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EU Integrated Urban Initiatives

Policy Learning and Quality of Life Impacts in Spain

Edited by
Clemente J. Navarro Yáñez
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IMPACTS

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Preface

Urban areas are strategic spaces for the promotion of sustainable development and socio-spatial cohesion in Europe. Around 75 per cent of the European population lives in urban areas, generating about 80 per cent of the European GDP. However, urban areas also face the challenges of poverty and social exclusion in some neighbourhoods, as well as socio-spatial segregation processes or environmental problems. Due to this relevance and these challenges, since the 1990s, the European Union has been shaping a policy area through different initiatives to promote development and social cohesion in cities.

Nowadays, EU urban initiatives—also termed the urban dimension of the Cohesion Policy—include different initiatives supporting local plans to promote sustainable urban development, initiatives seeking innovative solutions to urban problems, or the sharing and increasing of capabilities among national and local policymakers and practitioners through different collaborative networks across Europe. However, since the URBAN Initiative in the 1990s, the most traditional and relevant initiatives have been the 'urban integrated strategies'. These are plans designed and implemented at the local scale, and applying the integrated strategy in public policies aimed to fulfil the goals proposed by the EU through its cohesion policy at the local scale across Europe. Analyses of the legal framework and documentation for these initiatives at the EU and member state level, as well as in-depth case studies, have provided analytical ideas and

information about this growing dimension of the European cohesion policy.

The New Urban Agenda (United Nations) and the Urban Agenda for the European Union indicate new urban policies based on the integrated strategy require evidence-policy analyses to ensure better policy design, implementation and the accomplishment of objectives. The current book aims to offer some policy evidence, analytical ideas and research strategies aligned with this goal. We do so by analysing the actual nature of integrated urban strategies promoted by the EU and their added value in terms of improvements in their policy design, implementation and effects at the local level. Have these strategies applied the integrated strategy proposed by the EU? Are there changes pointing to the existence of improvements and learning effects about the integrated strategy across time? Have these strategies improved the living conditions among residents in targeted urban territories?

To provide policy evidence to address these research questions, this book offers an extensive, comparative analysis of all the EU-integrated local strategies implemented in Spain between 1994 and 2013. This covers 20 years of experience and several programming periods of the urban integrated strategy proposed by the European Union. Therefore, unlike other publications on the urban dimension of cohesion policy, this book does not focus on the analysis of the legal framework or documentation, or the official documentation about the initiatives carried out, nor does it present in-depth case studies from different cities or countries. Instead, new ideas and research approaches are proposed, in order to analyse integrated urban strategies at the local level from a comparative perspective using existing data sources. The empirical evidence focuses on the Spanish case because the continuity in applying the integrated strategy proposed by the EU since the 1990s offers opportunities for over-time and cross-sectional comparative analyses at the local level. Nevertheless, in view of the increasing relevance of the urban dimension of the EU cohesion policy, new national urban policies or strategies based on the integrated idea, the analytical and methodological proposals could be replicated and could be helpful to study urban/local integrated strategies supported by the EU in other countries, or local strategies in the framework of other urban initiatives or urban policies in the EU or outside it.

The book has three main objectives. First, to provide elements elaborating an analytical framework in order to analyse the nature of

urban/local integrated strategies and evaluate their added value from a comparative perspective. This is based on the idea of urban policies as complex multi-level policy mixes. Second, to offer new research methods to produce policy evidence about these issues, using available information and data sources. Third, to provide pieces of evidence about such effects based on extensive cross-sectional and over-time comparative analyses of urban integrated strategies, in order to enhance a multi-scalar comparative approach including the local scale and local authorities as the main focus of analysis.

The book accordingly aims to provide analytical ideas and policy evidence that could be useful for other researchers undertaking comparative analyses or as an introductory text to junior researchers starting their urban policy studies. It may prove especially useful for the agents and agencies in charge of the design, implementation and evaluation of EU urban initiatives (or other similar ones). To this aim, the research strategies, methods, analyses and empirical results are explained and shown in the simplest way possible; for instance, by using graphs and illustrations. Further, the main results are summarised in the conclusion chapter according to the specific research questions proposed.

The ideas, methods and evidence included in this book have been used in workshops with researchers and practitioners in charge of local initiatives, training activities on the analysis and evaluation of EU initiatives, and they have also featured in teaching material at the graduate and post-graduate levels. These activities have been developed thanks to European Commission support through the Jean Monnet Chair on European Urban Policies at the Centre for Sociology and Local Policies-The Urban Governance Lab at the Pablo de Olavide University. These activities have allowed testing and improvement of the ideas, research methods and empirical evidence included in this book, thereby improving on a previous version published in Spanish, with new chapters, ideas and analyses.

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We would like to express our gratitude for access to the documentation of local plans provided by the Spanish national authority in charge of the evaluated programmes: Dirección General de Fondos Comunitarios, Ministerio de Hacienda, Spanish Government.

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Analytical perspectives, research methods and results have been discussed in several seminars and workshops with other researchers and, especially, staff in charge of urban initiatives in the framework of the Jean Monnet Chair in European Urban Policies (EUrPol). We want to thank them for their comments and advice based on their actual experience planning, managing and evaluating urban integrated strategies.

Finally, we would like to thank anonymous reviewers for their comments that have improved this book.

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Abbreviations

CUPPA	Comparative Urban Policy Portfolio Analysis
ECP	European Cohesion Policy
EDUSI	Estrategia de Desarrollo Urbanos Sostenible e Integrado
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
HUA	Homogeneous Urban Areas
INE	Instituto Nacional de Estadística
NUP	National Urban Policies

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: EU Urban Initiatives as Integrated Multi-level Policy Mixes—Policy Levels, Policy Dimensions and Added Values of Integrated Local Strategies from a Comparative Perspective

Clemente J. Navarro Yáñez

Abstract This chapter proposes to study urban initiatives implemented in the framework of the EU cohesion policy as integrated urban multi-level policy mixes. The first section details the main policy level and dimensions of these policies and analytical ideas about their relationship based on policy sector and policy integration perspectives. The second section applies this analytical framework to the so-called urban dimension of the cohesion policy, proposing some insights into its multi-scalar comparative analyses based on policy frame changes, member state's institutional contexts and local settings. The third section specifies the central added

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value expected from EU integrated urban initiatives and research already done about this issue. Lastly, the fourth section briefly presents some of the major traits of EU urban initiatives applied in Spain, introducing the main research questions and empirical corpus analysed in this book.

Keywords Urban policy · Policy mixes · Integrated strategy · Comparative analyses · Institutional context · European Union

Place-Based Urban Policies as Complex Multi-level Policy Mixes: Policy Levels, Dimensions and Integration

Policy integration and place-based approaches are commonly proposed as strategies to cope with the complexity of urban problems, due to their multi-scalar and transversal character, cross-cutting different policy sectors and government levels. Integrated strategies mean policy agendas with multiple goals across policy sectors, combining their policy instruments and involving public and non-public actors in governance arrangements and processes (Candel, 2019; Rayner & Howlett, 2009). In addition, the place-based approach is applied to concentrate policy interventions in specific territories. This territorial focus is justified to reduce the socio-spatial inequalities between urban spaces by providing 'extra aid' to disadvantaged urban places; for example, the traditional area-based approach in vulnerable neighbourhoods in the 1970s and 1980s (Carmon, 1997; Powell et al., 2001). Currently, this territorial focus means a more general place-based approach, oriented to recognise and incorporate territories' heterogeneity as a relevant factor in policy design and implementation, as well as the evaluation of its effects (Méndez, 2013; McCann & Rodríguez-Pose, 2011).

This combination of policy integration and a territorial focus means that urban policies adopt the form of complex multi-level policy mixes, which apply a policy integration strategy (Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2020). The multi-level character implies nested policy design and implementation across three different policy levels (policy frame, programme and local action plan), to specify substantive and procedural policy dimensions (goals and instruments). Policy integration means complementarities

between policy dimensions across different policy sectors (their goals, policy theories defining implementation tools and typical governance processes regarding policy-making and implementation). This cross-level and cross-policy sector character, and its simultaneous implementation in different territorial settings, implies that this kind of initiative supposes complex policies (Howlett, 2009; Rogers, 2008).

The policy frame level includes the policy rationales, general problems to solve, overall aims and general implementation preferences (instruments, structures and actors). The programme level sets more concrete policy objectives and a repertory of substantive and procedural policy instruments defining a more specific policy frame. The local action plan introduces 'calibrations' to define concrete policy objectives and implementation tools. In the substantive dimension, these calibrations mean specific content and targeting specifications regarding the physical settings and groups of beneficiaries. In the procedural dimension, the policy tools to be employed and actors to be involved in governance and implementation processes are specified. Policy frame and programme levels are in charge of supra-municipal agencies; local plans are usually in charge of local authorities to ensure the place-based focus.[1]

This nested structure implies a continuum in the planning process, from the general policy frame to the policy measures included in local plans, to ensure coherent multi-level policy planning and subsequent implementation. At the same time, the progressive specification of goals and instruments to specific socio-spatial contexts could introduce differences among programmes (in the same policy frame) and local plans (in the same programme). Therefore, these nested linkages need a 'flexible multi-level coherence principle' to reconcile multi-level and territorially focused orientations, and to ensure the policy compliance of local plans as regards policy frames. This principle also means local authorities design a specific strategy as the implementing agents of the urban policy—its policy frame—in a local setting. This could promote policy design inconsistencies across policy levels, different policy compliance levels across local settings or implementation deficits, as the traditional debate between top-down and bottom-up approaches to implementation points out (Hill & Hupe, 2014).

[1] The terms 'local plan', 'local strategy' and 'project' are hereafter used to refer to the policy mix at the local level and 'programme' is used to refer to the more general initiative at the regional or national level.

Similar to other policies, integrated urban multi-level policy mixes should also establish relationships between their policy dimensions to ensure policy coherence and integration (Howlett & Rayner, 2013). Previous research on urban policies and governance, especially the policy sector approach, highlights the strong relationship between substantive and processual dimensions. However, research on policy integration, particularly the processual perspective, suggests a more independent relationship between them.

In brief, policy sectors are policy sub-systems that include issues with similar functional content, understood as the objective of a policy (Weible, 2010). According to the policy sector approach, different policy content promotes different policy and implementation styles, in terms of the ways in which government and its sectoral agencies make and implement policy. These styles mean differences in how policy problems are defined, the problem-solving approach applied and how the relationships between government and societal actors are established (Richardson, 1982; Freeman, 1985).

Moreover, policy sub-systems mean specific belief systems about the problems to solve, their causes and consequences, and the appropriate methods to deal with them. Policy sector content shapes an implementation logic; a rationale concerning the causes of the problems under intervention, the outcomes that can be attained and the policy instruments that will promote the appropriate causal processes to achieve them. Thus, each policy sector develops a particular implementation mode or 'style' based on policy theories to conceptualise policy problems and the proper policy tools and resources that will produce the behaviours or situations necessary to achieve the proposed policy goals. Thus, policy integration means that local plans should combine and promote interdependences between different policy instruments across policy sectors while achieving their multiple-goal agenda. In addition to traditional criteria regarding coherence between policy objectives and actions, integration also implies complementary effects between the implementation modes of different policy sectors participating in the local strategy, their policy theories and their policy tools (Howlett & Rayner, 2013).

The policy sector perspective also suggests that policy content shapes different policy networks and communities of actors (Jordan, 2005). Research on local governance has identified different models of urban governance coalitions or 'governing coalitions', as alliances of public and private actors supporting specific policy issues (Ramírez et al., 2008).

The participation and influence within these coalitions depend on actors' interest in the policy issue under discussion and the possession of key resources to include the issue in the policy agenda or to ensure its implementation. According to the policy sector approach, the relevance of actors' interests and resources differs depending on the policy issues. Therefore, each policy sector promotes specific local governance processes and coalitions, such as the growth machine and urban regime models in development policies, or the progressive or communitarian partnerships in welfare policies. However, specific issues can enhance interconnections between different policies, by mobilising actors from different policy sectors and promoting more 'hybrid coalitions' crossing different policy domains (Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2015a). These integrated-plural collaborations have been found in cultural policies that combine developmental and redistributive issues, integrated urban regeneration initiatives and sustainable development plans (Navarro, 2012; Navarro & Clark, 2012; Southern, 2002; Steurer, 2007).

In sum, based on the policy sector approach, policy content shapes the implementation style, the implementation logic (a policy theory based on policy tools and their causal processes) and governance coalitions (actors with shared interests and the relevant resources to promote or implement policies). Specifically, multiple-goal policy mixes should promote complementarities between different sectoral policy tools, and hybrid coalitions across policy sectors and government levels. Based on this idea from local governance literature and revisions of urban policies resembling the multi-level policy mix model—such as Carmon (1999), Roberts and Sykes (2000), Andersen and van Kempe (2003) or Zheng et al. (2014)—four main ideal types of policy frames could be defined according to the affinity between goals, the policy actions implemented and the governing coalitions supporting them: first, rehabilitating the city (urban space rehabilitation supported by the traditional growth machine to promote economic recovery), second, revitalising the neighbourhood (through policy actions in physical space and social inclusion supported by community partnerships to reduce socio-spatial inequalities), third, creating competitive urban spaces (economic development enhancing entrepreneurship supported by urban regime coalitions) and fourth, generating sustainable communities (more integrated policy agendas including environment and community cohesion through plural and hybrid coalitions) (Navarro, 2016, 2020).

Research on policy integration nevertheless suggests a more independent relationship between substantive and procedural dimensions (goals, policy tools and governance integration). The relative complexity of policy sectors before integration processes, their closeness in terms of the conception of policy problems, the policy tools to be used and the actors involved (interests, resources, etc.) could promote a different degree of success—or different timing—of policy integration in each policy dimension (and policy level). Even actors in more powerful sectoral policy communities could prefer the previous status quo between different policy sectors to the change that policy integration requires (Candel & Biesbroek, 2016, 2018; Rayner & Howlett, 2009). Thus, the policy integration strategy could be different across policy dimensions without the previously specified relationship between multiple goals and a more integrated implementation style based on complementarity of tools and hybrid governing coalitions. Policy content could also be shaped by the previous integration of policy tools or actors' collaborations across different policy sectors. Therefore, the integrated strategy supposes a more complex relation between policy dimensions and components that the policy sector approach suggests: more goals across policy sectors do not mean more integration in substantive and processual dimensions, the policy integration strategy could show different levels—timing—in different policy dimensions, or even, the causal relationship could be from instruments to goals, instead from policy content to implementation style (Fig. 1.1).

EU Urban Initiatives as Integrated Multi-Level Policy Mixes: Policy Frames, Institutions and Comparative Analysis to Examine Local Integrated Strategies

Since the 1990s, the EU has promoted the integral policy strategy to address urban problems, as a central element of the so-called urban dimension of the EU cohesion policy (Atkinson, 2014; Cotella, 2018). These initiatives focus on specific urban spaces, concentrating policy actions through policy integration regarding goals, policy tools and actors in multi-level governance processes. Therefore, these initiatives adopt the form of urban integrated multi-level policy mixes, implemented through

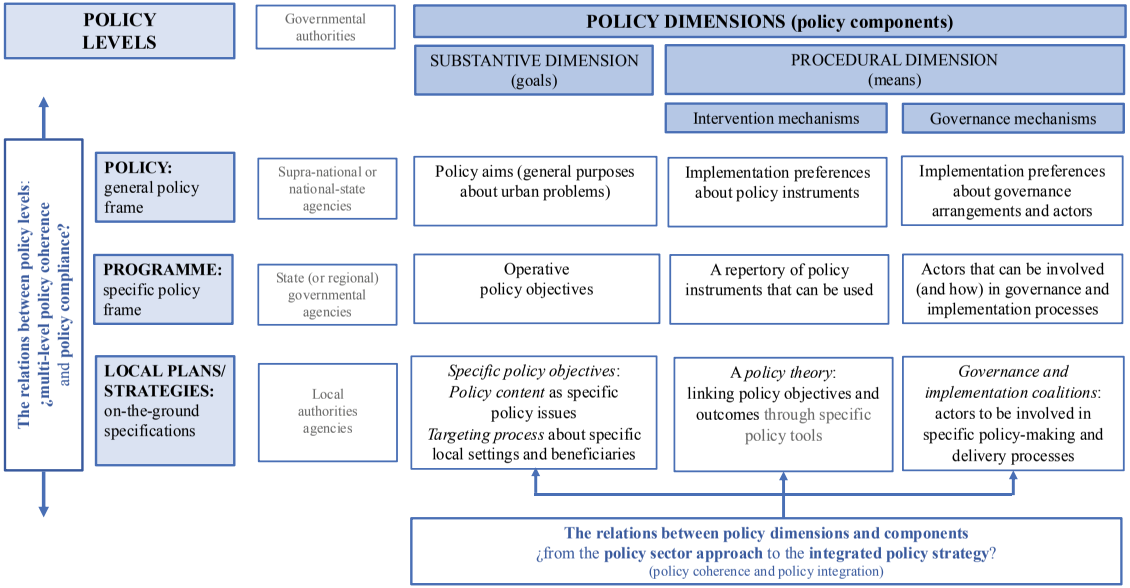

Fig. 1.1 Urban policies as integrated multi-level policy mixes: policy levels, policy dimensions and their relationships (*Source* Author's own elaboration based on Navarro and Rodríguez-García [2020] and Navarro [2021])

local plans nested in a more general policy frame—in this case, the ECP (Navarro, 2020, 2021).

As part of the EU Cohesion Policy (hereinafter referred to as ECP), this urban dimension shares the three main policy principles of this policy: place-based, adaptability and additionality (McCann, 2015). First, the place-based approach means policy actions are concentrated in territories, instead of being sectoral, and are thus designed and implemented according to the challenges and potentialities in each socio-spatial context. Second, the adaptability principle means bottom-up processes, so that policies are designed and implemented at the local level and by local authorities according to the general policy framework established by the ECP (policy priorities, rules and instruments for implementation). Third, the additionality principle means initiatives and strategies supported by the cohesion policy should show their added value. Has the support of the EU produced results that would not have been achieved without it? Therefore, initiatives supported by the ECP should be evaluated to show their added value based on policy evidence about their effects.

The ECP urban dimension has at least three main policy levels in which policy goals and instruments are progressively specified to ensure place-based and adaptability principles simultaneously. First, the EU defines the general policy frame for the ECP urban dimension for each programming period of seven years. Second, national and regional operational programmes select and set more specific goals and implementation instruments, establishing a more detailed policy frame. Lastly, specific calibrations for the substantive and procedural dimensions regarding the targeted urban spaces are incorporated in local plans that are normally designed and implemented by local authorities.

The adaptability principle means that each policy level should be coherent with the previous one to respond to ECP goals, although progressive specifications in each policy level are needed to satisfy the place-based principle. The so-called 'meso-level' method proposed by the ECP shows the combining of bottom-up and top-down processes in policy design, implementation and evaluation in order to ensure local plans respond to EU goals through different strategies adapted to the territorial heterogeneity of Europe (Crescenzi & Rodríguez-Pose, 2011). Thus, local strategies should respond to ECP aims with enough flexibility to also respond to local circumstances. These strategies are designed and implemented to have effects in local communities. However, above all, they suppose the implementation of the ECP and respond (or should

respond) to ECP aims (Blom-Hansen, 2005). Thus, this meso-level method could promote different levels of policy compliance of local plans regarding the ECP, as previous research on this issue has shown at national or regional levels (Zhelyazkova et al., 2016).

The second central characteristic of the ECP urban dimension is the use of the integration policy strategy since its first initiatives in the 1990s. Based on the implementation and results of the 'experimental' URBAN I Initiative, as the first EU programme specifically focused on urban areas, a method to address urban problems was 'codified' and incorporated into the ECP as regards urban spaces—the so-called URBAN Acquis (Atkinson, 2014). This method tries to enhance the integrated strategy through policy actions across different sectoral goals (physical space, and economic, social and environmental protection) focused on a specific urban territory and involving residents and socio-economic actors in decision-making processes (Carpenter, 2013). The main traits of this intervention method for urban spaces have remained the same since the 1990s. From the URBAN programme to sustainable urban development strategies through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) framework during the 2014–2020 programming period, the combination of the place-based approach and the integrated strategy has become normal for the urban dimension of the ECP (Fioretti et al., 2020).

Previous traits show the urban dimension of the ECP represents a good example of an urban initiative proposing local strategies as integrated multi-level policy mixes. Local strategies are nested within different policy levels and define complex policy portfolios that combine different aspects of their two policy dimensions across policy sectors. Thus, this analytical approach and its multi-scalar comparative method could be used to study variations in the policy design, implementation and effects of local strategies, because these show the actual character of the ECP urban dimension and the potential added value. In this regard, based on previous research into urban policies and governance, and the three policy levels previously mentioned, local plans (in terms of their policy dimensions) could vary according to at least three aspects that configure the 'starting conditions'—or structure of opportunities—shaping the design, implementation and potential effects of local strategies: (1) Changes in the general policy frame between ECP programming periods and its influence in national programmes. (2) The institutional context regarding local/urban authorities and policies in member states (or regions). (3)

The characteristics of local communities (targeted urban places). Some brief insights about these elements are presented in the following section.

The ECP Policy Frame for Urban Initiatives and Over-Time Comparisons: From 'Neighbourhood Revitalisation' to 'Sustainable Communities'

The integrated and multi-level character of local policy mixes has been the core element of EU urban initiatives since the 1990s. However, around this core, some changes have been included in different programming periods, shaping different policy frames for the ECP urban dimension. Based on an analysis of primary documents about this urban dimension, as well as previous research on the issue, the more significant changes in each policy dimension are summarised in the following paragraphs (and Table 1.1). The changes could explain over-time differences in national programmes and local strategies as policy mixes (policy dimensions and inter-relationships).

The main goal of the current EU urban initiatives is to promote territorial cohesion and sustainable urban development. This goal means improving physical space, as well as economic, social, environmental and governance aspects, to enable more intelligent, inclusive and sustainable cities (Medeiros, 2016; Medeiros & Van der Zwet, 2019). Nevertheless, it was during the 2007–2014 programming period that governance, and significantly environmental sustainability, increased in importance as essential objectives compared with previous URBAN programmes (focused on space, economic, social and environmental protection). Moreover, the most recent programming period ending in 2020 incorporated new goals into local strategies regarding digitalisation and innovation, as well as a greater emphasis on environmental sustainability concerning climate change. The policy frame has thus expanded its scope, shaping a more comprehensive policy agenda across different policy sectors. However, this could also be interpreted as a change towards a greater emphasis on economic development and competitiveness over other goals, or at least less emphasis on urban inequalities in the first initiatives in the 1990s in the framework of a more general shift away from the idea of convergence and towards competitiveness in ECP (McCann, 2015; Zimmerman & Atkinson, 2021).

Changes in the characteristics and scale of potential territorial targets could also inform about changes in the policy frame. The territorial

Table 1.1 The ECP urban dimension: main policy frames across programming periods (1994–2020)

		Programming periods		
		1994–2006	*2007–2013*	*2014–2020*
EPC general policy frame		Convergence	Competitiveness	Smart specialisation
EPC urban dimension policy frame		Integrated urban regeneration	Integrated urban development	Sustainable urban development
Goals (substantive dimension)	Main goals: emphasis on… (1)	Urban space, social inclusion and environmental protection	Competitiveness and environmental protection	Climate change and digitalisation (smart specialisation)
	Territorial target: scale	Intra-municipal	Intra-municipal	Infra-municipal, municipalities and functional urban areas
	Territorial target: type	Vulnerable neighbourhoods	Disfavoured urban areas in economic decline	Urban areas with problems established by the ECP (priorities)
Implementation preferences (procedural dimension)	Policy instruments	Integrated policy mixes (local plans focused on neighbourhoods)	Integrated policy mixes (local plans)	Sustainable development strategies (SUD): integrated local policy mixes (local plans), CLLD or ITI
	Governance process	Participative inclusion of local actors	Participative inclusion and multi-level governance	Participative inclusion, multi-level and inter-municipal governance

(continued)

Table 1.1 (continued)

	Programming periods		
	1994–2006	*2007–2013*	*2014–2020*
Policy frame type for EU urban initiatives	Integrated urban regeneration as the 'neighbourhood revitalisation' policy frame	Integrated urban development as the 'creating competitive urban spaces' policy frame	Sustainable urban development as the 'creating sustainable communities' policy frame

(1) New or more emphasised goals
Source Author's own elaboration

target in former URBAN initiatives was disadvantaged neighbourhoods in major cities. Since 2007, this has also applied to infra-municipal areas with specific problems (thus, not necessarily those with a concentration of poverty and social exclusion); since 2014, municipalities or functional urban areas (the EU proxy for metropolitan areas) have also become eligible targets. The policy frame has thus changed its territorial focus on deprived neighbourhoods—a central aspect of the traditional area-based initiatives promoted to balance urban socio-spatial inequalities—to a more general place-based approach regarding the heterogeneity of urban places across Europe.[2]

Integration among policy actions across policy sectors and multi-level and participative governance processes remain as the main implementation preferences. However, changes regarding goals and territorial targets could also promote changes in the implementation logic and coalitions in local strategies. First, new goals could mean the inclusion of new issues or even new policy sectors in the policy agenda of urban initiatives, and thus the inclusion of their typical belief systems, methods and policy tools previously not included in the EU policy frame and the policy mix of local strategies. New implementation strategies must accordingly enhance integration between more traditional and recent policy tools.

Second, the increasing scope of EU urban initiatives could promote more extensive 'hybrid' coalitions across new policy sectors, incorporating new criteria regarding mutual relevance, and participation and influence in governance coalitions. New and more actors with different resources and interests increase the collective actions dilemmas behind urban governance processes. This requires the adoption of new governance arrangements to promote collaboration and coordination among actors from the policy sectors involved (Navarro, 2010; Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2015b).

Lastly, the change in the scale of territorial targets could also promote changes in implementation logic and coalitions, especially regarding strategies focused on functional urban areas. This territorial target also adds new elements to the collective action dilemma that urban governance supposes (such as more actors, the heterogeneity of their preferences

[2] According to the STRAT-board (Territorial and Urban Strategies Dashboard) elaborated by the Joint Research Centre for the 2014–2020 programming period, shows that only 27% of integrated urban sustainable development initiatives focused on districts or neighbourhoods (https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/strat-board/#/where).

and even implementation styles and organisational cultures). The need for coordination between neighbouring municipalities implies new and different collective action dilemmas to solve, and therefore new forms of institutional arrangement and governing coalitions, as indicated by the collective institutional action approach (Post, 2004). With regard to these new dilemmas, two new policy instruments have been proposed since 2014 in the EU policy frame for urban initiatives: the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) for strategies targeting functional urban areas, and the Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) targeting more localised strategies based on active community involvement (European Commission, 2015; Tosic, 2020).

Institutional Context and Local Conditions: On Cross-Sectional Comparisons

Between the ECP policy frame and local strategies, member states and regional socio-economic and institutional 'filters' could also explain differences between local strategies in terms of design implementation and effects, as research about ECP at the regional level has shown. Moreover, comparative studies on urban policies and governance indicate the importance of institutional contexts in explaining urban policy content, implementation processes and governance coalitions. Based on this research, three *institutional filters* between the ECP policy frame and local strategies could be briefly mentioned (Navarro & Guerrero-Mayo, 2022).

First is the local government system in each member state (and their regional variations in federal and quasi-federal systems). Traditional studies of local government systems have identified different models across Europe (and other world regions). These are specific institutional contexts that define the institutional capabilities of local governments (Sellers, 2002). Different proposals and empirical studies exist with regard to the influence of local government models—and their specific dimensions—on various aspects of local government and policies. These studies have shown their relevance in explaining the relationship between political and administrative leadership, the policy agenda (goals), the configuration of different governance networks and coalitions or their effects on socio-spatial inequalities (Bäck et al., 2006; Mouritzen & Svara, 2002; Sellers et al., 2017).

These institutional contexts also influence the relationship between the two policy dimensions of urban policies indicated by the policy sectors approach. Local government systems explain the differences in policy instruments to manage local administrative processes and provide public services, but similar policy content can rely on different means of service delivery in different local government systems (Mouritzen, 1992). This institutional context also moderates the relationship between policy goals and alliances with specific actors in governance processes posed by the policy sector perspective (Navarro et al., 2008). Local institutional capacities in specific policy sectors also explain the existence of 'inter-governmental governance coalitions', including supra-municipal public agencies with local government and socio-economic actors (Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2015a).

With regard to EU urban initiatives, this institutional approach could therefore help to explain differences in goals, intervention logic and governance coalitions, as well as their relationships in local plans, as shown by previous research on local strategies in different member states (Chorianopoulus, 2002; Doria et al., 2016; Tofarides, 2003). In this regard, urban planning traditions are also a specific institutional factor affecting urban policies and their governance processes. Different planning traditions exist in the EU according to their scope across policy sectors and the role of local authorities. For instance, local authorities have an essential role in the 'urban planning' tradition, but the policy scope is narrow (mainly urban spatial planning). However, the 'integrated' tradition also includes economic and social issues in the framework of multi-level collaborative processes between local and supra-local authorities. These differences promote different policy agendas, tools and governance processes (Farinós, 2006; Nadín & Stead, 2008). Therefore, these traditions also shape different institutional opportunities to define and implement urban initiatives as integrated multi-level policy mixes (Nadin et al., 2021).

The contemporary concern about urban problems in the political agenda of national states and the spread of the UN Urban Agenda has promoted an increasing trend towards approving national urban policies (NUP). The EU also shows a heterogeneous situation concerning this issue. Some countries have had explicit and consolidated urban policies since the 1990s. More recently, some countries have approved explicit national urban policies or similar processes (the so-called 'urban agendas'), whereas other countries only have initial processes regarding this

Table 1.2 A multi-scalar perspective to analyse EU integrated urban strategies as complex multi-level policy mixes

Government levels	*Policy levels*	*Policy dimensions and their relationships as policy mixes*	*Factors affecting progressive specification and explaining local policy mixes*
EU	ECP policy frame for its urban dimension	Policy aims and implementation preferences concerning instruments and governance	Planning periods (over-time differences according to policy frame in programming periods)
State members and regions	Operational programmes	Selection (and specification) of goals and instruments	Institutional context: local government system, urban planning traditions and national urban policies/strategies (Cross-sectional differences at the member state or regional level)
Local authorities	Local plans/strategies (policy measures)	Specific objectives, territorial targets, policy tools, governance and implementation coalitions	Community traits: challenges, opportunities, collective capacities, etc. (cross-sectional differences at the local level)

Source Author own elaboration

policy. However, urban national policies or their proxies as 'national urban agendas or strategies' also vary in their sectoral scope (Armondi & DeGregorio, 2020; van der Burg et al., 1998; Zimmerman & Fedeli, 2021).[3] Thus, the institutionalisation, policy scope and implementation preferences set in national urban policies could shape the design, implementation and effects of integrated urban strategies promoted by the EU (Fedeli et al., 2021) (Table 1.2).

[3] According to the report concerning the state of national urban policy (UN-Habitat/OECD 2018), in 2018, 58% of the 24 EU countries included in this report had an explicit urban national policy. Around 85% had a general scope across policy sectors and 75% were in an implementation or evaluation stage.

These three 'filters' and their relationships accordingly suppose an institutional context that shapes different opportunity structures for the design, implementation and effects of local strategies. Nevertheless, the place-based approach means that local strategies should respond to challenges and opportunities in the local community in addition to previous institutional contextual factors (Kotzebue, 2016). These 'local starting conditions' include spatial, economic, social and environmental aspects, as well as collective capacities in society and public administrations (associative ecologies, social capital, policy capacities or previous experiences defining and implementing similar urban policies and initiatives). Some analyses concerning EU urban initiatives have also shown how these conditions shape the policy design, implementation and outcomes of local plans; for instance, the difference between historical districts and peripheral disadvantaged neighbourhoods or between large and medium-sized cities (Navarro, 2016; Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2015b).

On EU Urban Integrated Initiatives Evaluation and Added Value: Better Urban Policies and Better Urban Places to Live

The ECP additionality principle means that evaluation processes are needed to demonstrate the specific outcomes and effects of the ECP urban dimension (McCann, 2015). The research agenda on ECP at the regional level has analysed its effects in terms of the improvement produced in two main areas or 'added value aspects': policy-making and quality of life (Mairate, 2006; van der Zwet & Ferry, 2016).

With regard to urban initiatives, two main added value aspects could be established: *better urban policies* and *better urban places* to live. ECP tries to promote new and better institutional arrangements and policy capacities to increase the quality of policy design and implementation of urban strategies, being one of the most important goals in the current design of the Urban Agenda for the European Union. Better urban policies could be understood as better design and implementation of urban policies, and specifically, the spread of the 'EU urban integrated model' across member states, regions and—above all—local authorities, as these usually design and implement urban initiatives in the framework of the ECP. This is, for instance, the goal of the research agenda on the 'Europeanisation' of urban policies (Hamedinger & Wolffhardt, 2010). Based

on this idea, the added value could be understood as the 'policy compliance' of local strategies to the notion of good policy design and the main traits of the integrated strategy applied to multi-level policy mixes. Are goals, policy actions and governance processes well designed? Do the goals and implementation style in local plans show that the integrated approach is being applied? Is the integral approach adopted at the same level and simultaneously in these two policy dimensions of local plans? To answer these questions, a conceptual framework is needed to define a 'good plan' and 'the integrated strategy' at the local policy level. Then, a research strategy is required to provide answers in terms of policy evidence based on empirical findings at this scale.

