SOCIAL EXCLUSION, AREA EFFECTS AND METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FIVE LARGE SPANISH CITIES

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Introduction

Current processes of economic restructuring, changes to the employment market, to family stability, to social composition and alterations to life cycles are causing changes to welfare policies and to social networks and the guidelines for interpersonal reciprocity. All of this has generated the emergence of new realities of socio-spatial exclusion and therefore a revaluation of the debate concerning the spatial dimension of urban exclusion and poverty. Therefore, questions are reappearing such as: to what extent are vital opportunities conditioned by the place one lives? Does living in one urban area or another have a significant influence? And if that is the case, how important is this factor and what are the most significant elements involved in it? Evidently, if the existence and significance of these factors can be found, then all of this should be taken into account when designing new urban policies.

Big cities, metropolises, most strongly concentrate such processes and transformations (Sassen, 2000; Marcuse and Van Kempen, 2000). The most underprivileged urban areas are the most affected by the erosion of the processes of interpersonal reciprocity and the consequent weakening of the community network (Wacquant and Wilson, 1993). It is not easy for welfare states to maintain the levels of urban social cohesion achieved in the past (Musterd and Ostendorf, 1998). We therefore find that as the number of ‘notorious’ neighbourhoods, or disreputable districts, in Europe increases, the increasingly greater divide between the forms of life of mainstream society and that of groups with increasingly rates of vulnerability is expressed territorially.

In recent years, and following on from other previous research projects, the Institute of Government and Public Policies at the Autonomous University of Barcelona has led a triennial research project (2004 – 2007) of the processes of Urban Social Exclusion in Spain and its neighbourhood based dimension, a project that we summarise here\(^1\). It is an exploratory and initial investigation, as while in other European countries the debate on the area effects has been consolidated, in Spain it has been developed very little.

\(^1\) This project has been financed by the Ministry of Education and Science in the framework of the National Program of I+D (SEJ2004-01945/CPOL). Its main investigator is Dr. Joan Subirats. It has counted on the participation of IGOP, as well as the University of Murcia, the University of the Basque Country, the Institute of Regional Development of Seville, and the University Carlos III of Madrid.

This research starts from one of the most recent and significant researches undertaken at a European scale on such matters, the URBEX programme: The Spatial Dimensions of Urban Social Exclusion and Integration. A European Comparison. Financed by the IV\(^{th}\) Framework of the European Union, coordinated by Dr. Sako Musterd, of the Amsterdam Study Centre for the Metropolitan Environment in the University of Amsterdam. This project included 12 cities: Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Paris, Naples, Milan, London, Birmingham, Hamburg, Berlin, Brussels and Ambers.
This project is based on previous research studies in which we sought to establish certain parameters that could enable us to develop typologies for the different options taken in reference to welfare policies by the autonomous communities over the twenty five years of the regional structuring of Spain (Subirats, 2005b). In these investigations we recuperate the concept of the welfare regime, understood to be the complex articulation of the public, associative, merchant and family spheres in the production of resources and services to satisfy the social rights and needs of people. And on the basis of this, we formulate the analogous concept of the inclusion regime, i.e. on the basis of what interactions and with what relative weights are the four aforementioned social spaces combined in each autonomous community in order to prevent risks of exclusion and offer solutions to the marginal situations suffered by different social collectives. This is consistent with the vision that social inclusion cannot only be the responsibility of public authorities, but also a shared effort by the whole of the community implied. Moreover, while we take social exclusion to be a concept that offers a high capacity for describing and interpreting the emerging forms that social inequalities adopt in the current phase of change towards post-industrial society, we could conclude that the regime of inclusion will become one of the key pieces, maybe the central component, in the welfare state of any country or society over the coming decades.

Table 1 distributes the 17 ACs among the spaces generated by the interaction of the public, merchant, associative and family spheres in the configuration of the risks of exclusion and the corresponding policies for inclusion.

We see how in the Basque Country and Navarra there is a regime of inclusion that rests upon the axis of interrelation between powerful public responses and highly developed social networks. Another 5 communities (Catalonia, Madrid2, La Rioja, Aragon and the Balearic Islands) also feature a high presence of social networks as mechanisms of inclusion, although the weight of the merchant sphere increases in relative terms with respect to the institutional-public arena. 6 other communities (the two Castiles, Murcia, Galicia, Cantabria and the Valencian C) share a significant relative weight of market dynamics, but in those the relevance of the family space is clearly superior to that of social networks as a method of social inclusion: these are therefore communities with a heavy family slant. The remaining four (Extremadura, Andalusia, the Canaries and Asturias) share this family slant in their social structures and their inclusion strategies, although in these there is a greater relative weight of the public space, while they present policies that reduce factors and care for somewhat more developed collectives.

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2 There is a need to consider the high level of apparent associationism and the presence of the Third Sector in Madrid, through the accumulation of the ‘capital effect’, the presence of the central organs of many non governmental organisations
In the research that serves as the basis for this paper, we have chosen five cities: Madrid, Barcelona, Sevilla, Murcia and Bilbao, which are located in five different Autonomous Communities: Madrid, Catalonia, Andalusia, Murcia and the Basque Country. The research itinerary began with an exploration of the theoretical debate regarding the territorial dimension of social exclusion, in order for this to be followed by an analysis of the neighbourhood as a Territorial Structure of Opportunities. For the five cities under study, we sought to identify the major dynamics of urban transformation, observing the emergence of new factors for social risk associated to these dynamics of change. In each city we studied the structural characteristics of two of their underprivileged neighbourhoods, one with the profile of a degraded historic centre and another on the segregated urban periphery, and analysed the interactions between the different vulnerable social groups in the territory. The aim of this paper is to expose the findings of this research and aim to highlight their possible social implications for the formulation of urban public policies.

**Local Welfare Regimes and Territorial Opportunity Structures**

The decisiveness of the territory on people’s vital opportunities is obvious when we consider wide territorial scales such as continents or countries. The North – South inequalities cause intercontinental migration movements of people aiming to improve their vital opportunities simply by moving to a ‘richer’ region which supposedly offers more personal welfare opportunities. In Europe, the different configurations known as Welfare Regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990) produce clearly differentiated results from the perspective of social cohesion and the
welfare of the population of the respective countries. Even inside one same state, the interregional inequalities are usually significant. In Spain, for example, there is quite a clear relationship between the different configurations of the so-called Autonomous Welfare Regimes and the extension and intensity of the processes of social exclusion in the different autonomous governing units (Gallego, Gomà and Subirats, 2005), up to the extent that the debate at present discusses whether the decentralization of social policies has aggravated certain disparity patterns between territories.

