

**GOVERNING CULTURAL ISSUES AND SCENES:  
TOWARDS THE EMERGENCE OF A 'LOCAL CULTURAL POLICY DOMAIN'?**

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**CITY FUTURE '09 CONFERENCE**  
EURO/USA  
Madrid, 4-6 June 2009

# **GOVERNING CULTURAL ISSUES AND SCENES: TOWARDS THE EMERGENCE OF A 'LOCAL CULTURAL POLICY DOMAIN'?<sup>1</sup>**

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Culture has drawn the attention of analysts from cities indicating that this constitutes a new driving factor in the coming post-industrial society. However, the analysis is concentrated on its impact on urban economy and less on urban social structure, while its socio-political analysis has been even less developed. This paper will try to develop this approach indicating that culture might be generating a new local policy domain. This novelty comes from the objective of this rising local policy: cultural consumption; but above all because the issues linked to this escape the classical growth-redistribution framework of urban policy analysis. Cultural issues attract a great deal of support from both elites and citizens, as well as developmental projects, but conform a more pluralistic governance network than the classical pro-growth coalitions, a trait near redistribution policies.

The first paragraph presents some reasoning concerning the nature of culture as a local policy domain. The second one presents some evidence analysing mayors' agendas throughout European cities. The third one analyses the governance dynamic of cultural issues compared to other issues in Spanish cities.

## **1. Culture as a local policy: more than the classical growth-redistribution divide?**

The change from the industrial society to the coming post-industrial society has shown the crucial importance of culture as a driving force of economic, societal and political transformations, and cities, as well as concentrating the great changes from the traditional to the industrial societies, are the best place to analyze the role of culture in the coming post-industrial society. In fact, cities are changing their typical character of places of production to become places of consumption to a much greater extent (Glaeser et al., 2000; Zukin, 1998), in a new context where lifestyle, more than class, constitutes a force structuring social positions and relations, as well as political values and electoral competition around a new cultural cleavage (Clark and Hoffman-

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<sup>1</sup> This papers show some preliminary results come from the collaborative work between the 'Cultural Amenities and Urban Development Project' (University of Chicago) and 'The Cultural Dynamics of Cities' Project (Universidad Pablo de Olavide, funded by the Spanish National Research Framework, CICYT).

Martinott, 1998, Achterberg, 2006). Production relations and class politics seem to be replaced by cultural consumption and a new political culture linked to lifestyle and cultural consumption. Parallel to this big change, the nature of cities as a place of production is also changing: from 'industrial' to 'creative' places or entertainment cities (Clark, 2003). The 'new economy' linked to creativity, innovation, information technology and tourism, implies a new scenario for cities where competition is about the attraction of creative industries and a new kind of people as cultural consumers: a rising 'creative class' and/or visitors (Eisinger, 2000; Scott, 2004 ; Judd y Fainstein, 1999; Florida, 2002).

These changes pose cultural policies in the core of policy analysis, and introduce new challenges to the study of local policies and politics. In fact, the analysis of local policies has been enclosed around the growth-redistribution divide where culture and cultural issues do not seem to fit in too clearly. This divide, conceived as a dilemma for cities and local officials, has articulated the analysis of local policies and local governance. Briefly, the socio-political dynamic of cities has been, analytically speaking, a struggle between 'pro-growth machines' and 'progressive alliances', where economic development and welfare services are the classic policies. Business groups and civic associations used to be the associates of local officials, and the classical class cleavage around the right-left continuum constituted the main ideological criteria and political values supporting them.

This 'class politics' dilemma is also present in literature about local cultural policies. From a historical point of view, studies have been studied tend to identify three large phases concerning the conception of culture as a local - and national - policy: before the sixties, culture in cities was linked to the promotion of 'high arts' as a remote domain from economic development or 'popular culture'. At the end of the 60's and 70's, at the beginning of the post-materialist cultural shift and the action of new urban movements around collective consumption, culture was integrated in municipal agendas in order to bring culture closer to the inhabitants and also to promote more 'popular' cultural expressions by them and their new movements. Local governments ruled by leftist parties across Europe were the main actors in that change. In the 1990's, when a new economy linked to creativity, information technology and tourism was rising, culture was conceived as an economic tool for city development (Bianchini, 1993, Basset, 1993).

From this perspective, cities nowadays seem to confront a basic dilemma regarding the nature of culture as a local policy: an 'instrumental approach' where culture is a tool to promote economic development by using important cultural events and 'high culture', and a 'planning

approach' aimed towards promoting cultural services and events among their inhabitants (Basset, 1993; Lucchini, 2002; García, 2004)<sup>2</sup>.

A similar double-edged perspective seems to be present in the literature about the role of culture in contemporary cities. The 'creative city' thesis stresses the role of culture as an economic tool for local development. Here, the key focus is 'cultural and/or creative industries' and the employment generated by this economic sector. These are tools which are used to situate cities in the new socio-economic and territorial structure of post-industrial global societies, the main objective being to generate or attract cultural and creative industries and the 'creative people' linked to them (Landry y Bianchini, 1995; Scott, 2006; Dungey, 2004; Frith, 1991; Basset, 1993)<sup>3</sup>.

The 'educational city' focuses instead on educational and cultural services that are geared towards encouraging cultural life among their citizens. Here, the main objective is to promote an equalitarian access to culture, leisure and education as one of the main components of citizenship, in addition to the old redistributive welfare policies. Cultural or creative industries, public infrastructures and services, such as libraries, schools, theatres, museums and diverse cultural events, as well as other services geared towards increasing the multi-cultural character of city social structure, are the focus of analysis. More than just economic development, communitarian integration and citizen participation are the objectives.

There are, however, quite mixed effects. The 'instrumental approach' seems to have an impact on local economy, as well as on local social structure, residential patterns and opportunities of cultural consumption among inhabitants, creating a kind of 'tourist bubble' (Judd and Fainstein, 1999,) or segregating spaces of cultural consumption between downtown and peripheral areas (Mullins et al., 1999). This approach improves economic development, as well as a new kind of segregation in urban space and cultural practices. The services and infrastructures promoted by a 'planning' approach seem to be critical as 'cultural capital' with a view to boosting economic activity. A more vibrant cultural life around cultural amenities increases the attraction of the 'creative class' and visitors (Clark, 2003, Florida, 2002). These mixed effects could imply that cultural issues have a more transversal character than the classical divide between growth-

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<sup>2</sup> Big events around cultural and sportive issues would be a good example of the 'instrumental strategy', whereas the '21 Agenda for Culture', approved in 2004 by the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), is a good example of the 'planning approach'.

<sup>3</sup> From this point of view it might be possible to speak about a certain 'family resemblance' between the 'global city' and the 'creative city' because of their theoretical/analytical premises: a competition among cities creating a hierarchical structure according to centrality in an economic sector and the flux generated by it: a new economy and finances in the former and 'creative sectors' and tourism in the latter.

redistribution might indicate; at any rate, it would seem that cultural issues do not fit very well into the classical dilemma of municipal policies.

