Internationalization in the Sharing Economy

An empirical study into a car sharing company based in Copenhagen

Master's Thesis
MSc International Marketing and Management
15th of May 2020

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Abstract

The internationalization of firms is a topic that has been researched extensively in the past, however, almost no studies have investigated this process in the sharing economy. To enrich the academic field, this paper investigated how GreenMobility - a car sharing company - should internationalize by conducting a quantitative single-case study.

The findings reveal that the current internationalization theories and models do not sufficiently explain or provide suggestions as to how companies in the car sharing industry should internationalize. The research thus determined that the following characteristics make a potential city attractive: low levels of congestion, a well-functioning public transportation infrastructure and support from the local government. The paper has revealed that car sharing users tend to be young and non-brand loyal. To satisfy customer preferences, GreenMobility should emphasize price and car network coverage when going abroad.

Due to the growing importance of the car sharing industry as well as the sharing economy in general, the researchers believe that the field longs for further research. This paper serves as an example of how GreenMobility should internationalize but cannot provide an overarching framework for the entire industry.

Acknowledgements

The researchers would like to thank GreenMobility and especially Andreas Nygaard Andersen for their interest and cooperation throughout the writing process. Equally, the researchers thank their supervisor Henrik Johannsen Duus for his support and guidance.

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1. Introduction

The introduction will begin with a little background on the paper and why the particular topic was chosen. Thereafter, the topic will be described as well as how the researchers came to work with GreenMobility for this thesis. Then, the scope will gradually be narrowed until ultimately presenting the main research question and sub-questions. Once the aim of the research has clearly been outlined, the delimitations of the thesis will be introduced. Finally, the choice of methodology and theory will be presented followed by the thesis structure.

1.1 Background

The authors of this paper are both students at Copenhagen Business School and have international backgrounds. Both have been interested in the field of internationalization which has been further developed throughout their studies. This interest stems from a passion for international affairs and the strategies involved in being an international player. International trade relations are crucial in the world of today and being on the international market as a company is often inevitable or at least offers a significant advantage. The importance of the topic has always been high but with the advent of the digital age and the access to large sources of information, the topic will only continue to grow in relevance. The digital transformation that has characterized the past two decades has fascinated both researchers. Smartphones have revolutionized the way individuals interact, voice their opinions, how they purchase their products and much more. The authors have followed the birth and expansion of numerous digital platforms that enable consumers to easily purchase products or services from their hand-held devices. As business students, the researchers were particularly interested in finding out more about how these new fast-moving and -expanding businesses fit in the theoretical framework that is taught in university today. AirBnb, for instance, a company that was started little over a decade ago is now present in over two hundred countries (Airbnb, 2020). Such a rapid expansion is unprecedented and indicates that the traditional modes of internationalization no longer seem to fit reality.

The current internationalization theories and models are concerned with a plethora of topics such as culture, consumer behaviour, strategy, management and many more. These help explain the why and how of internationalization processes. However, these theories and models have been in place for decades

and are, to a great extent, based on the study of traditional companies. These traditional companies often provide a product or service to its customers. Where sharing economy companies differ is that their business model is based on technology and interconnecting customers on a platform. Essentially, these companies are using or providing assets that already exist or can easily be shared and enable these to be monetized by their respective owners. Thus, in contrast to traditional companies, sharing economy companies are much more dynamic and have much lower operating costs. This can enable them to rapidly expand their business model to foreign countries. However, after some preliminary research, little to no literature was found on the topic of internationalization in the sharing economy (Parente, Geleilate and Rong, 2018). After scouring the internet and numerous databases for potential applicable theories and models, the researchers were not able to identify any. Yet, in 2015 the sharing economy was a 15 billion dollars industry and it is predicted to grow to over 335 billion by 2025 (Statista, 2019a). Therefore, its importance is not negligible, and with growing concerns regarding the environment and consumption of scarce resources, the sharing economy is poised to keep growing in the future (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012).

Having identified that a gap in the literature exists, the researchers decided to gain further insight into this issue. However, the topic of internationalization in the sharing economy was too vast for conducting an in-depth analysis, hence the topic was further narrowed to focus on the car sharing industry, a subcategory of the sharing economy. The car-sharing industry was chosen as it is a fast-growing sector of the sharing economy, and with greater governmental focus on reducing emissions, the transportation sector is under increasing pressure to reduce its impact on the environment. Furthermore, car-sharing allows for individuals with only the occasional need for a vehicle to save money by renting a car only when necessary instead of owning one. In fact, according to a survey conducted by the EU, the average occupancy rate for a car was only 1.4 (Fiorello, Martino, Zani, Christidis and Navajas-Cawood, 2016). This highlights the potential of car sharing to reduce both the environmental footprint but also the costs for private consumers when travelling. The appeal of car sharing is clear, and the authors have also used the service on multiple occasions. Yet, whilst travelling abroad it was not always possible to car share due to their unavailability. Given that the world is so globalized and digital companies seem to be able to internationalize at an astounding rate, the researchers wondered how a company in the car-sharing business should internationalize.

With that in mind, research for literature regarding internationalization in the car sharing industry was initiated. Subsequently, to complement the little literature found, the researchers expanded their scope to include articles concerning the sharing economy in general. Furthermore, the researchers collected literature surrounding internationalization theory and any papers or articles that discussed internationalization in the sharing economy. Finally, the literature research enabled the authors to gain insight and knowledge, rendering a better understanding and enabling the identification of a research gap.

With all these elements in hand, it was determined that it would be an advantage to contact a company within the car-sharing industry. This would allow for insights into the industry and the issues a given company may face when trying to internationalize. Hence, a company compatible with the planned research topic would be identified and contacted thereafter. The company in question is GreenMobility and it was chosen for a number of reasons. The details regarding how the company was identified, contacted and why it was chosen will be outlined in section 1.3.

1.2 Problem Identification

The last ten years have seen a large-scale transformation of how assets are utilized; a car, for instance, is no longer seen as being only an item for personal use while it simply gathers dust the rest of the time. On the contrary, many people are starting to see the opportunities that the digital age offers and using these to lower their personal expenses. An individual seeking to use a vehicle only on specific occasions can easily join a digital platform that enables said service to be provided. This has created a revolution in the ownership of assets, whether it is a personal vehicle or a house, or bike – anything can be rented out and rented. With this revolution in asset ownership, certain companies have decided to make a business out of the concept of ‘sharing’ assets. In the case of cars, large manufacturers such as Mercedes and BMW launched their own platforms - Car2Go and DriveNow respectively - that enable customers to choose from a host of cars in their vicinity to rent for a given timeframe – as little as a few minutes (Car2Go, 2020; DriveNow, 2020). Though as of today, these two brands have chosen to join together to form ShareNow (ShareNow, 2020). This enables individuals that live in cities and that do not own a car to

temporarily use the services of such companies. Hence, the cost of ownership of the car is no longer on a single individual but can be distributed among the customers of a given car-sharing company.

Despite its appeal, a car-sharing service may not be viable in all markets or locations globally. In fact, the cost of renting a car through a car sharing platform is decreasing, becoming more accessible to those segments of the population that are more price sensitive (Standing, Standing and Biermann, 2019). This price reduction is the result of a fierce competition as several car sharing firms are entering new markets and thereby eroding their respective market shares (Schwieterman and Bieszczat, 2017). This research, thus, wants to investigate how a company such as GreenMobility can correctly identify the right markets and then enter said markets in order to maximize the likelihood of success. Combining the fact that the industry is still in its infancy and that there is a lack of literature regarding the topic, the researchers chose to investigate the topic further.

1.3 Problem Statement

Following the identification of a problem in the internationalization process of a car sharing company, a problem statement had to be drafted. Before this could be done the researchers had to identify, contact and establish a cooperation with a company in the car-sharing economy. This approach was chosen as neither researcher works in the car-sharing industry and thereby does not have access to insider knowledge regarding the challenges such a company may face while trying to internationalize. The scope of the potential companies was reduced to include solely companies that had a presence in the Copenhagen region so as to maximize the chances of cooperation with a given company. After screening the market, several potential companies were identified.

In wanting to establish contact, the researchers were directly faced with a challenge; most of the companies do not have a direct phone line or email address meaning that one has to contact them through their customer service or press departments. This turned out to be a very slow and rather unsuccessful process - many of the emails sent were never answered whilst others were forwarded to the appropriate department after which no response was received by the researchers. Therefore, it was decided that contact with these companies should be sought by going directly to their offices. The company with the

most interesting business case was chosen as the first company to contact directly; the company in question being GreenMobility. It was deemed an interesting company to work with for several reasons.

For one, the company was established in Copenhagen and it is not the creation of a large car manufacturer such as BMW or Mercedes. Consequently, the company is likely to have less financial capital which in turn can create larger financial risks when internationalizing. Its current business follows the free-floating model where users can pick up a car anywhere within a city and park it anywhere within city limits again. Meanwhile, other companies in the car sharing industry follow the station-based model by which users return the cars to specific parking stations across a city. Moreover, it offers solely electric cars which is a further risk as consumers are not used to electric cars as illustrated by the measly 2% that plug-in hybrid- and battery -electric vehicles represent on overall car sales in Europe as of 2018 (European Environment Agency, 2019). It may not be relevant in the case of short-term rentals; however, the researchers presume that it could, in fact, be a hindrance in the success of establishing a presence abroad.

Having established that GreenMobility was an interesting potential partner, the researchers set about meeting the company. The initial meeting was entirely unannounced and followed an unstructured interview style. It is important to note that only one of the thesis members could partake in this meeting. Following a short introduction of the researchers as well as the purpose of the visit, the meeting went further into exploring the challenges GreenMobility faces. Several topics were discussed and noted for further evaluation. Having reflected on the various issues GreenMobility had brought forward, the authors determined that the most important topics within the realm of internationalization were the determinants that made a city (market) attractive and the aspects that are essential in increasing the adoption rate of the service in terms of customer preferences. Consequently, the determined problem statement is as follows:

How can GreenMobility determine the attractiveness of a new market and ensure a high service adoption-rate?

1.4 GreenMobility: A Summary

GreenMobility is a Danish car sharing company founded in early 2016. The company leverages three contemporary and global megatrends namely urbanization, sustainability and sharing economy with the aim of shaping a healthier and wealthier tomorrow. In contrast to its main rivals GreenMobility stands out by offering electric cars only, an aspect that may appeal to both users and institutions alike. Hence, GreenMobility is contributing to changing the automotive industry as it moves towards eco-friendlier and sharing-based solutions, reducing per-capita CO2 emissions.

GreenMobility's first 'City Car' to hit the road was in Copenhagen in 2016 after which the company has experienced significant growth. A year later, in June 2017, GreenMobility successfully completed an IPO, becoming a publicly traded company listed on the Nasdaq Copenhagen (GreenMobility, 2020). In the following years, the company expanded its activities both internationally and domestically. The firm first entered Oslo, Norway, partnering with VY in December 2018 and launched in Aarhus, Denmark shortly thereafter. Furthermore, at present, GreenMobility is in the process of expanding into a new Scandinavian country, Sweden, with initial presence to be established in Malmö and Gothenburg. Aside from the Scandinavian market, GreenMobility is also entering two countries in the centre of Europe, namely Austria (Vienna) and Belgium (Antwerp).

The future for companies operating in the sharing economy seems promising. More specifically, the expansion of car sharing firms is facilitated by the ever-growing adoption of car sharing services by the public. In fact, the number of car sharing users is already significant today and it is expected to continue its growth with an estimated 36 million users by 2025 (Statista, 2016). More and more people are changing their transportation habits by favouring access over ownership. A recent survey carried out by GreenMobility showed that nearly 5% of its users have preferred to sell their car in favour of the transportation service offered by the Danish car sharing firm (GreenMobility, 2020). This data not only confirms the prominence of the car sharing phenomenon, but also testifies that free-floating car sharing systems positively impact the environment by reducing the number of privately-owned cars in the cities. These positive figures justify GreenMobility's interest in entering new markets. The company has great ambitions for the future and plans to achieve a momentous internationalization by 2021 – which it only

started in December 2018. The company's goal is to enter into 15 more European cities, introduce 6000 additional City Cars on the streets, and increase their user base by acquiring at least 450,000 new members (GreenMobility, 2020).

1.5 Research Question and Sub-Questions

Before drafting the research question and sub-questions, the researchers need to enter "*an exploratory research phase"* in order to gain knowledge (Cooper and Schindler, 2014, p.94). This phase serves several essential purposes; first, it gives insight into how the topic has been explored previously by other researchers and the conclusions that were drawn in these cases. Furthermore, this acquired knowledge allows the researchers to refine the research question. This amalgam of information also helps in designing the sub-questions that serve to answer the main research question (Cooper and Schindler, 2014).

A research question is *"the hypothesis that best states the objective of the research"* or *"the question that focuses the researcher's attention"* (Cooper and Schindler, 2014, p.79). Therefore, a research question represents a crucial step for defining and guiding the researchers in the research. As mentioned previously, GreenMobility faces numerous challenges but the focus of the researchers was within internationalization. As GreenMobility is currently in the process of internationalizing, the company was able to provide us with specific challenges it faces within the given topic. The interaction with GreenMobility enabled the researchers to clearly identify the problem and thereby the problem statement, which could then be followed by the determination of the research question. On the basis of this knowledge, the researchers determined that the research question had to be narrow enough to encapsulate the specific topic of internationalization but at the same time allow the authors to explore all the relevant sub-topics. Consequently, the research question that was designed is as follows:

How should GreenMobility internationalize?

The research question was designed so as to be company specific - narrowing the scope of the research - and to encompass internationalization. One could argue that the research question is rather general, and

it is true that the topic of internationalization is very broad. First, however, the question is focused on GreenMobility and thereby also the industry it operates in - in this case being the car sharing industry, a subcategory of the sharing economy. Therefore, the scope, in terms of industry, is focused and precise. The second criticism one may have is that internationalization is a large topic with many varying topics. That is true, though the researchers chose to keep the word and further specify the areas of research in the sub-research questions. These can also be referred to as *'investigative questions'* and serve to reveal the information needed to derive the conclusion regarding the identified problem (Cooper and Schindler, 2014, p.79). The authors believe that this enables a less cluttered research question for one, and it allows for greater detail in each sub-question which leads to a better overview of the aim of the research. Naturally, these questions need to be answered to a sufficient degree to enable the researchers to answer the main research question (Cooper and Schindler, 2014). The sub-questions are as follows:

1. *Are the current internationalization theories applicable in the sharing economy?*
2. *Is there a need for a new internationalization framework within the car sharing industry?*
3. *What market conditions make a foreign city attractive?*
4. *What industry competition is GreenMobility facing in Malmö and Vienna?*
5. *Are there certain customer preferences that GreenMobility should prioritize to increase the likelihood of service adoption?*
6. *To what extent does GreenMobility have a business model advantage?*
7. *In light of the findings, what recommendations can be made for GreenMobility?*

The first two sub-questions tackle the theoretical aspects of this paper. The first question is used to explore and establish to what extent current literature sufficiently provides answers for internationalization in the sharing economy. As previously highlighted, very little literature exists for the sharing economy and within the car sharing industry, it is non-existent. The current literature on internationalization will be analysed to determine if it is applicable to the very recent sector of the sharing economy. By answering the question, the researchers can establish whether or not the current theories can satisfactorily create an internationalization framework for companies in the sharing economy. Building on this foundation will allow the researchers to determine whether, in fact, there exists the need for new theories to be developed for this specific industry - which leads to the following sub-question.

The second question has a narrower scope as it focuses specifically on the car sharing industry. Using the previous question as a stepping-stone, it will determine whether there is the need for a new framework for internationalization in the car sharing industry.

The following four sub-questions are directed towards the local landscape, market conditions, consumer behaviour, and concern GreenMobility directly. Hence, the focus is one the one hand, on the external conditions surrounding GreenMobility and on the other hand, on the consumer behaviour and how it affects the likelihood of success abroad and finally how GreenMobility's current business model offers a competitive advantage or not. The purpose of these questions is to tie the theoretical foundation together with the knowledge acquired by the researchers throughout this paper.

The third sub question is aimed at the local market conditions. The term 'conditions' refers to the characteristics of a city such as local government, size, density, public transport availability etc. Here, the researchers will use secondary data sources to determine the factors that render a city attractive or not for GreenMobility. More specifically, a comparison will be conducted between two cities, Malmö and Vienna, to highlight the differences and similarities, and how these play in favour or not of an internationalization into a particular location. This leads directly to the following question, number four, which explores the industry conditions facing GreenMobility in Malmö and Vienna in terms of competition. To acquire a full view of how GreenMobility should internationalize, the competition that the company faces needs to be analysed in detail. This allows the researchers to pinpoint GreenMobility's position in comparison to its competitors in Malmö and Vienna.

Having established what makes a potential market attractive or not, the research determines the consumer preferences that need to be considered and prioritized accordingly to increase the likelihood of success. To do so, a survey is conducted investigating the consumer behaviour and preferences. Here, numerous aspects are explored and analysed by the researchers. In turn, it enables the research to draw conclusions regarding the use of car sharing by users as well as the customer preferences. Specifically, the survey outlines the factors that are most important to customers and potential customers. This will give insight as to how GreenMobility can appeal to customers and thus the aspects that should be emphasized by the company.

The penultimate question tackles the business model that GreenMobility currently employs. Its business model is characterized by following a B2C free-floating model and offering solely electric cars. To explain, within the car sharing industry, companies most often follow two different models; one is the station-based and the other is the free-floating model. The former dictates that a consumer return the car to either the same place where the car was originally retrieved or some providers may allow users to park the car at another station, while the latter allows the consumer to pick up and park a car anywhere within designated areas - which often cover entire cities. GreenMobility provides a free-floating car sharing service that is entirely business to consumer. In addition, GreenMobility offers only one vehicle that is fully electric. All of the above create its current business model, and the research aims to uncover whether it provides the company with an advantage or not.

Finally, the ultimate sub-question is concerned with recommendations that can be made for GreenMobility in light of the findings. The recommendations will be made on the basis of extensive research and the data collected from the survey. These may stem from individual parts of the theoretical, market and customer analyses or be a combination thereof. These may not pertain directly to how GreenMobility should internationalize but may regard other parts of their business. Thus, any relevant or noteworthy findings will be presented to GreenMobility.

1.6 Delimitations of the Thesis

Delimitations serve to outline the ways in which the researchers have chosen to limit the scope of the conducted research. Thus, it presents the aspects that will not be discussed or taken into consideration for the purposes of this study.

This paper is a case-study of GreenMobility, a car sharing operator. The research is not looking at several companies and offering a broader perspective on how the internationalization process should be conducted. The conclusions drawn from the research are focused on GreenMobility specifically and cannot be applied to the industry as a whole. This method was chosen in order to focus the research on a concrete example and allow for useful and necessary information to be gathered from an industry player.

A case comparison between two cities that GreenMobility is entering namely Malmö and Vienna is conducted. Hence, the research does not explore a multitude of different markets but is limited to two as a basis of comparison. It is believed that this delimitation renders a greater in-depth understanding of the analysed markets which in turn will lead to findings of greater reliability and validity. This way, greater resources for researching each city and acquiring a better understanding of them can be allocated. Furthermore, GreenMobility is expanding abroad but not everywhere at once, hence, this thesis follows the same strategy and focuses on certain markets at a time.

Third, the primary data is collected using a quantitative type method, namely a survey. While a shred of qualitative data has been collected, the research does not collect any further such data. It was determined that while it is a delimitation not to collect further qualitative data, the quantitative data collection serves to provide pertinent information for answering the research question.

The quantitative data is collected using online channels such as social media to spread the survey. Therefore, the data collected is not city/market specific however, the aim of the survey is to identify consumer behaviour, exploring the factors that affect their decision-making, and the preferences for service adoption. Therefore, the researchers believe that the survey respondents do provide relevant and appropriate information regarding car sharing. Furthermore, all respondents provide information regarding the city they live in, which allows for the categorization of consumers and their corresponding behaviour and preferences.

a. Competitor analysis

The paper focuses on direct competition in the form of other car sharing companies. However, the paper does not take into account private car sharing services (P2P) such as GoMore. These services offer private car owners the possibility to offer their own car on a platform where individuals seek to rent a car. ZipCar is a company that offers both a service similar to the one GreenMobility provides as well as the one GoMore supplies (Zipcar, 2020). However, the researchers consider this service as an alternative to traditional rental companies where rentals are not a matter of minutes but rather of days.

An additional service that exists is ride sharing or also called carpooling. This service allows individuals that own a car and drive a specific route to share that journey using a platform and enable others to join the ride along the way by contributing to the cost of the journey. The researchers, though, consider that this type of service satisfies a demand that is not the same as for car sharing services. Indeed, car sharing allows users to use a car in exactly the way they wish whereas ride sharing is better adapted for customers looking to commute on a regular basis or travel long distances cheaply (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012).

The potential competition for GreenMobility is not limited to other car sharing providers but may incorporate companies with a similar business model but who share other assets. These companies may offer the same service but for renting bikes, electric scooters, or e-scooters and thus may pose a threat to GreenMobility's service offering. Several examples exist, for instance, platforms such as Lime or Donkey Republic offer electric standing scooters and bikes respectively across Copenhagen. These services may not compete directly with GreenMobility as a bike does not offer the same level of service or practicality as a car can. However, these can still be considered as competitors as an individual seeking to go from point A to point B in Copenhagen may choose to use a Lime, for example. Hence, a potential GreenMobility customer could choose one of these indirect competitors due to greater convenience.

For the purposes of this thesis, though, the authors do not have the resources to conduct a market study taking into account the plethora of indirect competitors that exist on the market today. It would require several large-scale studies to determine the degree to which ride sharing or private car renting affects direct car sharing services such as GreenMobility. Furthermore, exploring whether Lime's and GreenMobility's services compete and if so to what extent, would require further in-depth studies complemented by large scale primary data collection.

1.7 Choice of Methodology

Methodology is an important first step for any research project. Methodology consists of a number of aspects that affect the outcome of how data is collected, the interpretation of this data and the conclusions drawn from this data. In methodology, one first has to determine the philosophy that the project will follow. Among the numerous research philosophies, this research paper follows a pragmatist philosophy.

For the type of research conducted, the authors determine that pragmatism represents the most suitable philosophy to follow as the researchers are conducting a large-scale quantitative survey to collect data and identify correlations, and potentially form theory. An interpretivist approach would have required in-depth qualitative data collection which, for the purpose of generalizability, is unfit. Positivists take a natural science approach to reality and believe that it exists independent of human influences (Saunders et al., 2012). However, as this paper explores human behaviour, one cannot argue that reality remains unaltered by social construct. Hence, the researchers believe that the findings will be influenced by the social structure surrounding the survey participants. Furthermore, according to Saunders (2012, p.162), *"a distinction needs to be drawn between data about the attributes of people, organisations or other things and data based on opinions, sometimes referred to as 'qualitative' numbers."*. In this case, the research collects both types of data as both the behaviour (attributes) and the preferences (opinions) are scrutinized. Saunders argues that some survey research despite being quantitative in nature, can be associated with an interpretivist philosophy (Saunders et al., 2012). Hence, this project follows a pragmatist approach while there are certain elements of interpretivism and positivism.

The research follows an abductive approach as both elements of deductive and inductive reasoning are employed. As the researchers are exploring internationalization in the car sharing industry - a topic with no prior theory -, the aim is to develop an understanding and explain the intricacies of internationalization within the industry. Indeed, inductive reasoning is characterized by the collection of data and the subsequent *"results of [...] (the) analysis would be the formulation of a theory, often expressed as a conceptual framework"* (Saunders, 2012, p.146). The research then draws logical conclusions from said data adhering to a deductive reasoning. Abductive reasoning involves the *"collection of data to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and explain patterns, to generate a new or modify existing theory which*

is subsequently tested." (Saunders et al., 2012, p.665). This type of reasoning is deemed to be most appropriate in answering the research question and is therefore mirrored in this research.

In terms of data collection, the researchers will collect secondary and primary data from various sources. The secondary data collected will include a literature review and data regarding the market conditions of two different cities, Malmö and Vienna. This data will be collected using official statistical databases, websites, articles and the like. For primary data collection, the researchers have already gathered preliminary information from the interview with GreenMobility, as mentioned previously. To add, the researchers conduct quantitative data collection to explore consumer behaviour and preferences.

1.8 Choice of Theory

Analysing the literature is a pivotal step for the development of any academic research paper. As a consequence, choosing the right theories and models also plays an important role in defining the boundaries as well as setting the guidelines of the research. One of the first steps prior to analyzing academic literature is defining the correct terms (Tharenou, Donohue and Cooper, 2007). This is crucial for the researchers, since "*productive computerized searches of electronic databases require the use of the correct search terms*" (Tharenou et al., 2007, p. 7). Following this essential step, the next step concerns the evaluation of the current literature.

Taking an academic perspective, the researchers first analyse the phenomena of sharing economy and car sharing by thoroughly investigating the most relevant research regarding the two topics. Doing so enables the researchers to gain knowledge and become better acquainted with the specific topic. Evidently, investigating internationalization in the sharing economy is an essential part of the aim of this paper. Therefore, the researchers dedicated significant time to research international business theories regarding the internationalization of firms.

The researchers chose to consider the most dominant internationalization theories such as the OLI framework developed by Dunning (1980) and the Uppsala model (Johanson and Vahlne, 1990). Both set the necessary conditions and provide a framework that allows a company to internationalize. In addition

to these two theoretical frameworks, other theories encapsulated in the international business studies such as product life cycle, economies of scale, economies of scope, liability of foreignness and outsidership have been investigated thoroughly throughout the paper. These theories are then placed in relation to the situation in the sharing economy and their applicability is thereby tested.

