



**WILCO**

Welfare innovations  
at the local level  
in favour of cohesion

WORK PACKAGE 4

**URBAN POLICY INNOVATIONS IN LOCAL WELFARE IN BERN, SWITZERLAND: CORE IDEAS**

Maxime Felder, Sandro Cattacin, Patricia Naegeli, Nathalie Kakpo

## CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
1.1. Bern in a few words.....	1
2. Welfare system.....	2
2.1. Two coalitions .....	2
3. Child care .....	5
3.1. Public service versus voucher system .....	5
3.2. For a voucher system: arguments and values.....	7
4. Youth unemployment.....	10
4.2. A large consensus .....	12
4.3. A dual system?.....	14
Conclusion.....	14
References .....	19
Annexes.....	23
Interviews .....	24

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Bern in a few words

A few facts are necessary to contextualize our observations. Bern is the Swiss Capital, hosting the federal administration, government and parliament. It is the fourth largest city (125 millions inhabitants in 2011)<sup>1</sup> and agglomeration (355 millions) in Switzerland. Foreigners represent 23% of the city-population, which is a bit less than most other cities in Switzerland.<sup>2</sup> The unemployment rate - which only counts people registered in regional unemployment offices - reached 3.3% of the active population in 2010 in the city of Bern while the mean in Swiss cities was 4.4%.<sup>3</sup> Bern is the chef-lieu of the second largest canton, both in surface and population. The canton of Bern is subdivided in 5 regions, 10 districts and 382 communes.<sup>4</sup> The cantonal government is currently encouraging fusions.

#### *Evolution of political forces*

Left-wing politicians have a majority in the executive council since 1992 (Barth and Bähler 2003) and in the legislative council since 1996. On the cantonal level, the situation is contrasting: the right-conservative party SVP is the most represented party and right-wing politicians represent 2/3 of the parliament.<sup>5</sup> The executive council, on the opposite, has a left-wing majority. Unlike the parliament - elected by a proportional system - the seven members of the executive council are elected by a majoritarian system. Tensions appear at two levels: between the cantonal legislative power and the executive power, and between the city and the cantonal political powers.<sup>6</sup>

Elections of the city legislative and executive powers are held every four years.<sup>7</sup> Elections in November 2012 confirmed the tendencies mentioned by every interviewee. The social-democratic party is the winner, its city-president has been largely re-elected (69.9%) for the fourth time, and its second representative in the city executive council got an even higher score. Back in 1992, two parties dominated the political arena: social-democrats and liberals. Things changed in 2004 as they both lost weight in favour of a center-oriented green party: GFL. In 2008 again, social-democrats and liberals lost respectively 4 and 5 seats, while two new parties appeared on the scene. The new Green-Liberal Party (GLP) gained 4 seats in 2008 and then 3 more in 2012. The other new comer (BDP) was created by dissidents of the right-conservative party SVP and gained 6 seats in 2004 and one more in 2012.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Agglomerations: Permanent Resident Population in Urban and Rural Areas" (Federal Statistical Office, 2012), [http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/themen/01/02/blank/key/raeumliche\\_verteilung/agglomerationen.html](http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/themen/01/02/blank/key/raeumliche_verteilung/agglomerationen.html).

<sup>2</sup> "Le Comparatif En Ligne Des Cantons Et Des Villes Suisses," Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration, accessed December 13, 2012, <http://www.badac.ch/>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> "Medienmitteilung - Gemeindegemeinschaften Noch Gezielter Fördern" (Berner Regierungsrat, September 8, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> "Groupes Parlementaires," Chancellerie d'Etat Du Canton De Berne, accessed December 14, 2012, <http://www.gr.be.ch/>.

<sup>6</sup> Interview 16 with an executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party - Canton of Bern.

<sup>7</sup> Both legislative and executive power at the cantonal level are organized according to a majoritarian voting system.

These two parties, together with the center-oriented green party, are now key players. As many interviewees said: the game is way more open than it was between 1992 and 2008 as the social-democrats managed to have a stable majority. These two new political forces are said to be less predictable than the traditional parties. First, both are born in a context of rupture with the traditional parties and second, both have a very short history of taking stance on controversial issues. According to most interviewees, this new deal could lead to more compromises from the left and the right side since they both want to convince the new balancing center. For example, dissidents of the right- conservative party SVP, united under the banner BDP, are said to be sometimes “surprisingly social oriented”<sup>8</sup> by some interviewees.

## 2. WELFARE SYSTEM

Since Switzerland is a federal state, responsibility for welfare is shared between the national level, the cantonal level (26 cantons) and the communal level (2495 communes).<sup>9</sup> Following the two guiding principles of subsidiarity and federalism, a large part of the welfare system is steered by the city (as a commune).

Bern has a wide and supportive welfare system.<sup>10</sup> It is seen as constantly growing since the left has a majority in the city government. Right and left representatives agree with this vision. Even if some doubt of its long term viability, the expansion of the city social policies is not fundamentally contested. For now, the city has no major budget issues and the unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the country. Nobody would be taken seriously saying the result of the last twenty years governance is a fiasco. Nevertheless, future orientations of the welfare system lead to debates, as we will see with the cases of child-care and youth unemployment.

There is a mechanism of equalization of resources and burdens between the canton and the communes. Communal social services are financed by 40% by the canton, 40% by a pool supplied by each commune, in accordance with their population size, and 20% by the commune itself. It has been a fifty-fifty share until 2012, when the 20% contribution of the commune has been decided. This is supposed to make the communes aware of their responsibility in the use of social expenditures.

### 2.1. Two coalitions

The welfare system of the city of Bern is supported by a stable advocacy coalition<sup>11</sup> commonly called RGM.<sup>12</sup> Among its most prominent and core actors are the city- president and the director of the department for welfare, education and sport. Both are social democrats and fill their position for more than ten years. Around them, some civil servants hold key positions. One is the director of the youth unit and plays an important role in the

---

<sup>8</sup> Interview 5 with a legislative council representative of the Social-Democratic Party.

<sup>9</sup> In January 2012, [http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/regionen/11/geo/institutionelle\\_gliederungen/01b.html](http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/regionen/11/geo/institutionelle_gliederungen/01b.html)

<sup>10</sup> As stated in the report of the WILCO WP3. To be published in 2013.

<sup>11</sup> Sabatier (1988 : 139) defines an advocacy coalition as “people from a variety of positions, elected and agency officials, interest group leaders, researchers who share a particular belief system. . . and who show a non-trivial degree of coordinated activity over time”.

<sup>12</sup> RGM for “Rot - Grün - Mitte” (Red - Green - Center).

implementation of the local welfare for now eleven years. Another key player leads the welfare unit. But members of this coalition are to find on every step of the hierarchical ladder. The coalition also counts politicians - most left wing - active in the city parliament. One of them, for example, is now presiding the parliament, after nine years representing the social-democratic party. Some politicians at the cantonal level also represent a support, like the director of the cantonal welfare department. Finally, the coalition counts on several supports in the civil society. One of the two regional newspaper - *der Bund* - is one of them. Finally, recent elections showed a large support of voters for the over-mentioned members of the coalition.

The second most influent coalition is commonly named by interviewees *Die Bürgerlichen* ("bourgeois", in the sense of "conservatives"). It includes members of the parliament, most are members of the liberal party, but also from the moderate wing of the conservative party SVP. One of them was director of the finance department until 2012, after six years in the canton parliament and five in the city executive council. Some members of the coalition have key positions in the administration - like the direction of the economy department - but are mostly out of the welfare field. This coalition counts influential members of the regional economy and have support of a majority of the canton parliament as well as from the other regional newspaper, *die Berner Zeitung*.

Other less important coalitions are positioned at the left and at the right of the these two influent ones. One includes representatives of several small left political parties and the other counts representatives of the more radical wing of the conservative party SVP. Since their weight is incomparable with the two principal coalitions and since they usually follow the closest one in votes, we will focus on the two major advocacy coalitions: *die RGM* and *Die Bürgerlichen*.

The two main coalitions are opposed on what Sabatier called "policy core". These "fundamental policy positions [concern] the basis strategies for achieving core values" (Sabatier and Weible 2007). The two chosen themes - child care and youth unemployment - will provide examples of this opposition. However, both coalitions share what constitute the "deep core", that is to say "fundamental normative and ontological axioms". It can imply views on human nature, on priority of values, or "basis criteria of redistributive justice" (Sabatier and Weible 2007). In spite of the dominant position of the first left coalition, a large consensus, regarding welfare policies, gather those two coalitions. As a consensus democracy, the swiss system often impose cooperation due to institutional constraints like direct democratic procedures, federalism and a fragmented party system (Kriesi and Jegen 2001). As Neidhart stated, the direct democracy procedures led to the integration in the negotiations of all actors capable of launching a referendum against a project of law. This implies that consensus are often reached in the administrative - or pre-parliamentary - arena (Neidhart 1970).