When incorporating the local level it becomes more difficult to identify the decisiveness of the territorial factor, although this does not mean it is inexistent. The disparities between cities are usually important and caused by a series of realities such as the specific dynamics of the metropolitan economy, the unequal territorial bearing of social-demographical changes such as immigration or ageing, as well as the type of public policies developed by the local governments depending on their respective levels of political autonomy. The current restructuring processes of the welfare state have obliged central government to progressively delegate the former institutional monopoly in the design of welfare policies to private organizations (both for-profit and nonprofit) and to local governing entities, all these acquiring new roles and prominence. (Rhodes, 1994). Therefore, we may expect the impact of the local factors upon well-being and urban social cohesion levels to have also increased. More specifically, the concept of the Local Welfare Regimes points out that the relative weight and the type of articulations carried out in each territory between the four basic agents producing social welfare – the market, public authorities, social and communitarian networks and family and kinship networks– affect the level of social inequality and its spatial expression in the city (Minguione, 2003). From a more specific perspective of public policies, elements such as public leadership, the level of cooperation between the different local actors and the level of integration developed within such urban policies seem to be key elements emerging from the arising of dynamic and complex urban social problems (Blanco and Gomà, 2002).

All in all, living in one city or another seems to be an element which significantly conditions opportunities of access to public welfare provision like security, environmental quality, culture or education. Nevertheless, how may we establish similar hypothesis for the neighborhoods of a same city? To what extent is a life course significantly conditioned by the neighborhood where each individual is born, grows, or lives in at present? This is the basic question formulated by literature on area or neighborhood effects. More concretely, the interest of literature has, in general, been focused on how the neighborhood factor is significant upon processes of social exclusion, without taking into account the same matter in other areas inhabited by people with more resources. In other words, the attention has been focused on exploring the extent up to which the simple fact of living in a deprived area negatively affects the vital opportunities of the most vulnerable groups, implying that the neighborhood is not a mere container of socially vulnerable population, but in itself a factor which exposes such groups to a major dose of social risk.
There are a number of investigations which intend to demonstrate the relationship between the micro-territorial variable and multiple aspects of an individual's life course, such as the position occupied in the labor market, the educational trajectory, the probability of victimization or even the health conditions and consequent life expectancy (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001; Buck, 2001; Andresson, 2001). Beyond the methodological debate which focuses on demonstrating the correlation between these types of variables, in our opinion, the most interesting debate concerns the mechanisms underlying such correlations. A predominant tendency in sociological literature emphasizes supposedly negative consequences brought about by the spatial concentration of poverty. According to such interpretation, the neighborhood’s social homogeneity would condemn its inhabitants to exclusively or mainly interact with people whose values and attitudes result negative for social integration, producing some sort of ‘contagious effect’ nourishing the reproduction of the so-called ‘poverty culture’ (Lewis, 1966; Murray, 1990).

This type of dynamic may be clearly observed in secondary processes of socialization in children and teenagers, fundamentally those occurring at school or within networks of friendship. If this is definitely the main mechanism through which the area effects act, just as is commonly supposed from certain academic tendencies and public institutions, then the recipe for public policy to counteract such effects is the ‘social mix’ (Atkinson, 2005). The policies of regeneration of some European historical centers, such as the ones carried out in Barcelona, have tried to publicly legitimate themselves upon the basis of the intention to avoid or hold back supposed gentrification tendencies and to generate new dynamics favoring ‘social mix’, taking for granted that such ‘mix’ would automatically generate positive effects upon the opportunities of social promotion for the most vulnerable part of the population.

From our point of view, territorial segmentation and social homogeneity undoubtedly generate negative urban dynamics, opposed to the idea of the city as a space of cohabitation between strangers (Jacobs, 1961) and, therefore, from the perspective of regulations, we find relevant those policies oriented to promote diversity and contact between varied and unequal groups – although, as Andersson (2001) warns, the geographical concentration of the rich is usually stronger than that of the poor and therefore the aims for mix are far more to the point when set out within rich areas than those poorer. In any case, we consider the approaches on area affects considering only cultural or behavior variables clearly insufficient.

Starting from the classical distinction carried out by Manski (2000), we may differentiate between two types of area effects. On one hand, those related to the social atmosphere in the area and its own social composition – called ‘contextual’ and ‘endogenous’ effects by Manski. On the other hand, those effects related to the territorial access to public welfare provisions such as employment, leisure, public areas, facilities and equipment and quality public services – named by the author as ‘correlated’ effects. In this way, the first type of effects emphasizes on the cultural and behavioral dimension within the exposure to social risk whereas the second type reminds us that the degradation of the deprived neighborhoods and its negative impact upon the
population’s vital opportunities have a lot to do with the public and commercial agents marginalizing the neighborhoods or not assisting them proportionally to their needs.

We conceive the concept of a neighborhood as a Territorial Opportunity Structure (TOS) adopted by the project URBEX mentioned above (see Musterd, Murie and Kesteloot, 2006), it seeming a richer and more complex interpretation than others which are strictly behavioral. According to this approach, the neighborhood would configure a structure of opportunities determined by the space where a market sphere (economic – productive), a social-communitarian sphere (reciprocity) and a public authority sphere (redistribution) acquire specific characteristics. From this point of view, the area effects upon individuals’ life courses could be explained, taking as examples and all simultaneously, the quality of the infrastructures and the public transport connecting the neighborhood to the metropolitan central areas; the sufficiency and quality of health, social, cultural and educational services in the neighborhood or surroundings; the existence of employment opportunities in the territory or at least the absence of labor market marginalizing behaviors because of the area of residence (address effects); the density and energy level of mutual cooperation and supporting networks between people, etc.

Such variables orientate urban policies towards a direction different to other approaches focusing on altering the social composition of poor neighborhoods. This necessarily leads them to regard more sensitively territorial particularities of social exclusion, a more integrated perspective oriented in spurring the participation of the different local agents able to generate well-being in the neighborhood. Above all, we’d like to take into consideration that a policy promoting equal opportunities cannot forget to include the elements of advantage-disadvantage that, in this case, each territorial location withholds.

**Analytical options and methodology**

As pointed out in the introduction, the research project here presented has been structured into three main analytical levels; the first two are contextual and the third is central for the aims of the investigation.

