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THE LOCAL WELFARE SYSTEM IN BARCELONA: CORE IDEAS

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INTRODUCTION : THE SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM IN BARCELONA

1.1. The local welfare system

The administrative decentralization of the political structure in Spain grants regional and local councils a set of legislative and executive competences, which, in the case of social welfare services, are very far-reaching¹. This decentralization of competencies has given considerable leeway to each territory in the design of their social protection systems. The case of the city of Barcelona is a good example for studying the main forces that have marked out the way in which the social welfare system has developed at a local level. In order to understand it, we need to analyse what has happened over the last few decades.

At the time of the first local elections after the restoration of democracy, in 1979, there was no organized social welfare system in Spain. Health and education were the only areas of social policy that were not discontinued during the dictatorship. The Spanish Constitution now establishes that the Autonomous communities have the competence on meeting the population's needs through a network of services and provisions. The state legislation on local government also establishes that cities of over 200,000 inhabitants must design their own services in this area.

From these first local elections, and until 2010, a period of over 30 years, the city council of Barcelona was in the hands of the left (the Socialist Party won the elections and governed in coalition with another two left-wing parties). The main characteristics of the social welfare of the city, therefore, are (1) continuity in the government team over a long period of time, (2) starting from zero, i.e. they had to build the system from scratch, and (3) citizens who - after the long period of dictatorship - wanted to become involved in political action, to participate. Municipal policymakers made the most of this potential when it came to setting up the local welfare system, as to some extent did other political actors (the opposition parties and civil society). From the review of council records and interviews we have carried out, we can find no great debates or proposals for designing alternative programmes.

The first decade, the 1980s, saw the creation of the social services network and, at autonomous community level, the passing of the first Social Services Act, but it was probably in the 1990s when it can be said that the city's social welfare model was consolidated. Some years earlier, in 1987, a Social Welfare Department had been set up in the city council. It is significant that this was the first time any government body in Spain had used the term "social welfare" to define an area of political action. (A ministry was later created in the government of Spain and a regional ministry in the Autonomous Community of Catalonia). For over 10 years the same politicians ran the department, a situation which has had an impact on its development right up until today.

In more general terms, in Barcelona we find an objective that cuts across all areas of political action: the "modernization" of the city. This is a manifestation of the desire to recover the spirit of enterprise that the city once had, to recover its own brand of economic and cultural dynamism that was forbidden during the years of the dictatorship. It finds its expression in the construction of the "Barcelona model", a model that can be seen clearly in the changes in urban development as a result of the 1992 Olympic Games, the success of which was to a large extent due to the involvement of civil society (a kind of ritual act of "civil religion" as one author described it), although it also affects other areas of society.

¹See Aguilar, Escobedo & Montagut (2011)

Policymakers in the Social Welfare Department set themselves a basic goal of building a social services model that was participative. As no welfare services system yet existed, there was no widespread culture of commitment to, or participation in, the city's social welfare. The structures used to encourage and enable people to commit themselves to collective responsibilities would also have to be created.

Social policy was the great unknown. There was no third pillar of social welfare and therefore we had to create a welfare state culture” ... “In Barcelona there were rules for participation and all the work that had been done between 1983 and 1987 aimed at decentralization and participation, and therefore ... let's create a department, a department we can use to create this shared welfare state consciousness ... In other words a department involving organizations large and small from different sectors that don't normally think in terms of “welfare”, and hence the idea can be sown and a particular perception created. And also if Barcelona City Council has any proposals to make regarding social policy, they could find a testing ground here. It could be a space where we can say: look, this is how we want to do it, what do you think? That way they can be discussed before being implemented. And finally it could also be useful for coming up with proposals. (I-1)

The value of citizen participation is a value present in the development of the social welfare system². It is a value encouraged by left-wing parties but also shared by their major opponent, the centre-right nationalist coalition CIU/Convergència i Unió. (Until very recently the conservative Partido Popular (PP) had very little presence in the running of the city because to a large extent the right-wing vote in Catalonia goes to the coalition formed by the Nationalist Party and the Christian Democrats, CIU). Being able to count on civil society is also important for a nationalist party, and therefore making civil society stronger also falls within its aims. The Christian Democrats, who form a coalition with the Nationalists, share the desire to create a system of social welfare services for the population as a whole. Perhaps this is one reason why there were no great debates about the model being developed and why it was easy to reach a consensus - or at least not encounter too many obstacles when it came to putting the new policies into effect.

Table 1. Percentage of votes in all the municipal elections of Barcelona city

(*)	2011	2007	2003	1999	1995	1991	1987	1983	1979
PSC	22,14	29,91	33,6	45,19	38,39	42,95	43,61	45,8	34,05
CIU	28,73	25,46	21,4	21,69	30,56	34,06	35,46	27,37	18,59
ICV	10,39	9,35	12,07	6,3	7,61	6,42	5,16	6,92	
ERC	5,59	8,81	12,8	6,5	5,12	2,57	2,31	3,86	
PP	17,24	15,61	16,12	14,87	16,62	9,79	7,56	12,98	

- (*) PSC + ICV: Left wing coalitions during all the elections
 CiU: nationalist and centre/right party
 ERC: nationalist and left party (sometimes in coalitions with the left wing)
 PP: Right wing party.

1.2. Debates on council policy

²In fact one of the programmes we will be analysing in WP5 - the “Citizen's Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona” - is related to this participation value, the basis of the city's social welfare system.