**Table 1. Culture as a local policy: four different main approaches.**

Main traits	The 'creative city'	The 'city as a cultural scene'	The 'Art for Art's Sake'	The 'educational city'
Objective	Economic development	Cultural consumption	Creating and consuming Art	Civic or communitarian development
Key instrument	Cultural and/or creative industries	Opportunities for different kinds of cultural consumption	Locales for presenting art	Cultural services
Main activity	Cultural production, distribution and workforce	Cultural consumption	Aesthetic and financial support for 'arts'	Cultural enrichment as access to culture breaking the 'high' and 'popular' divide
People such as..	Creative class or Visitors	Consumers	Artists and, indirectly, potential consumers of an aesthetic experience	Citizens
Prototypical place	Industrial district as a space for creative/cultural industries	Cultural scene as a space for cultural consumption	The 'art location' for artists	Neighbourhood as a space for civic development
Political orientation	Class politics	New political culture	Often non-political or loosely bohemian artist style, not linked to established political parties or civic groups ('arts are non-political issues' claim)	Class politics
Policy character	Developmental	Both	None, consciously	Redistribution
Governance infrastructure (networks)	Centralized around local government and business	Contingency, different issues generate different governance structures	Leaders are often artistic entrepreneurs, curators in museums, art shop dealers, constituting a mixture of public and private activities that may be non-coordinated	Centralized around civic groups, local and state government

Thus, the nature of cultural issues demands a new vision or approach to cities as 'places for cultural consumption' where different kinds of people (creative or not, visitors or inhabitants, high and popular sectors) develop different kinds of substantive cultural consumption. Cultural projects and initiatives attract economic activity and/or promote access to culture, but above all they promote different opportunities for cultural consumption in cities. As the 'cultural scenes' approach indicates, each amenity promotes different values which orient cultural consumption.

From this point of view, cities, as clusters of amenities, are different places of cultural consumption (Silver et al., 2007; Clark, 2003). However, the question is not only about the economic impact of culture or the equalitarian access to it, the new question concerns the kind of cultural consumption encouraged by the city.

Taking cultural consumption as an 'analytical lens' to study cultural policy implies understanding this sector of public intervention as a cluster of issues and initiatives that promote different kinds of opportunities for cultural consumption by different kinds of people in the same city – or in different parts of a city. This implies that cultural consumption, more than growth or redistribution, is the criterion required to analyse local socio-political and governance process regarding cultural policy. Some cultural initiatives by local governments could be linked to these two classical policies, but others lack a clear relationship with them, as well as the fact that new values and citizens' demands as regards lifestyles and cultural consumption escape the classical 'class politics' (Sharp, 2007). This makes it possible for us to think that the socio-political and local governance process was contingent to the specific cultural issues under discussion (or analysis) and local cultural policy domain showing specific traits that combine characteristics similar to both parts of the classical framework (development-redistribution).

The aforementioned has been summarized in Table 1. Evidently, these are analytical approaches to study local cultural policies. Even when complementary and simultaneous in the same city, they stress that culture might show a different character as a local policy. The 'creative city' should promote a governance process similar to the classical pro-growth machine model, and the 'educational city' one similar to the classical progressive model. Instead, the 'cultural scenes' approach implies a more contingent perspective where the character of governance process depends on the issues under consideration by public officials and other local socio-political actors. Furthermore, from this point of view, local cultural policies could show traits from both kinds of governance processes.

First, opportunities for cultural consumption, as a public good, could attract the support of a majority of political actors and citizenship. More possibilities for leisure and cultural activities for citizens imply extensive communitarian development, as well as socio-economic development. Building a public library or holding a large event means more services, as well as more employment. This is a trait common to local development as it is 'in the (economic) interests of the city' (Peterson, 1981). However, because of this, the transversal or double-edged character will trigger the involvement of a more pluralist group of actors than classical pro-growth coalitions. Cultural consumption involves decision about the use of local land, as well as the distribution of services to citizens that have no direct implication with it. For instance, cultural events, such as a

pop concert, are held in different parts of the city, where historical heritage is already situated, involving people who are not necessarily concerned with land use. Young people, recreational or leisure associations, the State Department of Culture or a lyric group do not necessarily have an 'interest' in land use, but they will be interested in the opportunities for cultural consumption promoted by local government. In a nutshell, cultural issues will mobilize a lot of actors, as pro-growth policies, but coming from more diverse sectors of local political societies, such as welfare policies.

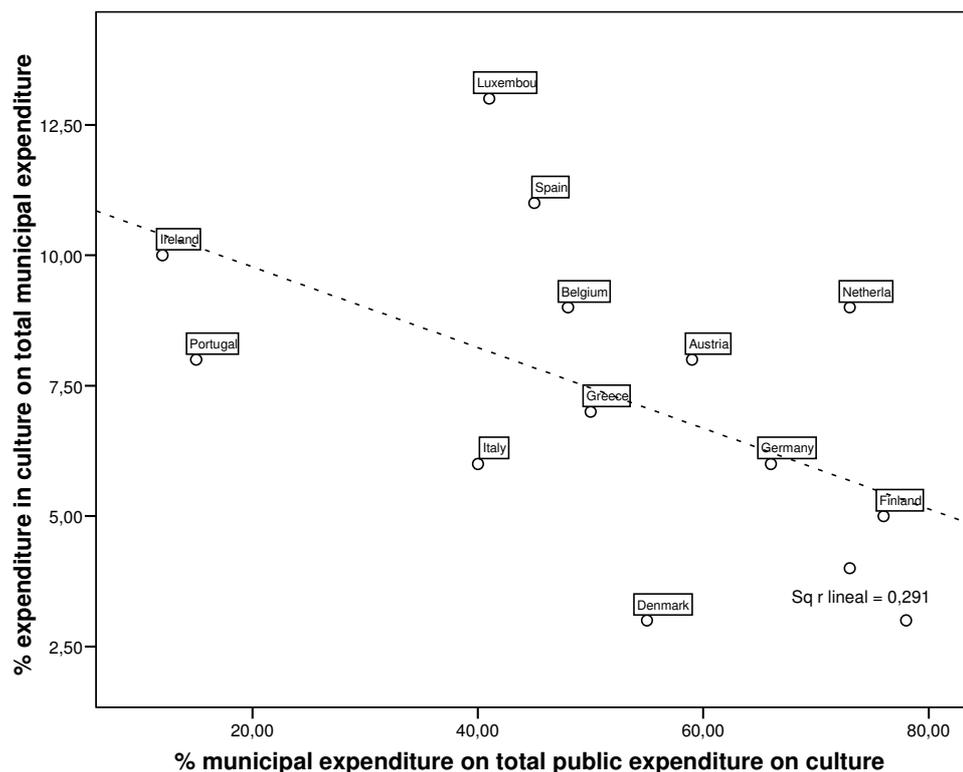
In fact, in relation to the specificities of culture, and more particularly the arts, it is important not to overlook the perspective held by many artists, namely that the arts are an expression of human creativity, sometimes genius-like or, like in the past, divinely inspired. Hence, the main dynamic is what happens inside the head and in the hand of an artist, not his/her surroundings. This leads to the classic "art for art's sake" view which is widespread among artists and commentators, many art historians and critics. It overlaps in part with the bohemian values perspective, supported not just by creative artists, but also by a broader anti-establishment, a colourful group of people who may define a neighbourhood or cafes or subculture in which the artistic creative values are a core element. Still many others seek to associate with or propound related values – by selling picture frames, smoking pot, wearing long hair, and engaging in the classic Paris Left Bank/Berkeley style of *la vie de bohème*. The descriptive literature dealing with this is long likewise the sociological one that criticizes its atomistic, non-social implicit assumptions (Passeron, 2006; Lloyd, 2006). Still, it would be a mistake to impute any political/cultural values to all artists; the main point here is the splendid isolation that arts-related people often articulate about politics. This "type" was more widespread globally before the 1990s, when the critical roles of the arts as drivers of tourism, and artists as entrepreneurs gentrifying poor neighbourhoods, and as models for creative cities and creative classes of people, projected a more visible profile. This type remains important if only as an ideal that policy makers or analysts can compare the three other types to. The type may be more salient for government staff, arts administrators and sympathetic citizens with a special interest in the arts, in contrast to leaders and policy makers for whom culture and arts are only one of their many concerns.

