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**Dealing with diversity in 21<sup>st</sup> century urban settings.**  
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**The participation of socially creative strategies in the  
governance of diversity. Assessing social innovation and  
citizenship practices in Barcelona and Bilbao.**

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**Abstract:** The research question of this paper deals with the role of socially creative strategies in promoting social transformation. It aims to understand the participation of civil society organizations in pursuing social cohesion at the urban level. The paper departs from the consideration that social innovation, as well as participation in public decision making, from the civil society side, is each day more enlightened as a crucial point for public policies. In a context of increasing diversity, public administrations seem to be each day more sensitive to offer *room to manoeuvre* to civil society organizations, especially regarding to social policy issues. Framing these circumstances from a critical point of view the paper focuses the comparison between two similar advocacy groups oriented to denounce racism and to promote citizenship rights for migrant people. The cases are chosen in two different cities, Barcelona and Bilbao, considering their respective institutional narratives of socio-economic transformation as well as their respective history of collective mobilisation. The comparison presented is useful to improve the understanding of social innovation as an issue intimately related with local welfare regimes, as well as with particular civil society's traditions of collective mobilisation. In parallel the paper is oriented to offer a better understanding on the challenges that citizenship practices have to deal with regarding their particular bridging role between social movements and public administrations. The main findings of the research reflect the key importance of the institutional architecture against social exclusion in assessing social innovation promoted by civil society. Summing up, the paper enhances the active role of socially creative strategies in dealing with diversity, stressing with special emphasis the fact that the quality of their participation in urban governance goes in direct relation with public policy choices.

## **Introduction**

The study of urban governance making emphasis on the relations between public administrations and socially creative strategies goes in hand with a process of statehood restructuring that attributes a growing importance to the urban and the regional decision-making sphere (Brenner, 2004; Garcia, 2006; González, 2005).

Specially related with participation and social innovation there is a significant body of research oriented to understand the transformation of state governmental functions. This is a literature that has analysed a change in the ways of governing from a central and authoritarian way of proceeding to a more mediator and facilitator role (Brenner, 2004; Jessop, 2002, 2004; Le Galès, 2002; MacLeod, 2001; Rhodes, 1997). In a context of urban competition, the interest of public administrations on developing alliances with civil society actors has been analysed in depth by this body of literature. In parallel with a growing interest on public-private partnerships, governance has become a well known notion to refer the development of collaboration between public administrations and civil society representatives, both from the non-for-profit and the profit oriented sector (Geddes, 2006).

In this process of transformation from a centralized to a coordinator governmental role, the multi-scalar conditioning of public policies, especially in social policy fields, is each day more important. The incidence of supra-national scales such as the European Union, as well as sub-national scales, such as the regional or the local, is each day more relevant to explain territorial disparities in welfare policies specially in federal, or semi-federal countries.

In order to face urban competition and post-industrial decline local governments in cities as Barcelona and Bilbao have been forced to develop public strategies to promote the consideration of their cities and regions as an attractive centre in the new economy. This has implied the development of market oriented policies searching the reconversion of old industrial cities into services and knowledge-based economies. Then, the physical and socio-economic transformation

that Barcelona and Bilbao faced at the end of 20th century is featured by the typical renewal narratives of a post-industrial context, with concrete specificities in each city. Although Bilbao begins this process later than Barcelona -from the eighties in Barcelona and from the nineties in Bilbao- in both cities there is a multilayered search for the transformation of an industrial economy to a service and knowledge-oriented economy.

Moreover, in parallel with the institutional preoccupation on economic transformation it is possible to identify a change in the terminology used by public administrations to refer to social challenges. As has been stated a new emphasis in governance is institutionally promoted searching the collaboration of civil society actors in the application of responses to contemporary challenges. This also goes in relation with a change in terms and ways of attending inequality. Poverty is no longer conceived as a static condition and becomes to be referred as a dynamic and relational question. The notion of social exclusion offers a multidimensional explanation, and often fragmented, of social inequality. Other fuzz words as 'social cohesion' or 'social capital' are spread underlining the transformation of the institutional attention to aspects as citizenship participation or diversity, without solving at the end the causes that produce poverty as well as social exclusion dynamics (Maloutas & Pantelidou, 2004; Sommers, 2005).