Firstly the study analyses the evolution of the five chosen cities – Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Bilbao and Murcia – throughout the last three decades, from the point of view of their urban development, socio-demographical and economic-productive transformations specially focusing on the emergence of new social risk factors. It also analyses the structure of the social-spatial disparities in each of the cities, taking as the starting point a series of basic social defragmenter indicators for each area or electoral territory, depending on the availability of data in each city.

Secondly two deprived neighborhoods have been selected and studied within each city, one with the features of a degraded historical centre and the other of a segregated suburb area. Understanding, as was described in the Topic Outline for this workshop, that the disparities of services and the concentrations of disadvantaged populations does not only arise in the central nucleuses of
large cities, but also on metropolitan peripheries. The statistic map of social-spatial disparities in each city has helped us select the neighborhoods to be analyzed, choosing those located in the lowest part of the deprivation hierarchy. For all of these (a total of 10 areas) some basic aspects have been analyzed such as the historical evolution, urban and social configuration at present, and, above all, each area’s own Territorial Opportunity Structure (TOS). More specifically, other aspects have been regarded throughout the analysis of the (TOS): employment and consuming opportunities in the area or surroundings; features of social and communitarian networks; the quantity and quality of equipment and public services in the territory. At such a level of analysis we have combined the compilation and documental analysis, the processing of statistic data and several discussion groups with key informers – technicians and administration professionals, representatives of the neighborhood’s entities, storekeepers and other economic agents.

Finally, the last phase of the investigation has consisted in conducting around 100 in-depth interviews to individuals subject to social exclusion. More specifically, in each neighborhood, two interviews have been carried out for each of the five target groups: immigrants in an irregular situation, individuals experiencing long-term unemployment, youngsters suffering school failure and difficulties to integrate socially and find a job, single mothers and elderly people living alone. These are the five target groups identified through other investigations as the most relevant in the analysis of the social exclusion in Spanish cities (Subirats, 2005a). Although the level of significance varies from territory to territory, having chosen the same vulnerable groups for all the neighborhoods of the total cities has made the comparison of the results easier. The individuals interviewed were contacted through the neighborhood’s social services or entities in the tertiary sector. The interviews lasting approximately two hours stressed on the individuals life courses and their specific relationship with the neighborhood where they live.

The results obtained from this investigation allow us to focus on different comparative levels: the comparison between cities; the comparison between centric areas and suburb areas; and the comparison between different socially vulnerable groups. The results are briefly summarized below.

**Change dynamics and urban social-spatial disparities in Spain.**

An initial global analysis of the dynamics of change in each of the studied cities allows us to verify that they have all experienced radical transformations over the last 25 years. In Barcelona, the 1992 Olympic Games catapulted a massive urban transformation: new road infrastructures were built; the regeneration of the historic centre was boosted; a significant part of the city’s sea front was regenerated; new downtown areas were created with varied functions; the city’s international visibility grew; the number of tourists increased significantly and, in more general terms, the weight of the tertiary sector grew to solidly establish itself in the urban economy.
In Seville, the effects of the 1992 Universal Exposition were similar. The urban transformation project associated to this event included the creation of a whole new arterial network; the railway network was reinforced and the high speed train (AVE) arrived to the city; it experienced a significant river transformation – just as Barcelona opened itself to the sea, Seville also turned towards its river, it becoming the new axis of the metropolitan structure as it had been a few centuries back; since then the city has pledged a firm commitment to the tourist sector with the consequent increase of specialized stores, hotel accommodation and other related infrastructures; in 1999, the income coming from tourism reached 60% of the local GDP.

Also Bilbao has undergone key changes in its urban and economic-productive structures. In the first half of the 80’s, the city was immersed in a profound economic crisis, fruit of the exhaustion of its traditional model of urban development, quite entirely based on the iron and steel industry, naval construction and other metal and electric manufacture. From the mid 90’s, Bilbao is experiencing an important process of urban regeneration in terms of recovering industrial ruins and the improvement of accessibility. Moreover, an important change of the city’s image has also gone hand in hand with this process; from the industrial and port city to a business city of cultural and tourist interest. The installation of the Guggenheim Museum and the urban development transformation of its long, narrow tidal inlets which makes the most of the large spaces left obsolete by the iron and steel industry, and, in general, reconstructs the surrounding neighborhoods, are the clearest urban development expression of such dynamics of change.

Neither Madrid nor Murcia held any specific events with the same transformation force as the Olympic Games in Barcelona, the Expo’92 in Seville or the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. Nevertheless, the dynamics of change in both these cities have also been important. The city of Madrid has not only maintained its political and economic weight in the country, but it has made the most of it being the capital city, becoming a central focus of the economic-financial flow established from Spain towards Latin American countries, and together with Miami, turning into a type of Latin American capital abroad. At the same time, the large economic growth has paired with a radical urban expansion, facilitated by the boost of a series of Urban Development Action Plans (Planes de Actuación Urbanística), through which a great amount of new residential areas have been –and are still being- constructed, areas emulating the American cities’ dispersed urban development model. From a much more peripheral geographical, political and economical position, Murcia has also undergone important changes. The weight of agriculture, although a lot more significant than in any of the other studied metropolitan areas, has decreased to favor other activities related to services and construction. The growth of the city and its metropolitan surroundings has been very important, up to the point where its 391,146 inhabitants (according to the 2006 register), have turned it into the seventh most populated city in the country. To this, we would add the development of a phenomenon of urban sprawl similar to the process observed in Madrid. The improvement of accessibility, the vicinity of the coast and the warm climate has helped tourist activities to strongly expand.
The changes in the social structure of all of these cities have, by all means, also been very important. Some are in the lines of the improvement of social welfare, experienced by the Spanish population as a whole. For instance, important improvements have been observed in all of the cities concerning education or social health. Other socio-demographical transformations, however, have lead to the spur of new social risk factors, present at different grades in all the studied cities. A decisive example is the radical transformation of the household compositions. Throughout the last decades, the number of marriage breakups has increased radically, as well as the number of single-parent households. New circumstances of deprivation emerge in all these cities associated to the transformation of household types, like the ones experienced by the elderly living alone despite economical and relational fragility, or by single mothers taking care of children.

Transformations in the structure of the labor market have not been minor, either. In this way, a decisive increase of the active population has been observed in all these cities as the fundamental result of the massive incorporation of women to the labor market. In the same way, a generalized decrease of the unemployment rates have also been observed since the mid 90’s. However, the incidence of the temporal contract rates in Spain is significantly greater than the European average, despite having experienced a slight downwards tendency in the last years. The purchasing power of salaries is particularly low, especially when contrasted to the intense upward dynamics of the price of housing. All this leads to the spur of new labor and housing deprivation, particularly serious for certain social groups like young people, women and immigrants.