The second added value implies that EU urban initiatives should improve the living conditions of residents in targeted territories and, as an aggregate effect, should help to reduce socio-spatial inequalities among urban spaces (at least in the more 'neighbourhood revitalising' policy frame before 2014). This has been an essential issue on the research agenda concerning ECP added value at the regional level. However, few proposals and little policy evidence exist with regard to the impact on targeted urban spaces, and therefore on the urban dimension of the ECP.

Moreover, in the study of the ECP urban dimension, 'better urban policies' (or added value I) have been paid more attention than the study of 'better urban places' (or added value II) in ex-post evaluations made about URBAN I, URBAN II and urban initiatives implemented in the 2007–2013 programming period, and the analysis of added value for the 2014–2020 programming period. These evaluations provide detailed information about aspects of the design and, above all, the implementation process and their added value. However, they do not include (or they include very little) policy evidence about the added value II. Networks promoted by URBACT have also focused on policy design and implementation, offering a detailed array of instruments with which to design and implement better integrated urban initiatives. Lastly, academic literature has also been more focused on added value I than on added value II. There are few analyses providing policy evidence about the impact of EU urban initiatives on the living conditions of residents in targeted territories, and the main results show moderate or no effects (Armstrong et al., 2002; Navarro et al., 2016).

These results are similar to evaluative exercises made on other similar place-based urban initiatives (Rae, 2011; Thomson, 2008). Some potential explanations for these results have already been discussed in ECP evaluations at the regional level (Batchtler & Wren, 2006), or other similar area-based initiatives These include the non-definition of policy theory for programmes linking policy actions and goals (expected results), the lack of an adequate comparison between intervened and non-intervened urban areas, or the failure to determine the exposure degree of different social groups or actors to different kinds of interventions (policy tools) included in these multi-objective initiatives. Lastly, the short time between the final implementation of local projects and their evaluation.

First, ECP establishes a general policy frame that member states and local authorities should adapt to their realities. However, this adaptation means a specific policy theory that should serve as a reference for implementation and evaluation; that is, the causal processes that link policy actions with their expected objectives (Rogers, 2008). Most of the case studies and assessments made or commissioned by the EU do not provide this policy theory. For instance, the ex-post evaluation of URBAN II indicates that a logical relationship between the problems and the action strategy only exists in around half of the 15 examined case studies (EC, 2010). Even in these cases, the relationships are not specified and used as a reference to evaluate the effects of projects. The ex-post evaluation of the 2007–2013 period indicates that despite the diversity of problems to be addressed and the sectoral policy actions included in projects, in most of them, the focus was sectoral and targets were broadly and not well-defined (mainly as 'population in the target area') (EC, 2016). Broadly, the analysis of the structural funds between 1995 and 2010 or the ex-post evaluation of Objective 2 (1994–1999) evidence that the logic linking proposed actions and their expected effects was never entirely clear, making it difficult to evaluate their effects (Armstrong & Wells, 2006; Baslé, 2006; Gaffey, 2013).

Second, ex-post evaluations show changes in the achievement levels of established objectives, measuring effectiveness, or in some cases, efficiency. However, these studies did not specify 'controlled comparisons' with similar urban areas to assess their effect through an appropriate research design, such as quasi-experimental, theory-driven comparative case studies or similar approaches (EC, 2003, 2010, 2016). These research strategies have been adopted to analyse the effect of the EUCP

at the regional level (Batchtler & Wren, 2006; Bondonio & Greenbaum, 2006; EC, 2016; McCann, 2015). However, their use to evaluate the effect of urban strategies at the level of their territorial targets (neighbourhoods or specific urban areas) is uncommon.

Third, evaluative exercises usually analyse changes in the entire resident population or collective agents in neighbourhoods (for example, companies, institutions or civic associations). However, the exposure to local plans could differ for different residents or agents, depending on the policy actions implemented (Armstrong et al., 2002; Navarro, 2021). This issue relates to the non-definition of the policy theory. On the one hand, policy exposure depends on the targeting processes in policy measures. On the other, policy exposure also depends on neighbourhood exposure to the mechanisms explaining its effect as an opportunity structure for residents. However, different social groups have differing exposure to neighbourhoods in line with their socio-demographics, lifestyles or residential mobility. Therefore, evaluations should specify policy exposure to provide evidence about effects.

Lastly, in some cases, the effect of local strategies is only visible after a medium or long period from their implementation. This mainly applies to policy actions using policy tools that require changes in skills, capabilities or lifestyles. Unlike policy tools based on inducements or physical urban interventions, the effect of these 'capacity building tools' are more evident in the long term (McDonnel & Elmore, 1987).

In sum, policy evidence about the added value of the ECP urban dimensions is more focused on added value I (better urban policies) than on added value II (better urban places). However, in both cases, comparative evidence at the level of local strategies from a comparative perspective is lacking and—again, above all—with regard to their effect in terms of added value II shaping better urban places.

The Spanish Case: An Opportunity for the Comparative Analysis of EU Urban Integrated Strategies and Their Added Value

This book aims to provide policy evidence about these two aspects of added value at the local level based on the Spanish case. The urban initiatives promoted by the EU have been implemented in Spain ever since the first initiatives in the 1990s. First, four pilot URBAN projects between

1989 and 1993. Between 1993 and 2006, 42 projects in cities with up to 100,000 inhabitants and some provincial capitals were implemented in the framework of URBAN initiatives (32 in URBAN I and 10 in URBAN II). In the 2007–2013 programming period, 46 cities did so through the URBANA Initiative, a programme launched by the Spanish Government through operational programmes that continued the logic of the integrated urban strategy in urban neighbourhoods. Currently, 174 EDUSI (sustainable and integrated urban development strategy) projects (local strategies) are being implemented at different urban scales in the 2014–2020 period.

These figures, provided by the Urban Initiatives Network (Government of Spain)—an initiative launched to coordinate and promote the study, design, implementation and evaluation of EU-funded urban projects—show the importance and institutionalisation of the EU proposals in Spain.[4] This has also been illustrated by research based on legal and programme documentation and case studies (i.e. Carpenter et al., 2020; DeGregorio, 2017, 2018). It further offers an excellent opportunity to analyse and evaluate this strategy at the level of its territorial target, specifically with regard to the two main aforementioned expected aspects of added value.

There is information about the design, implementation and output of local strategies implemented in the framework of the URBAN I, URBAN II and URBANA programmes. However, only about local plans designed under the EDUSI programme. Therefore, it is possible to analyse the 1994–2013 period covering three programming periods and a relevant change in policy frames (Table 1.3). First, the URBAN I and URBAN II programmes apply integral urban regeneration processes focused on deprived neighbourhoods. Second, the URBANA programme uses the integrated urban development approach in declining urban areas, with slightly more emphasis on competitiveness and environmental issues. Lastly, the EDUSI programme increases the scope of policy agenda and territorial targets, in that there are new priorities concerning digitalisation and climate change, municipalities and functional urban areas in addition to specific urban spaces (neighbourhoods), not necessarily in a vulnerable situation. In sum, the transition from URBAN to URBANA

[4] See the *Red de Iniciativas Urbanas* website: www.redeiniciativasurbanas.es.

programmes means a shift in policy frames from integrated urban regeneration resembling the traditional area-based initiatives focused on neighbourhood revitalisation, to integrated urban development initiatives closer to the 'generation competitive urban spaces' framework. The EDUSI programme introduces the sustainable urban development framework.

Analysing all the implemented local plans allows for comparative analysis beyond the documentation or data of policy programmes at the national level, or specific analyses of good practice and case studies. This extensive analysis provides other—and complementary—evidence about the nature and expected added value of the EU urban initiatives that are not common in the literature about such initiatives. Applying this approach, the chapters in Part I of the current book aim to provide policy evidence about added value I (better urban policies) by applying the comparative urban policy portfolios approach (CUPPA) (Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2020). The analysis will focus on over-time comparisons between programmes under different policy frames to show the relevance of this contextual factor in local strategies and their change (Table 1.4). Do different policy frames promote different local strategies? Do more recent local plans have better policy design and compliance regarding the integrated strategy? The research strategy and questions are presented in Chapter 2 as an introduction to Part I.

The second part of the book is devoted to analysing added value II, paying attention to the policy theory behind the programmes and other theoretical proposals based on previous research into urban change and policies. Policy evidence is provided by applying 'controlled comparisons' through quasi-experimental and comparative case studies. We compare trajectories of change between pre and post-intervention periods in 'experimental' and 'control' neighbourhoods with regard to different indexes measuring potential programme outcomes (Table 1.4). We intentionally use data sources than could exist across Europe (census data or surveys covering European countries), as this means that analyses are potentially replicable in other countries. Nevertheless, using these sources also implies certain limitations, such as their content and the level of territorial aggregation they can access, conditioning the methodological design and analysis that can be carried out. These limitations are indicated in each case. The research strategy and questions are detailed in Chapter 7 as an introduction to Part II.

The main results according to the specific research question proposed are summarised in the concluding chapter, as well as a discussion about

Table 1.3 The urban dimension of ECP in Spain (1993–2020): programmes and policy frames

Main traits		*URBAN I and II (1994–2006)*	*URBANA (2007–2013)*	*EDUSI (2014–2020)*
Policy frame orientation		Neighbourhood revitalisation	Competitive urban spaces	Sustainable communities
EPC general policy frame		Integrated urban regeneration	Integrated urban development	Sustainable urban development
Goals (substantive dimension)	Main goals: emphasis on… (1)	Urban space and social inclusion	Competitiveness and environmental protection	Climate change and digitalisation (smart specialisation)
	Territorial target	Vulnerable neighbourhoods in large cities	Urban areas in decline in large and medium-sized cities	Neighbourhoods, municipalities or functional urban areas
Implementation preferences (procedural dimension)	Policy tools	Policy integration across policy sectors	Policy integration across policy sectors	Policy integration across policy sectors
	Governance process	Participative inclusion	Participative inclusion and multi-level governance	Participative inclusion and multi-level governance
Number of local plans		42	46	174

(1) Previous goals are also included

Source Based on Navarro (2020). For the number of local plans, Red de Iniciativas Urbanas (https://portalweb.mitma.es/aplicaciones/portalweb/riuwebportal/)

Table 1.4 A plan to study the added value of ECP urban dimensions at the level of local strategies and territorial targets

	Added value	
	Better urban policies (policy design and implementation)	Better urban places to live (policy impacts)
The analytical idea about…	A conceptual approach to analyse the integral strategy in policy mixes: goals and implementation styles	Policy effects according to policy theory and policy exposure
Policy evidence as…	Policy compliance: 'good design' and the integral strategy in policy mixes Learning processes: policy design quality and policy integration	The effect at the level of targeting territories and their residents concerning some outcomes provided by existing secondary data sources
Research design strategy	Comparative urban policy portfolios (CUPPA)	Controlled comparisons (quasi-experimental design and comparative case study)
	Over-time comparisons between policy frames (programmes)	Cross-sectional and over-time comparisons between 'experimental' and 'control' groups
In this book	Part I (Chapters 2–6)	Part II (Chapters 7–11)

more general issues introduced in the current chapter concerning the Spanish case and the multi-scalar comparative strategy needed to study local integrated strategies as multi-level policy mixes in the framework of ECP.

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PART I

Better Urban Policies or Added Value I: The Practice and Learnings on the Policy Integration Strategy at the Local Level

CHAPTER 2

The Nature and the Policy Added Value of EU Integrated Urban Initiatives: Research Issues and Strategies

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Abstract After reviewing the main research strategies applied to analyse urban initiatives promoted by the EU, this chapter proposes the 'urban policy portfolio analysis' (CUPPA) approach to perform comparative analyses at the level of local strategies. Previous exercises about EU urban initiatives have analysed their legal framework, applied the classical programme perspective (spending and other aspects) or studied specific case studies. These approaches study the urban dimension of

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the European Cohesion Policy or national applications as a whole or provide in-depth information about detailed local plans. However, these approaches do not provide systematic information to perform comparative analyses at the local strategies level. The CUPPA approach provided comparative methods to perform bottom-up analyses (from the local strategy level to policy frames) of design and implementation processes theoretically founded in previous research on urban policies. Therefore, this approach is aligned with the multi-level and complex character of integrated urban strategies promoted by the EU. And, therefore, allow for multi-scalar comparative analyses of strategies (at the local level) and the actual character of policy frames (regional, national, and EU levels) from a cross-time and cross-sectional perspective.

Keywords Urban policy · European Union · Research methods · Comparison · Local level

Introduction

In order to analyse the added value promoted by the EU urban initiatives, we must define their essential characteristics, both from an analytical and an operational perspective, which will allow us to measure them and conduct comparative analyses. Our analytical proposal is defined in Chapter 1. In this chapter, the research strategy proposed is presented. How have EU urban initiatives been previously analysed? What research methods have been used?; what issues do these strategies allow for analysing?; can these strategies provide comparative policy evidence about the expected added value of the urban dimension of the EU cohesion policy on urban policies design and implementation?

In the first section of this chapter, we briefly review the main methodological perspectives used by previous research to analyse the nature—and changes—of EU urban initiatives and propose an alternative approach as regards these questions: the comparative urban policy portfolio analysis (CUPPA). This approach will then be applied to provide evidence on some central aspects of the urban dimension of EU cohesion policy and its added value for urban policies in chapters included in the first part of this book. A brief introduction to this objective is done in the second section of this chapter.

Analysing EU Integrated Urban Initiatives: Main Methodological Perspectives

From a methodological perspective, research on the nature of integrated urban development programmes and initiatives promoted by the European Union can be grouped into three broad approaches also used commonly to study other public policies: the normative approach; the analysis of programmes; and the study of policy domains (Howlett et al., 2006). These are complementary perspectives that analyse aspects related to policy goals and implementation preferences, the two main dimensions of public policies. They, therefore, help highlight relevant aspects of the policy framework established by a policy, as well as the specific projects developed within that framework.

The first and perhaps the most common approach is to analyse the normative or programmatic production of urban development initiatives promoted by the EU. This has allowed researchers to define the basic foundations of such initiatives, such as identifying the *URBAN Acquis* on which integrated urban development strategy in the EU has been based, as well as their evolution from integrated urban regeneration to the idea of sustainable urban development (Cotella, 2019; Dood, 2011; European Commission, 2014, 2015; Scheurer & Haase, 2018; Medeiros, 2019). This approach has shown significant changes between programming periods of the EU's cohesion policy and differences between countries (or regions). However, it does not show the variety found in the application of integrated strategy proposed by the EU in different territorial contexts, particularly at the scale of the territorial target to which they are applied (neighbourhoods, cities, urban functional areas, …). Furthermore, these studies are usually based on an 'open' or 'conventional approach' to documentation analysis or at least do not report the application of a systematic and reproducible methodology for the development of comparative analysis, as the 'direct approach' in content analysis tries to ensure (Hsieh & Shanon, 2005).

The programme perspective entails an extensive analysis of projects implemented within the framework of a programme or public policy. Examples of this approach are the ex-post assessments of urban initiatives carried out by the European Commission (European Commission, 2002, 2010, 2016) or the information provided by the *STRAT-Board* elaborated by the Joint Research Centre for urban initiatives included in ESIF during the 2014–2020 period, or analyses specific countries or

regions; for instance, Medeiros (2020) or Partidário and Nunes (2004) in Portugal and De Gregorio (2017) in Spain. Typically, this perspective provides information on the content of projects through planned or implemented budgetary spending on the 'official' objectives, policy areas or priorities established in their respective regulatory frameworks and calls for proposals. This information facilitates the analysis of project goals and, through aggregation, of programme goals, although it can present some difficulties for their comparative analysis. Firstly, the volume of financial resources required to implement actions within different objectives varies without necessarily taking account of their importance in the strategy pursued by the projects. One example would be the classic distinction between actions involving large investments linked to infrastructures or interventions in the physical space, as opposed to those aimed at providing services to specific groups (Sharp, 1990). This may affect both the analysis of projects within the framework of a single programme and the comparative study of several programmes. Secondly, there have been changes in the designation of the different areas of action (objectives, thematic priorities, …) between programmes or programming periods. Therefore, even if there is a similarity in their contents (pursued goals or the strategies proposed to achieve them), they cannot be compared based on their official definitions. Finally, this perspective does not usually provide information on the instruments or 'policy tools' used by projects, or at least with sufficient detail to enable their comparative analysis. Therefore, we might obtain details about their intended aims, but somewhat less on how they intend to achieve them. In other words, just one of the two primary dimensions of public policy (goals, but not policy instruments).

The policy domain perspective, in contrast, focuses on conducting a detailed study of projects to know which actors they involve, their activities and their relationships of interaction and influence. In this approach, the main objective is to analyse governance processes based on the structure of their policy networks and the roles played by different actors according to the public policy and policy issue under analysis. These analyses could provide detailed information about decisional and implementation processes similar to the classical 'community power studies' (Fedeli & Doria, 2006). However, it is a very costly approach to implement, which might explain why this is the least widespread perspective, and why its most common application is the development of case studies or the comparative study of some cases (Navarro & Rodriguez-Garcia, 2015; Rodriguez-Garcia & Navarro, 2016).

The above three perspectives or methods have been providing very valuable—and complementary—information to understand certain essential aspects of the policy framework surrounding the urban development initiatives promoted by the EU, as well as some features of the design and implementation of their projects at a local level. However, as we have seen, they present certain limitations for developing comparative analyses (see Table 2.1). One possible alternative, not without limitations either, is the strategy proposed here: the CUPPA or comparative urban policy portfolio analysis (Navarro & Rodriguez-Garcia, 2020). This strategy involves 'reconstructing' the nature of urban policies based on two premises. First, the analysis focuses on the concrete projects developed and the specific actions they contain. The unit of observation is not the policies or programmes, but the projects through which they are actually carried out at the local level, as well as the policy measures they include (their minimum unit of planning and implementation), enabling public policies to be analysed 'from the bottom up' according to what is actually planned and implemented in each case. Second, analysis is based on analytical categories theoretically grounded in urban policy literature. These categories, as analytical units, are therefore independent of possible changes in the normative or programmatic documentation of the policies or programmes analysed (from the definition of their objectives or their preferences for implementation), thus allowing for comparative analysis between projects, programmes, and policies across different contexts and periods.

Thus, CUPPA proposes a theoretically bottom-up approach to analysing urban policies. It allows for the comparative study of urban initiatives promoted by the EU at different levels taking into account the nested nature of these initiatives within the framework of the EU's cohesion policy (from policy measures to local projects, national or regional programmes, and the urban initiatives of the EU cohesion policy). Hence, the actual policy frame is analysed, not just the normative or programmatic proposals. This method also allows for conducting cross-sectional and cross-time analyses at different policy levels (policy measures, projects, programmes, regions, state members, and programming periods).

From an operational point of view, CUPPA involves the content analysis of the design documents (goals and policy actions planned) or evaluation documents (policy actions implemented) of all projects developed within the framework of the policies analysed. To this end, the direct content analysis approach is applied using a coding template to

Table 2.1 Analysing the design and implementation of sustainable and integrated urban initiatives promoted by the EU: main methodological perspectives

	Normative analysis	*Programme analysis*	*Analysis of 'political domains'*	*Comparative urban policy portfolio analysis (CUPPA)*
What does it entail?	Study of normative or programmatic documentation of programmes and public policies	Analysis of projects included in programmes	Activities and relationships between actors involved and affected by a public policy	Theoretically oriented analysis of project portfolios (design and evaluation documents)
How is it usually done?	'Open' content analysis: the method used is usually not indicated (conventional content analysis)	Budget analysis by 'objectives', 'policy areas', 'priorities'… officially established by the programme/public policy	Survey and/or interviews with representative samples of actors involved	Content analysis with theoretically oriented 'templates' (direct content analysis)
What does it contribute?	Generic features of the policy frame regarding the urban dimension of cohesion policy Differences between programming periods or their applications at state members and regions	Comparative analysis of projects and programmes according to the importance of the budget allocated to 'official policy areas' Differences between programming periods, state members, regions, and projects	Governance structure and processes underlying the design and implementation of urban initiatives Differences between projects	Comparative analysis of projects and policy frames at different scales, socio-spatial contexts, and periods Differences between programming periods, member states, regions, and projects

	Normative analysis	*Programme analysis*	*Analysis of 'political domains'*	*Comparative urban policy portfolio analysis (CUPPA)*
Limitations for comparative analysis	The analysis focuses on the 'policy' or programmes but does not analyse variability according to the territorial targets (scales and socio-spatial scopes where it is applied)	Limitations due to changes in objectives/priorities definitions and the validity of budget to measure the relative importance of objectives and their implementation It focuses more on the 'contents' (objectives) than on the policy tools used	The effort required when applying public policy network analysis does not allow for extensive research ('many cases')	Documentation on the design and implementation of local projects is required, including information on the central aspects of the projects (challenges, objectives, policy tools, governance, etc.)

analyse policy actions and a template to analyse aspects related to the project as a whole. This methodological approach is common to public policy evaluability assessment and urban policies (Hsieh & Shanon, 2005; Lyles & Stevens, 2014; Trevisan, 2007). The same coding template is applied to each local project (and their policy actions) with categories defined from theoretical perspectives referring to different aspects of the study of urban policies. The analysis provides a hierarchical database from the specific policy actions to local projects, and then, to the programmes and policies. At each policy level, basic aspects of their substantive and procedural dimensions are analysed (e.g. objectives, policy tools, actors involved, coordination mechanisms, evaluation mechanisms, etc.). These aspects could be studied either in terms of policy design, analysing the design documentation, or in terms of policy implementation, analysing the evaluation document that gives an account of the actions implemented and their achievements.

The application of the CUPPA approach depends on the existence of a design document and an evaluation document for each project providing relevant information on central aspects of any public policy, in general, and urban intervention projects in particular; namely: a diagnosis detailing challenges and opportunities; the desired future situation in terms of strategic goals and objectives; the policy actions and policy instruments that will make it possible to achieve these objectives; the processes that will ensure coordination and collaboration between the different actors involved in the projects; as well as a monitoring and evaluation system to supervise the implementation process and show evidence of the achievements and impacts made (Guyadeen & Seasons, 2018; Kaiser et al., 1995; Lyles & Stevens, 2014; Oliveira & Pinho, 2010).

The urban initiatives promoted by the EU are usually explained in a document establishing the vision and strategic actions to be developed in a territory. These documents typically include a diagnosis describing challenges existing in the targeted territory, pursued objectives, policy actions to be implemented, instruments chosen for their management, the promotion of processes of governance and participation, as well as their evaluation systems. In some cases, evaluative reports are made, and these documents include some information about what has been done and their degree of achievement according to established objectives. These sources of information offer us the possibility of studying projects by applying the CUPPA approach.

In the case of the URBAN and URBANA initiatives in Spain, information on the projects (design and evaluation documents) has been provided to us by the Directorate General of Community Funds within the Ministry of Finance. It has not been possible to study the design documents of the URBAN projects developed between 1994 and 1997 and two URBANA projects, since the documentation for these was not retained. It is, therefore, possible to analyse 64 projects at this level. However, it has been possible to analyse all the policy actions implemented in all projects based on their evaluation reports: a set of 611 policy actions and around 2000 specific policy measures for a total of 82 projects. This supposes a detailed dataset to analyse the design and implementation of local projects from a comparative perspective: between projects (within programmes or policies), between programmes (or policies), and different time periods (for instance, Cohesion policy programming periods).[1]

The Nature of EU Urban Initiatives and Their 'Added Value I': Quality of Design, Policy Agenda Content, Integrated Strategy, and Policy Theories

Based on the information gathered, the CUPPA methodology has been applied to study different aspects of the urban development initiatives promoted by the European Union in Spain between 1993 and 2014, comparing those implemented under the URBAN I and URBAN II Initiative (1993–2006) with those implemented under the Spanish URBAN Initiative (2007–2014). The aim is to develop three objectives.

The first objective is to provide descriptive policy evidence on four essential aspects of these initiatives. Firstly, we studied the quality of project design from the perspective of policy evaluability. Have the basic

[1] Ceuta and Melilla have been not included in the analysis because their special status as 'autonomous cities' in Spain. The documents have been analysed by a team of 10 coders previously trained and a coding handbook explaining analytical categories to be used and the coding process. The analysis was performed through an on-line platform available to the entire team, holding coordination meetings. Reliability analysis was performed using inter-rater test, as well as validity analysis by means of multi-dimensional analysis when the concept to be analysed is multi-dimensional. In the framework of the Urban DUSI-Lab, promoted by the Jean Monnet Chair EUrPol and the Andalusian Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, validation processes have also been carried out with staff in charge of local projects under the EDUSI programme in Spain.

dimensions of the projects been adequately defined? Would they be evaluable? Is the evaluation planned? Secondly, we examined the policy agenda (or content of projects) according to the relative importance of different areas or sectors of public policy as challenges, objectives, and actions of the projects. Unlike other studies, we do not consider the presence—or absence—of different policy sectors or their weight in the project budget, but their importance in the strategic vision of each project. Thirdly, we investigate the application of the integrated strategy in the projects, both in terms of their content and with respect to the actors involved, showing it is a different aspect to the diversity or juxtaposition of different objectives, actors, or processes within the same project. Lastly, we analyse the intervention strategy of the projects, understood as policy mixes, through the causal processes and mechanisms that underlie the implemented actions.

The second objective, which focuses on methodological issues, is to provide strategies for the comparative analysis of EU urban initiatives based on the CUPPA approach. For this reason, some sections of the chapters detail how the aspects analysed have been conceptualised and measured to perform comparative analyses. The intention is to show how this approach can be used to analyse integrated and sustainable urban development initiatives promoted by the EU from a multi-scale and comparative perspective that is not afforded by a programme-focused perspective, case studies, or normative analysis. The CUPPA perspective considers the nested and multi-level nature of urban initiatives within the framework of EU cohesion policy, offering the possibility of comparative studies from a multi-scale and longitudinal perspective; and, therefore, the development of the next objective.

The third objective—evaluative in nature—is to provide policy evidence about the added value of these urban policy initiatives through the comparative analysis of the URBAN and URBANA programmes. On the one hand, added value will be understood as a learning process in urban policy design: has the quality of project design improved? and has the integrated strategy been incorporated into projects? On the other hand, added value will be understood as the nature of the policy frame being promoted: what changes are taking place in its substantive dimension?, do they incorporate the idea of sustainable urban development?, are there differences in the problems they seek to solve, their objectives and the way they seek to achieve them?, do these differences indicate changes in the direction of the urban dimension of the EU cohesion policy?

Simple analysis techniques are used to carry out the comparative analysis between the projects included in the URBAN and the URBANA initiatives. In some cases, the 'effect size' is also provided. This shows the standardised differences between compared groups, URBAN and URBANA projects here, regardless of the measurement scale used, as well as its confidence interval (Fritz et al., 2012; Lakens, 2013). Specifically, we will use the g indicator proposed by Hedges since, unlike Cohen's classic d (Cohen, 1988), it considers the difference in the number of cases in the groups being compared (Hedges, 1981; Hedges & Olkin, 1985). According to the general rule established by Cohen (1988), values less than 0.2 would show no effect (or differences); values between 0.2 and 0.4 means a small effect; a medium effect for values between 0.5 and 0.7; and large effects for values greater than 0.8. In addition, to facilitate their practical interpretation, effect size values can be transformed into the U3 indicator (Cohen, 1988), which shows the percentage of projects in a group with values above the average of the group with which it is compared, here URBANA versus URBAN. Thus, the existence of a small effect size value would mean that between 58 and 68% of the URBANA Initiative projects have higher values than URBAN projects (g between 0.2 and 0.49), a medium effect would indicate that this percentage is between 69 and 78 (g between 0.50 and 0.79), and a large effect would be anything above 80% (g = 0.8). This way, the practical significance of the difference between the programmes can be seen more clearly.

Overall, the first part of this text aims to provide evidence on some essential aspects or dimensions of the model of integrated and sustainable urban development that the EU's cohesion policy has promoted since the 1990s in Spain. What has this entailed? How did the policy frame for integrated urban development programmes in Spain involved between 1994 and 2017? Has there been the expected improvement or added value? The evidence will allow us to answer these questions. The following chapters also aim to offer analytical and empirical tools for the comparative analysis of integrated urban development projects, programmes, and policies promoted by the EU, that could be applied to other cases (countries, moments in time,…). The main research questions in the following chapters, the analytical unit—or the specific topic analysed—and the observational unit for each case are summarised in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Analysing the integral strategy and added value I (better policies): research question, analytical and observational units

Main research issue	*Research question*	*Analytical unit (or topic)*	*Observational unit*
The nature of EU urban initiatives as integrated urban development strategies	Is the idea of integrated and sustainable urban development applied?	The policy agenda of integrated strategy: relevance of challenges, goals, and actions across policy sectors	The policy design of local projects/ strategies
	What policy theory is behind the integrated strategy?	The policy theory of integrated strategies: goals and causal mechanisms	Policy actions implemented in local projects/ strategies
The added value I: the 'learning effect' promoted by the integrated urban development strategy	Does the policy design improve over time?	The quality of the integrated strategy policy design	The policy design of local projects/ strategies
	Has the application of integrated strategy been extended over time?	Agenda and governance integration	The policy design of local projects/ strategies

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CHAPTER 3

Evaluating the Design of Integrated Urban Development Strategies: Evaluability, Plan Quality and Planning Learning Processes

María José Guerrero-Mayo and María Jesús Rodríguez-García

Abstract Policy design is a growing area of study in policy studies due to its importance in ensuring good implementation and impact. A 'good design' ensures good implementation processes and the proposed policy outcomes. Nevertheless, this issue has received little attention in urban initiatives promoted by the EU, at least through the analysis of local policy portfolios from a comparative perspective. This chapter applies the CUPPA approach to analyse the quality of local strategies design from a comparative perspective applying the comparative urban policy portfolio approach. The chapter establishes quality dimensions of

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local plans for each phase of the policy cycle (from diagnosis to evaluation); and two broad dimensions to analyse local plans' evaluability: the practical dimension (information needed to evaluate local plans) and the analytical dimension (the coherence between problems, objectives and planned actions). The analysis of URBAN and URBANA Initiatives shows a medium level of quality of local plans design, although very low regarding evaluation. The comparison between URBAN and URBANA local projects shows learning processes regarding the design of governance processes and mechanisms in local strategies, a better definition of instruments designed to ensure coordination among policy sector departments in local governments, between local and supra-municipal authorities, and between public and societal actors. Therefore, portfolio design analysis shows a growing trend towards multi-level governance in urban initiatives, but it also indicates evaluation is a dimension that needs improvements (low levels of quality and no improvements between programmes analysed).

Keywords Urban policies · European Union · Comparative analysis · Urban policy impact · Policy design

Introduction

The New Urban Agenda promoted by the United Nations indicates sustainable urban development strategies must pay particular attention to their design to ensure predictability and coherence in urban development (Naciones Unidas, 2017). The Urban Agenda for the European Union expresses similar concerns (European Commission, 2014). Previously, in its proposal to evaluate the Structural Funds, the European Union stressed the importance of design evaluation, the so-called *ex-ante* evaluation, to ensure adequate implementation and success of the actions to be developed under this framework (European Commission, 2013).

Interest in the design of public policies is also present in the academic sphere, and there is even renewed interest in this regard (Howlett & Lejano, 2013). It focuses not only on the analysis of decision-making processes leading to public policy formulation but also on evaluability, whether the design of a public policy is such that it can be evaluated (OECD, 2010; Trevisan & Walser, 2014). Specifically, this approach has

been developed by the plan quality evaluation approach to study urban policies and their specific projects (Lyles & Stevens, 2014). Similarities between both perspectives provide a framework to analyse urban integrated strategies design quality as an evaluability exercise (Rodríguez-García and Navarro-Yáñez, 2022).

In this chapter, we will adopt this perspective to analyse the design quality of the urban development projects encompassed by the URBAN and URBANA Initiatives; in other words, if they have been designed in a way that it is possible to evaluate them. In doing so, we are pursuing two objectives. On the one hand, this chapter tries to provide policy evidence about the quality levels of project design and, therefore, information to assess their evaluability. And on the other, it provides policy evidence about the existence of a learning process in the policy design of integrated urban strategies as an expected add value derived from the urban dimensions of EU cohesion policy.

The Quality of Integrated Urban Policies Design: Comparative Tools to Assess Evaluability

One perspective that might be appropriate for studying the evaluability of urban development projects is the public policy cycle (Dunn, 2011). This approach establishes a set of phases in the planning process that should lead to the design of the project. These phases mainly concern two major aspects or dimensions. On the one hand, the strategy proposed by the project: the diagnosis or starting situation, the objectives or desirable situation once the project has been developed and, finally, the planning of policy actions that will make it possible to achieve this. On the other hand, procedural aspects relating to the governance processes of the project (to ensure coordination and participation among concerned agents) and those relating to monitoring and evaluation (the extent to which the evaluative strategy of the project is planned in the project design).

