The enlargement of local power in trans-scalar strategies of planning: recent tendencies in two European cases

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Abstract The increasing 'trans-scalar' conditions of urbanity imply unique opportunities and threats for urban policies. When drawing up strategic urban policies, cities are confronted with the dominance of higher level policy programmes and even more so with the hegemonic power of globalizing markets. Could urban policies also undergo a similar change and actively pursue the enlargement of local power and energies by becoming actively involved in the higher level scaled networks? By building on useful concepts of urban regime theory and more recent rescaling theories, the authors argue that this element of 'foreign policy' should be integrated in the core analysis of urban policy approaches. The case is explored and illustrated in two European examples of strategic urban planning, namely Barcelona and Copenhagen. The cases provide evidence of the enlargement of local power via active trans-scalar policies. For civic groups, however, this strategy still appears to be a bridge too far in both cases.

Introduction

The enlargement of scale and scope of urban activities in the globalising society confronts cities with new challenges. The establishing of urban policies is becoming more and more dependent on external conditions beyond local control. On the other hand, the emergence of a new infrastructure of trans-scalar networks might create new opportunities for local actors to become actively involved in the processes of rescaling and they even might enlarge local power and local opportunities by becoming actively interconnected with the new infrastructure of 'non-place bounded' energies. In this paper we explore the meaning and potential impact of this trans-scalar dimension. In order to frame the concept of analysis, we build, in the first section, on the stepping stones of urban regime theory. Urban regime theory dominated the American urban policy analyses throughout the entire 1990s. In the next section, the urban regime framework is extended with more recent urban theories that include the rescaling of urban activities. These theories provide a great deal of insight into the dynamic macroscopic changes of

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urban conditions. In addition to these concepts, we explore the ways in which local actors might become actively involved in the ongoing processes of rescaling.

In the second part of the paper, empirical evidence is sought for these emergent opportunities of strategic urban policy making. Profiting from the trans-scalar dimension is still an embryonic element of urban planning strategies. For this reason we selected two relatively advanced cases of strategic urban planning in Europe, namely the strategic planning in Barcelona and Copenhagen. We critically investigate the strong and weak performances in the two cases. The paper concludes that the involvement of local actors in trans-scalar strategies is still highly differentiated in the current era of urban transition.

Analysing urban policies: the stepping stones of urban regime theory

After the frequent use of elitist and pluralist approaches from the 1950s until the early 1980s, the concept of *urban regime theory* emerged and, in a few years time, became a new dominant approach to analysing urban politics in American political and policy sciences (Fainstein et al. 1983; Elkin 1985; Logan and Molotch 1987; Stone 1989). Adherents of the urban regime theory claimed to give more systematic attention to and a more theoretical explanation for the organisation of power in urban development policies than preceding approaches. A key feature of this approach is the explanation of enduring forms of coordinated action between urban government and parts of the private sector. Although the interests of public agencies and private sector actors differ in many ways, enduring forms of cooperation—usually not formalised in statutory or contractual agreements but overtly visible in actual policymaking—were identified in many long-term case studies of American cities. More recently, overseas investigations have been carried out which, in particular, compare the politics in British cities (Digaetano and Klemanski 1999; Hambleton 2003). According to this approach the power on political decisions of urban policy is not exclusively held by political leaders (elitist theory), neither by more or less instantaneous coalitions between powerful agents (pluralism). Instead there is a sort of 'systemic

power' behind the daily decisions, a *regime* explaining a systematic selection of political decisions (Stone 1989).

The in-depth historical search by Elkin into the conceptual roots of the American Republic convincingly clarified the emergence of this type of regime and the many variable forms it may take in local practices (Elkin 1985). Elkin demonstrated that decisions on local development are not simply produced by those in local political power but primarily by those in charge of economic production and investment. Although political power depends on the whole set of electoral votes (without voting privilege for the relatively small group of entrepreneurs), urban policymaking is also dependent on the preparedness of entrepreneurs to produce in a certain place and on the tax income which is generated in this way. The emergence of a *regime* behind political decisions is dependent on the bridging of these two arrangements: the balancing of 'financial accountability' and 'electoral accountability'. This balance is extremely sensitive and differs greatly between cities, and even more so between cities in different countries. In general terms, American city politics is dependent to a high degree on income generated locally (local taxes and other own incomes) which produces a local political culture based on the notion of cooperation with business interests. In Europe, local and regional government is in general financed to a much higher degree by national government, giving more space to manoeuvre between national preferences and local electoral motives. In the US context, open rivalry between municipalities with a view to acquiring the favour of private investment is common, while it is still more hidden and indirect in the context of European cities.