The immigration phenomenon is, precisely, one of the factors transforming the demographical features of the studied cities. If Spain was, in the mid 80’s a country still having a positive migration balance, the increase of immigrants coming from countries in the south has been very intense in few years, going from half a million immigrants in 1996 to nearly five million in 2007. However, the percentages of immigration in Spanish cities tend to still be under the average of many large European cities.

Beyond the fact that all these processes of change are common to the national territory, we may, equally highlight that the present socio-spatial disparities vary significantly depending on the cities analyzed (table 1):

- The immigration phenomenon especially affects the cities of Madrid, Barcelona and Murcia, and is a lot more minor in Seville and Bilbao. In Madrid, for example the present foreign population is around 16%, whereas in the central neighborhoods of the capital like Lavapiés the percentage reaches 50%. At the other pole, Seville only has a 3’34% of foreign population.

- The incidence of unemployment is, on the other hand, significantly higher in Bilbao and Seville. This fact may explain the scarce interest immigration has upon both these cities. Seville is first in the unemployment rankings, with 23%. At the other extreme, Madrid hardly reaches an 8%.
On the other hand, if we focus on the incidence of insufficient training, Madrid and Murcia are the worst ranked cities. The extreme situation is for Murcia, with the highest levels of the unskilled and the lowest regarding the higher qualified. Madrid has a rate of insufficient training twice the size of that of Bilbao, Seville and Barcelona, but a rate of qualified individuals similar to that of Bilbao and Seville and significantly higher than Barcelona. This last case points to a certain labor-educational polarization tendency in Madrid, already detected in other investigations (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2007).

Barcelona and Bilbao share a higher incidence of aging population than Murcia and Seville. The proportion of people over 25 years old in Barcelona is, for example, double that in Murcia.

On the other hand, the rates of single parenthood have increased at similar rhythms in all the studied cities, in a way that there are not very sharp differences between them, except in Seville, where the number of single mothers is practically insignificant, probably because the traditional household model is still very present in this city, and in general, in the south of Spain.

Again we find sharp differences between the cities regarding electoral abstention rates. These are significantly higher in Barcelona and Seville than in the other cities. In the underprivileged areas studied in Barcelona, for example, the abstentions reach 50% of the electorate, nearly 10 points over the urban average.
Table 1. Factors of social risk in Spanish Cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>BARCELONA</th>
<th>SEVILLE</th>
<th>BILBAO</th>
<th>MURCIA</th>
<th>MADRID</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>City</td>
<td>Suburb</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>Suburb</td>
<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMPLOYMENT</td>
<td>Unemployment rate %</td>
<td>10'85</td>
<td>14'46</td>
<td>13'15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16'9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25'6</td>
<td>14'82</td>
<td>26'59</td>
<td>24'87</td>
<td>11'52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insufficient training rate</td>
<td>5'56</td>
<td>12'97</td>
<td>21'06</td>
<td>5'99</td>
<td>17'9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5'59</td>
<td>8'67</td>
<td>18'08</td>
<td>29'66</td>
<td>47'02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High qualification rate</td>
<td>12'85</td>
<td>4'33</td>
<td>2'53</td>
<td>18'29</td>
<td>11'05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1'16</td>
<td>17'77</td>
<td>9'97</td>
<td>3'47</td>
<td>9'96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aging index</td>
<td>1'80</td>
<td>2'24</td>
<td>1'09</td>
<td>1'03</td>
<td>1'47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1'16</td>
<td>1'94</td>
<td>1'98</td>
<td>1'57</td>
<td>0'89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% immigration</td>
<td>12'25</td>
<td>21'96</td>
<td>15'25</td>
<td>3'34</td>
<td>5'79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6'17</td>
<td>2'1</td>
<td>7'58</td>
<td>0'72</td>
<td>10'84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% single parent households</td>
<td>sd</td>
<td>9'1</td>
<td>9'6</td>
<td>2'03</td>
<td>Sd</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sd</td>
<td>11'17</td>
<td>10'07</td>
<td>14'45</td>
<td>14'94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% electoral abstention</td>
<td>40'06</td>
<td>49'9</td>
<td>48'2</td>
<td>41'15</td>
<td>43'64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>52'52</td>
<td>31'68</td>
<td>39'26</td>
<td>44'45</td>
<td>30'61</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sd</td>
<td>sd</td>
<td>31'07</td>
<td>34'24</td>
<td>28'82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All data are the last available in local and national registers. They rank from 2001 and 2006 depending on the cities and the sources.
To summarize, although the urban change tendencies have been similar in the five studied cities, the bearing of social deprivation varies significantly (table 2). Analyzing the possible explanatory causes of such variation goes beyond the aims of this research, although we have to highlight the fact that such variations – as well as others that have not been detected here but that certainly exist – justify the need for urban policies to act more sensitively towards territorial particularities of social exclusion in different urban contexts. Moreover, we find it commendable as a hypothesis, in terms of what has been pointed out in the compared literature, that the different socio-spatial disparity structures in each city respond to the diversity of the local welfare regimes and governance dynamics in each metropolitan area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Synthesis of the variations of factors of social risk.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barcelona</strong></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political dissociation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The area as a Territorial Opportunity Structure

Table 1 introduces us to the main analytic level of this research, the neighborhoods. For example, it indicates, in general terms, that the unemployment rates are clearly higher in the deprived areas than in the city as a whole, despite two exceptions: the central areas of Madrid and Seville. The insufficient training rates are also a lot higher without exceptions. In this sense, and different to what happens from a labor market perspective, the central areas are far better rated than the suburbs, what may respond to a higher grade of social mix in these territories, where young middle-class individuals with a high level of education tend to establish themselves attracted by the urban downtown effects. So, as we can see, and as was asked in the Topic Outline of this workshop, there is the potential to take advantage of this disadvantaged situation in central districts, when on the basis of the phenomena of urban renovation and regeneration the processes of mobbing and gentrification can occur, as we will be explaining in more detail later. If we focus on the incidence of aging, on the contrary, this is higher in the central areas than in the suburb neighborhoods, which, associated to the high residential deprivation – many buildings do not have lifts – leads to an elevated concentration of elderly people living in situations of loneliness. The suburb areas, on the other hand, tend to have a younger population pyramid, and, in any case, similar to the city as a whole. The rates of single mothers in the deprived areas are lower than those of
the city as a whole, which shows that in Spain this situation is more common in higher and middle-classes. However, it is obvious that it becomes a more intense factor of deprivation in such territories than in other privileged neighborhoods. Finally, the results also confirm that the incidence of abstention, as an indicator of political disengagement, is a lot higher in the deprived neighborhoods than in the rest of the city, with the single exception of the suburb area Los Rosales in Madrid.