1.9 Thesis Structure

The structure of this paper has been inspired by the structure proposed by Saunders et al. (2012). Following the previous *'Introduction'*, the research enters the *'Methodology'* section. This section brings forth all the relevant decisions made in regard to how and with which point of view the research is to be conducted, how the data is to be collected and how the findings are to be analysed. It represents an essential building block in the successful execution of any research. The *'Considerations and Limitations'* section is rather self-explanatory and allows the readers an insight into what the researchers believe to be the constraints on the executed research. Thereafter, a *'Literature Review'* is conducted and investigates the incumbent literature regarding internationalization that exists. These theories are put into the context of the sharing economy and the car sharing industry more specifically so as to determine the necessity of adding to the existing theoretical framework or not.

Continuing the research, the *'Market Analysis'* section outlines the characteristics of two separate markets - Malmö and Vienna - and determines their attractiveness. Thenceforth, the researchers generate an analysis of two cities exploring governmental, infrastructural and market conditions which are subsequently used in conjunction with the findings from the survey. Thereby, offering a comparative analysis of two markets with varying characteristics which in turn will allow the researchers to suggest which type of market conditions are more favourable for internationalization.

As hinted above, the section *'Data Analysis'* will focus on the findings from the primary data sources. These are presented transparently and are followed by a *'Discussion'* section. This section provides answers to the first six sub-questions and combines all the elements from the theoretical, literature, primary and secondary data sides. By answering the sub-questions, the research is able to give a clear answer to the main research question. Not only does this section outline the determinants that make an

attractive car sharing market, the behaviour and preferences of customers and how these influence service adoption but it also displays how this paper contributes to literature. Thereby, it serves to cement the findings of the paper and give a clear overview of how GreenMobility should internationalize.

The *'Conclusion'* takes all of the above-mentioned aspects and combines them to give a simple and clear overview. This section will serve to highlight the answer to the main research question as well as all the sub-questions. Thus, it provides the reader with a clear sense of what the paper has set out to uncover, what it has uncovered and how this eventually contributes to academia.

Finally, the paper concludes with *'Future Perspectives'*. This section will focus on how future research may be designed in order to explore other aspects not discussed in this paper. Aspects such as company context, research design and research approach, among others, will be discussed in relation to future research.

2. Methodology

The purpose of research is to investigate a topic with the aim of gaining greater knowledge thereof (Saunders et al., 2012). A part of research involves the researchers clearly stating the methods implemented to collect relevant data, the relevance of said data in answering the research question and finally highlighting the limitations of the aforementioned aspects (Saunders et al., 2012). The methodology helps outline all the intricacies of the performed research to the reader.

2.1 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is concerned with how knowledge is developed, namely the *"beliefs and assumptions"* that underpin it (Saunders et al., 2019, p.130). Scholars state that researchers make numerous types of assumptions throughout the research process (Burrell and Morgan, 2016). These assumptions can - amongst others - be of ontological or epistemological nature, and it is important for the reliability of the conclusions drawn that the researchers are aware of these influences when making conclusions (Saunders et al., 2019). Hence, researchers can influence or be influenced by any number of factors when conducting research. It is therefore essential to divulge the study's philosophy to reveal the interpretation, categorization and assessment of the conducted research.

In the field of business and management research, there are several research philosophies that can be applied (Saunders et al., 2019). Quantitative research can be defined as *"a research strategy that emphasizes quantification in the collection and analysis of data"* (Bryman, 2012, p.35). The research follows this approach by conducting a self-completion type questionnaire to collect data. This data is used to form a better understanding of the consumer's behaviour and preferences which in turn will provide an additional element to the researchers to answer the research question. To complement the quantitative data collection, secondary data is gathered from online sources. Finally, the researchers initially implemented a qualitative element by interviewing GreenMobility. However, this was done in the design phase of the research and does not serve to answer the research question. Rather, the interview helped to identify the research problem which ultimately led to the research question. In conclusion, for the purposes of this thesis, the researchers follow the pragmatist philosophy in combination with the quantitative research methods approach, further explained in the following sections.

a. Ontology

Ontology is concerned with the assumptions made in regard to the nature of reality (Saunders et al., 2019). Each researcher will have their own set of assumptions about the reality surrounding them and will consequently influence the conducted research. This phenomenon takes effect in the early stages of any research project (Saunders et al., 2019). Indeed, the topic chosen for this thesis as well as the manner in which it is meant to be researched has been affected by the natural preconditioning of the researchers. The researchers believe that the pragmatist philosophy is best suited for the purposes of this research as it fits the beliefs held by the researchers, but simultaneously enables the combination of different philosophies as outlined in the following paragraphs.

An aspect of ontology one has to discuss first in the process of determining the correct philosophy is objectivism and subjectivism (Saunders et al., 2012). If one follows the objective view of reality, one believes that things, organisations and the like exist as real units without the influence of humans. In contrast, a subjective view would postulate that people's perceptions and actions influence the entities surrounding them (Saunders et al, 2012). Moreover, it is believed that if one does not consider the innate bias one may have, it may cause the entire research to be biased or skewed in a certain direction. As opposed to the study of natural science, the study of human science is heavily influenced by the human actors within it. In view of the topic of this thesis, a subjective view of reality is adopted to emphasize the belief that social construct is influenced by the actors within them and that the researchers themselves are affected by their social surrounding in designing and executing this research.

Positivism states that there exists only one true reality, and that it is independent of the researchers (Saunders et al., 2019). Similarly, realists will argue that reality *"exists independently of human thoughts and beliefs or knowledge of their existence…"* and critical realists add that it is *"interpreted through social conditioning"* (Saunders et al., 2012, p.140). While critical realists acknowledge the influence of social construct, realists do not. Meanwhile, interpretivists will argue that the world surrounding the researchers is, in fact, socially constructed through "*culture and language"* (Saunders et al., 2019, p.145). In light of the subjective nature of the topic, the researchers would not be able to maintain the independent status that researchers are required to have when following a positivist philosophy (Saunders et al., 2019).

Pragmatists see the conflict between positivism and interpretivism as counterproductive, stating that these philosophical positions are at either end of a continuum. This permits researchers to position themselves accordingly and choose whichever position or combination of positions that will ultimately help them tackle the research (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010). Furthermore, pragmatists argue that *"values play a large role in interpreting results…"* much like realists that believe that *"research is value laden…"* (Saunders et al., 2012, p.140). Thus, in consideration of the above, it is believed that given the nature of the topic, a pragmatist approach seems to be the best fit.

Taking into account the influence the researchers' perception of the world surrounding them can have, the authors sought to acquire as much information as possible before settling on a specific topic. Therefore, rather than assuming the challenges that a car sharing company faces, the researchers gathered information from an inside actor directly. Following the exchange with the company, the researchers were able to make a better choice for what the thesis should focus on. Ergo, the researchers limited the impact of their own ontology when determining the research problem. Nevertheless, the ontology of the employees of GreenMobility is likely to have pushed the research in a particular direction and therefore comprises a degree of bias. However, eliminating the influence of ontology entirely from this paper is impossible so reducing one's own influence on the research is the most one is able to do.

b. Epistemology

Epistemology plays a role in determining what type of knowledge is considered to be *"acceptable, valid and legitimate [...] and how we can communicate knowledge to others"* (Burrell and Morgan, 2016, p.133). There are numerous knowledge sources that can be considered and applied in the given context (Saunders et al., 2019). In research, the investigators have the responsibility to comprehend the ramifications of various epistemological assumptions in regard to their choice of method in addition to the *"strengths and limitations of subsequent research findings"* (Saunders et al., 2019, p.134).

The requirements in terms of knowledge sources for this research project are two-fold. On the one hand, the project consists of certain sub-topics that can only be explored through the collection of secondary data. Conducting the market environment analysis for different cities is based, to a large extent, on the collection of statistical data about the specific city i.e. a positivist approach. Positivism stresses that

researcher and data should not intertwine and that researchers shall remain entirely independent and objective vis-a-vis the research (Saunders et al., 2012). The researchers are able to maintain a positivist approach in the collection of statistical data as the data cannot be influenced anymore. Yet, the collection method of this statistical data may have been influenced by the original researcher and therefore cause an inadvertent bias in this thesis.

On the other hand, determining the consumer preferences and behaviours that influence the adoption of GreenMobility's services cannot be achieved by relying solely on secondary data. In fact, such data does not currently exist in the literature, as previously mentioned, and can, hence, only be gathered through primary research. Here a positivist approach states that research will follow a *"highly structured"* model with *"large samples"* which suits the techniques implemented for this thesis (Saunders et al., 2012, p.140). Though, as the participants voice their own opinions in the survey, one should note that the data collected in the survey is inherently subjective. However, while this data may be subjective, it is collected and thereafter analysed in an objective fashion thereby rendering valid and unbiased conclusions. With a pragmatist approach, researchers are free to choose whether qualitative, quantitative or a mixture of both is best suited for the purposes of the research (Saunders et al., 2012). In conclusion, for the purposes of this paper, in terms of epistemology, a pragmatist philosophy is chosen.

c. Axiology

Axiology deals with *"the role of values"* in the execution of research (Saunders et al., 2019, p.144). Following a positivist philosophy, the researchers are deemed to be *"detached, neutral and independent of what is researched"* (Saunders et al., 2019, p.144). While the researchers do their best to remain as unbiased as possible, a degree of bias may be impossible to avoid. According to interpretivism, the research *"is value bound [...] (and the researcher) cannot be separated and so will be subjective"*, which in the case of research based on human behaviour seems more fitting (Saunders et al., 2012, p.140). Furthermore, realism argues that *"research is value laden"* and that *"cultural experiences and upbringing"* will affect the research (Saunders et al., 2012, p.140). Finally, pragmatism further confirms that *"values play a large role in interpreting results"* (Saunders et al., 2012, p.140). To not take into account the influence of values and prior experiences on research would be at the peril of the reliability of the results and the conclusions drawn.

d. Conclusion

According to the pragmatist philosophy, researchers are able to position themselves on a spectrum, allowing for the use of positivist and interpretivist ideals, for instance (Saunders et al., 2012). Furthermore, taking a pragmatist point of view allows the researchers to freely choose the method or methods that allow for appropriate and reliable data to be collected to further their research (Kelemen and Rumens, 2008). To conclude, the researchers believe that the pragmatist philosophy is best suited for this research.

2.2 Research Approach

In research, there are three research approaches; deductive, inductive and abductive (Saunders et al., 2012). Deductive research involves the creation of hypotheses which are then tested by conducting primary research (Saunders et al., 2012). Inductive research follows the opposite method in which observations are made first, and subsequently used to form a theoretical framework (Saunders et al., 2012). Finally, abductive reasoning can be described as a *"back and forth"* between deductive and inductive reasoning (Saunders et al., 2012, p.147). This paper has determined that abductive reasoning is the most appropriate research approach for the following reasons.

As aforementioned, a quantitative research method is implemented for this research. It is stated that quantitative research *"is usually associated with a deductive approach"* but this cannot be said for this paper (Saunders et al., 2012, p.162). A deductive approach involves *"a testable proposition about the relationship between two or more concepts or variables"*, however, the researchers do not propose a hypothesis (Saunders, 2012, p.145). In fact, the quantitative section of this paper serves to bring correlations to light. The inductive approach is meant to help researchers *"identify themes and patterns and create a conceptual framework"* (Saunders, 2012, p.144). On the basis of this information, the researchers will draw correlations and may be able to outline a framework. Finally, abductive reasoning is used to create a new or change existing theory (Saunders et al., 2012). This is done through the collection of data and the identification of factors that can explain certain patterns (Saunders et al., 2012).

In the case of this paper, the researchers have a theoretical base that needs to be tested and due to lack of literature regarding internationalization in the car sharing industry, data that needs to be gathered. In addition, the researchers investigate two potential markets and set out to uncover aspects that may contribute to the attractiveness of said markets. Finally, the researchers both examine and test the consumer preferences and behaviour and attempt to draw conclusions from that information. This clearly illustrates the aforementioned *"back and forth"* between deductive and inductive reasoning exercised in an abductive approach which is therefore chosen for the purposes of this thesis (Saunders et al., 2012, p.147).

2.3 Research Design

The research design lays down the framework on which the research is founded, outlining the details of how information is gathered and its practical implications (Malhotra, Nunan and Birks, 2017). The first step in the research design is defining whether the research is exploratory, descriptive, causal or explanatory (Malhotra et al., 2017).

The nature of this research is exploratory as it aims to unearth causal relationships between particular variables (Saunders et al., 2012). It is defined as a flexible and evolving research approach and tends to be used to explore phenomena that are intrinsically difficult to measure (Malhotra et al., 2017). Indeed, internationalization within the car sharing industry is a topic with no prior research, and one that is littered with complexities. The research aims to uncover how GreenMobility should internationalize. Various factors such as market conditions as well as consumer behaviour are explored to try to identify patterns that may increase the likelihood of success abroad. Following the analysis and discussion of all the collected data, conclusions will be drawn, and recommendations will be put forward.

The research takes an exploratory approach to the topic and uses GreenMobility as a case example to make the study, demonstrated clearly in the research question. The researchers take on the role of external researchers (Saunders et al., 2012). An organisation or company had to be identified after which access had to be granted by gaining their trust. This would initiate a cooperation that would enable the company to openly participate in the research and thereby allow for relevant data to be collected (Saunders et al.,

2012). Here, GreenMobility was identified and is used to gain insight into the industry. The findings of this paper thus pertain to GreenMobility specifically. While certain recommendations for industry actors can be formed, the researchers do not ascertain that the findings of this paper can be applied to the industry in general. To conclude, the research will draw conclusions and recommendations for how GreenMobility should internationalize.

This paper follows a quantitative approach although an element of qualitative data was collected in the preliminary stages of the research. As a survey strategy, the paper implements a questionnaire as is most often the case in quantitative research (Saunders et al., 2012). This type of approach allows a large data set to be collected and analysed in a transparent and objective manner. It enables the organization of the data into appropriate categories which can then be analysed by the researchers. Furthermore, the static nature of a questionnaire allows for the possibility of bias to be reduced which is essential in research. Finally, quantitative data can more easily be collected across borders and in various circles thanks in part to the internet.

Prior to starting the research process, the researchers conducted a literature review to familiarize themselves with the topic of internationalization within the car sharing industry. In fact, a literature review is essential in providing the researchers with information to formulate the research problem (Hesse-Biber and Johnson, 2010). Moreover, it provides the researchers with up-to-date knowledge and insight into the theoretical and research concerns that are contained within the given research topic (Hesse-Biber and Johnson, 2010).

2.4 Research Ethics

Research ethics is concerned with the standard of behaviour that guides the researchers vis-a-vis the *"rights of those who become the subject of your work, or are affected by it"* (Saunders et al., 2012, p.226). There are numerous factors that can influence the researchers' behaviour and thereby their ethics. So as to comply with a high level of ethics, the researchers follow the code of ethics set forward by their institutions, Copenhagen Business School, which in this case is the *"Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity"* (Ministry of Higher Education and Science, 2014). It stresses three principles that

are to be followed throughout the research; Honesty, Transparency and Accountability. The researchers abide by these principles and believe that these fulfil the necessary requirements in regard to research ethics.

To complement the above, the researchers examined ethical guidelines put forward by Saunders et al. (2012) and Bryman (2012). Particular attention was paid to the section concerned with ethical issues with 'Internet-mediated research' as it represents a significant part of this research (Saunders et al., 2012). In addition, Diener and Grandall (1978) state that ethical principles are concerned with *"four main areas; harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception"* (Bryman, 2012, p.135). These aspects were taken very seriously in designing and executing the survey. For instance, the survey respondents were given informed consent. Informed consent dictates that the participants are given necessary information and are free to choose whether they want to participate or not (Saunders et al., 2012). This also concerns the use of their personal data as well as the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. Furthermore, all the data collected is used solely for the purposes of this research. No personal information regarding the participants was collected. Any persons quoted in this thesis were asked for their consent beforehand. In consideration of the above, the researchers believe that they have informed themselves extensively and applied the relevant principles to achieve a high standard of ethics in this research.

2.5 Research Reliability

Reliability is determined by the degree to which, on the basis of the same data collection methods and analysis strategy, other researchers could reproduce the findings (Saunders et al., 2012). Here, methodology plays a crucial factor in enabling a high level of reliability. Despite the importance of reliability, Saunders et al. (2012) concede that it can be difficult to determine. External validity, which is concerned with the generalizability of the findings, for instance, can only be determined by replicating the study (Saunders et al., 2012).

As stressed in several sections above, the study has attempted to minimize the potential bias or subjectivity of both participant and researcher, increasing the reliability. To reduce participant bias, the

researchers implemented a self-completed questionnaire to lower the chances of respondents altering their opinions which could occur in certain circumstances or as a consequence of researcher behaviour. To reduce researcher bias, steps were taken in the design and execution phases of the research as illustrated at numerous occasions previously. Consequently, the design and application of the study would lend itself to replication and it is believed that this would yield similar results. Equally, the methodological framework could be applied by other researchers and render results which could be compared to this study.

2.6 Collection Methods

As mentioned beforehand, this thesis applies a quantitative data collection approach - discussed in further detail subsequently. The other data collection methods will also be presented below.

a. Primary Data

The primary data collected for this thesis consists of a questionnaire exploring consumer behaviours and preferences, one interview with representatives from GreenMobility and information received from GreenMobility as per request from the authors. The survey will be discussed in greater detail in section 2.6, part d.

i. Ethics of Primary Data

Primary data is data that is collected by one or several researchers for the purposes of a particular research paper (Malhotra et al., 2017). This enables a custom-made data collection process suited perfectly for the purposes of answering the research question. Naturally, this type of data also requires larger resources than secondary data (Malhotra et al., 2017). Questionnaires, as implemented in this research, are generally associated with lower levels of ethical issues (Dale, Arber and Procter, 1988). Indeed, questionnaires are rarely designed to explore responses or probe respondents to divulge further information (Dale et al., 1988). This helps reduce the ethical issues in this research as the conclusions drawn are in majority founded on the findings from the questionnaire. Moreover, no data has been misrepresented or altered in the process of analysing the responses of the survey (Zikmund, 2000). Lastly,

as stated in *'Research Ethics'*, great care is taken to maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of all the participants of the research.

ii. Data Collection

This research employs quantitative data collection methods as its primary sources of information. In quantitative research, one can use survey questionnaires, structured data collection or fixed-response alternative questions (Malhotra et al., 2017). In this case, the researchers conduct a self-completion type questionnaire that is distributed via several online channels, a common practice for sharing surveys (Bryman, 2012). This type of questionnaire allows respondents to complete the questionnaire by themselves at a time that is convenient for them (Bryman, 2012). This enables the collection of statistical data that can easily be categorized and thereafter analysed (Saunders et al., 2012). The advantage of the chosen circulation method is that it is very easy to spread to a large audience and to do so without depleting the time resources available to researchers (Bryman, 2012).

iii. Quality of Primary Data

Prior to publishing the survey, extensive time and consideration was allocated to draft questions that were pertinent and easy to understand. For the former, it would provide the necessary information and for the latter, it would reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings which in turn would affect the quality of data. To alleviate the risk of the researcher's being blinded by their own work, the survey was pilot tested on family and friends. This is a crucial step for the success of a survey (Saunders et al., 2012). Not only did this step ensure that the questions were easy to understand and straightforward, it also gave insight into how the flow of the survey felt for respondents (Saunders et al, 2012). Following this, certain questions were reworked, and the flow of the survey was also revised. In conclusion, these steps help safeguard the quality of the data.

iv. Data Analysis

The type of data collected from the questionnaire can be classified as categorical data. This is because it is not data that can be measured numerically but can be categorized by their characteristics (Saunders et al., 2012). The questionnaire incorporates both descriptive and ranked data results. Indeed, the researchers can categorize the data from certain questions but cannot rank it or define it numerically.

Finally, there is also ranked data in the survey stemming from questions that require respondents to position themselves on a numerical scale (Saunders et al., 2012).

For the coding and categorization of the data, the online platform used for the questionnaire allows for the creation of tables and graphs from the data directly. Furthermore, survey answers can be filtered by how the respondents have answered previous questions. This helps reduce the chances that the data is mishandled by the researchers themselves as it is done via a computerized system. To conclude, the researchers are able to use the software to reliably categorize the data and conduct the analysis of the findings.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data is data that has been collected by one or several researchers in the past, whose data is then used in research conducted subsequently by other researchers (Malhotra et al., 2017).
As a consequence, secondary data tends to be collected for a certain purpose, which may not be the same as for the research one is undertaking (Saunders et al., 2012). Also, the data may have been collected a few years prior, and thereby lost in its validity over time. Another aspect to consider is the quality which cannot always be verified by the researchers. Therefore, it is crucial that the researchers assess the sources critically to determine the quality of the data (Saunders et al., 2012).

For the purposes of this paper, the secondary data will largely be based upon statistical data collected by governments, municipalities, researchers and the like, regarding various factors such as public transportation use, car ownership etc. Other sources of secondary data may come from actors in the industry regarding the number of cars operating in a particular city, for instance.

i. Ethics of Secondary Data

In writing this paper, the researchers assessed solely freely available data that was collected in accordance with the law. These sources were cited and acknowledged according to the guidelines set out for this thesis. Furthermore, these can be found in the reference list. All data collected was presented in its original form and no modifications were made to fit the researcher's motives. Particular attention was

paid to protecting any personal information or confidentiality that may have presented itself in the secondary data sources (Dale et al., 1988).

ii. Data Collection

The secondary data collection consists essentially of a literature review to create a better understanding of the internationalization process in the car sharing industry. In addition, secondary data is collected for the market environment analysis to collect data and create an overview of the market situation in a given city.

For the literature review, the researchers look at sources such as Google Scholar, CBS Library and EBSCO to identify and choose the most important articles. The researchers begin with a large scope using keywords such as 'Internationalization' and 'Sharing Economy'. To further narrow the scope, the researchers implement keywords such as 'car sharing' and 'mobility'. Successively, the researchers focused on the type of car sharing by typing keywords such as 'free-floating' and 'station-based'.

For the market environment analysis, government/municipal websites, statistical databases and more were used to gather the relevant data. The researchers make use of Google to conduct the initial search for appropriate sources. Here, the aim is to find data relevant to the city that is being investigated as well as its market conditions.

iii. Quality of Secondary Data

A risk of secondary sources is that the data may be compromised due to bias. Therefore, measures were taken to test all sources for potential biases and thereby enable the researchers to draw valid and reliable conclusions (Malhotra et al., 2017).

For external data, the data sources can be divided into two categories. The first is concerned with statistical data provided by official sources such as governments or municipalities regarding the use of car sharing or population density, for instance. For this analysis, Malmö and Vienna were selected. Thus, the majority of sources found were either in Swedish or German, respectively. A risk that can damage the quality of the analysis is the comprehension of the language in which the data is provided. However,

one of the researchers speaks both Swedish and German at a suitable level to understand the information completely and correctly. Hence, the language barrier is not considered to be an issue in the case of this research. The statistics collected are from official sources and render a high quality of data.

The second source regards the competition and their characteristics, this information was gathered through the official website of these companies along with official documentation uploaded by the company itself. For instance, the pricing strategy of ELOOP in Vienna was taken from their official website at the time of writing the analysis. Hence, the data is both accurate and up to date which contribute to the quality of the data. The data sources used here were also, to a large extent, in either Swedish or German but as mentioned previously, it does not impede the quality of the analysis.

c. *Interview*

So as to conduct a successful interview, the researchers need to allocate the necessary time in preparing beforehand (Saunders et al., 2012). There exist several different techniques for conducting interviews. The interview with GreenMobility would fall under the category of unstructured or in-depth interview (Saunders et al., 2012). This is an informal type of interview style where there are no predetermined questions but simply a clearly defined topic. This technique allows the interviewee to speak freely and dive into various aspects of the given topic (Saunders et al., 2012). This type of interaction is referred to as a non-directive or informant interview, as it is not the researcher guiding the conversation but rather the interviewee. This suited the purpose of the interview perfectly, as the aim for the researchers was to gather information from a market insider. This information would then provide the necessary knowledge to determine the research problem and question.

i. Choosing and Obtaining Interviewees

The initial encounter with GreenMobility was entirely unannounced and hence no specific individual was chosen. Note, as aforementioned, that only one researcher could be present for the initial encounter with GreenMobility. The researcher entered the company office and was greeted by the International Project Coordinator. Thereafter, this individual offered to let the researcher meet the person corresponding to the questions posed, namely the Business Development Manager. However, due to a meeting that was being held the researcher was not able to interact at great length with this individual

but only for a few minutes. Following the short interview, it was determined that the person of contact would be the International Project Coordinator, Andreas Nygaard Andersen. This is because he is very familiar with the topic at hand and can respond to any questions the researchers may have. To conclude, the interview involved two representatives from GreenMobility after which contact was established with Andreas Nygaard Andersen to provide any necessary information to the researchers.

ii. Interview Conduct

The initial interview with GreenMobility was held at their office and was not previously agreed upon by both parties. The initial plan was to set a meeting with a company representative through the first email contact. However, as no response was received, the researchers deemed it more time efficient to meet the company directly at their office in Copenhagen. Doing so would enable the interviewee to be in a comfortable and familiar setting - thereby making that individual more receptive to the researchers. The meeting was not recorded as it was meant to be an informal meeting where the researchers and company representatives could get to know one another and discuss various topics freely. However, the present researcher was able to take notes during the interview and wrote a summary of the meeting afterwards.

d. Survey

Conducting a survey is common practice in the research field of business and management (Saunders et al., 2012). It enables researchers to explore a plethora of questions that are meant to explain the origins, intricacies and causalities of the identified phenomenon. A survey enables researchers to collect large data sets that can shine a light on the reasons for certain correlations or relationships which in turn can lead to the creation of models or theories based off of the information (Saunders et al., 2012).