### **3. Comparing European cities: the 'transversal character' of culture as local policy.**

According to the aforementioned, culture seems to rise as a central issue amongst the priorities of local authorities and a central concern in the agenda of local governments. Evidently, all cities do not have the same opportunities to develop a cultural strategy in their agendas. For

instance, the differences could be explained by the 'cultural capital or resources' that cities accumulate, as heritage (tangible or intangible), cultural infrastructure, identity or intellectual capital. Normally in Europe, 'central cities' concentrate more and more diverse cultural resources than other cities, which make it possible, for instance, to hold large and diverse cultural events. According to the ESPON projects analysis, more inhabitants and urban concentration seem to be correlated with more 'cultural capital' across Europe (ESPON, 2005).

**Graph 1. The role of local government in cultural policies in Europe**



X-axis: % expenditure on culture of total municipal expenditures

Y-axis: % of municipalities' expenditure on culture of total public expenditure on culture

In addition to these cross-cities differences in 'cultural capital', the institutional role of local government in that policy sector could also explain differences. According to figures for public expenditure in 'culture, sport and religious activities', it is possible to distinguish two broad models in Europe: the decentralized North-Central model, where municipal intervention around cultural activities is a secondary function in comparison with classical welfare policies, and the Southern, more centralized, model where culture is a more important function at a local level due to the fact that the more basic welfare functions are the competence of supra-municipal

governments (Graphic 1)<sup>4</sup>. In addition to the role of local government, cultural policy at the national level used to be more geared towards literature and scenic arts in the Northern model, giving a more important role to the private initiative, whereas the Southern model seems to be more oriented towards lyrics, cinema and cultural heritage, where public intervention is more important and oriented toward increasing the public offer of cultural infrastructures and services (Lucchini, 2002).

Thus, at least these two variables (urban centrality - as a proxy of cultural capital cities - and the institutional design of cultural policy – the role of municipalities in national cultural policy), as an opportunities structure, should explain the differences in the presence and weight of cultural issues among local government agendas. Based on previous literature and comparative analysis of urban governance, other local factors could also be mentioned. For instance, the classical right-left distinction. However, according to new political cultural theses, the new character of cultural issues is not clearly situated in that ideological continuum (Clark, 1998; Clark and Rempel, 2001). Cultural issues cross this ideological continuum making it difficult to explain the presence and importance of culture as a policy in local government agendas from this perspective.

Priorities mentioned by mayors in more than 2000 European cities across 12 countries seem to confirm some of the classical accounts of local governance literature, as well as the novel character of culture as a local policy (Table 2)<sup>5</sup>. In fact, mayor priorities show three main agendas in the classical growth-welfare continuum. These agendas are linked to the traditional right-left distinction according to the party membership of mayors, as well as their typical main associates: business groups and civic associations, conforming different local governing networks in the classical pro-growth vs. progressive distinction made by literature (Mangier, Navarro and Russo, 2006). However, cultural issues are situated along these three types: an 'external strategy' around the improvement of the aesthetic and external image of the city linked to classical pro-growth issues (attraction of economic activities and population); an educational or planning strategy around the leisure and cultural offer linked to classical welfare issues (housing, pollution

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<sup>4</sup> In North Europe a high percentage of total public expenditure on culture is concentrated by local governments, but this expenditure means a low percentage of the total expenditure of local governments, where the expenditure on social services and education is more important. In Southern Europe, municipalities concentrate a low percentage of total public expenditure on culture, whereas culture concentrates a higher percentage of own local governments' expenditure than among northern countries. There are no data for France because in this case the data refer to municipalities and regional governments. Data comes from Espasa and Bosch (2006).

<sup>5</sup> These data come from the survey among mayors developed in the framework of 'Political Leadership in European Cities' coordinated by Annick Magnier (Università di Firenze). Information about countries participating, questionnaire and sample sizes can be consulted in Magnier, Heinelt and Bäck (2006). Thanks for making it possible to use these data.

or poverty), and a communitarian strategy around local lifestyle linked to well-being maintenance<sup>6</sup>.

**Table 2. The agenda of European mayors: issues mentioned as main priorities for their cities. % mayors indicates the issue as being one of their 3 main priorities for their municipalities**

Pro-growth		Care-taker		Deprivation remover	
Items	%	Items	%	Items	%
Attract economic activity	68	Maintain privileged levels of services and well-being	33	Improve services against marginality and poverty	26
Develop high qualified activities	28	<b>Emphasize diversity and tolerance in community</b>	20	Develop housing offer	27
Attract new populations	16	<b>Defend local lifestyle</b>	11	Reduce pollution	15
Attract wealthier population	7	<b>Defend traditional local cohesion</b>	25	Develop infrastructure for mobility	51
Defend position of city in urban system	21	<b>Regenerate or rebuild the city-centre</b>	39	<b>Develop leisure and cultural offer</b>	33
<b>Improve aesthetic of the city</b>	31				
<b>Change the external image of the city</b>	24				

Source: based on Magnier, Navarro and Russo (2006: 206). N=2376.  
Cultural issues in bold.

These results show that culture, for European mayors, means a cluster of issues linked to a different local policy orientation around the classical growth-redistribution distinction. Otherwise, we might point out that cultural policy could adopt different profiles according to the issues or strategies under consideration and stressed by local government. From this point of view, culture may be understood as a ‘transversal’ local policy domain challenging the traditional distinction between redistributive and developmental policies. Culture is not the first priority in the local agenda nor is it a clear and consistent local policy situated in the classical growth-redistribution dilemma of local governments: it seems to be a transversal policy domain crossing them.