This perspective implies understanding planning as a decision-making process aimed at achieving a desired situation taking into account the starting situation and the internal and external factors (positive and negative) that could influence the achievement of objectives. Pursued outcomes are, therefore, established, along with what should be done, how, and when (and in what sequential order). It is a set of time- and space-specific strategies formulated in terms of measurable objectives

with regard to cost and results. It also involves understanding *evaluation from a holistic and integral perspective* that takes place in every phase of the public policy life cycle. As well as encompassing the results and effects, the evaluation also means the analysis of design, implementation, governance processes and participatory channels (Guerrero-Mayo et al., 2022). Therefore, evaluation is not the last phase of the policy cycle, but instead must be implemented from the beginning of the planning process (Guyadeen & Seasons, 2018; Rossi & Freeman, 1993).

From this perspective, the essential elements to be considered when studying the evaluability of public policy design and, therefore, the dimensions to be analysed are as follows: (1) Diagnosis: analysing the set of problems subject to intervention, identifying their causes and effects, differentiating between the normative ('should be') and the positive ('is'), what is actually happening; (2) Objectives: the results to be achieved, derived from the problems identified, as well as the relationship between them; (3) Action strategy: the actions to be developed in order to achieve the objectives established, as well as the relationships between them and/or with others developed in the same territory; (4) Governance and participation: instruments to establish the processes of collaboration and participation of the different stakeholders involved in the design and development of public policy; and finally, (5) Implementation and evaluation: mechanisms to ensure the development of the actions as designed, as well as the outcomes achieved with them in respect of the objectives established. These dimensions are similar to those proposed by the plan quality evaluation perspective. This approach tries to compare urban plan design (the results of the planning process, generally in a document) with normative principles defining a 'good plan'. In this case, two broad dimensions or principles are differentiated, including specific principles: direction-setting principles (fact bases, objectives, actions) and action-setting principles (implementation, monitoring, participation) (Lyles & Stevens, 2014). Complementariness between these two approaches means the analysis of local plan quality supposes an exercise of evaluability. In our case, about the design of sustainable and integrated urban projects (Rodríguez-García & Navarro, 2022).

In the framework of the CUPPA approach, 17 items have been defined to measure specific aspects of the five dimensions mentioned above (see Table 3.1). Each item measures whether the project design is close—or not—to an 'ideal situation' defined according to the literature on policy

evaluability, plan quality evaluation and urban policies evaluation. Reliability and dimensions validity tests show these items, and summative scales based on them, are valid instruments to analyse the quality of policy design of urban policies and integrated urban initiatives in particular (Navarro-Yáñez et al., 2020). Therefore, based on the public policy cycle perspective, this evaluative system can measure the design quality of the five core dimensions (as a summative index of their items) and a global level of quality for the project in order to evaluate a single project or conduct comparative analyses.

Some of the items also allow for the study of the practical and analytical dimensions of evaluability (Davies & Payne, 2015), and, more specifically, readiness and internal consistency as two quality dimensions of urban plan design proposed by Rodríguez-García and Navarro-Yáñez (2022). Practical evaluability seeks to ascertain whether the main dimensions of the design are defined in such a way that they can be understood and analysed. Readiness encompasses the clarity and specificity of challenges identified in the diagnosis, the definition of objectives pursued, the policy actions established to achieve them, mechanisms to ensure governance and participation, implementation management and evaluation. Analytical evaluability seeks to ascertain whether there is an internal logic that adequately links the objectives with the problems that justify them and the actions. Internal consistency means the project design shows the correspondence between established goals and needs (goals are based on identified needs or challenges) and between goals and policy actions (these are adequate to achieve goals allowing for causal attribution between policy actions and outcomes).

By crossing these two quality dimensions, it would be possible to establish four evaluation scenarios or spaces, which would give an account of the kind of evaluation that could be carried out based on project design (Rodríguez-García & Navarro-Yáñez, 2022). The space of 'analytical evaluation' means the project design shows a high level of readiness and internal consistency. Therefore, it is possible to know the results obtained (because they are well defined) and whether these are the product of implementation (due to adequate internal consistency). The 'results-oriented evaluation' combines high readiness and low internal consistency levels. Therefore, it is possible to know what has been done and what has been achieved, but it would not be possible to reconstruct the explanatory logic linking goals with challenges and policy actions. In the 'process evaluation' space, however, it is possible to reconstruct the

Table 3.1 Project quality as evaluability assessment: dimensions and indicators

Principles	*Items*
Policy challenges (diagnosis)	Definition readiness: need, problems and positive aspects are well defined
	Sources and methodologies used to provide empirical dates are indicated
	Spatial area, volume and types of people affected are indicated
Policy Goals	Definition readiness: it is possible to know desired future situations and measure them as outcomes; they are more than 'general intentions'
	Internal coherence: correspondence between needs and goals exist
	Internal integration: complementary relationships among objectives planned are established
	External coherence: complementary relationships among objectives and other plans' objectives implemented in the same territorial area (including policy mandates)
Policy actions	Definition readiness: policy actions are explained; it is possible to know their development and measure their outcomes
	Internal coherence: correspondence between objectives and policy actions exist
	Internal integration: complementary relationships among policy actions planned are established
	External coherence: complementary relationships between policy actions and other plans' policy actions implemented in the same territorial area (including policy mandates)
Governance and participation	Processes, organisms and mechanisms to ensure coordination with other public agencies
	Processes, organisms and mechanisms to ensure coordination and participation of local actors
	Processes, organisms and mechanisms to ensure coordination with other local public agencies/departments
Monitoring and evaluation	An ex-ante evaluation has been done to know potential implementation difficulties and avoid them
	A monitoring plan to include improvements during the implementation exists
	A plan for evaluation, including evaluation indexes, exists to measure goals attainment

Source Based on Navarro-Yáñez et al. (2020)

logic that connects problems, objectives and actions, but it is not possible to analyse the results achieved because those elements have not been well defined (a low level of readiness). Finally, the 'social-political evaluation' scenario combines low readiness and internal consistency levels. It is challenging to analyse processes and results (due to their lousy definition) and whether outcomes are a consequence of the plan established to achieve them (due to the lack of internal consistency). In this case, evaluation should be based on the participation and evaluative statements of public officials, staff and stakeholders involved.

In sum, based on the items proposed to measure plan quality from a policy evaluability perspective, different analyses could be done regarding a single project or develop a comparative study. The five dimensions mentioned above could help analyse the evaluability of integrated urban projects applying the policy cycle perspective or the plan quality evaluation approach. Based on the proposal of the two plan quality evaluation dimensions, readiness and internal consistency can help assess two central aspects of project design quality. And finally, by combining these two dimensions, different evaluative scenarios could inform the evaluation it can do according to the policy design of urban integrated projects.

The Quality of Integrated Urban Initiatives: URBAN and URBANA Initiatives

To analyse the quality levels of the URBAN and URBANA projects, we have computed a summative index for each dimension according to the public policy cycle approach. To facilitate the interpretation of the results, we have transformed the original five-point scale (1–5) into a 0–1 scale. We have also computed readiness and internal consistency indexes to measure the two quality dimensions of urban plan design mentioned above. The readiness index is the average of items measuring the quality of the definition of challenges, objectives and policy actions (the first items in these three dimensions, see Table 3.1). The internal consistency index is the average of the two internal coherence indexes (the second item in objective and policy actions dimensions in Table 3.1). Finally, evaluation scenarios are defined by crossing readiness and internal consistency indexes (the four scenarios are delimitated according to values below and above the theoretical mean of these indexes, value 0.5).

Analysis of the 64 projects studied (22 from the URBAN and 42 from the URBANA) shows that most indicators have means below the

midpoint of the scale (Table 3.2). The average of the global scale is equal to 0.37 points. The objectives dimension yields a similar score, with diagnosis and policy actions scoring slightly higher (around 0.5) and the design of the processes to ensure governance somewhat lower (average equal to 0.3). However, the monitoring and evaluation dimensions show the lowest level (score equal to 0.2). These results are typical in the literature on public policy and the quality of urban plans (Jun, 2014; Rodríguez-García & Navarro-Yáñez, 2022).

Regarding the two quality dimensions of urban plan design, readiness and internal consistency indexes show average scores slightly higher and slightly lower than the middle point of the scale, respectively (0,55 and 0,44 points). Therefore, challenges, objectives and policy actions are better defined than the relations between them, the internal logic establishing an appropriate link between challenges and objectives, and objectives with policy actions. In fact, the absence of internal logic in the European Union's Structural Funds is highlighted as an aspect that makes them difficult to assess (Gaffey, 2013).

Table 3.2 The design quality of URBAN and URBANA projects (Means on scales 0–1 [standard deviations])

		URBAN	*URBANA*	*Total*
Policy cycle dimensions	Policy challenges	0,47	0,51	0,49
		(0,28)	(0,28)	(0,28)
	Policy goals	0,38	0,37	0,38
		(0,29)	(0,26)	(0,27)
	Policy actions	0,42	0,48	0,46
		(0,22)	(0,22)	(0,22)
	Governance and participation	0,18	0,36	0,30
		(0,18)	(0,26)	(0,25)
	Monitoring and evaluation	0,22	0,18	0,20
		(0,19)	(0,22)	(0,21)
	Global	0,33	0,38	0,37
		(0,20)	(0,20)	(0,20)
Plan quality dimensions	Readiness	0,55	0,55	0,55
		(0,23)	(0,21)	(0,22)
	Internal consistency	0,46	0,42	0,44
		(0,27)	(0,27)	(0,27)

The comparison between URBAN and URBANA projects shows the scores are somewhat higher for the latter in specific dimensions. However, effect sizes show slight and not statically significant differences (Fig. 3.1). The global quality index is favourable for URBANA but is very small (g = 0,236). This difference is mainly due to the governance dimension, where there are significant differences between the two programmes. The effect size value indicates that around 77% of URBANA Initiative projects achieve higher levels than the average of URBAN Initiative projects in this dimension (g = 0.751). Differences also exist regarding the policy actions dimension, albeit very small and not statistically significant (g = 0.267). In contrast, URBAN projects present higher levels for the evaluation dimensions and the internal consistency index. However, the differences are minimal and not statistically significant (g equal to −0.176 and −0.138, respectively).

Table 3.3. shows the distribution of the projects into the four evaluative spaces defined previously. Around 36% are situated in the space for socio-political evaluation and 44% in the analytical evaluation scenario. Just over 10% of projects are located in the results-oriented evaluation

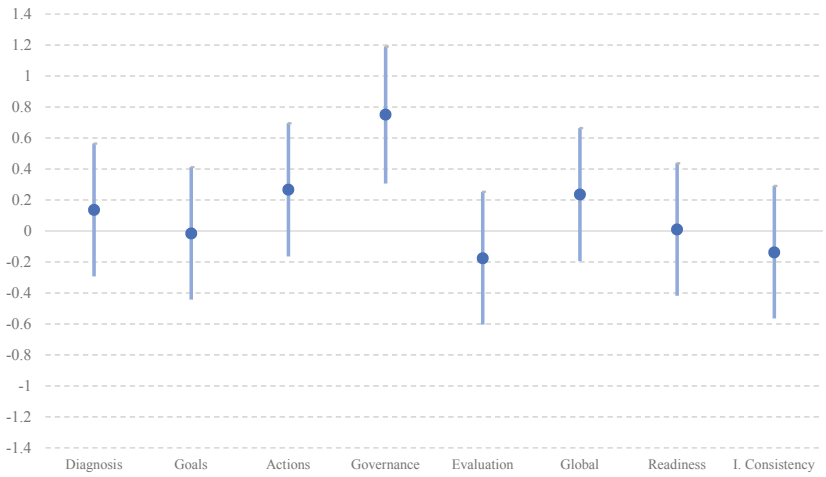

Fig. 3.1 Project design quality: differences between URBAN and URBANA projects (Effect size [Hedges' g] and confidence interval [CI90%])

Table 3.3 Evaluative scenarios and evaluation planning (Percentage over total cases in each evaluative scenario)

	Evaluative scenarios	
	Socio-political	*Analytical*
Is there an evaluation plan for the project as a whole?	43,5	70,7
Is there a specific team to perform the evaluation?	29,1	54,6
Will socio-economic agents participate in the evaluation?	26,1	53,6
Will citizens participate in the evaluation process?	13,0	32,1
Will citizens participate in the project monitoring process?	17,4	62,9
Total (*n*)	100,0 (23)	100,0 (28)

scenario, and only 6% are in the space that would allow for processes (implementation) evaluation but without adequately evaluating the results obtained. Thus, most projects are located in more different evaluative scenarios: the one that would enable to assess of whether the logic of the intervention produces the expected results (analytical evaluation) and the one that would be based on the view of stakeholders (or who participate in the evaluation process). Differences between URBAN and URBANA projects show a slight improvement in the second case (a higher percentage in the results and analytical evaluation scenarios). Above all, these results indicate projects are usually designed with high-quality criteria in all dimensions or present a low level of quality in all of them. Projects in different evaluation spaces have different quality levels in the global index: an average oaf 0.45 for those in the socio-political evaluation space and 0.66 among those in the analytical evaluation space. This result could be explained because the global scale includes indicators defining evaluation spaces (Fig. 3.2).

However, these differences also exist if we analyse more specific aspects of evaluation planning in project design not covered by the previous measurements (items and scales). We have examined whether projects present the following situations: an evaluation plan exists for the project as a whole, a specific team will carry out the evaluation, socio-economic agents will participate in it and mechanisms or processes exist to facilitate public participation in monitoring and evaluation processes. For all these issues, which show the extent to which evaluation is planned in projects and the role given to different stakeholders in this process, the values are

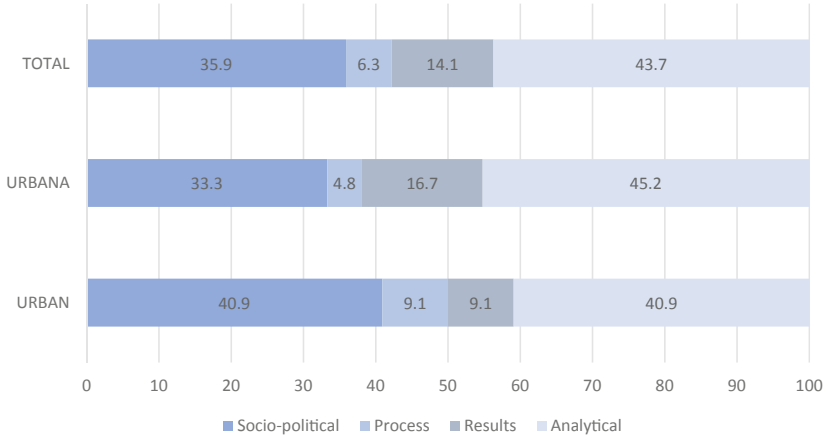

Fig. 3.2 Evaluative scenarios in URBAN and URBANA projects (Percentage over total cases [URBAN = 22, URBANA = 42])

much higher for projects situated in the analytical evaluation scenario than for projects located within the socio-political evaluation scenario (Table 3.3). Moreover, even where evaluation depends more on participation (socio-political evaluation), the number of projects including mechanisms to ensure this process is lower than in the analytical evaluation scenario. In this case, a good definition of the pursued outcomes and the process for achieving them comes with detailed evaluation planning in project design. Therefore, in this case, evaluation is understood as a crucial element of project design and its posterior implementation, not only as a final task.

Integrating Evaluation in Planning Sustainable and Integrated Urban Development Strategies

At the start of this book, we noted the widespread importance of the urban integrated strategy proposed by the EU for urban policies in Spain through the URBAN and URBANA Initiatives, as well as a growing community of agents around this issue. And that this strategy is also applied in the current EDUSI Initiative and the Spanish Urban Agenda. Has this experience generated any learning in design planning processes? Is the extension and recurrence of practice reflected in a higher quality

of designs? These were the main research questions proposed for this chapter.

Analyses provide mixed policy evidence about these questions. Regarding our first research question, results show project design has medium or low-quality levels, especially the evaluation dimension (see vertical axis in Fig. 3.3). And most of the project designs analysed are not located in the analytical evaluation scenario. Regarding our second research question, there do not seem to be significant learning effects (see horizontal axis in Fig. 3.3). The projects developed under the URBANA Initiative only present slightly higher quality levels than those developed under the URBAN Initiative.

Moreover, no significant learning effect exists for the three central elements of the projects (diagnosis, objectives and actions), and especially for the monitoring and evaluation dimension (in this case, URBAN projects have higher quality levels than URBANA projects). Only evident learning effects exist in the case of the governance dimension. This effect could be explained by the growing importance of this aspect since

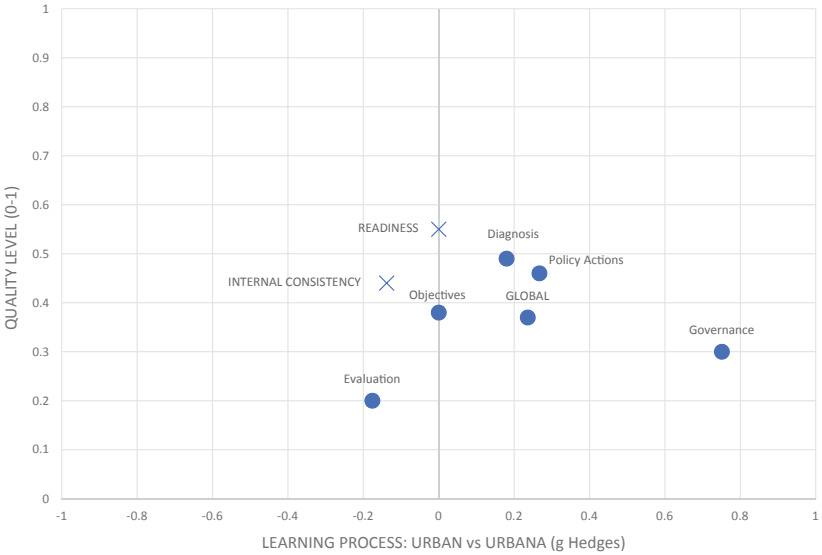

Fig. 3.3 On add values of the urban dimension of the cohesion policy in Spain: quality levels and planning learning effects in integrated project design

the 1990s, following the emergence of the White Paper on European Governance and the idea of multi-level governance surrounding the EU cohesion policy. Moreover, the consensus created around this issue in the 'Urban Acquis' derived from the URBAN Initiative and the following programme documentation on European urban development initiatives. Multi-level governance is explicitly listed as one of the key elements to ensure a good design of an integrated urban strategy, in addition to agenda integratedness and the participation of local socio-economic stakeholders (Fioretti et al., 2020; Urban-Future, 2005).

Increasing concern on multi-level governance could be the more evident add value of the EU proposal for urban policies, as the quality level of this dimension show against other project design dimensions. On the contrary, evaluation is and should be a big concern for the urban integrated strategy promoted by the EU. Its quality levels are very low, and learning effects do not exist, making it very difficult to apply an analytical evaluation to urban initiatives designed and implemented to know the impact of implemented strategies; or at least, to reduce the 'attribution gap' common in urban policies evaluation (Guyadeen & Seasons, 2018). The policy design of local integrated strategies should incorporate evaluation as an essential task to be included from the beginning of the planning process, not only as a collection of outcomes to show implementation levels of objectives proposed at the end of project implementation.

This chapter provides specific policy evidence about the added value of cohesion policy on urban policies, at least as improvements in the design of sustainable and integrated urban strategies. We have proposed and applied a validated instrument to measure the quality of project design as a perspective to assess its evaluability. It can be used, together with other evidence or procedures, to analyse this issue retrospectively (as we have done here). It could also be a helpful tool for staff in charge of projects and stakeholders participating in this process during the planning process. In sum, it is a management tool to plan (ex-ante) and improve the quality of integrated urban development initiatives launched by the EU by practitioners and to carry out comparative analyses within and between national and regional programmes or programming periods.

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CHAPTER 4

The Agenda of Urban Sustainable Development Initiatives: Challenges, Goals, and Actions Across Policy Areas

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Abstract Problems to solve, objectives, and policy actions are the main components of the policy agenda of local strategies. The European framework for sustainable urban development sustains that urban policy initiatives have to pay attention to five main policy sectors to promote sustainable urban development: physical space, economic development,

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social inclusion, environment, and governance. Applying the CUPPA approach, this chapter analyses the relevance of these five policy sectors as problems, objectives, and policy actions in local projects. Comparing URBAN and URBANA Initiatives, the chapter shows the growing importance of environmental and governance issues. Moreover, the comparison shows a change in the policy frame of URBAN and URBANA programmes from the classical 'neighbourhood revitalisation' (centred on physical space and social inclusion) to the current 'sustainable neighbourhoods' frame (more comprehensive portfolios across policy sectors and a more important role to community).

Keywords Urban policies · European Union · Urban policy agenda · Local strategies · Comparative analysis

Introduction

The idea of sustainable urban development emphasises the revitalisation of urban areas to improve their liveability by reducing environmental impact and promoting innovation. It seeks to maximise economic and social benefits by generating synergies between different areas of development. The centrality of cities to the global sustainability challenge is widely recognised; for example, one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals is dedicated explicitly to cities: 'Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable' (SDG 11).

The EU Urban Agenda considers cities as key actors in promoting sustainable development, solving environmental challenges, and ensuring a good quality of life for their citizens. And this, in particular, means integrating different areas of public intervention: public spaces, green economy, social and environmental justice, citizen participation, community initiative, renewable energies, sustainable mobility, housing planning, etc. In other words, it is about combining, in the design of urban policies, different sectors of public intervention from the perspective of a healthy, green, inclusive, circular, and resilient city.

This chapter studies the policy agenda proposed by projects included in the Spanish URBAN and URBANA initiatives (22 and 42 cases, respectively). We will analyse the public intervention sectors included in the design of projects as problems and challenges to solve, objectives, and

policy actions related to the main dimensions of sustainable urban development defined by the EU. Specifically, we will try to provide evidence about two main questions: do these policy sectors resemble the idea of sustainable urban development promoted by the EU?, there are relevant differences between URBAN and URBANA initiatives?.

Analysing Urban Development Agendas: The Relevance of Different Policy Sectors of Intervention as Problems, Objectives, and Policy Actions

Interventions to promote territorial or urban development suppose a 'notion'—an idea—about a pattern of change that would like to be promoted according to the vision about challenges to solve, objectives to attain, and policy actions to be implemented. These aspects are the main elements of the policy agenda planned in local projects: the policy issues that should be solved through specific policy actions to promote the achievement of the development goals established.

Urban sustainable development implies interventions to promote patterns of change that balance different development goals. The literature on this issue normally distinguishes four broad goals or dimensions: spatial, economic, social, and environmental. These main dimensions are also included as primary goals in the idea of sustainable urban development promoted by the United Nations (Klopp & Petretta, 2017; Simon et al., 2016). These main dimensions are also included as primary goals in the idea of sustainable urban development promoted by the EU (Medeiros, 2016). Specifically, based on these ideas, the EU proposed in 2015 the Framework of Reference for Sustainable Cities (RFSC), as a policy frame to promote sustainability in cities and provide a 'European vision' for urban policy oriented towards the urban sustainable development idea (European Commission, 2015). This framework of reference has 30 objectives organised in five dimensions: spatial, economic, social, environmental, and governance. A sustainable urban initiative should show a balanced pattern among goals across these five dimensions.

Based on this reference framework established by the EU, we have defined six dimensions that suppose different policy sectors or policy intervention areas, including specific issues. The spatial dimension includes issues relating to public space, basic urban infrastructure and services,

mobility, accessibility, habitability, heritage, both tangible and intangible, and even natural space, along with other aspects related to the territory and the physical environment. The economic dimension includes economic activity as a general issue and specific activities and sectors such as the promotion and development of local commerce, tourism, cultural production and consumption, and leisure and entertainment industries. Classic sectors such as industry and construction are also included, as well as innovation and technology development. The social dimension corresponds to social integration and welfare, including classical welfare policies (such as employment, education, health, housing, poverty, and dependent people), alongside other aspects more related to specific groups (for instance, young, older people, gender, ethnic minorities, immigration, …), and specific problems (vandalism, crime, drugs, …).

The environmental dimension includes three groups of issues: pollution (toxic emissions, waste, or even noise), the circular economy and recycling, and energy efficiency, including renewable and alternative energies but also consumption reduction as another action aimed at energy efficiency. These aspects are grouped together in the area we have called environmental sustainability. Governance includes four main issues: community life as relations among residents, citizen involvement in different forms of public and political participation, collaborative processes between public and non-public actors to define or implement public policies and initiatives, and innovations to improve public administration and service provision. Finally, based on documentation analysis, we have considered the need to include a specific area that accounts for demographic dynamics. In particular, aspects related to population loss, population growth, infancy and ageing populations, dependency rate, and other elements linked to demographic dynamics and composition of places under intervention.

In order to analyse and compare the intervention agendas of local projects, the CUPPA methodology tries to identify the relevance of the previous dimensions and issues in project design documentation. Specifically, issues and dimensions are identified as problems to solve, established objectives, and policy actions planned to attain them. To know the relevance of issues and dimensions, that is to say, their centrality to understanding the project agenda, a five-point scale is applied with the following categories: (1) Does not appear, (2) Appears but is not relevant to understanding the project agenda, (3) Although not essential, without it, the project agenda cannot be understood, (4) It very relevant to understanding the project agenda, and (5) It is central to understand the policy agenda proposed by the project, without it, it is impossible to

understand the proposed policy agenda. This analysis provides evidence about the relevance of issues and dimensions included in each project and, therefore, the possibility of carrying out comparisons among them.[1]

The Urban Development Agenda: The Relevance of Challenges, Objectives, and Policy Actions

Have the abovementioned dimension the same relevance in project diagnosis, objectives, and action plans?, is the pattern similar for URBAN and URBANA Programmes? The mean of the relevance scale has been computed for each dimension. The difference between programmes has been calculated as effect sizes applying the Hedges g index (see detailed results in this chapter annex). In addition to the average for each dimension, the most relevant specific issues in each are also indicated below.

The main findings show that the projects focus their diagnoses more on substantive rather than procedural orientations. The physical space stands out, with an average of 4.42. The most relevant specific problems are the lack of parks and green areas, the unattractiveness of the urban fabric, dwellings and buildings in bad conditions, and limited mobility and accessibility. In the second place, the diagnoses stand out in the social dimension (average of 4.23), highlighting unemployment, specifically female unemployment, as well as the lack of occupational training, crime, high absenteeism and school drop-out, and lack of educational and social services facilities.

In third place comes economic activity with an average score of 3.84, focused mainly on commercial activity. Demographic dynamics point out population loss and population ageing (means equal to 2.80). Environmental sustainability shows a mean equal to 2.53, being pollution as the main issue. And finally, community governance shows the lowest level (mean of 1,68). The most common problems are the lack of sense of belonging to the neighbourhood, conflicts between residents and a weak associative life.

[1] Inter-raters reliability test have been done to validate issue and dimensions used to define areas of intervention based on analyses done by 9 coders about 5 projects. Specifically, RWG, RWG*, and ADM tests have been applied. More details in Navarro-Yañez and Gómez (2017). The CUPPA protocol include very detailed issues for each dimensions. Each specific issue is analysed using the same scale. Here only main result for dimensions will be showed. Results for specific issue implies around 600 variables.

The relevance of dimensions among objectives established by projects is very similar. Physical space remains the most significant dimension (mean equal to 4,47), mainly as public space renovation. In the second place, economic activities and social inclusion show the same level of relevance as project objectives (3,88 and 3,83, respectively). Environmental and governance issues show a lower and similar level of relevance (means equal to 2,38 and 2,17). Nevertheless, the lowest level is for demography issues (1,52).

Regarding policy actions included in local projects, physical space is, again, the most relevant (mean of 4,78 points); being the specific issues according to their relative importance: the localisation of new urban infrastructure and services and the improvement of public space; issues related to urban mobility; and finally heritage and housing conditions. Economic and social dimensions are also relevant in projects (4,16 and 4,19, respectively). Economic actions focus on commercial activities and foster entrepreneurship, innovation, technology, and tourism. Social policy actions deal mainly with employment-related issues and, secondly, with specific social integration processes and groups, above all, in URBANA projects. Specifically, those actions focus primarily on ethnic minorities, immigrants, and child and youth care. Further down, gender equality, dependent people, health, and housing access to housing.

At a similar level are situated environmental and governance actions (2,84 and 2,42 points), and finally, demography (mean equal to 1,45). Environmental measures focus on the following issues: pollution levels (by reducing emissions, waste, noise, etc.), energy efficiency (through renewable energy), or reducing consumption (the circular economy and recycling). Governance actions aim to strengthen community (sense of community) and participation (expanding opportunities for public participation) and, to a lesser extent, promote collaboration networks with social agents and between public institutions. Finally, as regards demographics, the least prominent area, it shows no significant differences in the aspects addressed (such as seeking to resolve population loss, promoting population growth, tackling population ageing, etc.).

The relevance of the six dimensions is more or less the same in URBAN and URBANA programmes. First, economic and social dimensions are the most relevant dimensions, and big differences do not exist (see differences as effect size Fig. 4.1). These are the 'core' of local projects. However, governance stands out as a challenge in the URBANA programme and environment among their objectives; and especially as policy action (positive values in Fig. 4.1). Conversely, policy actions regarding physical space are more relevant in the URBAN initiative (a negative value in Fig. 4.1).

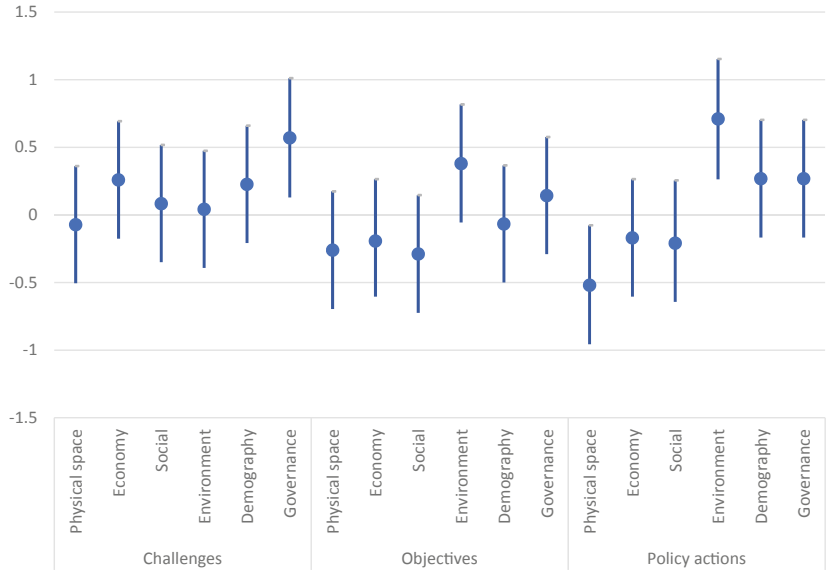

Fig. 4.1 Urban sustainable development: difference in relevance of policy dimension in URBAN and URBANA initiatives (Effect sizes and IC [90%]. *Source* Own elaboration based on Urban Impact Project databases)

Therefore, projects prioritise the intervention on improving the physical space, addressing processes that hinder social integration, and boosting economic activity. Nevertheless, environmental sustainability becomes more relevant with the URBANA programme instead of physical space. In addition, although differences are not statistically significant, governance and demography have positive values (meaning more relevance in the URBANA initiative) and negative values for the economic and, even more, the social dimension (more relevance in the URBAN initiative) (Fig. 4.1).

From Problems to Strategies: On Projects Consistency

Do dimensions have the same level of relevance as policy actions objectives, policy actions, and challenges existing in the neighbourhoods?

Objectives play a crucial role as an intermediate between challenges and policy actions: objectives should be established according to some of the challenges identified, and policy actions should be designed to accomplish set objectives. Therefore, the project's design should show consistency between these three elements (Rodríguez-Garcia & Navarro-Yañez, 2022).

Hence, to provide a general overview of this issue, we have created a chart that allows us to see comparatively the centrality of the different dimensions as challenges, objectives, and policy actions; in addition to standardised differences as effect sizes (see Table 4.1 in annex). The main result is that there is not always a correspondence between these three moments of the planning process of urban initiatives analysed. However, as a general pattern, only slight differences exist between the relevance of policy areas as objectives, challenges, and policy actions. Only specific dimensions show more important differences indicating a lower level of consistency. Governance is more relevant as a policy objective than as a neighbourhood challenge, especially among URBAN projects. This pattern is similar to the environmental dimension in URBANA projects. The social dimension has more relevance as a policy objective than as a neighbourhood challenge or policy action (especially in the case of the URBANA initiative). And the demography dimension stands out as a challenge, but its relevance is low as objectives and policy actions in URBAN and URBANA programmes (see detailed information in the annex) (Fig. 4.2).

In sum, physical space and economy dimensions show the highest level of consistency in analysed projects: they are very relevant as challenges, objectives, and policy actions in the strategy designed by projects. The oppositive situation for demography: it is a challenge without specific actions, maybe because activities in other dimensions could address some of the problems included in this dimension (for example, better urban space could attract young people to the neighbourhood). Regarding social inclusion, the pattern and its explanation could be similar: unemployment is the most relevant challenge and one of the most relevant objectives, and policy actions to solve this challenge focus on economic activities as a mechanism to generate new employment opportunities for residents. Finally, governance has a more relevant role in action plans than in the diagnosis or the objectives, maybe because of procedural purposes that could help accomplish other more substantive goals. This pattern could show some degree of integration between different policy areas as expected complementary and facilitation effects between them in the framework of project strategies (Navarro-Yañez, 2021).