The information obtained from the documental analysis, interviews and discussion groups with key informers allows us to analyze in depth the Territorial Opportunity Structure of these areas. Regarding the suburb areas, the majority of these were neighborhoods constructed during Franco’s dictatorship, between 1960 and 1970, during a period where cities rapidly grew due to the country’s industrial development. It was a time of intense and chaotic urban growth and these neighborhoods are its clearest expression. In the majority of cases, the dictatorship’s public administration simply redefined the uses of the land to enable its housing development in hands of either private constructors and real estate promoters or the same neighbors building their own homes. In some cases the administration finished off the construction of buildings. The neighborhoods were built on the outskirts and frequently far from the urban centers, though close to industrial zones where its inhabitants would work. The lands upon where these areas were constructed did not always meet the adequate requirements for housing development. Otxarcoaga (Bilbao) and Ciudad Meridiana (Barcelona), for example, were built on mountainside slopes surrounding the cities, what leads to a very abrupt relief of the neighborhood; Ciutat Meridiana was built on land which, due to its level of humidity, had previously been rejected for the construction of a cemetery – as a neighborhood leader once pointed out: “what was bad for the dead was good for the living“. In all of these, the quality of the housing was extremely poor. The apartments were very small, although they took in very large families and many buildings lacked lifts. The planning of the provision of public areas, infrastructures and basic equipment did not take place either. In many cases, for example, schools were built through initiative of the own neighborhood movement or parishes which settled in the area.

What are these neighborhoods actually like? How have they changed? The arrival of democracy and the consequent expansion of the welfare state supposed, without doubt, a new stage in their urban development processes, although they continue strongly segregated and marginalized from each city’s dynamics of growth and prosperity. From the point of view of the existence of equipment and public services the residents of these areas still have that sensation of ‘abandonment’ on behalf of the public administration. This is very intense in Tres Barrios – Los Pajaritos (Seville), where both the administration’s technicians in the territory and the neighborhood leaders agree on the total lack of any public equipment. At a balance between the two poles is Otxarcoaga (Bilbao), which counts on nearby sports’ facilities, social work and labor rehabilitation equipment, basic health centers, primary schools and a police station. The neighborhood has also been the object of an urban development program – Proyecto Piloto Urbano and Plan General de Urbanización –, however, the neighborhood movement condemns the lack of ambition and
continuity of such program and their scarce social dimension. From a social viewpoint, there are a few assisting program benefiting the neighborhood’s population but their area of implementation encloses the city as a whole. Ciudad Meridiana (Barcelona), on the other hand, is the example of a neighborhood which has lately been the object of territorialized and complete actions oriented to its physical and social regeneration. The most relevant in this sense are the area's Communitarian Plan, an urban development project co-financed by the Council and the Catalan autonomous government in the framework of a set of Area Laws for Cataluña and several social intervention programs spurred by the local schools, health assistance units and social services.

The presence of economic and commercial activities is scarce. In Tres Barrios – Los Pajaritos, for example, there are practically no commercial stores. One of the informal activities gaining importance in the area is the selling by hawkers, carried out mostly by neighbors belonging to gypsy communities. In Otxarcoaga, the density of commercial and business establishments is also a lot lower than in the city as a whole – 39.1 establishments per 1000 inhabitants, opposed to the city’s 94.89 average. The situation is very similar to that of Los Rosales (Madrid) and Ciutat Meridiana (Barcelona), although this later carries out a significant commercial role in the north part of the district – which groups together, as well as Ciutat Meridiana, Vallbona and Torre Baró. The neighborhood of Espinardo-Espírito Santo (Murcia) is located in a major commercial area, although the large commercial establishments have installed themselves in the surroundings instead of in the actual neighborhood. In fact, the neighborhood is located in an area which is experiencing heavy urban transformations, around the university campus, commercial centers and new residential areas, despite the fact of it still being considered “an islet of exclusion”.

Finally, from the viewpoint of networks of affiliation and reciprocity, the processes have followed similar tendencies in all the neighborhoods. Throughout the 60’s and 70’s they all counted on a very active neighborhood movement, with a broad social basis and considerable mobilization power. Such, in part, involved very solid mutual trust, reciprocity and solidarity ties, surely nourished by the fact that families were large and they all shared a very similar vital moment – the waves of migration within the country. Moreover, the neighborhood movement created links with, in those times, underground basic Christian movements and political parties which lead in Spain the conquest for democracy. With the arrival of democracy and the incorporation of some of its leaders to the political institutions, the neighborhood movement lost a lot of strength throughout the 80’s all around the country. Also, in this type of neighborhoods the affiliation networks started to suffer the dramatic consequences of unemployment, drug abuse (heroin), and the increase of crime. Since then, the reciprocity fabric has gone downwards. Situations of loneliness and isolation are common among the elderly and, in general terms, the networks of mutual solidarity have weakened. On one extreme, Tres Barrios-Los Pajaritos practically counts on no own neighborhood associations and the associative activity is limited to external NGOs carrying out assistant activities in the neighborhood. On the other extreme is Villaverde-Los Rosales
which has the largest concentration of associations per inhabitant in the whole of Madrid and its electoral participation rates are higher than the city’s average.

**Central areas** present some significant differences compared to the suburbs. From a historical point of view, they are far more ancient, their origins dating back to medieval times and they all grew throughout the period of industrial and urban expansion in the 19th century. They have traditionally carried out the role of taking in the working and low-income population. They were marginalized by the urban policies of the dictatorship, which gave priority to outskirt urban expansion, and this spurred the intense socio-spatial degradation of central areas. From the 80’s, however, the historical centers have started playing a very different role in the urban development model. In view of the industrial crisis, cities have steadily had to rely more and more on tertiary activities, to the extent that historic centers have been rediscovered as locations holding new commercial, cultural and leisure activities. This is why some of the deprived areas forming part of the old part of cities are experiencing an intense regeneration process. New middle and high class neighbors are moving to many of these, attracted by the downtown assets of the area. Also new immigrant population arrives to these neighborhoods to make the most of such downtown effects and because of the low-price stock of still degraded housing and the higher proportion of housing for rent than in other outskirt areas. They are, by all means, very diverse, complex and contradictory neighborhoods comparing to the suburb areas.