Following this change in the ways of referring to diversity and inequality we can state that participative governance and social innovation are currently two areas of interest in the scene of urban research.

The research on participative governance and public deliberation deals with how to perform direct democracy in a context of increasing diversity. The potentialities of participative governance, as well as its contradictions and paradoxes have achieved attention between the most debated issues in urban studies during the first decade of 21st century (Silver et al., 2010; Blakeley, 2010; Casellas, 2007). This emphasis has gone in relation with the progressive institutionalization of participative arrangements as a usual mechanism in local governance.

A significant part of the research on participation applied to the local scale tries to understand how people, civil society representatives and institutional decision-makers, collaborate and achieve certain degree of consensus. This body of research, identified by some reviewers of the literature as the 'habermasian' perspective, makes emphasis in the search of an ideal speech situation between citizen representatives and public administrations. In this perspective participative and deliberative democracy are studied from a pragmatic point of view trying to understand the conditions for an optimal procedure oriented to enhance local democracy (Beaumont, 2008; Blanco & Gomà, 2003; Bifulco & Centemeri, 2008; Fung, 2004; Gbikpi and Gropte, 2002; Uitermark & Duyvendak, 2008; Silver et al., 2010).

In front of this perspective a body of literature on participation argues the often non possible clash of interests and the silenced margins emerging in participative arrangements (Swyngedouw, 2005; Mouffe, 2000). This literature stresses the inherent neoliberal narrative which goes in hand with current emphasis on participation from a consensus building perspective. From this point of view, identified by some reviewers as the 'foucauldian' perspective, the emphasis of the analysis has to be settled in power relations, critically conceiving the processes of deactivation and cooptation of critical perspectives that derive from a top-down approach to citizenship participation. It is an approach that promotes to look at the silenced margins which emerge in every process of participation (Beaumont & Nichols, 2008).

In parallel to this debate, social innovation, in a context of multidimensional crisis, is being each day more institutionally promoted as a crucial goal for urban societies (Drewe et al., 2008; McCallum et al., 2009). The idea of social innovation has achieved diffusion as a line of analysis for urban research, crucial in order to fight social fragmentation in a context of decreasing public expenditure and externalization of social policy to civil society organizations.

In a context of increasing diversity, social actors seem to be the most appropriate agents to deal with social fragmentation. Thus, as a normative aim, the participation of socially creative strategies in

the governance of diversity tends to be considered as a crucial goal for public administrations. This role attributed to civil society organizations is reinforced for instance when public administrations emphasize the role of third sector actors in carrying with social policies. But in what sense can we state that civil society organizations are sufficiently autonomous and independent to deal with diversity challenges by their own?

What we bear in mind with this question is that in many cases social innovation is used as a euphemism addressing a cheap way to face social fragmentation. From a biased and non-academic perspective, social innovation is promoted as an alternative to public investment and social expenditure. It is referred as social policy done, in a governance-based framework, by civil society organizations as well as private enterprises. From this policy oriented perspective to promote social innovation implies to transfer the responsibility of tackling with social exclusion dynamics, from a government to a governance beyond-the-state perspective (Swyngedow, 2005).

This paper underlines that public administrations and their institutional architectures against social exclusion are extremely influent in defining how civil society organizations develop themselves. Especially in the familist welfare regimes civil society organizations are highly dependent on public funding.

The main point stressed by this paper is that the local welfare regime determines the participation of socially creative strategies in urban governance. Considering two different cities, Barcelona and Bilbao, with their particular architectures to face social exclusion, we highlight how the governance regime directly affects the way that civil society organizations deal with social innovation. The analysis proposed here shows the institutional conditioning of civil society organizations developing the comparison of migrant advocacy groups in both cities. The evidences have been recollected through the development of in-deep interviews both with civil society representatives and policy makers in Barcelona and Bilbao between 2007 and 2010.

### ***From social movements analysis to socially creative strategies assessment***

During the second half of the 20th century several theoretical perspectives have tried to understand the aims and forms of collective mobilization for social transformation. The scientific explanation of social movements has evolved from deprivation models centred in the identification of relative deprivation as a crucial factor promoting social contestation to other models based in resources mobilization and collective consumption as key factors promoting collective action. With Manuel Castells as one of its main diffusers, the research on urban social movements has progressively evolved to theoretical models that observe complexity in the social composition of active citizenship as well as in the motives and mechanisms of influence of civil society in the public sphere.

