

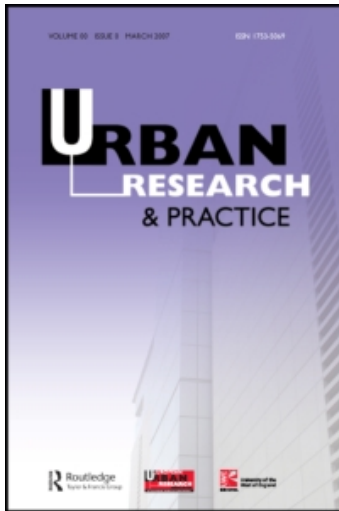
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Social exclusion, area effects and metropolitan governance: a comparative analysis of five large Spanish cities

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As a first step towards the exploration of the particularities urban social exclusion in Spain, the research presented here evaluates the significance of the urban territorial factor at neighbourhood level in order to develop relevant conclusions for the design of urban policies. After comparing the structure and dynamics of socio-spatial inequalities in five large Spanish cities (Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Seville and Murcia), we analyse how different disadvantaged neighbourhoods – inner city districts and peripheral housing estates – affect the life trajectories of different vulnerable social groups: long-term unemployed males, undocumented immigrants, single mothers, old people living alone and young people with a low education level and job problems. We identify the existence of significant differences between inner city districts and peripheral housing estates regarding the way they affect the life chances of their inhabitants. Furthermore, we show how different social groups are unequally affected by the characteristics of the neighbourhood in which they live. This all leads us to stress the importance of urban public policies being sensitive to the diversity of socio-spatial conditions of cities.

Keywords: social exclusion; area effects; disadvantaged neighbourhoods; territorial opportunity structures; urban policy

To what extent are vital opportunities conditioned by the place where one lives? More specifically, is living in one area or another, in itself, a determining factor? Which territorial scale most directly influences our life course? What are the most decisive aspects of a territory? And, above all, how significant is all this from the point of view of the design of urban policies? Such questions, aroused by the debate on so-called area effects or neighbourhood effects, have spurred a great deal of literature over the last few years, particularly in fields such as sociology and urban geography. Although it is not a new debate, the present economic restructuring processes and changes in welfare states, together with further transformations related to social networks, affiliation and reciprocity trends, are laying the foundations for the emergence of new situations of socio-spatial exclusion. This in turn requires a reappraisal of the debate on the area dimensions of poverty and urban deprivation.

Globalisation and processes associated with economic restructuring have exposed cities to strong socio-spatial fragmentation pressures (Sassen 2000; Marcuse and Van Kempen 2000). Individualisation processes and the consequent erosion of affiliation and reciprocity trends are weakening the communitarian fabric; together, these developments have largely destroyed more traditional economic, social and community structures in the most deprived urban areas (Wacquant and Wilson 1993). National welfare states have reacted differently to these

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processes of change; but on the whole they have been weakened, and are therefore less able and willing to maintain the levels of social cohesion achieved in the past (Musterd and Ostendorf 1998). All in all, throughout the European urban geography the number of notorious areas, or areas with a bad reputation, is on the rise, territorially expressing the growing separation between the lifestyles of mainstream society and those of groups that suffer from the greatest concentration of deprivation.

Such considerations on the spatial dimension of poverty and social exclusion have been long established in the United States, where the Chicago School, with its ecological focus, was created and where, more recently, the emergence of an ‘underclass’ was theoretically postulated and widely considered as a reality. An underclass is defined in the following terms: a product and a victim of the socio-spatial polarisation processes produced by economic restructuring; spatially concentrated in the inner cities, separated from urban suburban areas where employment is still available; and supposedly characterised by certain values and attitudes that hinder social integration (Wilson 1987, Massey and Denton 1993). The North American thesis of the dual city and the underclass have generally not been adopted in Europe, where the presence of a stronger welfare state seems to have restrained the dynamics of polarisation, subsequently adding complexity to its socio-spatial geography (Musterd and Ostendorf 1998). However, it has also been in Europe that an intense debate has addressed the factors determining the different socio-spatial urban configurations and the area effects of processes of social exclusion and inclusion upon the most vulnerable urban groups.

Starting from one of the most recent and significant investigations undertaken at a European scale on such matters,¹ the Institute of Government and Public Policy of the Autonomous University of Barcelona led a triennial research project (2007–2010), here summarised, on the processes of urban social exclusion in Spain and its neighbourhood dimension. It is intended to be an initial, exploratory investigation. Although the debate on area effects is well established in other European countries, in Spain it has hardly been discussed until recently. The lack of local comparative studies on the matter has frequently caused the uncritical importation of theories formulated in English-speaking contexts or in other European countries. As a first step towards the exploration of the particularities of Spain’s urban social exclusion, the research presented here has the fundamental aim of evaluating the significance of the urban territorial factor at a neighbourhood level in order to infer relevant conclusions for the design of public urban policies.

The structure of this article corresponds with the main phases the investigation has followed. We firstly explore the theoretical debate concerning the territorial dimension of social exclusion and we make clear our position, conceiving a neighbourhood as a Territorial Opportunity Structure (TOS). Secondly, we briefly explain the methodological options and analytical tools used in the investigation. We then begin the exposition of the results by identifying the main urban transformation dynamics for the five cities studied – Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Bilbao and Murcia – pointing out the emergence of new social risk factors associated with such dynamics of change. We then proceed to the central part of the investigation. We analyse, for each city, the structural characteristics of two of its most deprived neighbourhoods, one with the profile of a degraded historical centre and the other of a segregated urban suburb, followed by an analysis of the interaction between the different vulnerable social groups in the territory. Finally, we close the article with a short section of conclusions, aiming to highlight the possible implications of the investigation for the formulation of public urban policies.