The disputes or debate between parties revolve around, on the one hand, the competencies that should or should not be taken on by the council, and on the other the relationship between “the public” and “the private”, an argument that still continues to mark out the positions between what we could call the left and the right of the political spectrum. On the subject of competencies, over virtually the whole of the period studied there is rivalry between governments of different political hues covering different territorial areas (national, regional and local), each with different competencies which, although easy to define on paper, give rise to various problems in day-to-day political activity. So there are three levels: Spanish government, which was governed by the Socialist Party since 1982 until 1996; the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, which was governed for 23 years by the nationalist coalition CIU (1980-2003); and finally Barcelona City Council, which was governed by the socialists either alone or in a coalition of left-wing parties (1979-2011). This political structure easily leads to debate about which government level's “job” it is to take action in a particular field and even provides the tools to make political action difficult - and in some cases impossible - for a rival party governing at another territorial level.

Council debates over the last ten years enable us to monitor how these two positions have evolved. A review of the documents from council committees for these years confirms that political life has, to a very great extent, revolved around these two subjects. Debate is still concentrated on (1) the rivalry/affinity between levels of government with different competencies, and (2) on how strong/weak the role of services provided by private companies should be. The search for a “Barcelona model” has meanwhile continued ever more seriously in various political areas, and collaboration with civil society in social welfare matters has also increased significantly.

1.3. Electoral programmes

An analysis of the latest electoral programmes for the council elections held in 2010 allows us to see how these positions have been consolidated in the course of this period. These programmes reinforce trends that had already taken shape. The left-wing parties point to the work carried out so far and explain the need for continuity in their model, while the nationalists build up the role of civil society and suggest there is a need to extend services by also considering those provided by the private sector. The conservative Partido Popular, on the other hand, presented no specific programme for the city but designed a single programme for all Spanish councils. Their policies are therefore very general and do not specify the local social welfare model.

On the left we consider two political parties: the Socialist Party of Catalonia (Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya - PSC) and the coalition formed by the Initiative for Catalonia Greens/United Alternative Left (Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds/Esquerra Unida i Alternativa - ICV-EUiA), which includes the old communist parties and some of the Catalan environmentalists. It was this coalition that ran the area of social welfare in the city for over 20 years.

(a) From the left:

The **PSC** stresses the work it has carried out in the course of its lengthy period in power and expresses it as principles that should apply in the city:

Barcelona is committed to being a city of inclusion, in which social and cultural factors, origin, beliefs and age cannot be obstacles to guaranteeing full access to public services. These things are an

integral part of the city plan that brings together those values we support: equality, equal opportunities, cohesion, coexistence, justice and solidarity. It is therefore very important to remember that there can be no obstacles such as income, age-related needs or gender to block access or make access difficult to services in this equal opportunities process. (p.21)

As far as today's context is concerned, it incorporates the need for city governance to be shared with the people and organizations that form the third sector working in the city:

In today's context, social policies call for a strengthening of the governance model in which citizens and civil society will see the roles they carry out strengthened. Joint responsibility on the one hand and the participation of organizations that manage and provide services on the other have become unavoidable goals. In this context organizations in the third sector must play an important role. (...) These are organizations that increase our city's social capital. (...) Work with the third sector will need to be boosted to make it a participant in plans for cohesion and coexistence that call for cooperation and understanding between the various agents and which extend the models and strategies for society's participation in stakeholder projects. (p.22)

The electoral programme for the ICV-EUiA coalition is more explicit. It is possibly the most committed to a local model of social welfare services. An element probably very much in its favour is that it has been in charge of this area for over 20 years. The following text has been taken from its electoral programme:

The welfare state is one of civilization's conquests that involves bringing human development - education, health, personal autonomy, work, housing, pensions - into the sphere of citizen rights, with guaranteed access for everyone regardless of income or any other consideration. We must take part in any fight to prevent this being taken away. In Barcelona this means a commitment to the state schools in the neighbourhoods, defending social and health facilities, promoting public housing schemes, employment programmes, and defending pensions and unemployment benefits as a safety net for thousands of the less well-off. (p.20)

The strategic aim is to make Barcelona a city that is actively committed to making social services available to everyone. In other words, to have a system guaranteeing personal autonomy, socio-educational action, dependency care and relational and community liaison support. And to do this using council policies as Barcelona's specific contribution to extending the welfare state and supporting social innovation.... (p.20)

The local dimension of the welfare state, the social Barcelona, must be built using a relational way of thinking, with the participation of the citizens and the associative fabric. (p.19)

(b) From the nationalist coalition:

The nationalist coalition CiU, in opposition until the last elections, does not put forward a different social welfare model, but it does put the emphasis on personal responsibility in overcoming difficulties and the importance of encouraging civil society, also in social welfare. These are some examples from its electoral programme:

Social inequality is synonymous with a fragmented, weak society. By helping the most disadvantaged and promoting upward social mobility, we strengthen our society. (...) We believe in a welfare state that is neither interventionist nor inflexible but which takes into account the people and their sense of responsibility. We want to guarantee everyone's right to choose in all areas of social care, the universality of the essential services of the welfare state, social cohesion and territorial balance in Catalonia as a whole. (p.40)

The government should give active support to those with limited resources, promoting enabling policies so that they themselves can achieve their welfare at each stage in their lives (...) we must promote policies that encourage a culture of effort (...) We believe it is vital to give those people on the threshold of poverty the opportunities to find work by giving incentives to companies and the government to employ them. (p.41)

We must ensure that public services do not compete with services currently provided by associations and should encourage their existence rather than substitute them. (p.41)

The welfare community and its social cohesion do not allow exclusion. We will strengthen the social cohesion of our towns and cities by establishing a culture of fairness to enable inequalities to be reduced, and we will do this by imbuing all social actions with fairness and considerable moral content, with the ceaseless task of fighting dependency of any kind. (p.43)

As far as the Partido Popular is concerned, their general programme lets us know their opinion on social welfare, which, according to this party, should be routed through the family: “In social policies to support people with needs or at risk of social exclusion, we look first for help to be given within the family and from the family whenever possible” (p.41).

