained how Gällivare is perceived as a construction site. According to her, piles of gravel may randomly lie around from snowmelt and the lack of curb stones and finish in details in Gällivare creates an untidy impression. The group felt this showed a lack of consideration for citizens and expressed a desire for environments with design that integrates functional utility, aesthetical quality and seasonal changes.

In the Kiruna group there were discussions of coherence of the built environment, among others related to new buildings that are considered not to be adapted to the local character. One participant in Kiruna said: “There needs to be coherence between buildings and their surroundings, as the areas and buildings around a certain building affects its general impression”.

9.4.2. Communication and mobility

Communication and mobility was a general theme in the Urban Living Lab groups. It was expressed as good connections to other places as well as within the towns. The Gällivare group’s idea of mobility was based on an integrated traffic system that was well designed, easy to understand, and accessible. The modes of transport discussed included cars, public transport, snowmobiles, walking, biking, skiing and kick sledding.

In the Vassara-Sandviken group, one participant also asked for better integration between neighbourhoods in physical terms. She explained how different neighbourhoods in Gällivare today are physically separated and asked for coherent paths and connections between neighbourhoods.
9.4.3. Diversity

The theme of diversity comes from a desire to make it easier for different people to meet in the towns and a desire for a mixed physical impression in the urban environments.

To bring people together, one participant in the Kiruna group argued for common venues where sport and cultural activities could be combined so that people with different interests could meet. In the Vassara-Sandviken group a need for physical and social diversity was expressed in the whole neighbourhood. One participant explained that everyone should have access to and feel welcome in the neighbourhood. Another participant added the importance of mixing different types of building and apartment typologies and different tenures in the neighbourhood in the interests of both social and physical diversity.

9.4.4. Activities

The theme of activities is concerned with concrete, programmed places in the urban environment and open democratic places that people can use according to their desires.

This can be exemplified through the Vassara-Sandviken groups’ suggestions of programmed function in the area, such as ski tracks, ice roads for walking and skating, canoe storage, boat marina, and bathing site in the new neighbourhood. But a need was also expressed for places in the urban environment to sit down, socialise or read a book. Places without specific programme possible to claim according to social desires.
10. Production of attractive places

As argued in the introductory chapters of this thesis, production of place is a process that involves multiple actors (Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 1996; Healey, 2007). These actors do not produce space discipline by discipline, but rather as a collective enterprise (Friedmann, 2008). Lefebvre (2003) argues that although the world is complex there are ways to analyse the elements of that complexity. Drawing from Lefebvre (1991) I have divided the production of space in ideal and real spheres of society. The studies presented above could be understood to have different belongings in each of this ideal–real division. For the sake of this analysis, and as presented in Chapter 5, publications by scholars and professionals and urban design proposals are representing the ideal sphere. Their conceptualisations and spatialisations are explored in Chapters 7 and 8. The groups of citizens participating in the Urban Living Labs are here representing the real sphere. Their conceptualisations and spatialisations are explored in Chapter 9. This chapter will analyse and compare the term attractiveness as explained in the two spheres according to the triad of attractiveness idealised, attractiveness socialised, and attractiveness visualised, inspired by Lefebvre’s (1991) thinking and presented in Section 4.2.

Starting from the ideal sphere, the aim is to analyse how the two spheres of place production are producing attractive places according to the mentioned triad.

10.1. Idealised attractiveness

In the ideal sphere, attractiveness is idealised as an objective of place competition and growth in the local economy and population. The ideal dimension of publications by scholars and professionals idealised the term as making strategic choices that lead to the creation of more attractive places in terms of growth, of economy and population. The growth of economy and population are also expected to reinforce each other. The term as understood from this ideal dimension aims to inform strategic decisions to attract citizens, stimulate commercial and cultural activities, and provide urban environments and amenities that are known to attract citizens and confer economic advantages. Investments could also be made to give the impression of an attractive place, in other words investments may include support for branding and marketing activities.