Local welfare regimes and territorial opportunity structures

The decisiveness of the impact of territory on people’s vital opportunities is obvious when we consider wider territorial scales such as continents or countries. North–South inequalities cause

intercontinental migration movements of people aiming to improve their life chances simply by moving to a 'richer' region that supposedly offers more personal welfare opportunities. In Europe, the different configurations known as 'welfare regimes' (Esping-Andersen 1990) produce results that are clearly differentiated from the perspective of social cohesion and the welfare of the population of their respective countries. Even within a nation, 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 extent and intensity of the processes of social exclusion in the different autonomous governing units (Gallego *et al.* 2003). This effect is acknowledged to the extent that the debate in Spain is currently focused on whether the decentralisation of social policies has aggravated certain patterns of inequalities 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 nonexistent. The disparities between cities are usually important and caused by a series of factors such as the specific dynamics of the metropolitan economy, the unequal territorial impact of social-demographic changes such as immigration or ageing, as well as the type of public policies developed by 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 their former institutional monopoly in the design of welfare policies to private organisations (both profit- and non-profit-based) and to local governing bodies, all these acquiring new roles and prominence (Rhodes 1994). Therefore, we may expect the impact of local factors upon the well-being and urban social cohesion levels of the population also to have increased. More specifically, the concept of 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 the 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 dynamic of complex urban social problems (Blanco and Gomà 2002).

All in all, living in one city or another seems to be an element that significantly structures an individual's opportunities to access public welfare provision (e.g. security, environmental quality, culture or education). Nevertheless, how may we establish a similar hypothesis for the neighbourhoods of a city? To what extent is a life course significantly conditioned by the neighbourhood where each individual is born, grows up, or currently lives? This is the basic question formulated by the literature on area or neighbourhood effects. More concretely, the literature has, in general, been focused on the significance of the neighbourhood factor for processes of social exclusion, without taking into account the same issue in other areas inhabited by people with more resources. In other words, attention has been focused on exploring the extent to which the simple fact of living in a deprived area negatively affects the life chances of the most vulnerable groups, implying that the neighbourhood is not a mere container of socially vulnerable population, but in itself a factor that exposes such groups to a major component of social risk.

A number of investigations have sought 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 labour market, the educational trajectory, the probability of victimisation, or health conditions and consequent life expectancy (Atkinson and Kintera 2001, Buck 2001, Andersson 2001). Beyond the methodological debate that 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 the sociological literature emphasises supposedly negative consequences brought about by the spatial concentration of poverty. According

to such an interpretation, the neighbourhood's social homogeneity condemns its inhabitants to interact exclusively, or mainly, with people whose values and attitudes result in negative effects for social integration, producing some sort of 'contagion effect' nourishing the reproduction of the so-called 'culture of poverty' (Lewis 1966, Murray 1990).

This type of dynamic may be clearly observed in secondary processes of socialisation in children and teenagers, fundamentally those occurring at school or within networks of friendship. If this is definitely the main mechanism through which area effects act, as is commonly supposed by certain academic approaches and public institutions, then the recipe for public policy to counteract such effects is to change the 'social mix' of an area (Atkinson 2005). The policies of regeneration of some European historical centres, such as those carried out in Barcelona, have tried to publicly legitimise themselves on the basis of the intention to avoid or hold back supposed gentrification tendencies and to generate new dynamics favouring 'social mix', taking for granted that such a 'mix' would automatically generate positive effects upon the opportunities for social development of 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 the promotion of diversity and contact between varied and unequal groups. However, 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 in poorer ones. In any case, we consider insufficient any approaches to area affects that consider only cultural or behaviour variables.

Starting from the classical distinction established 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, there are effects related to territorial access to public welfare provisions such as employment, leisure, public areas, facilities and quality public services – defined by the author as 'correlated' effects. In this way, the first type of effects emphasises the cultural and behavioural dimension within the exposure to social risk, whereas the second type reminds us that the degradation of deprived neighbourhoods and its negative impact upon the population's life chances has a lot to do with the public and commercial agents marginalising these neighbourhoods or not assisting them in proportion to their needs.

We conceive the concept of a neighbourhood as a TOS, an approach adopted by the URBEX project referred to above (see Musterd *et al.* 2006); this offers a richer and more complex interpretation than others that are strictly behavioural. According to this approach, the neighbourhood configures 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 impact of area effects upon individuals' life courses could be explained, for example, by the quality of the infrastructure and the public transport system connecting the neighbourhood to the metropolitan central areas; the adequacy and quality of health, social, cultural and educational services in the neighbourhood or its surroundings; the existence of employment opportunities in the territory, or at least the absence of labour market marginalising behaviour because of the area of residence (address effects); the density and energy level of mutual cooperation and supporting networks between people, and so on. Of course, all of these factors operate concurrently.

Such variables orientate urban policies in a direction that differs from approaches that focus on altering the social composition of poor neighbourhoods. This necessarily leads them to adopt a more sensitive approach to the territorial particularities of social exclusion, in order to develop a more integrated perspective oriented to facilitating the participation of the different local agents

able to generate well-being in the neighbourhood. Above all, we would like to take into consideration that a policy promoting equal opportunities must recognise the elements of advantage and disadvantage that, in this case, each territorial location provides or denies to its inhabitants.