The definition of urban social movements, promoted by Manuel Castells in *The city and the grassroots* (1983), which makes emphasis on being social movements oriented to collective consumption, promoting community culture and developing political self-organized structures, is particularly similar to one of the most accepted current definitions of social innovation. Following Moulaert et al. (2007) social innovation defines those socially creative strategies oriented to the provision of resources and services non provided by the market neither the state, linked to the empowerment of individuals and groups as a way to overcome social exclusion dynamics, and at the same time oriented to promote the transformation of power relations (Moulaert et al., 2007, 2009).

From an institutional perspective centred in overcoming social exclusion dynamics Moulaert et al. state a definition of social innovation in three steps that can be analysed in parallel at the Castell's definition on urban social movements. In first place for Moulaert et al. social innovation can be defined as those experiences that deal with the mobilization of resources and services not offered by

the market or public administrations. A dimension closely related to the reference done by Castells about collective consumption as a main aim of urban social movements. In second place, for Moulaert et al., social innovation has to deal with the empowerment of excluded populations, going beyond a perspective centred on assistance dynamics. This dimension can be linked to the identification done by Castells on the empowerment of community culture as a crucial aim of urban social movements. Finally a third aspect that defines social innovation from the point of view of Moulaert et al is the fact that socially creative strategies are oriented to produce change in the political sphere promoting the change of power relations. This means the transformation of these social relations that reproduce social exclusion a matter only possible by the organization of alternative ways of proceeding, new forms of governance. An objective which is only achievable by the procedure of maintaining a certain degree of political self-management.

Following these parallelisms and specially the analysis of socially creative organizations promoted by civil society, we can state that the study of social innovation departs from and is in a constant dialogue with urban social movement's literature.

In this same line it is important to stress that the interest to understand the link between active citizenship and public administration is a research question assumed by the 'new social movements' literature, especially active during the nineties. The analysts of this body of research observe how for those social movements that appear at the end of 20th century individual autonomy has special connotations implying forms of organization in which the idea of homogeneous movement leaves place to new modes of action. The identification of new ways of mobilization is related by these authors with post-material values in which quality of life and personal expression are highly relevant (Inglehart, 1990; Tourraine, 1981).

Alberto Melucci, stress the identification of new social movements as dynamics of collective mobilization oriented to develop new cultural codes (Melucci, 1985: 792). Other representative authors as Offe emphasize their auto-limited radicalism, referring to the idea of civil society's self-defence against state and market economy, and identifying them as movements of conscience on the uncertainty and the possible effects of poverty, war and hunger (Offe, 1988). Scott stresses the non-mono thematic scope of these forms of organization and their tendency to establish networks of organizational support around a big array of issues (Scott, 1990). Other authors as Cohen use the expression of 'identity social movements', stressing the diversity of orientations that origin collective mobilization (Cohen, 1985: 670).

The literature on new social movements also has gone in depth in the identification of the political conditioning of collective mobilization. In concrete, authors as Wilson have identified new social movements as those protest voices of middle classes that do not see their interests represented by public administrations (Wilson, 1990). From this point of view the activity developed by social movements at the end of the 20th century could be identified as a political activity at the margins of politics.

But as Offe shows (1988), although in a discursive way social movements tend to refuse institutionalization, they have developed indirect ways of contacting with public administrations through civil society organizations (Offe, 1988: 178) as those that we consider here as socially creative strategies. This means that civil society organizations, as well as platforms or non-profit entities oriented to promote social innovation have to be considered in relation to social movements. The study of how these organizations participate in the public sphere as well as their interactions with public administrations is oriented to understand how people, using collective mobilization, is equipped to promote social change.

An essential difference between social movements and civil society organizations dealing with social exclusion dynamics is that the second ones are used to work in a more collaborative and pragmatic way, this means principally in a non-conflictive manner. Socially creative strategies tend to enter into the public sphere refusing, in general terms, a continuous confrontation with public administrations. This does not mean that they can not be oriented to dissent with mainstream policy

orientations. Simply it means that is more accurate to feature them as entities oriented to establish some kind of bridging between social movements and public administrations. Chosen one by one, civil society organizations which develop socially creative strategies do not try to lead big processes of social change. They are entities centred in the development of possible alternatives, progressively oriented in a localized way to new forms of democratic and equitable organization. Socially creative strategies represent then a pragmatic vision, fragmented in concrete spheres of social transformation, of deepening democracy, networking organization and institutional innovation.