A more concrete analysis about cultural issues included in the survey could help to illustrate this last statement. Based on the previous table and literature about local cultural policies, two indexes for cultural priorities or strategies have been elaborated:

1) ‘integrated cultural strategy’ index adding the positive responses to all the cultural issues; thus, a higher integral index shows more cultural issues being included in the mayor’s agenda,

<sup>6</sup> The agenda in table 1 comes from a multiple correspondence analysis applied to mayors’ answers. The contribution of ‘cultural issues’ in factorial solutions is less important than other issues in defining the resulting factorial axis showing their transversal character.

2) 'oriented cultural strategy' index as the difference between an 'external strategy' linked to a pro-growth agenda minus a more 'internal strategy' around local culture and services linked to a communitarian or planning agenda. Higher values of this index show a more 'instrumental strategy', whereas a negative index shows more of a 'planning strategy' or orientation.

The average values for these indexes show important differences among European mayors across countries: from the minimum of Sweden (Portugal and Spain) to the maximum of Netherlands in the integral index; and from the minimum of Portugal (Spain and Sweden) to the maximum in Greece and Belgium in the oriented cultural index (Table 2).

**Table 2. Culture in the agenda of mayors in 11 European countries**

Means in scale (0,1)

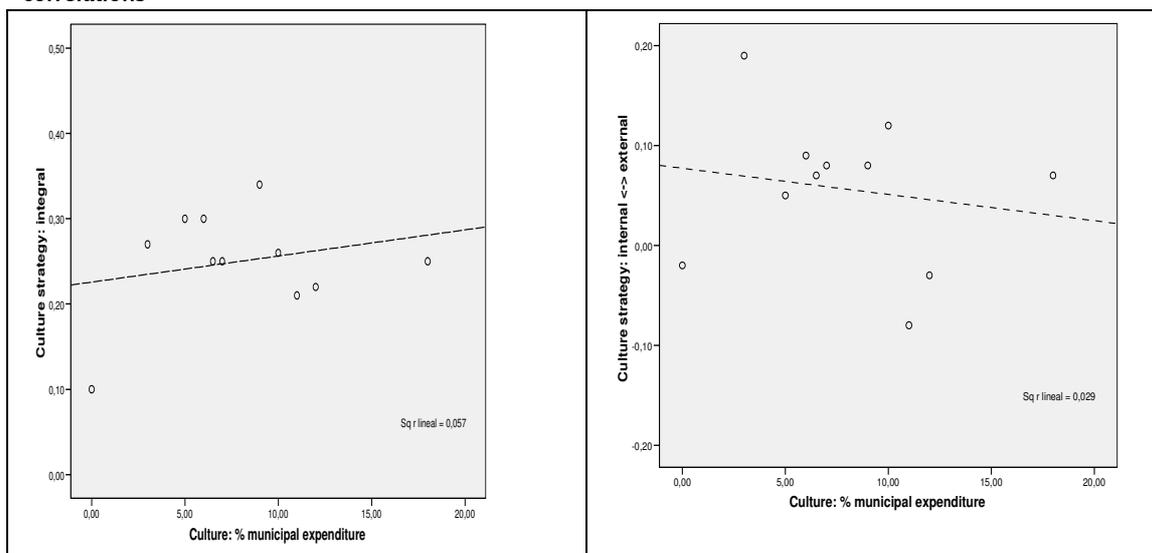
STATES	Cultural agenda (Indexes)			
	External (instrumental)	Internal (planning)	Integral (Both)	Orientation: Internal <-> External
SWEDEN	0,09	0,11	0,10	-0,02
GERMANY	0,29	0,22	0,25	0,07
NETHERLANDS	0,38	0,30	0,34	0,08
SWITZERLAND	0,33	0,27	0,30	0,05
AUSTRIA	0,29	0,21	0,25	0,08
BELGIUM	0,32	0,19	0,26	0,12
FRANCE	0,28	0,21	0,25	0,07
ITALY	0,34	0,25	0,30	0,09
GREECE	0,37	0,18	0,27	0,19
PORTUGAL	0,17	0,25	0,21	-0,08
SPAIN	0,20	0,23	0,22	-0,03
Total	0,29	0,22	0,26	0,06
<b>Correlations with % municipal expenditure on culture</b>	<b>0,07</b>	<b>0,37</b>	<b>0,24</b>	<b>-0,17</b>

Source: Euromayor survey (2006) and secondary data for expenditure.

Furthermore, these differences among countries seem to be related to the importance of culture as a municipal policy. In fact, more cultural issues are mentioned by mayors in countries with a greater weight in municipal expenditures. This also implies stressing a more internal or planning strategy (graph 2), that is to say, institutional factors which are linked to the role of local governments in culture policy matters.

**Graph 2. Cultural agenda of local governments by country: local government expenditures and mayors' priorities.**

Correlations



Are these differences also explained by the ‘cultural capital’ of cities (urban centrality) and/or the ideological orientations of their mayor (party in left-right continuum)?<sup>7</sup> According to basic correlations, more urban centrality (size) implies a more external strategy (correlations=0,063\*\*), whereas left parties seem to stress internal strategy (correlation=-0,066\*\*). Instead, these factors do not explain variations regarding the integral strategy index; this is a ‘universal’ strategy among European cities that can be explained only by country differences. A basic multivariate analysis shows that a country is the main explanatory factor and that, even with these country differences, the municipal size and left-party effects remain as an explanatory factor regarding the orientation of local cultural agenda<sup>8</sup>.

Therefore, the analysis does indeed show that culture is stressed in municipal agendas across Europe according to the role of local governments in the national cultural policy. Besides these institutional factors, the ‘integral cultural strategy’ seems to be extended across European cities; party differences or the urban centrality of cities do not matter. Nevertheless, the ideological orientation of mayors and urban centrality introduce differences in the orientation of cultural priorities: a more internal strategy geared towards the public offer of cultural services when municipalities are small and/or governed by leftist parties. Local opportunities and

<sup>7</sup> Urban centrality is defined using a question asked in the survey about the character of the city, the response categories are: ‘the core (or one of the cores) of a metropolitan area’, ‘part (not the traditional core) of a metropolitan area’, ‘the core of its own narrower urban area’, ‘part (not the traditional core) of a narrower urban area’, ‘mainly rural’. This interval variable correlates to the municipality size (as number of inhabitants). Mayors received a score on the left-right scale according to their parties’ scores on the left-right scale elaborated in the framework of the Party Manifesto Project.

<sup>8</sup> Rather than ‘urban centrality’ variable, the log for the number of city inhabitants is used in this analysis.

ideological orientations seem to explain the differences, but the institutional design remains the most important factor. This implies that the analysis of cultural policies in cities has to pay attention to institutional variables concerning the role of local governments in cultural policies, demanding cross-national comparisons. Of course, other variables could also explain the importance of culture - and different cultural issues - in municipalities' agendas, as a pattern of cultural consumption among local inhabitants and the presence and role of cultural associations and artists.