Even if they cause recurrent and sometimes heavy debates, welfare policies in the city of Bern often result from a consensus reached in the pre-parliamentary arena. A meaningful example of an orientation given at an administrative level is a document regarding the welfare strategy for the region of the city of Bern called "Strategy for coordinated social policies".<sup>13</sup> It has been created by the Commission for social issues and has been approved by parliaments of the communes constituting the region "Bern- Mittelland". The document addresses the three levels of Sabatier's model: deep core issues, policy core and secondary aspects.

---

<sup>13</sup> "Sozialraum Bern-Mittelland : Strategie Für Eine Vernetzte Sozialpolitik" (Regionalkonferenz Bern Mittelland, February 5, 2012).

### *Deep core*

The first point of the document summarizes a shared component of the “deep core”: “the man is considered as self-determined (independent) and caring about others (showing solidarity)”.<sup>14</sup> The document mentions further that “people in urgent need have right to a financial help and to support of their self-help”. First thing to say: such fundamental stance on the image of the man is not often made explicit as root of a welfare program. As we could state in the interviews and documents analysis, the idea of an “enabling state” - as Gilbert defined it, “public support for private responsibility” (Gilbert 2012) - reached a consensus. The task of the local welfare is here to provide “a framework in which everyone can participate and be financially independent and socially, economically and culturally integrated”.<sup>15</sup> Equality of opportunity is considered as a condition for this framework. This idea is to be understood as “a career open to the talents”(Friedman and Friedman 1980), more than a concept leaning toward an equality of outcomes. An example is the pre-school program focusing on disadvantaged families of specific districts.<sup>16</sup>

While the idea of self-responsibility came out often in documents and interviews, a less explicit value is nevertheless balancing this liberal position. Even if it is not said so, human dignity or solidarity with the most vulnerable is a common value, justifying a public intervention for “people in urgent need”. It could appear to be obvious, even “natural”, since the Man is seen as “caring about others”. Furthermore, since Bern has indeed a supportive welfare system, there is less need to insist on the idea of solidarity with the most vulnerable people. A city councillor recounts that year after year, in the rough debate on the budget, no one ever questions benefits like Christmas-money for the social assistance recipients. There is an emotional element that has to do with human dignity as a value and that is shared from one side of the parliament to the other.

### *Policy core*

Consensus subsists at the level of what Sabatier named “policy core”, that is basic strategies for achieving the core values. The most widely shared strategy is the subsidiarization. Actors on the communal level are considered as “more able to adapt social policies and solutions”.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the principle of self-responsibility is brought to the level of the communes. Those are responsible for the social, professional and cultural integration of their inhabitants, and also have to plan their social policies cost-consciously. The principle of subsidiarity isn't questioned, but the strategy to enforce a financial responsibility divides. The right-wing coalition reached a majority to institute a 20% participation of the commune on its own social expenditures.

Strategies going in the direction of a “social investment state”(Giddens 1998) reach a wide consensus. Both coalitions agree on a global and long-term understanding of social

---

<sup>14</sup> “Die Kommission Soziales orientiert ihr sozialpolitisches Handeln am Bild des selbst bestimmten, solidarischen Menschen. Gemeinden gestalten die Rahmenbedingungen so, dass möglichst alle Bewohnerinnen und Bewohner aus eigener Kraft finanziell unabhängig sowie sozial, beruflich und kulturell integriert sind und aktiv am gesellschaftlichen Leben teilhaben können.” “Sozialraum Bern- Mittelland: Strategie Für Eine Vernetzte Sozialpolitik” (Regionalkonferenz Bern Mittelland, February 5, 2012).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Project Primano. See report of WP5

<sup>17</sup> “Sozialraum Bern-Mittelland : Strategie Für Eine Vernetzte Sozialpolitik” (Regionalkonferenz Bern Mittelland, February 5, 2012).

problems and social policies.<sup>18</sup> This entails a will of collaboration among the different levels (communal, regional and communal) and among the different sectors of the local state (welfare, health, education). The aim of the collaborative work is to “implement a long term and cause-oriented social policy”.<sup>19</sup> Both coalitions agree on the benefit of thinking long term and acting upstream. Efficiency, even on a financial level, is an undisputed argument in both coalitions.

The core values that are self-responsibility, basic solidarity and equality of opportunities result in policies in line with social investment, activation and empowerment. It is not specific to Bern. Cantonal unemployment policies, for example, often combine conditionality and support of personal capacities and resources. Even at a national level, social spendings - in the fields of child care and unemployment policies in particular - are increasingly considered as investments (Bonoli 2007). However, the consensus on such policies appear to be broader in Bern in comparison with Geneva for example.<sup>20</sup>

However, it is at this level - policy core - that appears the most prominent disagreement. The distribution of tasks between the State and the market is a matter of dispute. What is at stake is faith, or trust, in both institutions. While the first coalition sees the State as most competent to do certain tasks, the second coalition thinks the market could do it better. As we will see in the next chapters, while the first says that child-care should not be commodified and submitted to the rules of market economy, the second says that pre-school children shouldn't be under the hand of the State. A kind of laissez-faire is defended by the liberal and criticized by the social-democrats. As we will see analyzing child-care and youth unemployment debate, a recurrent compromise is a quasi-market solution like a voucher system for child-care, or a partnership between public actors and private actors.<sup>21</sup> As we will see, secondary aspects are disputed in the child-care debate, but almost not in the unemployment debate.

### 3. CHILD CARE

A lively debate opposes since (at least) 2008 two coalitions around the question of the regulation of creches. First, this debate shows at the same time the consensus on “deep core” values and policy core, and the divergences on policy core and secondary aspects. Second, it highlights the discrepancy between the general orientation of the city social policies and the sectorial orientation of child-care. Third, it shows the shared support for investments in child-care is based on different arguments.

#### 3.1. Public service versus voucher system

The twenty last years saw a constant increase of the number of creche places in Bern. Some creches are public, some are private but subsidized and some are fully private. Anyway, the whole supply never reached the demand. In the end of 2008, the Social-Democratic party of the city, conducted by the director of the Department of welfare,

---

<sup>18</sup> Source : interview 7 with an executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party.

<sup>19</sup> “Sozialraum Bern-Mittelland: Strategie Für Eine Vernetzte Sozialpolitik” (Regionalkonferenz Bern Mittelland, February 5, 2012).

<sup>20</sup> See WP4 report for Geneva.

<sup>21</sup> These public-private partnership are encourage by the federal state, see: <http://www.ppp-schweiz.ch/>

education and health, launched a popular initiative<sup>22</sup> in order to establish an unconditional right to a child-care place for every child in Bern. The city would have the task to create the exact amount of places, integrating in the offer all existing (and willing) creches, including the private ones. As stated by an interviewed opponent, the initiators could have led this reform by their own, as they still had a majority in the city parliament at that time.<sup>23</sup> The purpose of the popular initiative was to legitimate the reform and raise a debate on the importance of more investments in child-care facilities.

Unexpectedly, the debate turned to the opponents' advantage. A few months after the launch of the initiative, the recently born Green-Liberal party submitted a counter proposal to the parliament. The idea was to privatize creches and implement a voucher system like it exist in Germany (Kornprobst 2007) and in other Swiss cities like Luzern.<sup>24</sup> Under certain conditions, parents would receive vouchers valid in any creche. The subsidy would be means-tested. Besides, parents would have to look themselves for a place in the creche of their choice. The number of places, the prices and the quality are supposed to automatically match the demand through market competition. The initiative and the counter proposal were submitted to a vote on May 2011 and lead to the success of the latter.<sup>25</sup> Despite this success, the debate is not over. The city parliament must now vote on an implementing regulation. The debate is still on going as no compromise has been found until now (February 2013).

Since the launch of the initiative, the first coalition received support from most left parties and unions. Nevertheless, it is generally seen as a government's project since the coalition leader is the member the executive power in charge of welfare. The opposed coalition gathers center and right oriented parties. The right-conservative party SVP is said to have chosen the lesser of two evils.<sup>26</sup> Elites of the national party and radical local representatives defend a traditional model where the mother takes care of the children.<sup>27</sup> However, local (and particularly urban) sections are said to have a less radical position on this question.

#### *For the initiative : arguments and values*

The debates preceding and following the popular vote provide a concrete support for an analysis of the coalitions, the coherences and the discordances in this field of the local welfare system. We will first examine the arguments for both projects and their links to “deep core” and “policy core” orientations. Then we will put in perspective these orientations and the general orientations and coalitions analysis we developed in the introduction.

The first and most recurrent argument for the initiative can be situated at the “policy core” level of Sabatier's structure of belief system. It concerns the share of responsibility between the State and the market, in other words: the welfare-mix (Evers 1993). For the left coalition, child-care cannot be submitted to the laws of market and must be provided by the State. The analogy with school system is meaningful: if private schools do exist in

---

<sup>22</sup> A popular initiative allows a certain number of citizens to propose a new law. If a certain number of signature is reached, the text is submitted to a referendum.