### ***Barcelona and Bilbao: narratives of socio-economic transformation and citizenship practices***

Looking at the history of their most recent urban renewal processes, both in Barcelona and Bilbao, is possible to identify a first stage in which urban planning is conceived as an instrument oriented to ameliorate inhabitants life conditions. The so-called 'citizen urbanism' oriented to provide facilities and services to all the neighbourhoods of Barcelona is specially active during the eighties and takes advantage of the announcement of the Olympic Games organization in 1986 as an occasion to develop big investments oriented to benefit all the city (ex: Les Rondes) (Borja, 2004; Capel, 2005; Montaner, 2004; Degen & Garcia, 2008). In the same line, during the nineties, in Bilbao, several big operations of public investment are oriented to the promotion of urban facilities. The cleaning up of the Ría or the development of the subway, as well as the renewal of the train station or the airport, have been their most reported examples (Cenicacelaya, 2004; Urrutia, 2004).

But after a first period of relative consensus on the benefits of urban renewal strategies as a source of socio-economic redistribution, during the first decade of the 21<sup>th</sup> century in both cities appears a body of literature criticizing the social effects of their respective urban renewal narratives (Borja, 2004; Capel, 2005; Cenicacelaya, 2004; Delgado, 2007; Esteban, 2000; Rodríguez, 2002; UTE, 2004). The emphasis done by public administrations to the attraction of creative industries tends to be considered, between other factors, as an example of an urbanism at the service of private interests.

In Barcelona this critique has been framed on the 22@, a district designed following the aim to attract creative industries and reported as a symbol of an urbanism promoted by private interests (Andreu, 2008; Delgado, 2007; UTE, 2004). In Bilbao 'the Guggenheim effect' and several of the operations near the Ria (for instance Zorrozaure) have also been discussed as nodes of transformation of the urban structure of inequalities (González, 2006; Plaza, 2006, 2008). But despite the fact that these critics are symmetric in both cities, there are some differences between the results achieved by Barcelona and Bilbao in the process of economic reconversion from an industrial to a service-oriented economy. Although the coordination of a multilevel alliance of public administrations has been a crucial factor to begin the renewal processes in both cities, the mechanisms that public administrations have followed to achieve the reconversion differ from one context to the other.

While in the Basque country the majority of the operations have been developed in public soil and have been lead by public administrations, in Barcelona the opportunistic leadership of private agencies has been bigger.

Analysing the labour market it is necessary to stress that the Basque context, departing from a worst situation in terms of crucial indicators as unemployment, seems to have achieved a better result in terms of job creation in a post-industrial context (Figure 1). This shapes a portrait favourable to Bilbao's welfare regime in terms of social and economic reconversion during the first decade of 21th century. Available data in this respect tend to stress the importance of the financial resources that Basque administrations are able to provide at the autonomic and regional level. This would have a clear translation on the development of a policy of attractiveness for emergent sectors in the

new economy.

Apart from institutional narratives on socio-economic transformation, another crucial issue that affects the quality of participation of socially creative strategies in the governance for the treatment of social exclusion dynamics is the dynamism of civil society.

The associative fabric in Barcelona and Bilbao is featured during the nineties and the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by a diversification of themes. During this period in both cities there is a considerable increase in the number of citizenship associations especially devoted to cultural and leisure time activities (Urrutia, 1992; Domingo & Bonet, 1998). The increase of the non-profit sector is also considerable in both cities analyzing its proportional weight with respect the rest of economical activities. The study of the numeric increase of associations and other type of entities with non-lucrative finalities stresses the idea that the growth of the third sector goes in relation with the development of welfare policies (Figure 2).

Looking specifically to socially creative strategies as defined earlier, in both cities it is necessary to stress that neighbourhood movements have had a crucial role in the articulation of demands in order to improve resources and service provision. In the same line that has been exposed as a bottom-up understanding of social innovation, in both cities it is possible to find examples of processes promoted by neighbourhood activists that have been accepted by public administrations as institutional compromises.