The predisposition of urban politics to private sector investment generates the regime condition that may explain (in all sorts of variances) the emergence of enduring alliances between different interests. Although established informally, urban regimes systematically include some interests and exclude others. Regimes usually consist of elected political leaders and business as the key participants and may include some further specific groups. Although the participants are not equal as regards position, they share goals and they are able to mobilise institutional sources in order to enable effective results. It is power as form of social *co-production* (Stoker 1995). In a

theoretical appraisal of urban regime theory, Stoker refers to the meaning of power conceived as a network of mutual dependency instead of power as control by a hierarchical actor, writing, 'Cooperation is sustained by solidarity, trust and mutual support instead of hierarchy and bargaining' (Stoker 1995). The existence of an urban regime as an enduring regime for the long term is not at all evident. Urban regime theory may explain the systematic character of power conditions and the conditions for mutual dependency of differently interested groups, but efforts are still required to make an informal and endurable regime effective and selective as regards its long term strategic goals. It requires what Stoker calls a 'pre-emptive power of social production forms', based on *leadership in coalition* in a complex and fragmented world.

To conclude our review of urban regime theory, it is here—in the basic notion of *interconnectivity* as a key to understand new forms of power and leadership—that we continue our search into trans-scalar policy strategies, as the context of political decision-making has become even more complex and uncertain in the current era of urban transformation in the last decade. The building blocks of urban regime theory provide useful analytical keys in connection with such action and governance focused concepts as 'systemic power', 'power as social production' and 'leadership in coalition' instead of frames of direct control. In this specific way, urban regime theory is an example of one of the frames of interpretation used in more recent theories of urban governance. As a second crucial notion of urban regime theory we build on the constructive use of the *action perspective* in this theory (in the form of co-production). According to this constructive notion of policy analysis, 'policy matters'.

Although systematically biased in order to appease economic investors, it is the differentiation of political strategies and the differentiation of coalitions with the private sector in which urban regime theory is interested. Even in the minimalist context of market-type American cities, urban regime theory allows an analysis of different forms of policy coalitions. Indeed, it makes a difference whether black communities are included or excluded from regimes, whether social issues of unemployment or education are part of the regime or not, and whether ecological organisations are included or not. Adherents of this approach are searching for the conditions

under which the 'use value' of urban spaces might be promoted instead of the systematic reproduction of 'exchange values' (Logan and Molotch 1987) (after the French sociologist Lefebvre 1991). It is the awareness of systematic bias to economic interests on the one hand and the combination with different uses of the electoral power on the other that keeps this approach viable and transforming (Fainstein et al. 1983; Mollenkopf 1992).

The rescaling context of urban governance

The urban regime theory has its shortcomings as well. One of the most frequently uttered objections to urban regime theory is its low level of abstraction and the direct focus on local arenas of action (Harding 1995). A local frame of policy analysis cannot stand the dynamics of urban development in an episode of rapid urban transformation which is increasingly characterised by trans-local and global tendencies of production and consumption. It is in response to this that some scholars attempted to construct a bridge between urban regime theory and economic regulation theory (Lauria 1997).

Economic regulation theory implies a macroscopic view of the accumulation of capital in the global economic system and its periodical crises. It investigates the inherent political necessities for accommodating the economic crises and the transition to new stages of accumulation (Boyer 1990). Although it has a tendency to economism, the macroscopic view is fascinating and may help to explain contextual changes in the position of local economic systems (Harvey 2001). Up to now, however, the regulation theory has developed in more conceptual frames than in empirical evidence (Goodwin 2001). The 'regulation school' might be expected to provide useful empirical findings about the impact of macro level economic conditions on the position of local economic systems. Ontologically, however, it is not easy to connect the macro level regulation type of analysis of systematic economic power directly with the very differentiated action perspectives of urban regime theories. Regulation theory has no antenna for the variable choices of action perspectives and it considers regulation as being directly related to the macro level changes in economic context.

Kevin Cox made serious efforts to connect the economic global networks and the local regimes (1998). More recently, the work on the rescaling of policy strategies by Neil Brenner has also created new conceptual bridges and openings. Brenner managed to translate the macroscopic economic dynamics into researchable hypotheses about actual development strategies for urban regions. Brenner hypothesises on the emergence of new state spaces via the construction of new coalitions for regional growth. National economic systems would bring their most advanced economic regions into a more privileged and autonomous position in order to meet the highly competitive standards in the rivalry between national states (Brenner et al. 2003; Brenner 2004). In this way, regional development policies are made part of changing national and international policy coalitions. Thus far, these fascinating concepts have only partly been investigated in empirical research. We believe there is a lot of evidence of the change of national economic policies into regional development in European nation states. There was the changing from the national support to economically peripheral regions in the 1950s through to the 1970s and to the support of regions with the highest economic potential during the past two decades. Following the market-led regionalisation of economic systems under the competing conditions of liberalised markets, the national economic policies decided to bet on the strongest regional horses. It is only at the level of the European Union that—for political reasons—there is still a tendency to support peripheral regions. Less evidence, however, exists on the hypothesis of decentralisation of economic policies to autonomous regions. We would expect more differentiation of the central–regional interrelationships in European member states.