The content of the term attractiveness is, in the ideal sphere, expressed in generic terms. It has been argued that creation of attractiveness must be adapted to the local place, its opportunities and potential problems (Andersson, 1998). In the publications by scholars and professionals, the
type of place from which ideal ideas arise is rarely described explicitly. As argued in Section 7.1, definitions used to study attractive places contribute to an idea that attractiveness is about providing the qualities that people are willing to pay for or qualities that will attract many people to the area. Generally speaking, cities and urban areas satisfy the above criteria more fully than small towns and rural areas. Hence cities and urban regions have come to be regarded as attractive places in the ideal sphere. And the social and physical qualities of such types of places become part of the general idea of attractiveness. The risk is that this ideological-epistemological knowledge of attractiveness is used as the basis for urban design and planning in small towns and rural areas. Places where different considerations might be more appropriate than the “urban” ideas of the ideal sphere.

In the urban design proposals the general ideas in the ideal sphere are however balanced with a local approach. Objectives of competition are provided in accordance with the local situation, its people, cultures, and history. Idealisation of attractiveness in this ideal dimension takes shape as a negotiation between general competitive aspects and local assets, where the conceptual development of attractiveness is derived from an inventory and analysis of the local situation. Architects and planners investigated the context of Kiruna as outsiders, constructing their own understanding of the context and their perceptions of how people want to live their lives. This investigation becomes affected by ideal ideas of attractiveness.

In the real sphere, attractiveness is idealised based on perceived challenges and opportunities of the local context and in society as a whole. The starting point for how the term is idealised in the real sphere includes perspectives derived from societal challenges, knowledge of past and future perspectives, local issues, social practice and everyday concerns and contextual discourses of urban environments. It is, for instance, evident that ideas of attractiveness in the real sphere are affected by the on-going development of the towns as official plans are woven into the narrative of current places. Participants regarded places that were going to be demolished in negative terms, whereas places that were going to be redeveloped were spoken of with pride. It was also evident that places and buildings that already have been demolished became references in discussions of future attractive urban environments. Another example of how challenges and opportunities affect the idea of attractiveness is found in discussions about climate change. Participants were concerned about climate change and the issues associated with it, so ecological sustainability becomes part of how attractiveness is idealised in the real sphere. The idea of ecological sustainability is not included in how attractiveness is idealised
in the ideal sphere. But it must also be acknowledged that the term attractiveness is often accompanied by the term sustainable in visions and objectives (see Lysekils kommun, 2018; Strångnäs kommun, 2017).

Attractiveness is also idealised in terms of a balance between welfare and attraction. This balance of idealisation is present in both spheres. In the ideal sphere it is assumed that a place cannot be attractive if basic needs, such as affordable housing, safe and well-maintained urban areas, are not provided for. In the real sphere, discussions about healthcare, affordable housing, and infrastructure are included in their descriptions of attractiveness. The term as idealised in the spheres must however be explained to focus on attraction and high-end qualities, including sustainable lifestyle, rather than welfare.

10.2. Socialised attractiveness

Ideas of how attractiveness is socialised in the ideal sphere often starts with a perspective of urban life. As already explained, this can derive from a definition of attractiveness as places that grow in population numbers. Studies of how attractiveness is socialised are based on cities and urban regions more often than other types of places. Hence, social aspects in the term attractiveness become the social qualities associated with the “urban”.

In the ideal dimension in publications by scholars and professionals, attractiveness is socialised in urban environments and is commonly referred to as activities of commercial and cultural art (Antoni, Kruth & Björnberg, 2015; Cars, 2006; Olsson, 2000). But, similar to Lefebvre’s (1991) argument, in the idea of the “urban” there is also a need for the “non-urban”, for recreational activities and areas for families where children can play and move around safely. Among others, this is seen in the migration study made in Gothenburg where people move to the metropolitan area of Gothenburg, but choose to settle in the outskirts of the metropolitan area to enjoy the quality of life that these less urban parts provide.