So as to spread the survey to as large an audience as possible the questionnaire type will be self-completing, enabling the respondents to answer the questions autonomously via the use of the internet (Bryman, 2012). This type is chosen as the other options such as telephone or postal are deemed to be too time consuming by the researchers. A benefit of using this type of survey is "*the absence of interviewer effects"*, these refer to potential bias a respondent may have when facing an interviewer of a certain ethnicity, gender or social background (Bryman, 2012, p.234). Moreover, the respondents tend to answer more truthfully when faced with questions that are concerned with sensitive or personal subjects

(Bryman, 2012). While the chosen type of questionnaire can be criticized for not ensuring that the correct person responds, the researchers are not targeting specific people such as managers or the like (Saunders et al., 2012). Despite the researchers not targeting specific people or groups, questions regarding the demographics of the individuals are posed in order to categorize them.

i. Designing Questions

As opposed to in-depth or semi-structured interviews, questionnaires do not allow the interviewers to engage the respondents to explore certain topics in greater detail (Saunders et al. 2012). The researchers are required to plan and design the questions beforehand and need to invest considerable time to avoid unanswered questions that the researchers may have once the data has been collected. Indeed, the researchers are unlikely to get a second chance to ask the same respondents to supplement their answers due to the difficulty of contacting these individuals after the fact (Saunders et al., 2012). Hence, a limitation of questionnaires is that one cannot ask respondents to elaborate or ask them follow-up questions while other types of data collection allow for greater in-depth exploration.

In designing the questions, the researchers wanted to minimize the fall-out rate and engage the respondents throughout the survey. Therefore, closed questions were chosen to allow for a quicker flow (Fink, 2009). As an exception, one open question was posed to ask respondents for their city of residence as it was considered to be better suited. Closed questions entail that respondents are given a choice of answers to each question posed which enables an easier comparison of results in the data analysis stage (Saunders et al., 2012). To avoid missing any potential answers, a majority of closed questions included an 'Other' option for the respondents to add their own answer. To sum up, the researchers believe that designing the questions as such allows for a middle ground between minimizing fall-out rate and maximizing the validity of results. The nature of the questions and the questions themselves will be discussed extensively in section g, 'Survey Description'.

Naturally, all research needs to take into account the social and cultural context of the environment in posing questions. As the research has an international focus, the researchers must understand the country specific context in regard to the survey (Saunders et al., 2012). The researchers chose to conduct the survey solely in English to minimize the chances of incorrect translations. Moreover, to reduce the

chances of misunderstanding or misinterpretation by the respondents, the questions have been formulated in a clear and simple manner. Also, the length of the questions is kept at a minimum to further improve readability and ease of comprehension for the respondents.

ii. Survey Sample

When exploring the characteristics of a certain consumer group, the sample plays an important role in defining the accuracy and reliability of the collected data (Saunders et al., 2012). To allow the researchers to generalize the findings, the sample needs to be representative of the population (Saunders et al., 2012). A thorough literature review and lengthy discussions between the thesis partners took place as it is paramount to the research (Saunders et al., 2012). This helps ensure that the questionnaire will have the right components to provide the researchers with relevant information (Saunders et al., 2012).

To determine the sample, the researchers can follow a probability or non-probability type sampling. However, neither were adapted for the purposes of this research, outlined in the subsequently. It is common practice to use probability sampling as it renders a more representative participant population and the results can, on the basis of statistics, be generalized to a greater extent (Saunders et al., 2012). To identify the correct sample, one can implement a sampling frame which is a list of the individuals in a particular target population (Saunders et al., 2012). Hence, if one was to explore the satisfaction rate of the canteen at Copenhagen Business School, one should gather the complete list of all students and employees at CBS thus identifying the sampling frame. In the case of this thesis, finding the correct sampling frame is not that simple. Indeed, the potential customers for a car sharing platform can, in reality, be anyone from a student to a retiree. Though, one target group may be more likely to use the aforementioned service. Yet, the researchers are able to eliminate certain target groups such as underage individuals and individuals without driver's licenses.

Finally, there exist several sampling techniques the researchers are able to choose from (Hesse-Biber and Johnson, 2010). As the purpose of the survey is to uncover customer attributes and behaviour, the larger the sample the greater the potential breadth of information that can be collected. Furthermore, the aim is to explore all possible customer groups and identify patterns and characteristics from them. As an online survey will be conducted where respondents themselves choose to participate, this does not constitute a

form of sampling technique. As a consequence, the respondents may not be representative of the entire population - perhaps young females are more likely to voluntarily answer a survey. To mitigate these effects, the survey incorporates some preliminary questions to determine the customer group to which a particular individual belongs. The survey may, in proportion, over-represent young females as an example, but this information will be recorded and categorized accordingly. Finally, the researchers will present the demographics of all respondents and discuss any proportional anomalies.

iii. Survey Size

In regard to quantitative research, the aim is to provide the researchers with insight and statistical patterns that help draw conclusions regarding the internationalization strategy GreenMobility should implement. The research thus wishes to gather as much data as possible by sharing the survey to as many people as possible. According to the law of large numbers, the larger a sample is the higher the chance is that it is representative of the population (Saunders et al., 2012). For problem-solving research, it is estimated that the sample size should be at least 200 participants (Malhotra et al., 2017). In the end, the questionnaire reached a total number of participants of 236 thereby achieving the minimum requirement brought forward by Malhotra et al. (2017).

iv. Distribution Channels

To spread the survey to as many people as possible the researchers employ several resources. The researchers share the survey in their network using email and private messaging. Furthermore, respondents are encouraged to share the survey onwards to family members, friends, acquaintances and the like.

To complement the traditional sharing method, the researchers use online tools to help reach a larger audience. The researchers use Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat to attain as many people as possible. The researchers also posted the survey within Facebook groups such as ‘Copenhagen Business School Connect’ and asked the respondents to further share it in their network. This enables the survey to reach a larger initial audience and has the potential of being shared further in other circles and renders more responses. In a second instance, the authors use LinkedIn to further spread the survey.

v. Quality of Survey

Evidently, the quality of the data collected from the survey is an essential factor in determining the quality of the conclusions drawn thereafter. There are numerous factors that can affect the quality of a survey. As stated above, the researchers used online channels to distribute the survey. This method allows the researchers a degree of separation that enables or at least encourages respondents to be fully transparent in their responses. Indeed, the likelihood that respondents answer in order to please the researchers or to conform to social norms is reduced (Saunders et al., 2012). Hence, the quality of the responses is likely to be higher.

One may argue that questionnaires distributed via online channels have the disadvantage of excluding individuals that do not have internet access. However, as the product GreenMobility offers is an online service, its potential customers need to have access to the internet. Hence, the aforementioned group does not represent a potential customer group for the company.

Finally, many questions in the survey have predetermined answers provided to the respondents and this could negatively impact the richness and quality of the results. The benefit of predetermined answers is that it enables a less time-consuming survey. Furthermore, a high fall-out rate - due to a time-consuming survey - would likely have worsened the quality of the findings to a larger extent than the potential bias in the predetermined answers. To counteract the potential bias, the researchers dedicated extensive time to identify all the possible answers that could be given so the participants are able to find the suitable answer. Moreover, the participants are given the option to add their own answer under the 'Other' section if it is missing from the options. Hence, a high standard of quality can be maintained while limiting the risk of participants 'falling out' during the completion of the survey.

vi. Data Integrity

Data integrity is a process through which bias in the findings and the risk of skewing results thereafter is diminished (Malhotra et al., 2017). This process involves, amongst others, the editing and coding of the questionnaire's data. Guidelines are provided to better handle *"illegible, incomplete, inconsistent, ambiguous or otherwise unsatisfactory responses"* (Malhotra et al., 2017, p.529). Qualtrics was used for conducting the questionnaire and integrates software quality checks that serve to ensure the data integrity

process as recommended by Malhotra et al. (2017). In consideration of the above, the research has taken the necessary steps to ensure data integrity.

vii. Survey Description

This section will give the reader a walkthrough of the structure of the survey, its content in terms of topics explored and types of questions asked as well as a description of the relevance of each question. The complete set of questions asked in the questionnaire can be found in the appendix.

Section 1: Cover Letter

The participant is, at first, met with a covering letter where a short description of the survey is presented (Saunders et al., 2012). First, the topic and purpose of the questionnaire is outlined, thereafter it is highlighted that only individuals with a valid driver's license may take part in the survey. As discussed previously, individuals without driver's licenses are not considered in this survey as they do not represent an imminent potential customer group. Though these individuals may get a driver's license eventually, due to the time it takes to acquire one, the researchers consider that if a respondent does not have one, this individual cannot represent a potential car sharing user. The introductory page is concluded with a confidentiality statement followed by the researchers email addresses in case participants have questions or concerns. Thereafter, the survey enters the question phase and is divided into three separate sections: Demographics, Transportation, and Sharing Economy and Car Sharing.

Section 2: Demographics

This section enables a better understanding of who the respondents are in terms of gender, age, occupation and current city of residence. The questions concerning demographics are as follows: *What is your gender?*, *What is your age?*, *What is your main occupation?*, and *In which city do you live?*. Here, *list* type questions were used for the sake of time and simplicity (Saunders et al., 2012). The sole exception being for the city of residence where an open question was used, as listing all the possible answers here would have been too cumbersome. These questions render essential information to be able to identify certain patterns in customer behaviour. For instance, a particular age group may be more likely to use car sharing or vice versa. Hence these questions permit the recorded consumer behaviours to be linked to a particular group, for instance.

Section 3: Transportation Habits

The second part of the questionnaire contains questions regarding transportation habits of respondents. Once again *list* type questions were deemed appropriate with the possibility of adding one's own suggestion under '*Other'*. It is essential for the researchers to be able to categorize potential users according to whether or not they own or have free access to a car, thus the following question was posed; *Do you own or have free access (through relatives, for instance) to a car?*. This question is posed to determine whether having access to a car or not influences the consumer preferences in terms of car sharing. Thereafter, a follow-up question is asked - that is only posed to respondents answering yes to owning or having free access to a car; *What do you primarily use your car for? (multiple answers allowed)*. Thereby, the researcher can identify what a private car is most often used for and analyse the data in the context of car sharing accordingly. The section is concluded with a *category* question concerning commuting habits; *How do you usually commute to work? (multiple answers allowed)*. This question is implemented to potentially find a correlation between the type of transport used when commuting and car sharing behaviour.

Section 4: Sharing Economy and Car Sharing

The final part of the survey is concerned with the main topic of the thesis, namely car sharing. The previous questions have been used to identify certain consumer characteristics while this part explores the opinions and behaviours of participants in regard to the car sharing industry directly. Also, a wider variety of types of questions are used here to test different behaviour and preferences.

First, short and simple definitions for both the sharing economy and car sharing are given. Thereafter, the questionnaire sets out to determine how often respondents use sharing platforms thereby giving a clear indication of how popular this type of platform is by asking; *How often, per month, do you use car sharing economy platforms (Uber, AirBnb, BlaBlaCar, ShareNow…)?*. In this case, a *category* question was used to give respondents simple suggestions yet provide accurate responses to the researchers (Saunders et al, 2012). This type of question comes recommended when collecting data about behaviour and attributes (Saunders et al., 2012). Furthermore, no more than five categories were suggested as is recommended by Sanders et al. (2012) when conducting self-completed questionnaires.

Having established the general use of sharing economy platforms, the researchers ask; *Do you rent cars through car sharing platforms?*. This allows the researchers to ask two follow-up questions concerning their behaviour if 'Yes' was the answer given. Hence, it renders a better understanding of what the use of car sharing is to those individuals. Furthermore, it can allow the researchers to draw different conclusions on consumer preferences dependent upon whether these use or do not use car sharing. For the follow-up questions, a *list* type question with the possibility to choose multiple answers was adopted to determine the purpose of car sharing followed by a *category* question on the duration of said rentals (Saunders et al., 2012). The questions are as follows: *For what purpose? (multiple answers allowed)* and *On average, how long do you rent the car for?*. With that, the researchers are able to determine what car sharing is most often used for and for what duration.

One of the aims of the questionnaire for this research is to highlight consumer preferences in regard to certain aspects such as price. Hence, a *matrix* question is best suited to determine the importance of these factors to respondents (Saunders et al., 2012). A *matrix* question allows researchers to ask several questions at the same time. Such a question is very insightful as it serves to test several factors using a single question thereby increasing efficiency and simplicity (Saunders et al, 2012). Here, a Likert-style rating is used with a five scale range from *'Really not important'* to *'Very important'*. The middle value is '*Neutral'* and permits the respondents to choose a middle ground instead of being forced to name a preference. Allowing respondents to choose '*Neutral'* does not hinder the data's completeness. On the contrary, this boosts it as it can give insight into whether individuals are in fact indifferent to certain aspects proposed. In this question, seven aspects regarding car sharing are presented and respondents are asked to rate these according to the importance they attribute to it (*Please rate the following features if you were to use car sharing: Price, Distance to the car, Parking space availability, Familiarity/Ease of using app, Electric car, Range (kms) of the car, Gasoline car*). Hence, this question will determine the degree of importance of each of the presented factors which in turn can be used for the analysis of consumer preferences.

Thereafter, the researchers want to determine whether the size of the car mattered to individuals as different car sharing operators offer various car sizes while GreenMobility only offers one. Here a *scale* type question was used - *Please swipe the bar according to your preferred car size:* - to facilitate the choice between '*Small'* (0) and '*Medium'* (6) sized cars. Using this type of question enables the respondents to place themselves on a scale according to their preference rather than forcing them into a decision as a *list* type question would have done. The researchers are interested to find out whether a preference exists rather than to determine if a small or medium sized car is preferred. Consequently, the data shows if such a preference exists and to what degree it matters to participants.

The following question is: *Please place the bar according to your preferred parking option*. This is also a *scale* type question with an identical 0 to 6 range, but this time to test the favoured parking option between *'Designated parking stations'* and *'Freely within city limits'*. Similar to the previous question, the aim of this question was to ascertain whether a preference even exists and to what degree one option may be preferred to the other.

The previous *matrix* question established the degree of importance of several factors for respondents, however, it does not place these factors in terms of relative importance to one another (Saunders et al., 2012). A crucial aspect in the analysis is to identify the factors that most influence the decision-making process of active and potential car sharing users. Hence, it is necessary to incorporate a *ranking* question that would do so (Saunders et al., 2012). Here the question requires that participants rank four factors according to their importance - *Please rank the following features in your order of preference* - thereby displaying which is prioritized by the respondents. It can be noted that there are only four factors (*Price*, *Distance to the car*, *Electric drivetrain*, and *Range (kms) of the car*) presented as opposed to the seven of the previous *matrix* question. This was done for two reasons; one, for the sake of simplicity for the respondents and two, because the other factors cannot be chosen by the end user. More specifically, the users can choose to resort to a cheaper alternative, or one that allows for a greater range. However, the user cannot influence the degree to which the application is easy to use or the availability of parking. Conclusively, the question helps determine the importance of factors that GreenMobility can easily influence.

The questionnaire is wrapped up with another *list* question to determine the attitude towards sustainability of the respondents (Saunders et al., 2012). Herein, the researchers want to establish whether a car sharing provider needs to offer sustainable solutions to their customers by asking the following: *Is it important to you that a car sharing provider offers eco-friendly solutions?*. The response options are: *Yes*, *No* and *Indifferent*. Thereby, the data collected from this question can complement the analysis of whether the green aspect of GreenMobility's business model offers an advantage or not.

Section 5: Conclusion

Finally, the survey concludes with a short message thanking the respondents for their participation and reiterating the contact information of the researchers as suggested by Saunders et al. (2012).

3. Considerations and Limitations

This section is a valuable part of any research as it helps prepare the ground for future research. It is crucial to determine the methodological limitations such as research design, research approach, methods of analysis, as well as the substantive/theoretical/conceptual limitations of a study (Tharenou, Donohue and Cooper, 2007). Substantive/conceptual limitations concern the nature of the topic. These limitations also refer to what has not yet been done and what the researchers cannot explain (Tharenou et al., 2007). Methodological limitations are usually due to inadequacy of research design used to test the sub-questions such as the nature of the design - qualitative rather than quantitative design - or the types of measures - objective rather than subjective measures (Tharenou et al., 2007). This section is not a measure of the validity or reliability of the research but rather in which ways the research was conducted, and the limitations thereby incurred.

3.1 Methodology

The researchers have chosen to follow a pragmatist paradigm which combines elements from different philosophies, both new and old (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). Some scholars criticize pragmatism for being too vague in research (Modell, 2010). It is true that positivism and constructivism, for instance, have clearly defined views of the reality of nature and how the study of it should be designed (Modell, 2010). However, pragmatism allows a middle ground in terms of methodology and philosophy that takes aim at answering the research question in the best possible manner (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006). Taking this into account, the researchers determine that pragmatism is the most appropriate research philosophy in the context of this thesis.

A consideration of single case-studies, as used in this paper, is the issue of external validity and generalizability (Bryman, 2012). Naturally, the researchers concede that the generalizability of this research may be limited. Indeed, researchers cannot assume that the conclusions drawn in this type of research can be applied to any other company in the industry. However, this method was chosen in order to present an *"exemplifying"* case of the car sharing industry (Bryman, 2012, p.70). This serves to demonstrate the inner workings of a company in the industry in addition to gaining industry insight. To improve the generalizability of the research, one could conduct a large-scale study of the industry as a

whole. Yet, this would require vast resources and the applicability of the findings to the entire industry would not be 100% certain either. Hence, for the purposes aforementioned, a case study was beneficial in terms of gaining access to industry knowledge as well as presenting an example for the reader. Finally, it is believed that the findings can be discussed on the industry level as long as one takes into account the limitations mentioned above.

A substantial part of the analysis is based upon the findings from a quantitative survey conducted by the researchers. Although a survey, overall, provides many advantages to the researchers as highlighted in the previous section, there are also several downsides with using this method. As a survey has a set of predetermined questions that are fixed, respondents are compelled to follow the structure set out by the researchers (Simon and Goes, 2013). In contrast, a semi-structured interview comes with a question guide, but respondents are free to ask clarifying questions or inquire for more detail. Furthermore, it also allows the researchers to explore and ask follow-up questions to the interviewees, thereby making each interview unique. This can enable potential misunderstandings to be avoided and for the results to be more reliable. To reduce the chances of false responses, the researchers used simple and clear language in forming the questions. Also, the question set was tested on family and friends before publication to make sure that it was easily comprehensible. These individuals were not native in English and therefore represent a good test group for the readability of the survey questions. Finally, focus groups were also considered for this research as a means to collect primary data. These are organised by researchers and consist of a set of participants in an open dialogue (Collis and Hussey, 2013). However, this technique would only have allowed the researchers to investigate customers in close vicinity as the limited resources at hand would not allow for a larger scope. This is not adapted to the research aim that is concerned with internationalization. Indeed, the researchers collect data from as many respondents as possible across geographical locations. This renders a larger breadth to the type of consumers reached in conjunction with greater variety in the information gathered. Furthermore, focus groups can enable participants to influence one another due to the physical proximity of respondents (Collis and Hussey, 2013). As the researchers wanted to avoid such a potential bias in the data collection process, this technique was not chosen.

3.2 Theory

Theory is an essential part of any scientific investigation and extensive discussions of theories and models can be found in this paper. However, no single theory or model is applied throughout the paper as may be the case in other instances. Here, the theories and models are discussed and their applicability to the car sharing industry is tested. Hence, theories and models serve as a preliminary step in this research. The step that ensues serves to contribute to the incumbent literature by suggesting how a company in the car sharing industry should internationalize. This is based on the primary data collected and the subsequent analysis executed by the researchers. Therefore, the theoretical framework that one may traditionally find is not present in this paper which can be seen as a limitation to the reliability of the paper. Yet, the researchers make it abundantly clear that the aim of this research is to determine how GreenMobility should internationalize. To determine this, the researchers explore and discuss relevant theories but do not apply any single one throughout the paper. To argue that the lack of a theoretical framework is a limitation would be ill-founded as the aim of the research is to contribute to literature by testing the applicability of the current literature around internationalization. To sum up, though the research lacks a theoretical foundation, its aim is rather to test and contribute to incumbent literature.

3.3 The Survey

Quantitative research methods such as questionnaires are often associated with lower levels of bias and influence from the researchers. However, as with any data collection technique there are limitations that need to be highlighted and discussed. First, the design of a questionnaire is very much in the hands of the researchers. Thereby, bias may occur in the design stages of the questions. Though, this is not singular to questionnaires and applies to an even greater extent to qualitative research methods. Furthermore, the analysis of the responses is executed in an objective manner through categorization and the analysis of statistical data. Hence, the influence of the researchers in the analysis phase is inferior to other methods one could employ.

A further limitation to consider is the way in which the survey was distributed and thereby which type of participants were questioned. As a matter of fact, the appropriateness of the sample as well as its representativeness in relation to a target population of interest are crucial elements in any survey (Nayak

and Narayan, 2019). Here, the researchers use online social media channels which tend to be used more by younger individuals; in this case almost 45% of respondents are below 25 years old. Furthermore, almost 62% of participants answered that 'Student' was their main occupation. This may skew the results as a particular group is overrepresented, though the researchers are fully transparent about this concern throughout the analysis. Important to note as well, is that the clientele of car sharing platforms tends to be younger individuals hence the fact that the survey respondents tend to be younger as well does not negatively affect the accuracy of said results (Statista, 2019d). No studies concerning the most common type of occupation for car sharing users could be found.

Due to the physical location of the researchers and their network, the majority of respondents were from Copenhagen which may influence the content of the data. Indeed, it needs to be considered that the contextual framework may affect consumer behaviour. For instance, the infrastructural context of a city such as Hamburg may differ to one such as Copenhagen. Hence, the use of car sharing may vary across geographical locations as well. However, the findings show that despite various geographical locations, consumer behaviour tends to be similar as can be seen in the 'Data Analysis' section. It can be concluded that although locational factors may influence responses, no particular pattern has emerged in the conducted survey.

A limitation in using a self-completion questionnaire is that it needs to maintain the attention of the respondent until completion of the survey (Bryman, 2012). The researchers are limited by the respondents' willingness to offer their time to answer the questions, hence, one cannot design a questionnaire with too many questions so as to reduce completion time (Saunders et al., 2012). As a consequence, the researchers have had to limit the scope of the topics explored and dedicate extensive time and energy resources into asking the correct questions. To appeal to the respondent, a questionnaire may also incorporate a number of predetermined answers to the posed questions. These are also referred to as closed questions rather than open-ended questions (Saunders et al., 2012). This technique was implemented in the survey and can cause respondents to answer in a different manner than if no suggestion was made. To alleviate this issue the researchers integrated the option for respondents to enter their own answer. Though, in the interest of transparency, very few respondents used this function. It

cannot be determined whether that is because it was not necessary or because respondents chose to opt out of writing their own choice.

The researchers achieved the minimum of 200 participants for the survey as stated by Malhotra et al. (2017). However, it is recommended for research to be within the 300 to 500 participant range (Malhotra et al., 2017). Despite numerous efforts to reach that range, the researchers were only able to achieve 236 participants in their survey. The researchers acknowledge that this may, in fact, impede the validity of the collected results. It is believed that although a larger number of respondents would have rendered a higher degree of reliability, the 236 answers are enough to satisfactorily provide the necessary information and achieve a sufficient level of validity.

Finally, once the researchers completed the survey and closed it for further responses, the analysis of the findings was started. Upon analysing the data in conjunction with the before collected secondary data, the researchers discovered that a further question should have been posed in the survey. Indeed, studies show that car sharing users are not loyal at all but are rather driven by price (Friedel, 2020). Hence, it could have been interesting to investigate whether individuals are members of only one or more than one car sharing platform. This question would have been posed only to participants answering 'Yes' to using car sharing. This would have allowed the researchers to test the veracity of the aforementioned statement and put it into relation to the questioned sample. Despite the potential of such a question, the researchers determine that this does not hinder the accuracy of the study but could have contributed further to the findings. It is believed that the studies investigating customer loyalty are reliable and provide a basis for discussion, while collecting said data in the survey would have provided additional information that could have been useful.

3.4 Secondary Data

The nature of secondary data implies several considerations and limitations. Indeed, secondary data is data that has been collected prior to the conducted research for reasons that may differ from the research aim of said research. Hence, a consideration of secondary data is that the data may not be adapted or appropriate in the context of the new research. To minimize this issue, the researchers focused their

search, to the extent possible, on data collected for statistical purposes. Governmental sources, such as 'Stadt Wien' are considered to be reliable sources of unbiased data. These sources were vetted by comparing them to other sources, when possible. It was determined that it would be an inefficient use of resources for the researchers to gather this statistical information on their own. Furthermore, it is believed that the prior institutional entities have larger resources and access to greater information pools and can hence provide more reliable and valid data than the researchers could themselves.

As secondary data is collected prior to the research being conducted, it involves the collection of data in a different time. Hence, this data may have lost some of its accuracy and/or validity over the years. Hence, it is decisive for researchers to try and locate the most recent data sets to limit the effect of the aforementioned. However, this cannot always be achieved with the means accessible to the researchers. Although the researchers consider the secondary data gathered to be indicative and pertinent of the topic discussed, it is still deemed to be a consideration. The data may have changed in recent years which would impact the conclusions drawn from this information. In conclusion, the researchers have throughout the research process attempted to always use up to date information, though in some cases it was not possible to achieve.

3.5 City Comparison

To investigate the attractiveness of a new market, the researchers conducted a two-case city comparison of Malmö and Vienna. This can be criticized for being too limited in scope, indeed while Malmö and Vienna present two rather different case studies on the surface, the generalizability of said analysis can be put into question. Here, to improve the reliability of the conclusions the researchers could have conducted further analyses of other cities. However, no study could properly assess a sufficient number of cities to render results applicable across various countries and cities. Therefore, the researchers chose to limit the focus on two cities and take an in-depth look into each of their characteristics.