**Table 3. Explaining cultural agenda of European mayors  
MGL models (F coefficients)**

	<b>Integrated strategy</b>	<b>Oriented strategy</b>
Local government role on cultural policy (Country)	27.205**	5.062**
Urban centrality (log of inhabitants)	2.269	16.915**
Left-Right scale	2.282	4.281*
Intersection	112,292**	.606
R2	.135	.034

Sigf.: \*\* < 0,001; \* < 0,05

#### **4. Analyzing the structure of cultural policy domain: governing cultural city projects in Spanish cities.**

The previous analysis could confirm that culture is a transversal policy among European mayors, above all if culture appears as an integral strategy for local development. One of the best examples of this transversal character of culture as a local policy is the 'European Capital of Culture' programme (from here on ECOC). Launched by the European Union, ECOC is a competitive programme where cities' candidacies have to demonstrate their capacity to encourage and promote culture, because of their heritage, as well as their creativity capacity, showing the cultural diversity of Europe and also boosting European cooperation and citizen participation<sup>9</sup>.

Clearly, ECOC is an initiative where culture is the main local resource for boosting a specific local initiative or event. Furthermore, this initiative could be considered an example of the aforementioned 'integral cultural strategy' due to the simultaneous orientation towards socio-economic and communitarian local development. Thus, it is a good, or perhaps even the best, example to analyse culture as a local policy domain.

<sup>9</sup> Information about the programme in: [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc413\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc413_en.htm)

However, evaluative analyses of ECOC cities have concentrated on the economic impact. Less attention has been drawn towards the impact on cultural consumption by inhabitants or on urban segregation. Few or no analyses have been developed to deal with the governance process of the project, although citizen participation and local actors is one of the main elements used to evaluate candidacies (Varbanova, 2008).

The previously mentioned character of ECOC initiatives also indicates its exemplarity in analyzing culture as a policy domain because it should promote a specific governance dynamic. In addition to policy objectives or issues, policy domains are articulated according to specific patterns of relations among different actors that constitute its governing network or coalition (Knoke y Laumann, 1987). According to the ECOC programme, all candidacies should promote a high level of mobilization and participation among local actors in order to articulate a dense network of support and involvement. In fact, the transversal character of cultural issues should be a factor promoting this effect, similar to pure-growth initiatives, but shaping a more pluralistic network<sup>10</sup>.

Are the governing networks of cultural projects different from other local projects or initiatives? Are there any differences between cities depending on institutional and/or local characteristics? We will try to provide some answers to these questions by comparing two cities in Spain, though, being a case study analysis, the results are not conclusive across Europe or that country. The main objective is to introduce the analysis of local cultural policies from a socio-political perspective by proposing some analytical statements and methodologies.

#### 4.1. The CEE project in Spanish cities.

As previous analysis has shown, local government in Spain plays an important role in national cultural policy, at least in comparison with other European countries. A big part of their cities and regions show a high level of cultural development, where cultural heritage is a main component. Cultural tourism is the second most important economic sector in the national economy and one of the most basic orientations in cities, being very active in the ECOC program.

In fact, three Spanish cities have been ECOC and 15 are candidates to become ECOC in 2016 (table 4). Most of them are situated in areas where there is a high degree of cultural development and multi-specialization according to ESPON project analysis, where conservation, production and valorisation functions of culture show a high level in comparison with other Spanish and European regions (ESPON, 2005).

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<sup>10</sup> See the 'Guide to Candidate Cities' (European Commission) where 'citizen participation' is stressed as a crucial criterion in order to become a successful ECOC.

**Table 4. The ECOC programme in Spain (1992-2016)**

Year	Cities	ESPON type (1)	In the cost?	Support (%) (2)	Visitors	
					Total	Foreigners
1992	Madrid	CPV	N	-	6860433	14194004
2000	Santiago de Compostela	C	N	-	765478	1153533
2002	Salamanca	CPV	N	-	758950	996131
2016 (candidacies)	Alcalá Henares	CPV	N	2		
	Burgos	C	N	4	370889	8159485
	Cáceres	CV	N	14	300590	342243
	Córdoba	CPV	N	9	772076	1194462
	Cuenca	CV	N	3	317754	367153
	Málaga	CPV	Y	8	777294	1280748
	Murcia	CPV	Y	1	563814	672004
	Oviedo, Gijón, Avilés	CV	Y	19	-	-
	Pamplona	CPV	N	2	376404	495474
	San Sebastián (Donostia)	CPV	Y	3	567191	885283
	Santander	PV	Y	18	653632	810736
	Segovia	C	N	3	279592	346015
	Tarragona	P	Y	3	251266	373410
	Zaragoza	CPV	N	10	1128287	1434649

(1) Source: ESPON Project (2005)

(2) Source: Association of Candidate Cities to the European Capital of Culture (web, 150409). % of votes made, freely, in the web.

Using the classic ‘method of difference’, two of the cities in table 4 have been selected to analyze the governing network of this cultural project. These selected cities are very similar in their basic characteristics as urban centres and cores of a surrounding metropolitan area. They are situated in a similar type of ESPON area and have a similar model for socio-economic development (ESPON, 2005), nevertheless there remains, at least, two crucial differences. One of them, city B, is situated on the coast, and this makes both the domestic/international tourism that is linked to this natural amenity and the entertainment sector a major economic activity. The other one does not have this natural amenity, nevertheless it does have an important historical and cultural heritage. Despite the similarities, this difference means that these cities represent two different structures of opportunities regarding the role of culture, triggering therefore different strategies concerning cultural policy domains. In city A, cultural consumption linked to cultural heritage is the main issue, whereas entertainment is also present in city B. Otherwise, city A is a ‘cultural city’, whereas City B combines this character with traits of an ‘entertainment city’, a more ‘hybrid city’.

In addition to these differences concerning opportunities for cultural consumption, there is another crucial difference between local political cultures. City A has traditionally been more geared towards citizen participation and networking than City B. In fact, the first one has developed a more extensive participatory infrastructure, offering permanent mechanisms for public

participation, as well as more innovative ones oriented towards deliberative practices. A denser associational life as a ‘civic infrastructure’ is also present in City A. These more participative traits of local political culture in City A should explain a denser and more pluralistic governance dynamic than in city B, in the ECOC project, as well as in other local initiatives or policy issues<sup>11</sup>.

**Table 5. The profile of two cities.**

Basic characteristics		City A	City B
Similarities	City as a geographical and socioeconomic place	Core of a metropolitan area where main activity is around service sector	
	City as a cultural scene (opportunities for cultural consumption)	Public infrastructure for cultural consumption (theatres, cinemas, libraries,...)	
Differences	City as a cultural scene (opportunities for cultural consumption)	The ‘cultural city’ (Strong Cultural heritage)	The ‘hybrid city’ (Cultural heritage and entertainment, the ‘beach’)
	City as a local political culture	More participative	Less participative

Thus, for these two cases, cultural capital and local political culture could explain the differences among ECC projects between these cities<sup>12</sup>. The impossibility to diversify between ‘culture’ and ‘beach entertainment’ in city A makes ECOC a strategic initiative for that city promoting a high level of mobilization among local actors as well as a stronger leadership in local authorities than in city B. Likewise the more participative local culture should promote a more pluralistic governance network.