Analytical options and methodology

As pointed out in the introduction, the research project presented here 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 five cities – Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Bilbao and Murcia – over the last three decades, from the point of view of their urban development, socio-demographic and economic-productive transformations, focusing particularly on the emergence of new social risk factors. It also analyses the structure of socio-spatial disparities in each of the cities, taking as the starting-point a series of basic indicators of social fragmentation for each area or electoral territory, depending on the availability of data in each city.

Secondly, two deprived neighbourhoods have been selected and studied within each city, one with the features of a degraded historical centre and the other of a segregated suburban area. The statistical map of socio-spatial disparities in each city has helped us select the neighbourhoods to be analysed, 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 analysed such as their historical evolution, urban and social configuration at present, and, above all, each area's TOS. More specifically, other aspects have been considered throughout the analysis of the TOS: employment and consumption opportunities in the area or its surroundings; features of social and communitarian networks; and the quantity and quality of facilities and public services in the territory. We have combined documentary analysis, the processing of statistical data, and several focus groups with key informants – technicians and administration professionals, representatives of community organisations based in the neighbourhood, storekeepers and other economic agents.

Finally, the last phase of the investigation consisted of conducting around 100 in-depth interviews with individuals experiencing social exclusion. More specifically, in each neighbourhood, two interviews were carried out with members of each of the five target groups: immigrants in an irregular situation; individuals experiencing long-term unemployment; youngsters suffering school failure and difficulties integrating socially and finding employment; single mothers; and elderly people living alone. These are the five target groups identified through other investigations as being most relevant to the analysis of social exclusion in Spanish cities (Subirats 2005). Although the level of significance varies from territory to territory, having chosen the same vulnerable groups for all the city neighbourhoods has facilitated comparison of the results. The individuals interviewed were contacted through the neighbourhood's social services or organisations in the tertiary sector. The interviews lasted approximately two hours and focused on the individual's life course and their specific relationship with the neighbourhood where they live.

The results obtained from this investigation allow us to focus on different comparative levels: a comparison between cities; a comparison between central areas and suburban areas; and a comparison between different socially vulnerable groups. The results are briefly summarised below.

Change dynamics and urban socio-spatial disparities in Spain

An initial global analysis of the dynamics of change in each of the studied cities allows us to confirm that they have all experienced radical transformations over the last 25 years. In Barcelona, the 1992 Olympic Games initiated a massive process of 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 and firmly established itself in the urban economy.

In Seville, the effects of the 1992 Universal Exposition were similar. The urban transformation project associated with this event included the creation of a whole new arterial network; the railway network was reinforced and the high speed train (AVE) arrived in the city; it experienced a significant river transformation. Just as Barcelona opened itself to the sea, Seville also turned towards its river, which became the new axis of the metropolitan structure, as it had been a few centuries back. Since then, the city has developed a strong commitment to the tourist sector with the consequent increase of specialised stores, hotel accommodation and other related infrastructures; in 1999, the income coming from tourism reached 60% of the local GDP.

Bilbao has also undergone key changes in its urban and economic-productive structures. In the first half of the 1980s, the city was immersed in a profound economic crisis, as a result of the exhaustion of its traditional model of urban development, which was almost entirely based on the iron and steel industry, naval construction and other metal and electrical industries. From the mid 1990s, Bilbao experienced an important process of urban regeneration in terms of reclaiming former industrial sites and the improvement of accessibility. Moreover, an important change in the city's image has also gone hand-in-hand with this process; it has gone from an industrial and port city to a business city and cultural and tourist centre. The construction of the Guggenheim Museum and the transformation of city's long narrow tidal inlets has made the most of the large spaces left obsolete by the iron and steel industry, and, in general, reconstructed the surrounding neighbourhoods. Together, these represent the clearest examples of urban development that reflect the dynamics of change underway in the city.

Neither Madrid nor Murcia held any specific events with the same transformational 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 has also made the most of being the capital city, becoming a central focus of the economic-financial flows established from Spain towards Latin-American countries; together with Miami, it has turned into a type of Latin-American capital abroad. At the same time, this large economic growth has been coupled with a radical urban expansion, facilitated by 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 American cities' dispersed urban development model. From a much more peripheral geographical, political and economic position, Murcia has also undergone important changes. The significance of the agriculture sector, although a great deal more important than that in any of the other metropolitan areas in our study, has decreased in favour of 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. In addition to this, we would add the development of a phenomenon of urban sprawl similar to the process observed in Madrid. In addition, improvements in accessibility, the vicinity of the coast and the warm climate has helped tourist activities to expand strongly.

Changes in the social structure of all of these cities have also been very important. Some are in keeping with 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 and social health. Other socio-demographic transformations, however, have led to the

creation of new social risk factors, present to varying degrees in all the cities studied. A clear example is the radical transformation of household composition. Over recent decades the number of marriage break-ups has increased radically, as has the number of single-parent households. New forms of deprivation emerged in all these cities associated with the transformation of household types, such as those experienced by the elderly living alone affected by economic and relational insecurity, or by single mothers taking care of children.

Transformations in the structure of the labour market have also been significant. In this way, a decisive increase of the economically active population has been observed in all these cities as the fundamental result of the massive incorporation of women into the labour market. In the same way, a generalised decrease of unemployment rates has also been observed since the mid 1990s. However, the rates of temporary employment contracts in Spain are significantly greater than the European average, despite having experienced a slight downward tendency in recent years. The purchasing power of salaries is particularly low, especially when contrasted with the intense upward dynamics of housing prices. All this has led to the creation of new forms of labour and housing deprivation that have particularly serious implications for certain social groups such as young people, women and immigrants.