In the real sphere, ideas of how attractiveness is socialised are almost taking an opposite starting point of ideas in the ideal sphere. In the real sphere of this study, the desired lifestyle is strongly associated with recreational values, such as outdoor and winter activities. In the Urban Living Lab in Vassara-Sandviken one of the participants explained that the neighbourhood should not be too commercialised, instead a recreational lifestyle should be provided with open and public places. This lifestyle also needs to be counterbalanced by something “urban” of providing culture and commercial activities. Cultural activities should be provided in informal settings, by local associations or enthusiasts, and commercial
activities should include basic amenities as well as local products and handicrafts.

The ideal dimension of urban design proposals must be explained to provide a middle ground between these perspectives presented above. Attractiveness in these proposals is socialised through the idea of the “urban” but adapted to the local idea of “recreation” as derived from the analysis of the local context made during the development of the proposals.

In the real sphere, attractiveness is also socialised through the activity of producing a town, in physical and social terms. One participant in the Vassara-Sandviken group said he wanted to be able to participate in the construction of new areas and housing in Gällivare. Another participant in the Gällivare group expressed a need for venues where citizens can arrange cultural activities. A third participant, also in the Gällivare group, felt more engaged with the community after participating in the Urban Living Lab. Similar to what Sandercock (2010) argues, there is pressure from actors in the real sphere to be included in the production of place. And this inclusion could be explained to have social benefits in relation to attractiveness as local citizens’ engagement increase. It might even increase the attractive value as explained in the real sphere.

10.3. Visualised attractiveness

In the ideal dimension of publications by scholars and professionals, descriptions of visualised attractiveness are seldom explicitly expressed. There is however a focus on an “urban” visualisation of the term. It is expressed as what could be interpreted as lively urban centres combined with calmer housing areas. Other aspects include well-designed public places, good transport possibilities, mixed-use areas, urban block typologies, access to parks, proximity to center, and easy access to urban amenities.

In the ideal dimension of urban design proposals entered in the Kiruna competition, more specific urban design principles are used when attractiveness is visualised. Among others, the urban design proposals display principles such as legible urban structures and adaptations to the climate. A common idea is the provision of urban areas with active streets, squares, and parks in which urban activities take place and citizens can congregate; and combining these urban qualities with natural and recreational places where outdoor activities are provided for. This is visualised, for example, in the proposed block typologies of the competition entries, illustrated in Figure 14, ranging from the traditionally “urban” perimeter mixed blocks to the offset freestanding low-rise cluster blocks whose configurations are tailored to the landscape.
In the real sphere, attractiveness is visualised as physical qualities rather than ideas of form. Aspects of how attractiveness is visualised include coherent diversity or unity, rather than uniformity; tidiness and clear spatial definitions; coherent paths and connections between neighbourhoods; social diversity through mixed housing and tenure typologies; and small-scale development with closeness to amenities and other neighbourhoods. There is also a practical and functional dimension to how attractiveness is visualised in the real sphere. Functionality and aesthetics need to reinforce each other in the visualisation of attractiveness.

Often these physical qualities are derived from recognised issues with the current built environment, such as lack of coherence, lack of well-designed impression, or forms that are not suitable for the climate. One participant suggested that grass lawns should be discarded in favour of lingonberries as the grass only stays green for a couple of months because of the climate. One participant in the Kiruna group saw a lack of coherence in some neighbourhoods and argued that buildings are also perceived in the context of their surroundings. In the Gällivare group the participants expressed dissatisfaction at the lack of integration between technical and functional aspects and the architectural quality of urban environments. They believed it demonstrated a lack of consideration for citizens and the context when designing and maintaining public places. To the participants, architectural quality meant, among others things, clear edges between what is built and what is nature, a balance of diversity and unity in building designs, materials, scales, and details that together create an identity of place.
10.4. Concluding reflections of attractive place production

The term attractiveness as used in urban planning and design contexts is defined in the ideal sphere of place production. Through the theoretical framework, the term attractiveness may be seen as a response to the modern phenomenon of inter-city competition, a competition between places of labour and capital of today’s society (Harvey, 1989). It has been said that urbanisation processes are both an outcome and facilitator of place competition (Harvey, 1989; Lefebvre, 2003), a possible explanation of the “urban” focus in the ideal sphere towards the term attractiveness.