The previous question presents certain hypotheses about differences between cities, but the specificity of local cultural policy should be shown by differences among issues (in both cities). Due to the transversal character of local cultural policy, its network should be denser than other issue networks that divide local actors in the classic pro-growth vs. redistribution framework. The main hypotheses, therefore, are:

<sup>11</sup> These similitudes and differences have been elaborated from analyzing census data and quantitative data from different sources, content analysis of documentation from their ECOC projects, the Strategic Planning of these cities and previous studies made of them. In Annex 1 there are some quantitative data.

<sup>12</sup> Of course, other cases could explain differences among cities. Here, in this comparative case study of two cities, we would venture to indicate that these two crucial differences could explain some differences in governing the process of the ECOC issue in these cities, that is to say, we do not claim universality; as a case study we propose ideas (hypotheses), as well as methodological tools. Comparative studies including more cases could improve the external validity of our proposals.

- 1) Differences among policy issues:
  - 1.1) A denser network for the ECOC project than for other issues in both cities.
  - 1.2) A more pluralistic governance network than for other issues in both cities.
- 2) Differences between cities:
  - 2.1.) A denser ECOC network in city A than in city B.
  - 2.2.) A more centralized ECOC network in city A around local government than in city B.
  - 2.3) A more pluralistic ECOC governance network in city A than in city B.

In order to try to test these hypotheses, a survey among representatives of organizations in public, private and civic sectors in these cities is used, there being a total of 36 actors in each city<sup>13</sup>. The survey asks about different aspects and the communication network regarding different local issues: the city-centre rebuilding process, the municipal social services plan and the ECOC candidacy. The character of governance dynamics will be analysed using network analysis techniques on communicative relationships declared by actors<sup>14</sup>. Basic density and prestige indexes will be used to develop the analysis<sup>15</sup>. First, the ECOC project will be compared to other local issues situated in the classical growth-redistribution divide (city-centre renewal and municipal social services plan); then, a specific analysis for the ECOC network will be presented for the two cities to show their structure analyzing the centrality of actors and alliances among them.

#### **4.1.1. The ECOC project vs. other local issues: density, centralization and basic governance structure.**

Basic traits of communicative relations among local actors interviewed show that the ECOC project generates one of the denser and more centralized networks in both cities (graph 3). However, some city differences exist. The ECOC project in city A shows the highest levels of mobilization (density) and leadership (centralisation as prestige) in comparison with other local issues and the ECOC project in city B. In that city, all issues have a similar level of centralization, and, contrary to our expectations, the ECC shows a lower level of mobilization (as density).

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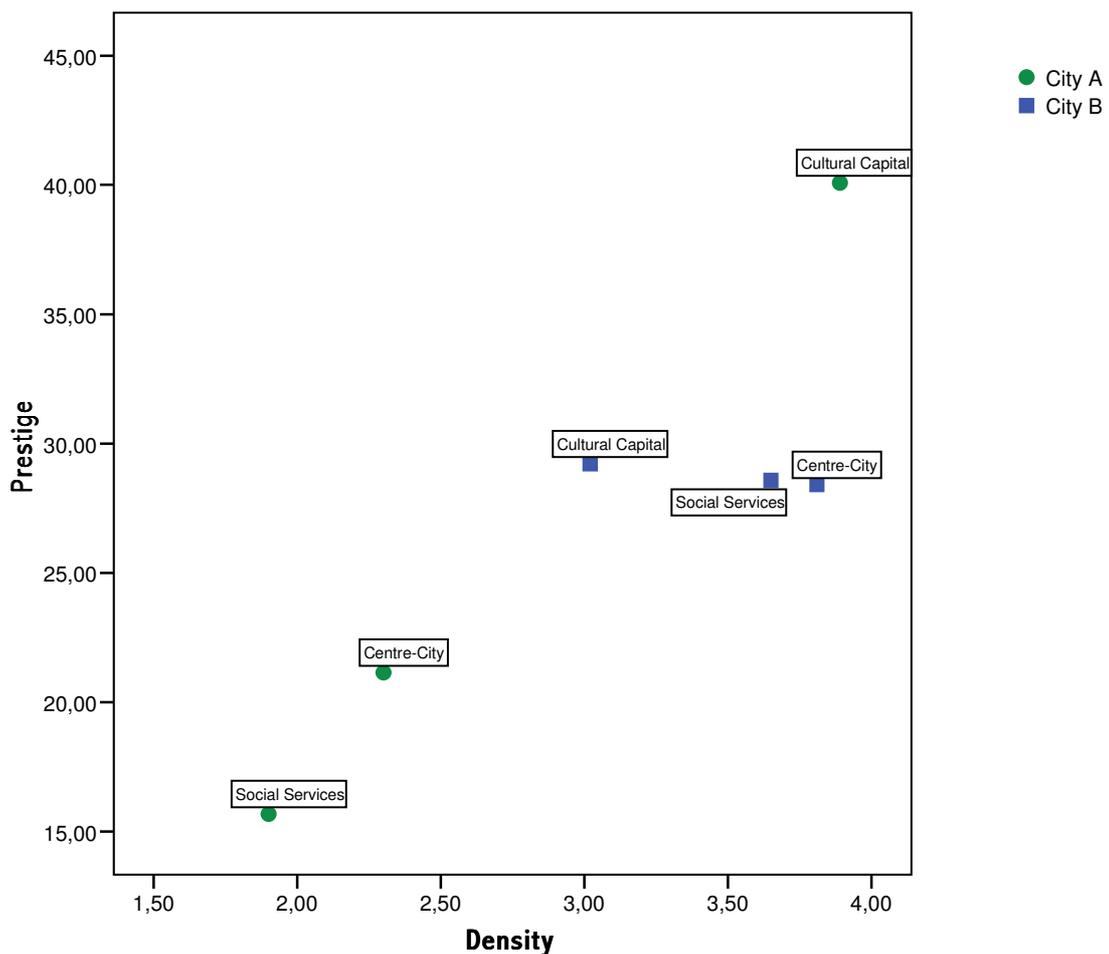
<sup>13</sup> The same kind of actors have been interviewed in the cities and included in the following analysis. For further information regarding data and methodological issues concerning the survey and methodology, see Navarro (2005).

<sup>14</sup> All analyses are carried out using UCINET v.6

<sup>15</sup> Density is measured using the classical density index on network analysis. 'Prestige' is measured as 'indegree centrality'.