The immigration phenomenon is one of the factors transforming the demographic features of the cities studied. If Spain in the mid 1980s was a country that still had a positive migration balance, the increase of immigrants coming from countries to the south has been very intense over recent years, going from half a million immigrants in 1996 to nearly five million in 2007. However, the percentage of immigrants in Spanish cities still tends to be below the average of many large European cities.

Beyond the fact that all these processes of change are common to the national territory, we may also point out that the present socio-spatial disparities vary significantly depending on the cities analysed (Table 1):

- The immigration phenomenon particularly affects the cities of Madrid, Barcelona and Murcia, and is significantly less in Seville and Bilbao. In Madrid, for example, the current foreign population is around 16%, whereas in the central neighbourhoods of the capital such as Lavapiés the percentage reaches 50%. At the other end of the spectrum, Seville has a foreign population of only 3.34%.
- The incidence of unemployment is, on the other hand, significantly higher in Bilbao and Seville. This fact may explain the low levels of immigration to both these cities. Seville is at the top of the unemployment rankings, with 23%. At the other extreme, Madrid's is under 8%.
- If we focus on inadequacies in training, Madrid and Murcia are the worst-ranked cities. The extreme situation is that of Murcia, which has the highest level of unskilled workers and the lowest level of higher qualified workers. Madrid has a rate of inadequate 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 labour-educational polarisation tendency in Madrid, already identified by other studies (Observatorio Metropolitano 2007).
- Barcelona and Bilbao share a higher incidence of aging population than Murcia and Seville. The proportion of people over 65 years old in Barcelona is, for example, double that in Murcia.
- The incidence of single parenthood has increased at similar rates in all the cities studied, and there no significant differences between them, except in Seville, where the number of single mothers is very low, probably because the traditional household model is still dominant in this city, and more generally in the south of Spain.

Table 1. Factors of social risk in Spanish cities.

Dimension	Indicator	Barcelona			Seville			Bilbao			Murcia			Madrid		
		City	Suburb	Central area	City	Suburb	Central area	City	Suburb	Central area	City	Suburb	Central area	City	Suburb	Central area
		Employment	Unemployment rate (%)	10.85	14.46	13.15	23	16.9	25.6	14.82	26.59	24.87	11.52	18%	11.34	7.84
Education	Insufficient training rate	5.56	12.97	21.06	5.99	1.79	5.59	5.2	8.67	18.08	29.66	47.02	21.10	12.01	19.31	16.77
	High qualification rate	12.85	4.33	2.53	18.29	11.05	1.16	17.77	9.97	3.47	9.96	2.84	16.21	15.42	9.7	5.64
Demography	Aging index	1.80	2.24	1.09	1.03	1.47	1.47	1.94	1.98	1.57	0.89	1.11	1.08	1.46	1.38	0.8
	Immigration (%)	12.25	21.96	15.25	3.34	5.79	1.76	2.1	7.58	0.72	10.84	22.63	10.75	16.55	21.7	21.31
Household	Single parent households (%)	N/A	9.1	9.6	2.03	N/A	N/A	11.17	10.07	14.45	14.94	20.46	17.89	11.43	10.55	8.58
Politics	Electoral abstention (%)	40.06	49.9	48.2	41.15	43.64	52.52	31.68	39.26	44.45	30.61	N/A	N/A	31.07	34.24	28.82

Note: All data are the most recently available in local and national registers. They date from 2001 and 2006, depending on the cities and the sources.
N/A, Data not available.

- We also 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, abstentions reach 50% of the electorate, nearly 10 points over the urban average.

To summarise, although the tendencies of urban change have been similar in the five cities, the incidence of social deprivation varies significantly (Table 2). Analysing the possible explanatory causes of these variations goes beyond the aims of this research, although we highlight the fact that such variations – as well as others that have not been identified here, but that certainly exist – justify the need for urban policies to more sensitively address the territorial particularities of social exclusion in different urban contexts. Moreover, we find it useful as a hypothesis, in terms of what has been pointed out in the comparative literature, that the different socio-spatial disparity structures in each city respond to the different local welfare regimes in each metropolitan area.

The area as a Territorial Opportunity Structure

Table 1 introduces the main analytical level of this research, the neighbourhoods. 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, with two exceptions: the central areas of Madrid and Seville. The levels of training rates are also considerably lower. In this sense, and in contrast to what occurs from a labour-market perspective, the central areas are in a far better position than the suburbs. What this may tell us is that there is a higher degree of social mix in these territories, resulting from young middle-class individuals with a high level of education establishing themselves in central areas attracted by urban downtown effects (e.g. the availability of services, leisure and consumption opportunities, employment and transport). If we focus on the incidence of aging, on the contrary, this is higher in the central areas than in the suburban neighbourhoods; which, associated with high residential deprivation (for example, many buildings do not have lifts) leads to an increased concentration of elderly people living in situations of social isolation. The suburban areas, on the other hand, tend to have a younger population pyramid 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 among the higher and middle classes. However, it is clear that it is a more intense factor of deprivation in deprived areas than in privileged neighbourhoods. Finally, the results also confirm that the incidence of electoral abstention, as an indicator of political disengagement, is a lot higher in the deprived neighbourhoods than in the rest of the city, with the single exception of the suburban area of Los Rosales in Madrid.

The information obtained from the documentary analysis, interviews and discussion groups with key informants allows us to analyse in depth the TOS of these areas. Regarding the suburban areas, the majority of these were neighbourhoods constructed during Franco's dictatorship,

Table 2. Synthesis of the variations of factors of social risk.