The perspectives of the real sphere are somewhat different as they have another starting-point. Similar to what Lefebvre (1991) suggests, participants from the real sphere find their knowledge of attractive urban environments from lived experience. The term attractiveness is in the real sphere rather a response to recognised opportunities and challenges derived in lived experience. Opportunities and challenges identified through local discourses, social practice, media reporting and individual experiences.
11. Conclusions

This study employs a theoretical framework that assumes space is produced by multiple actors, by both ideal and real spheres of society. The ideal sphere is here represented by a selection of publications by scholars and professionals and urban design proposals using the term attractiveness in relation to built environments. The real sphere is here represented by a group of citizens in Gällivare and Kiruna, and long distance commuters working in Gällivare. These groups contribute with their understanding of the term attractiveness. This conclusion synthesises these examples of ideas of attractiveness in order to answer the main research question: *Which differences can be seen in how urban planning & design professionals and local citizens conceptualise and spatialise the term attractiveness; how can the term be explained to inform the future planning of attractive urban environments?*

The main question is answered by the results from three sub-research questions. The first sub-question deal with the term attractiveness as conceptualised and used in the selection of publications written by professionals and scholars. The term attractiveness as understood from this dimension of the ideal sphere can be explained to inform decision-makers on how to create competitive places that provide the qualities attracting people. These qualities or aspects of “attractiveness” are presented as to inform strategic decisions, but descriptions are silent on the context from which attractiveness is understood. However, in this dimension places regarded as attractive are often identified in terms of high population and net migration. This gives the term attractiveness a certain emphasis on cities and urban regions and ideas of how attractiveness is created are derived from “urban” contexts. Spatialisations of attractiveness from this ideal dimension include active streets and urban places, a combination of dense active urban areas and sparse urban areas in the outskirts of a city, and a variety of transportation modes.

The second sub-question deal with the term attractiveness as conceptualised and spatialised in urban design proposals in Kiruna. The term as used in this dimension of the ideal sphere balances the competitive objective with conceptualisations in accordance with the local identity, local culture, and local citizens. In that regard this dimension of the ideal sphere demonstrates an adaptation of the generic idea of place competition to the local context. The result is a balance between the municipality’s aim of attracting new citizens and visitors, and providing qualities in accordance with existing citizens. The main part of the proposals is however made by outsiders to the context, by the architects and planners involved in the
urban design competition. This means that the analysis of the context is performed from an outsider’s perspective, thereby creating an outsider’s understanding of the place. It can be argued that in the urban design proposals there is a view that developing ideas of attractiveness from local characteristics gives competitive advantage. It is not only of benefit for existing citizens.

The conceptual idea developed in each proposal creates a basis for the spatialisation of the proposals. Some general qualities are however provided, such as a town plan that provides legibility and clarity, accessibility and movement, climatic comfort, and clear borders between built and unbuilt areas. Each proposal also show diversity in block and housing typologies in order to provide different types of housing qualities.

The ideal sphere’s approach to attractiveness can be explained as aiming to reinvent places as “attractive”. This can be compared to Brenner et al. (2012) that suggest capitalist planning has a tendency to reinvent itself in times of crisis to maintain its power and status. The term attractiveness is used to address the “crisis” or challenge of place competition. Reinvention occurs by implementing strategic competitive qualities as derived from other successful places, by emphasising the local identity and culture to gain competitive advantage through a unique character, or as a combination of the two.