Thus, this basic analysis shows differences among cities, as well as issue differences inside them; in particular, the importance of the ECOC in City A. Other basic descriptive information shows these city differences concerning this initiative. In city A, a higher percentage of actors indicates a favourable response to or support of the project (100% vs. 95%), and a higher percentage has participated in any meetings about it (80% vs. 70%). Furthermore, the ECOC project in city A has more ‘visibility’ than in city B, measured as the percentage of interviews that say that this is the most important issue for the city in an open-ended question (20% vs. 59%). Summing up, the ECOC candidacy seems to be ‘the city project’ for the ‘cultural city’.

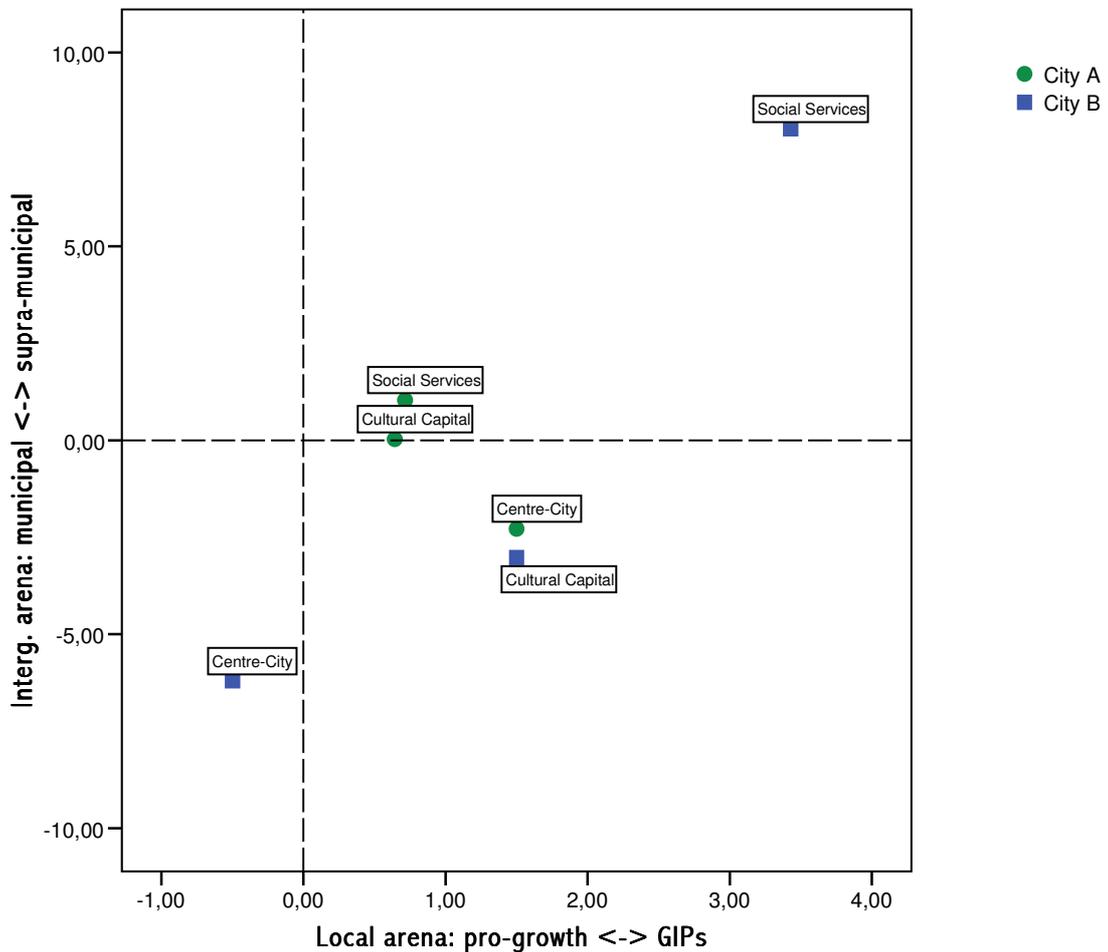
**Graphic 3. Issue networks: density and centralization**



These differences also appear on analysing the structure (centralization) of these issue networks. Graph 4 shows the results of the analysis of actors’ centrality (or prestige) using the classic framework of urban governance. An index for the ‘civic arena’ makes a distinction between pro-growth actors and public interest groups or associations (GIPs), and an index for the ‘intergovernmental arena’ points out the difference between local government agencies and supra-

municipal governmental agencies<sup>16</sup>. These indexes allow us to discover (and show in a simple graph) the governing structure of issues according to the actors who centralize their networks making it possible to compare differences between them. According to graph 4, there exist clear differences among issues: the redistribution issues show a classical progressive pattern in both cities (network centralized around GIPs and supra-municipal agencies), city-centre redevelopment near to the classical pro-growth pattern (pro-growth actors and local government centralize the network), above all in city B; whereas the ECOC project is situated in a more central place between these two trends in city A, and near to the structure of local progressive coalitions in city B (GIPs and local government agencies).

**Graph 4. Governance structure by issues: centrality of actors according to political arenas.**  
**Scatterplot showing prestige of actors in local and intergovernmental arenas**



<sup>16</sup> Local arenas are delimited using Ferman (1996) proposals. The indexes have been computed as a subtraction of prestige (indegree centrality) of actors on each side of the local political arenas. More details in Navarro (2008).

These analyses of actors' centralization, and previous analyses dealing with network density, indicate that, despite city differences, the 'cultural issue' seems to show similar traits of developmental issues in the general dynamics of the network (high density and centralisation), whereas the governance coalition in the network is more pluralist than the classical pro-growth machine. This project mobilizes more actors (density) and generates a more powerful leadership (network centralization) than others. This would imply that the ECOC issue, as an exemplar of the rising local culture policy domain, shows traits that combine the basic characteristics of development and redistribution policies: its transversal character generates a consensual socio-political dynamic (as growth issues), but it is supported by a more pluralistic network of actors (as redistribution issues).

#### **4.1.2. Governing the ECC project: the internal structure of local governing coalitions.**

However, despite these similar characteristics comparing ECOC projects with other issues, the differences between our two cities remain concerning this issue (its network). In the 'cultural city A', the ECOC initiative is denser, more centralized and more pluralistic than in City B. As has been mentioned before, the ECOC initiative is more crucial for the 'cultural city A' than for the more diversified 'entertainment city B' as local development initiative. This could explain high density, but not the differences regarding governance structure. The more participatory political culture in City A might be one possible explanation.

In fact, the issues in city A are close to an equilibrated situation in both civic and intergovernmental arenas (the middle point of graph 4, values equal to 0 in both axes of local governance). All of them have a more pluralistic network than issue networks in city B (more actors participating from different sectors of local political society). Thus, the participatory and networking political culture of city A seems to matter. This question is also present when analysing the internal structure of the ECOC networks.