	Barcelona	Seville	Bilbao	Murcia	Madrid
Immigration	+	–	–	+	+
Unemployment	–	+	+	+	–
Insufficient training	–	–	–	+	+
Aging	+	–	+	–	+/-
Political dissociation	+	+	–	–	–

between 1960 and 1970, during a period when cities grew rapidly due to the country's industrial development. It was a time of intense and chaotic urban growth, and these neighbourhoods are its clearest expression. In the majority of cases, the dictatorship's public administration simply redefined the uses of the land to permit its housing development in the hands of both private constructors and real-estate promoters or residents building their own homes. In some cases, the administration finished off the construction of buildings. The neighbourhoods were built on the outskirts and frequently far from the urban centres, though close to industrial zones where their inhabitants would work. The land on which these areas were constructed did not always meet the requirements necessary for housing development. Otxarcoaga (Bilbao) and Ciudad Meridiana (Barcelona), for example, were built on the steep slopes of mountains surrounding the cities; Ciutat Meridiana was built on land which, due to its high water content, had previously been rejected for the construction of a cemetery – as a neighbourhood leader once pointed out, what was bad for the dead was good for the living. In all of these areas, the quality of the housing built was extremely poor. The apartments were very small, although they took in very large families and many buildings lacked lifts. Nor was there provision of public areas, infrastructures and basic facilities. In many cases, for example, schools were built through the initiative of the local neighbourhood movement or churches that were established in the area.

What are these neighbourhoods actually like? How have they changed? The arrival of democracy and the consequent expansion of the welfare state initiated a new stage in their urban development processes, although they remain strongly segregated and marginalised from each city's dynamics of growth and prosperity. Regarding the provision of facilities and public services, the residents of these areas still have the sensation of 'abandonment' by the public administration. This is very intense in Tres Barrios – Los Pajaritos (Seville), where the administration's officers in the territory and the neighbourhood leaders agree on the total lack of any public facilities. In between the two poles is Otxarcoaga (Bilbao), which depends on nearby sports facilities, social work and labour rehabilitation facilities, basic health centres, primary schools and a police station. The neighbourhood has also been the target of an urban development programme (*proyecto piloto urbano* and *plan general de urbanización*); however, the neighbourhood movement has strongly criticised the lack of ambition and continuity of such programmes and their lack of attention to social issues. From a social viewpoint, there are a few programmes benefiting the neighbourhood's population, although such social programmes tend to focus on the city as a whole. Ciudad Meridiana (Barcelona), on the other hand, is an example of a neighbourhood that has recently been the target of territorialised and holistic actions that aim to bring about 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 by the Catalan autonomous government, established within the framework of a set of area laws for Cataluña and several social intervention programmes initiated by the local schools, health assistance units and social services.

The presence of economic and commercial activities in these areas is low. In Tres Barrios – Los Pajaritos, for example, there are practically no commercial stores. One of the informal activities gaining importance in the area is selling by hawkers, carried out mostly by residents belonging to gypsy communities. In Otxarcoaga, the density of commercial and business establishments is also far lower than in the city as a whole – 39.1 establishments per 1000 inhabitants, compared to the city's average of 94.89. The situation is very similar in Los Rosales (Madrid) and Ciutat Meridiana (Barcelona), although in the latter the north part of the district carries out a significant commercial role, together with Ciutat Meridiana, Vallbona and Torre Baró. The neighbourhood of Espinardo-Espirito Santo (Murcia) is located within a major commercial area, although the large commercial establishments have installed themselves in the surrounding areas instead of in the actual neighbourhood. In fact, the neighbourhood is located in an area that is

undergoing a significant urban transformation process: around the university campus, commercial centres and new residential areas are being developed. Despite this, it is still considered 'an islet of exclusion'.

Finally, regarding networks of affiliation and reciprocity, these processes have followed similar tendencies in all the neighbourhoods. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s they all relied on a very active neighbourhood movement, with a broad social base and considerable mobilisation power. This partly involved very solid mutual trust, reciprocity and solidarity ties, underwritten by the fact that families were large and that they all shared a very similar life situation – originating in the waves of migration within the country. Moreover, at that time the neighbourhood movement created links with what were then underground Christian movements and political parties that led the struggle for democracy. With the arrival of democracy and the incorporation of some of its leaders into the political institutions, the neighbourhood movement lost a great deal of its strength throughout the country during the 1980s. Also, in these types of neighbourhoods the affiliation networks began to suffer the dramatic consequences of unemployment, drug abuse (heroin), and an increase in crime. Since then, the social fabric supporting reciprocity has declined. Situations of loneliness and isolation are common among the elderly and, in general terms, the networks of mutual solidarity have weakened. At one extreme, Tres Barrios – Los Pajaritos has practically no neighbourhood associations, and associative activity is limited to external NGOs carrying out supporting activities in the neighbourhood. At the other extreme is Villaverde – Los Rosales, which has the largest concentration of associations per inhabitant in the whole of Madrid; 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 older, their origins dating back to medieval times; they all grew throughout the period of industrial and urban expansion in the nineteenth century. They have traditionally carried out the role of housing the working and low-income population. They were marginalised by the urban policies of the dictatorship, which gave priority to peripheral urban expansion, and this spurred on the intense socio-spatial degradation of central areas. Beginning in the 1980s, however, the historical centres started to play a very different role in the urban development model in Spain. As a result of the industrial crisis of the 1980s, cities have steadily had to rely more and more on tertiary activities, to the extent that historic centres have been rediscovered as locations containing new commercial, cultural and leisure activities. This is why some of the deprived areas in the old parts of cities are undergoing an intense regeneration process. New middle- and high-class residents are moving to many of these, attracted by the downtown assets of the area. Newly arrived immigrants also settle in these neighbourhoods, to take advantage of downtown effects and because of the continued availability of low-cost (and low-standard) housing and the higher proportion of housing for rent compared to peripheral areas. These are thus very diverse, complex and contradictory neighbourhoods compared to the suburban areas.