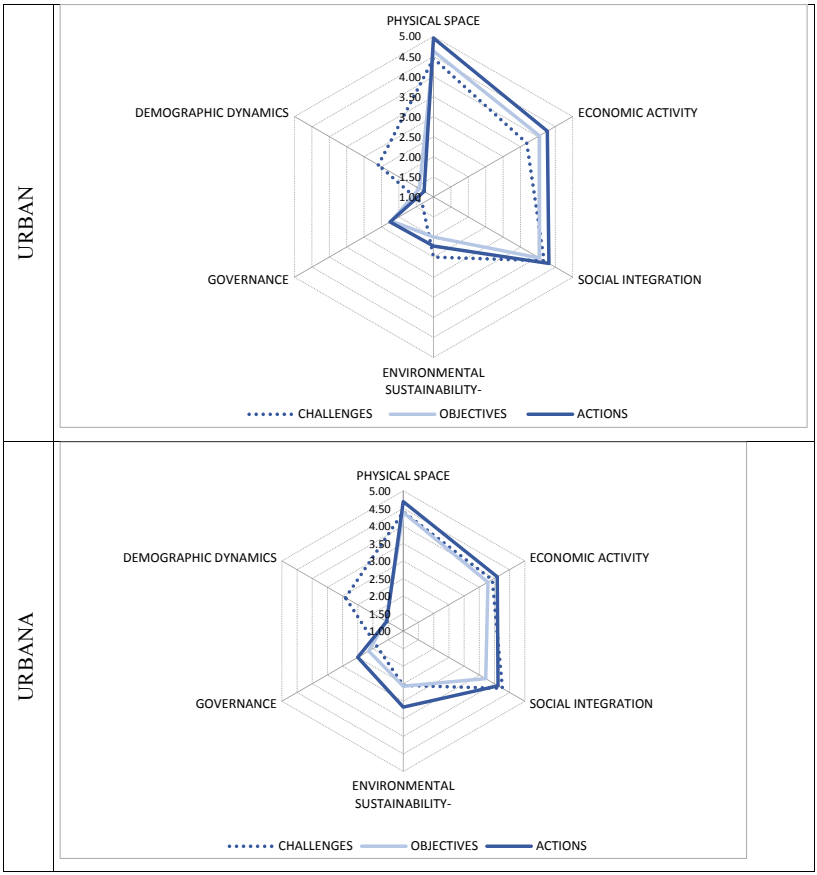

Fig. 4.2 Projects agenda: relevance of policy sectors as challenges, objectives, and policy actions (Means in scale [1–5]. *Source* Own elaboration based on Urban Impact Projects databases)

Conclusions: A Sustainable and Integrated Urban Development Model

The previous analyses have shown the relevance of different policy areas as dimensions of the sustainable urban development idea or policy frame in projects and programmes analysed. Do they match this policy frame?, Do

they balance the defined dimensions?, Do the projects show consistency between objectives, challenges, and policy actions?

The main results show that URBAN and URBANA programmes show a comprehensive policy agenda including different sustainable urban dimensions as relevant challenges to solve, objectives to attain, and action to achieve them. Therefore, from this point of view, they match the general policy frame that the EU has proposed to promote urban development. However, URBAN and URBANA initiatives differ according to the relevance of some dimensions. First, physical space and economic and social dimensions are the most relevant dimensions in URBAN and URBANA projects. But, second, environmental issues increase their relevance in the URBANA programme, specifically as policy actions to carry out, and the opposite for physical space. Although differences are smaller, demography and governance show positive values, and economic and social dimensions show negative values. Therefore, the URBAN programme is closer to the classical idea or policy frame focused on 'neighbourhood revitalisation' combining physical, economic, and social revitalisation. In contrast, URBANA is closer to the more contemporary vision of fostering 'sustainable communities based on social, economic, governance and, above all, environmental sustainability; as regards the objectives and, especially, the policy action proposed in their local projects'.

The analysis of the consistency between objectives, challenges, and policy actions shows some mixed results. Consistency exists because differences are low or non-statistically significant. However, some slight discrepancies exist for governance, environment, social, and demography dimensions that could indicate that objectives. These results could show project design combines consistency with some degree of integration between some objectives and policy actions in different policy dimensions of sustainable urban development. And therefore, this 'idea' means something more than a set of balance goals among dimensions; it could also need some degree of integration in order to accomplish the complexity and transversality of urban problems. It is well-known that integration is a central aspect of the model of urban development proposed by the EU since the 1990s

Annex

See Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Sustainable urban development dimensions in URBAN and URBANA Programmes: relevance and consistency

			Physical Space	*Economy*	*Social*	*Environment*	*Governance*	*Demography*
Relevance 1–5 scales Means (Std Dev)	URBAN	Challenges	4,45 (0,75)	3,68 (1,13)	4,18 (0,85)	2,50 (1,01)	1,33 (0,76)	2,59 (1,40)
		Objectives	4,64 (0,66)	4,05 (1,000)	4,05 (0,79)	2,00 (1,15)	2,21 (0,96)	1,41 (1,01)
		Actions	4,95 (0,21)	4,27 (0,94)	4,32 (0,89)	2,23 (1,34)	2,25 (0,91)	1,27 (0,77)
	URBANA	Challenges	4,40 (0,66)	3,93 (0,87)	4,26 (1,01)	2,55 (1,31)	1,87 (1,03)	2,80 (1,29)
		Objectives	4,38 (1,13)	3,79 (1,49)	3,71 (1,33)	2,57 (1,65)	2,14 (1,09)	1,57 (1,17)
		Actions	4,69 (0,60)	4,10 (1,03)	4,12 (0,99)	3,17 (1,32)	2,51 (1,00)	1,55 (1,17)
	Total	Challenges	4,42 (0,69)	3,84 (0,96)	4,23 (0,96)	2,53 (1,21)	1,68 (0,97)	2,80 (1,29)
		Objectives	4,47 (0,99)	3,88 (1,34)	3,83 (1,18)	2,38 (1,52)	2,19 (1,04)	1,52 (1,11)
		Actions	4,78 (0,52)	4,16 (1,00)	4,19 (0,96)	2,84 (1,39)	2,42 (0,97)	1,45 (1,05)
	Difference URBANA–URBAN	Challenges	−0,05	0,25	0,08	0,05	0,54	0,31
		Objectives	−0,26	−0,26	−0,33	0,57	−0,07	0,16
		Actions	−0,26	−0,18	−0,2	0,94	0,26	0,28

(continued)

Table 4.1 (continued)

			Physical Space	*Economy*	*Social*	*Environment*	*Governance*	*Demography*
Relevance Effect size G Hedges (IC 90%)	Difference URBANA–URBAN	Challenges	−0,072 (−0,505; 0,361)	0,259 (−0,176; 0,693)	0,083 (−0,350; 0,517)	0,041 (−0,392; 0,474)	0,570 (0,129; 1,011)	0,226 (−0,208; 0,660)
		Objectives	−0,261 (−0,696; 0,174)	−0,193 (−0,604; 0,264)	−0,289 (−0,724; 0,146)	0,380 (−0,056; 0,817)	−0,067 (−0,500; 0,366)	0,143 (−0,290; 0,576)
		Actions	−0,520 (−0,956; −0,077)	−0,170 (−0,604; 0,264)	−0,209 (−0,643; 0,255)	0,71 (0,263; 1,153)	0,268 (−0,167; 0,703)	0,266 (−0,168; 0,701)
Consistency Effect size G Hedges (IC 90%)	URBAN	Objetives-Challenges	−0,269 (−0,767; 0,229)	−0,347 (−0,846; 0,153)	0,158 (−0,338; 0,655)	0,462 (−0,041; 0,965)	−1,016 (−1,543; −0,489)	0,967 (0,433; 1,497)
		Objetives-Actions	0,633 (0,125; 1,141)	0,227 (−0,271; 0,724)	0,321 (−0,178; 0,820)	0,184 (−0,313; 0,681)	0,354 (−0,008; 0,716)	−0,156 (−0,653; 0,341)
	URBANA	Objetives-Challenges	0,022 (−0,337; 0,381)	0,115 (−0,245; 0,474)	0,468 (0,085; 0,812)	−0,013 (−0,372; −0,346)	−0,255 (−0,615; 0,106)	0,999 (0,618; 1,380)
		Objetives-Actions	0,343 (−0,019;0,074)	0,242 (−0,118; 0,062)	0,414 (0,051; 0,777)	0,402 (0,039; 0,764)	0,354 (−0,008; 0,716)	−0,017 (−0,376; 0,342)
	Total	Objetives-Challenges	−0,059 (0,349; 0,232)	−0,034 (−0,325; 0,257)	0,372 (0,079; 0,655)	0,109 (−0,182; 0,400)	−0,507 (−0,803; −0,212)	1,064 (0,753; 1,374)
		Objetives-Actions	0,392 (0,098; 0,686)	0,237 (−0,055; 0,529)	0,335 (0,042; 0,628)	0,316 (0,023; 0,608)	0,229 (−0,063; 0,520)	−0,065 (−0,356; 0,226)

Source Own elaboration based on Urban Impact Projects databases

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CHAPTER 5

The Integrated Strategy as Urban Policy Innovation Proposed by the EU: Do Cities Apply It?

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Abstract Policy integration is a central aspect of urban initiatives promoted by the EU since the 1990s. However, analyses about this issue usually define and measure policy integration as the diversity of

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policy sectors included in local plans portfolios. Nevertheless, this chapter sustains that policy integration and diversity are different concepts. Integration means interrelation among policy sectors and actors to cope with the complexity of urban problems. Diversity means the variety of policy sectors or actors included in local strategies portfolios. Therefore, diversity does not ensure integration into local strategies. Applying the CUPPA approach, both aspects are analysed by proposing specific measurement tools. The analysis shows that diversity and integration are different concepts, that the levels of policy integration are low in local strategies, and the increase of integration in their policy agenda from 1993 to 2013. Therefore, policy-learning processes exist regarding this central aspect of local strategies to promote sustainable urban development.

Keywords Integrated strategy · Policy design · Urban policy · European Union · Comparative analysis · Governance

Introduction

Changes in municipal reality due to the so-called Great Recession led, among other things, to renewed interest in innovation in urban policies. In the 1970s and 80s, also because of a severe urban crisis, innovation experiences were developed, focusing on new approaches to management and service delivery, with discussions focusing mainly on the proposals of the so-called New Public Management. However, the innovations that emerged during the most recent urban crisis present at least two common elements: on the one hand, a shift away from a sectoral perspective to an integrated approach to understand the complexity of urban problems; and on the other, the increasing attention to 'bottom-up' initiatives, which emerge through participative and social innovation processes (MacCallun et al., 2009; Navarro et al., 2019; Parés et al., 2017).

In response to the complexity of urban problems, new urban initiatives try to apply an integrated perspective. On the one hand, recognising that urban problems are interrelated and that their possible solutions must be based on the integration of action developed from different policy sectors (Candel & Biesbroek, 2016). On the other hand, considering the need to establish hybrid forms of governance, collaboration processes between institutional and non-institutional stakeholders at different scales, who are

typically involved in governance processes of specific public policy sectoral domains (Navarro & Rodríguez, 2016), and including new kinds of stakeholders and more open participation to facilitate the inclusion of citizens initiatives through deliberative processes (Pastor, 2017).

These trends towards policy integration in urban policies are also guiding principles of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015, particularly in the New Urban Agenda and the European Union's Urban Agenda. In this case, however, this is not so much a recent innovation but rather the consolidation of the integrated urban development strategy with which, for instance, the European Union had 'experimented' through the URBAN Initiative and which has been incorporated as the urban mainstreaming of the European Union's Cohesion Policy (Carpenter, 2006; Ferry et al., 2018; Fioretti et al., 2020).

To what extent did the URBAN projects developed in Spain incorporate this innovation? To what extent has this incorporation become broader in the subsequent URBANA Initiative? In this chapter, we will provide some evidence about these questions. After a brief definition of the integrated strategy promoted by the EU, a measurement proposal is made. Then, projects design are analysed to provide policy evidence about their integratedness, their level of policy integration, and changes between these two programmes.

Integrated Urban Development as Urban Policy Innovation in the European Union and Spain

The implementation of an integrated urban development strategy has been the common orientation of urban policies promoted by the European Union since the URBAN Initiative, whose legacy, the so-called 'URBAN Acquis', or 'URBAN technology', established the three broad features of this strategy that were, and even today would be considered innovations in urban policies: the formulation of a transversal agenda that interlinks different areas or sectors of public policy; the establishment of multi-level governance processes in terms of the role played by institutional stakeholders and local socio-economic agents in the governance of projects; as well as the participation of the latter in their formulation and subsequent development (De Gregorio, 2010; Gutiérrez, 2010; Urban-Future, 2005). This 'technology' was also applied in the URBANA

Initiative (De Gregorio, 2017). Regardless of the incorporation of environmental sustainability, showing a policy frame closer to 'sustainable communities' complementing the more classic 'neighbourhood revitalisation' (see Chapter 4), the integration strategy is a central aspect of both programmes. URBAN and URBANA show the change from 'integrated neighbourhood regeneration' to 'integrated urban development' ideas (Navarro, 2021a, 2021b).

Do the projects in URBAN and URBANA Initiatives adopt this innovation included in their policy frames? In particular, has any learning process in this regard? The experience gained during the development of URBAN projects could have generated learning in the application of 'URBAN technology'. Therefore, projects under the URBANA Initiative should have incorporated this innovative strategy further. The work carried out within the framework of exchange networks between agents involved in these projects through European initiatives (such as URBACT) or the Urban Network Initiatives promoted by the Spanish government might also have had a positive influence in this regard.

However, such technology can take place regardless of the degree of diversity of policy sectors included in the policy agenda of projects. Thus, incorporating environmental sustainability into the URBANA Initiative should increase their diversity compared with URBAN projects as a *policy-frame effect* derived from the sectoral contents of each programme. A *policy-learning effect* means a greater degree of policy integration between different policy sectors and stakeholders, not a higher degree of diversity in the policy agenda of local projects. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between diversity and integration should be differentiated in order to differentiate between policy-frame and policy-learning effects.

Measuring the EU 'Urban Acquis': Policy Diversity, Integration, and Participation

As an element of the CUPPA approach, specific scales have been designed to study diversity, integration, and participation as central aspects of the integrated strategy proposed by the EU for urban initiatives. These measures have been applied to analyse the document of the design of

projects. Therefore, results will show the level of diversity, integration, and participation planned.[1]

Agenda diversity measures the presence of the main five public policy areas of the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities defined by the EU in project diagnosis, objectives, and actions (territory, economy, welfare, environment, and governance/participation). Therefore, the maximum degree of diversity exists when all five areas appear in all three aspects. A scale is elaborated for each element (diagnosis, objectives, and actions), and then these scales have been aggregated into a summative scale. Therefore, agenda diversity measures comprehensiveness across the main dimensions proposed by the idea of sustainable urban development, similar to the suggestion made by Medeiros and Van Der Zwet (2020). Instead, *agenda integration* measures the interdependence between policy sectors in project diagnosis, objectives, and activities planned. Specifically, we establish a continuum between two poles: a policy sector plays a central role through which other areas are articulated (minimum value of integration among them), or there is an interdependence between all areas included in the project (maximum value of integration). Therefore, the agenda integration scale tries to measure if projects define a combination of coherent and congruent objectives and instruments consistent with one another (Briassoulis, 2004; Candel & Biesbroek, 2016; Cejudo & Michel, 2017; Rayner & Howlett, 2009). The integration scale is computed as the average of integration scales in project diagnosis, objectives, and policy actions planned.

Governance—or stakeholders—integration examines whether the mechanisms designed to ensure project governance pivot around the government and local administration or assign a similar role to other actors through collaborative processes with other administrative levels (vertical governance) or through a balanced articulation between institutional and local stakeholders (horizontal governance). More integration means multi-level governance processes that include vertical and horizontal governance processes (Farinós, 2008; Rogge & Reichardt, 2016). Stakeholder integration is the average of three items measuring governance integration during the project planning process, the implementation plan, and the constitution of its governing and management bodies. Therefore, the presence of different stakeholders is not measured but

[1] All the items and scales have been measured using a five-point scale, which we have transformed into a 0–1 scale to facilitate their interpretation in this chapter.

rather the ability of these stakeholders to influence projects. Instead, *governance—or stakeholders—diversity* considers the presence of different sectors of local political society in the project governing and management bodies. Based on the proposal made by Rodríguez-García and Navarro (2016) to analyse local governance processes from a comparative perspective, these sectors are municipal administration (departments, agencies, etc.), supra-municipal levels of government, political parties, trade unions, businesses, and civic associations. The highest level of diversity would be that in which all these sectors are present. Finally, the *participation* scale sum three items referring to the participation of local agents in different moments of the project planning process: diagnosis elaboration, discussion to propose project objectives, and decisions to define and design policy actions. The three items analyse whether project design documentation includes vague statements about local stakeholders' participation (the minimum value for each item) or specifies the participatory mechanism used and which stakeholders have participated in them (the maximum degree of participation).

Levels of Policy Integration, Diversity, and Participation in Local Projects

Overall, levels of integration and diversity are low. However, the second is higher than the first one (Fig. 5.1). Only agenda diversity shows a value clearly above the mid-point on the scale (average equal to 0.77) and slightly higher than the mid-point in the case of agenda integratedness (average equal to 0.56). The values are even lower for the diversity of stakeholders present in governance bodies and processes and stakeholders' integration as a shared influence on decisions about the project (averages equal to 0.38 and 0.48, respectively). Therefore, projects tend to show more diversity than integration, and both aspects are higher for agenda than governance processes. However, the indicator regarding the participation of local stakeholders yields the lowest values.

But are there differences according to the programme? Integration and diversity are higher among projects in the URBANA Initiative than among those in the URBAN Initiative, except for stakeholders' diversity (Fig. 5.2). However, the standardised differences between the two programmes (the effect size) show that significant effects only exist for the agenda integration index. Based on the effect size value, around 73% of URBANA Initiative projects present a level of agenda integration higher

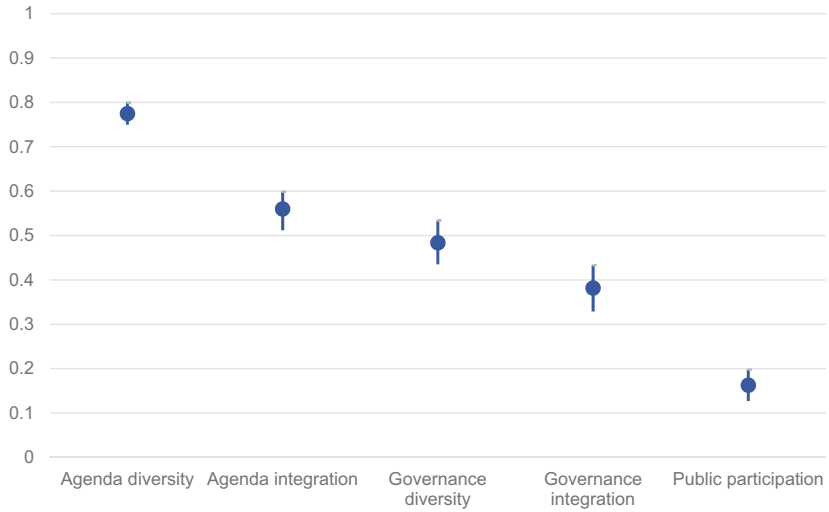

Fig. 5.1 Policy integration, diversity, and participation in URBAN and URBANA projects (Mean values on scales [0–1] and confidence intervals [CI90%]. *Source* Own elaboration based on Urban Impact Projects databases)

than the average of URBAN Initiative projects ($g = 0.622$). In addition, there is a moderate effect on agenda diversity and stakeholder integration. The 60–65% of URBANA projects are more diverse in their agenda and have more integrated governance processes than URBAN projects (g equal to 0.368 and 0.270, respectively). However, the difference is not statistically significant (for $p < 0{,}10$; see Fig. 5.2).

These results could mean that some policy-learning effects exist, especially regarding policy sectors in the policy agenda of projects. Analyses could also show that diversity and integration are two different dimensions of the projects and that agenda integration and governance integration in the projects might not be related. The correlation between agenda integration and diversity indicates these aspects are related but different phenomena ($r = 0.37$), the same for governance integration and diversity ($r = 0.32$). This relationship is stronger among URBANA projects, although the difference is only statistically significant for the policy agenda of projects (Table 5.1).

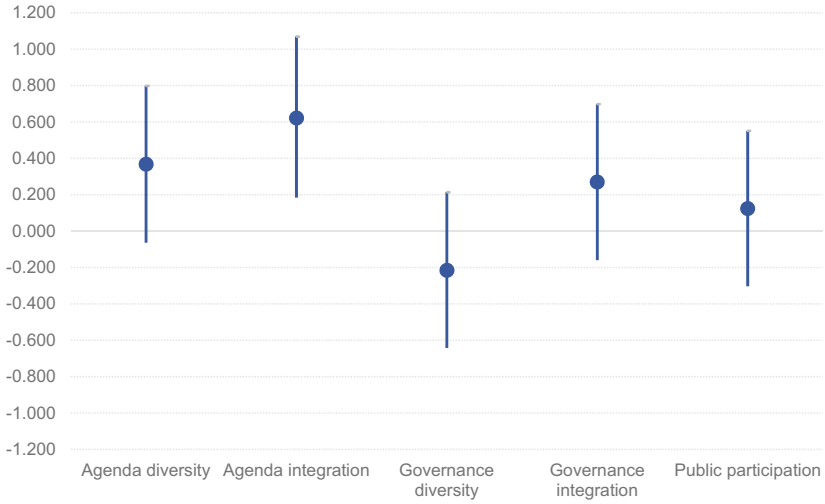

Fig. 5.2 Policy integration, diversity, and participation: differences between URBAN and URBANA projects (Effect size [Hedges'g] and confidence intervals [CI90%]. *Note* Higher values mean a favourable difference for URBANA vs. URBAN. *Source* Own elaboration based on Urban Impact Projects databases)

Table 5.1 Association between diversity and integration in URBAN and URBANA projects (Correlations)

	URBAN	*URBANA*	*Total*	*Difference*
Agenda: integration*diversity	0.114	0.445*	0.374*	1.290*
Governance: integration*diversity	0.276	0.390*	0.324*	0.455
Integration: agenda*governance	0.605*	0.270	0.397*	−1.613*

**$p < 0.05$, *$p < 0.10$

Source Own elaboration based on Urban Impact Projects databases

To what extent do agenda and governance integration come together? The correlation between them is moderate ($r = 0.40$), although it is higher for URBAN than URBANA projects (r equal to 0.61 and 0.27, respectively). Therefore, although there has been some learning regarding agenda integration (Fig. 5.2), the URBANA Initiative projects show a lower level of coherence between these two integration dimensions

(agenda and governance) than the projects developed under the URBAN Initiative.

Towards a Sustainable and Integrated Urban Strategy?: Something More Than Diversity or a Balance Between Different Sustainable Development Goals

Although so-called 'URBAN technology' implies the development of an innovative intervention strategy within the framework of urban policies, the results show that, in general, it does not seem to have been a widespread strategy among the projects developed within the framework of the URBAN and URBANA Initiatives in Spain. Their agendas and governance processes are diverse, but they show a low level of integration. Despite the diversity of projects policy agendas, it does not seem to be designed from an integrated perspective considering the interdependencies and complementarities among the different sectoral problems, objectives, and policy actions that projects include. As regards governance processes, although different types of stakeholders are involved, governance processes seem to remain largely in the hands of the municipal administration, implying a low capacity to promote integrated governance processes in both vertical and horizontal dimensions (a higher degree of integration about projects decisions).

The integrated strategy in public policies aims to ensure that its interactions and complementation (between policy issues and actors involved) enable the achievement of broader objectives that overcome the fragmentation of the traditional approach to urban policies based on sectoral interventions. To achieve this goal, policy design and implementation should stress complementarity and synergies between problems, objectives, and instruments; as well as multi-level and intersectoral collaborations (Bali et al., 2021; Cunill-Grau, 2014; Howlett & Rayner, 2011). The sustainable and integrated model proposed by the EU implies diversity to promote a balanced development across different policy sectors or dimensions defining sustainable development, but it also means some degree of policy integration as a crucial strategy to ensure this goal for cities.

Therefore, diversity and integration are different concepts and aspects of the EU proposal for urban policies, albeit related, and must be analysed

separately and differently. Developing different measurement instruments for these two aspects within the same projects has made it clear that project diversity does not necessarily imply greater innovation in terms of a more integrated strategy. This has also enabled comparative policy evidence about differences between projects in different programmes; in our case, it provides policy evidence about the existence of learning processes between the URBAN and the URBANA Initiatives.

In this regard, the results show no significant differences between URBAN and URBANA projects concerning governance processes (in terms of their diversity or their integration). However, the second one shows more diversity and integration in their policy agendas. The slight difference in agenda diversity could be explained by the change in policy frames from 'neighbourhood improvement' to 'sustainable communities', because the URBANA Initiative more explicitly incorporates content related to environmental sustainability (as shown in Chapter 4). However, the difference in the levels of agenda integration could be related to a learning effect generated between the two initiatives. Despite this, although the implementation of the integrated strategy was less intense among URBAN projects, their projects seem to have incorporated it more coherently by doing so simultaneously in their content and governance processes.

Have there been changes between the URBAN and URBANA Initiatives? Have any lessons been learned in this regard? The answer should be yes, particularly as regards their agendas. However, the results show that the third element of the urban integrated strategy proposed by the EU, the mechanisms and processes to foster public participation in projects, presents low levels and shows no evidence of learning when comparing the two initiatives. Therefore, projects have adopted the sustainable framework proposed by the EU (a more diverse agenda). Still, the adoption of the integrated strategy and the impact of policy-learning effects on it is less clear.

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CHAPTER 6

Opening the Black Box of Integrated Urban Development Strategies: On Causal Mechanisms and Policy Theories

Clemente J. Navarro Yáñez and María Jesús Rodríguez-García

Abstract This chapter is devoted to analysing the policy theory used by local plans to implement integrated policy mixes. Based on the theory-driven evaluation and social mechanism perspectives, the chapter analyses the causal process established by local plans to ensure the link between objectives and their expected results; and, therefore, the relation between goal and implementation tools. From an analytical point of view, four main causal processes are proposed as combinations of two main aspects. First, goals according to the classical distinction in urban policies between context and actors. Second, the causal mechanism behind policy tools is

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distinguished according to two main types: oriented to modify opportunity structures and to change actors' preferences or resources. These causal processes are identified by analysing each policy action implemented in local plans portfolios. The comparison between URBAN and URBANA programmes shows a progressive change from causal processes based on motivational mechanisms targeted at specific groups to re-equilibrate social inequalities to causal processes centred on context improvements to enhance their attractiveness.

Keywords Policy theory · Causal mechanisms · Integrated strategy · Place-based · Comparative analysis · Evaluation · European Union

Introduction

Integrated urban development strategies promoted by the EU aim to improve the living conditions of residents within the urban areas targeted by them. But how do they intend to do that? The general policy frame indicates that integratedness between policy sectors and the involvement of different agents are essential to attain the sustainable development objectives established in this kind of initiative. However, it does not specify how these objectives will be achieved. Knowing the relative importance of different objectives or actions across different policy sectors is very significant because it allows knowing what challenges are intended to address, and, therefore, how the project defines improvement in living conditions. However, it does not outline how the project implementation intends to achieve the proposed objectives or how policy actions will achieve them. Such approaches turn the projects into 'a black box' in which the causal mechanisms that link objectives and results are unknown (Astbury & Leeuw, 2010), limiting the possibility of appropriate evaluation processes and policy learning.

In this regard, the theory-driven evaluation perspective sustains that it is necessary to know the theory behind the projects, the explanatory mechanisms underlying their policy actions connecting goals and outcomes (Weiss, 1997). More specifically, this involves analysing which causal processes link objectives and expected outcomes, and, specifically, how the instruments (or policy tools) used to implement the projects will

activate the behaviours or situations that will make it possible to achieve the proposed objectives.

This task faces at least two challenges. On the one hand, a methodological challenge since analysing the projects as a whole does not allow identifying these causal mechanisms. Therefore, more specific units must be 'broken down' and analysed. This is the strategy developed by the comparative urban policy portfolio analysis approach (CUPPA), which we will apply here at the level of the policy actions undertaken by all projects included in the URBAN and URBANA Initiatives. On the other hand, an analytical challenge, meaning the perspective we shall adopt to analyse (reconstruct) the logic that links objectives and results through actions. For this, we will adopt the situational perspective.[1] Basically, this assumes that social phenomena, in our case, the expected outcomes of projects in terms of improvements in residents' quality of life, should be analysed from the targeted population or stakeholders' point of view (their interests, beliefs, and resources) situated within a given context or structure of opportunities (be it physical, social, or cultural). The action taken by the targeted population involves a combination of these factors. Therefore, the policy instruments proposed to produce the situations or behaviours necessary to achieve the objectives of the projects suppose acting on some of these elements. Thus, as the behavioural turn in public policy proposes, analysing theories behind policies involves ascertaining their premises regarding how the policy instruments deployed will influence some of these elements (interest, resources, beliefs, opportunities) and lead to the achievement of the objectives set (Scheneider & Ingram, 1990).

Integrated Urban Development Projects as Policy Mixes: Objectives and Causal Processes

Urban integrated strategies suppose policy mixes combining different types of objectives and policy instruments to cope with the complexity of urban development, especially the sustainable model proposed by the EU.

[1] This perspective assumes a sociological tradition that includes classical contributions, such as Weber's comprehensive explanation method (1964) or Merton's idea of opportunity structure (1968), up to more contemporary proposals by authors such as Boudon (2003), Elster (2007) or the so-called school of analytical sociology and its proposal on social mechanisms (for example, Hedström, 2006).

To understand the proposal projects made to attain these objectives, their 'policy theory' should be studied, understood as the set of causal processes that link the established objectives with their expected outcomes (Chen, 1990; Weiss, 1998). This link is established through the policy actions planned and implemented. These involve using specific policy tools to activate the behaviours or situations necessary to achieve the objectives and produce the expected outcomes. Therefore, different policy tools are identified according to the causal mechanism that would explain such activation, according to their behavioural assumption about how they will influence and produce these behaviours or situations (Bemelmans-Videc et al., 1998; Scheneider & Ingram, 1990). Therefore, each policy action could be analysed as a specific combination of policy objectives set and causal processes to achieve them, and these, in turn, according to the policy tool used and its underlying causal mechanism. These mechanisms would explain why and how a policy tool will trigger behaviours or situations that enable the achievement of the proposed objectives, at least in the way proposed or implemented by the project. A classical example, to achieve the aim of improving the economic activity of the neighbourhood, financial support is given to economic agents, underscored by the idea that such support will modify their pay-off about creating or improving an economic activity by reducing their costs, causing them to do so, and, by aggregation, this would increase business density in the neighbourhood or reactivate the economic activity of existing businesses.

From this perspective, the analysis of causal processes of the policy actions included in the projects would enable a 'reconstruction' of the 'policy theory', the underlying intervention strategy, as specific combinations of objectives and policy tools proposed in policy actions included in the integrated project understood as a policy mix. This theory would establish the framework to tackle their evaluation: did the causal processes established achieve the proposed objectives? (Rogers, 2008). Similarly, the overall strategy of a programme could be 'reconstructed' through this analysis of policy actions carried out by the local projects developed (Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2020). Therefore, our proposal implies:

$$\text{Intervention Strategy (policy theory) of a project} = \text{policy mix as a combination of policy actions}$$

where:

$$\text{Policy action} = f(\text{objective, causal processes})$$

$$\text{Causal process} = f\,[\text{policy tool (a causal mechanism)}]$$

Basic Policy Actions in Integrated Urban Development Policy Mixes: Combining Objectives and Policy Tools

Which types of objectives and causal processes are common to place-based integrated urban development projects? There are two major types of objectives, which are somewhat independent of the sector of public policy involved. On the one hand, projects often pursue objectives related to neighbourhood improvement (the urban area where they are applied), based on the understanding that this sets up a specific structure of opportunities for their residents. There is a 'neighbourhood effect' justifying the area-based project; therefore, its objectives can be geared towards modifying it, both in its spatial dimension, as well as in the socio-economic composition, communitarian life, or environmental dimension. For example, this objective could be improving environmental quality, employment opportunities, public space or pedestrian zones, accessibility to the whole city, signage for heritage or tourist sites, or creating or improving commercial areas or new centres to provide services.

On the other hand, objectives could try to improve the situation of residents or specific groups. For example, employment training and skills, help and information for integration into the job market, developing participatory skills or promoting certain habits or lifestyles regarding health, academic education, community life, or the environment. Thus, although the policy frame of the programmes focusses on specific urban areas, their objectives can be oriented both towards socio-spatial (neighbourhood) improvement and towards residents directly (their resources, lifestyles,…). In other words, analytically, the target of policy actions could be the residents or other agents developing their activities in the targeted area (business, associations,…) or neighbourhoods as a structure of opportunities for residents of these other actors. Therefore, this distinction between neighbourhoods and actors is similar to the classical difference between place and people in urban policy analysis (Holland, 2015).

Regarding policy tools, two major types could be defined according to their underlying causal mechanism; their assumptions of how the behaviours or situations needed to achieve the proposed objectives will be activated. On the one hand, those that try to do so by modifying the opportunities for action available to residents or other agents without altering their capacities, interests, or beliefs. These would be contextual mechanisms that essentially involve the provision of unconditional incentives, as new opportunities are offered (a social centre, more buses, a park, traffic rules,…), but their use—or not—is subject to the reasons the stakeholders have for this (Dowding, 1991). Thus, these mechanisms seek to modify the physical, social, or decision-making context to expand—or limit—the repertoire of actions residents and other agents in the urban area can develop.