Inside both networks it is possible to identify two basic 'alliances' or 'factions', but their members and weight are different (table 5)<sup>17</sup>. In City A there is a big faction around the mayor where local agencies, local associations, pro-growth actors and some provincial agencies are integrated. The other faction is integrated by regional and provincial agencies that deal with cultural and urban planning, as well as recreational/leisure associations. In city B, a big faction is

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<sup>17</sup> In Annex III the networks are graphically represented to show the shape of governing coalitions and alliances. To define alliances we have selected the 'faction' analysis: this shows actors who have a similar pattern of communication among each other and a different one for actors in other factions.

centralized by the local agency of culture. This faction is integrated by actors from cross-sectors of local political society, as well as intergovernmental agencies. However, the other faction is integrated by powerful actors from the pro-growth sector (chambers of commerce, business federations), as well as powerful local political associations (parties, trade unions and neighbourhood associations).

Furthermore, this basic comparison among ECOC issues in these cities shows differences regarding logic and fragmentation of their governance dynamic. In city A the governance dynamics seems to be structured around a ‘local-intergovernmental division’ with a low level of fragmentation, whereas city B seems to show a governance dynamic more fragmented around a division between an ‘ECOC faction’ and a powerful faction of economic and political actors. On the other hand, an integrated local coalition supports the ECOC candidacy in city A, where ‘culture’ is the main orientation in a participative framework. Instead, a specific coalition is struggling with local powerful actors in city B, which might be related to the diversification between ‘culture’ and ‘entertainment’ in a less participatory local context.

**Table 5. The governance dynamic of ECC projects: factions and fragmentation.**

City	Main traits	Faction 1	Faction 2	Peripheral and isolates	Governance dynamic
City A	Centrality (%)	88	10	2	<u>Logic:</u> Local vs. intergovernmental <u>Fragmentation:</u> low
	Actors (%)	69	14	6	
	Main members	Mayor and local actors across local political society	Intergovernmental actors	Civic associations	
City B	Centrality (%)	68	29	3	<u>Logic:</u> local struggle <u>Fragmentation:</u> high
	Actors (%)	44	31	25	
	Main members	Local and intergovernmental agencies	Local powerful actors across local political society	Civic associations	

## 5. SOME FINAL COMMENTS: TOWARDS A ‘LOCAL CULTURAL POLICY DOMAIN’?

The main objective of this paper was to explore the character of culture as a local policy domain. This exercise, carried out by means of analysing mayors’ agendas across Europe and two exemplar case studies in Spain, started from the premise that local cultural policy could challenge the classical framework around growth-redistribution policies. Its main concern, cultural

consumption, constitutes a new socio-political cleavage different from the classical class cleavage (development vs. redistribution). Cultural issues transcend this classical policy division including developmental traits (broad support), as well as redistribution traits (pluralistic governance network). In the same way that developmental issues appear as a 'consensual policy' that receives a great deal of support among elites, groups and citizenry (as mayors' agendas and network density have shown), likewise redistribution issues are supported by a pluralistic network made up of actors who are different from the classical pro-growth sector. The public character and appeal of cultural policy not only involve classical pro-growth actors, but also others who come from civil society and intergovernmental agencies participate in its governance structure and dynamic.

However, just like developmental and redistribution policies, its weight in local government agendas and its governance dynamic is explained by institutional and local factors. Here, the role of local government in national cultural policy, the cultural capital of cities and their more or less participative political cultures have been taken as independent variables showing a certain degree of explanatory power (in cross-country comparisons and the two case studies). Of course, the results are not conclusive. More and more specific variables should be included in cross-national comparisons (a better measurement of cultural resources, more specific for cultural issues, a better analysis of institutional design of cultural policy at national and municipal levels) and more cases and issues ought to be included in comparative case studies. So, more analysis is needed concerning the local cultural policy domain if we wish to be more conclusive regarding our statement about this emerging local policy domain.

However, even partially, the results and our premise about the objective of this policy, cultural consumption, indicate that in order to make any further progress, a new and specific approach different from the classical growth-welfare framework is needed. If the new post-industrial cleavage around cultural consumption transcends the class division that supports that framework, new 'analytical lenses' will have to be developed and used in empirical analysis. More than 'seeing' cities as 'creative' places for economic development or 'educational' places for promoting communitarian development, we would propose 'seeing' the city as a scene of cultural consumption where both aspects are present crossing the growth-welfare divide generating contingent and different governance dynamics.

This new analytical approach and more comparative analysis across countries, cities and cultural issues are needed in order to make headway in the socio-political and policy study of cultural consumption in cities. More than being just 'creative' or 'educational', cities are scenes of cultural consumption where creativity, participation, high and popular cultural practices come

together in the framework of a rising new political culture around lifestyle in the coming post-industrial society.

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## Annex 1. The two cities compared

Some traits of the cities		'Cultural city A'	'Hybrid city B'
Inhabitants		325453	566447
Foreigners (%)		2,33	<b>7,15</b>
Mean household rent: euros (2001)		8300-930	8300-9300
Unemployment (%) (2001)		23,50%	21,00%
Workers in service sector (%)		85%	90%
Cultural heritage	Historical sites and monuments (10.000 inhabitants)	<b>0,03</b>	0,01
	Public libraries (10.000 inhab.)	0,01	0,01
Entertainment	Cinemas (screen/10000 inhab)	0,15	0,15
	Restaurants	0,11153684	0,114926904
Tourism	Overnight stays(2007)	1194462	<b>1280748</b>
	Overnight stays by foreigners (%)	35,36	<b>39,31</b>
	Stay: # of days (2007)	1,6	<b>1,8</b>
	Index of Economic Activity: tourism (2002)	442	<b>589</b>

## Annex 2. Groups and institutional actors included in the survey

Labels (in graphs)	Sectors	Actors (representative of the main groups in each sector)	
CE	Pro-growth	Business Confederation	
CCel		Chamber of Commerce	
BANCA		Financial Sector Representative	
ETUR		Tourism Companies Association	
INMOB		Real State Association	
CPROF		Professional Association of Architects	
PRENSA		Local Press	
UNIV		University	
SIND1		Public Interests Groups and Associations	Trade Union
SIND2	Trade Union		
PP1	Political Party (left)		
PP2	Political party (right)		
PP3	Political party (left)		
AAVV	Neighbourhood Associations		
ECOLG	Ecologists		
GENERO	Women Associations		
CONSUMO	Consumers Association		
RECRE	Culture and recreative associations		
BIEN1	Welfare associations (handicapped, illness,...)		
BIEN2	Welfare associations (immigration, exclusion, poverty,...)		
AMPA	Parents' School Associations		
GM	Local government		Local government (mayor)
GM_URB			Local government: land use and planning department
GM_TUR		Local government: tourism department	
GM_CULT		Local government: culture department	
GM_BIEN		Local government: welfare department	
GM_PART		Local government: public participation department	
GM_TUR1		Local government: ECOC Office	
GP		Provincial government	Provincial government: (presidency)
GP_CULT	Provincial government: culture department		
GP_BIEN	Provincial government: welfare department		
GA	Regional (state) government	Regional (state) government (representative on the city)	
GA_URB		Regional (state) government: urban planning department	
GA_TUR		Regional (state) government: tourism department	
GA_CULT		Regional (state) government: culture department	
GA_BIEN		Regional (state) government: welfare department	