These areas are currently still very much affected by a sharp lack of public services, although these deficiencies are compensated for by their downtown location. Moreover, they have, in general, been the targets of urban regeneration programmes, to a greater or less extent. Bilbao La Vieja (Bilbao), for example, has been the object of multiple urban development projects since the 1990s: the 'Puerta Abierta' programme, financed by the European URBAN I programme, which created new cultural services in the city such as BilboRock and BilboArte, and the *Plan de Rehabilitación y Reforma Interior*, carried out urban development remodelling in some of the neighbourhood's strategic areas. There is also 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 programme integrating three neighbourhoods 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 organisations of the city. Although the urban development changes boosted by this plan are clear, the neighbourhood's organisations have criticised the excessive emphasis on urban development remodelling, the lack of solutions offered to the neighbourhood's social problems, and the ineffectiveness of citizen participation mechanisms. Similar regeneration plans and conflicts with the neighbourhood movement are to be found in the rest of the areas, except in the cases of La Paz (Murcia) and Valdeacederas (Madrid), where rehabilitation is in hands of the private sector. Particularly in La Paz, the rehabilitation process is being boosted by a powerful developer and construction company. Motivated by speculative interests, it offers to buy residents' houses in areas on the city outskirts in order to allow a massive housing and building demolition programme as part of the area's complete reconstruction.

The downtown assets of these neighbourhoods have been a powerful element attracting private investment. In general terms, the commercial fabric of these areas is highly dynamic. The neighbourhood of La Barceloneta (Barcelona) is representative in this sense. Despite its having a commercial structure that does not seem to respond to the everyday needs of its residents (the nearby stores are, in fact, in crisis), it has very dynamic catering and leisure sectors, due to its location on the city's seafront and its consequent capacity to attract tourists. The commercial sector in Bilbao La Vieja, on the other hand, is changing following the arrival of immigrant populations who are acquiring a very significant part of the traditional commercial stores, introducing new products and new more extensive opening hours. But, most of all, private investment is directing its attention towards the property market. The case of La Paz has already been highlighted. In La Barceloneta, despite public leadership of regeneration policies being clearer, private initiatives are placing heavy pressure upon the market trying to gain more locations for tourist businesses. For example, many foreigners coming from elsewhere in the European Union, as well as high- and middle-class indigenous people, are purchasing houses as first and second homes, generating sharp upward pressures on the price per square metre. In Valdeacederas (Madrid), there has also been an intense purchasing process over the last 10 years, where private investors have acquired land, store houses and business premises in order to demolish them and build housing for the middle class.

The property market dynamics in the central areas are, however, contradictory. On the one hand, these areas still contain a large proportion of low-cost housing, due to the decayed and precarious state of a good part of its accommodation. On the other hand, however, its repositioning in the urban system has attracted many people from the high and middle classes. As a result it has witnessed a rapid increase in the value of land and sharp increases in the price of housing, which has increased at a faster rate than elsewhere in the city. The speculative interests of owners frequently leads to cases of eviction, through legal and illegal methods, targeting the most vulnerable section of the population.

Finally, the associative fabric of these central areas is far more rich, diverse and complex than that of suburban areas. Again, in La Barceloneta there are large numbers of neighbourhood organisations, religious groups, groups of the elderly, of immigrants, storekeepers, squatters, and so on, and even umbrella platforms (such as Platform Defending Barceloneta) that bring together many organisations that fight against the area's gentrification dynamics. Bilbao La Vieja is also a good example of a neighbourhood with a high associative density. Some projects are quite innovative, 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 suburban areas tend to suffer from a shortage of infrastructure and public services, an absence of commercial and productive activities and a critical weakness in their associative fabric. Their residual situation in the urban system in general leads to low interest in

the property in the neighbourhood. Its population is still largely indigenous, although in recent years they have begun to receive immigrant populations who initially arrived in the city centre but have had to move towards the suburbs because they are unable to resist the pressures of gentrification. The central areas have their relative weakness in terms of facilities and public services, compensated by urban downtown effects and by the fact that public intervention in these areas 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 experiencing strong pressures from the property market, generating severe situations of residential deprivation and vulnerability.

In an effort to synthesise these developments, we may also point to significant differences between cities regarding the analysis of the TOS of their deprived areas (Table 3). Madrid and Murcia are the cities that give a greater leadership role to market agents. State intervention is relatively low, so the market agent's power is only partially balanced by communitarian networks. In Seville, the intervention level of the public authorities, market agents and communitarian networks is alarmingly low in the suburban neighbourhood, which seems abandoned to its own dynamics of socio-spatial segregation. The presence of the three types of actors is somewhat higher in the centre; in fact, the area of San Gil is experiencing a significant transformation, although it is not an area with the same downtown assets 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 centres undergoing an intense urban regeneration process led by the public authorities. Their historic centres also show high associative density. In the central area of Barcelona, 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 suburban areas of Bilbao and Barcelona benefited more from the presence of public and communitarian agencies than in the other cities, although it is by no means enough to counteract the processes of social exclusion in these territories.