Increasingly, local and regional development policies are becoming involved in trans-scalar coalitions of policymaking (inter-regional, national and international). Obviously, this process did not start in the public sector and crossed the borders of local and regional arenas which have prevailed for many years in the private sector. However, the phenomenon reached a new stage of intensity in the private sector as well as a result of the explosive growth of telecommunication and the information society. Crossing borders no longer means keeping relationships with external agencies but economic processes increasingly have become *trans-scalar* as such: the external dimension has been internalised. Since the groundbreaking studies of Sassen and many others, the impact of economic rescaling and global networks on the functioning of economic systems have been intensively studied in the literature of recent decades (Sassen 2001; Swyngedouw 1997). The interesting question for local and regional development strategies is whether there is a growing one-sided dependency on the non-place bounded relationships of economic power and on the new state spaces or whether new forms of local responsiveness are being invented.

Our aim, therefore, is to explore the conditions of enlarging the local action space in the context of a new infrastructure of trans-scalar relationships of economic power. Savitch and Kantor explored this action perspective in various local contexts. They found numerous forms of local responsiveness: cities need not be 'leaves in the wind' (Savitch and Kantor 2002, p. 346). Their investigation focused on the 'driving' and 'steering' variables that enable cities to bargain responsive strategies under the conditions of the international market (Savitch and Kantor 2002, pp 149–170). In this paper, we want to explore the action perspective of local responsiveness a bit further by focusing on the enlargement of local action space in trans-scalar policy strategies. The trans-scalar dimension is not just a result of changing policies at higher levels of scale but might also actively be initiated from the bottom up in the shaping of new trans-scalar strategies of policymaking. In exploring this bottom-up dimension, however, we have to distinguish between different sorts of local participants. The established local policies are usually very concerned about their position of economic competitiveness. Considered from this perspective local politics might make more effort to become interconnected with external economic networks. However, civic groups might adopt a different perspective in the development of cities, and might attempt to become interconnected with *counter hegemonic* networks. Evans investigated the counter hegemonic globalization of transnational social movements which oppose the dominance of international economic networks (Evans 2005). He distinguished three broad families of transnational movements aimed at counter hegemonic globalization (countering transnational economic hegemonies): labour movements, women's

movements, and environmental movements (Evans 2005, p. 658). We have not yet found significant counter hegemonic transnational movements at the level of urban strategies in the current stage of urban transformation, nor in the two advanced case studies that are discussed later. However, some expect similar tendencies to become more significant in the coming years.

The multi-levelled context of governance differs in Europe in many respects from the North American conditions. In all European nation states, the national—local nexus dominated the building up of the national welfare states. The profiles of individual European states differed strongly of course (from relatively liberal, to the entrepreneurial state, and from corporatist to etatist) but everywhere local and regional policy strategies were shielded by national arrangements from direct dependency on market conditions. Even in the liberal UK, more than 60% of municipal expenditure was provided via national funding. The national governments used to specify the conditions of local policies. In many countries this dependency also extended to the provision of semi-public goods, such as social housing, public transportation, health services, education, energy, etc. The local providers of these goods— although often founded on private law—were as much dependent on the national arrangements as local governments themselves. This extremely variegated but largely 'nationally-dependent' context of local and regional policymaking has changed dramatically in the last two decades (LeGalès 2002). The most dramatic change is the continuous tendency of liberalisation, bringing a greater need for initiatives aimed at the setting up of privatised organisation.

Regarding public amenities, however, the public sector usually still decides on the conditions and, in most cases, there is no evidence of complete privatisation. The second process of change occurred within the public sector itself. A continuing tendency of differentiation has drastically changed the post war profiles of the European nation states. Obviously, the nation state is not on the decline as some observers thought (Ohmae 1995). The nation state is still omnipresent in all sorts of intergovernmental relationships but the one-sided hegemony of the *national-local axis* has disappeared almost everywhere. The national states decentralised large parts of policy production to lower tiers of government and to semi-

autonomous public agencies (quangos). In many cases, the processes of decentralisation are still conditioned, but local and regional responsibilities have increased considerably. The emergence of new meso-government may be regarded as one of the most structural innovations in the intergovernmental relationships of unitary European nation states in the last decades. Before the early 1980s, most unitary states in Europe did not even have regional tiers of government. Now they exist in all European countries under variegated conditions of power (Newman and Herrschel 2002). The processes of governmental rescaling are also taking place towards the international level. In particular, the European Union has grown into an effective new tier in almost all forms of policy. European decision-making does not simply mean regulating at a higher level of government, but is an extremely complex fabric of trans-scalar wheeling and dealing (Brenner 1999; Hooghe and Marks 2001; LeGalès and Lequesne 1998; Gualini 2006)