When the PP Group in Barcelona City Council were asked questions for the purposes of this study, they replied as follows: “When it comes to improving the quality of life and the welfare of the people of Barcelona, the role of Services must be immediate and appropriate for dealing with and offering better services and opportunities to the elderly and people with disabilities. (...) Prioritizing families as the lynchpins of society”.

2. ANALYSIS OF DEBATES IN THE FIELDS OF HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND CHILD SERVICES

2.1. The field of housing

Debates and problems concerning housing

The housing situation in Barcelona has been an area of recurring debate, argument and research. All the ideas and controversies that have arisen should be analysed from the start of the democratic period and are explained mainly by a combination of various elements, such as the rigid system of house occupancy based on ownership and the network of private relationships that has come about between the various agents involved in housing, maintained in part by the rationale behind the *Barcelona model*³. "Model" here refers not only to thinking of new urban planning for the city but also to the new interrelationships between social actors (in urban planning matters, in housing, in social affairs). Apart from the rationale behind the model, there is another aspect that has a great effect on housing policies, this being the way in which competencies are divided between the various levels of government, so when these bodies have been governed by parties of different political hues there have been fights over competencies, and this slows down initiatives which it was possible to carry out in periods when responsibilities were shared by the same party.

b) Urban planning and housing

The so-called *Barcelona model* has involved a specific management model characterized by close collaboration between the public and private sectors along with a constant relationship with city residents via a dense network of neighbourhood associations that are highly active in various fields and have consolidated the existence of constant contributions on the part of civil society, with a bottom-up structure⁴. This relationship has not always guaranteed full consensus, but what it has done is to ensure that the opposition has to some extent been included in the debate. However, some people have recently come to believe that the model is exhausted and that this is due to a change in the balance of power between the actors:

There has been a change in operators, who since the mid-1990s have come from the world of global finance and act with little concern for the social, environmental and urban contexts. (...) Now it is more difficult to keep their involvement channelled within council criteria. Municipal management has changed, becoming closer to private interests (...) and the social composition of the city has changed, becoming much more fragmented, with residents who have already accepted that they are only consumers and residents who are not resigned to this and demand a type of urban planning that listens to society.⁵

The change has brought about a transformation in the running of the city and in the areas where ideas are created and received. This is one of the subjects that have recently marked the debate on urban planning issues and, by extension, on housing.

³ "The cornerstone of the Barcelona model has consisted of promoting big events, furthering an understanding between the social will of public initiative and the interests of private initiative, and handing over to the technical experts all the initiative of the urban plan" (Muntaner, 2007).

⁴ The council itself points out how academics have considered this way of approaching municipal policy as "empowering", "pluralist" and "relational" governance. The council believes that "a government of these characteristics bases itself on the assumption that its mission is very wide and all-encompassing but at the same time very simple: it means guaranteeing governability, building social cohesion and contributing to the generation of the greatest added value for the citizens. (...). It means that the city is building -in the widest sense of the word- on the foundations and with the collaboration of the urban agents" (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 1999, p.133).

⁵ J.M. Muntaner, op.cit. Other authors include H. Capel (2005)

We can identify two main actors, on the one hand the city council itself, that encourage important debates both internally and externally with the aim of determining the set of ideas that will form the city's housing strategy. These ideas were at first directed towards correcting inherited structural deficiencies, then later, towards planning a new housing policy to go with changes in the city's urban planning. The debate in this area has been characterized by a strong basic consensus between the groups on the council, although discussions have normally taken place reluctantly after criticism from the public. As an example of the city council's dynamic, one recent proposal put to the vote and passed by all the municipal groups in the Committee of "Area of Quality of Life, Equality, Youths and Sports" (with the exception of the Partido Popular) was the following:

"(1) To demand that the central government modify current legislation by introducing "dation in payment" as a way of settling mortgage debt in certain cases. (2) To declare abusive those clauses that set a lower limit to variable interest rates in mortgage contracts. (3) To report this agreement to the President of the Catalan Parliament, the Congress of Deputies and the Senate; to the Presidents of the Catalan Association of Town Councils and the Federation of Town Councils of Catalonia". (Barcelona City Council committee document M0711/133810)

On the other hand, city residents, organized into different committees, have turned out to be central to the debate on housing. Basically they are organized through residents' associations with the neighbourhood as the point of reference and coordinated by the Barcelona Federation of Residents' Associations (Federación de Asociaciones de Vecinos y Vecinas de Barcelona - FAVB). The associations have played a very important role as a political actor in demands for decent housing and have denounced deficiencies in plans for public housing as well as various abuses in the housing market. They have also initiated fundamental debates. They have often worked jointly with the council and at the same time have represented the true opposition to council policies - somehow agreed on by all the different groups, especially during the council's big event phase. In short, the Resident's Associations (AAVV) have always shown a clear position in terms of the city's urban development whilst at the same time building a consensus view of the desired city model.