Life course and Territorial Opportunity Structures

How do the different social groups relate to the area in which they live? To what extent does the neighbourhood 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 draw from the analysis of the interviews is that under no circumstance are territorial elements, in themselves, the cause of the exclusion trajectories of the interviewed individuals. The factors that trigger deprivation are 'extraterritorial'. In all cases, the situations of vulnerability are understood according to a number of different factors; however, if we should highlight any, the ones that stand out because of their explanatory relevance are precisely those that are 'extraterritorial'. For instance: irregularity is the factor that contributes most to the social deprivation of immigrants, and this is independent of the area where they live; among single mothers, it is the fragility of family ties that more clearly exposes them to a situation of risk, and such a situation is also independent of the territorial factor. This, however, does not prevent such disadvantages external to the territorial factor from being reinforced by location.

It is also true that many of the individuals interviewed stated that their neighbourhoods hold resources that compensate for 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 facilities, as well as education and cultural services. They also tend to stress the importance of family, friendship and communitarian networks in the neighbourhood that act as supporting

Table 3. Territorial Opportunity Structures in central and suburban areas.

Territory/TOS spheres	Barcelona		Seville		Bilbao		Murcia		Madrid	
	Centre	Suburb	Centre	Suburb	Centre	Suburb	Centre	Suburb	Centre	Suburb
Public authorities	High	Medium-high	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Medium
Market agents	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	High	High	High	Low
Associative and communitarian networks	High	Low	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	High

and social insertion elements and are taken as crucial among those individuals with stronger territorial feelings. Even certain establishments in the area allow residents 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 neighbourhood is not only perceived in negative terms, but also as a space of access to certain resources considered positive by the individuals interviewed.

Another idea that points to the decisiveness of the microterritorial factor is the capacity to move about and, therefore, to look to other urban areas for the type of resources that are not available in their own area. In the central areas, the dependence of individuals on territorial resources is lower due to the downtown effects, for instance being near to a wide variety of public and private resources such as health centres and social services, learning centres, libraries and areas for leisure and consumption activities. Similarly, in the suburbs, the general improvements in the public transport infrastructures favour the population's mobility. Also, some of these neighbourhoods, 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 courses. The way in which territorial elements operate, however, varies significantly in terms of the groups and in terms of the area, whether central or suburban. The following are the most significant conclusions we have drawn from analysis of the interviews.

With regard to the long-term unemployed, we must highlight the diversity of the group, referring to both the individual trajectories of those interviewed as well as the relationship patterns with the territory. In the 1980s and early 1990s, this would have been one of the predominating deprivation factors, corresponding to a middle-aged male who had lost his job in the factory as a result of economic restructuring processes. 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 such as chronic illnesses, addiction to psychoactive substances, mental health problems, divorce, or the fact of belonging to an ethnic minority (e.g., 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 effect of the territorial factor on these individuals' later trajectory of exclusion tends to be lower than that of other groups, especially among men who view their job opportunities as strictly located in the industrial activities on the city's outskirts. There are no clear patterns of variation in terms of the area as central or suburban, 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 greater degree of housing vulnerability.

Among single mothers, the critical point in the exclusion trajectory is usually the partner leaving soon after the birth of a child, a problem that is commonly accentuated by adding to this situation the care of other members of the family (elderly dependent individuals) and by the fragility of family networks outside marriage. All this frequently leads to psychological depression and stress. This group depends on two types of very territorial resources: on the one hand, casual family and neighbour support, which is higher depending on the strength of the individual's territorial attachment, no matter whether the neighbourhood is central or suburban; on the other hand, public educational, cultural and playtime services (e.g. nurseries, schools, libraries, play areas, sports facilities, after-school activities) free the mother from family overload. In suburban areas, the availability of these services is often perceived as scarce. In central areas, though more of these services are offered, they often do not fully adapt to the profile of the most vulnerable population, and tend to be perceived as facilities 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 proximity between the place of work, school and home is essential for these women; or the extent to which the neighbourhood offers opportunities to use public areas (squares, streets, etc) in safe conditions.

Among the elderly, the most incidental risk factors are health (physical and mental) problems deriving from aging, loneliness arising from the death of a close member of the family (usually the partner), a feeling of abandonment by other family members, and scarce economic resources. Territorial elements have a strong effect on this group, and the differences between central areas and suburban neighbourhoods are significant here. In both types of area, urban development and aspects related to the built environment and the area's topography play an important role; for example, buildings lacking lifts and other architectural barriers create problems, and the steep gradients of the suburbs exacerbates these situations. The availability of institutional and communitarian support networks is also fundamental, for instance those offered by social and health services, homes for the elderly, facilities for the elderly and, more generally, the provision of specific services to this group. Their dependence on such territorial resources is sharper than that of other groups due to their particular mobility problems. With regard to the differences between the centre and the suburbs, it is important to highlight how the most deprived elderly individuals are common targets of eviction from their homes, by both legal and illegal methods.

The main causes of deprivation among young people concern their school career: lack of motivation for their studies, truancy, negative influence of other group members, and antisocial behaviour at school, as well as other types of antisocial behaviour in public areas. School failure for this group creates obstacles not only to their employment insertion, but especially for their professional promotion. Concerning the effects of territorial factors, this group's greater capacity to move around the city generally reduces their dependency on the territorial structure of opportunities. They tend to move more around the city searching for job and leisure opportunities. They even make friends with a 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 for their opportunities to find work. They tend to see the neighbourhood as an area that offers very little in the way of leisure opportunities; they often feel little identification with the area, and express their wish to leave. Young people in the centre tend to identify more (in a positive way) with their neighbourhood, and are more active in the area's affiliation fabric. However, as for all the groups living in the centre, they find it increasingly difficult to continue living in their neighbourhood due to excessive increases in housing prices.