Despite conducting an in-depth analysis of both cities, a further criticism of the city comparison is in the choice of the cities themselves. The researchers chose the two cities because GreenMobility is entering both markets in the imminent future. Furthermore, the two cities were considered to be rather different

case examples and thereby offered a potentially interesting case comparison. As a consequence, the researchers may have been influenced by GreenMobility's ontology. However, despite this risk, GreenMobility's choices were followed as the researchers wanted to investigate two markets that had the necessary potential for car sharing. In fact, it would have been very difficult for the researchers to self-determine what type of cities to analyse as they are not in touch with the inner workings of the industry. Hence, the researchers would have risked choosing cities that did not present an interesting case for a car sharing company wishing to internationalize. To conclude, it was considered beneficial for the accuracy and validity of the case comparison to choose two cities that GreenMobility had already chosen beforehand.

4. Literature Review

This section will present and discuss the theories and models in relation to internationalization in the sharing economy that have been gathered following an extensive literature review. The first part provides a thorough analysis of the incumbent literature on the topic of the sharing economy and the car sharing industry more specifically. While the second part will focus on the analysis of the existing internationalization theories and their pertinence to sharing economy firms. On the basis of the acquired knowledge, the researchers will be able to draw conclusions regarding the exhaustiveness and the potential applicability of the existing theories.

4.1 Sharing Economy

This section brings forth the numerous definitions set forward by scholars of the sharing economy and the one that has been chosen for this particular research. Then, the academic literature regarding the sharing economy is presented and the importance of the industry is thus established.

a. Definition

Scholars have proposed disparate definitions of the sharing economy over the years. The term sharing economy was first proposed by Lessig (2008, p.143) who defined it as a "*collaborative consumption made by the activities of sharing, exchanging and rental of resources without owning the goods*". However, although today the term is quite widespread, there is no common agreement among scholars on the definition of the sharing economy (Acquier, Daudigeos and Pinkse, 2017). One aspect scholars do agree upon is the difficulty with which one can determine a suitable definition of the sharing economy and hence to set well-established conceptual boundaries. As a result, the term sharing economy has turned into a catch-all label with solid normative underlying principles. Contributing to the confusion, many other similar concepts have been introduced including access economy (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012), peer-to-peer economy (Bauwens, 2005), on-demand or gig economy (Friedman, 2014; Sundararajan, 2013), platform capitalism (Cockayne, 2016), the 'mesh' (Gansky, 2010), collaborative consumption (Botsman and Rogers, 2010), connected consumption (Dubois, Schor and Carfagna, 2014; Schor and Fitzmaurice, 2015) and gift economy (Cheal, 1988).

Considering the numerous definitions developed by scholars regarding the sharing economy, it is possible to divide them according to their scope. Muñoz and Cohen (2017, p.1) provide a broad definition arguing that the sharing economy is "*a socio-economic system enabling an intermediated set of exchanges of goods and services between individuals and organizations which aim to increase efficiency and optimization of sub-utilized resources in society*". In contrast, Botsman (2013) argues that the sharing economy is an economic model built on the sharing of underused goods ranging from extra space to assets for either monetary or non-monetary benefit. Other scholars have proposed more specific definitions by introducing different terms which aim to explain the same topic. In regard to this, Cockayne (2016, p.73) states that "*the on-demand or 'sharing' economy is a term that describes digital platforms that connect consumers to a service or commodity through the use of a mobile application or website*". However, numerous scholars dispute the 'real' meaning of the term sharing. These debates have led scholars to analyse the topic from other points of view. Indeed, Belk (2014b) stands out from other scholars as he goes further into depth in defining the sharing economy by differentiating the 'true sharing' from 'pseudo sharing'. It is claimed that the true sharing is an alternative to the personal ownership which traditionally takes place in both marketplace and gift giving (Belk, 2014b). Pseudo sharing is, on the other hand, is a "*phenomenon whereby commodity exchange and potential exploitation of consumer co-creators present themselves in the guise of sharing.*' (Belk, 2014b, p.7), or "*business relationship masquerading as communal sharing*" (Belk, 2014b, p.11). Arnould and Rose (2016) criticize the word sharing for focusing excessively on the exchange and thereby suggest reconceptualizing the term around the concept of mutuality. Several scholars oppose the sharing economy and criticize the sharing economy's 'feel good' story as they see it as an attempt to mystify and mislead the public when companies push on promoting positive collective values such as sharing and togetherness (Slee, 2016; Murillo, Buckland and Val, 2017).

The controversies related to the sharing economy directly reflect its complex inner nature. In fact, the sharing economy embeds disparate arrays of economic, social and environmental promises, each of them belonging to different values, areas and framings (Acquier et al., 2017). The sharing economy's environmental purpose is pursued by favouring the access over the ownership of assets with the ultimate aim of using available resources in a more sustainable way (Martin, 2016; Botsman and Rogers, 2010). Nonetheless, empirical research shows that environmental concerns are not the main driver for the users

of the sharing economy (Böcker and Meelen, 2017; Wilhelms, Henkel and Falk, 2017). Some scholars support the social promise of the sharing economy by seeing it as an instrument to create a non-reciprocal exchange among individuals, as a tool to facilitate easier and cheaper access to services, and eventually, as a completely new form of cooperation among people (Bauwens, 2005; Benkler, 2017). Recent empirical studies go against this collectivistic vision and propose that sharing economy platforms could re-establish the disparities pertaining to the capitalist markets (Schor, Fitzmaurice, Carfagna, Attwood-Charles and Poteat, 2016). The economic promise of the sharing economy refers to its attempt to reduce the restrictions imposed by political institutions through the decentralization of markets thanks to peer-to-peer exchanges (Acquier et al., 2017).

b. Chosen Definition

Although GreenMobility operates in the car sharing industry, it is still part of the macro phenomenon of the sharing economy and needs to be defined as such. Among the plethora of definitions proposed by scholars, the research defines the sharing economy as a "*peer-to-peer-based activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing the access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services*" (Hamari, Sjöklint and Ukkonen, 2016, p.1). This definition was chosen as it is the most complete and suitable for this research. The bulk of definitions developed by scholars have focused their attention either on the exploitation of underused goods or on the mere activity of sharing. Unlike the other definitions, the one elaborated by Hamari, Sjöklint and Ukkonen (2016) focuses on two factors that are crucial for the research: access to services and the use of an internet-based platform.

c. *The Academia*

The term sharing economy has existed for over a decade now. Nevertheless, the term only became popular in academia later on as shown in the graph below (Figure A).

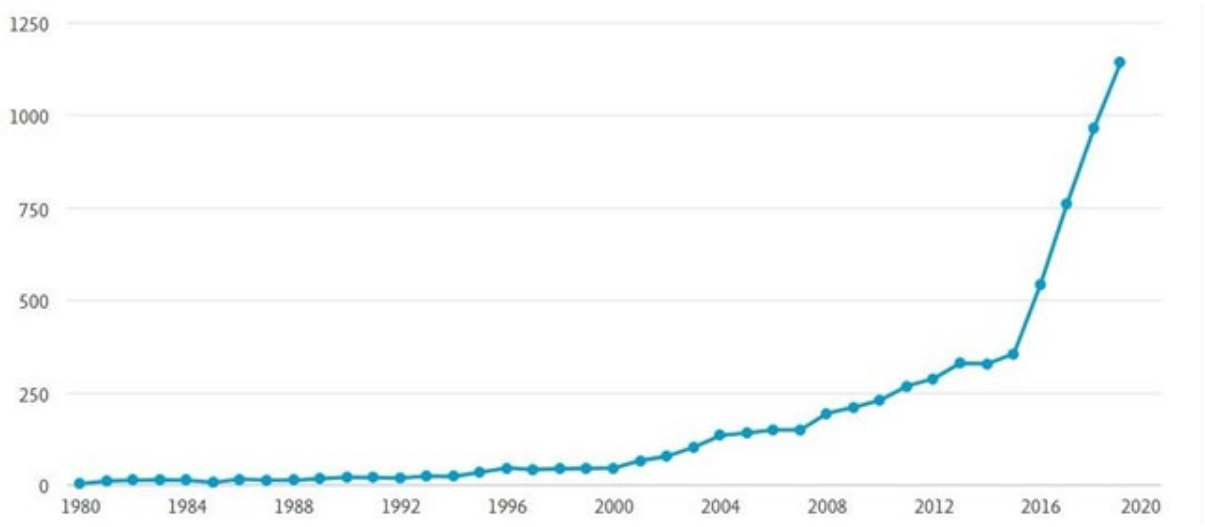

Figure A - Number of academic articles that make mention of the sharing economy
Source: www.scopus.com (Authors' own research)

The increase in popularity of the term in academia is directly linked to the actual growth in the global market size of the sharing economy (Statista, 2019a). This drastic growth has been sparked by several factors. The omnipresence of smartphones and increasing internet access as well as innovation and the constant evolution of technology have been essential in its growth (Parente, Geleilate and Rong, 2018). These advances have enabled companies to conduct business in a quicker and easier way while offering customers a smoother user experience (Posen, 2015). Moreover, the increased environmental consciousness, the abundance of goods in idle capacity, and the economic consequences of the financial crisis such as higher unemployment rates have pushed more and more consumers towards sharing their resources to take advantage of underutilized assets (Cohen and Kietzmann, 2014; Parente, Geleilate and Rong, 2018). Moreover, people do not interact with sharing economy companies simply to try a new social trend but primarily to elude the ownership costs of certain assets (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2015). By 2015, the sharing economy reached an annual market size of 15 billion dollars and it is expected to reach 335 billion by 2025, as mentioned earlier (Statista, 2019a). These figures highlight the ever-growing importance of the sharing economy in the current and future world.

As demonstrated in the figure above, the sharing economy gained much more visibility in the recent decade, and especially in the last five years. Indeed, the amount of academic publications focused on the sharing economy is currently growing at an exponential rate (Gutiérrez, García-Palomares, Romanillos and Salas-Olmed, 2017). This is an interesting indicator because it highlights the contemporary nature of the sharing economy and simultaneously poses a challenge to the applicability of the dominant internationalization theories and models that were developed decades (Parente et al., 2018).

Moreover, as shown in figure B below, there has been almost no research conducted which investigates the relationship between sharing economy firms and their internationalization process. Indeed, Hossain (2020) claims that despite many sharing economy firms making their fortune by internationalizing their operation quickly, academic studies focusing on the internationalization of sharing economy firms are still scarce.

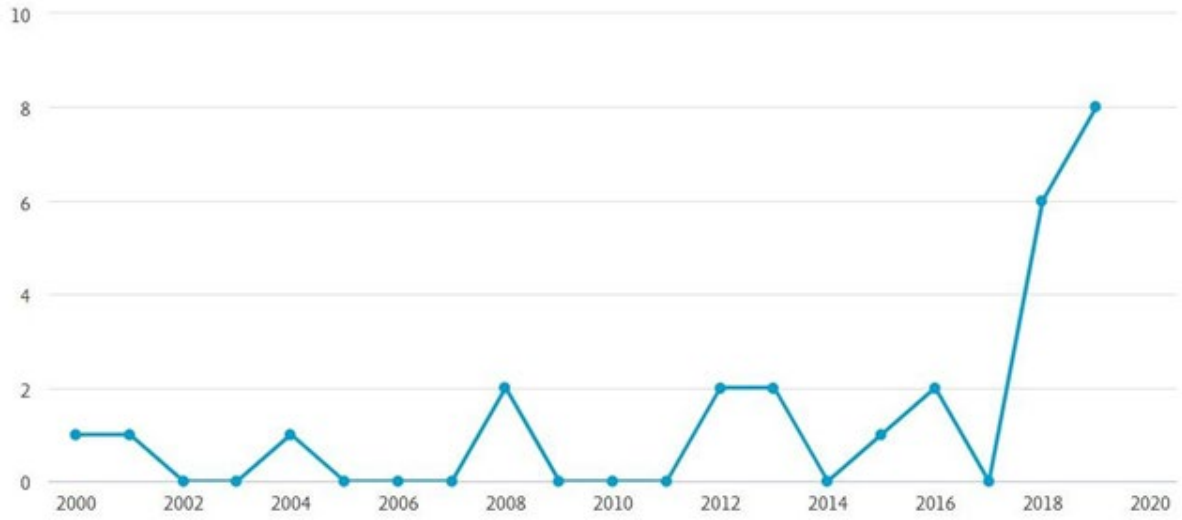

Figure B - Number of academic articles focusing on the intersection of sharing economy and internationalization

Source: www.scopus.com (Authors' own research)

This affirmation is further supported by Parente, Geleilate and Rong (2018) who state that questions on how firms operating in the sharing economy elaborate and execute internationalization strategies – in particular with respect to internalization, local adaption and competitive scenario – still need to be addressed by the incumbent literature. The surprising lack of research for a sector that is expected to grow dramatically calls for further investigation (Statista, 2019a). In light of competitive dynamics,

innovative business models and the process of internationalization of sharing economy companies, future research on the implementation of their global strategy might benefit not only academia in general but also public policy developments and the community as a whole (Parente et al., 2018).

4.2 Car Sharing

This section narrows the scope from the sharing economy to focus on the car sharing industry in particular. First, the phenomenon will be presented after which the various types of car sharing models will also be presented, giving the reader an insight into the forms of car sharing that exist today definition for it will be chosen. Then, a definition for the car sharing phenomenon will be given. Similar to the previous section, the incumbent academic literature concerning the car sharing industry and internationalization will be investigated. In addition, the section will examine both electric and fossil fuel driven car sharing and elaborate on some final considerations.

a. The Phenomenon

In recent years, car sharing has become a global phenomenon due to extensive news coverage and the increased consumer usage (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012; Levine, 2009). Despite individuals traditionally considering ownership as the most desirable way to access products, an ever-growing number of people prefer to use these platforms to temporarily share or access services and products instead of owning them (Scaraboto, 2015). However, sharing in the mobility sector can take a multitude of forms such as: ridesharing, car-sharing, car-pooling, bike-sharing and e-scooter-sharing (Standing, Standing and Biermann, 2019). This research paper is focusing on car sharing and hence a thorough analysis of the car sharing phenomenon from the academic perspective is performed in this section.

Car sharing firms provide vehicles to users who are then able to use them for a short amount of time, typically in the range of a few minutes to a few hours (Turoń, Kubik, Bugosław, Czech and Stanik, 2018). From an urban traffic management perspective, the introduction of car sharing systems have contributed to an improvement in mobility by limiting the amount of existing private vehicles in the cities (Perboli, Ferrero, Musso and Vesco, 2018). Sharing cars can also impact the environment positively and can encourage a more sustainable consumer behaviour thanks to the drastic reduction of vehicle ownership

(Shaheen, Mallery and Kingsley, 2012; Pizzol, de Almeida and Couto Soares, 2017; Hartl, Sabitzer, Hofmann and Penz, 2018).

A car sharing sign-up process may resemble the following; first an initial or yearly fee is required. This allows individuals to become members and thereby get access to and use a fleet of vehicles spread throughout the city. Users of car sharing services access cars that are owned by a car sharing company, which makes it different from peer-to-peer car sharing programs or carpooling (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012). Users are charged according to the effective time the car is rented, whilst gas, insurance and maintenance are included in the price (Degirmenci and Breitner, 2014). By doing so, car sharing is transforming the fixed costs which come along with the ownership of a vehicle (such as purchase cost, insurance and/or depreciation) to a variable cost which is directly linked to the actual usage of the vehicle (Degirmenci and Breitner, 2014).

b. Car Sharing Models

Several different typologies of car sharing have been developed (Bauwens, Mendoza and Iacomella, 2012; Cohen and Kietzman, 2014). For instance, Bauwens et al. (2012) identify three different types of car sharing: business-to-consumer (B2C) car sharing, peer-to-peer (P2P) car sharing and non-profit co-operatives.

Business-to-consumer car sharing implies that a firm owns a fleet of vehicles and enables these to be shared among the community of members. Automobile manufacturers (such as Daimler, BMW and Peugeot), rental brands (such as WeCar and Hertz) and car sharing brands (such as Zipcar, GoGet, Enjoy and GreenMobility) are all examples of business-to-consumer car sharing. In contrast, in peer-to-peer (or consumer-to-consumer) car sharing the fleet of cars is owned by a community of private individuals (Novikova, 2017). The platform enables its members to make their own vehicle available and offer them to other individuals seeking to rent it (Bauwens et al. 2012). Turo (previously named RelayRides), JustShareIt and Getaround are examples of companies offering peer-to-peer car sharing services (Novikova, 2017). For P2P car sharing, as the rental car is owned by a private person and not a company, users cannot benefit from a continuous interaction with a single provider that allows them to choose among several cars that are of the similar standard and quality (Wilhelms, Merfeld and Henkel, 2017).

The last type of car sharing service consists of non-profit cooperatives (also called public initiatives) which are local organizations that promote car sharing with the ultimate aim of making an impact by changing driving habits rather than making a profit (Novikova, 2017). Organizations such as Autolib, PhillyCarShare, City Car Share are examples of the aforementioned initiative.

Cohen and Kietzman (2014) have further categorized the B2C car sharing firm's business model in station-based (one-way and round-trip) and free-floating (one-way). Station-based round-trip car sharing is a system that allows users to pick up a car from a designated station and use it freely by paying for it on a minute or hourly basis with the sole requirement of returning the car to the same place as where it was picked up. In the station-based one-way model, the user has no obligation to return the car to the same station and is thereby able to park it at other designated stations that are located around the city (Machado et al., 2018). In contrast, free-floating one-way car sharing allows members to pick up and drop off vehicles everywhere in the city as long as the members remain within the designated operating area. More and more organizations have started offering free-floating car sharing as a more flexible solution compared to the traditional station-based car sharing model. The factor that most characterizes the free-floating formula is the higher degree of flexibility that is provided to the users. Free-floating car sharing is becoming ever more popular and enables the use-rate of vehicles in a city to increase which in turn lowers the congestion rate and increases the parking space availability. This ultimately serves to boost the efficiency of the transport sector (Sprei et al., 2017). This system is gradually replacing the round-trip system because it gives more freedom to the users (Namazu and Dowlatabadi, 2018).

c. Definition

Having analysed the car sharing phenomenon from an academic point of view, the researchers identified the following definition of car sharing as the most exhaustive in regard to this paper's purpose. Ferrero, Perboli, Rosano and Vesco (2018, p.1) identify car sharing as a "*phenomenon that increases mobility for community members to reach destinations otherwise inaccessible by public transit, walking or biking, while increasing the citizens' awareness about the social and environmental impact of using private cars*". GreenMobility can be positioned into the group of B2B car sharing companies who utilize a free-floating one-way car sharing business model. As previously discussed, car sharing is rapidly spreading worldwide; the number of car sharing users in 2006 was 7 million while it is expected to hit 36 million

by 2025 (Statista, 2016). In 2016, the fleet growth rate of the car sharing industry was at 23% while the compound annual member growth rate hit a staggering 76% (Shaheen, Cohen and Jaffee, 2018). These figures highlight the general growth, but the growth rates differ greatly within the types of car sharing models offered. Specifically, a 16.2% decrease in the round-trip car sharing market in addition to a 3.6% reduction in the number of vehicles available have been registered (Rotaris, Danielis and Maltese, 2019). By contrast, the free-floating car sharing market has witnessed significant growth with a 76% increase in membership and 11.5% increase in the number of vehicles available (Rotaris et al., 2019). These numbers clearly highlight the importance of the car sharing economy and its potential for future growth. In addition, it underscores the popularity of the free-floating one-way car sharing, a model that GreenMobility is currently employing.

d. The Academia

Academic literature concerning the sharing economy has received greater attention illustrated by the drastic increase in publications over the past five years. The car sharing business has received similar interest in recent years. This is made abundantly clear in figure C below which provides an overview of the number of publications regarding the topic of car sharing in the last two decades. The subject area has witnessed a huge surge in published papers displayed by a quadrupling of the number of publications in the last five years.

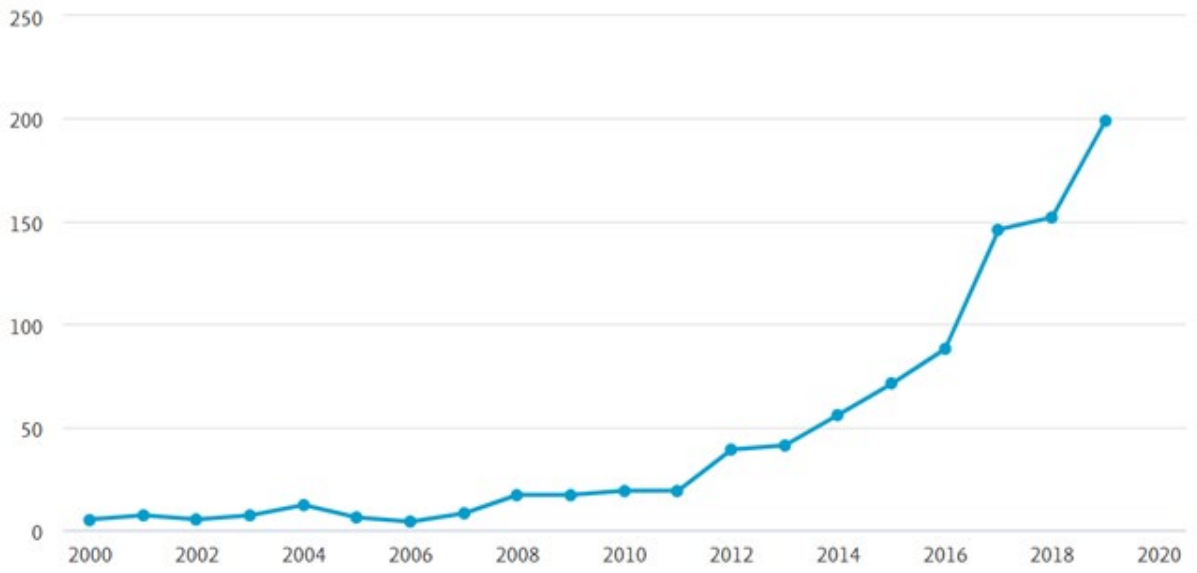

Figure C – Number of academic articles concerning car sharing
Source: www.scopus.com (Authors' own research)

The relevance of car sharing is clear, the industry is growing rapidly and so are the publications relating to it. The car sharing industry is likely to receive more and more attention in the coming years. The bulk of academic articles published, though, focus on studying and understanding the customer behaviour as well as the variables that drive consumers to engage in car sharing activities in the first place (Rotaris, Danielis and Maltese, 2019). Accordingly, several socio-economic characteristics have been studied by scholars such as: age range (Becker, Ciari and Axhausen, 2017), level of income (Kim, Rasouly and Timmermans, 2017), car availability (Becker et al., 2017), use of public transport (Loose, 2010), environmental awareness (Efthymiou and Antonious, 2016).

Although car sharing has acquired greater interest from researchers, there is little to no research - so far as the researchers were able to gather - that has tried to uncover the way car sharing companies internationalize their activities nor the way in which they should enter a new market. This statement is supported by a search performed using Scopus - a tool that was used to produce the previous graphs. Here, the researchers were unable to find any academic articles focusing on the intersection of both the car sharing industry and internationalization, confirming the lack of research in this specific field.

e. Electric vs. Fossil-fuel Car Sharing

A mobility service such as car sharing is seen as a means through which one can obtain a more sustainable transportation system. However, although the phenomenon has gained momentum over the last few years, it has not achieved a major breakthrough yet. This is due to the fact that a shared solution cannot guarantee the same amount of flexibility that a private vehicle can offer (Sprei and Ginnebaugh, 2015).

Depending on the city, free-floating car sharing services offer both electric and fossil-fuel driven vehicles. For instance, only electric vehicles are offered in the streets of Madrid and Amsterdam, while in other cities such as Stockholm, Munich and Copenhagen a mixture of both can be found (Sprei et al., 2017). Preferring novel electric solutions over the well-established fossil ones will have a strong impact on the environment by lowering CO2 emissions. Car sharing firms that provide electric vehicles might also showcase electromobility to the public by letting individuals try out an electric vehicle (Sprei et al., 2017). For instance, the city of Amsterdam outlines this as an incentive to support the introduction of free-floating car sharing services with electric vehicle fleets.

Although an electric vehicle could be better from a sustainability point of view, it is not guaranteed that it can provide the same service as a gasoline powered car. This is mainly due to the fact that an electric vehicle can be driven for a shorter distance in comparison to its fossil-fuel driven pendant. Additionally, electric vehicles also require a longer charging time. Charging is one of the major issues related to electric vehicles, particularly if a car sharing provider is to achieve a high utilization rate.

In light of the previous statements, scholars have investigated whether electric vehicles in free-floating car sharing are used in the same way as fossil-fuel vehicles. To do so, Sprei et al., (2017) have compared

the usage patterns of both electric and fossil cars of different car sharing operators in numerous cities. The research concluded that there are no statistical differences on how electric vehicles are used in free-floating car sharing services compared to the fossil-fuel driven ones. For instance, in Madrid - where there are only electric vehicles - the driving distance tends to be shorter, however, the number of daily trips is fairly high as well as the compound utilization rate (Sprei et al., 2017). Therefore, free-floating car sharing operators that are using electric vehicles can provide the same service as the ones that are using fossil driven vehicles (Sprei et al., 2017).

Overall, the research on free-floating car sharing is still in its early stages (Sprei et al., 2017). Many aspects of this service as well as its effects on the society have not been analysed and uncovered yet. Moreover, the studies that show evidence on the sustainability and efficiency of the free-floating service are mainly based on surveys (Ciari, Bock and Balmer, 2014; Kopp, Gerike and Axhausen, 2015). Even fewer studies have been developed in regard to the introduction of electric vehicles in the fleet of free-floating car sharing providers. This clearly indicates the recentness of the topic as well as the need of further research and investigation.

f. Additional Considerations

Car sharing firms need to collaborate with local authorities to avoid parking limitations (Monitor Deloitte, 2017). The decision made by the cities' policy makers concerning urban planning and design as well as mobility tend to heavily influence the outcome of car sharing services, and especially the emerging forms of it, such as the free floating one (Ampudia-Renuncio, 2020). Thus, the likelihood that a free-floating car sharing model would prove successful is in part related to the parking and transport policies set by local authorities (Ampudia-Renuncio, 2020; Friedel, 2020).