From the point of view of the residential fabric, one of the main problems is that what is built is aimed at the city's moneyed classes. Just walk around the neighbourhood [Poblenou] and ask how much the flats are (240 - 300,000 euros or even more). Sometimes it's a case of speculative real estate operations; people even speak of gated communities (La FAVB, 2007).

Housing

These debates can be divided into two main groups: one involving structural matters and the other depending on the circumstances of a particular moment and each area. In the first group there are discussions on two main topics: substandard housing and structural deficiencies on the one hand, and the problems in finding a home largely due to the rigid nature of the housing stock on the other. The second group depends on the specific situation in the neighbourhoods and the particular moment in time. First of all we will look at the structural issues.

a) Substandard housing and structural deficiencies. This subject became the main demand with the early democratic councils⁶. The problems arose and centred around two different typologies of neighbourhood. On the one hand, the sudden growth in outlying high-density

⁶See the situation of the Spanish housing market in WP3

neighbourhoods for the working classes during the 1950s and 1960s (most of which have a development typology housing state by the local council) shaped a map of the city with problematic areas. At the root of this situation we find a strong citizen movement which opened the debate on the lack of housing and the difficulty in getting access to decent housing. This type of housing was often found in neighbourhoods with serious deficiencies in facilities and services as well as accessibility problems. This meant that the debate on the state of housing became part of the debate on the state of the neighbourhoods. On the other hand are the self-built neighbourhoods which configure the second typology. In the early 1980s Barcelona still had a number of areas with self-built housing occupied by people with very few economic resources. Was the so-called *barrios de barracas* (shanty towns)⁷. The state of dilapidation of these houses, together with the characteristics of the residents, condemned these neighbourhoods to an almost total state of social isolation, partly as a consequence of delinquency problems and drug dealing in some zones. Faced with this situation, the council came up with a number of different strategies. One of these was to relocate the people living in these shanty towns to newly-built public housing estates. This was the origin of one of the biggest estates on the outskirts of the city, the neighbourhood of La Mina, which will be studied in WP5. In so far as the residents saw no improvement in their situation, these new neighbourhoods each ended up becoming a kind of *vertical shantytown* (Tatjer, M; Larrea, C. 2010) with the result that some of them became *marginal ghettos*. Improvements were attempted in the shape of redesigned urban planning, refurbished housing and, in some cases, social-based interventions.

b) Access to housing. The lack of housing has become a structural debate over the last few years for a number of reasons. This is mainly because of the structure of the market based on ownership, but it is also due to the lack of land available for building in a city that is very limited geographically.

b.1 A lack of suitable housing adapted to residents' needs. This discussion has centred around two specific areas: 1) a lack of rental housing as a consequence of a housing tenancy system traditionally based on ownership, and 2) the inadequate supply of housing of a sufficiently diverse nature to meet every requirement. We can find three main stages to this demand depending on which parties were in government. During the first stage (from 1982 to 2003), the autonomous community and the city council were controlled by different parties. In the second stage (from 2003 to 2010) both institutions were in the hands of the left, while in the third stage (from 2011 onwards) both institutions are governed by the centre-right nationalist party.

It is in the second stage, when both the region and the city were governed by the left coalition, that the city council managed to bring about significant changes in the city's housing market. New types of subsidized housing were promoted as a response to the old model inherited from the Franco period (which favoured ownership of this housing). The aim was to ensure that the government did not lose control of public assets, prices and the profit from capital gains. A second objective was to enable easier access for the most vulnerable groups. "The aim is to prevent promotions for purchase financed with public money ending up as part of the free market, as has been the case until now" (Newspaper El Punt 05/05/2004).

The milestone marking the beginning of the debate behind these changes was the publication of a report⁸ by the Housing Department of Catalonia which proposed new types

⁷ The shanty towns (*barrios de barracas*) were a spontaneous response to various waves of sudden population growth as a consequence of the arrival of migrants from other areas of the country.

⁸ Trilla, C., Clavell, D. (2004)

of subsidized housing: (a) a surface rights system whereby the government retains ownership of the ground and allows construction on it; (b) a buy-back clause which reserves the option to repurchase after a certain period of time or in case of irregularities; (c) rental with an option to buy; (d) shared ownership between the individual and the government; and (e) the social integration housing programme.

The difficulties in accessing housing clearly affect some groups more than others. Young people have for many years been one of the groups most affected, especially as regards emancipation. Demands concerning the need to build social housing and the debate on the construction and types of subsidized housing have often caused conflict between local and regional government and residents. The debate centres on the role of housing as a basic need and the demand that the government should intervene as a housing provider outside the rationale of the market.

Many of us thought that the arrival of democracy would allow more social housing and more subsidized housing to be built, and this would make it possible for working class people to acquire a decent home. Unfortunately this has not been the case, and suffices to say that in Barcelona and Catalonia much less social housing has been built than in the 1960s, the era of Franco's policy of economic development. And while it is true that the competency for public housing construction belongs to other authorities, it is also true that no land has been allocated for building and the Municipal Housing Board has been dismantled. (La FAVB, 2007)

b.2 The fact that it is impossible for the city to extend its limits because of its geographical structure has also revived a classic debate between redevelopment and demolition, which has often caused conflict between residents and the city council when it comes to reclassifying land for use as housing. This has happened with both free market housing and social housing provisions.