This new context of multi-actor and multi-level governance enables additional policy strategies. Instead of a prevailing national–local arrangement for local and regional policy, the context for policy games enables many sorts of coalition making at different levels of scales and between different types of actors. The choices for coalition making are not completely free of course and there are still hegemonies of public and private sector based power. However, the potential for policy differentiation has increased considerably (LeGalès 2002). Regional governments may cooperate with other regions in order to achieve a greater impact on the decision-making at European level. They may cooperate with national governments, and they may even produce counter coalitions with Europe in order to prevent one-sided dependencies on national policies (as frequently observed in federal Germany with its powerful states). In addition, there may be different sorts of interconnectivity with economic or social stake holders in the private sector. In other words, the policy field for regional policymaking has become extremely differentiated, resulting in all sorts of different, overlapping and even conflicting coalitions of policymaking (Salet and Thornley 2007).

Some urban and regional systems are more active than others in exploring the new potential of policy-making in this changed context. In our investigations

into metropolitan governance in European city-regions we found dramatic differences, ranging from regional politicians and planners that still operate in the mode of post-war dependency of national arrangements, to regions that launch their own inter local strategies against the national prerogatives. We explored this trans-scalar dimension in the framing of some of the largest urban projects under construction in seven European city-regions (Salet and Gualini 2007).

Some experiences of trans-scalar strategies of planning in two European city regions

Barcelona and Copenhagen are two of the most advanced examples in the European context where, in the last two decades, active local municipalities have explored trans-scalar networks to focus and enrich urban planning strategies. We briefly investigate these forms of local responsiveness, analyse the institutional dynamism they have brought about and identify several conflicts and imbalances in their outcomes.

A cultural and project oriented approach in Barcelona

The Barcelona municipality has developed a well-known strategy in the last two decades of connecting and aligning an agenda of strategic urban projects with higher levels of government and the private sector. Barcelona's urban development strategies, especially related to the Olympic Games of 1992, have been extensively analyzed, praised, copied and criticised (e.g. McNeill 1999; Monclús 2003; Marshall 2004). In the post-Olympic era, the Forum project most interestingly radicalises the idea of local responsiveness. Via a 'self-invented' international cultural event, rather than an existing international showcase, the municipality organised public and private investments for a major programme of infrastructure and urban investments.

The series of urban interventions linked to the Olympic Games of 1992 are often referred to as a textbook example of a local government that is successful in organizing processes of public–public and public–private leverage (Garcia-Ramon and Albet 2000). The municipality, then led by the charismatic and determined mayor Pasqual Maragall, skilfully used the imminent deadline of the Olympics to push through an extensive package of separate but highly connected projects for new infrastructures, squares, parks, housing areas and improved telecommunication (McNeill 2001). The essential point from the perspective of local responsiveness was that the city's government understood the opportunity the Olympics presented for focusing and for prioritising its policies—an exercise that was made easier due to the dominant position of the social-democratic party in the municipal council. In addition, the event deadline, together with the international attention, was the key to the setting up of coalitions of support with the business sector and the regional and national government—two levels of government that had previously not been very supportive.

The Forum 2004 and other post-Olympic projects had their origins in a structural economic weakness of the Olympic transformation. The major developments in that era did not specifically target Barcelona's underdeveloped higher tertiary economic sectors and its still emergent regional and national infrastructure connectivity. In a situation of perceived rising outside pressures in favour of 'competitive' development, it was therefore no surprise that the series of strategic plans developed in the Nineties strongly embraced the vision of integrating urban investments with economic policies and the ambition of enhancing Barcelona's connectivity in economic webs (Santacana 2000). This was a strategic shift away from the community-based approach of the Eighties that focused specifically on carefully renovating neighbourhoods and creating new public spaces (Busquets 2005). Even the Olympic programme had a quite localised impact since its developments were concentrated in four zones, while its more visible larger elements, especially the new beaches, were widely supported, by civic groups as well. However, Barcelona's post-Olympic round of strategic urban investments shifted the municipal agenda towards much bigger and particularly economic oriented projects: the expansion of trade fair facilities, the expansion of the airport, the connection towards the high-speed train network and the development of a large area of logistic facilities in the Llobregat Delta. In the old industrial area of Poblenou, a comprehensive long-term redevelopment scheme, 22@, was introduced whose aim was to transform the area into

a place for high-tech industries and creative industry. This transformation was connected to two urban mega projects, namely the development of the Sagrera/St. Andreu area, a mixed-use project around a future high speed train station, and Forum, a project of infrastructural, environmental and urban investments at the mouth of the river Besòs. Due to the municipality's substantial debts after the games, it became clear that this ambitious local development agenda had to be realised mainly by the private sector or on the basis of higher-level government investments (Rowe 2006).