On the other hand, policy tools could try to modify residents' motives or reasons for activities that would achieve established objectives, whether through persuasion processes about the value of certain behaviours or lifestyles (healthy habits, inter-ethnic relations, the importance of education, gender equality, environmental quality,…), or through resources that facilitate an action development or modify the order of preferences with respect to it (competences and skills for those who want to increase their employability, subsidies to initiate or improve a business, for example). In this case, these would be 'motivational mechanisms', as they seek to modify the motives or reasons residents have to develop certain attitudes and behaviours, influencing their 'mental state' (their interests and beliefs) or their capabilities (resources of various kinds: economic, information, cognitive, skills,…..), without taking action on their context (expanding or limiting their opportunities for action).[2]

This approach assumes that the achievement of project objectives, and their potential impact, depends on the exposure of residents or other agents to the causal processes underlying project policy actions. Contextual mechanisms involve contextual exposure to the project. The underlying premise is that changes—improvements—in the neighbourhood will generate changes—improvements—among residents because they have more—or better—opportunities at their disposal that they can use, or even because exposure will produce changes without needing to create a specific action. For example, improving public transport means

[2] A more datailled repertorie of policy tools in integrated urban policies can be found in Navarro and Rodríguez-García (2020).

more mobility opportunities available to use. Improving the environmental quality or reducing physical and social disorganisation (better urban furniture, lighting, less social conflict) can impact residents' health or sense of security.

Motivational mechanisms, on the other hand, involve changing the 'motives' of residents or other agents to develop—or not—certain behaviours or lifestyles. Therefore specific exposure is required to the instruments that promote these. While contextual mechanisms involve unconditional incentives, motivational ones come closer to the idea of selective incentives, which could be 'hard' (resources of different kinds) or 'soft' (ideas, information, persuasion,…) in nature. For example, subsidies granted to certain companies or initiatives, the acquisition of job skills and competencies, or awareness-raising on certain issues among those attending courses or activities included in project activities.

There might be some affinity between the pursued objective and the policy tool used, so neighbourhood-oriented objectives tend to use contextual mechanisms, and residents-oriented objectives apply motivational mechanisms. However, analytically speaking, it does not have to be this way. Motivational mechanisms might aim to improve the neighbourhood. For example: the extension of pro-environmental behaviours among residents could be considered a means to improve the environmental quality of the neighbourhood; raising awareness of inter-ethnic or inter-generational relationships can improve the level of social cohesion in the neighbourhood (as neighbour relations); support for businesses could expand employment context—opportunities—in the neighbourhood. In the same way, contextual mechanisms can target directly residents, such as actions to improve social integration through a new centre or infrastructure in the neighbourhood to older people or children, or regulating vehicle access to specific areas. Therefore, analytically there are four major types of policy actions in area-based integrated development projects according to how causal objectives and processes are combined (Table 6.1).

The presence of these four types of actions, and in particular their causal processes, would show the policy theory proposed by the projects as policy mixes, their strategy to improve the quality of life among residents (see Chapter 1). In addition, the combined analysis of all projects would allow reconstructing the programme's intervention strategy, that is, the policy frame by which they are actually developed, somewhat independently of their normative or programmatic proposal (see Chapter 2).

Table 6.1 Policy actions as causal processes: objectives, policy tools, and causal mechanisms (Examples of policy actions in each type)

		Policy tools and their causal mechanisms (how do you want to change?)	
		Motivational (reason/motives according to interests, resources, and beliefs)	Contextual (more or better opportunities for action courses)
Objectives (what do you want to change?	Actors (residents and other agents)	*Motivational and actors oriented (type 1)* Courses and activities to improve capabilities (i.e. employment skills, participatory skills) Awareness about individual habits and lifestyles (the value of academic training, gender equality, healthy habits,…)	*Contextual and actors oriented (type 2)* Better access to public services (new or better centres or spaces providing services Access rules to use a service, a space, an organism or a participatory device
	Neighbourhood (socio-spatial context)	*Motivational and socio-spatial oriented (type 3)* Awareness about collective habits and lifestyles (intercultural relations to improve social cohesion, pro-environmental behaviours, …) Grants/subsidies for business activities to increase employment opportunities	*Contextual and socio-spatial oriented (type 4)* New urban infrastructures, public spaces, pedestrian zones,… Improve urban mobility through public transport Better o more spaces to increase the competitiveness of business and commercial activities

Note the examples have been extracted from the actual policy actions of the 82 projects analysed
Source Own elaboration

The design and implementation of place-based integrated strategies as policy mixes are given by at least three aspects or 'starting conditions' of the projects (Navarro, 2016). Firstly, the 'repertoire' of objectives and policy tools established by each policy or programme through its policy frame, since projects must show a degree of external coherence with the framework they establish. This 'starting condition' should explain programme differences (Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2020).

Secondly, on account of the characteristics of the territory where the intervention takes place (local needs, culture, and capacities, stakeholders present, previous experiences, …), the policy frame must be adapted to the territorial area where policy actions take place. This factor could explain differences between local projects and, thus, within programmes (Navarro et al., 2019). And finally, the institutional environment—the local government system—in which local authorities are situated. This gives them different capacities or even guides their preferences, agendas, and interactions with other institutional and non-institutional actors to conform muti-level governance processes (Navarro, 2009; Navarro et al., 2008; Sellers, 2002). These sources of diversity are a consequence of the place-based approach adopted by the EU cohesion policy and its 'meso-level approach' combining top-down and bottom-up approaches to design and implement nested integrated urban strategies in the framework of EU policy (Crescenzi & Rodríguez-Pose, 2011; Newig & Koontz, 2014). This chapter will focus on the differences between URBAN and URBANA programmes. The repertoire of objectives and instruments included in their policy frames is fairly broad. In addition, they share a similar policy frame based on the urban integrated strategy proposed by the EU, except for the importance of environmental sustainability as an objective in the case of URBANA versus URBAN (see Chapters 1 and 4). We aim to show how to analyse the strategy of the projects and whether our proposal can show differences between their policy frames understood as the policy theory applied to improve the quality of life in urban areas.

Integrated Urban Development Strategies in the URBAN and URBANA Programmes: Changes in Their Policy Theory

Which strategy do URBAN or URBANA Initiative projects deploy? Are there any differences between them? To provide evidence to these questions, we have studied the policy actions included in the projects applying the CUPPA approach. We have analysed all policy actions implemented according to the evaluative reports. Therefore, we will examine the actual strategy implemented by projects. We have excluded those policy actions concerning project management, as they are generally referred to somewhat generically and similarly across all projects. We will analyse a total of

514 policy actions for 82 projects, 205 in 39 URBAN projects, and 309 in 43 URBANA projects.

The most relevant objectives and policy tools for each action have been identified, following the classification proposed in the previous section. Most of the measures analysed are more or less equally focussed on residents and the neighbourhood (49% and 51% of the total actions, respectively). However, there is a greater tendency to use policy tools that involve contextual mechanisms than motivational ones (61.1% and 38.9%, respectively). In addition, there are differences between the two programmes (Fig. 6.1). Actions taken within URBANA projects tend to focus somewhat more on the neighbourhood than in URBAN projects (54.4% and 45.9%, respectively), and causal processes that apply contextual mechanisms are also more prevalent than in URBAN projects (64.4% and 56.1%).

But which instruments are used to achieve which kinds of objectives? How are objectives and policy tools combined in policy actions?

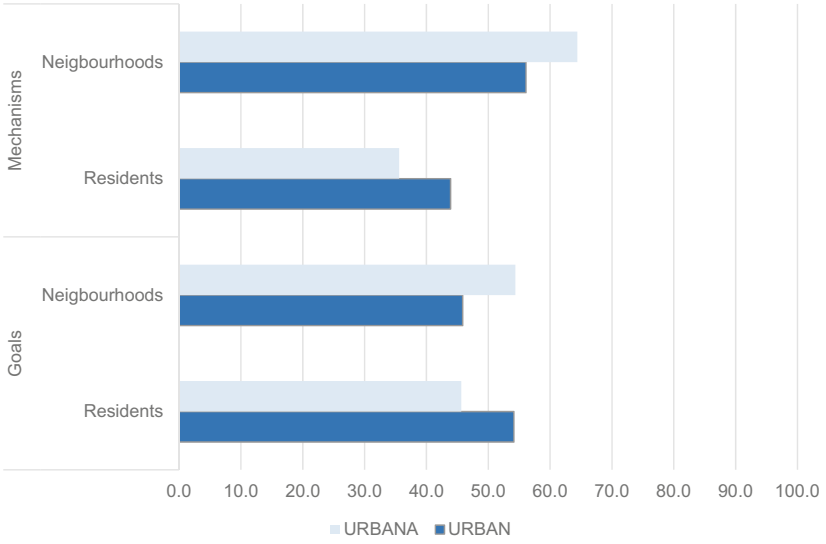

Fig. 6.1 Objectives and mechanisms of policy actions implemented in URBAN and URBANA projects (Percentages of the total number of actions in each programme. *Source* Own elaboration based on Urban Impact Project databases)

As indicated above, there is likely to be some affinity between objectives and policy tools. When the objectives are resident-oriented, motivational and contextual mechanisms (56.7% and 43.3%, respectively) are often used, more or less equally. However, contextual mechanisms are clearly dominant when the objective is to modify the neighbourhood as an opportunity structure for residents (21.8% and 78.2%, respectively). The pattern is quite similar between URBAN and URBANA projects.

Nevertheless, the relationship between contextual objectives and contextual mechanisms is more pronounced in the latter: in the case of URBAN projects, 68% of the neighbourhood-oriented actions apply contextual mechanisms, whereas this percentage climbs to 85% in the case of URBANA projects. Thus, comparing the two programmes, we find similar objectives (improving the neighbourhood) are sought using different causal processes. Therefore, knowing project content—such as policy sectors, priorities, or objectives—is not enough to understand the strategy deployed by a policy action and integrated urban initiatives at a more aggregate level.

But what is the weight of each combination of objectives and causal processes in the policy mix defined by the project portfolio? What kind of strategies do they deploy? A greater proportion of all policy actions analysed seek to improve the neighbourhood as a structure of opportunities through contextual mechanisms (39.9%). Second are those seeking to train or persuade residents to take a specific action that supposes an objective accomplishment or facilitates its achievement (27.8%), followed by those seeking to do so by changing the opportunities available to do the action needed to accomplish an objective (21.2%). Finally, a small percentage of the policy actions aim to improve the neighbourhood by acting on the reasons of residents or other agents to develop the activity necessary to achieve the proposed objective (11.1%). This portfolio means that the logic of the intervention lies primarily in contextual exposure to the improvements that the project can bring to the neighbourhood.

The comparison between the URBAN and URBANA shows that this contextual logic is more relevant among the latter. There are changes in their objectives and, especially, in the mechanisms used to achieve them. Firstly, the weight of actions based on contextual mechanisms to improve the neighbourhood increases from 31% in URBAN projects to 46% in URBANA projects (Fig. 6.2). Secondly, there is a clearer specialisation of the URBANA programme around two types of actions: motivational mechanisms for resident-oriented actions and contextual mechanisms for

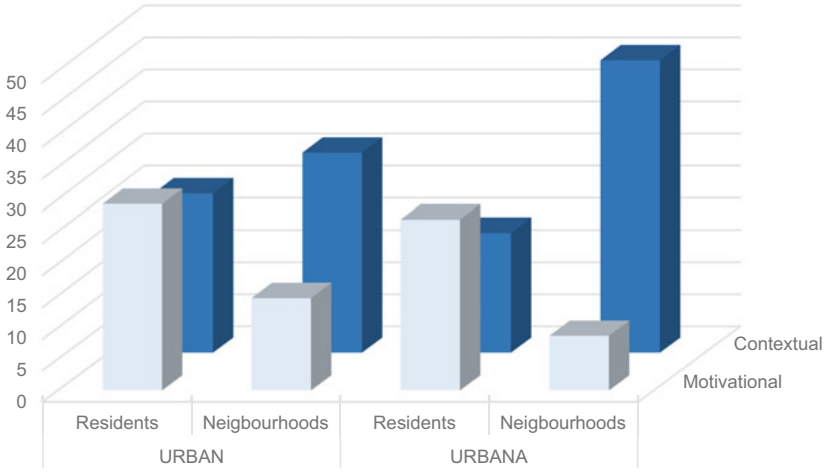

Fig. 6.2 Strategies deployed in URBAN and URBANA projects: objectives and mechanisms (Percentages for each type of action [objective and mechanism] within the total number of actions in each programme. *Source* Own elaboration based on Urban Impact Project databases)

neighbourhood-oriented actions. The former has more or less a similar weighting in URBAN and URBANA projects (29% and 26%, respectively). However, in URBANA, causal processes that seek to improve the neighbourhood using motivational mechanisms have a lower weighting (from 14.6% to 8.7%), as do those seeking to facilitate certain attitudes or behaviours through contextual tools (24.8% to 18.8%).[3]

These results mean URBAN projects deployed different types of causal processes in a more balanced way to achieve their objectives than URBANA projects. These tries combined to a greater extent the effects that would be derived from specific exposure involving motivational mechanisms and from contextual exposure to neighbourhood improvements. Hence, URBANA projects place greater emphasis on the second type of exposure: improving residents' living conditions will result from their contextual exposure to improvements promoted by projects in the neighbourhood as opportunity structures. This implies a significant

[3] Similar results applying more detailed categories of objectives and policy tools can be found in Navarro (2020).

change in the intervention strategy for integrated urban development that is not directly evident from a normative analysis of the integrated strategy policy frame defined by the European Union or the study of programmes implemented in Spain. Although their goals and implementation preferences (policy frames) may seem similar, the strategy actually deployed appears to be different.

In this regard, as indicated above, the contextual strategy essentially involves the provision of unconditional incentives in the form of contextual exposure. The central idea is that there will be more and new opportunities for residents that will eliminate or mitigate the negative consequences of the 'neighbourhood effect', which justified the implementation of the project. However, contextual exposure does not necessarily ensure that residents will 'use' such opportunities or, more generally, that all residents are exposed in the same way to the new 'positive neighbourhood effect' promoted by the projects. This strategy does not pay attention to the social composition of the neighbourhood, the fact that resources, interests, or beliefs are not equally distributed among its residents, or even that their lifestyles involve different degrees and forms of exposure to the neighbourhood. More contextual opportunities do not mean that all residents use (or take advantage of) them equally.

For example, a new service facility in the neighbourhood equally reduces the costs of use for all residents (at least, in terms of displacement), being able to influence usage and the resulting benefits. That is the main causal mechanism underlying this widespread type of policy action in urban integrated strategies. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the reasons for using such services change: those related to the need for them or others about the relationship between citizens and public services, such as trust in them or those who provide them, their reputation, or information barriers that could explain the use of public services regardless of their territorial localisation or accessibility. Some analyses show that the effects of contextual exposure to the neighbourhood and its changes due to, for instance, place-based policy actions, are different according to the recourses, capabilities, and lifestyles of different social groups (Zapata & Navarro, 2017; Zapata et al., 2019). Other studies show that the effects of the projects become more evident when contextual exposure and specific exposure are combined, involving simultaneous exposure to contextual and motivational mechanisms (Navarro, 2016).

From Policy Frames to a Theory of Integrated Urban Development: Some Analytical and Methodological Foundations

In this chapter, we have shown another possible application of the CUPPA approach: analysing the theory underlying integrated urban strategies. The analysis has shown differences in the intervention strategies that cannot be captured by analysing the policy frame of the programmes applying the normative or the programme analysis approaches. The analysis has not been based on the economic weight or importance of different areas or sectors of public policy. Instead, strategies have been defined in response to the causal processes established to achieve the proposed objectives and their assumptions of how they would affect residents' quality of life. Therefore, we now know in more detail what the projects have sought to do and how they have sought to achieve their pursued outcomes, thereby indicating how the expected effects and impacts might occur. The policy theory behind integral strategies has been reconstructed by analysing their causal mechanisms and processes.

This CUPPA application has helped analyse the character of EU-integrated urban initiatives in Spain and their change since 1993. In this respect, the analyses show that, in the Spanish case, the integrated urban development strategy promoted by the European Union has changed from a more varied mix of different types of policy actions to greater specialisation in a contextual strategy. Put another way, the focus has been placed on changes in the neighbourhood as a driving force for improving residents' quality of life than on policy actions oriented to modify actors' capabilities, resources, or beliefs. This could indicate a change in policy orientation from a redistribution approach to a more distributional and developmental approach in urban policies. This could coincide with the shift from convergence towards competitiveness policy goals in EU cohesion policy during the period analysed (McCann, 2015) and the move away from the anti-poverty approach of the EU urban initiatives in the 90s (Zimmermann & Atkinson, 2021), which could mean a shift from the 'revitalising the neighbourhood' towards 'creating competitive places' policy frames mentioned in previous chapters.

In this chapter, analytical bases and methods have been provided—and applied—to analyse these changes from a comparative perspective and at the local integrated strategy scale (and their policy actions). Those are based on the proposal to study urban policies as multi-level policy

mixes and the CUPPA approach as a research methodology (Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2020). These elements provide some analytical foundations to elaborate a theoretical perspective of integrated urban strategies promoted by the EU that could be analysed empirically from a comparative perspective beyond the study of good practices or the normative analysis of policy frames and their limitations (see Chapter 1).

This trend towards the contextual strategy in the policy theory of urban integrated strategies might face risks arising from potential heterogeneity in the socio-spatial contexts (neighbourhoods) in which it is developed. If the 'neighbourhood effect' that justified the intervention might not affect all its residents equally, the same could be concluded regarding the 'neighbourhood effect' promoted by the contextual exposure underlying this strategy. Instead, in the case of URBAN projects, this contextual strategy is combined with policy actions focussed on residents' motives, interests, beliefs, and resources. These actions could address better the heterogeneity existing in neighbourhoods or other socio-spatial scales—municipalities and functional urban areas—in which the integrated strategy could be applied. The mechanism behind this 'contextual strategy' in integrated urban policies could promote heterogeneous effects at the territorial level—differences between targeted territories—and at the individual level—different types of residents in targeted places according to their resources, lifestyles, ….

Nevertheless, more comparative analyses are needed to conclude this trend in the policy behind the EU-integrated urban initiatives and their effects on quality of life and socio-spatial cohesion across Europe. These analyses could also include other explanatory sources previously mentioned as starting conditions: the traits of places where projects are applied and the institutional framework in which municipalities define their strategy, including the planning traditions or the new urban policies that state members are launching across the EU (Nadin & Stead, 2008; Zimmermann & Fedeli, 2021).

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PART II

Better Spaces to Live or the Added Value II: The Impacts of the Policy Integrated Strategy on Neighbourhoods and Residents

CHAPTER 7

The Impact of EU-Integrated Urban Development Initiatives: Research Strategies Beyond 'Good Practices'

Alicia Domínguez-González and Clemente J. Navarro Yáñez

Abstract After reviewing previous research strategies applied to evaluate the impacts of EU urban initiatives, and previous evaluative assessments of similar place-based initiatives, this chapter proposes the use of 'controlled comparisons' to perform this crucial task for the urban dimension of the European Cohesion Policy: analyses should compare changes before and after interventions between territorial targets and appropriate contrafactual. Previous studies on policy effectiveness have analysed programme outcomes or case studies, but their results do not provide information about initiatives' impacts due to the lack of contrafactual comparison. Besides, urban initiatives establish some 'eligibility criteria' to select their

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territorial targets. Therefore, contrafactual should be chosen according to the criteria. Based on these ideas, this chapter applies propensity score matching to select appropriate experimental and control groups to evaluate the impact of EU urban initiatives in Spain. The following chapters use the chosen neighbourhoods (experimental and control groups) to perform impact analyses using different methodological approaches.

Keywords Urban policy · Impact evaluation · Neighbourhoods · Controlled comparison · Quasi-experimental design · Propensity scores · European Union

Introduction

As indicated in the introductory chapter (Chapter 1), sustainable and integrated urban development strategies promoted in the EU should have two central add values: on the one hand, demonstrative effects regarding improvements in the design and implementation of urban policies; on the other hand, to improve the cohesion of the territorial areas where they are applied, specifically urban areas (neighbourhoods) in the case at hand. However, whereas the first objective has been the subject of analysis, studies on the second objective are almost non-existent.

Over the coming chapters, some evidence on this issue will be presented. These chapters try to provide policy evidence about the impact of integrated urban development strategies on different aspects of quality of life and the scale of territories targeted by programmes. Previously, in the first section of this chapter, we will briefly review the strategies commonly used to analyse the effects of these types of initiatives and their scope. In the second section, we will present the general approach we have used to analyse the impact of the URBAN and URBANA initiatives as examples of integrated urban strategies promoted by the EU.

Analysing the Effects of Integrated Urban Development Strategies on Socio-Spatial Cohesion: Main Methodological Strategies

The analyses of the effects of integrated urban development programmes promoted by the EU on socio-spatial cohesion have mainly utilised two strategies: intensive—in-deep—analysis of specific projects or the analysis of programme perspective. The first approach involves analysing projects as case studies or comparing cases to yield conclusions regarding demonstrative effects (lessons learned) for other cases or applications. These studies provide detailed evidence about project design and, particularly, the implementation process and results (outcomes) according to the objectives set. Their most relevant contribution has been demonstrating what integrated strategy development entails and the elements that facilitate or inhibit its implementation. This approach is applied, for example, in the URBACT networks, the Urban Development Network, and specific studies carried out in Spain (De Gregorio, 2015).

The second perspective has focussed on extensive analysis of the implementation and outcomes in projects applied under a programme—or a programming period. Two main strategies are used for this purpose: the study of implementation and objectives achievement indicators or the consultation processes with experts and stakeholders involved. Regarding the first strategy, implementation analysis has focussed mainly on the level of spending execution or the study of some established indicators of objectives achievement. Good examples of this perspective are the ex-post evaluations made about URBAN initiatives and the urban initiatives implemented in the 2007–2013 programming period (European Commission, 2003, 2010, 2016). However, in their final reports ('closing reports'), not all projects state the value achieved for the indicators, making it difficult to analyse the programmes as a whole. Moreover, given the bottom-up logic of their design, in many cases, the establishment of achievement levels might not be very realistic, as evidenced by the *ex-post* evaluation of initiatives developed between 2007 and 2013, including the URBANA Initiative (European Commission, 2016).

For example, in the case of Spain, the 'closing evaluative reports' for the URBAN projects provide fairly detailed information, with specific indicators that are quite similar between projects, as well as measurements of their expected and eventually achieved levels. This detail, however, does not appear in the closing reports of the URBANA Initiative. Using

the information provided by the former, we have calculated the 'performance' level of each policy action included in local projects, comparing the value assigned as the objective to be achieved with the value actually achieved. Of the set of interventions analysed, slightly less than half obtained values greater than 100% and almost half of these values were greater than 150%.[1]

The strategy based on consulting experts and stakeholders often provides information about the strategy developed, as well as factors that have facilitated—or inhibited—its implementation and the achievement of objectives. Thus, for example, in the *ex-post* evaluation of the URBAN I Initiative, the experts indicated that, in Spain, 100% of the projects had positive effects on the neighbourhood's urban environment or socio-economic conditions (European Commission, 2003). This report also includes several ideas about factors enhancing or eroding the programme implementation and its success. The ex-post evaluation for the 2007–2013 period also includes a survey among stakeholders providing information about strategies and their success.

In some cases, evaluation based on experts and stakeholders is done through specific assessment protocols in order to provide a comparative assessment. In this regard, the EU has promoted the Territorial Impact Assessment approach. This approach is based on a participatory process of experts and stakeholders to provide a 'theory' about the potential territorial effects of EU policies (programmes, initiatives, regulations,…). This 'theory' is applied to existing statistical data to catch the territorial heterogeneity before policy implementation and provide a set of potential outcomes according to the 'theory' elaborated by experts and stakeholders. The main idea is to show the potential heterogeneous impacts of EU initiatives across European territories (regions, cities, …) This approach has not been applied to the territorial targets of EU urban initiatives (cities or neighbourhoods).[2] Nevertheless, some exercises have used this approach to check the potential effects of the Territorial Agenda 2030

[1] There are also differences according to policy sectors and the type of intervention, with higher levels for those that suppose interventions on the urban space, and lower levels for those referring to welfare and social integration.

[2] About the TIA approach and the on-line tool designed in the framework of ESPON: https://apps.espon.eu/TiaToolv2/welcome. About other models based on the TIA approach Medeiros (2020).

on cities or the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (Dallhammer et al., 2018; Gaugitsch et al., 2020).

Overall, both intensive case studies and the programme analysis perspective have shown the value of EU-integrated urban strategy for urban policy formulation and implementation. However, these approaches do not provide policy evidence of impact because these perspectives only analyse implemented projects without comparisons with other urban areas where EU urban integrated strategies are not implemented (Table 7.1).

This lack of comparison makes it difficult to provide evidence about their impacts because other factors could also explain outcomes and changes in areas targeted by integral strategies. For instance, changes observed in targeted areas can be similar to more general trajectories of change in the urban area in which projects are implemented (the city, the region,..); improvements observed could be caused by sectoral policies that are applied simultaneously across municipalities or neighbourhoods, or observed outcomes could depend on the initial situation in targeted urban areas before project implementation, as the TIA approach sustains.

Thus, these strategies face two methodological challenges: limits to generalisation (or external validity) and limits to explanatory capacity (or internal validity). First is the external validity challenge when dealing with unique case studies, comparative cases without an explicit sample framework explaining controlled factors included in the analyses or the programme establishing specific selection criteria for targeted territories. These criteria mean a 'policy selection bias'; selected urban areas do not represent all the urban reality in Europe, a state member or a region, only those types targeted by the policy frame. For instance, the focus on vulnerable neighbourhoods in big cities in early EU urban initiatives in the 1990s provided relevant information and results that could be not valid for small and medium-sized cities. Therefore, observed outcomes, changes, or improvements in socio-spatial cohesion will be valid for other cases and contexts. Second is the internal validity challenge due to their ability to show that programmes and projects generate the desired changes in targeted territories, since they do not 'isolate' (control) the effect of other potential explanatory factors. Are we sure integrated strategies are the explanatory factor of socio-spatial cohesion improvements in targeted territories?

In this regard, the commonly used strategy to try to overcome these challenges is to establish 'controlled comparisons' between places where

Table 7.1 Analysing the effects of EU integrated urban development strategies on socio-spatial cohesion: main perspectives

Main traits	*'Good practices'*	*Programme analysis: implementation and outcomes*		*Controlled comparisons*
What is done?	In-deep analysis of cases	Analysis based on programme information	'Consultation' of experts and stakeholders	Comparative analyses using contrafactuals
How is it done?	Case study or comparative case study	Analysis of implementation and outcome indicators	Surveys, interviews, participatory workshops and the TIA approach	Quasi-experimental designs (and comparative case studies theoretically oriented)
What does it provide?	Detailed knowledge of projects implementation and outputs	Output assessment, efficacy, and efficiency analyses	Qualified information about outcomes and their causes	Policy impact analysis
Potential limitations	External and internal validity	External and internal validity		Inadequate and/or insufficient controls
Examples	URBACT networks and reports 'Peer review' methodology used by the Urban Development Network	Ex-post evaluation of programmes (European Commission) TIA on Territorial Agenda 2030 or COVID-19 effects		There are no quasi-experimental studies at the territorial scale of EU urban initiatives

the programme is implemented and places without this implementation that were 'similar' to them before programme implementation. Then, policy impact is analysed as the differences between their respective trajectories of change between pre- and post-implementation periods (Rossi, 1999). This strategy involves comparing urban areas that, firstly, are differentiated by whether they have been the object of intervention or not, and secondly, are similar in aspects that might explain the change between the moments before and after implementation. This approach faces at least three challenges: delimiting the territorial spaces to be compared, defining which conditions make the areas comparable in terms of their 'starting conditions' before implementation, and establishing a methodological strategy to ensure this, to ensure this similarity before implementation.

The first of these challenges requires projects to define in some detail the urban area in which it is applied. Albeit unevenly, the URBAN and URBANA projects analysed include some description of the urban area subject to intervention, either in the form of an illustration, a list of affected streets, or a map to identify the census sections it comprises. However, other urban areas where projects have not been implemented should be defined in the same cities where projects have been implemented. These should be similar to the previous ones before project implementation. This issue relates to the next challenge.

The second challenge concerns the need to establish how the urban areas should be similar, in other words, the 'starting conditions' that should be controlled. At least two approaches can be considered in this regard: a theoretical approach or a policy-applied approach. The first approach means similarity is established according to prior knowledge about causes explaining changes in urban areas that could be included or not in the policy theory of the programme. The second approach is based on the policy theory established, implicitly or explicitly, by the programme in its policy frame, regardless of other theoretical knowledge about urban change not included in the programme's policy. The policy frame sets goals, implementation preferences, and criteria for territorial targets. These eligibility criteria could mean targeted territories could have specific and differentiated traits from other urban areas.

The programmes analysed here define their territorial targets as areas with high levels of socio-spatial vulnerability within the framework of their respective urban contexts (cities), establishing a series of problems that must be evidenced in the diagnosis of the projects to show their eligibility. These criteria respond to the logic of their policy frame based on

the idea of integrated urban regeneration promoted by the EU since the 1990s. The programmes aim to reduce processes of socio-spatial segregation by bringing these urban spaces closer to the general dynamics of their cities. To this end, they 'add' a specific integrated policy strategy to the existing sectoral policies actions in the urban area where they act. The main assumption is that these targeted actions will close the gaps between target areas and other urban areas. Therefore, to be successful, programmes must select areas with high socio-spatial vulnerability appropriate to this policy frame (Rae, 2011; Thomson, 2008). Thus, the impact analysis must compare urban areas chosen by the projects with similar areas according to the eligibility criteria established by the programme, the 'starting conditions', which, accordingly, justify their implementation and potential effects in selected urban areas. This 'applied policy approach' is the strategy we will use here.

The third challenge concerns the methodological strategy used to establish and ensure the similarity in the starting conditions among urban areas that will be compared. We have used propensity score matching, as other evaluative exercises have done for similar area-based initiatives in other regions (Bondonio & Greenbaum, 2007; Ploegmakers & Beckers, 2015) and to analyse the impact of Cohesion Policy at the regional level (Dall'Erba & Fang, 2017). This method allows us to select similar urban areas, in terms of their likelihood of being chosen as the territorial target of the programmes, to the areas eventually chosen to implement the projects, as we will explain below.

Impact Analysis Using Controlled Comparisons: A Quasi-Experimental Research Design Approach

Based on the criteria indicated in the previous section, this section presents the general strategy used to analyse the impact of EU-driven integrated urban development programmes in Spain between 1994 and 2013 (the URBAN and URBANA initiatives). We will consider only URBAN I projects, as URBAN II was implemented in only ten cities, which is too small a sample for controlled comparison analyses. We will detail the strategy used in the context of the three challenges mentioned above.

Observation Units: 'Homogeneous Urban Areas'

The urban area in which each project was developed has been delimitated as groupings of census sections based on the illustration, description, or map included in each project documentation. For the rest of the areas in each of the cities that participated in the URBAN I and URBANA Initiatives, homogeneous urban areas (HUAs) have been defined by applying four criteria. Firstly, they were similar to the selected areas in their resident population, an eligibility criterion included in URBAN but not in URBANA projects. Secondly, given the approach adopted in their policy frame, they were internally homogeneous regarding socio-spatial vulnerability. Thirdly, they did not include major urban discontinuities due to large avenues, train rails, roads, etc. And fourthly, they would allow adequate estimates based on the 2011 Population Census samples. As regards the second criterion, we used a synthetic indicator of socio-spatial vulnerability validated at the census tract level in 1991 and 2001, which includes four sub-indicators: housing in poor conditions, unemployment rate, uneducated population, and percentage of unskilled workers (Fernández et al., 2018).

The HUAs were defined for 2001, and the same territorial areas were delimited for 1991 and 2011. Therefore, these are similar territorial urban areas spaces enabling their comparison over time. In the case of the URBAN I programme, 542 urban areas were defined for a set of 26 cities, since in three of the cities that implemented this programme was no geo-referencing of their census sections for the year 1991 (Langreo, Castellón, and Avilés). For the URBANA programme, 576 areas in 43 cities were identified (in the case of Coslada there is no documentation on its project).[3]

The targeted areas defined by the projects are extensive. Therefore, the delimitated homogeneous urban areas are also vast. This large size might dilute evidence of the impact of projects. First, the policy actions could be carried out in specific spaces of the selected urban area as a whole, and, therefore, they affect such spaces or only some of the area's residents to a greater extent. Second, some heterogeneity could exist between different

[3] The homogeneity of delimitated urban areas according to population size, population density, and socio-economic vulnerability has been analysed to validate them. Comparisons with other territorial delimitations (census districts and sub-municipal areas defined under the URBAN AUDIT programme) have also been made to validate this issue. More details in Fernández-García (2021).

spaces included in targeted areas (in their urban fabric, social composition, or other specific aspects), meaning that the whole area is not exactly equal in terms of its starting conditions. However, our study is not about the change in urban areas, but about the impact of the programme. We have studied the design and development of the projects, trying to stick as closely as possible to the urban areas as defined in them. That is to say, our analysis is about the change promoted by integrated strategies promoted by the EU in their targeted territories, not about general processes of urban change.