At the present these areas are still very affected by a sharp lack of public equipment, although these deficiencies are compensated by their downtown effects. Moreover, they have, in general, been object of urban regeneration programs, to more or less ambitious extents. Bilbao La Vieja (Bilbao), for example, has been the object of multiple urban development projects since the 90’s: the program “Puerta Abierta”, financed by the European program URBAN I, which created new cultural equipment of reference in the city like BilboRock and BilboArte; the Plan de Rehabilitación y Reforma Interior, carries out urban development remodeling in some of the neighborhood’s strategic areas; and the Plan Especial de Bilbao La Vieja, San Francisco, Zabala, which began in 2000 and is currently in its second phase of execution. It is an ambitious regeneration program integrating three neighborhoods of the old part of the city, co-financed by the Basque government, the Diputación Foral de Bizkaia and the council of Bilbao, and with the participation of several entities of the city. Although the urban development changes boosted by this plan are evident, the neighborhood’s entities have criticized the excessive emphasis on urban development remodeling, the lack of solutions offered towards the neighbor’s social problems and the ineffectiveness of citizen participation mechanisms. Similar regeneration plans and equal conflicts with the neighborhood movement are found in the rest of the areas, except in the cases of La Paz (Murcia) and Valdeacederas (Madrid) where the rehabilitation is in hands of the private sector. Particularly in La Paz, the rehabilitation process is being boosted by a powerful promoter and constructing company. Motivated by speculative interests, it offers to buy the neighbors houses in areas on the city outskirts intending a massive housing and building demolition operation towards the area’s complete reconstruction.
The downtown asset of these neighborhoods has been a powerful element attracting private investment. In general terms, the commercial fabric of these areas is highly dynamic. The neighborhood la Barceloneta (Barcelona) is representative in this sense. Despite it having a commercial structure which does not seem to respond to the everyday needs of its neighbors (the nearby stores are, in fact, in crisis), it shows to have very dynamic catering and leisure sectors, due to its location on the city’s sea front and its consequent capacity to attract tourism. The commerce in Bilbao La Vieja, on the other hand, is changing subsequent to the arrival of immigrant population which is acquiring a very significant part of the traditional commercial stores, introducing new products and new more extensive timetables. But, most of all, private investment is directing its attention upon the property market. The case of La Paz has already been highlighted. In Barceloneta, despite the public leadership being clearer in regeneration policies, private initiatives are putting heavy pressures upon the market trying to gain more locations for the tourist business. For example, many foreigners coming from the European Union as well as the high and middle class indigenous are buying houses as first and second homes, generating sharp upward pressures on the price per square meter. In Valdeacederas (Madrid), there has also been an intense purchasing process over the last 10 years, where private investment has acquired land, one store houses and business premises to then demolish them and build housing for the middle class.

The property market dynamics in the central areas is, however, contradictory. On the one hand, these areas are still holding a large proportion of low price rents, due to the decay and precarious state of a good part of its housing offer. On the other hand, however, its relocation in the urban system leads to a greater attraction power of the high and middle classes, the increase in value of the land and sharp increases of the price of housing, at faster rhythms than those in the rest of the city. The speculative interests of owners frequently lead to cases of property mobbing precisely targeted on the most vulnerable part of the population.

Finally, the associative fabric of these central areas is far richer, diverse and complex than that of the suburb areas. Again in Barceloneta there are large amounts of neighborhood entities, religious groups, groups of the elderly, of immigrants, storekeepers, squatters... and even entity platforms – like the Platform Defending Barceloneta – which fight against the area’s gentrification dynamics. Also Bilbao La Vieja is a good example of a neighborhood with a high associative density. Some projects are quite innovating such as “Arroces del Mundo” (Rice all over the world) or “Red connecta” (Connecting networks) which try to establish intercultural links between the area’s multiple associations and groups.

In summary, the suburb areas tend to suffer from shortage of equipment and public services, a great absence of commercial and productive activities and a critical associative fabric. Its residual situation in the urban system in general leads to a scarce interest in the property in the neighborhood. Its population is still greatly indigenous, although over the last years, they have begun to receive
immigrant population that initially arrives to the city centre but has to move towards the suburbs unable to resist the pressures of gentrification. The central areas have their relative weakness in terms of equipment and public services compensated by their urban downtown effects and by the fact that public intervention tends to be more intense. The commercial and productive structure is more dynamic. The associative fabric is richer and more diverse. However, these areas are suffering strong pressures from the property market, generating severe situations of residential deprivation and vulnerability.

In an effort to synthesize, we may also establish significant differences between cities regarding the analysis of the Territorial Opportunity Structures of its deprived areas (table 3). Madrid and Murcia are the cities which grant more leadership to market agents. The state intervention is relatively low, so the market agent’s power is only partially balanced by communitarian networks. In Seville, the level of intervention of the public authorities, market agents and communitarian networks is alarmingly low in the suburb neighborhood, which seems abandoned to its dynamics of socio-spatial segregation. The presence of the three types of actors is somewhat higher in the centre and, in fact, the area of San Gil is experiencing a significant transformation, although it is not an area with the same downtown asset as others surrounding it, therefore its urban regeneration process is less intense. Bilbao and Barcelona show higher levels of public intervention than in the rest of the cities, particularly in the historic centers experiencing an intense urban regeneration process thanks to the public authorities. Its historic centers also show high associative density. In the central area of Barcelona, the market agents also operate intensely. Nevertheless, the presence of these three types of actors does not necessarily imply that their aims and interests coincide, but that the regeneration process is creating social tensions and significant political conflict. The suburb areas of Bilbao and Barcelona are benefited by more presence from the public and communitarian agents than in the other cities, although it is by no means enough to counteract the processes of social exclusion in these territories.