Finally, referring to immigrants in irregular circumstances, their situation of deprivation comes from the fact of not having a residence permit: the threat of being forcibly repatriated makes them feel very insecure. In many cases, this situation of vulnerability leads them to live in deprived housing conditions – for example, paying high rents out of proportion to their income and living in overcrowded conditions. It also leads to working without contracts, and therefore to a situation where they lack legal protection. Despite this irregularity, they manage to gain access to institutional support services such as education, health, social and employment insertion, all of which are of a strongly territorial nature. In their own 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 neighbourhood of stores and services oriented to immigrant populations – telephone booths, food stores, legal advice services for foreigners – satisfy the group's specific needs and may constitute a job opportunity in the neighbourhood. Many of them arrive in the city through the centre, attracted by the presence of these types of public, commercial and communitarian resources, but they have

suffered from pressures in the property market and have had to move to the suburbs, where the rate of immigration growth has, in recent years, been a lot higher than in the centre, although overall the centre still holds a higher proportion of the immigrant population.

Conclusions

Our investigation has marked similarities with other studies carried out concerning 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 to and exit from situations of social vulnerability and the risk of exclusion. In addition to the particular situations of personal or family deprivation and deficiency, which tend to be common among these groups, factors such as isolation, lack of adequate public transport, and insufficient commercial services and public service infrastructures compound their situation. It is evident that this does not happen in the same way in the five cities studied, and, in this sense, the presence of a social network or proactive policies in this direction has a clear influence. In the central areas analysed, the impact of the territorial factor on living conditions and on opportunity structures is less decisive, especially when individuals make the most of downtown effects to gain access to 'the city's' services. However, the conditions of substandard housing in some of the areas where urban regeneration measures have not been taken are indeed significant, as they become low-price locations and are, lately, being occupied by immigrant individuals and families, which later contributes to the neighbourhood's 'notoriety'. At the same time, and most recently, the increase in urban land values in 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 the extreme situations found in some European cities, in the areas of these large cities, because throughout the 1980s and the 1990s the issues ignored by the former dictatorship were vigorously addressed, and therefore lifestyle conditions generally improved. Only in the last 10 years have the effects of major changes in the productive system (deindustrialisation, dislocation), in employment conditions (instability), in the household structure (fragility, break-ups), or in social composition (immigration and the unprecedented lengthening of the life cycle) begun to have an impact. It is only 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 that may be useful to us from the viewpoint of determining which policies should be pursued to counter this situation, it is relevant to consider some elements that have not appeared in the investigation we have carried out. On the one hand, public housing policies have had negative consequences, as they have turned out to be segregating and hinder the 'normalisation' of certain areas. In the situations analysed, the major form of urban growth initiated in the last period of the dictatorship, coming from a period of economic expansion and massive internal migration, encouraged the building of housing areas that did not take into account their connection with the existing urban structure. These housing projects were often carried out in complicated locations or without adequate transport connections, allowing land costs to dominate the process.

In the examples analysed, we have not come across any very specific or focused policies in these areas that could create situations of social stigma. It is true that in many of the 10 areas studied there have been – and continue to be – specific actions in this sense, but we understand that they have not directly led to labelling such neighbourhoods as 'dangerous', nor to their being avoided by others. 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 taken into account when developing policies.

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, these areas are generators of deprivation or lack the conditions that would allow their residents to gain access to existing opportunities; but at the same time, they provide their inhabitants with resources. The factor of proximity creates better conditions for access to certain services and, in some cases, the presence of family or social networks facilitates the continued existence of supporting, cohesive, and cooperating structures that exist outside the ordinary channels provided through public institutions. In this sense, the presence and density of networks of ethnic origin (e.g. gypsies, immigrants), or the presence of the memory of the area's construction and its first inhabitants, act as key elements of communitarian relationships.

The 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 recognise the territorial specificities of different social problems. We have confirmed how each neighbourhood contains diverse situations, and that the fine tuning of the policies applied, making the most of the existing resources and a precise diagnosis of its potential and weakness, could ensure higher rates of innovation and change in the opportunity structures of its residents. Urban policies should therefore emerge from the recognition of these social and relational factors. Second, there is a need for policies to go beyond the fragmented and partial social viewpoints from which they currently develop. Policies should seek to integrate each territory's different approaches, different professional logics and different governing spheres. Urban policies cannot be limited to urban development policies. They need to be focused on and build upon community-based logics, and we have demonstrated how in these areas this is conceived as a very positive approach. Building upon this recognition, it is essential that urban policies be led by local government; that their design and implementation articulate the experiences and initiatives coming from the different governing spheres, starting from local leadership and incorporating the rest of the existing actors and resources in the territory.

Urban policies in Spain up to now have been public intervention programmes focused largely on creating infrastructure, cleaning up locations and constructing housing, public areas or transport access. There is no tradition that articulates these policies with social, educational or environmental policies. In recent years, some initiatives have emerged recognising, implicitly or explicitly, the limitations of this way of approaching urban policies. At the same time, arising from other policies already mentioned, there is a growing awareness of their limitations, and this is why transversal approaches have recently become so popular. The analysis carried out in the 10 areas, and the interviews carried out with groups affected by the dangers of exclusion, confirm the need to advance the testing and application of urban policies that go beyond the limitations of urban development and the limitations and competences of local governments, if policies are to make the most of existing resources and improve the inhabitants' opportunity structure.

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Note

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