Sharing economy firms are characterized by the trend of 'servitisation' (Cohen and Kietzmann, 2014). Today, firms can expand their potential consumer pool by not only selling their products but also by renting the access to their products for a limited amount of time. This is the case for the well-known car makers such as Daimler, BMW and Peugeot, all of which are offering transport solutions as a service rather than selling cars (Cusamano, 2014). However, from a market-based perspective, when deciding which type of vehicles to offer and what business model to follow, these companies face a tricky trade-

off between cannibalization and market expansions (Cohen and Kietzmann, 2014). On one side, by providing car sharing services, the OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturer) could potentially expand their scope of action to those segments of the population that cannot afford a car. On the other hand, offering car sharing services could cannibalize the demand from those segments who otherwise would have purchased a vehicle and, thus, it may impact the overall car maker' profitability negatively (Bellos, Ferguson and Toktay, 2017).

4.3 Internationalization Theories in the Sharing Economy

In this paragraph the most important theories and models pertaining to internationalization will be analysed from an academic perspective and juxtaposed to the sharing economy phenomenon. Sharing economy firms can traditionally be identified as start-ups that need to collect large amounts of funding in order to uphold their activities. Internationalization, therefore, becomes a must because of first mover advantages and network effects that need to be captured. This, in turn, pushes sharing economy firms to undertake overseas activities that become a necessary condition for survival (Parente, Geleilate and Rong, 2018).

a. Uppsala Model

Internationalization of processes has thereby become, over the years, an instrument of pivotal importance in the corporate world. The Uppsala Model of internationalization - also known as the U model or incremental internationalization - and OLI framework - or eclectic paradigm - both play a significant role in international business studies.

The U model explains which steps firms should follow when deciding to internationalize their activities by entering a foreign market (Johanson and Vahlne, 1990). The model states that companies obtain experiential knowledge by entering into those markets with less psychic distance (Stottinger and Schlegelmilch, 1998). Psychic distance has been defined by Johanson and Vahlne (1990) as those factors that make it tough to understand foreign environments. Thus, internationalization would start in those markets that are close in terms of psychic distance to the domestic one. By doing so, firms are able to control the high risks of foreignness and eventually earn enough experiential knowledge to enter new

markets (Hymer, 1976; Etemad, 2004). According to Whitelock (2002, p.342), the Uppsala model dictates that "*the firm develops its activities abroad over time and in an incremental fashion*". The model thus focuses on the study of the 'how' in the internationalization processes of firms (Galan, Galende and Gonzalez-Benito, 1999).

Sharing economy firms seem not to be affected by traditional obstacles underlying international expansion such as institutional and cultural differences as well as the abovementioned psychic distance (Parente et al., 2018). In fact, these companies have cut both adaptation and entry costs by directly using the resources, assets and infrastructures made available by local providers which turn out to be less costly. This behaviour is in contrast with the principles underlying the incremental internationalization of companies which suggests that multinational enterprises, when going abroad, should pick a country on the basis of both learning effects and risk aversion (Johanson and Vahlne, 1990). A concrete example to better understand the incremental and sequential entry proposed by the Uppsala model can be obtained by analysing the foreign market entrance decision of IKEA. The Swedish retail firm started its expansion strategy by entering the Norwegian market first and - only after a couple of years - the Danish one. IKEA leveraged the presence of 'test stores' in foreign markets to acquire knowledge and experience (Jonsson and Foss, 2011). Thereafter, following the Uppsala Model, the company expanded into other European countries.

b. Eclectic Paradigm

Multinational firms have also been regarded as corporations with valuable internalized activities able to gain firm-specific and country-specific advantages when going abroad. In this regard, the eclectic paradigm or also called the OLI framework was introduced by Dunning (1980) who proposes that ownership (O), location (L), and internalization (I) advantages are crucial for firms when deciding to go international. The OLI framework is the most prevalent and exhaustive approach explaining foreign direct investment (Parente et al., 2018).

When contrasting the internationalization of sharing economy firms with the theoretical internationalization models and theories, some relevant differences can be observed (Parente et al., 2018). In the sharing economy, for instance, the O advantages are related to the virtual platform value chain as

the members own the majority of the assets and thus, it reduces reallocation of production and local adaptation of their product/service (Parente et al., 2018). Thus, O advantages are based on the utilization of intangible assets which can more easily be redeployed abroad. It is therefore of paramount importance for sharing economy firms to strengthen their brand image so that they can exploit network effects with the final aim of boosting adoption by users and suppliers. Car sharing firms are part of the sharing economy, but these do not always adhere to the aforementioned characteristics. The business model of P2P car sharing companies enables an asset-light structure as stated. GreenMobility, however, owns the assets it provides which signifies that network effects are not as important as for a car sharing firm with a P2P model. A network effect arises when the value of a service or a product augments as more members use the platform (Evans, Hagiu and Schmalensee, 2008; Gawer and Cusamano, 2014). This is directly related to the concept of critical mass. The sharing economy companies are heavily dependent on the concept of critical mass. This is because of two reasons: social proof and range of choices (Botsman and Rogers, 2010). It lays its foundation on the fact that members of the sharing economy are considered both consumers and suppliers (Botsman and Rogers, 2010). The more people take part in sharing economy activities the wider the range of choices made available to the members of the sharing economy. Additionally, sharing economy firms are characterized by network externalities which affect the acquisition of new members. In short, the perceived benefit that comes from the utilization of a P2P platform becomes significantly higher when more people take part in that specific sharing activity (Dervojeda, 2013). Overall, according to Parente et al. (2018), O advantages of sharing economy firms are not hard to emulate and, hence, are not the only way these companies achieve competitive advantage.

In regard to L advantages, in a complex, volatile and dynamic global economy, the role played by both firm and location-specific informal and formal institutions is becoming increasingly important (Agarwal and Wu, 2015). For instance, for an internet-based firm, location advantage can derive from the presence of good internet infrastructure and solid intellectual property rights protection. Overall, both regulations and government policies constitute substantial incentives or disincentives for companies when entering into a particular country (Dunning, 1998). According to Coviello, Kano and Liesch (2017) the digital component of sharing economy firms influences their internationalization strategies in terms of speed, timing or location choice. Indeed, geographically dense locations turn out to be ideal for the establishment of sharing economy firms as they enable them to exploit network effects (Parente et al.,

2018). Sharing economy firms have been facing restrictions regarding market regulations and local infrastructure (Rauch and Schleicher, 2015). Nevertheless, sharing economy firms still managed to enter attractive markets where overall advantages related to L factors were low. Therefore, when going abroad, sharing economy firms are not driven by location-related endowments and as a consequence pursue a market-seeking approach instead of the traditional asset-seeking approach (Parente et al., 2018).

In the case of I advantages, it is not relevant for sharing economy firms to internalize foreign activities to minimize transaction costs since upstream and downstream users own the exchanged assets. As a result, sharing economy firms do not focus on the internalization of tangible assets across borders to generate value. This directly contrasts the dominant international business theories which consider internalization an essential factor to obtain competitive advantage (Kirca et al., 2011; Porter, 1990). Sharing economy firms' advantages are network and technology related. Therefore, sharing economy firms are not incentivized to vertically integrate operations because their core operations are related to the administration of the virtual platform, which in turns require the internalization of services and technologies possessed by supplementary asset providers (Parente et al., 2018). For instance, GreenMobility's partnership with a supplementary asset provider - such as Renault for the acquisition of city cars - reveals how important it is for sharing economy firms to partner with supplementary asset providers in order to maintain an asset-light structure. To sum up, taking into account the particular nature of sharing economy firms, the eclectic paradigm can be considered as a good starting point to understand the behaviour of sharing economy firms. Sharing economy firms have reduced internalization requirements by having ownership advantages based on intangible assets and little dependency on location advantages (Parente et al., 2018).

c. Additional Theories

Sharing economy firms do not have to move production abroad in order to source cheaper assets or cut costs, and they do not have to wait for the arrival of product standardization to expand into less developed countries, which is in contrast to what is proposed in the product life cycle model (Vernon, 2015). Hence, most of the reasons why firms expand internationally, such as the exploitative use of economies of scope and scale, lower costs and specific characteristics of the markets fail to explain the reason why sharing economy firms internationalize (Buckley and Casson, 1991; Porter, 1990).

Scholars also discuss the importance of liability of foreignness and liability of outsidership in choosing the correct entry modes. The liability of foreignness is directly related to the concept of psychic and cultural distance and takes place when a company has a lack of knowledge in regard to the institutional market - which refers to the laws, language and rules of a said market (Johanson and Vahlne, 2009). Thus, the liability of foreignness represents "*the costs of doing business abroad that result in a competitive disadvantage for a Multinational Enterprise subunit*" (Zaheer, 1995, p.342). On the other hand, the liability of outsidership refers to the difficulties and uncertainty that come with being an outsider in a specific network (Johanson and Vahlne, 2009). More pragmatically, it takes place when a company has a low understanding of the firms which it is cooperating and establishing relationships with. A lack of business market knowledge refers to the environment where the company operates. Eriksson, Johanson, Majkgård and Sharma (2015) found that liability of outsidership has a negative impact on the internationalization of firms. Specifically, lack of market knowledge provides unrealistic effects on the presumed cost of internationalization (Eriksson, 2015). Although it might be easier for sharing economy firms to move their operations in a foreign country, issues connected to the liability of outsidership and foreignness will still play a significant role (Brouthers, Geisser and Rothlauf, 2016; Calhoun, 2002). Indeed, a concrete example is the failed attempt by Uber at conquering the Chinese market. Sharing economy firms need to adapt not only their digital platform but also the relationship with crucial stakeholders in the new market. Unlike traditional companies that can decide to internalize activities (upstream and/or downstream) with the aim of reducing costs and boosting efficiency, sharing economy firms need thereby to work on other options such as partnering with complementary asset providers and well-established firms - an example is provided by Uber's partnerships with Pepsi, Hilton and Amex (Parente et al., 2018).

4.4 Need for Further Research

Having thoroughly analysed the incumbent literature on the sharing economy and car sharing in addition to the internationalization theories and models, it is concluded that this topic requires further research. This affirmation is supported by other scholars who claim that sharing economy firms are characterized by a singular business model which presents limitations for the current international business theories (Parente et al., 2018). The current internationalization theories are too static to accommodate the speed with which sharing economy firms carry out internationalization (Axinn and Matthyssens, 2002). Sharing economy firms are intrinsically dynamic in part due to their business model being heavily based on intangible assets. Furthermore, the essence of their business involves the fulfilment of a service in a timely fashion through digital platforms. These unique characteristics set these firms apart from their traditional counterparts which explains why further studies are needed to better understand the way these firms behave when choosing to go international (Belk, 2014a; Cusamano, 2014).

5. Market Environment Analysis

In determining how GreenMobility should internationalize, it is imperative to develop a profound understanding of the market conditions that affect the attractiveness of a city. It was chosen that this analysis should incorporate two cities in order to provide a basis of comparison. Thus, the research can establish how various factors impact the appeal of a city either positively or negatively. The cities of Malmö and Vienna were chosen to perform this market comparison.

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first one will tackle mobility in both Malmö and Vienna, discussing aspects such as public transportation accessibility, population density and more. The breadth of this section is rather large and will set the stage for the second part which will focus on the competitive environment, narrowing the scope. Thereby, all the car sharing platforms that are operating in both cities will be presented and discussed, giving an insight into the competitive market environment. In the final section, the elements from both aforementioned sections will be combined and compared extensively, further increasing the focus of the analysis. This will shed light on both the similarities and differences between Vienna and Malmö in terms of market environment and industry competition.

A number of factors have been considered in selecting the two cities of Malmö and Vienna specifically. The researchers choose to conduct a city level comparison rather than a district or regional level comparison for several reasons. The markets that offer the greatest potential for GreenMobility are, in general, highly urbanized environments and densely populated areas. These two factors are important in order to reach the highest potential of new customers. City analyses also allow for a detailed and rich analysis due to the accessibility of data published by the city governments. Furthermore, a city offers a smaller scope of analysis than an entire region which can entail that the results are more accurate and specific to a location rather than an amalgam of data for a larger area. This increases the ease with which the market environment analysis conducted for two cities can be applied to cities with similar characteristics. Hence, the generalizability of the findings can be increased.

It was concluded that the researchers should investigate two markets that offered clear potential for a car sharing operator. This could not be determined by the researchers due to insufficient knowledge regarding the industry and it was thus determined that the two cities in question should be ones that GreenMobility themselves would be interested in entering. Both cities have been targeted by the company and therefore provide the sufficient groundwork for car sharing. The two cities vary greatly in terms of population and size, hence offering the possibility of comparing two different urban landscapes. Furthermore, Malmö is located near the home city of GreenMobility while Vienna is at a much greater distance. On the surface, these cities present differences that may render interesting results for comparison.

5.1 Mobility in Malmö

Car ownership in Sweden is generally increasing. As of March 2020, almost every second Swede owned a private car signifying that there are almost five million cars in Sweden (Myhr and Melkersson, 2020; Statista, 2019b). Although the ownership rate of cars has increased in recent years, the average amount of kilometres driven per individual is decreasing (Kågeson, 2014). The rate of car ownership in Swedish households is particularly resilient to change. According to Pydokke and Creutzer (2014), a Swedish household that owns a car has a 91 percent chance of keeping ownership of the car. Overall, although Sweden has turned into a post-industrial society, car manufacturing still represents a large part of the economy of the country. Hence, trends and regulations that may affect the rate of car ownership are met with strong resistance from both automakers and unions alike as it puts their business in jeopardy (Noll, 2017).

Having established the general attitude towards car ownership in Sweden, the research will now focus on the Swedish city of Malmö in terms of mobility. Malmö is a city in the south western part of the country and is the third largest city in Sweden with a population of 344,166 (Malmö Stad, 2020a). Today, Malmö is in an economic hub named the Öresund region. It is located in a strategic location; a quick drive over the Öresund bridge and one is in Copenhagen. Furthermore, it represents the first access point to Sweden from Europe. In combination with a local government that promotes social activities, Malmö

has become a hotbed for entrepreneurial and social projects (Reimer, McCormick, Nilsson and Arsenault, 2012).

Malmö is at the forefront of developing and improving mobility within the city. Malmö has been involved and has helped in the creation of the so-called bike house. This residential plan includes providing bike-only parking instead of vehicle parking. Another project the city government has been involved with is the EC2B. The project aims to reduce the dependency of residents on private vehicles and, as a result, reduces the need for parking spaces by linking a number of mobility providers such as Sunfleet - a car sharing firm - and Skånetrafiken - the regional public transport company - with Malmö city (Lund, 2016). These types of projects considerably increase the chance of expanding a car sharing service in the city (Plepys, Heiskanen and Mont, 2015).

As a step in the fight against climate change, Sweden is setting the goal to become entirely fossil fuel free by 2045. Interestingly, the city of Malmö represents a real showcase project since it aims to be supplied solely with renewable energy by 2030 (Field, 2020). This goal is having strong impacts on numerous sectors and will influence the mobility sector to a great extent in the future. The mobility sector will have to provide solutions in order to sustain a future based solely on green solutions. An illustration of the efforts made to shape the mobility sector of tomorrow, electric vehicles are gaining in importance and momentum both in the private and public sectors. For instance, Volvo has received an order for 60 fully electric busses from the Scandinavian transit operator Nobina with the aim of hitting the road next year (Field, 2020).

In addition to efforts made in motorized transport, Malmö has witnessed the establishment of a biking subculture. This may have been inspired by its close neighbour and economic partner Copenhagen as it is famous for its bike friendliness. Similarly, Malmö is constantly trying to improve and expand the bike path network. Focus is set on improving the conditions for both cyclists and also motorists in the city. The main cause of traffic in Malmö's streets stems from residents from other municipalities commuting to and through Malmö for work purposes (Malmö Stad, 2020b).

The public transport network in Malmö is managed by Skånetrafiken and is characterized by an efficient network coverage. It consists of 13 bus lines which cover most of the city and 6 train stations which connect the city of Malmö with many nearby cities such as Copenhagen, Lund, Ystad and Gothenburg (Skånetrafiken, 2020). However, no metro is available in the city (Skånetrafiken, 2020).

The local government allocates resources to the urban planning of the city to alleviate congestion in the city. Here, studies have been conducted to identify the travelling habits of both residents within the city but also people who commute to work in the city. As of the end of 2019, there were 120,967 private vehicles registered in the city of Malmö (Statistics of Sweden, 2020). In other terms, the number of private cars per 1000 inhabitants was 351 at the end of 2019. If one looks at the country in general, the car ownership rate is much higher at 498 cars per 1000 inhabitants (Myhr and Melkersson, 2020). Commuters represent one of the biggest challenges for Malmö in regard to infrastructure stress and congestion. The statistics show that 38,000 people travel to go to work in Malmö on a daily basis from other cities, whilst 18,000 Malmö residents travel to work in other municipalities outside of Malmö (Malmö Stad, 2020b). The city has already implemented several strategies aimed at reducing the number of commuters who utilize private vehicles to commute to Malmö. The city government is tackling the issue by focusing on different areas. For instance, the city is working on improving the viability of the main throughways as well as expanding the reach of public transport by placing strategic mobility nodes. The biking infrastructure entering and leaving the city is also being improved and, finally, the city government is promoting car sharing among the residents who need to move around the city. This represents a big opportunity for car sharing companies. With the previous strategies – and probably many others in the future – the city of Malmö is trying to reduce the percentage of commuters from 62 percent to 50 percent by 2030 (Malmö Stad, 2016).

5.2 Mobility in Vienna

Austria is located in the middle of vital trade and traffic routes along the Danube and across the Alps. As of the end of 2018, approximately 4.98 million cars were registered in Austria (Statistics Austria, 2020). Taking into account that the Austrian population is around 8.859 million people, the car ownership in Austria is slightly higher than in Sweden as slightly more than every second Austrian owns a car. The amount of passenger cars has drastically increased over the last 60 years, rising from almost half a million to nearly five million between 1961 and 2018 (Statistics Austria, 2020). However, although this data has been on the rise, it has started to decrease in the last two years which may be as a result of the various plans implemented across the country by the government to preserve and protect the environment by reducing the usage of private vehicles.

Vienna is the largest city in Austria and with 1.9 million inhabitants, it is also the largest in terms of population. It is the economic centre of Austria and is located in the Northeast of the country. Vienna differs from other European cities because of its outstanding performance in several areas: infrastructure services, public transportation and a large amount of urban green spaces. As a direct consequence, the city ranked first in 2011 in the first international smart city index (Wien Gv, 2014). The city of Vienna – in its own Smart City Wien framework strategy – defines itself as "*a city that assigns priority to, and interlinks, the issues of energy, mobility, buildings and infrastructure*" (Wien Gv, 2014, p. 30) and is based on three components: productive usage of new technologies, preservation of resources and high quality of life.

In regard to the mobility sector, the city of Vienna is trying to achieve three goals: maintaining the high share of public transportation usage, strengthening the CO2-free transports (walking and cycling), and gradually decreasing the motorized individual traffic down to 20% by 2025, to 15% by 2030, and ultimately reaching less than 15% by 2050 (Knoflacher, Freya and Letha, 2018).

The public transportation network in Vienna is highly efficient and is characterized by a large network coverage. Indeed, it consists of 29 tramway lines covering around 220 kilometres, 5 underground lines covering more than 80 kilometres and 127 bus lines covering 850 kilometres (Wien Gv, 2020). Impressive is that 97.3% of the Viennese population lives within 500 meters of a suburban/underground train station or within 300 meters of other means of transportation (MA, 2018).

Likewise, the bike path network has been enlarged extensively in the past few years and is now composed of a network with over 1350 kilometres of bike paths (Knoflacher et al., 2018). The amount of available parking spots for bicycles has also been increased. However, the status of cycling infrastructure is still heterogeneous (Knoflacher et al., 2018). Specifically, more than a quarter of the infrastructure is characterized by traffic-calmed areas while over a fifth are cycling routes (Knoflacher et al., 2018). Finally, dedicated cycle paths only account for 10% of the current infrastructure (Knoflacher et al., 2018).

Analysing the data in further detail, the transportation sector that has witnessed the highest growth in the last decades is public transportation. In fact, the share of people using public transport grew by 10 percentage points reaching 39% from 1993 to 2016 (Wien Gv, 2018). Likewise, the number of individuals with a public transportation subscription card increased by 111% from 303,000 to 640,000 individuals between 2011 and 2015 (Wien Gv, 2015). In 2005, only roughly 18.6% of the Viennese population had an annual subscription to the public transportation service, by 2014 the number of annual subscriptions had doubled and reached 36.2%. Experts explain this significant increase in subscriptions as the result of the reduction – by the Green Party in 2012 – of the annual public transport ticket price to 365 euro, which symbolically represents 1 euro per day (Knoflacher et al., 2018).

Vienna has also set its aim on the availability of parking in the city. The parking-management has reduced the number of parking spots available for private car owners in the inner city. This is due to the ever-growing importance of ‘green modes’ of transportation for the city of Vienna. Experts deem that this shift towards ‘green’ is due to a change in personal values and it can also be observed in Central and Northern European cities (Knoflacher et al., 2018). The majority of districts in Vienna only allow people to park for a restricted period of time (Wien Gv, 2020). However, residents can apply for a permanent

parking permit called ‘Parkpickerl’ which allows them to permanently park their vehicles in the close vicinity of their houses (Wien Gv, 2020).

Overall, the push and pull measures adopted in Vienna have positively impacted the mobility in the city and especially the environment. To summarize, from 1993 to 2016 cycling more than doubled, public transportation use rose by 10 percentage points, walking habits have remained the same but have been and continue to be on a very elevated level, and the number of private motorized vehicles has gone from 40% to 27% (Wien Gv, 2016). Furthermore, statistics display that the number of private cars per 1000 inhabitants was 371 in Vienna in 2017 (Knoflacher et al., 2018) while the average in the country in the same year was 555 (Statista, 2019c).

In addition to the push measures, the city of Vienna strongly promotes the adoption of new motor technologies such as electric cars, and car sharing systems. In fact, the e-mobility strategy is focusing both on promoting the electrification of cars and on the growth of the charging station infrastructure network in semi- public spaces such as gas stations and parking garages (Wien Gv, 2016). However, since electric vehicles require the same amount of space as traditional cars for parking, the city has not planned to give electric cars exemptions from parking conditions as was the case in Oslo until the beginning of this year, for instance (Garza, 2020). Today, Vienna’s car sharing services count more than 200.000 registered users, the majority of those are using operators with the free-floating model with a total of 1200 car sharing vehicles circulating the streets of Vienna (Wien Gv, 2016). However, Vienna’s city provides well-located parking spaces for station-based car sharing, with the intention of using this constraint as an advantage by increasing the number of electric cars in the fleet (Wien Gv 2016).

A bigger number of car sharing firms operate on Vienna’s streets compared to in the city of Malmö. However, despite the population of Vienna being much larger, its population density is very close to that of Malmö. Hence, population density does not seem to be the explanation for why Vienna has many more car sharing firms on its streets. Malmö’s population density is 4,049 people for km^2 whilst the number in Vienna is slightly higher at 4,326 people living per km^2 (Malmö Stad, 2020a; Wien Gv, 2020). Therefore, the factor that could better explain this difference in competition between the two cities turns

out to be the different size in terms of population. This is due to the fact that the city of Vienna provides a bigger catchment area favouring the establishment of more car sharing operators.

5.3 Car Sharing in Malmö

a. An Overview

To better understand the car sharing phenomenon in Malmö, it is necessary to consider the situation on a country-level. It is part of the Swedish culture to work in groups, support local initiatives, and proactively try new things. These values can be seen in the development of car sharing systems in the country (Strid, 1999). Surprisingly, the first case of car sharing in Sweden dates back to the mid 1970's where several neighbourhoods jointly purchased cars for the purposes of sharing them amongst the community. Over the years, many car sharing companies came to life such as for example Bilpoolen - first company offering P2P - and Vivallabil - first one offering B2C. However, almost all of them have ceased to exist.

The turn of the century was a crucial point for car sharing in Sweden as Sunfleet established itself in Gothenburg and City Car Club expanded to Sweden from Finland (Bocken, Jonca, Södergren and Palm, 2020). However, City Car Club eventually returned to operate solely in Finland indicating that either the Swedish market for car sharing is difficult or that the car sharing market itself was not yet developed enough to attract the necessary number of users.

Overall, the car sharing system in Sweden is deemed to be an underused asset which is distinguished by a substantial gap between the potential of the market and the understanding/usage of car sharing by the public (Schillander, 2010). Car sharing businesses operating in Sweden have always asserted that the industry does not require financial support to be profitable, however, car sharing firms face an unfair disadvantage (Bocken et al., 2020). This is because when taking taxis and or leasing cars, individuals can deduct the entire sum of Value Added Taxes (VAT). However, when it comes to shared cars, individuals are only able to deduct half the VAT (Schillander, 2010). In addition, the tax levied on car sharing is higher than the one on taxis, 25% and 6% respectively. An additional hurdle that car sharing operators face comes from the lack of any legal definition of the car sharing phenomenon. Hence, neither municipal

nor national governments can grant exemptions to car sharing vehicles for parking fees. Neither can they allow prioritized parking which is the case in the majority of other cities where car sharing systems are fully implemented. This is a major drawback of operating in Sweden as parking allowances in the car sharing world are deemed to be instrumental in the success of operations in a given city (Plepys et al., 2015).

b. Sunfleet

By exploiting the EU initiatives supporting sustainable mobility, Sunfleet expanded its operation in many Swedish cities after its original debut in Gothenburg. To date, Sunfleet enjoys a dominant position in the Swedish car sharing market overall. The company was founded as a collaboration between Hertz and Volvo but is now fully owned by the Volvo Group. Sunfleet has adopted a business model with station-based roundtrip car sharing - like ZipCar - rather than the most widespread free-floating type which is adopted by companies such as ShareNow and GreenMobility (Hall-Geisler, 2017).