<sup>23</sup> Source : interview 1 with a legislative council representative of the Green-Liberal Party.

<sup>24</sup> “Spielend Gross Werden” (Stadt Luzern, January 2013).

<sup>25</sup> Initiative : 46% Yes, 54% No ; Counter proposal : 51.54% Yes, 48.46% No. See Annexe “Zusammenfassugen Kita-Debatte”.

<sup>26</sup> Source : interview 1 with a legislative council representative of the Green-Liberal Party.

<sup>27</sup> “We are fundamentally against extra-family day-care. Parents should educate their children themselves”. Hess Erich (SVP), City Parliament session of the 18th of February 2010.



Switzerland, they are strongly regulated by the State and a place in the public system is guaranteed for everyone. Two beliefs characterize this position. First, child-care is not like “any product” and cannot be commodified. Second, the market has possible negative consequences from which children must be protected by the State. As other consequence of this distrust of market mechanisms, the left coalition does not believe in the self-regulatory capacity of the principle of supply and demand. The lack of places would not be solved that way.

The second argument is linked to the way of seeing child-care. Supporters of the initiative see the creche as an educational and integrative tool. Since it is educational, it must be steered by the State, just like schools. Quality guidelines must control infrastructures as well as the training of personal. Furthermore, since it is integrative, social diversity within each facility must be forced by the authorities. Following the left coalition, a market system will lead to a differentiated offer in term of quality and prices, leading to a social (and possibly “ethnic”) segregation. The integrative goal can therefore not be reached outside a public frame. This position also implies a belief in the individual or societal benefits of social diversity in educational facilities. Equality of opportunity is an underlying value, since attending creche is seen as a good prerogative for school<sup>28</sup> and - like school - quality must not depend on the parent's financial means.

A third argument is based on the fact that - even with a voucher system - it is easier to find a creche place for someone who has a comfortable financial situation. A legal right would be the only way to ensure equality of opportunities for parents. Since women are still more likely to abandon their professional life against their will, a right to a creche place would also promote equality between men and women. Investing in child-care addresses those who have to work and for those who want to work.

### 3.2. For a voucher system: arguments and values

The prominent argument of supporters of the voucher system is to promote a kind of reality principle. The proposition of an unconditional right to a place for every child is seen as financially unrealistic. The risk of a financial fiasco is added to the risk that financial means simply do not allow the creation of more places, leaving the problem intact. Second, they explain the lack of places by the fact that private creches cannot compete with subsidized creches. Furthermore, regulation of infrastructures and personal makes the opening of new facilities very hard. As the liberal party's program says: “There no need of a university degree to baby-sit”.<sup>29</sup> The solution is “to let the market play”.<sup>30</sup> Unlike the first coalition, they believe in the capacity of the principle of supply and demand to match the expectations in terms of quantity and quality. While the divergence on the realistic character of the initiative and on the explanation of the lack of places concerns secondary aspects, the faith in the market competition marks a clear divide regarding policy core.

However, some involved actors do not have the impression of being part of an ideological debate. The position (of the left) consisting in seeing child-care as something that cannot be submitted to the law of market is seen as “ideological”.<sup>31</sup> The right coalition considers itself as “pragmatic” and sees no fundamental problem in dealing with child-care like with

---

<sup>28</sup> Interview 5 with a legislative council representative of the Social-Democratic Party

<sup>29</sup> “Renforcer Les PME, Créer Des Emplois” (Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei), accessed October 12, 2012, <http://www.plr.ch/positions/papiers-de-position/test/47-seiten/533-wirtschaftspolitik.html>.

<sup>30</sup> “Um die effektiv nötige Anzahl Plätze schaffen müssen wir den Markt spielen lassen”. Dana Dolores (FDP), City Parliament debate of the 7th of February 2010.

<sup>31</sup> Source : interview 1 with a legislative council representative of the Green-Liberal Party.

any other service. In a New Public Management approach, public administration should be run like a business. But this way of seeing the State goes with a way to consider the citizens. If the State operates as an enterprise, the citizen is seen as a “rational consumer of public goods” (Hvinden and Johansson 2012). This “marketization of welfare”(Salamon 1993), or “welfare consumerism” (Baldock 2003), matches with values like liberty of choice and individual responsibility. This argument by a centre- right politician illustrates this stance : “Parents know best what is good for their children”.<sup>32</sup>

By subsidizing the parents instead of the creches, the State would step back from its providing role and take a more regulatory role. Its redistributive (in a relative proportion) and coordinating role is not contested, but it should leave more space to the market and to the citizens themselves. A creche-manager assured: “The State should handle this problem (the lack of places) ensuring the conditions for more creches to open, and not creating creches itself”.<sup>33</sup> The solution recommended by this coalition is first to lower taxes, so that parents would have more money to pay for child-care. Secondly, through deregulation, creches would be cheaper and more private facilities would be created.<sup>34</sup>

This position on the respective roles of the market and the State is also related to a certain way of ranking child-care's aims. The educational and integrative objectives are not first on the list, like it was the case for the first coalition. As we mentioned before, child-care is assimilated to babysitting.<sup>35</sup> First, child-care should principally allow parents to both have a job in order to participate to the economic growth. “We want to provide enough child-care places, so that parents can work and generate growth, and doing so, increase the amount of taxes”<sup>36</sup> says a representative of the Liberal Party. Second, child-care should allow parents to be economically independent of the State by having a double income.

#### *A consensus on the need for investment*

Despite these divergences, the two coalitions agree on the need for more investment in child-care. According to interviewees, this idea was contested by right wing parties until the last five or ten years. Explanations of this change are numerous. Parliament members recount that arguments for more investments are often linked to personal experiences. Those we did not experienced the search of a creche place themselves know someone who did. There would be more women and young parents in the parliament than before. Moreover, parents wanting or having to both work is increasingly common and seen as normal. A second hypothesis is a broad diffusion of an investment perspective. It does not fit exactly the usual definition of social investment, which is meant to avoid the intergenerational transmission of poverty and should improve children skills for their future

---

<sup>32</sup> “Eltern wissen am besten, was gut für ihre Kinder ist”. Wertli Béatrice (CVP), City Parliament debate of the 7th of February 2010.

<sup>33</sup> Source : interview 8 with a child-care facility manager.

<sup>34</sup> “Renforcer Les PME, Créer Des Emplois” (Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei), accessed October 12, 2012, <http://www.plr.ch/positions/papiers-de-position/test/47-seiten/533-wirtschaftspolitik.html>

<sup>35</sup> “There no need of a university degree to baby-sit”(“Renforcer Les PME, Créer Des Emplois” 2012)

<sup>36</sup> “Wir wollen primär berufstätigen Eltern Kita-Plätze zur Verfügung stellen und das durch ihre Arbeit generierte Mehreinkommen wird volkswirtschaftlich einen Mehrwert in Form von gesteigerten Steuereinnahmen abwerfen.” Dana Dolores (FDP), City Parliament debate of the 7th of February 2010.

life (Jenson 2012, p. 69). The investment perspective - in respect of child-care - we can witness in Bern is rather based on a short or mid-term payback.

Like the second coalition argues, two working parents generate growth, increase the amount of taxes and are less likely to represent costs in term of social expenditures. It is a central justification for investments. For the first coalition, this financial argument is not the fundamental aim of child-care. Equality of men and women, integration of disadvantaged children (including non native speakers) and educational properties come first on the list. However, when it becomes necessary to convince, then comes the financial argument and the investment perspective. As stated by a left wing politician: "We can justify social measures economically".<sup>37</sup> In its program, the Social-Democratic party pleads for an "investment-strategy for growth, value creation and equality of chance".<sup>38</sup>

Why did this consensus happen? Studies and audits seem to have had an impact, as they are used as argument, even outside of the politic field. A creche-manager reported that "studies show that every franc spent in child-care comes back".<sup>39</sup> Besides of the influence of the evaluations and expertise field, we can argue that being the party in power, the Social-Democratic party and its coalition have a strong interest in insuring economic growth. First, only a good economic situation allows Bern to keep up the level of social provisions. Like interviewees said: "[in the cantonal equalization system] Bern pays more, but also receive more".<sup>40</sup> Second, following Shefter, maintaining a healthy local economy is an imperative for city officials so that they stay in power (Shefter 1992).

Even if the short term perspective appears more clearly, it seems like a long term view is taking shape. An implicit link is sometimes made between the lack of child-care places and a problematically low birth rate.<sup>41</sup> The pre-school education program is another example. It was launched by representatives of the first coalition and addresses disadvantaged children. It is meant to promote equality of opportunities, but also to prevent potential social problems. This preventive perspective overstep the field of child-care. Unemployment offices start working with a similar preventive view.<sup>42</sup> A representative of the first coalition explains: "it is cheaper to invest in education and training than paying ten or twenty years of social assistance".<sup>43</sup> The second coalition seems to pay less attention to this long term perspective. In the case of child-care, investing is first a response to the economy's needs in term of work-force.