The relationships between neighbourhood movements and public administrations have evolved in both cities, from a position of clear confrontation (during the period that goes from legalization of civic associations (1964) to the recuperation of democratic institutions (1979)) to a certain agreement on the institutionalization of participation channels and a relative stable collaboration between city councils and neighbourhood movements in both cities.

Currently there are in both cities several examples of public facilities that run with a “civic management” agreement. This type of agreement gives financial support and decision-making attributions to platforms of residents that vindicate the recognition of their crucial role in the dinamization of public facilities (ex: *Ateneu Popular de 9 Barris* in Barcelona, *Centro Cívico Otxarkoaga* in Bilbao). This can be considered as an example of the development of a trust relationship between the neighbourhood movement and public administrations. As a result, as has been said, in both cities it is possible to identify local development processes, following the scheme of Area Based Initiatives, in which there is a clear institutional support facing historical demands of the residents (ex: *Pla Comunitari de Trinitat Nova* in Barcelona; *Plan Comunitario Imagina Otxarkoaga* in Bilbao).

At the contrary, the conflict between the city council and those socially transformative networks promoted by citizens, specially in Barcelona, has persisted mainly linked to the protest against concrete urban planning operations or with the aim of demanding concrete social policies (ex: Protests for better housing opportunities). In Barcelona, during the first decade of the 21th century there have occurred several episodes of lack of comprehension and confrontation between public administrations and citizen's networks. These episodes have been framed both in a city scope (ex: the tensions between the FAVB and the organization of the *Forum de les Cultures* in 2004) and in a more neighbourhood centred dynamic (ex: Can Ricart) (Andreu, 2008).

The fragmentation of the socially creative fabric, as a reflection of fragmented social exclusion dynamics, is a common feature of urban contexts (Mingione, 1991). It is possible to talk about a transition of the actors that lead resources mobilization, from an urban social movement's paradigm to a more specialized scheme in which socially creative strategies play a key role. The organizations that are oriented to the treatment of an specific aspect of social exclusion dynamics are usually identified as the third sector, being public administrations service providers. But as has been state above they can also be identified with urban social movements, as organizations that are historically derived from citizenship mobilization processes, with a huge ideological charge and a dependence on militancy.

In both cities there is a similar process of social conflict institutionalization by the consolidation of representative instances oriented to facilitate citizenship participation. In Barcelona and Bilbao there are formal participation instances oriented to facilitate decentralisation of decision-making, in a territorial as well as thematic-oriented sense. Furthermore in both cities it is possible to find a public strategy oriented to promote associationism. As has been presented regarding governance literature this can be considered as a result of the need of concertation. In addition to this it is also necessary to consider the historical incidence of urban social movements in the developing of these kind of instances.

The decentralisation from the city council to the districts, translating a small government to the neighbourhoods is in many sense a democratic step beyond, as Borja stresses regarding the citizens driven urbanism from the eighties (Borja, 2004). Also the consideration of citizenship associations in thematic councils is a clear institutional innovation that facilitates specialized and coordinated work between different agents. By the contrary the existence of citizenship participation arrangements is not a warranty that citizens demands, especially those related to the city model are directly addressed by policy-makers.

### ***Case study: Differences between similar socially creative strategies located in two different cities.***

In this section the comparison between two local fractions of SOS RACISME in Barcelona and Bilbao exemplifies the central argument of this paper. By comparing these entities we want to stress the influence of the local welfare regime, the architecture against social exclusion and the cultural tradition of collective mobilisation, in the participation of socially creative strategies in governance. Here the analysis is centred in those civil society organizations oriented to refuse racism and xenophobia and to defend citizenship entitlements for migrant people.

Both in Barcelona and Bilbao *SOS RACISME* coordinates an office of information and denounces deriving the management of migrant regularisation processes to other specialized entities, in the Catalan case to some organizations dependent of the labour unions (CITE, AMIC), and in the Basque country to an organism dependent of the Basque government.

The double objective of denouncing and sensitizing is the principal aim recognized by SOS RACISMO in both cities, but if in the Basque country the way that it is achieved is centred in popular mobilization, in Barcelona there is a big component of advocacy in front of public administrations, developing a pro-positive role regarding public policies. While the representatives of SOS RACISMO in Bizkaia underline that the role of the entity is principally to denounce power abuses and cases of racism and discrimination, in Barcelona *SOS RACISME* representatives, apart from denouncing racism and xenophobia, make a bigger emphasis on sensitizing public administrations and exercising as a political lobby in order to try to influence on public decision-making.