Barcelona is in some ways an "atypical", complex city as far as housing is concerned because it has no space to grow, and in this sense it is therefore limited. (...) The housing market is one in which not only new construction is important but also the refurbishment or rebuilding of constructions that already exist, and it is often the case that new housing is built to substitute pre-existing housing or to reclaim spaces that are not being used to the best effect ... (I-2)

These are certainly the main structural debates that take place in the city, although not the only ones. In the second group, which depends more on circumstances over the last few years (between 2000 and 2007) and Spain's economic growth based to a large extent on construction, the main debates have revolved around the property bubble and the effect it has had on increasing housing prices. Discussion has centred on the government's role as an agent that should keep a check on the effects of urban change in housing matters.

The huge increase in prices during the housing bubble combined with large-scale construction activity in various parts of the city - often associated with unbridled speculation processes according to the residents' associations - has opened a debate on the extent to which the city remains a city that encourages a social mix or one that encourages preferential access for groups with most resources. The residents' associations are constantly denouncing the increase in housing prices in *neighbourhoods* or sectors that are undergoing urban renewal and claim there is a need to plan more subsidized housing to enable residents to stay in their neighbourhoods. "The "Casc Antic" Residents' Association and the groups of 'Forat de la Vergonya', Residents in Defence of Old Barcelona and the

Barcelona Federation of Residents' Associations accused the City Council of speculating, of throwing poor families and the elderly out of their homes” (La FAVB, 2007).

In the context of this investigation and the aims of the project, it is interesting to see the direction this debate finally takes. Concern about the effects of the renovation plans that are being carried out means a good part of civil society is opposed to the way in which urban renewal is being planned, to the point where the questions of how this renewal should take shape and what its objectives should be have become matters of debate. In this respect it is clear that urban reform needs to be comprehensive as this is the only way in which residents can remain in the neighbourhoods and avoid having to go elsewhere. Claims for comprehensive reform combine the need to increase subsidized housing in the neighbourhoods and the need to take action in other areas, both urban and social, as integral elements of the process. This means serious debate among citizens and conflict with council policy which in the end produces a clear line of social innovation. In this respect the reform of the La Mina neighbourhood was a pioneering move⁹.

Finally, in recent years the housing debate has been monopolized by the effects of the economic crisis we are experiencing. The problems with accessing housing have meant that some groups have become even more vulnerable.

What we need to remember is that in the past, in the present and no doubt also in the future, those sectors of the population that have always had housing difficulties are those that are almost excluded or in a very precarious position, and they are the ones that have always had the most difficulty. This is a sector made up of elderly people who to varying degrees have limited resources, along with those inhabitants of Barcelona who are in financial difficulties, who are on the threshold of poverty and social exclusion. These are the main groups that have always had problems with housing. But then a few years ago with the housing bubble, part of the middle-class population was also excluded from the market due to the increase in prices, which at the time gave rise to mobilization and protests... (1-2)

The other big problem that has arisen recently as a result of job losses is the re-possession of homes due to the difficulties that many families have in paying their mortgages. There has been a huge increase in the number of repossessions and the media report cases that

⁹ Indeed the La Mina estate is one of the neighbourhood that has generated most debate over the years. The serious level of deterioration the estate had reached in the 1990s, its isolated position between the Barcelona and Sant Adrià del Besós city limits and its problems with crime and drugs gave rise to a situation that called for urgent action. Different governments of the democratic regime concerned themselves in different ways with La Mina. However, it was only when the reclassification process of the north-east of the city started that La Mina became a key piece that needed to be dealt with urgently. Its problems were becoming ever more obvious and the threat of urban planning pressure resulting from the reclassification of the neighbouring area posed a double-edged problem for a neighbourhood that had already begun a far-reaching process of comprehensive reform: on the one hand there was the danger that its residents would be forced to leave due to the rise in prices, and on the other there was the threat that in comparison to the new area being planned, La Mina would take on a ghetto dynamic with no chance of reform. Faced with this situation, a plan for comprehensive reform was put forward which involved taking action in a number of areas. This plan will be the subject for analysis in WP5.

result in extremely serious situations. Losing their jobs and their home means different things to different families. Immigrants go back to their countries of origin; young people go back to live with their parents (in our social model it is once again the family that is having to deal with these problems). It has also given rise to a very active social movement that has managed to stop some of the repossessions. The government has also intervened in an attempt to convince the banks to agree to convert these mortgages into a kind of rental contract adapted to the family's financial means. Some cases have reached satisfactory solutions.

In short, from 2004 onwards the process of diversifying the formulas for obtaining official subsidized housing and for social assistance for excluded groups have been the central topics of the public debate on housing in Barcelona. This debate became even more intense once the sector was affected by the crisis, which is presenting new challenges for local welfare policies on housing issues. As a way of improving efficiency in responding to these new challenges, the regional government and the city council (both of the left) set up the Housing Consortium in 2009. This acts as a one-stop office dealing with applications for subsidized flats, economic assistance to help with emancipation and access to housing, and legal advice in cases of bullying or mobbing. Since 2011, autonomous community and city council elections have again brought changes to the respective governments, with both institutions now being held by the centre-right nationalist coalition. For the moment and given the current situation - which in Spain is having a particular effect on the housing market - it can be seen that new proposals for political action have come to a standstill.