Although the car sharing business in Sweden seems to be fraught with obstacles and complexities, there are several companies operating in the country, especially in the two largest cities by population: Stockholm and Gothenburg. In contrast, Sunfleet - unlike the other commercial car sharing companies – moved to slightly less dense cities such as Hägersten, Vellinge, Visby etc. The reason why Sunfleet is able to profitably operate in such locations is due to its agreement with Arbetsförmedlingen - the Swedish public employment service. Indeed, Arbetsförmedlingen is using Sunfleet's vehicles in lieu of owning its own fleet of private vehicles. Roughly 100 Sunfleet vehicles are used in 28 locations in Sweden during traditional working hours by Arbetsförmedlingen. This also positively impacts Sunfleet members as they can benefit from an increased number of vehicles available during the other hours of the day. This is why Sunfleet has been able to operate successfully in smaller cities where the market potential for their service would normally not have allowed them to survive.

Sunfleet is the largest car sharing firm operating in Malmö today. The company operates in 50 Swedish cities and it has a user base of 50,000 who use a fleet of about 1,200 Volvo cars. Due to the small population size of Malmö, Sunfleet has witnessed little to no competition over the years. Furthermore,

the limited number of potential customers has made it difficult for other B2B car sharing firms to enter the city, allowing Sunfleet to preserve its privileged status (Bocken et al., 2020).
The pricing model used by Sunfleet is the same across the entire country and members can choose among different options. Indeed, cars can be rented on an hourly, daily, weekend or week basis (Sunfleet, 2020). These options make the service only suitable for people who need to use a car for a longer period of time as it is not possible to rent it for less than one hour.

Volvo will change the current service offered in the cities of Malmö and Gothenburg. As a consequence, Sunfleet will be renamed to M. M will be launched on the 16th of March in Gothenburg and on the 23rd of March in Malmö respectively (Sunfleet, 2020). The ambition of Volvo is to create a new global leader in the market of car sharing solutions. M will provide a wide array of cars, indeed members can choose among five different types of premium Volvo cars though no small cars are offered (M, 2020).. Prices vary in regard to the renting option (hourly, daily, weekend, weekly) and the type of car that is selected. The hourly fee is the only one that will be analysed as it is the closest to the traditional minute-fee proposed by the majority of car sharing companies. Cars need to be returned in the same place where members have picked them up (M, 2020). M has established more than 100 private and public parking spaces throughout Malmö, where users can pick up the shared cars (M, 2020). As with other car sharing operators, fuel tolls and insurance are included in every trip. A car rented through the M app costs 10 Euros per hour plus 0,18 cents per kilometre (M, 2020).

c. GoMore and Snappcar

Despite the difficulties presented by the rather small size of the market in Malmö and the well-established presence of Sunfleet in the city, GoMore and Snappcar have successfully entered the market. These two firms' business models differentiate from Sunfleet's as they offer P2P car sharing service. Specifically, the two firms do not themselves provide vehicles to the community - as is the case for B2C car sharing - but rather provide the platform where the users can exchange their own private cars (Bocken et al., 2020). In short, GoMore and Snappcar have a significant advantage in comparison to B2C car sharing platforms as they do not own any of the assets. These merely serve as platforms for private individuals to share their own assets. Consequently, they are able to enter and operate in any type of city with much greater ease.

GoMore is a Danish company which provides three different services: car sharing, ridesharing and leasing. Through their app users can share unused seats when driving (ridesharing), and when they do not need to use their car, they can rent it out to other GoMore members (P2P car sharing) (GoMore, 2020). Car sharing prices vary according to the car that it is selected. Likewise, the minimum/maximum amount of time the car can be rented also depends from car to car. Finally, GoMore broadens its ecosystem by giving users that are leasing a car the chance to rent it out to other GoMore members in order to considerably reduce the leasing cost.

Snappcar is a Dutch company offering an identical type of car sharing service as GoMore. However, Snappcar is the largest European company in the car sharing market and has expanded to many more countries than GoMore.

d. GreenMobility's Position

Although GreenMobility has not entered Malmö yet, it can already be said that the pricing model used by M - for being a station-based solution - is fairly high. Moreover, the two companies differentiate in many other ways. The main distinctive factor is the offering: GreenMobility will be able to serve a different target group, those people who need more flexibility in terms of rental time and parking ease. Another distinctive feature is in the size of the car GreenMobility offers which is a Renault Zoe, a small and city friendly vehicle while M offers only Volvo cars which are larger. GreenMobility plans to enter Malmö with 100 vehicles and will thus be able to compete fiercely with Sunfleet in terms of network coverage (Andersen, 2020).

GoMore and Snappcar are positioned differently from GreenMobility due to their business models. Indeed, the two P2P car sharing firms enable members to choose among a wider array of cars - which can be of any type. Furthermore, to rent a car, a renter needs to satisfy several requirements such as: booking time (that is usually minimum 1 hour or 1 day), age limit (at least 21 years old) and one year of driving history. GreenMobility demands far fewer strict requirements and can thereby attract a different market segment.

5.4 Car Sharing in Vienna

a. History of Car Sharing

Car sharing in Austria was first introduced by Denzeldrive in 1997. As is often the case over the course of a few years, the service has been circumscribed to the largest Austrian cities. Interestingly, the first car sharing companies that entered Vienna were all offering a station-based car sharing service and are no longer operating in the city today (Schuster, Steinacher and Tomschy, 2015). As a matter of fact, Denzeldrive was acquired by Zipcar which was also offering station-based car sharing. In addition to these traditional car sharing systems with fixed stations, the first free-floating car sharing service to be offered in Vienna was by Daimler, namely Car2Go in 2011. Successively, Flinkster (station-based) and DriveNow (free-floating) entered Vienna in 2013 and 2014, respectively. The latest report published on the official website of the city of Vienna provided an overview of the car sharing situation in the capital city. The overview clearly demonstrates a new trend characterized by the ever-increasing importance of free-floating systems over the conventional station-based ones (Schuster et al., 2015). Indeed, Zipcar and Flinkster had just 116 and 53 vehicles each and they both shut down their businesses. On the other hand, free-floating car sharing gained momentum as DriveNow and Car2Go were offering 430 and 700 vehicles respectively (Schuster et al., 2015). Although the report was released in mid-2015, it has still positively contributed with providing a broad overview of the car sharing operators in the Viennese market.

b. Car Sharing as a Green Solution

The number of kilometres driven by car on an annual basis has significantly decreased over the last few decades as shown by statistics (Schuster et al., 2015). As a direct implication, the likelihood of buying a new car has also decreased (Schuster et al., 2015). In Vienna, one shared-vehicle is estimated to be able to replace five private cars and as a consequence increases the amount of free-parking spaces (Schuster et al., 2015). In addition, car sharing saves 44 million kilometres every year in Vienna, which corresponds to saving a total of 7,000 tons of CO2 emissions every year (Schuster et al., 2015). This is possibly due to the fact that people who access cars through car sharing services have to pay on a minute basis and this factor may encourage them only to drive when it is truly necessary. Hence, for governments fighting

climate change, car sharing operators offer a great solution in the context of making mobility more sustainable.

Depending on the operator, a car sharing service is utilized on average between 3 and 23 times per year (Schuster et al., 2015). With 2,5 million public transport journeys per day in Vienna, the 7,000 daily journeys made through car sharing platforms do not represent a competition for public transport (Schuster et al., 2015). Indeed, car sharing users cover the bulk of their journeys by foot, by public transport or by bicycle. Besides, many car sharing users also have an annual public transportation card (Schuster et al., 2015). Car sharing is seen as a 'mobility insurance' for trips that cannot be carried out without a car, and it also makes it easier to forego owning a vehicle in the city (Schuster et al., 2015). The city of Vienna and Wiener Linien - the company running the majority of public transports in Vienna - will continue to work with the car sharing operators to optimize the offer in Vienna.

c. P2P Car Sharing Operators

Getaround is an American P2P car sharing company that has made some important moves to become a global car service rental. The American firm has entered Europe by acquiring Drivy, the market leader in Europe, for 300 million Euros (Dickey, 2019). With the addition of Drivy, the company now counts more than 5 million users around the world. Getaround operates in Vienna and it is the only company providing a P2P car sharing service in the capital city.

d. Station-Based Car Sharing Operators

i. Stadtauto

Stadtauto is the largest station-based car sharing firm operating in Vienna. The company is partnered with the Korean automaker Hyundai. People who already have a subscription with Wiener Linien (public transport ticket) can get free access to the app, otherwise the one-time registration cost is 9,90 Euros (Stadtauto, 2020). The company provides different types of pricing packages, the traditional one is 23 cents per minute with a maximum of 50 kilometres allowed while each additional kilometre costs an additional 10 cents (Stadtauto, 2020). Finally, the city cars used by the car sharing firm is a Hyundai Ioniq which can be hybrid, hybrid plug-in or fully electric (Stadtauto, 2020).

ii. MO Point

MO Point also offers station-based car sharing in the city of Vienna. The vehicles can be rented and returned in certain locations called 'Mobility Points' (MO Point, 2020). The vehicles can be picked up in six different locations throughout the city and naturally returned there as well (MO Point, 2020). MO Point is the most singular car sharing company operating in Vienna as it offers several eco-friendly types of vehicles, such as electric cars, electric bikes, electric-cargo bikes and electric scooters. There are different types of subscriptions and tariffs but the following one is the most similar to the traditional tariffs from other operators. By paying 19 Euros per month the members can have access to electric cars with 4 hours free per month included while each additional hour costs 8 Euros, electric scooters are 4 Euros per hour and electric bikes are 2 Euros per hour (MO Point, 2020).

iii. GreenMobility's Position

When it comes to station-based firms in Vienna, several observations can be made with the current situation in the free-floating field. For instance, Stadtauto partners with an OEM while MO Point is not linked to any big automaker or multinational company. Although MO Point and Stadtauto are located in the same segment group (station-based), their business models differ in many ways. Between the two, Stadtauto is the closest operator to GreenMobility in terms of car types and pricing model. By offering different types of electric vehicles (cars, bikes, scooters), MO Point plays a unique role in the Viennese market.

The two companies offer different pricing schemes, MO Point's is based on a monthly subscription while Stadtauto's is similar to the one proposed by the free-floating companies such as GreenMobility. Nevertheless, it differentiates from free-floating because the users can only drive a fixed set of kilometres for free after which the user pays extra for each additional kilometre travelled, which is not the case for GreenMobility's service.

e. Free-Floating Car Sharing Operators

i. ShareNow

ShareNow is the biggest company operating in the capital city. Car2go and DriveNow merged to form ShareNow which is the result of the joint venture between the two OEMs Daimler and BMW Group (ShareNow, 2020). This has made ShareNow the global leader amongst all the free-floating car sharing companies, as it operates in 10 different European countries and is available in 18 cities. Today, more than 700 vehicles, both fossil-fuel and electric, are accessible through ShareNow on the Viennese streets (ShareNow, 2020). Individuals wishing to use ShareNow need to first pay a registration fee of 9 Euros which is then converted to a 15 Euro credit on the created account (ShareNow, 2020). Thereafter, the price varies in relation to the type of car chosen. A small car such as a Smart costs 26 cents per minute whilst a bigger and higher standard car such as a BMW 1 series costs 36 cents per minute in Vienna.

ii. ELOOP

ELOOP is a free-floating electric car sharing start-up founded in August 2017 by four Viennese residents. The company differentiates itself from other car sharing providers because it is not an OEM. Furthermore, ELOOP only offers electric cars which range from small sized cars for 2 people to medium sized cars with 4 to 5 seats at various prices. No registration fee is required to access the service, though for each time a user wants to rent a car a one-euro access fee is charged for renting said vehicle (ELOOP, 2020). Prices range from a minimum of 26 cents to a maximum of 33 cents per minute depending on the car rented (ELOOP, 2020). The company is still in the process of expansion as the current fleet counts a total of 20 vehicles. As a matter of fact, ELOOP's plan is to introduce more e-cars as well as vans in the months to come.

iii. GreenMobility's Position

The business model implemented by ELOOP is almost identical to the one GreenMobility currently operates with. Indeed, both companies are characterized by only offering electric cars and not being the creation of large OEMs. Both ELOOP and ShareNow offer several types of cars while GreenMobility only provides one model. In Vienna, GreenMobility is going to launch only one car model, which is the traditional Renault Zoe. In total, the Danish company will enter the market with a fleet of 400 vehicles (Andersen, 2020).

Finally, the pricing model currently used by the two free-floating operators in Vienna is quite similar with regard to the minute-fee. Yet, it differs when analysing the fixed costs. Users are required to pay 1 Euro to unlock the vehicles with ELOOP. This cost is not applied by ShareNow, which instead requires a one-time registration fee of 9 Euros. This registration-fee is not a real cost for the end-user customer as it is going to be converted into a 15 Euro credit on the account. ShareNow adopts this strategy to bond users to their services. In comparison, GreenMobility does not charge a registration fee.

5.5 A Comparison

Having carried out an extensive analysis of the market conditions in both countries, with a particular focus on the cities of Malmö and Vienna, the following section will help to outline both the touchpoints and discrepancies which characterize the two cities. The comparison will be twofold with one focusing on the city-level and the other on the competition-level.

a. City-Level Comparison

As highlighted previously, the two cities were chosen because at least on paper their characteristics differed greatly. However, there are many other factors that characterize these cities. Both cities have developed and launched long-term plans to improve mobility. This also involves reducing congestion which benefits residents both in terms of travel efficiency but also cleaner air. To date, these plans have performed well, and the results achieved have been outstanding in many cases. For instance, the Urban Mobility Plan in Malmö has contributed positively in decreasing the number of private cars on the streets by favouring, instead, the usage of public transport (Knoflacher et al., 2018). The number of individuals using private vehicles is decreasing whilst the usage of both public transport and CO2- free transportation options, such as electric vehicles, bikes and walking, are on the rise (Wien Gv, 2016; Malmö Stad, 2016). Furthermore, both cities are symbolized by their particular focus on new innovations and technologies with the ultimate aim of improving the quality of life of its citizens. As a consequence, with a focus on the mobility-field, electromobility is gaining momentum in both cities as it is considered to provide several concrete advantages to the community (Field, 2020; Knoflacher et al., 2018).

A crucial factor for car sharing services in any city is the attitude of the local government towards this service. Indeed, GreenMobility states that car sharing can sometimes be seen as a competitor to public transportation and is thereby not encouraged by local government. However, in the cases of Malmö and Vienna, both cities see car sharing as a means to achieve the sustainable mobility that is desired. Hereby, car sharing is considered as a tool with which superior mobility goals can be achieved (Schuster et al., 2015). As underscored before, the support of the local government is of pivotal importance and hence a necessary precondition when a car sharing company chooses to enter a new market or not.

It is essential for a car sharing company that utilizes the free-floating model to have access to parking as the system relies to a large extent on the ability of customers to park anywhere within the city limits. To obtain these flexible parking policies, car sharing companies must collaborate with local authorities to avoid parking limitations (Monitor Deloitte, 2017). This is a fundamental aspect a city must be able to propose in order to represent a profitable and viable opportunity for free-floating car sharing firms (Rivasplata, Guo, Lee and Keyon, 2013). An illustration of the importance of parking allowances for car sharing is the case of Car2go in London. The German car sharing company was not able to obtain the necessary parking permits for all of the capital's individual boroughs and had to discontinue operations as a consequence (Monitor Deloitte, 2017).

To conclude, several factors need to be met in order to render a city attractive for car sharing operators. Most importantly, the local government plays a vital role in promoting car sharing. Both Malmö and Vienna are keen to see car sharing use increase as it is believed to contribute to lower congestion in the cities overall. Local governments can support car sharing companies by offering beneficial parking allowances to its users within the given operational area. Vienna is a step ahead of Malmö in that it proposes users of car sharing services the opportunity to park freely where there are short-term parking zones with no additional costs within the city limits (ShareNow, 2020).

b. Competition-Level Comparison

The comparison of the competitive environments of Malmö and Vienna present both similarities and disparities. Both cities have a rather long history with car sharing as the first car sharing firms were established just before the turn of the century. This indicates that car sharing firms have always found a breeding ground for starting business operations in Malmö and Vienna. However, the car sharing journey taken in both cities has varied and the degree of competition today is higher in Vienna than in Malmö.

In Malmö, the first operator of car sharing was Sunfleet and still operates there to this day. Additionally, it enjoys a market-leader position, not only in the city of Malmö but across the entire country of Sweden. In contrast, car sharing firms did not have the same growth pattern in Vienna. Here, the first companies that entered the Viennese market to offer car sharing, did not survive and are no longer operating in the city. Sunfleet may have had an advantage in entering a relatively small city like Malmö as once it had established itself as a dominant player in the market, it would make entry for new competitors much more difficult. Comparatively, Vienna is almost six times bigger in terms of population. While this offers the possibility to catch a much larger potential customer base, it requires vast resources to obtain a market-leader position such as Sunfleet has achieved in Malmö.

Currently, there are five car sharing companies established on the Viennese market, all with various business models. There are in total four B2C car sharing companies, divided into two free-floating - ShareNow and ELOOP - and two station-based - Stadtauto and MO Point. Only one P2P car sharing firm is operating in Vienna, namely Getaround. As a consequence, the market for car sharing in Vienna is quite competitive and GreenMobility will have to face two direct competitors. On the other hand, Malmö has only three car sharing firms operating in its streets. Though, no free-floating services are provided in the city. As a matter of fact, there is only one B2C car sharing firm, Sunfleet, and it is offering solely the station-based solution. Although Sunfleet enjoys a leading position in Malmö, the lack of free-floating services in the city might present an opportunity for a firm such as GreenMobility. However, new companies planning to enter Malmö should take into consideration the extended presence of Sunfleet in the Swedish market as well as the experience and knowledge it has gained over the years as well as the partnerships it has established with local authorities. For Malmö, Sunfleet represents the largest car sharing operator in terms of market share, though GoMore and Snappcar still threaten Sunfleet. Though

they offer a P2P service, the demand that is fulfilled by its service is similar to the one that Sunfleet proposes. The conclusion that can be made of the market in Malmö is that there is a lack of any free-floating car sharing operator. Hence, there is an opportunity for a new entry or for the current actors to offer such a service. This is due to the fact that free-floating car sharing embraces people that have different needs - for instance, more flexibility when moving around the city in terms of parking spaces (Friedel, 2020). Hence, such a service may meet a demand that is not yet being satisfied in the market.

Unlike in Malmö, free-floating services are offered on the Viennese market. This is the main separating factor that stands out in the analysis of the two cities. ShareNow is the largest car sharing operator in the capital city and it counts a large fleet of vehicles. On the other hand, ELOOP - despite its innovative business model that consists in offering only electric cars - only represents a moderate competitor because its current fleet is around 20 times smaller than ShareNow's one. Although free-floating car sharing firms hold a large market share, station-based operators also represent tough competitors in Vienna. Specifically, Stadtauto represents a strong competitor due to its size and as it is the largest station-based operator in the city (Stadtauto, 2020). Meanwhile, the innovativeness of MO Point along with its business model (offering only electric vehicles) as well as its unique portfolio (offering not only cars but also bikes and scooters) makes this company an important player in the Viennese market. Finally, the competitive environment in Vienna is completed by Getaround, a P2P car sharing firm, which counts a large user base but competes on a less direct level with the rest of car sharing companies.

Vienna represents a tougher market in terms of competition as there are currently more potential as well as direct competitors to GreenMobility. However, despite having similar population densities, Vienna offers a much larger number of potential customers and can therefore also accommodate more car sharing companies. ShareNow has a well-established position in Vienna while ELOOP offers a nearly identical service to GreenMobility. Therefore, the competition GreenMobility will face in Vienna will be tough but the market potential is large which may be enough to offset the added competition. On the other hand, Malmö does not currently host any car sharing company with a free-floating model which could offer GreenMobility an edge over the current operators in the city. While the market as a whole remains small, GreenMobility may use Malmö to test the demand for a free-floating car sharing model in Sweden. Thus, using Malmö as a steppingstone to enter further Swedish cities at a later stage.

6. Data Analysis

The following section presents the data collected from the survey. The results such as statistics, percentages and distribution are taken directly from the Qualtrics platform and have not been modified in any way shape or form. Furthermore, the graphs and diagrams illustrated below have been generated using Qualtrics. Thereby, the researchers are able to distance themselves from the statistical analysis of the data and avoid any misinterpretation or mistakes rendering a high quality and accuracy in the presented data. The first sub section commences by displaying the broad findings in terms of demographics such as gender, age etc. Once these aspects have been presented, in-depth data referring to the behaviour, preferences and characteristics of consumers are presented.

6.1 Demographics

The survey has been completed by 236 individuals. Naturally, as is the case in many questionnaires, some individuals did not complete the entire survey. Such was also the case for the conducted survey as 22 participants did not complete the survey entirely. These responses counted into the final statistics recorded which would inherently cause the statistics to be skewed. For instance, a respondent that only answered half the questions would be accounted for in the statistics of the first half of the questions but no longer be present in the second part. As a consequence, the researchers chose to disregard these responses as on the one hand, these risked to misrepresent the results and on the other hand, did not provide complete answers which in turn does not allow for the complete analysis to be fulfilled.

Section 1: Gender and Age

The gender distribution is relatively even as just above 45% of participants are male while just under 55% are female. For the age distribution, the spread is not nearly as even as in the case for gender, see figure D below. In fact, almost 87% of respondents are between the ages of 18 and 35. However, individuals under 40 are also much more likely to use car sharing services (Kang, Hwang, and Park, 2016). This statement is confirmed by the data collected in the survey as no individual above 45 answered that they car share, though the sample for that specific group is rather small at 16 participants. Despite this, it is still believed that the age groups below 45 years old are overrepresented in this survey which must be considered for the subsequent discussion section.

What is your age?

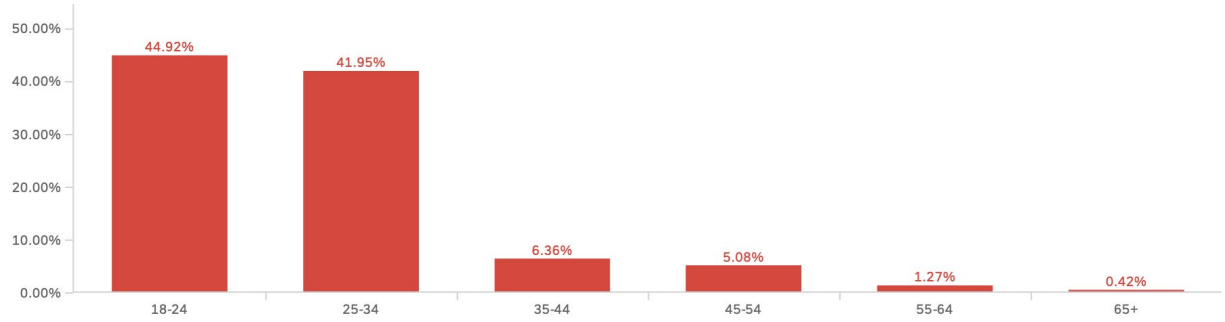

Figure D - Y: Percentage of respondents, X: Age group

Section 2: Occupation

The majority, 62%, of respondents in the survey chose *'Student'* as their primary occupation. Roughly 30% of respondents are full-time employees and the leftover 8% are split across the remaining categories with *'Unemployed'* being slightly above the rest at 3.4%.

What is your main occupation?

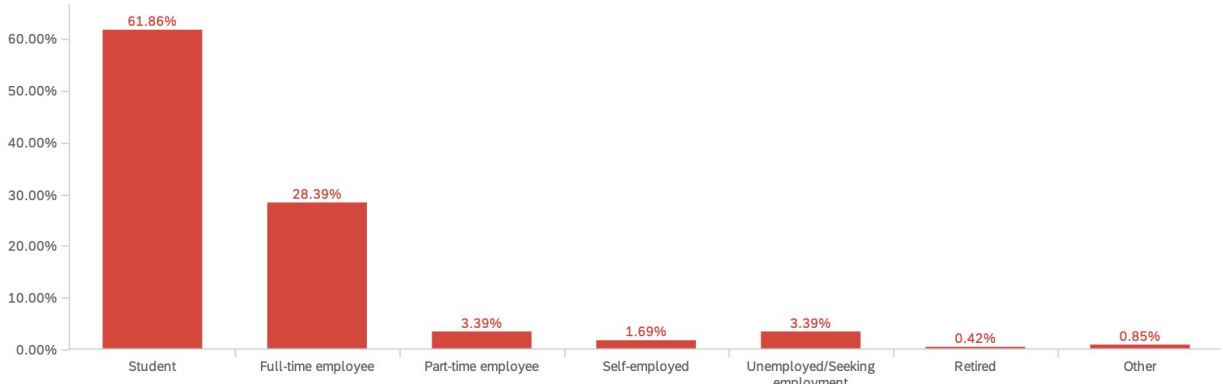

Figure E - Y: Percentage of respondents, X: Type of occupation

Section 3: In which city do you live?

A major concern in conducting a survey without a sample is the issue of generalizability of the results. In this case, 107 participants wrote that they lived in Copenhagen which represents roughly 45% of all answers. The large majority of the remaining 55% of the participants live in cities across Europe with some exceptions living in Asia or Australia, for instance. Interestingly, however, the results from the survey demonstrate that little difference is noticeable in the answers that respondents have given in regard to preferences. If one takes an example, for the matrix question concerning customer preferences, which is one of the essential questions posed in this survey, the answers are almost identical. Indeed, while the mean values vary slightly, the ranking that ensues is identical. This fact is acknowledged and taken into account in the subsequent presentation of the behaviour and preference sections.

6.2 Behaviour

The survey incorporates several questions to determine the behaviour of individuals in regard to mobility and car sharing. The first question concerned with behaviour is car access rate. Almost 70% of all respondents answered *'Yes'* to owning or having free access to a car. If one looks at respondents from Copenhagen, little over 53% answered *'Yes'* in comparison to almost 80% for non-Copenhagen residents. From this information, it can be concluded that individuals living in Copenhagen are less likely to have free access to a car.