*SOS RACISME* in Barcelona works through the development of relatively stable agreements with different administrations in a multilevel governance framework. The financial alliances of the association are clearly better established and less precarious in the Catalan case than in the Basque example. Also the Catalan organization of *SOS RACISME* has a bigger structure, in terms of people working for the entity.

In the Basque case, by the contrary, *SOS RACISMO* representatives are especially proud of having an heterogeneous militancy. They give big relevance to their own assamblearian way of organizing in front of more professionalised forms of managing civil society organisations. Finally they relate as a crucial aspect of their task to have an active presence in the street by often doing demonstrations. At the contrary that the Catalan case they refuse stable agreements with public



administrations assuming the idea that collaboration with them goes in relation with a loss of criticism. In the interviews realized to the representatives of *SOS RACISMO* in Bilbao they express their preference on concrete project-oriented work more than on stable agreements with public administrations that promote, from their point of view, a clientelar relationship.

One of the key questions that emerge from this comparison is why *SOS RACISME-Catalunya* does not define itself as a social movement while *SOS RACISMO-Bizkaia* clearly does. A possible explanation of this fact derives from the analysis of the institutional architecture against social exclusion. In the comparison of these differences it is relevant to stress that the Basque institutional architecture has several public organisms oriented to the governance of diversity. The Basque government has an organism oriented to promote intercultural mediation (*Biltzen*) as well as a public service specially oriented to study the phenomenon of migration (*IKUSPEGI*). The existence of these public organisms, from an institutional perspective, explains partially the identification of *SOS RACISMO-Bizkaia* as a social movement. In addition to this the presence in Bilbao of an active organization oriented to promote networking alliances between immigrant associations, as well as between those civil society organizations oriented to support immigrants (*Harresiak Apurtuz*) explains the identification of *SOS RACISMO-Bizkaia* as an independent organization rejecting a collaborative relationship with public administrations. *Harressiak Apurtuz* which emerged from different citizenship alliances is also considered as a civil society organisation oriented to overcome social exclusion dynamics but is totally supported by public funding. Because of this it has an active role in the governance of diversity, influencing the voluntary marginalisation of *SOS RACISMO-Bizkaia* that in relation to *Harressiak Apurtuz* directly refuses the attributions of dialoguing with public administrations.

Analyzing the institutional architecture in Catalunya there are some observations that can be done at this respect. The absence in the Catalan case of an organism or public structure oriented to provide services and resources to the collective of immigrated people, as well as the absence of any kind of public organism specifically oriented to prevent racism and xenophobia, influences the configuration of *SOS RACISME-Catalunya's* attributions. In the absence of better resources or services *SOS RACISME-Catalunya* is conceived as a public referent on a diversity of roles that go from intercultural mediation to public policy consultation. That is translated in terms of stable agreements and permanent governance relations, which in many sense defines the organization as a public service provider, a conceptualization with which the organization has to deal with. In some cases the collaboration with public administration implies a supplementary effort for the organization in order to develop activities especially oriented to underline its ideological identification and critical positioning in line with social movements.

In addition to this there are other crucial factors, as the associative culture, explaining the differences between these two organizations in both cities. In the Basque country civil society organizations tend to search the articulation of their demands in transversal social movements as a previous and crucial source of legitimating that allows them to achieve the recognition in the political sphere. By the contrary in Catalunya civil society organizations tend to be used to negotiate with public administrations in a fragmented scheme, individualised and extremely oriented to the discussion of concrete demands, one by one. This would explain why in the Catalan context the attitude of civil society organization's representatives is more optimistic than in the Basque country, in relation to their potential transformative role as isolated public-policy consultants.

## **Conclusions**

This paper frames the assessment of social innovation dynamics promoted by civil society organizations in the consideration of public policies and citizenship practices as crucial path-dependent factors that determine the way that civil society deals with social exclusion dynamics.

The idea putted in relevance is that in a context of multilayered construction of social policies, the role of socially creative strategies in improving public policies is extremely context sensitive and policy dependent.

Departing from the debate on associative democracy, enhanced by the literature on participation, we have stated that it is not possible to frame the description of the role of civil society organizations as a matter of assessing the production of an ideal speech situation between public administrations and civil society representatives.