Here, we focus briefly on the Forum project because of its particular significance and originality in creating new trans-scalar cultural relations. The project aims to transform an old industrial area into a project of important new economic activities and public spaces. Its location is a brownfield where the grand Avinguda Diagonal reaches the Mediterranean Sea. The project aim was a total overhaul of the area with a mixed-use programme and large public spaces, integrated with the existing and upgraded waste-water treatment, incinerator and power plant in the area. While the large Forum project is a specifically public-funded project, creating a new area of open spaces and facilities like a marina, a conference centre and a new university campus, the adjacent Diagonal Mar project—which we analyse as an integral part of the total Forum transformation project—is a purely private sector investment in high-end condominiums, in combination with an indoor shopping mall and some other functions. Table 1 summarises the programme of urban investments in Forum.

As far as the municipality of Barcelona was concerned, the Forum project had several interconnected spatial, economic and environmental goals. It

was seen as an area in which crucial economic structures could be located to enhance the city's economic vitality in advanced economic networks, particularly a large conference centre and a new university. It was also an opportunity to transfer the last brownfield part of the city's eastern coastline into a beach and marina, thereby stimulating tourism. By upgrading the existing environmental facilities in the area, a new central public area could be realised which was expected to enhance existing physical, economic and social revitalisation programmes in different surrounding disadvantages neighbourhoods in the area and which could be used as an area for large-scale public events (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2006). To the municipality, these all represented desirable but very expensive public investments, which could only be realised by higher-level government investments and private participation. Inspired by the success of the Olympic Games, a crucial aspect of the strategy of the local government was to link the transformation to an ambitious international cultural event. It was hoped that this would inspire the business sector and higher levels of government to invest in Forum. Since it was not possible in the short-term to attract an existing large event (Olympics, Expo) to the city, the municipality responded by 'inventing' a new kind of event itself. Interestingly enough, the city understood that it was necessary to connect such an event with trans-scalar (inter-national) networks to increase its relevance, (inter)national attention and capacity to persuade other actors to invest. Eventually, in 1997, UNESCO support was acquired for the organisation of an event named '2004 Universal Forum of Cultures'. As a sort of cultural Olympic Games, this four month outdoor event featuring debates, exhibitions and performances was also expected to strengthen Barcelona's

Table 1 Programme of urban investments in the Forum and Diagonal Mar area 2001–2008

	Surface (ha.)	Housing (m^2)	Hotels (m^2)	Offices (m^2)	Other com. functions (m^2)	Total programme (m^2)
Forum	222	82,000	86,000	109,645[c]	35,994	313,639
Diagonal Mar	23.5	169,978	58,000	57,000	87,000	371,978
Total	245.5	251,978[a]	144,000[b]	166,645	122,994	685,617

[a] In the neighbouring areas of La Mina and La Catalana another 2,477 housing units are to be built as part of the revitalization plans for these areas (not included in these numbers)

[b] Outside the project area and alongside the coast another 641 hotel beds have already been realized in the last few years

[c] A large number of the offices in the Forum area are buildings for the University campus in the Llull-Taulat zone. Source: Ajuntament de Barcelona 2006; Tersol 2004

position as an important cultural city and a tourist magnet (Luzón and Vila 2007).

With the support of UNESCO, the municipality persuaded the regional and national government to form the Forum Consortium, to organise the cultural event and link its development with the community and Barcelona's cultural scene (García 2004). A purely public consortium, the Consorci del Besos, with political leaders of the two municipalities the project area was in, was formed to coordinate all planning activities in the area. The Diagonal Mar area was assigned completely to one large American property developer, namely Hines.

As Table 2 shows, the project was particularly successful in persuading the region and the national government to allocate European funds they were allowed to spend anywhere in their jurisdiction to the Forum project. This is the source of most investments for the environmental improvements in the area for example. The municipality of Barcelona also used money from its European fund for local development to finance 32.9% of its total of 784.90 million euro investment during the first few years (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2006). Various interviews with professionals involved in the planning of the project revealed that the political support and quick allocation of subsidies via the regional and the national government was possible due to the pressure to finalise the new infrastructures quickly before the start of the 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures.