<table>
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<th>Territory/ TOS</th>
<th>Barcelona</th>
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<th>Bilbao</th>
<th>Murcia</th>
<th>Madrid</th>
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<td>high</td>
<td>low</td>
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Table 2. Territorial Opportunity Structures in center and suburb areas

Life course and Territorial Opportunity Structures

How do the different social groups relate in the area where they live? To what extent does the neighborhood condition positively or negatively individuals’ life course? What variations may we highlight in terms of the groups and the territories?
The first conclusion we may come to from the analysis of the interviews is that under no circumstance do territorial elements, in themselves, hold the cause for the exclusion courses of the interviewed individuals. The factors that trigger deprivation are ‘extra territorial’. In all the cases the situations of vulnerability are understood according to a number of different factors, however, if we should highlight any, the ones standing out because of their explanatory relevance are those which are precisely territorial. For instance: irregularity is the factor which mostly contributes to the social deprivation of immigrants, and this is independent of the area where they live; among single mothers, it is precisely the fragile family ties what more clearly exposes them to a situation of risk, and such circumstance is also independent of the territorial factor. This, however, does not prevent such disadvantages external to the territorial factor from being precisely reinforced by that same location.

It is also true that many of the interviewed individuals stated that their neighborhoods hold resources that compensate the problems they suffer. For example, they highlight how in their area they may gain access to certain public resources like social services, health services or certain equipment as well as education and cultural services. They also tend to stress the importance of family, friendship and communitarian networks in the neighborhood which act as supporting and social inserting elements and are taken as crucial among those individuals with stronger territorial feelings. Even certain establishments in the area allow neighbors to satisfy the need to have basic consumer goods nearby or there are some (very few) productive activities that are a source of income for their inhabitants. In other words, the neighborhood is not only sensed in negative terms, but also as a space of access to certain resources considered positive by the interviewed individuals.

Another idea which allows ease the decisiveness of the micro-territorial factor is the capacity to move about and, therefore, to look in other urban areas for the type of resources which are not available in their own area. In the central areas, the dependence of the individuals in terms of the territorial resources is lower due to how downtown effects imply being near to a wide variety of public and private resources such as health centers and social services, learning centers, libraries and areas for leisure and consumption activities. In the suburbs, the general improvements of the public transport infrastructures favor the population’s mobility. Also, some of these neighborhoods, despite being geographically on the outskirts, are close or even next to large commercial or industrial urban areas.

However, as we have already pointed out, the interviews have allowed us to observe how the territorial factor definitely and decisively bears on individuals’ life course. The way in which territorial elements operate, however, varies significantly in terms of the groups and in terms of the area as central or suburb. Following are the most significant conclusions we have drawn from the analysis of the interviews.

Concerning long term unemployment, we must highlight the diversity of the group, referring to both the individual trajectories of the interviewed as well as
the relationship patterns with the territory. In the 80’s and beginnings of the 90’s this would have been one of the predominating deprivation factors, corresponding to a middle aged male who would have lost his job in the factory subsequent to an economic restructuring process. At present it is a far more heterogeneous group.

Among the factors triggering unemployment and its consequent social deprivation we may find a series of different situations like chronic illnesses, addiction to psychoactive substances, mental health problems, divorce, or the fact of belonging to an ethnic minority, like the gypsy population. This is why it seems difficult to find a common factor grouping these individuals. However we may confirm that, in general terms, the bearing of the territorial factor on these individuals’ later trajectory of exclusion tends to be lower than that of other groups, especially among men who conceive their job opportunities strictly located in the industrial activities on the city’s outskirts. There are no clear variation patterns in terms of the area as central or suburb, beyond the fact that in central areas the price of housing is on the rise and the common situation of paying rent exposes this group to a larger housing vulnerability.

Among single mothers the critical point in the exclusion trajectory is usually the partner leaving soon after the birth of the children, a problem which is commonly sharpened by summing to this situation the care for other members of the family (elderly dependent individuals) and by the fragility of the family networks outside the marriage. All this frequently leads to psychological depression and stress manifestations. This group depends on two types of very territorial resources: on the one hand the casual family and neighbor support, which is higher, the stronger the individual’s territorial attachment, no matter whether the neighborhood is central or suburb; on the other hand the public educational, cultural and playtime services (nurseries, schools, libraries, play areas, sports facilities, after-school activities…) freeing the mother from family overload. In the suburb areas, such offer is often sensed as scarce. In the central areas there is more of such, although it often does not fully adapt to the profile of the most vulnerable population, and tends to be perceived as equipment and services for the city as a whole. The territory also plays a leading role in other senses: for example, the extent to which it may offer employment insertion opportunities – the closeness between the place of work, school and home is essential for these women; or the extent to which the neighborhood offers opportunities to use public areas (squares, streets…) in safe conditions.

The most incidental risk factors among the elderly are health (physical and mental) problems deriving from aging, loneliness arising from the death of a close member of the family (usually the partner), the feeling of abandonment by other family members and the scarce economic resources. The territorial elements have a strong effect on this group and the differences between central areas and suburb neighborhoods are significant here. In both types of areas urban development and aspects related to the relief play an important role like the fact of buildings lacking lifts and other architectural barriers which create problems – the common abrupt relief of the suburbs complicates these situations. The availability of institutional and communitarian support networks
is also fundamental, like the ones offered by social and health services, homes for the elderly, equipment for the elderly and, more generally, the offer of specific services to this group. Their dependence to such territorial resources is sharper than that in other groups by their particular difficulties to get around. Concerning the differences between the centre and the suburbs, it is important to highlight how the most deprived elderly individuals are common targets in situations of home mobbing.

The main causes of deprivation among young people concern their school career: lack of motivation towards their studies, truancy, negative influence of other group members and antisocial behavior at school, as well as other types of antisocial behavior in public areas. School failure for these not only supposes an obstacle for their employment insertion, but very especially for their professional promotion. Concerning the effects of territorial factors, this group’s larger capacity to get around the city generally tones down their dependency towards the territorial structure of opportunities. They tend to move more around the city searching both for job opportunities as well as leisure in other urban areas. They even make friends with certain independence of the territory. However, certain territorial elements bear intensely on this group. Particularly among the youth of the suburbs, social stigma weighs heavily, with more or less serious consequences upon their opportunities to find work. They tend to see the neighborhood as an area which offers very little free time opportunities, they tend to feel very little identification with the area and express their wish to leave. The young people in the centre tend to feel more identified (in a positive way) with their neighborhood and are even more active in the area’s affiliation fabric. However, like it is for all the groups living in the centre, they show growing difficulties to be able to continue living in their neighborhood due to the excessive increase of the housing prices.