One may argue that the difference principally takes place on a rhetorical level. Indeed, the second coalition certainly supports equality of men and women, and surely is sensitive to the long term potential benefits of social investment. However, argumentation reflect a more or less coherent and stable political program that defines priorities among numerous issues and determine the choice of arguments. Different argumentations and ranking of

---

<sup>37</sup> Source : interview 7 with an executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party.

<sup>38</sup> Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz, "Investitionsoffensive Für Wachstum, Wertschöpfung Und Chancengleichheit," March 18, 2007, [http://www.spps.ch/ger/content/download/18582/230696/file/070318\\_betreuungsgutschriften\\_d.pdf](http://www.spps.ch/ger/content/download/18582/230696/file/070318_betreuungsgutschriften_d.pdf).

<sup>39</sup> Source : interview 8 with a child-care facility manager.

<sup>40</sup> For example: interview 15 with a University professor of Public Administration

<sup>41</sup> "Für Eine Liberale Familienpolitik, Die Chancen Bietet Und Wachstum Ermöglicht." Freisinnig- Demokratische Partei, December 4, 2012.

<sup>42</sup> For both programs, refer to WP5 report.

<sup>43</sup> Interview 16 with an executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party - Canton of Bern

priorities does not necessarily imply a fundamental disagreement. Indeed, both coalitions found a common ground: Bern needs more creche places and therefore needs to spend more money on child-care. The question now is how to spend it. And here comes the disagreements about the respective roles of the State and the market in the welfare-mix. The conflict, as we detailed above, persists over the necessity of not to force a social diversity in child-care facilities, and over the regulation of the prices and the amount of subventions.

The case of this debate shows a turn in the orientation of urban welfare in Bern. First, it highlights a consensus over values and policy core. Even if articles and discourses about this debate make a much bigger place to the disagreements, the consensus we described is an essential feature of Bern's welfare system. It is a coherence factor. The second element that can be learned from this case is the disagreement over the roles of the State and the market. It is an incoherence factor. Even if some people read it as a sectorial and isolated change<sup>44</sup>, others see a global change in the making. "We hear more and more the word 'voucher'"<sup>45</sup> says a leader of the parliament. The success of the counter proposal shows that this form of a limited and indirect intervention of the state received a certain success among the voters.

Although we can not be certain of the intentions of voters and the reasons of the success of the voucher system, we can claim the realistic and viable character of the initiative was seriously put in doubt. Supporters of the counter proposal put forward the limits of what can be achieved through "legally enforceable rights" (Evers and Guillemard 2012a). However, this aspect of the question (can we really afford and implement a right for a crèche place for every child?) occulted the role of beliefs and values inherent in this debate. The result is a discrepancy between the elites of the first coalition who launched and supported the initiative and the voters who at the same period of time largely re-elected them and chose the counter-proposal.

#### 4. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

In comparison to other European countries, Switzerland has a low - but still underestimated - unemployment rate. Like the other "old risks", unemployment is addressed with a compulsory social insurance regulated at the federal level. However, the communes are concerned by unemployment since it often implies other social expenditures. For example, long-term unemployment impacts costs of social assistance. Unless social insurances, social assistance is paid by the communes.<sup>46</sup> As the 2010 revision of the unemployment insurance reduced the allowance for people under 25 and over 55, costs were transferred from the national level to the cantonal and communal level. Indeed, at the end of their allowance period, unemployed people usually receive social assistance. Youth unemployment is certainly the major concern. It challenges social cohesion and implies important potential costs. We will argue that even if unemployment is interpreted differently, a wide consensus exists over the necessity to act preventively, in an investment perspective.

##### *A shared concern but different interpretations and argumentations*

---

<sup>44</sup> For example: interview 7 with an executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party.

<sup>45</sup> Interview 5 with a legislative council representative of the Social-Democratic Party

<sup>46</sup> The official rate only counts people registered in regional unemployment offices. At the end of the allowance period, unemployed people benefit of social assistance, and therewith are no more counted as "unemployed". See (Flückiger 2013)

The debates transcripts show that unemployment is not a major topic of discussions in the parliamentary arena. However, the situation in certain districts and youth unemployment in general is a shared concern among all political forces.<sup>47</sup> However, interpretations of the problem and proposed solutions show different orientations. We will focus on interpretations and solutions addressing youth unemployment. Explanations linked to a difficult situation in a cyclic economy are widely shared. However, no one holds it for a unique explanation. The first coalition sees youth unemployment as an individual and a structural problem at the same time. While young people present lacks of training and capacities, the labour-market is seen as very demanding. The second coalition puts a different structural explanation forward. There would simply not be enough jobs.

Representatives of the first coalition see unemployment as an individual and structural problem. The official city strategy for professional and social integration measures states that “full employment is not a perspective”. Indeed, “the growing demand of labour-market makes that more people will not find a job in the first labour-market. A professional integration is not realistic for some of them. This is why we need social integration measures”.<sup>48</sup> Youth unemployment is not seen as a big problem itself, since it would mostly concern people that are not professionally integrateable. A parliamentary leader of the social-democratic party explains:

*Youth unemployment is not a big deal in Bern. There are enough apprenticeship places. Young unemployed people cannot work for social or health reasons. It is not a structural problem. Maybe they cannot find the job that they want, but there are enough jobs. These three administrations [communal, cantonal and federal] are quite social employers and offer lots of places and internships. But like anywhere else, some young people are not enough socialized or have psycho-social problems.*<sup>49</sup>

The problem can also be seen as structural because it is caused by a mismatch between the demand of the labour-market and the skills of young job-candidates. Bern labour-market would be demanding highly skilled workers, while most unemployed people are weakly trained. Following a leader of the unemployment sector, the lack of apprenticeship places was significant in the last ten years, and particularly around 2005.<sup>50</sup> But more recently, some apprenticeship places have not been filled due to a lack of trained candidates. The proposed solutions are low-threshold offers that would allow cognitively and socially weak young people to complete a professional training, and hopefully get a job. In 2005, a youth section of the Social-Democratic party proposed the creation by the city of a parallel labour-market for the one who cannot meet the demands of the regular labour-market. They asked for the creation of public jobs, focussing the measure on

---

<sup>47</sup> The costs are shared between a pool alimented the every commune in the canton and the commune itself, as explain in the introduction.

<sup>48</sup> “Zugleich ist er sich aber bewusst, dass angesichts der laufend steigenden Ansprüche der Wirtschaft eine

immer grösser werdende Gruppe von Betroffenen den Einstieg in den ersten Arbeitsmarkt nicht mehr schafft. Für diese Personen ist die Integration in den ersten Arbeitsmarkt oft keine realistische Option, deshalb ist hier vor allem die soziale Integration zu fördern”. “Strategien Und Massnahmen. Förderung Der Beruflichen Und Sozialen Integration in Der Stadt Bern 2010-2013” (Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, March 2010).

<sup>49</sup> Interview 5 with a legislative council representative of the Social-Democratic Party

<sup>50</sup> “The matching does not work anymore. Some apprenticeship positions stay unfilled because of a lack of trained people. At a different level, some sectors meet specific problems. Bouchers, for example, have trouble to find candidates” Interview 3.

particularly hit districts. This proposal was rejected by both coalitions. The only acceptable solution is an integration in the regular labour-market.

#### 4.2. A large consensus

Even if the second coalition do not reject to previously described interpretation, it favors a liberal interpretation. “It is clear we have not enough jobs”<sup>51</sup> says a representative of the liberal party. The proposed solution is to lower the taxes and ameliorate the business-climate. They also advice union leaders that wage moderation could participate to improve the attractiveness of Bern. Attracting companies in Bern is a first solution to reduce unemployment. Improving young people skills is a second. Those should be trained in a professional perspective, favoring apprenticeship over degrees leading to academic studies. However, despite these different interpretations, both coalitions found a common ground on the way of dealing with youth unemployment.

First, following the idea that social problems are better addressed at a lower level<sup>52</sup>, the city of Bern created its own professional integration structures. The “Competency center for Labour” (Kompetenzzentrum Arbeit), created in 200X, provides facilities and services to support adults and young adults' training and professional integration. Legislature guidelines for 2009-2012 announced that “Aim of city social policies is to make possible the development possibilities of all social layers and all generations. In the first line is the fight against youth unemployment.”<sup>53</sup> The value of equality of opportunities is here put forward by the government to justify its intervention. According to most interviewees, the existence of these facilities is not contested.