However, apart from the quick physical transformation that the formula helped to achieve, Forum can hardly be described as an overall success. The 2004 event attracted only a modest 3 million visitors, despite 7 million being expected. Now, several years on, we can reflect briefly on the outcomes of the project and the extent to which this particular example of a transscalar form of local responsiveness was successful.

Although the cultural strategy was potentially powerful to give 'meaning' to the transformation and to generate input and commitment from Barcelona's lively civic and cultural society, the programme of the event became privatised to please corporate sponsors and to suppress rather than to debate important political and ideological differences between the organising political parties. In this way the event lost its bottom up character and alienated itself from the civic and cultural groups it was meant to connect to (Fernandez and Andreu 2004). This also had a negative effect on the public perception of the urban transformation project. In contrast to the Olympic era, the physical 'legacy' of the spatial investments hardly generated any enthusiasm. The Forum area consists of large and empty open spaces, iconic buildings, luxury high-rise hotels and a lack of urban functions. After the cultural event it has transformed into the antithesis of a thriving urban space. By contrast, the large conference centre is an economic success. On the other hand there is the Diagonal Mar area with its indoor shopping mall, semi-privatised public spaces and luxury condominiums that is contradictory to Barcelona's legacy of fine-knit integrated urban neighbourhoods. Forum has satisfied some strategic economic wishes of Barcelona's political elite. However, serious criticisms have been voiced about the huge public spending on

Table 2 Total investment in the Forum and Diagonal Mar area 2001–2004, in millions of euro[a]

	Private sector	Public sector			Total
		Barcelona city council, and related EU funds	Autonomous Government (Catalonia)	Spanish state and related EU funds	
Forum	594.20	784.90[b]	232.20[c]	138.60[d]	1,749.90
Diagonal Mar	489.00	–	–	–	489.00
%	48.4	35.1	10.4	6.2	2,238.90

[a] The data in this table is taken from two sources which reveal several inconsistencies in the official figures. We took Tersol 2004, pp. 59–60, as our main source and used a newer source of the Ajuntament de Barcelona 2006, pp. 155–159, for a further refinement, especially of the origin of the different categories of public spending

[b] Of the total investment of the municipality, 32.9% came from European funding for local projects

[c] Of these, €56 million came from European funds

[d] In fact, all Spanish state investments were from European funds at their disposal

this project which critics say did not help to solve problems relating to long-term unemployment, growing social inequalities in the city and rising housing prices (García and Claver 2003; Balibrea 2004). The closed governance setting in which the project was shaped and executed has prevented it from being better balanced with, or integrated into, a more citizen-oriented agenda.

A cross-border government-oriented approach in Copenhagen

During the past two decades, the Danish capital of Copenhagen has developed into a prominent example of a city-region where local spatial and economic development have become strongly connected with inter regional and international networks (Thor Andersen et al. 2002). During the Nineties, the increased cooperation between the Copenhagen region (Zealand) and the South Swedish region around Malmö (Skaane) as an integrated Oresund-region, gave planning and economic development an important regional trans-scalar dimension (OECD 2003). However, although often praised as a model of cross-border interregional cooperation, the new direction urban governance has taken in Copenhagen has also been criticised. On the one hand, the overall Oresund integration strategies have been described as being still rather 'imaginary' or 'illusory' (OECD 2003; Hospers 2006). Ørestad, Copenhagen's most iconic development project in the light of this cross-border strategy, has been criticised as lacking democratic control and transparent economic management (Andersen 2003).

At the beginning of the Nineties, a quite abrupt change in policy direction in Denmark—which had been largely dominated until then by a Keynesian distributive logic—led to the embracing of a metropolitan growth strategy for the Copenhagen region and a strong entrepreneurial turn in urban planning policies (Thor Andersen and Jørgensen 1995; Lund Hansen et al. 2001). The background to this sudden switch is based on a combination of factors. The first was the dire financial situation of the Copenhagen municipality that was accumulating increasing debts while coping with rising social needs in a period of a continuous lack of economic and infrastructure investments. A second important aspect was the growing understanding among politicians about the importance of metropolitan competitiveness in a quickly integrating

Europe. The fact that Sweden had recently joined the EU triggered local politicians to revive the old concept of Oresund cooperation with the Malmö area as an important form of local responsiveness designed to create a more competitive environment. This process of closer cross border cooperation was strongly encouraged when, after influential lobbying by the European Round Table of Industrialists, the Swedish and Danish national governments decided to construct a combined car and rail bridge between the two cities in 1991. This bridge opened in 2000.