The third sub-question focuses on the term as conceptualised and spatialised by citizens in Gällivare and Kiruna, and long-distance commuters working in Gällivare seen as the real sphere. The term attractiveness as described by these groups rather identifies challenges, issues and needs directly relevant for the participants. Compared to the ideal sphere, existing citizens have an approach of refining the current state of the towns, building from the reality and knowledge they share. Even if the study contexts are exposed for urban transformations and large possibilities for reinvention, ideas of attractiveness have their starting points in the contemporary situation. Long-distance commuters, having less knowledge of and commitment to the place, take the approach of reinventing the place according to their preferences. The spatialisations made in the real sphere is mainly built on social and physical qualities sought for, rather than fixed-form ideas. For example, they search for a coherent diversity or unity, rather than uniformity, tidiness and clear spatial definitions, coherent paths and connections between neighbourhoods, social diversity through mixed housing and tenure typologies, and small-scale development with closeness to amenities and other neighbourhoods.

In the comparison between the spheres made in Chapter 10, and through the triad of attractiveness idealised, socialised and visualised, it is
possible to draw conclusions of differences and similarities between the
sphere’s understanding of the term attractiveness. In the idealisation of the
term from the two sphere’s, there are differences in how the term is
approached. In the ideal sphere, the term is idealised as an objective of
place competition and growth of local economy and population. In the real
sphere, idealisation of the term is based on recognised challenges and
opportunities of the local context and society as a whole. The term as
idealised in the real sphere of this study therefore showed a wider scope,
than the term as idealised in the ideal sphere. In the real sphere, the term
included aspects that could be related to economic growth, such as a larger
range of job opportunities, but it also included aspects of diversity,
sustainability, and local knowledge. Both spheres also include welfare as it is
expressed a need for certain basic functions in order for a place to be
attractive. The term must however be described to focus on attraction and
high-end qualities in both spheres.

In the analysis of how attractiveness is socialised it becomes evident
that attractiveness not only is understood as an idea or a spatial expression
in the different spheres. There is as well a social dimension of attractiveness
expressed in both spheres as an integral part of the term attractiveness. The
social dimension of attractiveness can be described as a balance between
“urban” and “recreational” qualities; a balance of urban amenities, such as
commercial and cultural activities, and recreational qualities, such as
outdoor and leisure activities. It should however be noted that the spheres
differs in their emphasis, as the ideal sphere emphasise on the urban
qualities and the real sphere emphasise on the recreational qualities. In the
real sphere, it is also expressed a desire to participate in the production of a
place. The desire includes opportunities to participate in cultural events, in
the construction of buildings and in the vision making for a place. And by
having the possibility to participate, the perceived attractiveness of a place
might increase.

In the analysis of how attractiveness is visualised, some general aspects
are included in both spheres, such as good transportation, mixed-use areas,
legible urban structure and climatic adaptation. There is however a
difference in the origin of these ideas. In the ideal sphere attractiveness is
visualised based on cities and urban areas considered to be successful in
terms of economic and population growth. The approach of reinvention
beside, it is suggested that visualisations must be adapted to the place of
implementation. The discussions also circulate more around types of urban
forms, such as urban structures and block typologies. In the real sphere,
attractiveness is visualised from the local context and its recognized issues.
Visualisations are adapted to the local place and its prerequisites. Rather
than form ideas, discussions circulate more around design quality. In the real sphere there are also more detailed descriptions of how attractiveness is visualised, such as integration of functional and aesthetical qualities and suggestions of suitable materials and colour schemes.

These differences and similarities expressed in the spheres highlight a risk that language becomes a barrier to communication in discussions about attractiveness as the same words may mean different things to different people (Majone, 1989). In other words, the term attractiveness could hide agendas and implement ideas others than what was thought to have been agreed upon. In the production of attractive urban environments, the assumption that certain actors have more power than others are an ethical issue that should be acknowledged.