2.2. The field of employment

In 1986 Barcelona City Council set up "Barcelona Activa" (a private municipal company) as a local development agency, part of its Department of Economy, Business and Employment. (This was not the only policy of the council, which, as part of its decentralization process, also created the figure of the "Local Development Agent" (Agente de Desarrollo Local - ADL) in each of the city's neighbourhoods. The ADL's task was to revitalize economic and community structures and development on a micro level). Barcelona Activa's goal was to become *"a benchmark organization as regards policies aimed at supporting businesses, employment creation and the international projection of Barcelona as an excellent location for economic activity and social progress"*.¹⁰ It had two lines of action: on the one hand, to promote entrepreneurial activity by offering premises and services and technological structure to new business initiatives, and on the other, offering professional and occupational training courses. EU grants for this area were channelled along this second line.

Barcelona Activa was set up as a "breeding ground for small companies" whose size, in many cases, was one of the keys for future success as they were capable of adapting to constant changes. It has been offering everything from advice to premises for people who have drawn up viable business plans. Both at the start and during its later development, this initiative has been a job fully shared by municipal groups of different political hues, aimed at creating innovative projects that are capable of being identified as a "model" or an ability to generate new projects and proposals. In connection with this line of "exporting" new policy proposals, Barcelona Activa has taken part in various international cooperation projects and technical assistance projects for the transfer of methodologies on an international level.

The business section of El País reported on 11/10/98 that Barcelona City Council had taken advantage of events to create a new business fabric: the active city:

¹⁰See <http://www.barcelonactiva.cat/barcelonactiva/en/index.jsp>

The Barcelona Olympic Games of 1992 saw not only a great number of medals being won and various sporting records being broken in Spain, it also saw the setting-up of a new way to deal with and develop this kind of event. The city underwent a noticeable change because of these Games, and not only in the urban planning aspect. It was also clear that there was a new way of understanding local administrative management and a great response from citizens.

All this has been a breeding ground for new activities, organizations, programmes... in short, for a new mentality that has manifested itself in, among other things, the setting-up of "Barcelona Activa", one of the instruments the city council has provided itself with so it can achieve its aims (...) For the Deputy Mayor in charge of employment and economic promotion, the strategy is clear: all these actions have a direct effect on three fundamental areas that define and improve the quality of life in a great city, these being urban planning, transport and housing (El País, 11/10/1998).

As mentioned earlier, the urban planning proposals had an effect that exceeded the actions carried out in this field and must be put down to a desire to modernize the city. The economic project involved promoting business sectors that were strategic for the future of Barcelona.

The debates about unemployment, especially unemployment among young people, have revolved around whether the resources allocated for creating youth employment are sufficient or not. As this is an area in which the council has no competencies, the debates are centred on proposals and requests for action at higher levels, or at least a substitute for this action that it is proposed should be carried out by the council. For instance, one day in October 2010 the Committee for Economic Promotion, Employment and Knowledge agreed on the following resolution:

That Barcelona City Council should promote a specific collaboration programme with the city's production, social and education fabric with the aim of providing training for young people, especially those with training deficiencies and/or lower levels of employability, within participating companies and businesses, recovering the figure of the "apprentice"...

This resolution, presented by one of the groups, was discussed in committee and received a favourable vote from all the political groups in the council. All the parties proposed small changes of their own, but there were no alternative proposals. Indeed the various contributions go to show how important the subject is for each of the parties. The conservative Partido Popular, for example, is recorded as saying: "The difficulties that young people face are not only the result of the economic crisis but, fundamentally, stem from structural problems which are very often a result of educational, employment and economic policies that the PP believes are wrong."

In the debate on this proposal, the centre-right nationalist coalition CiU stated the following: "We would like to see the creation of a map of professions and trades and the creation of a platform to help the professions, which could be used, on the one hand, to identify the supply and demand needs of the professions and professionals, and on the other, to identify those professions most in need".

The other opposition party, the minority nationalist centre-left Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, expressed its:

concern over the fact that there are young people who neither study nor work, a situation that could be improved with the recovery of the figure of the "apprentice" and the passing of this proposal, and concern over professional training, which is believed to be the great problem of the employment pyramid in Catalonia and Spain.

Comments of this type are repeatedly found in committee records when proposals on the subject of employment are being dealt with (although the same happens in other areas in which the council has no competencies for action).

Following a council proposal, the "Pact for Quality in Employment" was signed in 2008 by the various social agents (city council, regional government, unions and employers) with the aim of "promoting a quality labour market, inclusive, with high productivity and which will generate professional opportunities for everyone, supporting economic growth in Barcelona that will incorporate more added value and innovation and enable high rates of competitiveness, welfare, and social and territorial cohesion to be achieved".¹¹

The pact was signed by all the parties in the council with the exception of the conservative Partido Popular. Over the years its achievements were monitored and, once it came to an end - a time when the ruling parties of both the autonomous community and the city council changed - the left-wing coalition ICV-EUiA presented a proposal to reactivate the pact for a further period, but this was rejected by the nationalists (in power) and the Partido Popular. This new stage also seems to have seen the weakening of the Barcelona Activa organization. In a plenary session of the city council, the left-wing ICV-EUiA councillor denounced that: "The restructuring of Barcelona Activa shows that this isn't a priority for the government. They say there's no money, but then they say there's enough for the Formula 1 ... With this decision, the government is now leaving the most disadvantaged groups to their fate because that's what its political agenda is" (Debate 18/06/2012).