The Oresund integration process has been shaped by political, economic and social objectives. The Oresund Committee is a political cross-border partnership between regional and local authorities from both the Danish and Swedish sides. It is this committee that actively promoted programmes to increase cooperation between companies in the same sector on both sides, to improve cooperation between research institutions and universities, to stimulate cross-border trade, travel and work and to create a common 'branding' to increase awareness for local citizens of the Oresund integration policies and attract foreign investment (Hospers 2006). The process was further stimulated by funding from the European Union's Interreg IIA and IIIA programmes, which selected it as a 'model for European cross-border cooperation', due to the unique bi-national character of the cooperation and the special emphasis on policies in order to integrate the two labour markets more effectively.[1]

Although the Oresund region has undergone strong economic development in the last decade and scores high as regards 'competitiveness' and 'quality of life' indicators, the results of the integration policies have been mixed till now, both economically and socially. On the positive side, the improved cooperation between different higher-education and research institutions on both sides of the Sound has been promising (OECD 2003). The creation of a cross-

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[1] Between 1996 and 2001, the Greater Copenhagen area and Skaane received total funding of € 29 million (€ 13.5 million provided by the European Commission, € 13.5 million from public funds from the region itself and € 2 million from private sources). In the next program (INTERREG III A) for 2000–2006, an expanded geographical area consisting of the whole Øresund region was allocated a budget of € 61.8 million (co-financed equally by the EU commission and the Danish and Swedish governments) (OECD 2003, pp. 87–90).

border labour market has, however, been hampered by differences in taxation and welfare policies between the two countries and the high costs of using the bridge (Bucken-Knapp 2001; Wichmann Matthiessen 2004). The overall project is also criticised as a form of 'governance without government', since there is no directly elected body governing the Oresund region (OECD 2003).

The most important urban planning icon of the Oresund integration was—besides the Oresund bridge—the Ørestad project. Located just south of Copenhagen, next to the infrastructure bundle that leads to the bridge to Malmö and Copenhagen's international airport, Ørestad is a large (3.1 million square metres) mixed-use development area for high-end offices, housing and facilities. It aims to provide the Copenhagen area with a new 'competitive' location for the tertiary sector and provide the city with a new ultra-modern public transport system, the driverless mini metro. By developing a large piece of land co-owned by the municipality and the national government over a 30 year period, its initiators expected that enough profit would be made to pay off large government secured loans which financed the construction of most of the mini metro before any urban development would have taken place. This whole operation is managed by a semi-public Ørestad Development Corporation (merged in 2007 into the Port & City Development Corporation) responsible for both the construction and operation of the metro and the sale of the parcels in the Ørestad area.

Two important aspects of Ørestad were particularly innovative. On the one hand it was a prime example of a local response to counteract, by means of a grandiose public investment, the declining economic situation of the Copenhagen area. The initiators expected Ørestad to help re-position Copenhagen within an expected fierce competition with other European cities and regions as the major Scandinavian city by giving the city a new prime location for modern offices. The central location with direct rail and road links to Copenhagen, the international airport and the Swedish side of the Oresund anticipated on the economic benefits of the cross-border integration. The metro would be a major solution for the city's gridlock traffic problems. This pro-active strategy differed considerably from the welfare-oriented distributive spatial policies that dominated in the city in the previous decades that hardly paid any attention to large physical

(infrastructure) investments in the capital (Majoor and Jørgensen 2007). The second innovative aspect was the governance form: a public led, but very introverted, development corporation (with a 55% stake by the municipality and 45% by the national government) that would execute the scheme in a corporatist way. The special Ørestad Act allowed existing democratic planning procedures to be largely overruled. This was a conscious 'solution' provided by the national government and municipality based on the expectation that a more participatory strategy would strongly diminish the chances of swift decision-making and execution of the plan (Majoor 2008). Due to this closed governance setting and the fact that part of the project was planned in an environmentally sensitive area, the project has faced strong opposition from active citizens groups ever since its quite sudden initiation in 1992 (Jørgensen et al. 1997).

The question is what the major results were of this quite forceful form of local responsiveness? For a variety of reasons, the first decade of development in Ørestad has not generated the expected dynamism in the area. The project has till now been mainly a showcase of public spending of infrastructure. The real estate investments have predominately been in housing and facilities, while development of offices—which was originally intended to be the major land use—has been very slow (see Table 3). The positive redistributive aspect of the project is the quite successful mini metro. However, due to major cost increases during its construction and a failure to attract the over-optimistic initial passenger predictions, the mini metro project is facing serious financial problems. An additional problem for the Ørestad Development Corporation has been the lack of demand from (international) private sector investors in the project. A lack of regional coordination of

Table 3 Quantitative overview of the first building stages of Ørestad (March 2008 numbers)

	Square meters	Percentage
Offices	64,700	10.5
Housing	271,700	44.1
Facilities	279,900[a]	45.4
Total	616,300	100

[a] Of which 178,000 m^2 is for the Field's shopping mall

Source: Ørestadsselskabet (2008)

office development in Copenhagen, after the abolishment of most regional planning at the end of the Nineties, clearly hampered Ørestad in this respect (Thor Andersen et al. 2002). In order to achieve its financial objectives, the Ørestad Development Corporation had to speed up the housing part of the project and was cross-subsidised by different forced relocations from government institutions into the area (Andersen 2003; Majoor 2008).