Second, and it can partly explain this acceptance, the methods seem to have an unanimous support. A document summarizing the local welfare strategies for 2005- 2009 recommends “individual and flexible solutions”. As explained by civil servant, beneficiaries' situations and problems are too different to be addressed with one standard measure.<sup>54</sup> Unemployment programs of the Competency center aim at providing tailor-made measures, instead of universal provisions or specialized programs addressing a very targeted population.<sup>55</sup> This kind of policies are uncontested since they address the persons capabilities(Nussbaum and Sen 1993). As we stated, both coalitions agree on an individual understanding of unemployment. Since it is seen as an individual problem, the aim of unemployment policies is not to compensate a risk, but to enhance the person's capacity of dealing with this risk. Another key point of the consensus on methods is the conditionality. An active participation to unemployment programs is bound to cash entitlements (unemployment insurance entitlements of social assistance). The “carrot and stick” system is an essential part of this activation perspective. It fits with the normative consensus on reserving welfare provisions to deserving people. The individualization and the conditionality make the work of the Competency center in phase with the shared value of self-determination.

---

<sup>51</sup> Liberal party, cf. annexe. City Parliament debate of the 25th of January 2005.

<sup>52</sup> “Actors on the communal level are “more able to adapt social policies and solutions””, “SozialraumBern-Mittelland: Strategie Für Eine Vernetzte Sozialpolitik” (Regionalkonferenz Bern Mittelland, February 5, 2012).

<sup>53</sup> “Legislaturrichtlinien 2009 - 2012” (Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, October 2009).

<sup>54</sup> Interview 10 with a civil servant in the field of unemployment

<sup>55</sup> For more detailed analyses on tailor-made policies in Switzerland, see Bonvin, J.-M and Farvaque, N. 2007. A capability approach to individualized and tailor- made activation. In: Van Berkel, R. and Valkenburg, B. (eds.): Making it personal. Individualising activation services in the EU. Bristol: The Policy Press, pp. 67-85.

Third, the respective roles of the State and the market are less disputed in the field of unemployment than it was in the field of child-care. Unlike the more extreme left that wanted the creation of a “secondary labour-market”, both coalitions agree on the shared responsibilities of the State and the market. From the State, the first coalition expect investments addressing the person's professional integration. The second coalition emphasizes on measures targeting the labour-market : enhancing the attractiveness of Bern, decreasing the taxes. But is also supports integrations efforts from the market. A representative of the economic field explains:

*We do not support measures that are compulsory for companies. But we support professional integration in private companies since it do not generate wage dumping. We discuss with companies that are sensitive and accept to hire unemployed or disabled people. Companies see their benefits in the well being of the society.<sup>56</sup>*

This consensus result in so called “quasi-market” solutions. The part-wage jobs program is an example. The department of welfare, together with union and employers<sup>57</sup> decided to implement a project where participant companies will (voluntary) hire unemployed people who are not totally able to work in the regular labour-market. If a man works for a cleaning company, but only does half of the job another worker would do, he will get half of the salary. The social assistance will compensate until the wage reaches the subsistence level. A firm (detached from the welfare department) will handle the distribution of jobs and supervise the relation between workers and employers.<sup>58</sup> This kind of quasi-market solution was more likely to appear in so-called liberal welfare-state than in local welfare system ruled by social-democrats representatives. However, such arrangements are seen as an appropriate way to increase public sector efficiency. And some argue that doing so, the State does not become a less important player in the welfare-mix, by emphasizing its controlling and standardizing roles (Kazepov 2010, p.255).

From the side of the market, the motivation to participate in such program could be explained by the growth-machine theory. Like the above-quoted interviewee said: “Companies see their benefits in the well being of the society”. A representative of employers states: “This is a win-win solution”.<sup>59</sup> A second explanation is a heritage of Fordism. Swiss companies have a tradition of involvement for the society's well-being and partnership between the State and private companies in the field of welfare is not a novelty. However, this involvement is now stimulated by the State. In Bern, and in the case of the part-wage program for example, the impulse clearly comes from the administration. As the liberal orientation is gaining importance over the last twenty years in Switzerland (Cattacin 2006), public-private partnership are being increasingly popular and legitimate in many fields. But as we can witness in Bern, the State does not loose its centrality as coordinating and encouraging actor.

---

<sup>56</sup> Interview 10 with a public administrator of economy department - city of Bern.

<sup>57</sup> For unions: UNIA, for employers: the städtische Gewerbeverband (KMU) and the Handels- und Industrieverein Sektion Bern (HIV)

<sup>58</sup> Zellweger, Katja. “Die Stadt Bern erprobt das Teillohnmodell.” Der Bund, September 11, 2012, sec. Bern. <http://www.derbund.ch/bern/nachrichten/Die-Stadt-Bern-erprobt-das-Teillohnmodell/story/31274555>.

<sup>59</sup> Bernhard Emch, quoted in “Teillohnmodell Schafft Neue Perspektiven Für Arbeitslose.” Kompetenzzentrum Arbeit, Stadt Bern, February 2013.

### 4.3. A dual system?

Häussermann argued that cities where lead by a dual system where a coalition concerned by economic growth faces a coalition concerned by societal integration and by the need of the vulnerable populations (Hartmut Häußermann 2008). These two groups would be working in parallel. It would be tempting to label the two coalitions we identified in this paper “integration coalition” and “growth coalition”. It is true that the first one, as we argued, is more present on the social field and dealing with social issues, and the second appears to be more concerned by the economic competitiveness.

However, is it possible to distinguish radically different motivations behind the agreement on the necessity to act against unemployment and the way to do it? As we argued, even if argumentation insists on different aspects on the problem - growth versus integration issues - coalitions seem to overlap. First of all, the concern about a “healthy economy” is shared outside of the liberal circle and the second coalition. Economic arguments traverse the whole debate over unemployment. Being central in the discourses of members of the second coalition, they are also used by representatives of the first coalition. A social-democrat deputy argued that “youth unemployment is very expensive”, generating costs of social assistance, health care and police work. He also mentioned that “people who have less money contribute less to the economic growth”.<sup>60</sup>

Secondly, the role of the economy in labour-market policies is not contested, as one would have expected from a coalition principally concerned by social integration issues (social issues arguably caused by the market economy, by the way). The administration of the local welfare, steered by leaders of the first coalition, underlines the centrality of the collaboration between the economy and the welfare actors. “In comparison with other cities, Bern runs for a long time a collaboration with the economy, in order to achieve social and professional integration. Bern has no classic occupation program, but works instead with a large network of intern jobs and jobs in companies.”<sup>61</sup> The city undertakes its integrative role collaborating with private companies. This welfare-mix is not (or not only) the result of a “pragmatic” governance, or a “one day at a time” politic.<sup>62</sup> It is the result on a consensus on values.

## CONCLUSION

Bern present a rather coherent welfare-system. It is a stable but slowly changing system, in the line with the slow shift from a post-war providing welfare-state (and its still existing structures like national social insurances) to an enabling State (Evers and Guillemard 2012b). The role of the State was to compensate risks, it is now also to prevent them and to enable people to cope with those risks themselves. This orientation matches the fundamental stance supported by both coalitions: “the man is considered as self-determined (independent) and caring about others (showing solidarity)”.

### *Social investment and activation*

The main general orientation is the social investment perspective. Child-care is a central field for social investment. Allowing mothers to work encourages women to have children, which is good for the viability of the welfare system. It also supports children development in order to make them skilled workers and financially independent people. As Esping-

---

<sup>60</sup> Keller Ruedi (SP), City Parliament debate of the 25th of January 2005.

<sup>61</sup> “Strategien Und Massnahmen. Förderung Der Beruflichen Und Sozialen Integration in Der Stadt Bern 2010-2013” (Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, March 2010).

<sup>62</sup> “Tagespolitik”, Focus group.



Andersen said : “fertility and child quality combine both private utility and societal gain” (Esping-Andersen 2007). In an other perspective - which is less addressed by the literature but more by our interviewees - investing in child-care allows more people to enter the labour-market. First, Bern economy needs work-force in some sectors. Second, more workers means more wage-earning and tax-paying people.

Regarding unemployment, investment takes a preventive face. Acting upstream and preventing unemployment by investments in professional training and education win unanimous support. As social investment is future oriented, youth unemployment receive a stronger attention. Young adults are seen as more likely to improve their capacities to deal with risks than older adults. In a very individual understanding of social problems, tailor-made measures address individual flaws. Another aim of such investment is the need of an “well functioning” society. The city must stay attractive and social problems would arguably impact the business climate and consequently affect the level of taxes.

Activation policies are an essential part of this investment perspective. The human being is seen as endowed with capitals that can be enhanced. Unemployment policies, as we have seen, are meant to support the person's resources and capacities to deal with unemployment. As a civil servant working in professional integration workshops explained, it is meaningless to write someone's cover letter. Her role is to make that person capable of writing the letter him/herself.<sup>63</sup> Another aspect of activation is the use of incentives to encourage people to take charge of their employability. Some authors make a difference between labour-market policies aiming to enhance the human capital, and those aiming to force people to find a job (Bonoli 2010). For example, while Barbier distinguishes the “universalistic activation” from the “liberal activation” (Barbier and Ludwig-Mayerhofer 2004), Taylor-Gooby talks of “positive” versus “negative” activation (Taylor-Gooby 2005). In Bern, workfare policies present both aspects at the same time.<sup>64</sup> While the tailored measures are meant to improve the person's capacities, incentives force him to follow the rules, participate actively to his/her own empowerment and find a job.