Further, the term as used in the ideal sphere addresses challenges of urbanisation processes and place competition. However, if place competition becomes the only challenge to face, attractiveness then runs the risk of becoming a measure of success in terms of growth and a term associated with the reinvention of place for the purpose of growth. Such an aim for more “attractiveness” runs the risk of leading to attractive destruction, to reinterpret Harvey’s (1989) terminology. Harvey (1989) explains the idea of creative destruction as the phenomenon of new innovations destroying the value of existing innovations. He argues that organisations, in trying to keep up with competitors, implement the new innovations so as not to fall behind. This situation could be true not only for the commercial organisation or financial speculator competing in the market, but also for local authorities that run the risk of destroying existing values when aiming for attractiveness. And these existing values could be part of some people’s idea of attractiveness.

Harvey (1989) also makes a point that a strong focus on competition between municipalities distracts from other questions such as equity and social justice. This is also what Florida (2017) argues is now happening. As a former proponent of place competition for economic growth (see Florida, 2002; 2010), he now acknowledges that places falling behind in the place competition struggles with increasing inequality, segregation and alienation. Challenges of social justice and segregation are included in the real sphere and its conceptualisation and spatialisation of attractiveness, as it includes socio-economic diversity, accessibility and care for all citizens, among others.

Another issue arises from the informative character of the term as it is presented in the ideal sphere. If the content of the term attractiveness is understood too normatively, places are running the risk of becoming more and more alike. Within the studied real sphere, a resistance is expressed.
towards the architectural styles, consumption and cultural activities of other places, beside some exceptions associated with basic functions and activities. In this sense, attractiveness according to local citizens is not necessarily about keeping up with innovations in other places to gain competitive advantages. Place attractiveness is rather the opposite; it is about making use of the place specifics in best possible way. The real sphere of the local citizen thus means that uniqueness of place is the distinguishing factor that increases attractiveness and, potentially, gives competitive advantages.

If the objective is to create truly attractive places, there is a potential in acknowledging attractiveness as being produced by everyone engaged in a place. It introduces possibilities for a more diverse and inclusive notion of attractiveness with richer ideas of attractive places; for collaboration towards a commonly defined understanding of attractiveness; and for finding a unique expression as an attractive place.

11.1. The potential of Urban Living Labs for co-creation of attractiveness

This section will answer to the fourth sub-question of this study: How can the Living Lab approach be useful to support co-creation of attractive urban environments? As concluded in the comparison of ideal and real perspectives of attractive urban environments through the triad of attractiveness idealised, socialised, and visualised, there exist different meanings of the term. The research study shows there is lack of consideration of citizen’ perspective of attractiveness in the term as used in urban planning and design contexts. The term attractiveness has to be acknowledged as a term defined by, for example, scholars, planners, and urban designers working with development and design of cities, towns and other places. And as concluded in the preceding section, attractiveness when realised only from the ideal sphere runs the risk of attractive destruction. These are some among several arguments for including citizens and other actors in the conception and creation of attractive places.

The Living Lab approach, as used in this study, turned useful in covering several perspectives of attractiveness. A well-conducted participatory process can feed the definition and evaluation of attractiveness from the perspective of the actors’ involved in the process, including actors’ one would wish to attract to a place. And by participatory processes the idea of attractiveness also becomes adapted to the actors it seeks to address.

To aim for more diverse and inclusive implementation of the term attractiveness, the Urban Living Labs based on participatory action research, provides a potential way to negotiate ideal and real sphere’s interests. As explained in Section 5.2.3, the critical nature of the Urban Living Labs
should be understood as the challenge of individual knowledge that takes place in the Living Labs through the learning and understanding of other stakeholders’ perspectives. As described in Section 6.3, the Urban Living Labs were useful in identifying common and contrasting ideas of attractiveness. But as the participants learned from each other’s perspectives, the co-creation process established common understanding and problem solving rather than increasing potential conflicts. This power of co-creation lies in establishing an equal collaboration, a ‘we-know, they-know’ situation according to Tolley & Bentley (1996).