We can conclude that the Oresund formula, with its focus on cross-border integration, is a quite successful example of a form of trans-scalar local responsiveness which helped two regions to position themselves more effectively in international networks. Its material benefits are, however, still hard to define and probably need more time to materialise, just like the political and social dimensions of the cross-border cooperation. The Ørestad project, as a sort of ideological offspring of this cooperation, is easier to assess. On the one hand it is a rather classic example of local responsiveness, by creating investment opportunities for international businesses. Its trans-scalar dimensions lie in the intense political and financial partnership between the local government and the national government that was set up, and, to a lesser extent, its location and clear ideological focus on the Oresund cross-border region. Although its redistributive aspects—the profits of land development are used to pay for a public transport system—are quite innovative, the direct economic benefits of the project are still unclear. More alarmingly, the strategic reorientation of urban planning policies in Copenhagen on economic cross-border opportunities and inner governmental cooperation, has not been matched with adequate social programmes to counterbalance the increasing social inequalities in the city. Civic groups and academics criticise the huge public investments in Ørestad for their single-minded economic bias, neglecting broader social needs in the city (Andersen and Hovgård 2003).

Conclusion

Our investigation into forms of trans-scalar responsiveness related to urban planning in Barcelona and Copenhagen indeed shows that cities can be much more than 'leaves in the wind' in an enduring storm of economic liberalization and competition. New dynamism is possible through the creation of new local arenas of action and the connecting of these with wider social, political and economic networks. If we compare the two cities there are interesting similarities. Both the Copenhagen and Barcelona municipalities have reoriented their urban policies around a much more competitive focus in the last two decades. The Ørestad and Forum projects are clear markers of this shift. With a view to realising these projects, new international political links were explored in Copenhagen and new international cultural links in Barcelona. However, the main goal of both projects was especially to utilise these links to pressure regional and national governments to invest in these local projects. In both cases, this aspect of the trans-scalar reorientation worked most convincingly. Due to the international component of their strategies, both Barcelona and Copenhagen were treated as significant national priorities and received government investments to ensure that their objectives could be quickly realised. Although these projects hint at an increased capacity for local action, they have also resulted in projects—and forms of governance—that focus on rather one-sided economic goals and have therefore disappointed many local observers. In a situation of real or imagined competition between cities, both Forum and Ørestad are prominent examples of urban planning projects that focus primarily on pleasing 'the outsider, the investor, developer, businesswoman or -man, the elite culture freak, or the money packed tourist' (Moulaert et al. 2003, p. 2). They are accompanied by flexible forms of governance that circumvent traditional forms of policy deliberation. In the Copenhagen case, Ørestad fiercely broke a tradition of participatory citizens' oriented governance, while residents of Barcelona eventually felt extremely alienated by Forum's programme and its rush to complete the project before the 2004 cultural event.

One of the founders of the urban regime analysis in the Eighties, Clarence Stone, recently observed that it is important to keep in mind that urban regime analysis is about more than analyzing and explaining how and why economic development so often occupies a priority position in agenda setting. It is also about what it would take to build and maintain a different agenda of urban priorities (Stone 2005, p. 328). In our opinion, the biggest challenge in connection with this agenda is twofold. Although the two cases showed that local

governments can enlarge their action perspective by connecting local projects with national and international economic, political and cultural sectors, the resulting policies and projects are still quite unbalanced, reflecting the quite introverted coalitions on which they are based. Although it makes sense to set up new governance bodies, like development corporations, to coordinate these trans-scalar initiatives effectively, it is necessary for these bodies to be connected more effectively to public scrutiny and the influence of elected officials and their bodies of 'traditional' government. Although this might sound counterproductive in the eyes of the initiators of large-scale projects who favour 'smooth' decision-making and execution, the two cases clearly show the long-term weaknesses of these corporatists approaches. Neither Forum nor Ørestad has developed into the thriving mixed-use cultural or business location they were expected to become, mainly because they respectively lacked connectivity to civic and private domains. Secondly, local social movements should also innovate and try to adopt trans-scalar strategies of policymaking to counter—and possibly complement—the economic hegemony such projects represent. The cases provide evidence of the enlargement of local power via active trans-scalar policies. For civic groups, however, this strategy still appears to be a bridge too far in both cases.

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