Section 1: What do you primarily use your car for?

The use of said vehicles can be seen in figure F and the sole differentiating factor between Copenhagen and non-Copenhagen residents is that the former use their cars less for commuting to work. While 28.5% of non-Copenhagen residents use their car for commuting to work or university, this proportion descends to 16% for Copenhagen residents. The remaining uses such as *'To drive on holiday'* or *'To carry out daily errands'* receive near identical proportions with the highest percentage point difference at 3.5%. Having said that, the primary use of private vehicles for all participants is pretty evenly distributed between the proposed factors with *'To visit family and friends'* receiving the highest share with roughly 32%, ahead of *'Commuting to work/university'* by 8 percentage points. Followed closely by *'To carry*

our daily errands' at just over 21% and *'To drive on holiday'* at almost 18%. A remaining 4% gave further options not proposed such as to drive to soccer practice or for moving purposes.

What do you primarily use your car for? (multiple answers allowed)

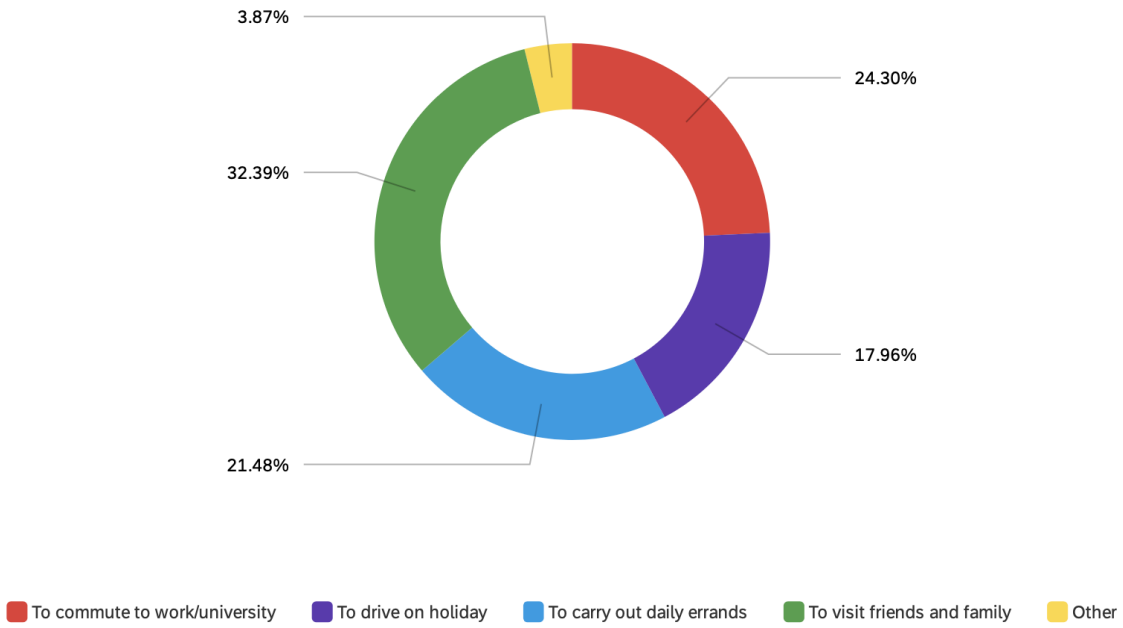

Figure F - Data for all respondents

Section 2: How do you usually commute to work/university?

In terms of commuting habits, the behaviour differs to a notable extent between Copenhagen and non-Copenhagen residents. The data for the former is displayed in figure G while the latter is shown in figure H. Interestingly, the public transportation use is almost identical at around 40% while bike use is the predominant means of commuting in Copenhagen with a 44% lion's share compared to roughly 12% elsewhere. In contrast, almost 30% of commuting is done by private car for non-Copenhagen residents while this number does not surpass 10% for Copenhagen residents. Commuting by foot is only marginal with 6.5% in Copenhagen and 14% elsewhere. Overall, less than 1% of respondents use car sharing to commute to work. It can be concluded that currently car sharing does not currently represent a means of replacing current commuting habits.

How do you usually commute to work/university? (multiple answers allowed)

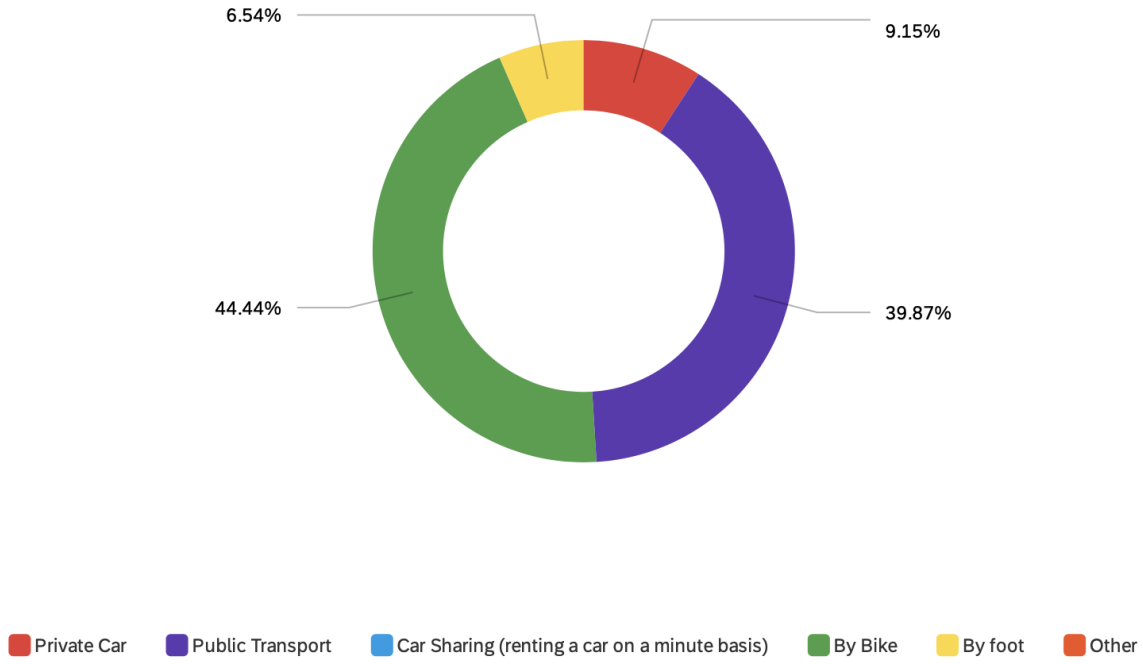

Figure G - Data for Copenhagen residents

How do you usually commute to work/university? (multiple answers allowed)

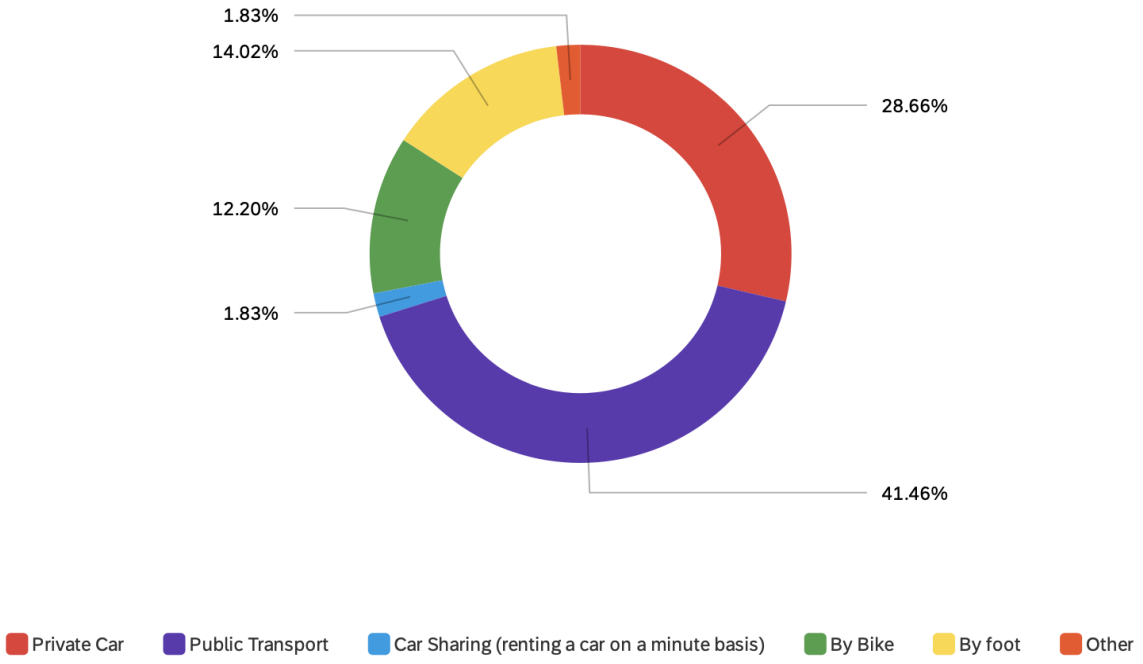

Figure H - Data for non-Copenhagen residents

Section 3: How often, per month, do you use sharing economy platforms?

In order to get a broad perspective on the use of sharing economy platforms, a question regarding the average use per month is posed to participants. If one looks at the overall results - see figure I - 46% of individuals answer that they use sharing economy platforms 0 times a month on average. This may mean that these individuals use sharing economy platforms occasionally like two or three times a year but do not use them on a monthly basis. A further 44% answered that they use sharing economy platforms between one and five times a month. This clearly demonstrates the popularity of the sharing economy amongst the participants of the survey. Just over 7% state using sharing economy platforms 6 to 15 times, while roughly 1% use them 15 to 30 times, and a miniscule 0.42% above 30 times a month. To note, no noteworthy differences were found between residents from Copenhagen or elsewhere in the world.

How often, per month, do you use sharing economy platforms (Uber, AirBnb, BlaBlaCar, ShareNow...)?

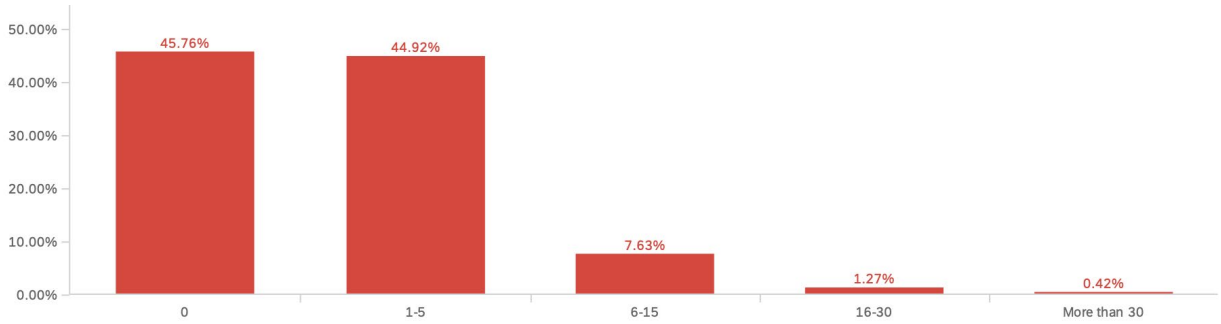

Figure I - Y Percentage of respondents, X: Use groups

Section 4: Do you rent cars through car sharing platforms?

A significant difference in behaviour can be noted in the following question addressing whether participants rent cars through car sharing platforms or not. While 24% of non-Copenhagen residents answered *'Yes'* to car sharing, this figure rises to 42% when isolating Copenhagen residents. This demonstrates a clear difference in the use of car sharing platforms between locations. Taking a focus on the data from Copenhagen residents, the car sharing usage may be linked to the rate of car ownership/access. Indeed, the share of Copenhagen residents that answered *'Yes'* to having free access to a car is roughly 53% and of those participants 33% said that they car share, see figure J. If one observes

the car sharing use for the 47% of Copenhageners that do not to have free access to a car, the number surges to 52%, see figure K.

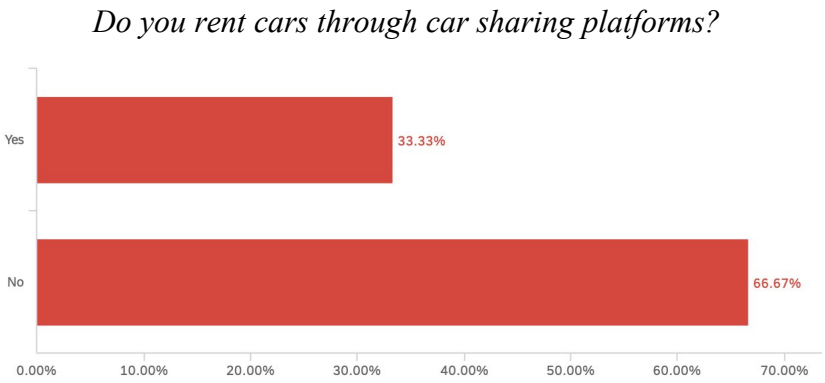

Figure J - Copenhagen residents that answered 'Yes' to having free access to a car

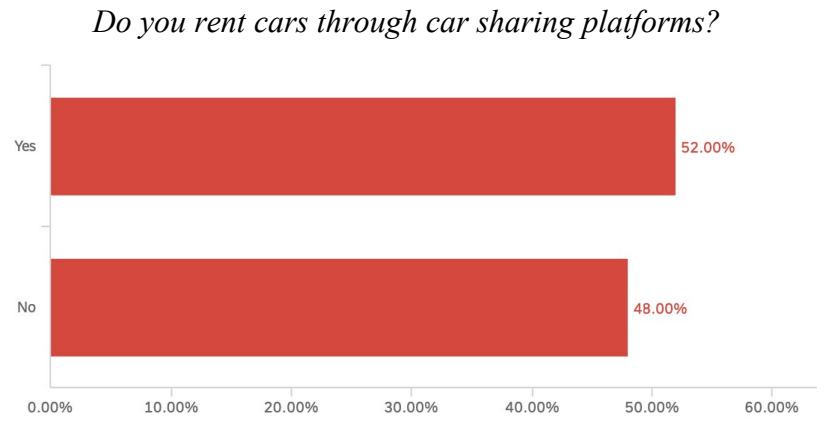

Figure K - Copenhagen residents that answered 'No' to having free access to a car

In contrast, for non-Copenhagen respondents such a correlation does not seem to exist. Of the 80% of non-Copenhagen residents that have free access to a car, 23% claim to use car sharing. Meanwhile, of the 20% of respondents without free access to a car, 25% of them state that they use car sharing services. This data does not suggest any significant correlation between free access to a car and car sharing use. However, the sample size of the remaining 20% is consequently low at only 28 participants which limits the possibility of generalizability. In comparison, for Copenhagen residents the distribution for free access to a car or not is almost 50/50 which allows for greater respective sample sizes. An explanation for the difference in results may stem from the fact that Copenhagen is a breeding ground for car sharing

operators while many of the cities where the respondents come from have few or no car sharing operators. In conclusion, while a correlation seems to exist between car access and car sharing use in Copenhagen, this cannot be established with certainty for all markets given the breadth of the data from the survey.

Section 4a: (Car Sharing) For what purpose?

If a respondent answered *'Yes'* to the previous question *'Do you rent cars through car sharing platforms?'*, the follow-up question investigates the use of car sharing and allows multiple answers to be chosen. Here, the researchers observe similar results between Copenhagen residents and others as highlighted in figure L. The two predominant uses for car sharing are *'Quickly get from A to B'* and *'When public transport is unavailable or inconvenient'* reaching 35% and 36% respectively. Thereafter, the two options *'Pick up something'* and *'Go to friends or relatives'* are nearly tied at almost 12% each. A final 4% of respondents also chose *'To reach the nearest public transportation location'* as one of the purposes for car sharing. This indicates that car sharing is not often used by individuals in conjunction with public transport. Rather, car sharing offers a convenient solution for individuals seeking to move quickly and freely to areas that are less well connected or unavailable by other means of transportation.

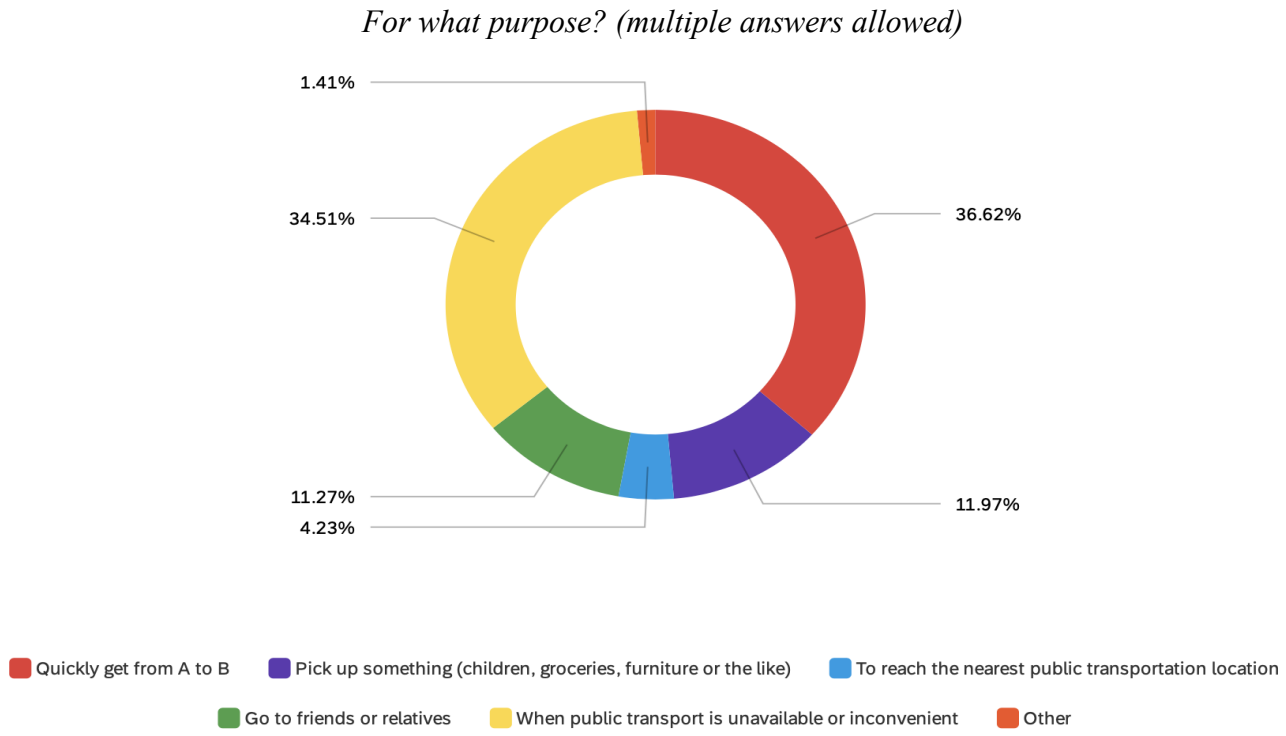

Figure L - Data for all respondents

Section 4b: On average, how long do you rent the car for?

The final question concerning behaviour is posed to individuals having answered *'Yes'* to using car sharing and explores the average rental time of said vehicles. Almost 78% of respondents state that when car sharing, the average rental time lies between 1 and 30 minutes with an additional 10% in the next bracket between 30 and 60 minutes. This clearly indicates that the majority of car sharing travels are less than an hour long in general. This is especially the case in Copenhagen where no respondents stated that they rent a car more than 60 minutes. Meanwhile, 29% of non-Copenhagen residents state to rent these cars for a longer period than 60 minutes. This suggests that the duration of car sharing rentals may vary heavily depending on the city in question.

6.3 Preferences

The final part of the survey concerns the consumer preferences and aims to uncover what factors drive the decision-making process of consumers.

Section 1: Feature preference

The first question concerned with customer preferences investigates how respondents rank several features in terms of importance to them. Remarkably, the order of preference for the factors outlined in the matrix question are almost identical whether respondents are Copenhagen residents or not. Here, it is crucial to understand that the mean value of each factor indicates how high the respondents ranked it on the Likert scale with five being the maximum, shown as *'Very important'* in the survey and one being the minimum displayed by *'Really not important'*. Thus, the higher the mean value of a factor, the higher that particular factor has, on average, been ranked by individuals. Price receives the highest mean value at 4.34 out of 5, followed closely by the distance to the car at 4.18, see figure M. Parking space availability receives the third place with a mean value of 3.91. These aspects are all relatively close to one another, indicating that these aspects are all quite important to participants. Thereafter, the distance grows with *'Familiarity/Ease of using a specific app'* taking 4th place with 3.44 as its mean value. Participants rank the importance of the car being electric rather low with 3.02. Finally, the range of the car and it being gasoline powered are similarly ranked at 2.6 and 2.5 mean values. Conclusively, the results clearly

indicate that consumers favour aspects such as price, location and parking space availability. Additional aspects such as the powertrain of the car or its range are not prioritized by participants.

Please rate the following features if you are or were to use car sharing:

Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
Price	1.00	5.00	4.34	0.76
Distance to the car	1.00	5.00	4.18	0.74
Parking space availability	1.00	5.00	3.91	0.88
Familiarity/Ease of using a specific app	1.00	5.00	3.44	0.94
Electric car	1.00	5.00	3.02	1.05
Range (kms) of the car	1.00	5.00	2.60	1.09
Gasoline car	1.00	5.00	2.50	1.08

Figure M – Data for all respondents

Section 2: Car size preference

The survey incorporates a question to determine the preferences of participants as to the size of car. Participants were given a choice between a small and medium sized car as the vast majority of car sharing operators do not offer vehicles larger than that. Here, a Likert-scale - a six step scale in this case - is used in order to facilitate the ease with which a participant could answer according to their preference. Here the results indicate no clear preference though the mean is at 3.47 out of 6 which highlights a slight preference towards a medium sized car. No significant discrepancies are observed between Copenhagen and non-Copenhagen residents.

Section 3: Parking preference

The preference in terms of parking possibilities is investigated by allowing participants to place themselves on a scale according to their preference. Once more, a Likert-scale is implemented using the identical range as the previous question. Clearly, the results show that participants prefer being able to

park freely within city limits as opposed to at dedicated parking stations as the mean value observed is 4.34 out of 6. Here a mild difference can be observed as Copenhagen residents are placed with a mean value of 4.69 while the remaining participants reach a mean value of 4.05. Conclusively, though a difference can be observed, the trend demonstrates a clear preference towards a free-floating car sharing model.

Section 4: Ranking preferred factors

The penultimate question highlights which factors come before the others when choosing a car sharing service. In this case, four factors were shown; Price, Distance to the car, Electric Drivetrain and Range (kms) of the car. Once again, no significant difference could be found between Copenhagen and non-Copenhagen residents. Price was most frequently ranked as the number one priority with a mean of 1.37 - more than 70% of respondents ranked this as the number one priority. Closely behind is distance to the nearest car with a mean value of 1.94 while 25% of respondents ranked this feature as the number one priority. Electric drivetrain was ranked higher than the range of the car with a mean value of 3.18 compared to 3.5 for the latter. Thus, a slight preference for an electric drivetrain over the range of the car can be observed. However, one must acknowledge that these aspects are far behind price and distance to car in terms of importance. In fact, roughly 90% of respondents ranked electric drivetrain as either the 3rd or 4th most important factors along with the range of the car, as demonstrated in figure N.

Please rank the following features in your order of preference:

Field	1	2	3	4
Price	70.18%	24.56%	3.07%	2.19%
Distance to the nearest car	25.00%	58.77%	13.16%	3.07%
Electric drivetrain	3.51%	7.02%	57.46%	32.02%
Range (kms) of the car	1.32%	9.65%	26.32%	62.72%

Figure N - Data for all respondents

Section 5: Eco-friendly

The survey concludes by asking a simple question into whether eco-friendly solutions should be offered by car sharing operators. Responses were once again very similar across geographical locations with roughly 65% of respondents stating that *'Yes'* eco-friendly solutions should be provided. Surprisingly, almost 30% of participants are indifferent and the remaining 5% do not think it is important. It can be concluded that eco-friendly solutions are desired by a majority of respondents but that it is not essential for all participants.

7. Discussion

The analysis and discussion section takes the elements from each aforementioned section in order to answer the relevant sub-questions. In turn, it will allow the researchers to answer the main research question. On the basis of the analysis and discussion, the researchers will be able to determine both how this thesis has contributed to literature and provide recommendations to GreenMobility for how they should internationalize.

7.1 The Theoretical Side

First, the research conducted an extensive literature review in order to better understand the sharing economy and car sharing industry. Numerous internationalisation theories and models offer explanations and suggestions as to how companies can or should internationalize. Particular focus was set on the Uppsala model and the OLI framework in the theoretical presentation. However, it was concluded that these theories and models do not provide sufficient answers for how the companies in the sharing economy have been able to internationalize so rapidly and extensively. Nor can these theories accurately predict or provide a framework that companies within the car sharing sector can base their internationalization strategy upon.

a. Uppsala Model

Some sharing economy companies are able to internationalize at an astounding rate, disregarding the factors laid out by theories such as the Uppsala model, a model that emphasizes gradual expansion to countries near the home country of a given company. Institutional and cultural differences as well as psychic distance are emphasized by the Uppsala model but do not seem to be key factors in the internationalization processes of sharing economy companies (Parent et al., 2018). Looking at the car sharing industry in particular, GreenMobility's previous internationalization strategy has mimicked the one proposed by the Uppsala model. Its initial internationalization was to Norway where it entered Oslo. Though, this may be because the Norwegian electric charging infrastructure is highly advanced and electric mobility is supported by the government. Thereafter, GreenMobility entered Aarhus, Denmark, and is now planning to enter Sweden, adhering to the framework laid out by the Uppsala model. This suggests that companies such as GreenMobility benefit from gradual expansion to nearby countries.