Participatory processes also have the effect of creating a larger sense of belonging and motivation among stakeholders, leading them to strive towards the same objective. Section 6.3 described how the Urban Living Labs produced a group identity and some participants identified themselves more strongly with their town afterwards. The co-creation process led to an increased perception of attractiveness in the towns among some participants as they were engaged in the local production of place.

Urban Living Lab as a method to develop urban environments in collaborations between ideal and real spheres gives potential to negotiate and commonly define attractiveness; it gives potential to identifying a unique expression as an attractive place and adapting general objectives to the local place; and the process itself might increase the participants perceived attractiveness of place as they are engaged in the production of place.
12. Discussion

This research study originated in a very practical question regarding the relocation of Kiruna and Gällivare: how can these towns become more attractive? This discussion will focus on this question and start to sketch an idea based on the findings of this research study.

Firstly, a clarification should be made that the ideas of attractiveness expressed in the studied contexts are not generic, not necessarily the standpoints of other ideal and real perspectives. They are examples among multiple co-existing realities, selected for the purpose of a critical investigation of attractiveness.

Attractiveness as a term described in the ideal sphere of this study relates to competition between places. The aim of competition is to attract people to a particular place, rather than another, and the purpose is growth of the economy and population. Simultaneously, based on the theoretical framework, it is suggested that competition is executed as urbanisation processes where urban areas grow through densification and sprawl and the rural areas are exploited to supply cities.

The small mining towns of Kiruna and Gällivare are situated in remote and sparsely populated area of Sweden affected by depopulation rather than population increase. The problems faced by these communities have been document by Müller’s (2013; 2015) investigations of the mining industry. He notes that mines are becoming more efficient and mining jobs more automated. Thus the number of job opportunities in mining may well reduce in the future. The towns are running the risk of becoming places for extraction rather than attraction. Additionally the towns need to be transformed in order to continue the mining activities in the future. These observations lead to the conclusion that places like Kiruna and Gällivare are affected by the urbanisation process. The risk is that it is for the benefit of larger cities rather than for themselves.

As Brenner et al. (2012) suggests, capitalist planning has a tendency to reinvent itself in times of crisis to maintain its power and status. Kiruna and Gällivare could be seen as undergoing a type of crisis that has led to the idea of reinviting these towns as attractive places with the aim of retaining or even increasing the population. The question is then, how can these places compete, on what terms and with what means?

One perspective of lifestyle is discussed both in literature and in the Urban Living Labs of this study. As a counter reaction to the densification of cities, there is a reverse wave of lifestyle migration, migration of people that want to leave the heavily urbanised areas (Benson & O’Reilly, 2016).
These can be from Sweden or from other densely populated regions in Europe. The participants of the Urban Living Lab also stress that it is not the urban lifestyle that is desired in these contexts. It is rather a lifestyle related to the natural landscape, outdoor activities and the small-town feeling. One way forward would be to make use of the local situation and location in defining attractiveness. This idea may be problematic as it is built on a dependency of the urbanisation process, and urban centres, as it aims to attract the counter movement of urbanisation processes. On the one hand, Kiruna and Gällivare would constitute their role as resource provider for cities in terms of material resources and recreation. On the other hand, they could become centres for people searching for alternative lifestyles.

12.1. Attractiveness and social inequality

I would like to go back and reflect upon Harvey’s (1989) and Florida’s (2017) notion that focus on competition might neglect issues associated with increasing inequality, segregation and alienation. First, it could also be pointed out that Florida (2017, p. 191) presents a solution of urban and capitalistic art: “if our crisis is of urban art, so is its solution”. His idea is that reinvented forms of urbanisation could provide the solution for dilemmas of increasing inequality and segregation. He proposes interventions such as investments in infrastructure, affordable rental housing, and investments in deprived people and disadvantaged places to include these aspects in the urbanisation process.