### *Not a growth machine*

In this paper, we talked of two coalitions. The first is left-wing, social-democratic, and counts numerous representatives in the government and in the administration. The second is right-wing, liberal, and have the support of employers. But despite this opposition, consensus are found, and often imply an investment perspective. Financial arguments are often held by representatives of both coalitions to justify social spendings. This image of an omnipresent concern for economic growth reminds of the growth-machine theory. The consensus among “members of politically mobilized local elites” would be motivated by “the desire for growth” (Molotch 1976).

But economic growth cannot be the only motivation for consensus in Bern. From both sides, there is a will to enhance the “quality of life” and create an attractive city of which one can be proud. An academic observer states: “Everyone wants Bern to be fine, and to have enough jobs”.<sup>65</sup> Employment is just a part of a whole integration process. The ultimate aim of social policies is social integration.<sup>66</sup> For example, people for which the

---

<sup>63</sup> Source : Focus group

<sup>64</sup> More about workfare in Switzerland : (Cattacin et al. 2002)

<sup>65</sup> Interview 15 with a University professor of Public Administration

<sup>66</sup> “Gemeinden gestalten die Rahmenbedingungen so, dass möglichst alle Bewohnerinnen und Bewohner aus eigener Kraft finanziell unabhängig sowie sozial, beruflich und kulturell integriert sind und aktiv am gesellschaftlichen Leben teilhaben können.”

labour-market remains inaccessible are targeted by social measures. “Bern is a social city”<sup>67</sup>, or “Diversity is richness”<sup>68</sup> are slogans promoted by the city government.

Bern wants to be a city where no one is left behind. Another example is the focus that has been made on the integration of migrants. Guidelines for integrations were defined after a large consultation and should rule the everyday work of anyone dealing with a migrant population, in the administrative services as well as in companies. A preschool program in specific districts aims to support the integration of children from a migrant family. These two examples give rise to pride.<sup>69</sup>

### *Not a dual system either*

Haussermann's regime theory of a dual system dominating urban politics seems a better fit. The growth-regime is concerned by the attractiveness and the visibility of the city. “The cities' self-presentations emphasize a strategic focus on growth” (H Häußermann, Läger, and Wurtzbacher)“. However, the growth-regime is concerned by social issues, first through a normative “social conscience”, and second because of the importance to avoid - through social policies - social issues capable of damaging the business-climate of the city. At the same time, the integration-regime, with the help of medias which reveal social problems, prevents the growth-regime to ignore social issues and disadvantaged areas of the city.

Nonetheless, this image of a dominating growth-coalition, balanced by an integration-coalition that tries hard to highlight social issues does not match Bern situation. It rather seems that the growth-regime and the integration-regime are embedded. A driving force of consensus is the promotion of Bern as a city. Several indicators and benchmarks evaluate cities regularly. For example, the firm Mercer publishes every year its international Quality of Living Survey, in which Zurich was ranked #2 in 2012, Geneva #8 and Bern #10. At a national scale, the magazine *Bilanz* publishes a Swiss city ranking. Besides of that, the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs publishes every month a ranking of the Cantons according to their unemployment rate. Media usually report these periodic publications. Since unemployment is a very urban problem<sup>70</sup>, this ranking is easily extrapolated to a rating of the economic development of cities and their capacity to deal with social problems.

The struggle for visibility of the city in the national and international city-competition, with big events and “festivalisation” (Hartmut Häußermann and Birkhuber 1993) is undoubtedly a reality. Bern had in certain circles the reputation of being a boring, slow acting administrative city.<sup>71</sup> Several political interventions have this “negative” reputation

---

<sup>67</sup> “Bern ist eine soziale Stadt”, “Legislaturrichtlinien 2009 - 2012” (Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, October 2009); Interview 7 with an executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party.

<sup>68</sup> “Vielfalt ist Reichtum”, (“Sozialraum Bern-Mittelland: Strategie Für Eine Vernetzte Sozialpolitik” 2012) 70 See report WP5.

<sup>69</sup>  
<sup>70</sup> “Travail Rémunéré Et Profession” (Office fédéral de la statistique, 2013), [http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/regionen/thematische\\_karten/gleichstellungsatlas/erwerbsarbeit\\_und\\_beruf/erwerbslosigkeit.html](http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/regionen/thematische_karten/gleichstellungsatlas/erwerbsarbeit_und_beruf/erwerbslosigkeit.html).

<sup>71</sup> Interviews 13, 15 ; Güntert, 2012

for purpose or use it as an argument.<sup>72</sup> However, this is not the particular concern of the second coalition. It is actually the city-president (social-democrat) that is credited to have placed Bern in the dynamic of a competitive city. This change took the form of flagship project like the new Federal Place which used to be a mere parking lot, or the recent Paul Klee Museum.

Urban planning and public transportation received a sustained attention since he is in power.<sup>73</sup> The creation of “Region Capital” in 2010 was a way to become visible among swiss biggest cities. This project was fully supported by both coalitions. In twenty years, competitiveness is said to have become a relevant argument for action. According to an interviewed academic, “Social policies still divide a little, but urban development, infrastructures, economic promotion and urban marketing are less and less a political matter. The city has problems and wants to solve them.”<sup>74</sup>

Furthermore, instead of seeing - like Häussermann did - a “strategic focus on growth” in the city self-presentation, we see a strategic focus on location factors (“*Standortvorteil*”). “Bern have no big banks like Zürich has, no chemical industry like Basel, no international organizations like Geneva, but it is the Capital” says as introduction a brochure of the University of Bern. Beside these bigger financial “capitals”, Bern presents itself as a social, innovative, maybe alternative city. Bern invests in familiarity and in migrant friendliness (Cattacin and Kettenacker 2011). Cynically, this could be seen as a part of the city branding, but beyond slogan and image are values. This ideological orientation seems to be supported by a large part of the population, as the recent elections and votes show. Due to the system of direct democracy at the communal level, orientation of the welfare system can be partly attributed to voting citizens.

A part of Bern citizens could be described as a “creative class”(Florida 2002). Despite the critiques that can be made to this analytical category, a number of interviewee spoke of an “urban mind”, or an “urban minded population”. This state of mind is thought as including values like world openness, solidarity, creativity, ecology and growth. These values are taken over by the city government, as a framework for their policies. Several strategic documents for the years 2009-2012 have as headline “Bern is a growing city, a creative city, a ecologic city, a world open city, a social city”.<sup>75</sup> These are basic elements constituting the relationship between the government and a population who choose to live in the city because this urban life is in line with their convictions. The high scores of the government reelection of 2012 (almost 70% for the city president) show that this relationship still works.

This state of mind is linked to a history and a specific context. According to a stakeholder active in the addiction field, “The City of Bern had a certain openness in the years 1980-1990. The canton was governed by the SVP [right conservative party] but the left took over the city. In the field of addiction, we were pioneers. We were among the first to open injections room and distributions of heroine”. This divide between a majority of left oriented voters in the city, and a majority of right oriented voters in the peri-urban and rural areas still exist. Media regularly analyze voting results with the help of the notion of “urban-rural gap”.<sup>76</sup> In the interviews, this divide feeds into the distinction of the so-called “urban state of mind”. An hypothesis is that the orientation of the city voters and

---

<sup>72</sup> For example: Dolores Dana (FDP) Parliamentary debates of 27th of March 2012. Claude Grosjean (GLP) Parliamentary debates of the 7th of June 2012.

<sup>73</sup> Interviews 13, 15

<sup>74</sup> Interview 15 with a University professor of Public Administration

<sup>75</sup> “Legislaturrichtlinien 2009 - 2012” (Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, October 2009).

<sup>76</sup> See annexe : urban-rural gap.

consequently of the city policies takes shape and is reinforced by an opposition with a so called “rural state of mind”.<sup>77</sup>

An example often mentioned in interviews is the “autonomous” cultural center “*Reithalle*”. Near from the station and covered with graffiti, the “*Reithalle*” is accused by certain right wing politicians to host drug dealers and violent anarchists. Five referendums were launched by the right party SVP in order to cut the public subsidies. None of them succeeded.<sup>78</sup> The last time in 2010, almost 70% of the voters “saved” the “*Reithalle*”. Several interviews mentioned another example. Until 2008, Bern had a municipal police, who was seen a relatively tolerant with protest marches and places like the “*Reithalle*”. Since this 2012, the police is a cantonal competence, under the supervision of the cantonal parliament and its center-right majority. “[This tolerance to demonstration and “autonomous” places] is very ideological. Now that the police is under cantonal authority, it creates a discrepancy”<sup>79</sup> said an academic stakeholder.