Finally, referring to immigrants in irregular circumstances, their situation of deprivation comes from the fact of not having a residence permit, and the threat of being expelled makes them feel very insecure. This situation of vulnerability in many cases leads them to deprived housing conditions – for example, paying prices highly out of proportion and living over crowdedly. It also leads to working without contracts and therefore to a situation of legal lack of protection. Despite this circumstance of irregularity they manage to gain access to institutional support to education, health, social and employment insertion, all services of a strong territorial character. In the territory these individuals also tend to weave reciprocity networks particularly with other immigrants coming from the same or a similar community of origin. The presence of such personal networks is an important factor when deciding where to live, as well as the price of the housing and the possibility of renting. Moreover, the presence in the neighborhood of stores and services oriented to immigrant population – telephone booths, food stores, legal advice services for foreigners – satisfy the group’s specific needs and may constitute a job opportunity in the neighborhood. Many of them arrive in the city through the centre, attracted by the presence of this type of public, commercial and communitarian resources, but they have suffered from pressures in the property market and have had to move to suburbs, where the rhythm of immigration growth has, over the last years, been a lot higher than in
the centre, although the centre still holds an overall higher proportion of immigrant population.

Conclusions

Our investigation has marked coincidences with other studies carried out concerning the area effects in processes of social inclusion and exclusion. We may state that, especially in the suburbs, the territorial factor increases its effects in the processes of entry and exit of situations of social vulnerability and risk of exclusion. On top of the particular situations of personal or family deprivation and deficiency which tend to be common among these groups, burden factors of isolation, lack of adequate public transport, deficient commercial services and public service infrastructures, etc. It is evident that this does not happen in the same way in the five studied cities, and, in this sense, the presence of a social network or proactive policies in this direction are quite decisive. In the central areas analyzed, the territorial factor on the living conditions and on opportunity structures is less decisive, especially when making the most of their downtown effects to gain access to ‘the city’s’ services. However, the conditions of subhuman housing in some of the areas where urban regeneration measures have not been taken, are indeed significant, as they become low price platforms and are, lately, being occupied, by immigrant individuals and families which later contribute to the neighborhood’s ‘notoriety’. At the same time and most recently, the increase in urban value of some of these central areas is leading to the expulsion under pressure of some of the most vulnerable groups.

Nevertheless, we may state that in Spain we cannot speak of limit situations in the areas of these large cities, because, throughout the 80’s and the 90’s the measures ignored by the former dictatorship were intensely recovered, and therefore, the lifestyle conditions generally improved. Only in the last 10 years, the effects of the major changes in the productive system (deindustrialization, dislocation), in employment conditions (instability), in the household structure (fragility, breakups), or in social composition (immigration and the unprecedented lengthening of the vital cycle) are starting to show. It is only just recently that certain circumstances occurring in other European countries over the last 20 years are now becoming visible in Spain in these areas.

If we try to detect factors which may be useful to us from the viewpoint of the policies to impulse in this sense, it is convenient to consider some elements which have appeared in the investigation here carried out. In observance of the elements of the Topic Outline of the workshop, in none of the five studied cities are there any instances of metropolitan governance. The differences between the sizes of what is considered a city in each case are very important (600 km² of Madrid, compared to 100 km² of Barcelona). This means that, in practice, Madrid and Murcia function much more as metropoles than the other cities under consideration. The logics of governance vary on the basis of the richness and plurality of the actors present in the scenario of the policies to be
considered, and in general, it can be expected that there will be (in the absence of more detailed analysis) a greater presence of social networks, richer governance networks and a greater capacity to respond to the challenges of spatial inequality. From the more specific perspective of the policies to be promoted, we could highlight the negative consequences of public housing policies that have turned out to be segregating or have made the processes of ‘normalising’ certain neighbourhoods more difficult. In the situations analyzed, the major urban growth spurred in the last period of the dictatorship, coming from a period of economic expansion and the massive internal migration, brought the building of housing areas which did not consider at all the connection with the existing urban structure. They were often carried out in complicated land locations or transport connection allowing the minor land costs to prevail.

In the analyzed cases, we have not come across any very specific or focalized policies in these areas which could create situations of stigma. It is true that in many of the ten studied areas there have been and there are specific actions in this sense, but we understand that they have not directly lead to labeling such neighborhoods as dangerous or to be avoided. It is more precise to state that the lack of specific actions in these areas generates problems that could be avoided if the particularities of each location were considered.

The presence of cultural or identity factors based upon perceptions, values and shared experiences… has been perceived as very relevant, especially for the design of a new breed of urban policies. As we have already mentioned, the analyzed areas are generators of deprivation or lack of conditions to gain access to the existing opportunities, but at the same time they are its inhabitants’ own resources. The factor of closeness enables better access conditions to certain services and, in some cases, the presence of family or social networks facilitates the supporting, solidarity, and cooperating structures which do not belong to the ordinary channels foreseen by public institutions. In this sense, the presence and density of networks of ethnic origin (gypsy, immigrant…), or the presence of the memory of the area’s construction and its first inhabitants act as key elements of communitarian relationships.

Following, are a series of general elements to be considered in terms of the urban policies to be created. First, there is the need to recognize the territorial particularities of the different social problems. We have verified how each neighborhood holds diverse situations, and that the fine tuning of the applied policies, making the most of the existing resources and a precise diagnosis on its potential and weakness could assure higher rates of innovation and change in the opportunity structures of its residents. Urban policies, therefore, should emerge from closeness and social implication factors. Second, there is the need for policies to go beyond the segmented and partial social reality viewpoints in search for the articulation in each territory of the different approaches, the different professional logics, the different governing spheres. Urban policies cannot be limited to urban development policies. These need to be focused from wholesome communitarian logics, and we have verified how in certain areas of the small analyzed universe, this is conceived as a very positive approach.
As a following deduction, it is fundamental that urban policies be lead very especially by local governments and for their design and use to articulate the courses and initiatives coming from the different governing spheres, starting from the leadership of closeness, incorporating the rest of existing actors and resources in the territory.

Urban policies in Spain up to now have been public intervention program very focused on creating infrastructures, cleaning up locations and the construction of housing, public areas or transport access. There is no tradition which articulates these policies with social, education or environmental policies. Over the last years, some initiatives have emerged recognizing implicitly or explicitly the limitations of this way of approaching urban policies. At the same time, from the other mentioned policies there is a spurring consciousness of its own subject limitations and that is why transversal plans are so popular lately. The analysis carried out in the ten areas of five large Spanish cities, and the interviews carried out to groups especially affected by the dangers of exclusion verify the need to advance in the experimentation and application of urban policies, going beyond the limitations of urban development and limitations of the competences of local governments to focus from closeness on how to make the most of the existing resources and improve the inhabitants’ opportunity structure.

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