Similar to Florida’s (2017) suggestion of urban and capitalistic art, I would like to change the perspective of attractiveness and discuss the term as a possible term for social sustainability. As pointed out in two of the publications included in the discourse analysis of the research project, individual attractiveness can be understood through Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of human needs. For a person not having the basic qualities of life, such as safe home, food on the table, and a job, these aspects are the description of attractiveness for that person. When the basic needs are fulfilled, that person has the possibility to climb the ladder and aim for other qualities in life. Attractiveness could as well be about providing basic qualities to existing citizens. And as the affected people climb the ladder, they are able to participate more in the society. To attach this chain of thought back to the origins of the term, the effect might be of both competitive and economic benefits for a place, also by providing for existing citizens.
12.2. Attractiveness as a mean of change

In the real sphere, ecological sustainability was associated with attractiveness. One participant in the study even stated that the attractive neighbourhood of Vassara-Sandviken should be “Sustainable everything in the whole area”. Among the citizen groups there was, among other ecological ideas, a common understanding that car dependency should be reduced in favour of more sustainable transportation modes. These views suggest it is reasonable to discuss attractiveness as a mean of change. By making something more attractive than other options, sustainability could be implemented by desire rather than force. The idea may be controversial as it is based on manipulation. But manipulation, as in persuasion, is a dimension of attractiveness not commonly discussed in ideal sphere. It occurs however in the implementation of competition and growth agendas.

12.3. Attractiveness and urban form

The ideal sphere of this study is associated with general planning and urban design ideas of attractive urban environments. There is a focus on providing active and public places and streets, and a range of commercial and cultural activities, and to provide dense urban centers and sparse urban outskirts.

In the Urban Living Labs, participants placed value on social and physical qualities rather than fixed-form ideas, qualities such as open and democratic places; movement through neighbourhoods rather than around – to achieve feeling of safety; entrances and connections between neighbourhoods; well-maintained areas; and clear edges between nature and the built environment. These qualities do not necessarily have fixed urban forms but are rather design elements to be implemented in a particular urban place.

Through the Urban Living Labs, a need was articulated for urban environments having functional, technical, social, and physical aspects together with the purpose of creating coherence. It does not mean that everything needs to be designed, it means that what is built, such as infrastructure systems, public places, buildings, storage areas for snow etc., should have a detailed design and provide a contrast to natural elements of the environment. Fuzzy definitions, spontaneous snow storage, and areas of ‘left-over character’ are seen as unattractive or unsightly, and should be prevented. There is also a need for a more detailed design level that should be considered, one of coordinated colours and materials that, according to the participants, adds character to the urban environment.
13. References


Florida, R. (2017). The new urban crisis: How our cities are increasing inequality, deepening segregation, and failing the middle class—And what we can do about it. Basic Books.


Göteborgs Stad. (2018). Delmak - attraktiv bebyggelsestruktur - göteborgs stad. Available: http://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/miljo/goteborgs-tolvmiljomal/god-bebyggd-miljo/attraktiv-bebyggelsemiljomat/lut/p/z1/hY5NC4jAGIR_jdd9XzeRttd2MPwgDQjt L6GxrYK6sm4t9OuzY1A0t2GeYQYE1CCm5tGrxvZ6ao6Vn0V4Kf3 0yHY-x2IfxZicsjl-ZHzmRjJSq6hBYY_ whjpCC6NuRuOtlkPgLJoYBMroJGAt9-t7nU7thCoSRN2m kIXez3uqsnZethx4654jSWg2SLNLDb41OLxbqDxDmsX7msuIv4zych BA!!/dz/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/ [26 May 2018]


Sandercock, L. (2010). From the campfire to the computer: An epistemology of multiplicity and the story turn in planning. In L. Sandercock, & G. Attriili (Eds.), Multimedia explorations in urban policy and planning: Beyond the flatlands (pp. 17-37). Heidelberg: Springer.