To conclude, Bern makes social cohesion a priority. Consensus on what Sabatier called the “deep core” and the “policy core” is an important part of the functioning of Bern welfare system and its orientation. Both coalitions have an interest in growth and in integration. And it appears that features of an “enabling State” model satisfy both coalitions' needs. Furthermore, such features and their underlying values seem to be legitimate and largely accepted in the population. Self-responsibility, equality of opportunities and solidarity (in the name of human dignity) are the common ground on which both coalitions and the population build Bern local welfare system.

---

<sup>77</sup> An online study on the image of the swiss cantons revealed that rural cantons are said to be narrow-minded. <http://www.kantonsimage.ch/>

<sup>78</sup> Daniel Vonlanthen, “Fast alle Jahre wieder: Abstimmen über die Reitschule,” *derbund.ch*: (Der Bund), January 19, 2010, sec. Bern, <http://www.derbund.ch/bern/Fast-alle-Jahre-wieder-Abstimmen-ueber-die-Reitschule/story/28809333>.

<sup>79</sup> Interview 15 with a University professor of Public Administration

## REFERENCES

- Baldock, John. 2003. "On Being a Welfare Consumer in a Consumer Society." *Social Policy and Society* 2 (1) (January): 65-71.
- Barbier, Jean-Claude, and Wolfgang Ludwig-Mayerhofer. 2004. "Introduction. The Many Worlds of Activation." *European Societies* 6 (4): 423-436.
- Barth, Robert, and Anna Bähler. 2003. *Bern - die Geschichte der Stadt im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert : Stadtentwicklung, Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft, Politik, Kultur*. Bern: Stämpfli Verlag AG.
- Bonoli, Giuliano. 2007. "Die Soziale Sicherheit Im 21. Jahrhundert: Vom Sozialschutz Zur Sozialen Investition." *Soziale Sicherheit Und Arbeitsmarkt* (1).
- . 2010. "The Political Economy of Active Labor-Market Policy." *Politics & Society* 38 (4) (December 1): 435-457. doi:10.1177/0032329210381235.
- Cattacin, Sandro. 2006. "Retard, Rattrapage, Normalisation. L'Etat Social Suisse Face Aux Défis De Transformation De La Sécurité Sociale." *Etudes Et Sources*.
- Cattacin, Sandro, Matteo Gianni, Marcus Mänz, and Véronique Tattini. 2002. *Retour au travail!: le workfare comme instrument de réforme*. Editions Universitaires Fribourg. Res Socialis. Fribourg.
- Cattacin, Sandro, and Florian Kettenacker. 2011. "Genève N'existe Pas. Pas Encore ? Essai Sociologique Sur Les Rapports Entre L'organisation Urbaine, Les Liens Sociaux Et L'identité De La Ville De Genève." In *Genève à L'épreuve De La Durabilité*. Genève: Fondation Braillard.
- Esping-Andersen, Gosta. 2007. "Childhood Investments and Skill Formation." *International Tax and Public Finance* 15 (1) (June 2): 19-44. doi:10.1007/s10797-007-9033-0. 20
- Evers, Adalbert. 1993. "The Welfare Mix Approach. Understanding the Pluralisms of Welfare States." In *Balancing Pluralism: New Welfare Mixes in Care for the Elderly*. Avebury.
- Evers, Adalbert, and Anne Marie Guillemard. 2012a. *Social policy and citizenship : the changing landscape*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- . 2012b. "Reconfiguring welfare and reshaping citizenship." In *Social policy and citizenship : the changing landscape*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Florida, Richard. 2002. *The Rise Of The Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community And Everyday Life*. 1st ed. Basic Books.
- Flückiger, Yves. 2013. "Chômage (taux De)." *Socialinfo, Dictionnaire Suisse De Politique Sociale*. Accessed February 14. <http://www.socialinfo.ch/cgi-bin/dicoposso/show.cfm?id=137>.
- Friedman, Milton, and Rose D Friedman. 1980. *Free to choose : a personal statement*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1998. *The third way : the renewal of social democracy*. Malden, Mass.; Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gilbert, Niel. 2012. "Citizenship in the Enabling State: The Changing balance of rights and Obligations." In *Social policy and citizenship : the changing landscape*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Häußermann, H, K L Läzer, and J Wurtzbacher. "The Dense Net of Fine Threads." Häußermann, Hartmut. 2008. "Desintegration Durch Stadtpolitik?" *Sozialwissenschaftlicher Fachinformationsdienst (Stadt- und Regionalforschung* 2008/1): 9-19. Häußermann, Hartmut, and Daniela Birkhuber. 1993. *Festivalisierung der Stadtpolitik :* Stadtentwicklung durch große Projekte. Opladen: Westdt. Verl. Hvinden, Bjørn, and Håkan Johansson. 2012. "Towards a Post-Marshallian Framework

for the Analysis of Social Citizenship.” In *Social policy and citizenship : the changing landscape*, by Adalbert Evers and Anne Marie Guillemard. New York: Oxford University Press.

Jenson, Jane. 2012. “Changing perspective on social citizenship.” In *Social policy and citizenship : the changing landscape*, by Adalbert Evers and Anne Marie Guillemard. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kazepov, Yuri. 2010. *Rescaling Social Policies: Towards Multilevel Governance in Europe*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Kornprobst, Judith. 2007. *Gutscheinmodell in Der Außerhäuslichen Kinderbetreuung - Eine Ökonomische Und Sozialpolitische Analyse*. 1. ed. Grin Verlag.

Kriesi, Hanspeter, and Maya Jegen. 2001. “The Swiss Energy Policy Elite: The Actor Constellation of a Policy Domain in Transition.” *European Journal of Political Research* 39 (2): 251-287.

Molotch, Harvey. 1976. “The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place.” *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (2) (September 1): 309-332. doi:10.2307/2777096.

Neidhart, Leonhard. 1970. *Plebiszit Und Pluralitäre Demokratie: Eine Analyse Der Funktion Des Schweizerischen Gesetzesreferendums*. Helvetia Politica. Series B vol. 5. Bern: Francke.

Nussbaum, Martha Craven, and Amartya Sen. 1993. *The Quality of Life*. Edited by World Institute for Development Economics Research. WIDER Studies in Development 21

Economics. Oxford [England] : New York: Clarendon Press ; Oxford University Press. Sabatier, Paul A., and Christopher M. Weible. 2007. “The Advocacy Coalition Framework:

Innovation and Clarifications.” In *Theories of the Policy Process*, 2ed ed. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. Salamon, Lester M. 1993. “The Marketization of Welfare: Changing Nonprofit and For-

Profit Roles in the American Welfare State.” *Social Service Review* 67 (1) (March 1): 16-39. Shefter, Martín. 1992. *Political Crisis - Fiscal Crisis: The Collapse and Revival of New York*

City. Columbia University Press. Taylor-Gooby, Peter, ed. 2005. *New Risks, New Welfare: The Transformation of the*

European Welfare State. Oxford University Press, USA. **Documents :**

“Agglomerations : Permanent Resident Population in Urban and Rural Areas.” Federal Statistical Office, 2012. [http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/themen/01/02/blank/key/raeumliche\\_verteilung/agglomerationen.html](http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/themen/01/02/blank/key/raeumliche_verteilung/agglomerationen.html).

Baromètre Des Préoccupations. Institut GFS, 2012. Baumann Oggier, Mona, and Martine Scholer. “Primano - Frühförderung in Der Stadt

Bern.” *SuchtMagazin* 4 (2010): 27-31. “Ensemble Plutôt Que Les Uns Contre Les Autres.” Schweizerische Volkspartei. Accessed

October 12, 2012. <http://www.svp.ch/display.cfm/id/101684>.

“Für Eine Liberale Familienpolitik, Die Chancen Bietet Und Wachstum Ermöglicht.” Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei, December 4, 2012.

“Groupes Parlementaires.” Chancellerie d’Etat Du Canton De Berne. Accessed December 14, 2012. <http://www.gr.be.ch/>.

Illi, Martin, and Alfred Zangger. “Ville-campagne, relations.” *Dictionnaire historique de la Suisse*,. Bern, May 11, 2012. <http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/f/F7881.php>.

“Integrierter Aufgaben- Und Finanzplan (IAFP). 2013- 2016.” Stadt Bern, 2012.

“Investitionsoffensive Für Wachstum, Wertschöpfung Und Chancengleichheit.” Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz, March 18, 2007. <http://www.sp->

[ps.ch/ger/content/download/18582/230696/file/070318\\_betreuungsgutschriften\\_d.p](http://www.sp-ps.ch/ger/content/download/18582/230696/file/070318_betreuungsgutschriften_d.p) df.

“Le Comparatif En Ligne Des Cantons Et Des Villes Suisses.” Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration. Accessed December 13, 2012. <http://www.badac.ch/>.

“Legislaturrichtlinien 2009 - 2012.” Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, October 2009.