Though the speed with which the expansion of GreenMobility is taking place is much greater than as suggested by the Uppsala model (Johanson and Vahlne, 2009).

GreenMobility provides the assets - cars - to its clientele, it requires larger financial resources and thus needs to consider foreign expansion carefully. In comparison, a car sharing service such as Getaround uses the assets owned by its members and simply provides a platform connecting the supply and the demand, enabling it to expand rather inexpensively to foreign countries. It may be to GreenMobility's advantage to enter markets early in which no similar service is provided, or demand exceeds supply, though it incorporates greater risk. It can thereby capitalize on its unique business model and acquire a new clientele. GreenMobility seems to have recognized this and plans to expand to countries outside its immediate vicinity such as Austria and Belgium.

b. OLI Framework

The OLI framework suggests that companies should only internationalize if the following factors are met; ownership-, location- and internalization -advantages (Dunning, 1980). However, as illustrated in section four, the internationalization of sharing economy companies cannot be framed within the aforementioned factors. The unique and disruptive business models allow these companies to have a low degree of dependence in regard to the OLI aspects. Indeed, sharing economy companies rarely internationalize for resource or cost purposes as proposed by the OLI framework. The sole factor that explains the internationalization of sharing economy companies is often for market-seeking purposes (Parente et al., 2018). It would, therefore, seem that the OLI framework does not provide satisfactory answers for the internationalization of sharing economy companies. Taking GreenMobility as an example, the research determines that the company does not internationalize for purposes outlined in the OLI framework. The precise reasons for GreenMobility's foreign expansion could not be gathered, however, it is believed that the company is doing so solely to expand its market presence. In conclusion, the OLI framework is unable to sufficiently explain or provide guidelines for internationalization of sharing economy companies.

c. Conclusion

The research has been able to determine that the current internationalization theories and models do not furnish sufficient answers as to the internationalization process in the sharing economy. Thus, these cannot be applied in the same way to the sharing economy as they can to more traditional sectors. Sharing economy companies are dynamic and unique, and do not follow traditional modes of internationalization (Parente et al., 2018). Having established that, the research found that no studies have investigated the internationalization processes of car sharing companies. While the Uppsala model suggests incremental foreign expansion, the nature of the sharing economy compels companies to act fast and aggressively. Furthermore, these companies internationalize for market-seeking purposes and should thereby only follow the Uppsala model if nearby markets are also attractive. The OLI framework is concerned with factors of internationalization that are, to a large extent, not applicable to the sharing economy (Parente et al., 2018). There is, therefore, a complete lack of theories and models for internationalization in the sharing economy and by consequence in the car sharing industry. This poses a risk to car sharing operators as they are unable to follow a framework when going abroad. Hence, the research determines that there is the need for a new internationalization framework within the car sharing industry. Not only would it enable these companies to reap the benefits out of their expansion, but it would also alleviate the risks associated with erroneous foreign market entries. GreenMobility itself states that a framework concerning the internationalization process would go a long way to help them successfully expand (Andersen, 2020). The creation of such a framework will not be without hiccups. It is stated that an internationalization framework for the entire sharing economy would not be able to incorporate the plethora of companies and business models found in the sharing economy. Specifically, differences in business models within the car sharing industry would already pose issues as to the generalizability of any internationalization framework conceived. Conclusively, while there is the need for an internationalization framework within the car sharing industry, the creation of such will demand extensive research and consideration.

7.2 The Market Side

The companies operating in the sharing economy and the car sharing industry are characterized by their rapidity in foreign expansion. Theory suggests that companies that internationalize, traditionally do so in order to gain access to cheaper resources and lower their costs by exploiting economies of scale and scope (Buckley and Casson, 1991). Furthermore, such companies often have to wait for the onset of product standardization to enter lesser developed countries (Parente et al., 2018). In contrast, car sharing companies tend to rely on intangible assets such as their online website or mobile application which can more easily be redeployed in a foreign country.

Yet, it is imperative to note, as theory points out, that there are distinctions among car sharing companies. The first distinction drawn in this paper is between P2P and B2C car sharing (Bauwens et al., 2012). Due to their cost structure, these companies face very different conditions when internationalizing. The main service provided by car sharing operators are naturally the cars. P2P car sharing firms have the benefit that they do not own these tangible assets (cars) but that the users of the platform provide the tangible assets themselves. Thus, P2P car sharing companies do not need to acquire large quantities of cars when internationalizing but merely transfer their online platform into the selected country. This provides this type of car sharing company with an advantage as the asset-light structure allows them to internationalize into any type of city at a faster pace and with greater ease. In contrast, B2C car sharing firms, such as in the case of GreenMobility, are also the owners of the tangible assets that they provide. Hence, internationalization involves larger resources as these tangible assets need to be acquired. A further distinction among car sharing companies is between the free-floating and station-based models. The latter involves the creation and operation of parking stations for the users. Here, GreenMobility's free-floating model is an advantage as it does not necessarily have to create parking spots for each of their cars. Indeed, GreenMobility does create dedicated parking stations for their fleet but does not need to have a one to one car to parking ratio (GreenMobility, 2020). In light of the aforementioned, it is crucial for GreenMobility that the local governments provide sufficient parking spots for residents. This is an important point that car sharing firms - and especially the ones offering free-floating solutions - need to take into account when entering into a new market (Friedel, 2020). The survey provides valuable insights

in this regard as respondents ranked the parking availability as the third most important factor when car sharing.

GreenMobility solely operates electric cars which for the purposes of internationalization is sub-optimal. While gasoline cars can be refuelled using the existing network of tank stations, electric cars require greater refuelling times and dedicated charging stations. As this would incur a high cost, it is imperative for GreenMobility that there exists a large network of charging stations in the city that is being entered. This can be provided by private charging station providers or local governments. The cities of Malmö and Vienna provide extensive charging station coverage and thereby represent great opportunities for companies offering only electric cars such as GreenMobility. There is a total of 69 charging stations in Malmö, whilst in Vienna the number reaches 530 (Chargemap, 2020a; Chargemap, 2020b).

The local charging infrastructure along with parking availability are not the only determinants of success in a given city but knowing the local market conditions is also crucial and acts as a steppingstone prior to internationalization. There are certain elements GreenMobility needs to consider before it chooses to enter a given market. Scholars suggest that a city needs to be of a certain density before it can be considered for a car sharing service (Hampshire and Gaites, 2011). Also, for car sharing to be a success, a city needs to have a well working and large public transportation network (Friedel, 2020). A city with inefficient public transportation represents an unattractive market for car sharing as owning a car would be unavoidable (Friedel, 2020). This is also highlighted in the results from the survey where almost 90% of respondents from, for instance, Naples - a city with little public transportation - own or have access to a car. Here, roughly 10% of respondents said that they car shared as opposed to almost 45% in Copenhagen. Likewise, poor driving conditions derived from high levels of congestion and insufficient parking spots also represent threats for car sharing operators as they impact negatively on the attractiveness of a city (Friedel, 2020). This statement is also supported by the survey results that show that people tend to use car sharing services for short periods of time, generally between one and thirty minutes. This is where the city government plays a pivotal role in defining success. Regulations and government policies can constitute substantial incentives or disincentives for companies when entering a country (Dunning, 1998). If local authorities choose to tackle congestion by improving public transportation and reducing car use, car sharing can become a very attractive solution. Among the

respondents living in Copenhagen only 53% stated having access to a car as opposed to the almost 79% for non-Copenhagen residents. This is in part due to regulations imposing high taxes on ownership of private cars in combination with a highly efficient public transportation system. Thus, Copenhagen has lower levels of congestion and can thereby house many car sharing operators. In the conducted analysis, both local governments view car sharing as a means to enhance mobility - especially green mobility - and improving the life of its local citizens. The cities are actively involved in improving the local mobility conditions by reducing car ownership rates, and by improving bike and public transportation infrastructure. This provides a reason for the introduction of car sharing solutions as one shared car is estimated to replace up to 5 privately owned cars (Schuster et al., 2015).

The competitive environment of a city can affect the attractiveness of a said city. In Malmö, GreenMobility will face a well-established station-based operator while in Vienna, it will be facing direct competition from local operators. Interestingly, the presence of car sharing operators does not seem to hinder the entrance of a new player. GreenMobility believes that despite the elevated competition, it can successfully establish itself in both markets (Andersen, 2020). It is considered that pre-existing competitors do not represent a hindrance to successful market entry. Rather, pre-existing competition is seen as a positive factor. This is due to the fact that a specific market along with its user base might be more ready to embrace the sharing concept and to take part into sharing economy activities such as car sharing (Andersen, 2020).

The market analysis has brought numerous factors in terms of attractiveness regarding both Malmö and Vienna to light. Malmö represents an attractive market for GreenMobility as it is densely populated and, more importantly, there are currently no other operators offering free-floating car sharing. GreenMobility has thus a competitive edge as it will have a unique offering in Malmö. By entering with 100 vehicles it will be able to densely cover the entire city with its vehicles and compete with its main rival Sunfleet. The Viennese market is not as clear cut. There are numerous competitors with near identical offerings that have already established themselves. ELOOP represents a direct competitor as its business model is almost identical to that of GreenMobility. However, while ELOOP currently offers a fleet of merely 20 vehicles, GreenMobility plans to enter Vienna and establish a network of 400 cars. Thus, GreenMobility will be able to provide its users with a much larger quantity of cars - lowering the average distance to a

car. This characteristic will give GreenMobility an edge over its competitors as the survey highlights the importance participants attribute to the distance to the nearest car. Furthermore, GreenMobility may benefit from the nature of its clientele as these are highly price sensitive. This is once again confirmed by the results from the survey as price is ranked the number one priority for car sharing. Car sharing users are not loyal, in fact, many users are registered to more than a single car sharing provider (Friedel, 2020). To illustrate, when DriveNow and Car2Go merged, it was found that 30% of the users of the new ShareNow platform had been customers at both DriveNow and Car2Go (Friedel, 2020). Taking the aforementioned into account, a company such as GreenMobility may be able to acquire significant market share if it fulfils the demands of its customers in terms of price and vehicle availability.

7.3 The Company Side

Much of what has been discussed has regarded the market conditions that create an attractive environment for GreenMobility. However, once these factors have been established, the company needs to determine what drives the consumer to adopt its service. The car sharing industry is characterized by a young customer base with very low levels of customer loyalty (Friedel, 2020). This is confirmed by the data collected from the questionnaire. Thus, the influence of already established competitors on the market is lowered and the focus needs to lie on supplying a service that meets as many of the customers' wishes as possible. Price represents an essential factor in the adoption rate of car sharing. Due to the importance of price for the consumer, it is suggested that GreenMobility place itself at a similar level or slightly below its direct competitors. This is especially the case for companies offering an almost identical service such as ELOOP in Vienna. In contrast, GreenMobility may be able to charge customers a slight premium in Malmö given that their service differentiates itself significantly from the local competition. GreenMobility appeals to customers that enjoy more freedom in terms of parking through its free-floating model. The survey underscores that individuals prefer the free-floating model to the station-based model. In fact, the mean value of 4.34 out of 6 clearly indicates a preference for being able to park the car freely within city limits. The free-floating model also allows a car sharing company to span a wider net of cars throughout a city and be in close vicinity to a larger potential customer base. This is because the operator does not have dedicated stations across a city, but cars are distributed throughout the city by the users. Hence, the distance to the car criteria emphasized as very important by respondents is met with greater ease.

Something that separates GreenMobility from its largest competitors such as ShareNow is that it only offers one type of vehicle, namely the Renault Zoe. In comparison, ShareNow provides a multitude of cars of various sizes from very small to medium sized cars. However, the survey results show that users do not allocate much importance to the size of the car. Indeed, when participants were asked to name a preference, the mean value of 3.47 out of 6 reveals that people are rather neutral to car size, with a slight preference towards a medium sized car. As the Renault Zoe offers the same versatility as a Renault Clio (as proposed in the survey), the choice of car seems to correspond to customer demands. In conclusion,

GreenMobility does not need to modify its current fleet for internationalization purposes as it meets the desires of the customers.

In regard to the car, a further factor that makes GreenMobility unique is that it only offers electric cars, though some car sharing operators have started to follow the electric trend. Surprisingly, the survey demonstrates that an electric drivetrain is of little importance to customers. It was found that among the seven factors proposed to participants, for the car to be electric was ranked as the third to last in terms of importance. Its mean value is closely matched to that of the range of the car and a gasoline drivetrain. Moreover, when asked to rank four factors according to preference, price and distance to the car were ranked far ahead of having an electric drivetrain. Though, an interesting observation is that the range of the car does not matter to respondents either. This is most likely due to the short nature of car sharing rentals confirmed by the survey where almost 80% of respondents state a shorter than 30-minute average rental. Even more compelling, almost 90% of participants say that their car rentals last fewer than 60 minutes. To conclude, despite the lower range of an electric car in comparison to its traditional counterpart, this does not negatively impact the attractiveness of one. While GreenMobility has no clear competitive advantage in solely offering electric cars, the current trend in mobility is moving towards the electrification of vehicles. Furthermore, growing environmental consciousness will push car sharing providers to offer more sustainable solutions. In fact, two thirds of survey participants express that it is important for a car sharing operator to offer eco-friendly solutions. This share is likely to increase in the coming years as the mobility sector continues to be electrified. Thus, while it currently does not provide a consequential advantage, GreenMobility may benefit from its experience and know-how of electric fleet management in the future. In addition, its green brand image will be enhanced if its strategy has always followed an eco-friendly agenda.

8. Conclusion

The research is designed to explore how GreenMobility should internationalize. In the process, the researchers pose several sub-questions to investigate various aspects of internationalization. It is found that the current theoretical framework for internationalization proposed by scholars cannot sufficiently explain or suggest how a company in the sharing economy should internationalize. The research then focuses on academia regarding the car sharing industry and determines that there is a need for a new internationalization framework for the car sharing industry. Once the aforementioned is established, the research conducts extensive research taking GreenMobility as a case study. Doing so allows the researchers to uncover numerous aspects to consider for internationalization. With this information on hand, this paper can be used as a steppingstone for future research and the eventual creation of an appropriate internationalization framework for the industry. Thus, by testing the current internationalization theory and executing comprehensible research, this paper is able to contribute to literature.

In light of this, the research identified the factors that render a market attractive for car sharing. It is stressed that the local government needs to play an active role in promoting sustainable mobility, work towards reducing private car ownership and welcome car sharing as a solution for green mobility. Furthermore, it is preferable that a city has a well-functioning public transportation network and low levels of congestion. This creates an environment where citizens may choose not to own private vehicles which in turn creates greater demand for car sharing services. Indeed, in Copenhagen a correlation between free car access rate and car sharing use has been observed, though it cannot be postulated for the industry in general.

To exemplify the determinants of market attractiveness, a case comparison between Malmö and Vienna was conducted. It is found that for the former, GreenMobility has a potential competitive advantage as it will offer a unique service in the city. Thus, it may be able to charge a premium price as its service offers greater flexibility to its users than any other competitor. This flexibility stems from the free-floating business model but also the minute-based rental which are currently not offered on the market in Malmö. GreenMobility needs to ensure a good network of cars throughout the city as the distance to the cars is a

vital aspect in fulfilling customer demands. Entering with 100 cars as planned will supply the necessary network coverage required (Andersen, 2020). In comparison, Vienna represents a much larger potential market but GreenMobility will face challenges in terms of direct competition. Indeed, there are many car sharing services operating in Vienna as well as one that has a very similar business model. GreenMobility should and will enter Vienna with a large fleet of cars, 400, which will render a high car coverage of the city and allow it to compete against ShareNow with its large fleet (Andersen, 2020). Furthermore, this will enable it to fiercely compete with its closest rival ELOOP by offering potential customers a much larger concentration of vehicles. Network coverage is essential to meet the demands of the customers in the car sharing industry. Another characteristic of the car sharing industry is that customers tend to be young and are not loyal to a single operator but are, to a large extent, driven by price, further asserted by the data from the survey (Friedel, 2020). It should, thus, adjust its pricing strategy to the competition so as to catch a large customer base.

It was found that customers emphasize price and distance to the vehicles as well as the parking space availability when car sharing. Car sharing rentals are used for very short periods and satisfy consumers when public transportation is unavailable/inconvenient or for quickly moving from point A to B. Importantly, these preferences are mimicked across geographical regions. It is, thus, imperative for the success of operations abroad that GreenMobility consider these aspects prior to market entry. It is, therefore, recommended that the company enter a new market with a sufficient fleet to render a high density of cars. Moreover, it should adapt its pricing strategy according to the competition present. In markets with direct competitors, GreenMobility should match or undercut the price of the competition and ensure wide network coverage. The non-loyal nature of car sharing users will play to GreenMobility's advantage. On the other hand, in markets with no direct competition, GreenMobility can charge a price premium due its unique service offering.

The research indicates that GreenMobility's current business model does not represent a clear advantage. Indeed, its free-floating business model is an attractive solution in markets where such a service is not provided as in the case of Malmö. However, this advantage does not apply in markets where competition operates with similar service offerings such as in Vienna. In addition, while sustainability is likely to increase in importance in the future, the fact that GreenMobility only offers electric vehicles does not

serve as a competitive advantage today. The survey suggests that while a large share of individuals wish to see eco-friendly solutions, it is far down on the priority list when car sharing. Though GreenMobility may benefit from its experience with an electric fleet in the future, it is not able to capitalize on it as of today.

Finally, further recommendations - that are external to internationalization for GreenMobility - have come to light through the performed research. GreenMobility should make sure to have a user-friendly mobile application as this is an aspect that is important to consumers. As its service appeal hinges on smooth and rapid execution, the higher the simplicity the greater the likelihood of repeat customers. The survey has confirmed that the average car sharing user tends to be under 40, hence, this should be taken into account for targeting purposes.

9. Future Perspectives

The previous chapter has outlined the essential contributions of this paper to literature. While the findings of the study only pertain directly to GreenMobility, it serves to open up a path to future research as well.

While this paper has taken a single-case study approach and appropriately so, future research should investigate internationalization in the car sharing industry in multiple case studies to potentially uncover further aspects relevant to the field. A qualitative study, for instance, where the internationalization processes of car sharing companies are investigated could uncover the motivations for foreign expansion and the strategies of how these processes were undertaken.

The nature of any single-case study means that its findings are specific to a certain contextual. GreenMobility was created in Copenhagen, an environment that is prone to car sharing, and bordering technologically advanced and environmentally conscious countries. Future research investigating companies from various geographical locations could complement and nuance the findings of this paper. Hence, it could lead to a better understanding of the internationalization of car sharing companies.

This paper has studied the case of GreenMobility, a car sharing operator that is still relatively little and has not had much experience with internationalization. Future research could take a company such as ShareNow under the microscope. ShareNow is particularly interesting as it was created through the merger of DriveNow and Car2Go, BMW Group and Mercedes creations respectively. Both companies have extensive experience with foreign expansion successes and failures. A study could, thus, explore whether the merger has in fact allowed both companies to reap the benefits of economies of scale and increase the success rate of future internationalization attempts.

The cities chosen for the case-comparison in this research stemmed from GreenMobility, as the aim was to study two markets that had already established a certain appeal for car sharing. A market study focusing on markets that are completely foreign to car sharing may expose interesting findings and reveal further details as to what renders an attractive city for car sharing. Thus, future research may take a

similar case-comparison approach but choose two cities that on the surface do not represent an interesting market for car sharing.

Car sharing companies operate in numerous different ways and a comparative study between a car sharing company using the free-floating model and one using the station-based model could be conducted thereby shedding light on which business model is more viable for internationalization. Research papers may focus on the study of other differences such as service offerings, ownership structures, hierarchical structures, and how these aspects affect if at all the internationalization of these companies. To exemplify, GreenMobility has much smaller resources than ShareNow but is likely to have a different hierarchical structure which, in turn, begs the question of which company is more likely to succeed in entering a foreign market.

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11. Appendix

Car sharing survey

Start of Block: Intro

I1 Welcome and thank you for participating in our survey!

The survey aims to find out more about consumer preferences in the car sharing industry. No prior knowledge of the topic is necessary. A description of the Sharing Economy and Car Sharing will be provided at a later stage.

Please only answer the survey if you have valid driver's license.

All information will remain anonymous and all answers will be kept confidential.

If you have any question regarding the survey, please contact us at:
stde18ac@student.cbs.dk
lalo15ab@student.cbs.dk

Best,
Stefano De Luca & Lauritz Lorenzen

End of Block: Intro

Start of Block: Demographic Area

Q1 What is your gender?

- ○ Male (1)
- ○ Female (2)

Q2 What is your age?

- ○ 18-24 (1)
- ○ 25-34 (2)
- ○ 35-44 (3)
- ○ 45-54 (4)
- ○ 55-64 (5)
- ○ 65+ (6)

Q3 What is your main occupation?

- Student (1)
- Full-time employee (2)
- Part-time employee (3)
- Self-employed (4)
- Unemployed/Seeking employment (5)
- Retired (6)
- Other (7) _____

Q4 In which city do you live?

_____

End of Block: Demographic Area

Start of Block: Car & Commuting

Q5 Do you own or have free access (through relatives, for example) to a car?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Display This Question:

If Do you own or have free access (through relatives, for example) to a car? = Yes

Q5a What do you primarily use your car for? (multiple answers allowed)

- [ ] To commute to work/university (1)
- [ ] To drive on holiday (2)
- [ ] To carry out daily errands (3)
- [ ] To visit friends and family (4)
- [ ] Other (5) _____

Q6 How do you usually commute to work/university? (multiple answers allowed)

- [ ] Private Car (1)
- [ ] Public Transport (2)
- [ ] Car Sharing (renting a car on a minute basis) (3)
- [ ] By Bike (4)
- [ ] By foot (5)
- [ ] Other (6) _____

End of Block: Car & Commuting

Start of Block: Sharing Economy & Car sharing

Q7 **Sharing Economy**
The Sharing Economy is comprised of online platforms where users can temporarily access untapped resources such as cars (ShareNow), lodging (Airbnb), tools (Hygglo), labour (TaskRabbit) on an on-demand basis.

Car Sharing
Carsharing is a model of car rental where people rent cars for short periods of time, often by the hour.

Q8 How often, per month, do you use sharing economy platforms (Uber, AirBnb, BlaBlaCar, ShareNow...)?

- ○ 0 (1)
- ○ 1-5 (2)
- ○ 6-15 (3)
- ○ 16-30 (4)
- ○ More than 30 (5)

Q9 Do you rent cars through car sharing platforms?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Display This Question:

If Do you rent cars through car sharing platforms? = Yes

Q9a For what purpose? (multiple answers allowed)

- ☐ Quickly get from A to B (1)
- ☐ Pick up something (children, groceries, furniture or the like) (2)
- ☐ To reach the nearest public transportation location (3)
- ☐ Go to friends or relatives (4)
- ☐ When public transport is unavailable or inconvenient (5)
- ☐ Other (6) _____

Display This Question:

If Do you rent cars through car sharing platforms? = Yes

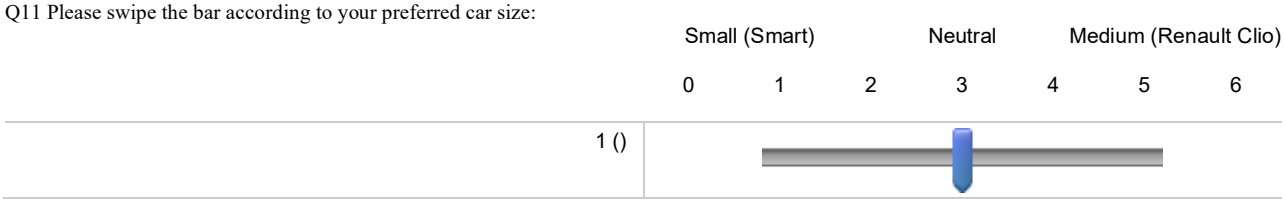
Q9b On average, how long do you rent the car for?

- ○ 1-30 minutes (1)
- ○ 30-60 minutes (2)
- ○ 1-6 hours (3)
- ○ More than 6 hours (4)

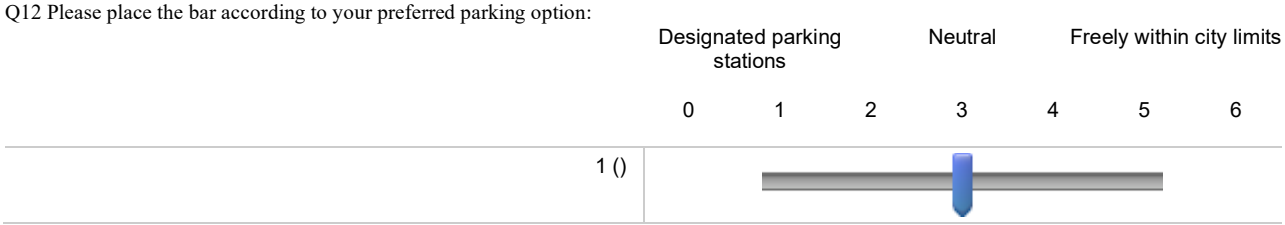
Q10 Please rate the following features if you are or were to use Carsharing:

	Really not important (1)	Not important (2)	Neutral (3)	Important (4)	Very important (5)
Price (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Distance to the car (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Familiarity/Ease of using a specific app (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Gasoline car (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Electric car (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Range (kms) of the car (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Parking space availability (7)	○	○	○	○	○

Q11 Please swipe the bar according to your preferred car size:



Q12 Please place the bar according to your preferred parking option:



Q13 Please rank the following features in your order of preference:
_____ Price (1)
_____ Distance to the nearest car (2)
_____ Electric drivetrain (3)
_____ Range (kms) of the car (4)

Q13 Is it important to you that a car sharing provider offers eco-friendly solutions?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Indifferent (3)

End of Block: Sharing Economy & Car sharing