Reducing the 'Selection Bias' of the Programmes: Propensity Score Matching for Experimental and Control Areas Selection

As indicated above, the urban areas selected by the projects should present high levels of socio-spatial vulnerability according to the eligibility criteria established by the programmes. These mainly include urban fabric degradation, bad environmental quality, low levels of economic activity, and high levels of social exclusion, especially unemployment; although URBAN II also includes other aspects regarding educational achievement or specific problems linked to intercultural relations and security in neighbourhoods (European Commission, 1994, 2000; Ministry of Public Administration, 2007; Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2007). Except for environmental quality, for which there is no information at the census section level for either 1991 or 2001, we have elaborated specific indicators to measure these eligibility conditions: population density, percentage of housing in good condition, the density of establishments that develop economic activity (per thousand inhabitants), and the rate of employment. In the URBANA Initiative, we have also considered the percentage of the population without any formal education title since problems related to educational achievement and the level of academic training of its residents are explicitly included in the eligibility criteria.

The comparison between selected and non-selected areas shows that the former are more vulnerable, especially regarding house conditions and unemployment (Table 7.2). Although the differences are not statistically significant, they also have higher demographic density and business density, which would not correspond to the established criteria. This might be explained because selected areas included historical centres of cities which concentrate on economic activities—because of their centrality in the urban space—although they present a considerable level

of socio-spatial vulnerability according to urban environment conditions or social composition (Fernández Salinas, 1994).

These differences would show that the selection of territorial targets within the programmes was adequate since they are urban areas with high levels of socio-spatial vulnerability.[4] However, this implies the existence of a 'selection bias' that would affect the impact analysis of jointly analysing all these urban areas (selected and unselected). In other words, we would be comparing areas based on different starting conditions making it difficult to establish whether changes were due to the implementation of a project or to these initial differences.

We applied the propensity score matching method to ensure comparisons between urban areas with similar starting conditions. This method 'matches' selected areas with non-selected urban areas according to their similarity in terms of the eligibility criteria established by the programmes. First, a logistic regression model is used to estimate the probability that an urban area would have been selected. The dependent variable is whether an urban area has been the object of intervention or not (selected vs. non-selected UHAs), and the indicators that measure the eligibility criteria of each programme are included as covariables. Second, urban areas with similar propensity scores (similar odds of being chosen) are 'matched'. There are different matching methods. We have applied the nearest-neighbourhood method matching each selected area by the programme with the closest one according to the propensity score. In addition, we applied more specifications. First, the experimental and control groups only include urban areas in the 'common support' area (overlap between the propensity score distributions of selected and non-selected HUAs). Second, up to five non-selected areas have been chosen for each area included in the experimental group. Although this specification might be less effective in reducing selection bias, it improves the accuracy of impact estimates (Ming & Rosenbaum, 2000). Finally, we have applied three callipers: levels of standard deviation values equal to 0.0, 0.1, and 0.2 of the logit function of the propensity score have been set.

To validate the propensity score models, we analysed the balance in the distribution of the propensity score and covariables within matched urban areas, including areas selected by the programme, which would constitute

[4] We have also found that the differences between selected and unselected areas exist when considering the urban context, the city, in which they are located using measurements centred on city averages (Fernández-García et al., 2021).

Table 7.2 Eligibility criteria for the territorial targets of the programmes: differences between selected and unselected areas in the URBAN and URBANA initiatives (Mean [standard deviation])

Programme	*Urban areas*	*Population density (Inhabitants/Km^2)*	*Housing conditions: good (%)*	*Business density (establishments/1000 inhabitants)*	*Employment rate (%)*	*Population without formal education (%)*
URBAN I	Without intervention (n = 542)	18,659,490 16,355,711	83,896 10,942	6,115 7,458	81,204 6,198	
	With intervention (n = 26)	15,164,347 13,176,650	70,149 17,634	8,362 8,471	77,412 6,442	
	Total	18,499,501 16,230,602	83,267 11,671	6,218 7,514	81,031 6,254	
	Difference (t-test)	3,495,143	13,747***	−2,247	3,792**	
URBANA	Without intervention (n = 576)	18,659,490 16,355,711	83,896 10,942	6,115 7,458	81,204 6,198	12,636 6,840
	With intervention (n = 43)	15,164,347 13,176,650	70,149 17,634	8,362 8,471	77,412 6,442	17,528 8,630
	Total	18,499,501 16,230,602	83,267 11,671	6,218 7,514	81,031 6,254	12,976 7,082
	Difference (t-test)	3495,143	13,747***	−2,247	3,792**	−4,892**

*p < 0,05; **p < 0,01, ***p < 0,001

For the indicator 'population without formal education', the differences for URBAN I are also statistically significant, in the expected direction. They are not included in the table because it was not an eligibility criterion for the urban areas included in this programme

Source Authors' own based on the Population and Housing Census and E-INFORMA

our experimental group, and those not selected by the programme, which would make up our control group. We compared the standardised differences between experimental and control groups to ensure they do not exceed 25% and that the overall RMI L1 indicator is small after matching. In addition, we replicated the logistic regression model to verify that its fit-level (Pseudo-R2) is lower in the model that includes matched areas than in the original (including all urban areas). These analyses show all models are well balanced, both globally and for covariables, with a lower fit for the regression model with the paired areas (Table 7.3)[5].

Analysis of the 'Average' Impact of Programmes and Potential Heterogeneous Effects: Controlled Comparisons of Urban Trajectories of Change and Other Possible Specifications

To analyse the impact of the URBAN and URBANA Initiatives, we will compare the trajectories of change in the experimental and control groups between pre and post-implementation periods. The difference between their trajectories will inform us of the impact of the programmes. To perform this analysis, we have used existing secondary data sources. This will limit the analysis we will be able to carry out, but it will also show that, within these limits, it is possible to analyse the impact of urban integrated strategies promoted by the EU.

The following chapters provide policy evidence in this regard. They should also be taken as exercises that seek to show different strategies for making controlled comparisons from existing data sources to analyse the impact of EU-integrated strategies. The first chapter applies repeat measures analysis between pre- and post-intervention times based on ecological information (secondary data aggregated at the neighbourhood—urban area—level) to analyse URBAN policy impacts regarding some of their objectives (Chapter 8). The second study trends of change in experimental and control areas by analysing individual cross-sectional data for periods before and after URBANA Initiative implementation (Chapter 9). The third applies repeat measures models with ecological measurements at three points in time to study the short-time and long-time impacts of the URBAN Initiative on the cultural amenities

[5] For an overview of the propensity score matching and its validation, see Rosenbaum and Rubin (1983), Luellen et al. (2005), and Stuart (2010). We have used the R propensity score matching module in the SPSS.

Table 7.3 Experimental and control groups: validation of propensity score matching models

			URBAN I			*URBANA*		
			C = 0	*C = 0,1*	*C = 0,2*	*C = 0*	*C = 0,1*	*C = 0,2*
Urban areas (n)	All	Total	568	568	568	619	619	619
		Intervention: no	542	542	542	576	576	576
		Intervention: yes	26	26	26	43	43	43
	Matched	Control group	115	97	98	210	149	162
		Experimental group	23	21	22	41	42	41
	Not selected for marching	Intervention: no	97	97	97	5	5	5
		Intervention: yes	3	5	4	2	1	2
Global balance global	RMI L1	Before matching	0,987	0,987	0,987	0,990	0,990	0,990
		After matching	0,861	0,924	0,782	0,986	0,974	0,965
Co-variables balance	Covariates with standardised differences > 25%		None	None	None	None	None	None
	Pseudo-R2 (only selected urban areas)		0,005	0,016	0,028	0,023	0,034	0,033

Level of fit for the regression models with all areas (R2): URBAN R2 = 0.168; URBANA R2 = 0.168
In all models, ratio 1:5; C: calliper

in neighbourhoods (Chapter 10). And finally, we will contextualise the trajectories of change in experimental areas within the urban context of their respective cities applying a comparative case analysis (Chapter 11). In all cases where we analyse the impact based on propensity score matching, we will present the results with the models that use a calliper width equal to 0.2, as this will provide the best results for the estimates (Austin, 2010; Yongji et al., 2013).

As regards the general policy theory behind sustainable and integrated strategies implemented by URBAN and URBANA Initiatives (Chapter 6), two main dimensions or areas of policy impact could be defined; on the one hand, the contextual dimension of targeted urban areas, therefore, improvements that suppose a better opportunity structure for residents. For instance, the urban fabric (better or more houses, public spaces, basic urban services,..) urban mobility opportunities, increasing economic activity and employment opportunities, access to more or new services, environmental quality, low levels of social conflict, crime, … On the other hand, improvements in the 'individual' living conditions of residents and their households (socio-economic situation, employment, educational attainment, health status, participation in neighbourhood activities and participatory processes,…). The following chapters will analyse some of these aspects. All these issues could not be examined due to limitations in secondary data disposable and used in the subsequent analyses.[6] Nevertheless, the analyses done include some of the main goals of the EU cohesion policy and its urban integrated strategies (for instance, habitability, economic activity, employment, or educational attainment).

These analyses will show the 'average impact' as differences in the trajectory of change between similar (targeted and non-targeted) urban areas. The results will provide evidence for the following question: what would have happened if the project had not been implemented? This situation is represented by the trajectory of change in the control areas (counterfactual conditional). Comparison with the trajectory of the experimental areas will make it possible to show the impact of the programmes as a whole; in other words, 'what happens when the project has been implemented'. Therefore, the added value promoted by the urban dimension of the EU cohesion policy through integrated urban development strategies.

[6] For instance, not specific data about environmental quality exist at the census track level. Therefore, this goal can not be analysed.

This assumes that the analyses will not consider the possible existence of 'composition effects' derived from potential diversity between projects, urban areas, or within them not controlled by matching. That is to say, the possible existence of policy heterogeneous effects beyond programme eligibility criteria. For example, according to the specific strategy of each project (its theory), these might include the nature and intensity of residential mobility phenomena or the generational change in neighbourhood residents during the projects implementation period, or specific differences in the starting conditions not included in the eligibility criteria of the programmes (e.g. historic centres vs. peripheral neighbourhoods, or, even, because of the intensity of socio-spatial vulnerability processes). These phenomena can produce opposite effects that, on the whole, blur the evidence of programme impact. Therefore, these elements could also be included in controlled comparisons. Hence, in addition to the selection bias of each programme (matching through propensity score matching), each of the following chapters will add other specific control elements in order to show how possible composition effects could be considered using existing data sources, which are not otherwise considered in the documentation relating to the programmes (and the theory that may arise from them). In other words, we will use propensity score matching based on programmes eligibility criteria (a 'policy approach' to ensure similarity between experimental and control groups) plus some theoretical ideas about change in urban areas (a more 'theoretical approach') to try to pay attention to potential heterogeneous effects of programmes. Table 7.4 presents the research questions analysed.

Thus, the following chapters provide evidence on the 'average' impact of the URBAN and URBANA Initiatives, that is, an initial approach that considers the 'general policy theory' of change implied by these programmes. This brings evidence to an area of study, the impact of EU-integrated urban strategies, for which there is not a lot of previous analysis. The following chapters also provide examples of methods that can be used to analyse the impact of integrated urban strategies using data sources that are usually available to the researcher community and agents involved in the programmes or their specific projects. More detailed access to these and other sources, or the production of data specifically oriented towards the analysis of their impact, might refine the results presented below, so they are able to specify, to an even greater degree, 'controlled comparisons' that, for example, derive from the specification of the theories behind these programmes and their projects.

Table 7.4 Analysing added value II (better places): research question, analytical and observational units

Research issue	*Research question*	*Analytical unit (or topic)*	*Observational unit*
The added value II: The policy impacts of the integrated urban development strategy	Have neighbourhoods changed as structures of opportunities for residents?: the 'average impact' of programmes	Impacts on the contextual dimension of targeted urban areas (economic activity, house and neighbourhood problems, opportunities for cultural consumption, …)	Experimental and control urban areas selected by propensity score matching
	Have there been improvements in the living conditions of residents?: the 'average impact of programmes'	Impacts on individual traits of residents' quality of life (employment, educational attainment, socio-economic status, health,..)	Experimental and control urban areas selected by propensity score matching
	The existence of heterogeneous effects	Including controls by contextual policy exposure, residential mobility or neighbourhood starting conditions	Experimental and control urban areas selected by propensity score matching A comparative case study among historical city centres

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CHAPTER 8

The Impact of the URBAN Initiative: On Residential Mobility and 'Contextual Exposure' to EU-Integrated Urban Development Strategies

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Abstract Previous evaluations of integrated area-based initiatives have shown moderate effects on residents' living conditions and, therefore, neighbourhood socioeconomic composition. This chapter sustains this could be explained by residential mobility in targeted neighbourhoods: according to the 'neighbourhood revitalisation' frame of policy analysed,

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impacts should be more evident among 'stayers' residents who have been exposed to the project implementation. This idea is studied by performing two analyses: all residents and only 'stayers' residents. Both apply a repeated measurement with control groups design to analyse the change in unemployment rates, educational attainment, and socioeconomic status in experimental and control neighbourhoods. The analysis controlling by contextual exposure, including only stayers residents, shows a better impact than the analysis including all residents. Therefore, in addition to contrafactual selection according to programme eligibility criteria, impact studies should consider residential mobility as a confounding factor regarding the impact of area-based policy actions on targeted territories providing policy evidence for the debate between urban revitalisation and state-led gentrification theses on area-based initiatives.

Keywords Policy evaluation · Integrated urban policy · Residential mobility · Neighbourhood revitalisation · Gentrification · European Union

Introduction

Analyses of the URBAN I Initiative implementation in Spain between 1994 and 1999 have shown its adds value to urban policies promoting collaborative processes among different types of stakeholders in the design and implementation of urban policies (De Gregorio, 2015). However, there is no comparative analysis of its impact according to their objectives. Did the urban environment improve? Did economic activity in the neighbourhoods increase? Did the living conditions of residents improve?

As noted previously, analysis of the impact of these types of policies is scarce, and, in general, the outcomes are not conclusive, either because they do not exist, because they are usually moderate, or because they are different depending on the type of objective considered (Lawless, 2012; Navarro, Moya et al., 2016; Rhodes et al., 2005). This could be due to the difficulty of evaluating such policies because of their complexity, the temporal proximity between their implementation and impact analysis, or the lack of adequate data sources (see Chapter 1). However, as we pointed out already, it could also depend on the evaluation approach

or strategy used. In this chapter, we propose a strategy that, using available data, considers some of these elements to analyse the impact of the URBAN I Initiative in Spain. We will point out the importance of the programme theory to analyse its impact, specifically, residents' exposure to implemented strategies and the importance of addressing residential mobility as a factor explaining exposure to the programme. For this purpose, controlled comparisons will be applied to trajectories of change in urban areas between 1991 and 2001, considering the programme selection bias (eligibility criteria) and contextual exposure to the programme (as residential mobility).

The Impact of Integrated Urban Development and Urban Change: Intervention Mechanisms, Policy Exposure, and Residential Mobility

Integrated urban development projects use two major types of causal mechanisms to try to achieve their goals. On the one hand, mechanisms aim to produce contextual effects by improving the neighbourhood as a structure of opportunities for its residents and other agents that develop their activities in it (companies, associations, etc.). Here, it is assumed that there will be contextual effects on residents or other stakeholders resulting from their exposure to changes in the neighbourhood. On the other hand, mechanisms aim to improve the resources or lifestyles of specific groups through actions aimed at increasing their capacities regarding specific situations or behaviours (see Chapter 5).

Therefore, the project's impact will differ depending on residents' exposure to such mechanisms. Whereas the first type of mechanism could affect all residents because they are exposed to changes in the socio-spatial context (the neighbourhood), the second type would do so only, or fundamentally, for those exposed to—targeted by—specific actions. In part, the absence or low impact found in most area-based intervention evaluations might be explained because all residents are considered without regard to the degree or nature of their exposure to different policy actions included in projects. That is, they assume that projects are based exclusively on contextual mechanisms. This is partially due to the use of aggregate data in the absence of appropriate information at the individual level. In fact, when considering the degree and type of exposure to the project, we get a clearer picture of impacts that do not appear

when this fact is not taken into account (Navarro, Rodríguez-García et al., 2016). This could be because the joint analysis of all residents produces composition effects between those most exposed to the programme, who might have been affected, and those not exposed to it, who are unlikely to have been affected.

Nevertheless, even assuming the contextual effect of the projects, be it due to a lack of specification in the project theory guiding the evaluation (assuming implicitly that its effects are only contextual), or because of the absence of appropriate data at the individual level, the evaluative analysis of such initiatives also faces the challenge of residential mobility. As in other neighbourhoods or urban areas, during project implementation, there is residential mobility, both outbound, because some of its residents move to other urban areas (outcomers), and inbound, because new residents move into the area (incomers). The volume and nature of this mobility can affect impact analysis. The few studies about residential mobility and area-based initiatives seem to show the existence of 'upward residential mobility' processes. Those whose situation improves as a result of the intervention tend to move to another neighbourhood and are replaced by other residents in worse socioeconomic situations (Cole et al., 2007; South et al., 2005). However, in other cases, interventions and their results may also attract new residents with a higher socioeconomic status. In these cases, neighbourhood improvements could be explained by population substitution more than an improvement in the lives of its traditional residents, as the literature on state-led gentrification points out (Hochstenbach, 2017). These two phenomena may underestimate (upward mobility) or overestimate (gentrification) project impact depending on the volume and characteristics of the 'outcomers' and 'incomers'.

This means the impacts can be more clearly attributed to projects among those residents (or other stakeholders) who have remained in the neighbourhood throughout project implementation. Compared with incomers or outcomers, this group of stable residents (stayers) has been exposed during the whole implementation period; thus, in this case, changes could be more assuredly attributed to the project. Although their degree of exposure to specific targeted actions cannot be known, their contextual exposure to the project has been more intense than that of the other groups, albeit only for the duration thereof. It could, therefore, expect a more significant impact among them (Fig. 8.1).

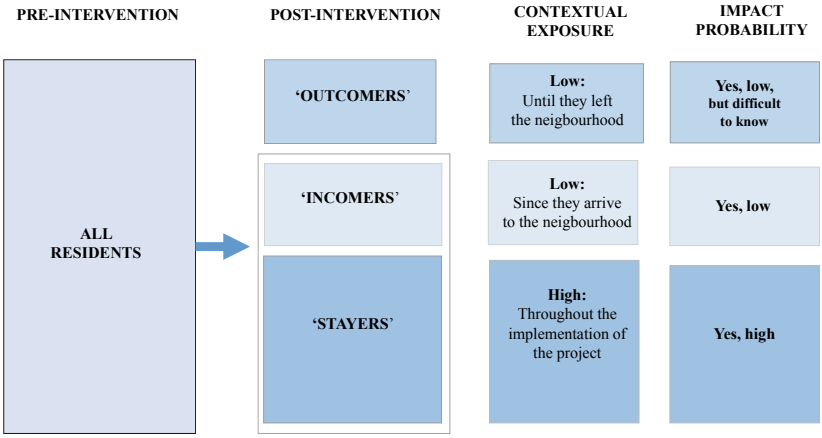

Fig. 8.1 The impact of integrated urban development strategies and residential mobility: the role of contextual policy exposure

Research Design to Analyse Integrated Strategy Impacts: Controlling by Territorial Eligibility Criteria and Contextual Exposure to the Programme

As indicated in the previous chapter, to analyse the impact of integrated urban development programmes, it is necessary to conduct a controlled comparison between urban areas where these are applied and other areas that were similar before the implementation of projects. To this end, we applied the propensity score matching technique to select experimental and control urban areas according to the eligibility criteria established by the URBAN I programme. A total of 22 experimental areas and 98 control areas were selected (see Chapter 7). In addition to eligibility criteria (basically, urban vulnerability), we will also try to control the effect of policy contextual exposure due to residential mobility.

We analysed the patterns of change in these two types of areas for some indicators related to the programme objectives: business density (the number of establishments that develop an economic activity per 1000 residents), the rate of employment (the percentage of employed people over the total population of working age), the percentage of the university-educated population over the total adult population, and residents average

socioeconomic level based on their occupations, from unskilled workers to executives and managers (scale values 0 and 1, respectively).[1]

We have no individual longitudinal data for urban areas or information about residential mobility. Therefore, we can not differentiate the degree of contextual exposure to the programme at an individual level (either on the duration or because of the exposure to specific targeted actions). Therefore, we will approach this by performing two models with aggregated data with experimental and control urban areas as observation units and applying a repeat measures design. One model includes all residents in 1991 and 2001, the other only stable residents in 2001 in the post-intervention measurement. Therefore, in both models, the post-intervention measurement does not include those who have left the neighbourhood (outcomers). The difference is that the first model comprises both incomers and stayers, and the second contains only the latter. Therefore, the second model controls programme exposure derived from residential mobility, thereby providing a closer approximation of the impact of projects on residents. In addition, if there were any positive impacts on stable residents (second model), this would point to a possible revitalisation of the neighbourhood more than a led-state gentrification process, in other words, an improvement among traditional residents regardless of possible incomers with a higher socioeconomic position.

We have analysed the programme's impact using the dRM indicator proposed by Morris and DeShon (2002). This measures whether the improvement trend in the experimental areas has been higher than in the control areas as standardised differences, so the impact in different indicators can be compared regardless of their original measurement scale.[2] For their interpretation, the basic rules outlined in the second chapter can be used: the effect size value, the confidence interval, and the percentage of experimental areas that show a trend of improvement above the average of the control areas.

We expect the impacts will be more evident, dRM values will be greater in models model controlling for contextual exposure—those including

[1] The source for population data is the Spanish Population and Housing Census (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, INE), for companies, data provided by E-Informa. More information about average socioeconomic status in Navarro (2013).

[2] The impact of the programme has been calculated based on the interaction between the intra-subject factor (change of areas between 1991 and 2001) and the inter-subject factor (experimental group vs. control group).

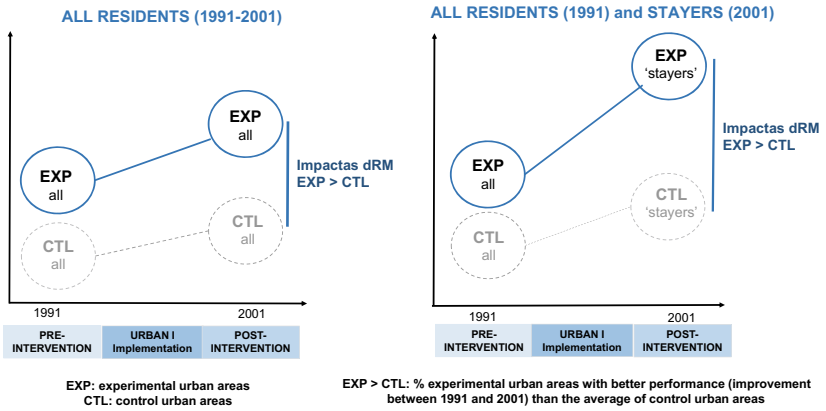

Fig. 8.2 The logic of the quasi-experimental design for evaluating performance trends: repeat measures and control for policy contextual exposure

only stayers in the post-intervention measurement (Fig. 8.2). However, our proposal might also have certain limitations that should be pointed out. Firstly, it assumes that residential mobility patterns are similar in experimental and control areas in terms of volume and those involved. No differences exist in the rate of those who remain in the urban area (percentage of stayers in 2001), either for the population as a whole (which is 60%) or for five-year age groups, since life cycle is a significant factor in this phenomenon.[3] Secondly, we assume that stable residents are similar to the residential population in 1991; in other words, at the start of the intervention there were no significant differences between stable residents and those that moved to other areas before the end of the intervention. And thirdly, if the thesis of 'upward residential mobility' is true, we do not include the possible impact of the programme on *outcomers*, and therefore we might be underestimating it.

[3] The mean rate of those who choose to remain in the experimental areas is equal to 60.1 (St. Dev. = 6.2) and equal to 60.2 (St. Dev. = 11.6) in the control areas, with no significant differences between them (t-test = 0.193, $p > 0.10$). The same tests have been carried out by five-year age groups.

Table 8.1 Changes in experimental and control urban areas between 1991 and 2001 (Difference 2001–1991. Mean [Standard deviation])

	All residents			*Stayers*		
	Experimental	*Control*	*Total*	*Experimental*	*Control*	*Total*
Business density (premises/1000 inhabitants)	22,387 (17,119)	17,144 (15,276)	18,105 (15,687)			
Employment rate (%)	4,598 (2,515)	4,178 (2,935)	4,255 (2,857)	3,660 (2,530)	2,930 (3,127)	3,063 (3,030)
Socio-economic status (0–1)	0,036 (0,034)	0,032 (0,036)	0,033 (0,036)	0,021 (0,025)	0,012 (0,024)	0,014 (0,024)
Universitary (%)	8,149 (3,290)	7,682 (3,681)	7,767 (3,604)	3,935 (1,428)	3,132 (1,604)	3,279 (1,598)

Source Spanish Population and Housing Census (INE) and E-Informa

Results

The change in the business density of urban areas analysed between 1991 and 2001 was 18 points, slightly higher in experimental areas than in control areas (22 and 17 points difference, respectively, see Table 8.1). This change shows the cycle of economic growth that took place during part of the analysis period, with a considerable increase in companies in Spain.[4] However, our analyses show that the trend is more prominent in the experimental areas, which could provide evidence of the impact of the URBAN Initiative.[5]

Indicators for all residents show improvement patterns, although no programme impacts. The employment rate increases by 4 points, showing a pattern similar to the country as a whole during the period analysed (Jiménez et al., 2002), and the change is quite similar between experimental and control areas (4.6 and 4.2 points). The change in socioeconomic status is also low and similar in both types of areas (0.036

[4] In this regard, see the statistics provided by the INE (National Institute of Statistics) on changes in the number of enterprises for the whole country. https://www.ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/es/categoria.htm?c=Estadistica_P&cid=1254735576550; https://www.ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/es/operacion.htm?c=Estadistica_C&cid=1254736160707&menu=ultiDatos&idp=1254735576550.

[5] The values of the indicators for the two types of areas, types of residents, and dates analysed can be found in the chapter annex.

and 0.032 points, respectively). Finally, the percentage of population with a degree increases between 7 and 8 points in the analysed period, slightly higher in the experimental areas (7.7 and 8.1 points, respectively). Therefore, there do not appear to be any evident impacts from the URBAN initiative.

Analyses including only stable residents show the intensity of change between 1991 and 2001 is somewhat lower (Table 8.1). However, the differences between experimental and equivalent areas are greater than when considering all residents. Regarding the employment rate, this difference equals 0.42 when all residents are considered and 0.73 when only stable residents are examined. Concerning socioeconomic status, these differences are equal to 0.004 and 0.009, respectively, and equal to 0.467 and 0.803 for the university-educated population. These differences would show improvement patterns are clearer when models only include residents who remained in the neighbourhood between 1991 and 2001.

Figure 8.3 shows the impact of the URBAN I programme in terms of standardised differences between experimental and equivalent areas (dRM). Improvements in business density are greater in experimental areas than in control areas; the effect is moderate, although statistically significant (dRM = 0.336). The results would indicate that 59% of the experimental areas show a higher pattern of improvement than the average of the control areas. Therefore, although the effect is moderate, the URBAN I programme achieved its objective of increasing economic activity in the neighbourhoods. This does not mean that residents or existing businesses have set up this more intense economic activity. Policy actions might have promoted this, but also because they have made the neighbourhood a more attractive space for economic activity initiated by other external agents, as noted by analysis of similar initiatives (Archibald et al., 2019).

The impacts on the living conditions of all residents are very small or non-existent, at least for the three indicators considered here: employment rate (dRM = 0.147), average socioeconomic status (dRM = 0.126), and the university-educated population (dRM = 0.129). However, the evidence is clearer when the model includes only those residents exposed to the programme. Although the confidence interval would indicate that the differences are not statistically significant, the results concerning the employment rate show that 60% of the experimental areas improve above the control areas (dRM = 0.241). The impact is also moderate for the

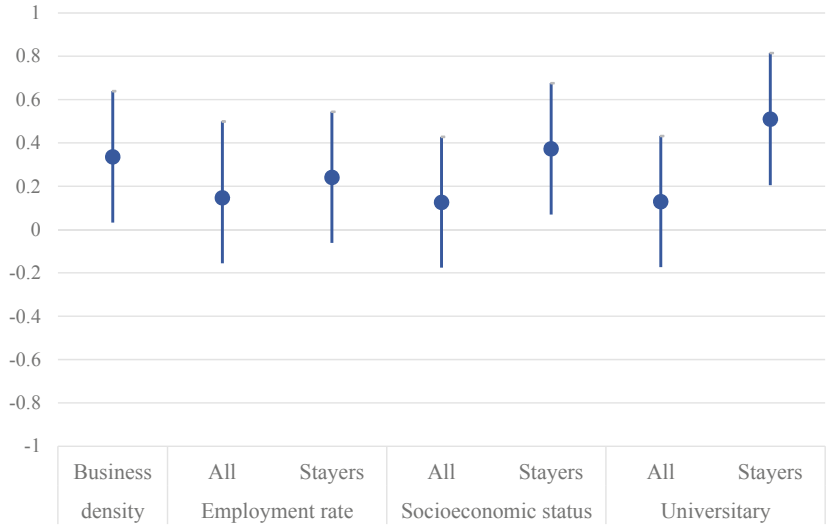

Fig. 8.3 The impact of the URBAN programme according to contextual programme exposure: all residents and stable residents (Effect size (dRM) and confidence intervals [CI90%])

socioeconomic status of residents, as about 65% of the experimental areas have experienced a better pattern of change than the average improvement of the control areas (dRM = 0.373), although in this case, the difference is statistically significant.

Finally, the impact of the URBAN programme on the improvement of human capital in the neighbourhoods is quite evident: 70% of the experimental areas achieve a greater improvement than the control areas (dRM = 0.510). This could mean that, at least in part, some improvements depend on generational renewal. Young residents have brought about this change because they have reached the level of university education or entered the employment market in occupations better than those usually found among the neighbourhood's employed population in 1991 due to their better educational level (as regards socioeconomic status). However, this generational thesis should be explored in more detail.

Overall, the results would indicate that, although moderate, the programme has achieved some socioeconomic revitalisation in the neighbourhoods, thus, in accordance with its policy frame (see Chapters 1 and

6). The improvement in economic activity in the experimental neighbourhoods has been higher than in the control areas, but it seems that the rate of employment has also improved to a greater extent, albeit very moderately, as has the socioeconomic status of residents and their level of education, in a slightly more straightforward way.

This is highlighted by the fact that the models that analyse only stayers show more evidence of the impact than the models that also include incomers (dRM values in Fig. 8.3), although the magnitude of the change is greater when the latter are also included (Table 8.1). New residents might have a higher socioeconomic status or level of education than the residents in 1991, but the neighbourhoods in which the programme intervenes do not appear to show a superior pattern of change to the control neighbourhoods when new residents are included in analyses together with stayers. Therefore, there do not appear to have been clear gentrification patterns in experimental neighbourhoods promoted by URBAN, but instead, patterns that point to their socioeconomic revitalisation. Our post-intervention measurement is very close to the completion date of the projects. This might not show the change assumed in the gentrification thesis, which might need more time to appear. However, evidence show projects promoted changes pursued by the EU urban initiative among stable residents.

Place-Based Integrated Strategies and the Puzzle of Residential Mobility: on Gentrification, Revitalisation, and Socio-Spatial Inequalities Reproduction

In this chapter, we have sought to provide some arguments and strategies to improve the analysis of the impact of the integrated strategy, using the most commonly available data to approach this type of analysis (aggregated data at the sub-municipal scale). To this aim, we have indicated the importance of considering exposure to the programme in more detail rather than assuming that the integrated strategy only involves a change in the neighbourhood as a structure of opportunities; that is to say, that their impact is derived only from the effects of 'contextual exposure' to them. Based on this assumption, we have pointed out the need to

consider the phenomenon of residential mobility, as it relates to assumptions about policy contextual exposure and, therefore, to the adequacy of the programme's underlying theory.

In response to these two issues and the data available, we have performed controlled comparisons according to programme selection bias (experimental areas vs. control areas) and programme exposure derived from residential mobility (all residents vs. stable residents). By establishing these two 'controls' in our comparisons, derived from analytical arguments, we have been able to show more clearly the impacts of the URBAN programme. Very briefly, the results of applying this strategy show that the projects improved the economic activity of the urban areas where they were applied, at least in their business density (as we have been able to measure this aspect here). But also that, although moderate, they brought about improvements among traditional residents, more exposed to their actions because they remained in the neighbourhoods from the beginning to the end of the programme.

More generally, the strategy used and its results could be useful when discussing the effect of such initiatives in terms of the revitalisation or gentrification of the urban areas where they are applied. When considering all residents, the change observed in neighbourhoods is more intense than when considering only stable residents, and policy impacts do not exist. However, when considering only the second group, differences are low but the programme's impacts become more evident (differences in the improvement patterns of experimental and equivalent areas). Does the former imply evidence of gentrification processes because the change is more intense? Are new residents with a higher socioeconomic status replacing traditional residents with a lower socioeconomic status? Even if the answer to the second question is yes, the arrival of these new residents or incomers in the neighbourhoods does not seem to create much greater change in the socioeconomic status of experimental areas than in the control areas.