2.3. Child services

Competencies and responsibilities for child services for 0-3 year-olds are not clearly distributed at different levels of government. Important debates have focused on the role of councils in providing these services. Some autonomous communities have designed a dual system, with some services regulated as part of the education system and some as a care service. This debate can also be found in Barcelona's local welfare system. It highlights a clear difference between alternative proposals and has divided opinion not only along party lines but also within the same party. These, for example, are opinions on the subject from two people in the Socialist Party who had institutional responsibilities:

the regulations say that for 0-3 year-olds it's determined by the autonomous communities, but that's ridiculous. The autonomous communities arrive and the first one to pass a decree to carry out this article of law is Catalonia. And this decree already takes this duality into account. It says some will be the responsibility of

¹¹ See "Pacte per a l'ocupació de Qualitat a Barcelona 2008-2011". Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2008

education and others will be the responsibility of “whatever”... (I-3)

The basic debate was the Partido Popular defending a provision for reconciling work and family life and the Socialist Party defending a more educational provision (...) Catalonia would be to the right of this way of thinking, whereas Spain would not. I believe in the idea that you can do something educational at that age, but I think there are families that don't need that at all because they can do it better themselves. However, there are others looking for a more varied input, and it would be worth doing it for them. (I-4)

As we can see, on one side we find the opinion of those who believe that child services for 0-3 year-olds should be included within the education system. This means a set of measures has to be designed for implementation by all centres offering this type of service, ranging from the teacher/pupil ratios to equal timetables for all children, suitable spaces, fluid contact between parents and teachers and the involvement of parents in the centres. During the early years this "model" operated in municipal nursery schools in Barcelona, but later governments (of the same party) relaxed the measures because in practice they considered them unsustainable. On the one hand it allowed excellent educational and care work in early childhood, but on the other hand it limited the possibility of increasing the number of centres because it cost too much. Also, those who defend this model say the same requirements should be demanded from private centres that want to receive council subsidies.

Nursery schools are being set up that are called municipal but are run by the private sector with “disgusting” conditions for children and workers, and the families are being deceived (...) Then we find others that say no, we're not part of education, we're going to do things a new way because we're very up-to-date and very feminist ... (I-3)

On the other side we find those who say the centres should be a resource for parents, who need to reconcile their working hours with looking after their very young children. From this point of view, the centres should be more like places that look after children, with flexible hours depending on the parents' needs and therefore different types of staffing. This does not necessarily mean that the educational function of early childhood should not be taken into account, but that an effort should be made to design a model to help - and complement - the parents' function:

Basically the debate has been very frequent and very focused on the subject of care, i.e. the reconciliation of work and family life, versus education, i.e. something we could say was more regulated. This is a debate that has constantly accompanied the subject for the last 10 or 20 years and it is a debate that has still not been resolved, and we would say that from a social point of view, as a social practice, the important thing is that families can have a solution for their children when they have to go to work and can stop having to worry about reconciling their working life with their family life. (I-4)

3. BY WAY OF CONCLUSION: THE LOCAL CONTEXT FOR SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

3.1. Policy orientations and values on Local Welfare System in Barcelona

As we have seen, there are two important features in the local welfare. On the one hand, the objective of “modernization” of the city, as a manifestation of the desire to recover the “enterprising spirit” that the city once had, in the sense of a social, economic and cultural dynamism that was forbidden during the years of the dictatorship. It finds its expression in the construction of the “Barcelona model” that cut across all the policy fields. This can be seen as a platform that encourages the pursuit of social innovations. The idea of “Barcelona model” was an idea shared between the different political parties - and also civil society- that generated a strong agreement in the vision of the city and in some municipal policies. In particular is important in regard to development of the city and, in part, explains the lack of debate -or their weakness- that we raised in others points.

On the other hand, other hard feature is the value of citizen participation that is present in the development of the social welfare system. Is a value encouraged by left-wing parties but also shared by their major opponent, the centre right nationalist coalition. As you can see in the table 1 (in the point 1.1), in all the elections their weight is around 70% to 80% (The votes to the right wing party Partido Popular, have been fluctuating between the 8 to the 17% of total votes). Being able to count on civil society is important for a nationalist party and the Christian democrats (in coalition with nationalists) share the desire to create a system of protection for the population. This can be one of the reasons why there were no great debates about the model being developed and why it was easy to reach a consensus or at least not encounter too many obstacles when it came to putting the new policies into effect.

We have also identified some tensions between party discourse and the social policy carried out, especially in the areas that are interconnected by aspects that go beyond social welfare, such as urban planning and the economic revitalization of the city. Other kind of tension comes from the division of power and responsibilities between different territorial levels (see point 1.2 of this report). When the local and regional governments have been governed by parties of different political hues, on numerous occasions have been difficulties to get funds for specific actions.

3.2. Welfare discourse and practices in the three policy areas

Each of the fields analysed has its own dynamic and features which do not lend themselves to generalization. We summarize the dynamics for each of the three fields below:

Housing

In the analyses of housing policies, a certain inconsistency can be observed between what is said and what is done. As a result of the serious deficiencies the city had, the search for the ideal “*Barcelona model*” (which cuts a cross-section through various areas of political action) has meant that, in the area of housing, urban planning aspects have sometimes been given priority over the housing needs of certain groups in the city. As the Federation of Residents' Associations has pointed out, some of the redevelopment of neighbourhoods with serious deficiencies meant that some of the people who lived there before were forced to leave, mainly due to the increase in price of the newly-built housing.