For explaining social innovation dynamics, both in terms of resources redistribution and conceptual deepening of democracy, it is crucial to stress the relevant paper played by local welfare regimes. The definition of urban inequalities, as well as the policy responses to face them, has a clear impact in the way that civil society organizations deal with social exclusion dynamics and the attitudes assumed by socially creative strategies regarding their participation in urban governance. The institutional architecture against social exclusion dynamics is therefore a key important variable in order to describe the quality of the participation of civil society organisations in the governance of diversity as well as in the treatment of social fragmentation challenges.

As has been observed, civil society organizations, especially those initiatives that can be featured as socially creative strategies because of their linkage with the production of social innovation, are used to balance between opposition and collaboration with public administrations. The decision between one of the two possible attitudes is not a zero-sum choice, at the contrary in many cases socially creative strategies act as a bridge between public administrations and social movements playing at the same time, or in a consecutive succession, a pragmatic and a discursive role.

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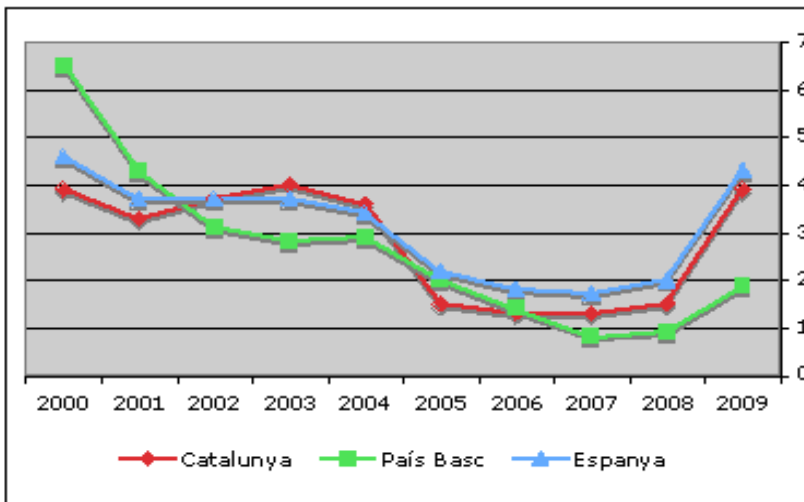
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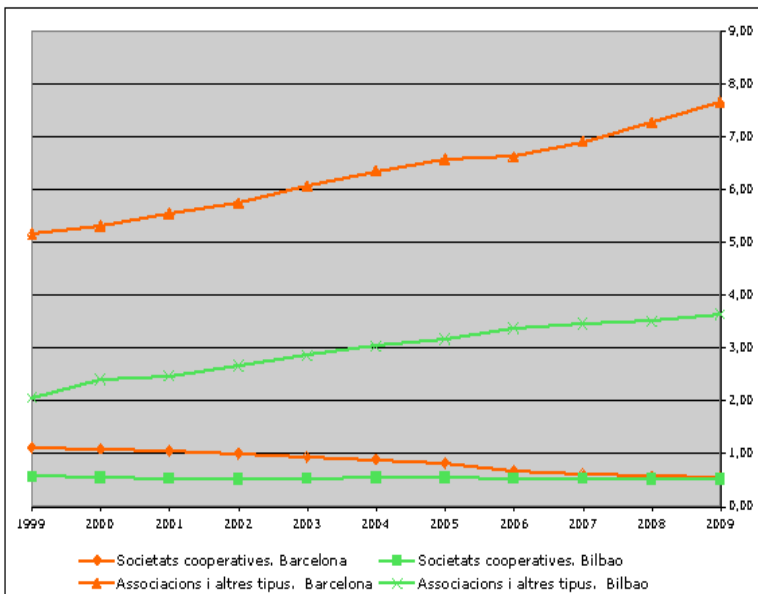
## Figures

**Figure 1: Large-duration Unemployment rates (2000-2009). Catalunya, País Basc i Espanya**



Font: Font elaboració pròpia. Eustat, Idescat.

**Figure 2: Average of non-lucrative entities in respect to the total of economic activities. Barcelona and Biskaia (1999-2009).**



Font: Elaboració pròpia. Directori General d'Empreses. INE 2010.