Does the impact revealed by analyses of stayers provide evidence of neighbourhood revitalisation? In this regard, we can at least indicate that the improvement observed among these residents is slightly higher in areas where projects are developed. The evidence points more to processes of revitalisation rather than gentrification, although to be more conclusive, we would need to continue using the proposed strategy, incorporating other indicators or seeking to evidence the impacts of the projects over a longer term.

Moreover, the analytical ideas and analyses show the importance of paying attention to the residential mobility phenomena to know better the effects promoted by the urban integrated strategy in neighbourhoods. This phenomenon informs about the exposure to the programme and, therefore, its potential impact. Therefore, residential mobility could be a cause explaining the effects promoted by the integrated strategy, or at least a factor explaining its capacity to improve residents' quality of life. However, this implies residential mobility could also be a consequence (an effect) of these policies that could hide their impacts if residents who improve their situation move to other neighbourhoods (in the same city or other cities in the metropolitan area). In sum, residential mobility suppose a puzzle for area-based integrated strategies: it could be a factor explaining the usually low impacts found on previous evaluative exercises, meaning the design of these urban initiatives should pay attention to this phenomenon by including policy actions specifically oriented to promote and encourage residential stability in targeted territories. Gentrification could be a risk to these area-based initiatives as replacement of traditional residents by others with higher socioeconomic status. However, the 'upgrading' residential mobility that could promote these initiatives also suppose a risk regarding socio-spatial inequalities reproduction in specific urban areas due to the 'runaway' of those who improve their socioeconomic conditions thanks to the public intervention.

Like other possible ones, the proposed strategy to analyse this issue is not without limitations. It only allows for an approach that considers contextual exposure to the programme, without being able to provide evidence on the effect of targeted exposure (e.g. motivational mechanisms targeted at specific groups of residents). Even so, if the hypothesis that the projects produce upward residential mobility is true, or because the effect of specific actions requires a broader timeframe to be evidenced in terms of improvements among residents, we have adopted a conservative strategy in analysing the impact of the programme. In any case, the strategy put forward here should be taken as a proposal. Using the most commonly available ecological data sources (aggregations at the urban area level, for instance, census data) offers an approach to analysing the impact of integrated urban development initiatives. The strategy is based on analytical ideas about the theory of this type of public policy (contextual mechanisms and exposure) and other phenomena related to urban

change (residential mobility) that must not be excluded from any evaluation or assessment of urban integrated strategies promoted by the EU or other similar policies adopting a multi-level policy mixes character (see Chapter 1).

Annex

Economic activity in the neighbourhood 1991–2001 (Mean [standard deviation])

		Total 1991	*Total 2001*
Business density	Control	7,273	24,416
		(8,65)	(23,665)
	Experimental	8,300	30,687
		(8,566)	(25,231)
	Total	7,461	25,566
		(8,608)	(23,974)

Experimental areas = 22; Control areas = 98
Source E-Informa

Socioeconomic conditions of neighbourhood residents 1991–2001 (Mean [standard deviation])

		Total residents in 1991 and 2001		*Stayers: stable residents in 2001*
		1991	*2001*	*2001*
Employment rate	Control	80,096	84,274	83,025
		(6,877)	(5,856)	(6,151)
	Experimental	79,226	83,824	82,885
		(4,489)	(4,423)	(4,83)
	Total	79,936	84,191	82,999
		(6,498)	(5,607)	(5,913)
Socioeconomic status	Control	0,497	0,529	0,509
		(0,121)	(0,114)	(0,115)
	Experimental	0,501	0,537	0,522
		(0,108)	(0,118)	(0,113)
	Total	0,498	0,531	0,512
		(0,118)	(0,114)	(0,115)

(continued)

(continued)

		Total residents in 1991 and 2001		*Stayers: stable residents in 2001*
		1991	*2001*	*2001*
Universitarys	Control	10,881 (9,148)	18,562 (11,956)	14,013 (10,208)
	Experimental	10,554 (6,543)	18,703 (9,347)	14,488 (7,532)
	Total	10,821 (8,705)	18,588 (11,487)	14,100 (9,746)

Áreas experimentales = 26; Áreas de control = 98
Source Spanish Population and Housing Census (INE)

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CHAPTER 9

The Impact of the URBANA Initiative: Socio-Economic Conditions, Self-Perceived Health and Quality of the Built Environment—A Time-Trend Analysis of Repeated Cross-Sectional Data

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Abstract This chapter analyses the potential impacts of the URBANA programme between the periods before and after its implementation. The impact was studied using a quasi-experimental design based on secondary data from the complete series of the Spanish Living Conditions Survey. The impact of the programme on household socio-economic conditions, self-perceived health and the quality of the built environment was studied.

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In addition, the degree of vulnerability of the neighbourhoods in which the programmes were implemented was taken into account, as the impacts could be conditioned by this contextual dimension. The results suggest some improvements in urban context and health, specifically among those neighbourhoods with higher levels of vulnerability before the intervention process. Therefore, the chapter shows 'neighbourhood effects' due to the differences between the selected neighbourhoods and the importance of the selection process in policy design.

Keywords Urban regeneration · Neighbourhood impact · Socio-economic conditions · Health · Built environment · Time-trend analysis · Urban vulnerability

Introduction

In recent decades, integrated urban regeneration initiatives have emerged as one of the main strategies to improve the economic, physical, social and environmental conditions of the city, and as an effective way to address socio-economic imbalances between urban areas (Roberts, 2000). One of the main objectives is to bring the living conditions of certain neighbourhoods closer to those of the whole city, thereby reducing the accumulation of disadvantages affecting different dimensions of quality of life (Van Gent et al., 2009). The central objective is to change the living conditions of the residents and to improve the structure of opportunities that the context of the neighbourhood can offer to inhabitants. Furthermore, integrated area-based policies can be seen as interventions that promote '*structurally transformative agency*'. These programmes typically not only deploy interventions aimed at changing the structural elements of the most vulnerable areas but also often involve interventions aimed at mobilising the agency capacity of residents that contribute to structural modifications and social changes in urban places. For example, this is the case when integrated area-based policies are designed to activate mechanisms that seek to foster community participation for vulnerable populations to gain control over key aspects of their quality of life, such as actions developed with the aim of building neighbourhood community capacities as a way to improve safety, more equitable access to healthy leisure spaces, foster mutual support networks and increase a sense of

identity with the neighbourhood. In short, not only by redistributing the provision of goods and services between areas of the city but also by acting on what people can effectively do and be in the nearby context in which they live, in other words, by acting also on their individual and community capabilities (Abel & Frohlich, 2012). At least theoretically, these would be the inspiring principles of the integrated interventions developed in the URBANA programme that has been implemented in provincial capitals and municipalities throughout Spain with more than 50,000 inhabitants during the 2007–2013 period (De Gregorio Hurtado, 2017; Ministerio de Economía y Hacienda, 2007).

The previous chapters have dealt with the evaluation of the impacts of urban regeneration policies using aggregated information at the level of Homogeneous Urban Areas. In this chapter we intend to present another evaluative approach using household and individual data from cross-sectional surveys, more specifically, through the information provided by the Living Conditions Survey (ECV), the primary source for the European Union Statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC) in Spain. The ECV is a statistical operation that has been carried out annually in Spain since 2004, following harmonised criteria for all countries in the European Union. It provides information on the income, quality of life and social exclusion of some 180,000 households and more than 400,000 people between 2004–2017 (Table 9.1). After asking Spain's National Institute of Statistics (INE) for the census section code of the households and individuals interviewed, a quasi-experimental study was designed to explore trends followed in different socio-economic indicators by households and individuals residing in urban areas targeted by the URBANA programme and in a sample of paired urban areas acting as controls.[1] In order to ensure sufficient sample sizes, the data were pooled biannually to conduct an initial evaluation of trends in various socio-economic indicators before, during and after the intervention periods (Fig. 9.1).

[1] As detailed in previous chapters, the experimental and control areas were selected using the propensity score matching technique (see Chapter 7).

Table 9.1 Sample sizes of the living conditions survey waves

	Households		*Individuals*	
	N	%	N	%
2004	15,355	8.4	31,368	7.7
2005	12,996	7.1	30,375	7.4
2006	12,205	6.7	28,144	6.9
2007	12,329	6.7	28,656	7
2008	13,014	7.1	30,082	7.4
2009	13,360	7.3	30,836	7.5
2010	13,597	7.4	30,953	7.6
2011	13,109	7.2	29,211	7.2
2012	12,714	6.9	28,210	6.9
2013	12,139	6.6	26,883	6.6
2014	11,965	6.5	26,531	6.5
2015	12,367	6.8	27,215	6.7
2016	14,240	7.8	30,688	7.5
2017	13,740	7.5	29,294	7.2
Total	183,130		408,446	

Measuring Programme Objectives: Household Socio-Economic Situation, Personal Health and House-Environmental Problems

Bearing in mind the major areas of objectives pursued by the URBANA initiative (improving the physical, social, economic, environmental and governance aspects of the areas involved), three indicators were calculated to assess their potential impact based on the information contained in household and personal questionnaires from the various waves of the ECV survey. Firstly, an indicator related to the household socio-economic situation was derived based on the information provided by six items indicating whether the household: could afford to pay for a holiday away from home, at least one week per year; could afford meat, chicken or fish meal (or equivalent for vegetarians) at least every two days; could cope with unforeseen expenses; whether it could make ends meet right to the end of the month; whether total household expenditures were a heavy burden on the household; and, finally, whether the household was at risk of poverty. Negative responses to socio-economic status were coded with a value of −1 and positive responses with a value of 1. Finally, the indicator was

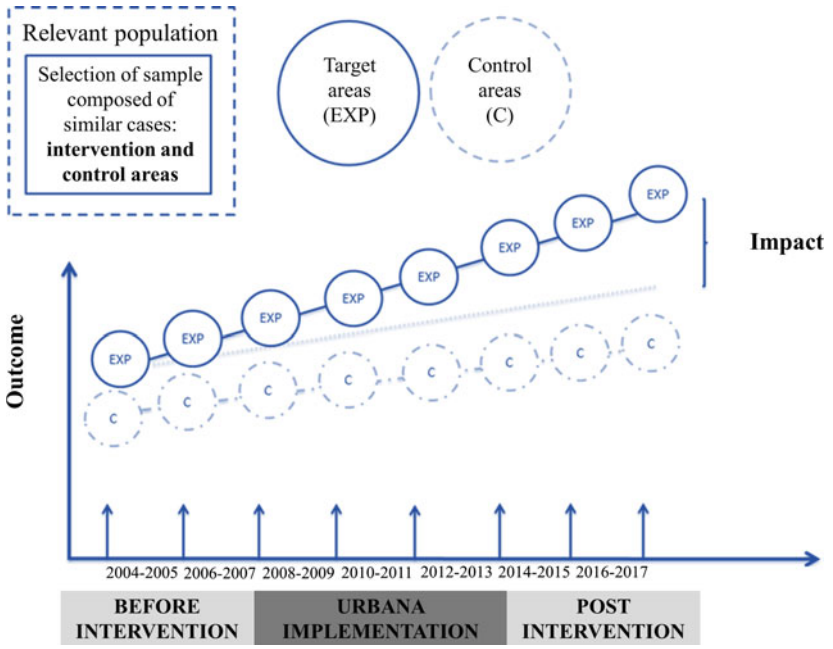

Fig. 9.1 The logic of the quasi-experimental design for trend assessment using cross-sectional data

computed as the sum of all these items and takes values ranging from −6 to 6, with higher values indicating a better household socio-economic situation.

Secondly, another indicator of perception of the environment and housing was calculated based on five items, namely: whether the home suffered from noise problems caused by neighbours or from outside (traffic, factory business); pollution, dirt, or other environmental problems caused by industry or traffic; crime, violence, or vandalism problems in the area; whether the house had problems in terms of leaks, damp on walls, floors, ceilings or foundations, or rot in the floors, window frames or doors, and whether the temperature of the house was adequate during the winter. Similarly, negative responses were coded with a value of −1

and positive responses with a value of 1, and therefore, the overall indicator takes values ranging from −5 to 5, with positive values indicating better perceptions of the environment and housing situation.

Thirdly, the self-perceived health was selected as an indicator of the quality of life. Respondents were asked about their overall state of health, choosing an answer among five options: very good (1), good, fair, bad or very bad (5). The coding was reversed, and then higher values indicate a better perception of the informant's overall state of health.[2]

Multiple linear regression models were used to explore change trends in the three selected indicators, considering as independent variables the 'intervention', which identifies cases situated in an experimental or control area; the variable 'period', which identifies the biannual period in which the survey was conducted, as well as a series of control variables for each indicator detailed in the results section. Then, an interaction effect between the intervention and the period in which the survey took place was introduced in regression models.[3] This interaction will indicate if there are significant differences in the evolution of indicators between the control and intervention areas. The models were calculated using the Generalised Linear Model procedure. For this analysis, the experimental group encompassed 23 urban areas ($N_{\text{households}} = 2531$ and $N_{\text{individuals}} = 5558$) and the control group 105 matched urban areas ($N_{\text{households}} = 9645$ and $N_{\text{individuals}} = 21{,}334$).

[2] Only people interviewed in each wave of the ECV survey aged between 35–75 years were considered for the analysis of overall state of health, since this is the population group that appears to show greater residential stability and this helps to minimise possible biases resulting from population change in the intervention areas ($N_{\text{intervention areas}} = 5558$ y $N_{\text{control areas}} = 21{,}334$).

[3] $y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_1 X_2 + \ldots \beta_k X_k + u$

This is a linear model, with normal distribution and identity link function, where β_0 is the intersection (the mean value for the whole sample); $\beta_1 X_1$ indicates the difference between intervention and control areas; $\beta_2 X_2$ indicates a positive or negative trend of change in the indicator considered over the evaluation period; and interaction $\beta_3 X_1 X_2$ would indicate the direction of evolution for households or residents of the intervention areas compared to those of the control areas, that is, whether the trend of change is different between them. This would show that the programme has had an impact.

Is There an 'Average' Impact of the URBANA Projects?

Regarding changes in the socio-economic situation of households, the results show a slightly negative trend in the intervention neighbourhoods (Table 9.2: $\beta = -0.097$, p-value ≤ 0.05). However, the socio-economic situation of households appears to remain constant throughout the period considered in the control areas, as shown in Fig. 9.2. The first graph shows that during the period before the implementation of the URBANA programme, there appeared to be no significant differences in the socio-economic conditions of households between the intervention and control areas, but the most negative evolution observed in the intervention areas from 2008 onwards shows a degree of amplification of these differences. Therefore, these results do not support the socio-economic situation of all households living in URBANA areas improved after the interventions. Regarding the perceptions about the quality of the urban environment and housing, a positive period effect is observed; in other words, this indicator seems to have improved in both types of areas over the period considered ($\beta = 0.140$; p-value ≤ 0.001, result not shown in tables). However, this positive evolution appears to be less intense in intervention areas than in control ones (Table 9.2: $\beta = -0.073$; p-value ≤ 0.01).

As shown in Fig. 9.2, households' perceptions have evolved positively in both types of areas. However, the improvement trend is slightly higher in the control areas than in the intervention ones. It is, therefore, also not possible to conclude that the URBANA programme has positively impacted the perceived quality of the urban environment and housing. Finally, the results for self-perceived health also show a positive period

Table 9.2 Trends in indicators for intervention and control areas

	B	*Error*	*Sig*
Household socio-economic indicator	−0.097	0.0440	*
Quality of the environment and housing	−0.073	0.0257	**
Self-perceived health	0.004	0.0071	

***$p < 0.001$, **$p < 0.01$, *$p < 0.05$

Household Socio-economic model: controlled by household typology

Housing-Environment Quality model: controlled by household typology and household at risk of poverty

Self-perceived health model: controlled by age, sex, marital status and education level

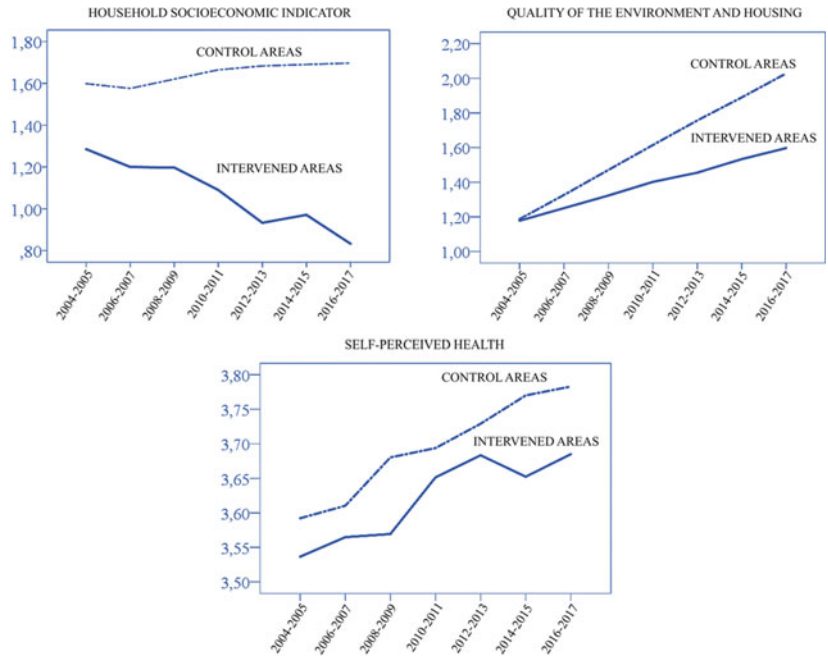

Fig. 9.2 Predicted trends in intervened and control areas

effect, perceived general state of health appears to have improved for the whole sample in the study period considered. However, there are no significant differences between intervention and control areas (Table 9.2: $\beta = 0.004$; p-value > 0.05). The findings of our analyses do not support an impact on the self-perceived health of the whole population living in the intervention areas (Fig. 9.2).

Do Impacts Depend on the Properties of the Context in Which the Intervention Takes Place?

The question posed in the previous section assumed that all initiatives developed within the framework of URBANA projects should have positive effects on social, economic and environmental aspects for the overall population residing in the areas concerned. However, the lack of evidence

regarding 'average' impacts does not imply that the programme might not have generated differential impacts for population sub-groups. For example, impacts could be conditioned by the characteristics of the urban context in which the intervention takes place, or they may be restricted to specific groups of residents whose characteristics might make them more prone to the improvements the interventions seek to promote (see Chapter 6). To illustrate this argument, we examine whether the programme's effects are conditioned by the degree of vulnerability of urban areas. To this end, the same model was applied to the sample of households and persons residing in the most vulnerable areas, defined by their unemployment rate.[4]

Firstly, the results show that, even though the analysis is limited to the most vulnerable areas, there are no differences between the evolution of the socio-economic conditions of households in the intervention and control areas (Table 9.3: $\beta = -0.091$; p-value > 0.05). Figure 9.3 shows that the estimated trend in control urban areas remains constant, and although a slight negative trend appears to be seen in the experimental areas, these are not statistically significant. Secondly, the analyses show that the perceived quality of the urban environment and housing has improved more intensely among households in the intervention areas compared with control areas (Table 9.3: $\beta = 0.124$; p-value ≤ 0.05). The second graph of Fig. 9.3 shows that this perception is higher among households in the control areas, but the trend shows that this perception remains constant in the control areas, whereas it improves moderately in the case of households in the intervention areas. Something similar occurs regarding self-perceived health. Although the residents of the control areas have a better self-perception of their health, which even seems to improve slightly, the trend of improvement of this indicator among the residents of the vulnerable intervention areas seems to be stronger ($\beta = 0.058$, p-value ≤ 0.001). Therefore, these 'explorations' regarding the relative improvement of perceived environmental quality and state of

[4] Only households and persons residing in areas where the unemployment rate in 2001 was greater than or equal to 21.30% (the national average) are considered in the analysis. Information taken from the Spanish Atlas of Urban Vulnerability 2001. $N_{\text{households}} = 1622$ ($N_{\text{households intervention areas}} = 273$ and $N_{\text{households control areas}} = 1349$); $N_{\text{individuals}} = 2728$ ($N_{\text{individuals intervention areas}} = 447$ and $N_{\text{individuals control areas}} = 2281$).

Table 9.3 Trends in indicators for intervened and control areas with a high level of socio-spatial vulnerability

	β	*Error*	*Sig*
Household socio-economic indicator	−0.091	0.0869	
Quality of the environment and housing	0.124	0.0545	*
Self-perceived health	0.058	0.0144	***

***$p < 0.001$, **$p < 0.01$, *$p < 0.05$
Household Socio-economic model: controlled by household typology
Housing-Environment Quality model: controlled by household typology and household at risk of poverty
Self-perceived health model: controlled by age, sex, marital status and education level

health in the intervention areas suggest that the programme potentially has a positive impact in the most vulnerable contexts.

Some Brief Reflections About the 'Average' and 'Heterogeneous' Policy Impacts of EU Urban Integrated Strategies

The main objective of this study was to explore the impact of the URBANA programme by applying a research design based on controlled trends analysis based on cross-sectional data for households and individuals. Although these initial results do not seem to provide conclusive evidence regarding the impacts of the programme, they help illustrate some of the possibilities offered by the use of cross-sectional survey series in evaluating such policies, which was one of the main objectives of this chapter.

From a methodological point of view, when compared with aggregate data sources, such as population censuses, cross-sectional data series have the advantage of providing a broader range of measurements on processes and phenomena related to programme objectives. In addition, if government agencies give the researchers georeferenced information, as is the case in this research, this type of data facilitates the assessment of trends using multiple measurements from the relevant indicators. On the other hand, by applying a quasi-experimental design logic, the georeferenced cross-sectional data allow these trends to be studied in a controlled way, thus improving causal inferences about the possible impacts of interventions. These georeferenced data also facilitate the integration

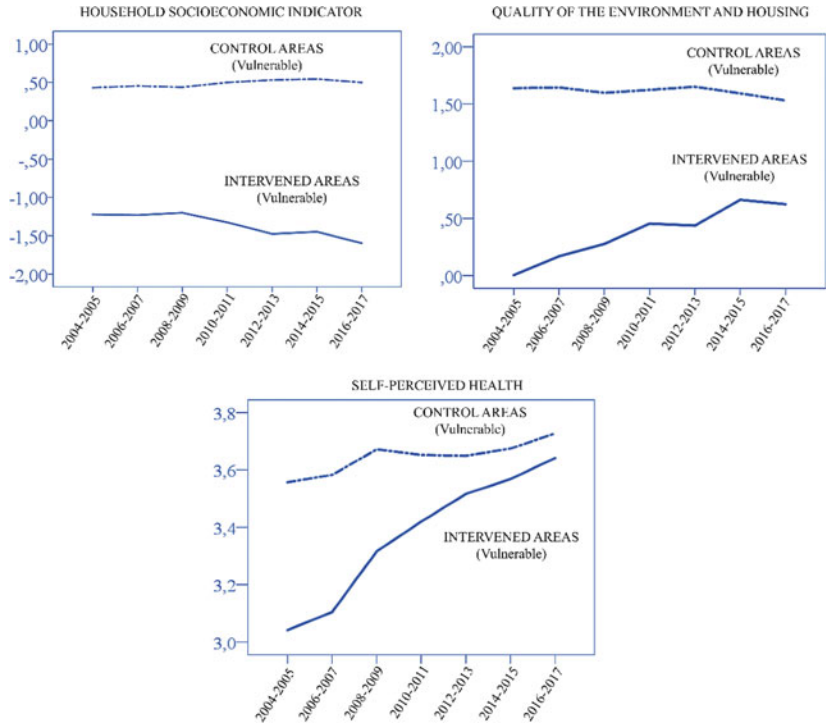

Fig. 9.3 Predicted trends in intervened and control areas with a high level of socio-spatial vulnerability

of information between various sources at different levels, for example, regarding the characteristics of households, individuals and urban areas. This integration makes it possible to explore the direct and indirect impacts of interventions, in other words, whether they produce significant changes in the living conditions of the entire population residing in the intervention areas and/or whether they have the ability to interact with other individual or contextual properties, generating moderating or mediating effects (Navarro, 2016). In short, the integration of contextual information allows the evaluation process to consider the multilevel nature of the mechanisms whereby impacts of this type of policy might occur, placing the phenomena on their corresponding scale and exploring how they interact with each other.

Obviously, the use of cross-sectional survey series is not without problems. Among the most relevant limitations, it should be noted that this type of information raises difficulties in considering residential changes that have occurred in the intervention areas within the analysis, which would have consequences in terms of attributing the results to the programme evaluated (as shown in the previous chapter).

From an evaluative point of view, the results presented indicate no evidence of an 'average' impact on the programme with regard to the socio-economic conditions of households, perceived quality of the housing and neighbourhood environment and their health. Even the households' socio-economic situation shows intervention areas have declined since 2008 despite the intervention process. In this regard, it cannot be ignored that certain external factors, such as the economic crisis experienced in Spain, present a great challenge for evaluating the socio-economic impacts of this type of programme. Along these lines, studies suggest that the recent economic crisis is an important disruption factor in assessing the impact of urban regeneration programmes implemented during the crisis period and also that the Great Recession did not affect all territories in the same way. However, this circumstance also offers a unique opportunity to test whether urban initiatives have the capacity to moderate the negative effects of the crisis, as other studies suggest (Mehdipanah et al., 2014; Zapata-Moya & Navarro Yáñez, 2021).

Assuming that the effects of the economic crisis have been more intense in the most vulnerable areas, leading to a relative loss of resources for residents of these areas, the decision was made to conduct the evaluation based only on information from the households and persons surveyed from census sections with high unemployment rates. Results show interventions appear to produce a relative improvement in the quality of the urban environment and in health among households and people living in these areas, which might be interpreted in line with the hypothesis that such interventions could moderate the consequences of the crisis.

Finally, our findings that programme impacts may be conditioned by the degree of vulnerability of the context also seems consistent with the resource substitution hypothesis, which suggests that when multiple resources are available, quality of life depends to a lesser extent on the presence or absence of a specific resource since the resources are interchangeable with each other (Ross & Mirowsky, 2006). Consequently, the

impact of interventions could be greater for those with fewer alternative resources before the intervention, such as households and individuals residing in the most vulnerable intervention areas.

However, it was not the objective of this analysis to obtain a conclusive answer to the questions asked. The idea was to illustrate the possibilities that arise from using transversal information in evaluating such policies and provide some policy evidence in the case of the URBANA Initiative in Spain. This exercise provides previously non-existing policy evidence, and potentialities and limitations of the research design using existing data have been indicated. Both issues show evaluative exercises about urban initiatives promoted by the EU should consider the importance of certain context properties or individual characteristics in greater detail. This issue raises the challenge of multilevel controlled evaluation if we aim to improve causal inference and unpick the mechanisms that produce (or do not) the desired impacts of this type of urban policy.

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CHAPTER 10

‘Cultural Buzz’ on the Neighbourhood: The Impact of the URBAN I Initiative on Cultural Consumption Opportunities

Cristina Mateos Mora and Clemente J. Navarro Yáñez

Abstract Urban development projects typically include policy actions to change neighbourhoods as cultural spaces. These actions try to promote quality of life among residents through cultural services and to generate opportunities for local economic development: educational and instrumental strategies in relation to the role of cultural policies in local development, respectively. This chapter briefly analyses the ‘cultural contents’ of local plans in terms of their orientation towards educational and instrumental strategies This is followed by an analysis of the impact of urban projects on the ‘cultural scenes’ of neighbourhoods. The cultural scenes approach examines neighbourhoods as a cluster of cultural consumption

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opportunities in terms of existing cultural amenities and the lifestyles they promote. The chapter compares two types of cultural scenes: communitarian (oriented to residents) and innovative (oriented to promote economic development and tourism attraction). Comparing experimental and control neighbourhoods between 1991 and 2001 shows that local projects enable a trend towards less communitarian cultural scenes.

Keywords Cultural scenes · Cultural consumption opportunities · Urban policies · Comparative analysis · European Union

Introduction

Culture, arts and creativity are central to the analysis of urban development and the policy agendas of local governments, international organisations, the European Union, non-governmental bodies and other stakeholders (European Commission, 2018). Therefore, promoting creative spaces and activities linked to culture is an important element in urban regeneration and development initiatives (Bianchini, 1993). These initiatives propose different actions to generate a context or cultural buzz in cities and neighbourhoods that favour certain practices and interactions among inhabitants. These can improve social cohesion in the city and neighbourhoods and could also attract certain types of economic activities and social groups linked to them. But to what extent did the URBAN Initiative incorporate these contents? To what extent did it affect the 'cultural buzz' of the neighbourhoods where it was implemented?

In this chapter, we will examine some ideas and try to provide evidence on this issue. We will analyse the change of the neighbourhood as a cultural context before and after urban initiatives applying two perspectives to study this context. On the one hand, considering its volume, the extent to which the projects have given rise within the neighbourhoods to more space and equipment providing more opportunities for cultural consumption. And on the other hand, the type of cultural buzz that characterises them, the lifestyles that such spaces of cultural consumption encourage and promote, using the perspective of cultural scenes (Silver et al., 2010).

Cities and Neighbourhoods as Cultural Contexts: Urban Policies and the 'Cultural Buzz' of Neighbourhoods

Urban analysis has pointed out that the shift towards post-industrial societies implies, among other issues, that cultural factors and lifestyles in the city have become just as important as their productive activities. The city is not only a residential space or an economic activity; it must also be understood as a cultural context. City expresses different lifestyles that could promote innovation and creativity, or, more generally, can foster certain social practices and interactions (Silver et al., 2010). Based on this idea, since the 1980s 'the arts have been given a key role in strategies to deal with urban problems from social exclusion to the rehabilitation of postindustrial sites', in most cases due to industrial change in urban centres and the economic restructuring of industrial cities (Miles, 2005: 889; cited in Lees & Melhuish, 2015). For example, Scott (2000) and Markusen (1996) highlighted the importance of clusters of cultural industries as promoters of economic development. Florida (2002) emphasised the role of the cultural context, in terms of tolerance and opportunities for cultural consumption linked to the neo-Bohemian lifestyle, factors that would attract activities and creative class, and thus promote territorial development. Clark (2003) analysed the impact of different cultural spaces and services on urban development, along the lines raised by Glaeser et al. (2001), and the study by Navarro et al. (2014) in the case of Spain. Other studies have highlighted that exposure to different kinds of cultural contexts promotes different social practices and lifestyles, somewhat independently of the resources or social position of inhabitants, whether in terms of cultural consumption or healthy habits (Navarro and Rodríguez-Garcia, 2014; Zapata-Moya et al., 2020).

But, if these are their effects, how are these spaces generated or created? On the one hand, the generation of different cultural contexts can be brought about by the interaction between different types of agents who induce significant practices in the space where they live or develop their activities. In this case, the residential location patterns between specific groups seem to play a role, such as young artists attracted by the local authenticity of particular urban spaces (Lloyd, 2002; Zukin, 1995). On the other hand, public institutions can promote these spaces through specific policies or plans to change the cultural context of neighbourhoods by creating new spaces or activities. Whereas the first process

involves a 'demand model' whereby residents demand and generate specific opportunities for cultural consumption according to their lifestyle, the second would imply a 'supply model' with the authorities creating a favourable environment for the development of different cultural activities and practices that would attract specific collectives and activities (Navarro, 2013).

In fact, the second model has played and continues to play a significant role in urban development initiatives through the promotion of cultural and creative spaces, both in the proposals for urban regeneration in the 1980s and the current initiatives for integrated urban development (Bassett, 1993). However, these initiatives can foster different scenarios or orientations depending on the role they give culture in the urban development strategy they promote. Two broad strategies, not necessarily incompatible with each other, can be defined, as shown by analyses of European and Spanish cities: instrumental and planning (Navarro & Clark, 2012; Rodríguez-García et al., 2014). The first approach turns changes in the cultural buzz of the neighbourhood into an instrument to encourage and attract economic activity (businesses, creative groups, or visitors). New cultural spaces, such as museums, galleries or performance spaces, but also convention centres, congresses, or cultural and sporting events, are examples of this strategy linked to the idea of the 'creative city'. The second approach, more closely related to the notion of the 'educational city', aims to make culture more accessible and available to foster cultural practices among residents, seeking to take advantage of the potential effects on social cohesion in the neighbourhood. Neighbourhoods' socio-cultural and civic centres, open public spaces, or participatory cultural initiatives are examples of the initiatives that would characterise this strategy, linked more to welfare policies than economic development policies. One might expect, therefore, that the presence of these strategies in urban development projects will have different effects on the cultural buzz of the neighbourhood or the city. So what kind of cultural buzz would be created as a result of these strategies?

Urban Development Strategies and Cultural Buzz: Quantity and Type of Opportunities for Cultural Consumption

The cultural context of neighbourhoods has chiefly been analysed from three perspectives: which economic activity is located in them (existence and concentration of cultural and creative industries), who are their residents (weighting or concentration of creative groups among their inhabitants), and what lifestyles are promoted through the existing opportunities for cultural consumption (Mateos, 2016; Navarro, 2013). This third approach aims to analyse the cultural buzz of places as cultural scenes. These scenes mean the localisation of specific kinds of spaces, equipment and services that facilitate different types of cultural consumption, linked to culture in a more restricted sense (museums, theatres, …), as well as more everyday practices (retail, leisure, or entertainment) (Silver et al., 2010).