“Leitbild Zur Integrationspolitik Der Stadt Bern 2010.” Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, May 7, 2010.

22

Les Défis Urbains, Du Point De Vue De La Confédération. Mandat De L’Office Fédéral Du Développement Territorial ARE Du Secrétariat d’État à L’économie SECO. ECOPLAN Recherche et conseil en économie et en politique, June 27, 2012.

“Medienmitteilung - Gemeindegemeinschaften Noch Gezielter Fördern.” Berner Regierungsrat, September 8, 2012.

“Pilotprojekt Primano : Zwischenbericht Zur Frühförderung in Der Stadt Bern Ergebnisse Und Erfahrungen 2007-2010.” Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, January 7, 2011.

“Renforcer Les PME, Créer Des Emplois.” Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei. Accessed October 12, 2012. <http://www.plr.ch/positions/papiers-de-position/test/47-seiten/533-wirtschaftspolitik.html>.

“Sozialpolitik in Der Stadt Bern. Ein Grundsatzpapier Der SP Stadt Bern.” Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz - Stadt Bern, November 19, 2008. [http://www.sp-bern.ch/fileadmin/user\\_upload/sp-be/sp-sektion-stadt-bern/pdf/positionspapiere/Grundpositionen\\_Sozialpolitik\\_08.pdf](http://www.sp-bern.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/sp-be/sp-sektion-stadt-bern/pdf/positionspapiere/Grundpositionen_Sozialpolitik_08.pdf).

“Sozialraum Bern-Mittelland : Strategie Für Regionalkonferenz Bern Mittelland, February 5, 2012.

Eine Vernetzte Sozialpolitik.”

“Spielend Gross Werden.” Stadt Luzern, January 2013. “Strategie Bern 2020.” Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, October 2012.

“Strategien Und Massnahmen. Förderung Der Beruflichen Und Sozialen Integration in Der Stadt Bern 2010-2013.” Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, March 2010.

“Teillohnmodell Schafft Neue Perspektiven Für Arbeitslose.” Kompetenzzentrum Arbeit, Stadt Bern, February 2013.

“Travail Rémunéré Et Profession.” Office fédéral de la statistique, 2013. [http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/regionen/thematische\\_karten/gleichstellungsatlas/erwerbsarbeit\\_und\\_beruf/erwerbslosigkeit.html](http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/regionen/thematische_karten/gleichstellungsatlas/erwerbsarbeit_und_beruf/erwerbslosigkeit.html).

Trede, Aline, and Lea Bill. “Stadtrat Bern - Interpellation GB/JA! : ‘Stadtkanton Bern’,” January 11, 2012.

“Vernehmlassung Zum Gesetz Über Die Integration Der Ausländischen Bevölkerung.” Schweizerische Volkspartei Kanton Bern, September 7, 2010.

Vogel, Hansjörg. “Gut Vernetzt, Aber Schwach Verankert.” Terra Cognita no. 10 (September 2006): 82-85.

**Press :**

Bracher, Katharina. “Stadt-Land-Graben wird immer tiefer: Skepsis gegenüber der ausländischen Bevölkerung wächst vor allem auf dem Land.” Neue Zürcher Zeitung, December 5, 2010, sec. Schweiz. <http://www.nzz.ch/aktuell/schweiz/stadt-land-graben-wird-immer-tiefer-1.8562764>.

Bucher, Rahel. “Stadt-Land-Graben im Asylwesen?” Der Bund, January 31, 2012, sec. Bern. <http://www.derbund.ch/bern/kanton/StadtLandGraben-im-Asylwesen/story/22275145?track>.

23

Frammery, Catherine. “Le «fact Checking» Vainqueur Du Débat.” Le Temps, May 4, 2012.

Guggenbühler, Mireille. “«Den Stadt-Land-Graben gibt es nicht wirklich».” Der Bund, July 25, 2012, sec. Bern. <http://www.derbund.ch/bern/kanton/Den-StadtLandGraben-gibt-es-nicht-wirklich/story/19335155>.

Güntert, Andreas. “Städte-Ranking 2012: Leuchttürme der Schweiz.” Bilanz, May 29, 2012, sec. Luxus. <http://www.bilanz.ch/luxus/staedte-ranking-2012-leuchttuerme-der-schweiz>.

Jaberg, Samuel. "Stadt-Land, Der Graben, Der Die Schweiz Entzweit." Swissinfo.ch, October 21, 2012. [http://www.swissinfo.ch/ger/politik\\_schweiz/Stadt-Land,\\_der\\_Graben,\\_der\\_die\\_Schweiz\\_entzweit.html?cid=33717334](http://www.swissinfo.ch/ger/politik_schweiz/Stadt-Land,_der_Graben,_der_die_Schweiz_entzweit.html?cid=33717334).

Ott, Bernhard. "«Der Stadt-Land-Graben ist das Hauptproblem»." Der Bund, October 12, 2012, sec. Bern. <http://www.derbund.ch/bern/kanton/Der-StadtLandGraben-ist-das-Hauptproblem/story/24967980>.

———. "«Wir müssen die Solidarität im Kanton leben»." Der Bund, July 21, 2012, sec. Bern. <http://www.derbund.ch/bern/stadt/Wir-muessen-die-Solidaritaet-im-Kanton-leben/story/14754743?track>.

"Présidentielle France 2012 : Le Triomphe Du Fact-checking !" TV5 Monde, n.d.

Schäfer, Fabian. "Kein Stadt-Land-Graben im Grossen Rat." [bernerzeitung.ch](http://www.bernerzeitung.ch): (Berner Zeitung), December 15, 2012, sec. Region. <http://www.bernerzeitung.ch/region/kanton-bern/Kein-StadtLandGraben-im-Grossen-Rat/story/26789086>.

Senti, Martin. "Topografie der Werte: Versinkt die Schweiz im «Stadt-Land-Graben»? Solche Pauschalurteile sind angesichts der politisch-demografischen Vielschichtigkeit und Dynamik verfehlt. Von Martin Senti." Neue Zürcher Zeitung, February 15, 2011, sec. Startseite. <http://www.nzz.ch/aktuell/startseite/topografie-der-werte-1.9528908#>.

"SP-Initiative: Private Kitas warnen." Der Bund, November 20, 2008, sec. Zeitung heute. [http://www.derbund.ch/zeitungen/stadt\\_region\\_bern/SPIinitiative-Private-Kitas-warnen/story/11037197](http://www.derbund.ch/zeitungen/stadt_region_bern/SPIinitiative-Private-Kitas-warnen/story/11037197).

Vonlanthen, Daniel. "Fast alle Jahre wieder: Abstimmen über die Reitschule." [derbund.ch](http://www.derbund.ch): (Der Bund), January 19, 2010, sec. Bern. <http://www.derbund.ch/bern/Fast-alle-Jahre-wieder-Abstimmen-ueber-die-Reitschule/story/28809333>.



## **ANNEXES**

Annexe 1: Summary of parliamentary debates on Kita initiative. (“Zusammenfassungen Geschäfte und Protokolle Kita-Debatte Stadtrat und Newspapers”)

Annexe 2: Summary of parliamentary debate of the 25th of January 2005 on unemployment.

Annexe 3: Urban-rural gap.

## INTERVIEWS

<b>Interviews, led between the 31<sup>st</sup> of July and the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2012 in Bern</b>					
<b>Nb</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Field</b>		<b>Position</b>	
7	08/10/12	Child-care	Civil servants	Executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party	
2	11/09/12			Public administrator of youth department - city of Bern	
16	16/11/12			Executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party – Canton of Bern	
1	31/07/12		Policy makers	Legislative council representative of the Green-Liberal Party	
5	21/09/12			Legislative council representative of the Social-Democratic Party	
9	08/10/12			Legislative council representative of the Social-Democratic Party	
15	16/11/12		Civil society stakeholders	University professor of Public Administration	
8	08/10/12			Child-care facility manager	
17	13/12/12			Union of public sector employees representative	
7	see above		Youth unemployment	Civil servants	Executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party
3	21/09/12				Public administrator of the employment department - city of Bern
12	25/10/12				Public administrator of economy department – city of Bern
7	see above			Policy makers	Executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party
9	see above				Legislative council representative of the Social-Democratic Party
1	see above				Legislative council representative of the Green-Liberal Party
15	see above	Civil society stakeholders		University professor of Public Administration	
13	05/11/12			Stakeholder in the field of social services	
4	21/09/12			Stakeholder of the Swiss Cities Union	
6	04/10/12	Additional interviews		Stakeholder in the field of unemployment	
10	12/10/12			Civil servant in the field of unemployment	
11	16/10/12			Civil servant in the field of childhood	
14	05/11/12		Civil servant in the field of unemployment		
17	13/12/12		Stakeholder from union		
18	13/12/12		Public administrator in the field of integration		

19	13/12/12		Civil servant in the field of integration
20	02/11/12	Focus group in Bern.	