Despite the fact that the city council had its own Municipal Housing Board and definite proposals for action in the area, its financial resources to a large extent depended on the autonomous community government. The city council has often protested that the city of Barcelona was being suffocated in comparison with other cities in Catalonia due to the lack of financial resources.

There is a network of actors who, to a greater or lesser extent, have played a part in the city's big decisions (government at all levels -central, regional and local-; neighbours -and several associations and platforms-; private agents -builders and developers-; and others like trade unions).

Employment

Since the mid-1980s there has been a determined move to promote employment among the most vulnerable sectors of the population. The creation of the “Barcelona Activa” organization has encouraged and helped new business initiatives and provided employment through the use of EU funding.

There appear to be no inconsistencies between political practice, political discourse and the social welfare system. This field has also seen attempts to involve companies in the objectives of encouraging apprenticeship and employment.

Child services

No inconsistency between the local welfare system and political practice has been observed in child services. The debate continues, given that there are various proposals regarding the type of public services for 0-3 year-olds. There are two kinds of debates :

(a) By one hand, there is a division of opinion among those who believe that the services should be provided by the government (as opposed to those who think the private sector should play a bigger role). That is a ideological debate between public and private services.

(b) By the other hand, there are those who believe the services should be strongly educational, and there are those who believe that services should be aimed at helping families to reconcile the responsibilities of looking after their children and their involvement in the labour market. This is a debate that is not linked to the division between left and right, but is also expressed within the same ideological choice

3.3. The key for Social Innovations

In WP5 we have been studied some cases of social innovations that can be better understood if we take into account the perspective and the information contained herein. Some links between the innovations and the core values of the local welfare system are:

The program “Citizen’s Agreement for an inclusive Barcelona” is related with the objective (the discourse and also the practice) to involve civil society in the social welfare responsibilities. (See the point 1.1 of this report). This program is related to this participation value, one hard value of the Barcelona social welfare system.

The program “La Mina transformation plan” is an action for comprehensive reform which involved taking action in a number of areas and is related in the desire of a “Barcelona model” and also and action coordinated between different administrative levels (See the point 2.1 in this document).

The program “Young people with future” is an example of some difficulties in the political action when is necessary to act together at different territorial levels, especially in the case of different administrations are governed by different political parties.

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Field work

The research was done between 2011 and 2012 and the field work is based on the following information:

1. Documents analyzed

(a) Minutes of municipal debates:

In each of the period of the different elections the commissions in charge of the aspects that we are interested to analyze, have been changing. We have analyzed the minutes of the following commissions.

Between 2001 and 2004
Commission for Land and Housing
Commission for Social Welfare

Between 2004 and 2007
Commission for Economical Promotion, Employment and Knowledge
Commission for Culture, Education and Social Welfare
Commission for Urban Planning and Housing

Between 2007 and 2011
Commission for Culture, Education and Social Welfare
Commission for Social Action and Citizenship
Commission to Economical promotion, Employment and knowledge
Commission for Urban Planning and Housing

(b) Electoral programmes

We have analysed the programmes of the parties with representation in the City Council for the elections in May 2010. We used the Atlas-ti program.

2. Press

We work on two steps looking for the news about our fields: First, in the Newspapers Archives of the City Council (<http://bcnweb13.bcn.es:81/brs/ARTI.html>) we find the news related with the local social welfare. In the second step, we work with “My News” database that include more than 700 local, regional and national newspapers and News Agency. We have found several articles in the follow media: La Vanguardia, El País, Avui, El Periódico, El Periódico de Catalunya, El Punt, El Mundo, El Mundo Cataluña, Diari Ara, Agencia de Noticias Europa Press y Revista La Veu del Carrer.

3. Interviews related with WP4 and WP5

- I-1 - Former manager of the Social Welfare Area in the City Council Barcelona
- I-2 - Former manager of Housing Area in the City Council Barcelona
- I-3 - President of Teacher’s Association Rosa Sensat
- I-4 - Former manager of Education in the Regional Government
- I-5 - Person in charge of the program “Joves amb futur” - Barcelona Activa
- I-6 - Member of Social Educators Association and program Acord Ciutadà
- I-7 - Member of Third Sector organization and program Joves amb futur
- I-8 - Member of Third Sector organization and Acord Ciutadà
- I-9 - Former manager of Housing of Regional Government
- I-10 - Member of Entities Platform of La Mina
- I-11 - Former manager of Welfare and Participation of City Council Barcelona
- I-12 - Head of Technical Secretary of Acord Ciutadà
- I-13 - Member of the Quality of Life Area of the City Council Barcelona
- I-14 - Person in charge of Social Innovation of City Council
- I-15 - Former manager of Social Welfare of City Council Barcelona
- I-16 - Head of the Barcelona Activa Agency
- I-17 - High Technical (civil servant) of City Council Barcelona
- I-18 - Councilor of Education of the City of Sant Adria de Besos
- I-19 - Head of the Social Area of the Consortium of La Mina

4. Focus groups

Focus Group celebrated in November 2011. Participants

- Three researchers of WILCO Project
- Two researchers of others universities
- Seven peoples of Third Sector entities
- Three peoples responsible of Welfare in the City Council
- One person linked responsible of a Welfare Consultant’s Office