More specifically, we will consider the density of the 'cultural market', that is, the presence of spaces, facilities and services that provide opportunities for cultural consumption in the neighbourhoods per thousand residents. But we will also look at the kind of cultural scene they represent. Very briefly, the cultural scenes approach analyses what cultural practices might be developed in places through three main dimensions and specific sub-dimensions: the reasons why they are used (tradition, utilitarian, self-expression,…), the aesthetic form or style that characterises them (transgression, glamour, formality, closeness,…) or the identity that they allow to be expressed and/or generated (localist, entrepreneurial, state, ethnic,…). The spaces, services or equipment available in a neighbourhood will be more or less prominent in these sub-dimensions according to the cultural practices that can be developed in them, giving an account of the type of cultural scene in the neighbourhood (Silver et al., 2010).

Various analyses conducted at different geographical scales (local work systems, cities, neighbourhoods…) have shown that this perspective identify two basic orientations: on the one hand, a 'community' orientation, where tradition, closeness and localism prevail, thereby generating cultural practices more linked to the classical—communitarian—idea of 'neighbourhood life'; and, on the other, an innovative orientation, where self-expression or transgression would prevail, which would foster cultural practices more linked to artistic expression, as well as aesthetic and cultural

distinction, but also to innovation and economic development (Mateos, 2016; Mateos et al., 2012; Navarro, 2012; Navarro et al., 2014).[1]

In general, the most highlighted strategies in the literature of cultural-led regeneration are the creation of cultural districts, preservation and promotion of urban heritage, the use of art projects and events to generate tourism, and the role of public art, street furniture, landscaping and environmental art. However, there has been much discussion in recent years about the appropriateness of these measures. Currently, the idea that it is convenient to use culture as an impulse for urban economic growth to improve its competitive position is also accompanied by the question of whether we know the nature of the impact of cultural actions in cities, or to what extent these strategies are based on informed analysis or what impacts they have on the lives of their inhabitants? (Miles, 2005).

Based on the above, one might infer that the URBAN initiative could increase opportunities for cultural consumption by promoting economic spaces and activities linked to cultural production and consumption. But also, such projects might promote different types of cultural scenes according to the type of spaces and equipment on which they focus their actions. In this case, the cultural scenes perspective distinguishes between more community-oriented (socio-cultural centres, open public spaces and cultural activities aimed at residents of the neighbourhood) or more innovation-oriented (centres for companies, for large events, museums and heritage to attract visitors, etc.). Some examples point to similar effects through analyses of major cultural events or urban regeneration initiatives in Spain (Navarro, 2013; Navarro et al., 2013) or urban development initiatives in the historical centres of large cities (Bromley et al., 2005).

The URBAN Initiative: 'Culture' as a Project Objective and Its Potential Impacts

Before examining the potential effect of the URBAN Initiative on the cultural buzz of neighbourhoods, the following question needs

[1] Business establishments in neighbourhoods are considered according to their four-digit CNAE code. The list of types included in the analyses, as well as details of the methodology used when analysing cultural scenes, can be seen, for example, in Navarro et al. (2014). Here we use data on existing facilities at the census section level provided by E-INFOMA.

answering: What is the presence of the two strategies outlined above in URBAN Initiative projects? Are they more oriented towards an instrumental strategy or a planning strategy? So far, we have seen that these projects are mainly structured around three major policy sectors: the physical environment, the promotion of economic development, and social integration (see Chapter 4). But what specific issues are the objectives of the actions included in URBAN I projects focused on these three major areas? Fig. 10.1 shows the percentage of projects in the URBAN I Initiatives that have among their objectives issues more directly related to our object of study, as well as those that are most frequently found in these three areas of public policy. Concerning territory, actions tend to focus on providing basic urban infrastructure and services, and to some extent, creating or improving public spaces, with policy measures that include heritage among the established objectives being present to a lesser degree. Economic activities focus mainly on the promotion of commerce, which can include different types of activities. Some of them could be more closely linked to innovation and creativity, which could account for more innovative scenes, but also proximity commerce, which would probably be more linked to community scenes. However, the promotion of cultural industries is rare. In the field of social integration, the key objectives include employability or social policy actions (specific groups and processes of social excision), and, to a lesser extent, the creation of socio-cultural spaces and activities for residents.

This analysis would show that the initiatives developed are more oriented towards using culture as a 'planning strategy' than an 'instrumental strategy'. Nevertheless, the volume and nature of opportunities for cultural consumption could also change by combining policy actions oriented to improve the physical environment of neighbourhoods to attract economic activities, creative groups or tourism and motivational tools to promote commercial business (grants, subsidies,…).[2] In the longer term, these improvements could enhance other results and changes in the neighbourhood. Better socio-spatial conditions could attract new social groups with higher socio-economic status or creative sectors demanding other kinds of cultural consumption opportunities as well as

[2] This is an example in which motivational and contextual mechanisms are combined—integrated—to produce effects—to attain specific objectives—within the neighbourhood (see Chapter 6).

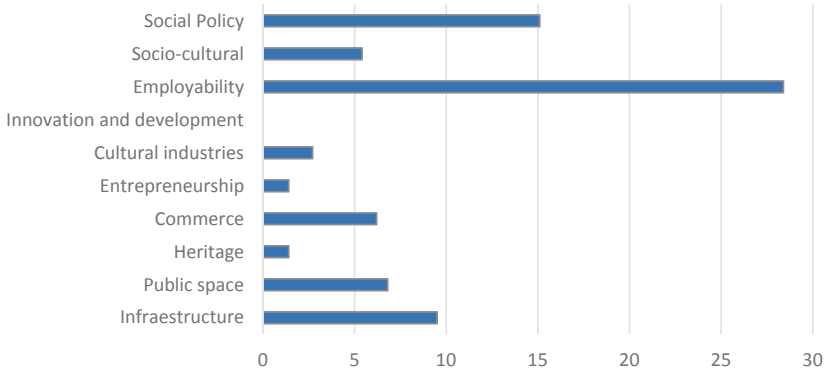

Fig. 10.1 Objectives of policy actions in URBAN I projects (Percentage over the total number of projects [$n = 514$ policy actions]) (*Note* In each policy sector, only the issue with the highest score and those related to culture, creativity and innovation are included)

new businesses focused on more innovative and unconventional cultural consumption patterns (Lloyd, 2002; Navarro et al., 2014).

The Impact of the URBAN Initiative on the Cultural Buzz of Neighbourhoods: Sort and Long Time Effects

In order to analyse the impact of the URBAN I Initiative on the cultural buzz of urban areas, we have applied a quasi-experimental design based on the propensity score matching technique and the application of repeat measures models. The dRM indicator is used to compute the effect size of the interventions.[3] Specifically, the intervention impacts have been analysed by comparing change trajectories in experimental and control urban areas concerning two issues: the density of the cultural market, as the number of facilities by residents, and the nature of the cultural scenes, from more community-based to more innovative (according to the definition and methodology mentioned above). We shall analyse the trends of

[3] More details about the propensity score matching applied in Chapter 7. A similar strategy applying repeat measure models and dRM in Chapter 8.

change by considering three moments in time: pre-intervention (1991), post-intervention in the short term (2001), and post-intervention in the medium to long term (2011). Firstly, we will present the results for the whole period considered (1991–2011), and then for two more specific periods (1991–2001 and 2001–2011).

Results indicate an increase in the density of opportunities for cultural consumption in both control and experimental areas. However, it was more accentuated among the latter (differences of 0.9 and 1.3 points, respectively: see Table 10.1). If we focus on the orientation of cultural scenes, we see that it tends to be more community-based than innovative in both types of urban areas, although there is a tendency to move towards less community-based scenes in experimental areas than in control areas (differences equal to 0.03 and 0.02, respectively).

Thus, analysis of the period 1991–2011 shows an increase in the density of the cultural market and a slight trend towards less community-based cultural scenes, but without a strongly prevalent innovative orientation either. Is this due to the impact of the URBAN Initiative? Analysis of the effect size using the dRM indicator shows that there does appear to be an impact in the first case, but not in the second. Although the difference is fairly small, the changing trend in the density of cultural consumption opportunities is higher in experimental areas (dRM = 0.34, CI90%: 0.5; 0.65). This means the densification trend in about 63% of the experimental sites is higher than that of the control areas. In contrast, the URBAN Initiative does not appear to have had a clear impact on the nature of cultural scenes, as the effect size value is smaller and not statistically significant (dRM = 0.24: CI90%: −0.06; 0.54).

The analysis of the two specific periods shows that between 1991 and 2001, the density of opportunities for cultural consumption increased in both experimental and control areas, although the increase was somewhat higher among the former (Fig. 10.2). This trend continued in the period between 2001 and 2011. In fact, differences in change patterns are similar in both periods (dRM1991–2001 = 0.34; CI90%: 0.04; 0.65; dRM2001–2011 = 0.33; CI90%: 0.031; 0.64). However, there is a small impact as regards cultural scenes between 1991 and 2001 (dRM1991–2001 = 0.15; CI90%: −0.14; 0.46), but in the long term, although the pattern of change of that period is maintained, the differences between experimental and control areas again widen as a consequence of more intense change among the latter (dRM2001–2011 = 0.31; CI90%: 0.01; 0.61).

Table 10.1 Cultural environment in experimental and control areas: volume and scenes orientation (1991–2011) (Means [standard deviations])

		1991	*2001*	*2011*	*2011–1991*
Density: opportunities for cultural consumption per capita	Control areas	0,142 (0,233)	0,505(0,682)	1,052 (1,281)	0,909(1,068)
	Experimental areas	0,228(0,326)	0,759(0,884)	1,524(1,62)	1,296(1,322)
	Total	0,158(0,253)	0,552(0,725)	1,139(1,355)	0,98(1,123)
Scenes orientation: Community vs. Innovative	Control areas	−0,272 (0,166)	−0,273(0,094)	−0,249 (0,079)	0,023(0,184)
	Experimental areas	−0,296(0,089)	−0,271(0,078)	−0,265(0,067)	0,031(0,079)
	Total	−0,276 (0,155)	−0,273(0,091)	−0,252(0,077)	0,024(0,169)

Note Negative values in the 'scenes orientation' variable mean more communitarian scenes, and positive values mean more innovative cultural scenes

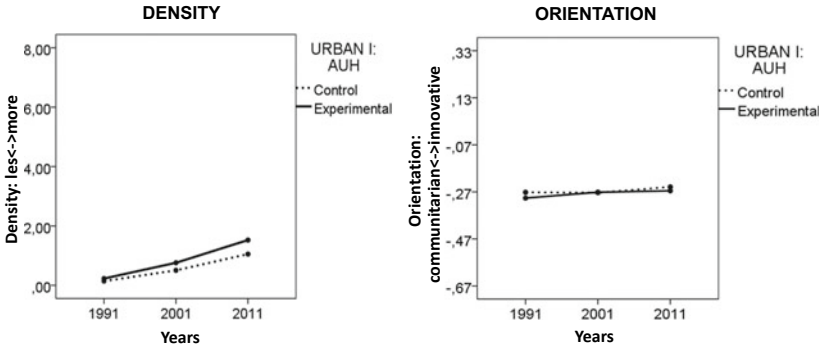

Fig. 10.2 The impact of URBAN I on the cultural environment of neighbourhoods: density and cultural scenes orientation of their cultural consumption opportunities (Marginal means estimated by repeated-measures models)

In sum, the result for the analysed period shows what might be expected of the kinds of actions developed by the URBAN I Initiative regarding opportunities for cultural consumption. The density of the cultural market shows an upward trend since commerce of proximity is encouraged, as well as facilities to favour residents' access to cultural activities. However, the effects are less obvious for cultural scenes: there appears to be a shift towards less community-based scenes with a short-term 'boost' (1991–2001), which continues later, but points to a generalised and similar change in the two types of areas than to an impact of the URBAN Initiative.

Final Considerations: On the 'Sustainability' of Impacts

The results presented above appear to be in line with the foreseeable outcomes of the URBAN I Initiative, aimed more towards the planning strategy, where culture is understood in terms of promoting facilities and services aimed at residents, 'culture for all', rather than as an instrument of economic development. This strategy results in increased opportunities for cultural consumption in terms of their density, which is greater in the experimental neighbourhoods. However, it does not appear to produce a significant change in the character of their cultural scenes; they remain

community-based and oriented towards the neighbourhood's daily life. This result does not imply that the projects have not generated an effect in terms of the closeness, involvement and participation of their residents in cultural activities, an issue that could be analysed using other data sources and analyses. Or that, over the longer term, the increased density of the neighbourhood's 'cultural market', by means of this 'supply model' of opportunities for cultural consumption, does not make these urban spaces more attractive for other economic activities or new groups of residents. Or even more, improvements in the living conditions or socio-economic status of its traditional residents (as seen in chapter eight), do not generate some (albeit minor) increase in the demand for new, less community-based spaces for cultural consumption.

These patterns could means that the sustainability of the changes generated by urban development projects in the cultural buzz of neighbourhoods over time might depend not only on specific initiatives in this regard, but also on changes in other policy areas and goals, such as space, economic activity or the social composition of neighbourhoods, thereby evidencing the integrated nature of these initiatives and the possible inter-relationship between the effects, direct or indirect, derived from different types of actions over time.

By including a broader time perspective, the reinforcement (in density) or absence of change (in cultural scenes) as an impact of these projects becomes evident. From this, it would be possible to analyse whether these effects are associated, at different moments in time, with other effects in other spheres of action and proposed goals tackled by projects. In addition, this could combine with the possible existence of composition effects linked, for example, to differences in the position occupied by neighbourhoods within the general dynamics of their respective cities or potential differences in project strategies (according to the importance of policy actions oriented to culture). Or perhaps, because the impact of the projects does not reside so much in the nature of cultural scenes in the short and medium-term, but above all, in the changes they can bring about in the social composition of the neighbourhood and the effect this could have on the cultural buzz in the longer term. This would mean that projects would actually promote a 'demand model' for the cultural buzz of the neighbourhood rather than a 'supply model'. Undoubtedly, this issue requires further investigation to better understand culture as a tool in sustainable and integrated urban development initiatives promoted by the EU.

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CHAPTER 11

The 'Historical City Centre' Question: How Have the Historical Centres of Major Cities Changed After the Intervention of the URBAN I Initiative?

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Abstract One of the main goals of urban planning is to reduce 'urban inequalities' between neighbourhoods to promote socio-spatial cohesion

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within the city. Cohesion is achieved by reducing the social and spatial distance of targeted areas compared to the city as a whole. This chapter aims to contribute to the study of this effect by analysing the social change in intervened neighbourhoods compared to change in all the non-intervened. The areas of five major Spanish cities (Madrid, Malaga, Sevilla, Valencia y Zaragoza), where URBAN initiatives were implemented, were analysed. This chapter presents the change in the neighbourhoods' relative position—based on residents' socio-economic status—within the city hierarchy. The difference was explored by comparing and analysing the census data for 1991 and 2001. Evidence suggests that intervened neighbourhoods improved their relative position within the city raking.

Keywords Urban policies · Urban equality · Socio-spatial cohesion · Urban policy impact · Inner city · Neighbourhoods

Introduction

One of the objectives of the URBAN Initiative was to improve the quality of life in urban areas with high levels of socio-spatial vulnerability in their respective cities. Thus, at least implicitly, it sought to rebalance the city by bringing these areas closer to the urban dynamic as a whole, both from a physical (public space, urban mobility, accessibility, etc.) and socio-economic point of view (unemployment, social exclusion processes, etc.).

This chapter aims to evaluate this implicit objective of the URBAN Initiative. In order to do this, we will contextualise in each city the change in the levels of socio-spatial vulnerability of the intervention areas at a time before and after the implementation of the URBAN projects (1991 and 2001). As explained below, this exercise focusses on the historical centres of major cities, one of the main targets of this Initiative. These Spanish urban areas were at the centre of debate and public interest in the 1980s. At the time, this was due to their urban and socio-economic disadvantage. Nowadays, these urban areas remain highly debated within the discussion of gentrification.

The URBAN Initiative as a Socio-Spatial Rebalancing Policy in the City: Contextualised Improvements and Changes

Integrated urban regeneration programmes involve intervention in urban areas that are deemed to be, for various reasons, out of step with the overall dynamics of the city. Whether they are implemented in peripheral areas with a high concentration of social problems, or in 'degraded' areas of the historic city, they seek to increase levels of social cohesion in the city by improving these vulnerable areas. One of the central ideas is thus to improve the city by transforming its neighbourhoods (Navarro et al., 2016; van Gent et al., 2009).

This idea was key to the URBAN I Community Initiative, as well as the broader framework of the urban dimension of EU policies in which it was developed, as shown, for example, in documents such as the *Aalborg Charter (1994)* and the European Commission report *Europe 2000+* (1995). The diagnosis provided in these documents assumed that a key component in the decline of large cities was due to the decay of urban fabric and the concentration of social exclusion processes in certain areas and, therefore, the existence of socio-spatial segregation processes in these areas (De Gregorio Hurtado, 2014). It was, therefore, a matter of developing programmes to ensure the socio-spatial rebalancing of European cities. In particular, one of the central goals proposed by the URBAN was the incorporation of vulnerable areas into the social and economic dynamics of their cities through the attraction of economic activity, as well as the generation of confidence and security for the population residing in those areas (European Commission, 1994).

Nevertheless, did the URBAN Initiative manage to rebalance the cities where it was implemented? More specifically, did it achieve its objective of bringing the areas where it was applied into closer alignment with the urban dynamics of their respective cities? To answer this question, we must know not only whether these urban areas improved but also whether or not they did so to the same extent as the cities where they are located. The achievement of pursued goals should be shown as improvements in the socio-spatial conditions of the urban areas targeted by the URBAN Initiative. However, if these improvements are similar to all the other city urban areas, one might think it shows a more general process of improvement in the city rather than a consequence of the programme implementation. In other words, there would be an impact in

terms of urban rebalancing if the intervention area shows more significant improvement than its respective city as a whole.

Additionally, it should be noted that the existing literature has pointed out that public intervention can be one of the primary causes of gentrification (Hackworth & Smith, 2001; Paton & Cooper, 2016) and, ultimately, an unintended effect of urban regeneration policies (Zuk et al., 2018). Moreover, gentrification has been used as a tool for urban renewal (Davidson, 2008). In this regard, most analyses about gentrification based on aggregate data at the neighbourhood (or census tract) level compare the change in specific urban areas with the change in the city as a whole in order to show population replacement trends pointed out in gentrification processes (Fernández-García, 2021). Therefore, it will be necessary to consider whether the possible improvements detected between the different temporal points may reflect this type of replacement process due to led-state gentrification rather than improving the living conditions of the traditional inhabitants of targeted neighbourhoods.

Methodology: Case Selection and Analysis Strategy

The previous ideas comparatively analyse the changes observed in the intervention urban areas with those of their respective cities. To this end, we will use as a territorial unit the homogeneous urban areas (HUA) defined in each city (see Chapter 7) and compare the changes in their socio-spatial vulnerability levels between 1991 and 2001.

We have chosen URBAN I cities where there are at least 30 HUA. Specifically, and in order of their demographic size, they are Madrid, Valencia, Seville, Zaragoza, and Malaga. This means that the analysis focusses on historical centres, the territorial target of URBAN I projects in these cities. In part, this highlights the importance of the problems facing historic centres at that time. Different urban processes had important consequences throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

On the one hand, processes of relocation and de-industrialisation marked the decline of the industrial city (Fernández Salinas, 1994), turning cities, especially their central areas, into specialised tertiary activities and consumer services districts. On the other hand, dynamics of sub-urbanisation were initiated that promoted the demographic growth of metropolitan areas to the detriment of their centres (Gil-alonso & Bayona-i-carrasco, 2012; Nel-lo, 2004). The result of these processes for

urban centres was ambivalent: they were turned into spaces of opportunity for commercial activity due to their central localisation and the disposal of significant cultural heritage, but they concentrated high rates of unemployment, population ageing, infrastructure deficits, and urban problems in old housing stock that was, sometimes, in deplorable condition.

The diagnosis of the projects analysed combines these two challenges. On the one hand, there are severe problems of social exclusion, such as high levels of unemployment, pockets of poverty, ageing dynamics, and a whole range of problems related to social disorganisation, such as petty crime, drug dealing and consumption, and prostitution (Sampson et al., 1997; Shaw & McKay, 1969). On the other hand, there has been a significant deterioration of the urban environment regarding housing conditions, a lack of basic infrastructure and neglected public spaces, and some decline in commercial activities in the area.

Based on this common diagnosis, project strategies propose actions to improve the urban environment (re-urbanisation processes, improvement of infrastructure and environmental conditions), boost the economy, foster socio-cultural development and social welfare, and provide employment-training services. Of course, the strategies are shaped by the priorities set out for the URBAN programme itself, but what is remarkable is that the projects share a common vision regarding the problems that need to be addressed and the policy actions required to do so.[1]

To analyse the extent to which the projects generated improvements in the intervention areas and some degree of territorial rebalancing, we analysed the Socio-Economic Level Indicator (INSE), which measures socio-spatial inequalities between urban areas in 1991 and 2001. It combines four other indicators that would account for the presence of risks concerning social exclusion processes (percentage of unemployed population and percentage of the adult population without a primary education), an approximation of income from occupation (socio-economic status) and physical environment (housing conditions). The INSE is elaborated as a synthetic standardised indicator, so its mean value equals 0 (Fernández-García et al., 2018).

[1] Main traits of these urban areas and their projects area in the following link to the project catalog of the Urban Impacts Project: https://www.upo.es/investiga/urbanimpacts/es/catalogo-intro/; and also the summary sheets of the URBAN-I projects, available on the European Commission's Inforegio website https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/urban2/urban/initiative/.

In order to know the relative position of these areas in their respective cities, we have established a ranking of that indicator among all their HUAs, both for 1991 and 2001. To compare it between cities, we have standardised this ranking according to the number of HUAs in each of them (i.e., relative HUA position = HUA position in ranking/number of HUAs in the city). In addition, we have standardised the relative positions of all HUAs in each city on 0–1 scales to facilitate their comparative analysis. By analysing the change (the differences) in these relative positions between 1991 and 2001, we will know their relative improvement level in the context of their cities.

Starting Conditions in the Intervention Areas: Severity of the Socio-Spatial Vulnerability

Table 11.1 shows that, due to the framework established by the URBAN programme, the public effort of the projects (investment per inhabitant) is quite similar between them, except for Madrid, since this case was classed as a particular situation (Goyanes López, 2000). However, the starting conditions for the areas were different (Table 11.1). In the cases of Madrid and Zaragoza, these areas had better starting socio-spatial conditions than those in Valencia, Seville or Malaga (levels of socio-spatial vulnerability), particularly regarding the unemployment rate and the presence of housing in poor conditions. However, these are not the areas with the lowest scores in their cities; even in the cases of Madrid and Malaga, they have values well above the city average. Therefore, the preference of local authorities to include these areas in the URBAN I programme compared to more vulnerable ones could be explained by the centrality of the issue of historic centres in Spain since the 1980s, as mentioned earlier. However, it could also be explained by their central location in the city, as well as their heritage resources, thereby offering more favourable starting opportunities to boost development, at least, compared with urban areas of public housing estates with high levels of physical and social vulnerability on the outskirts of cities, another of the targets of the URBAN Initiative and other similar programmes (Fernández-García, 2018; Navarro et al., 2016). Furthermore, although the historic centres of these Spanish cities have declined significantly since the 1970s (Fernández Salinas, 1994), their central position and their large

Table 11.1 Starting conditions in the intervention areas (1991)

Project and territorial area	*Madrid*	*Valencia*	*Seville*	*Zaragoza*	*Malaga*
	Historical Centre	*Velluters*	*San Luis-Alameda*	*Magdalena-Tenerías*	*Historical Centre*
Budget (thousands €)	23,804	14,477	14,490	14,476	14,020
Public effort	992	3266	464	1574	643
Unemployed population (%)	14.7	20.9	26.2	12.6	20.3
Unschooled population (%)	14.6	18.6	26.5	12.6	20.3
Unskilled workers (%)	9.9	8.5	8.5	10.5	11.1
Housing in poor condition (%)	30.8	41.4	22.7	15.9	28.9
Socio-spatial Inequality according to INSE (City average in the national context)	1.7 (1.0)	0.4 (1.1)	−1.8 (−1.7)	1.4 (1.5)	−1.5 (−3.4)
Relative position in the city ranking according to INSE	84 of 171	27 of 45	24 of 42	19 of 34	7 of 31

Public effort: budget per inhabitant
Source Authors' own elaboration based on INE Census tracks and Urban Impact Project catalogue

geographical scale cause the phenomena of vulnerability to be concentrated in specific areas, and they contain a certain social mix of residents from different socio-economic strata (Borja & Muxí, 2001).

URBAN Policy Impact: Contextualising Changes Within the City

The starting conditions described above show that areas share certain features as historic centres but have different levels of socio-spatial vulnerability. Nevertheless, have they changed their position in the urban hierarchy of their respective cities? Was it similar for all of them? Furthermore, is this change due to the URBAN intervention? Fig. 11.1 shows the change in the relative position of the HUAs between 1991 and 2001. The line followed by the vast majority of the areas is almost straight, meaning

there has been no change in their relative position within the urban hierarchy of their respective cities. There does not, therefore, appear to be a marked trend towards territorial rebalancing. However, some areas have improved their relative position (above the straight line) or have declined (below). There are also 'extreme cases' that usually involve new urban developments on the outskirts of cities during the period studied (e.g., the areas covered by specific urban planning projects).

Regarding urban areas where the URBAN Initiative was applied, those in Valencia and Seville saw the most remarkable improvement in their relative position within the city. Their distance from the straight line is more significant than most of the HUAs in their respective cities and the intervention areas in other cities. This result coincides with other comparative analyses on the level of change observed in Spanish cities at the neighbourhood level (Navarro et al., 2016). In both cases, the URBAN project initiated a profound transformation, moving these areas from pockets of

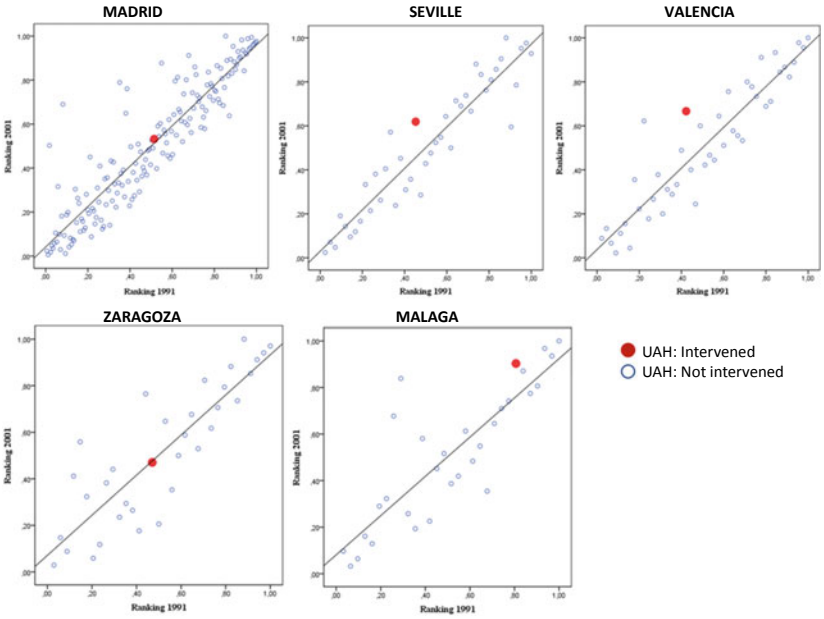

Fig. 11.1 Change in the relative position of homogeneous urban areas in cities (1991–2001)

poverty and marginalisation to regenerated areas that regain their physical and social connection with other areas of the city. In particular, these are the neighbourhoods within the *Ciutat Vella* district of Valencia, such as El Carmen, and in particular, the neighbourhoods of El Mercat and El Pilar, where the URBAN programme focussed its policy actions (Pérez & i Martí, 2013). In Seville, the targeted area mainly covers the San Luis-Feria-Alameda axis, where there has been an evident change in urban morphology and social composition (Díaz-Parra, 2015; Parra, 2009). In particular, in Valencia, the intervention area moves from the relative standardised position of 42 in 1991 to 67 in 2001 (up 25 relative positions), and in the case of Seville, from position 45 to position 62 (17 relative positions).

In the cases of Madrid and Zaragoza, where the areas started in a much more favourable situation than in the other cities, there were no remarkable changes in their relative position. In the first case, this might be because, although the targeted area was very large (almost all of its historic centre), the project was justified and its actions were carried out in a specific area recognised in the proposal as 'the heart of the problem', since it was the focus of a large proportion of the social conflicts affecting the centre, a high degree of urban deterioration, and a lack of services (De Gregorio Hurtado & Kocewicz, 2007). This might explain why the intervention area defined by the project did not present a high degree of vulnerability in 1991 and that the change in its relative position was less intense than in the other cities (from position 51 to 53). In the case of Zaragoza, although there is no such extensive delimitation of the intervention area, which is restricted to specific neighbourhoods (Magdalena-Tenerías), its relative position remains relatively stable (around the 47 mark), starting from a much more favourable situation than in the other cities (see Table 11.1).

Finally, in the case of Malaga, although the starting situation is similar to the cases of Seville and Valencia, its position in the urban hierarchy at the start of the intervention was reasonably high. This might explain why the improvement in its relative position has been less intense than in these cities but more so than in cases where the vulnerability situation was more unfavourable (Madrid and Zaragoza).

Overall, the results show that change in the urban hierarchy of the intervention areas targeted by URBAN is related to their starting conditions (Fig. 11.2). When an unfavourable starting situation is combined

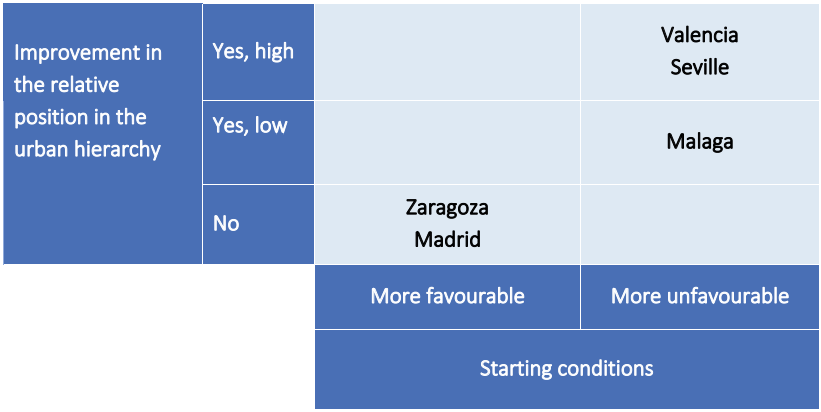

Fig. 11.2 Effect of the URBAN programme: starting conditions and trajectories of change in the intervention areas (*Note* Starting conditions are the level of socio-spatial vulnerability in 1991 according to the INSE index)

with a low position in the urban hierarchy, change within the urban hierarchy is more intense, showing a more evident effect of the URBAN Initiative (Seville and Valencia). However, when the relative starting position is higher, even though the severity of the problems is greater, the impact appears to be lower (Malaga). Finally, when the degree of vulnerability is lower, it seems that the impact of URBAN, in terms of relative improvement in the city as a whole, is considerably lower (Madrid and Zaragoza).

Urban Integrated Policies, Changes in Historical Centres, and Heterogeneous Policy Impacts

So far, the analyses show that the effects of the URBAN programme on processes of territorial rebalancing in the cities have been uneven, at least with regard to the change in the relative position of historic centres within the urban hierarchy of their respective cities. The main finding would appear to be that the starting situation of the area, in other words, the severity of its socio-spatial vulnerability, matters. The historical centres that started from a worse socio-economic situation seem to improve the

most, especially if they did not occupy a prominent position in their respective cities at the outset.

In line with the analyses presented in other chapters, it is possible that the effect of some policy actions had not yet been shown when the changes were analysed, especially those explicitly targeted at residents. This may cause us to underestimate the impact of the programmes. However, in our analysis, this analysis period is similar for all the cases analysed. We have controlled for this possible effect in the comparisons made, and despite this, clear differences are observed.

Furthermore, we must consider that the role of public intervention in transforming historic centres does not start and end with the URBAN programme. To a large extent, this programme is often part of a broader urban strategy that aims to transform these degraded areas into 'spaces of opportunity' for the city. This would be shown, for example, in the existence of 'strategic plans' for the regeneration and development of historical centres, such as the Special Plan for the Centre (PEPRI) of Malaga (1990), Plan Riva I (1992) and Riva II (1998) in Valencia, PICH in Zaragoza (1997), the ARB Rehabilitation Project for the Northern Quarter of the Historic District of Seville (1999), as well as different strategies and agreements for the Rehabilitation of Residential and Urban Heritage in Madrid (Herraez, 2000). As with the URBAN programme, these strategies are supported by regional and state administrations, which account for the concentration of policy actions in the areas studied here. Their joint effects might well appear in the longer term.

However, the results presented show that the URBAN Initiative led to changes in the historic centres of large cities. In some cases, these changes were very intense, based on the empirical information used in our analyses at any rate. Nevertheless, this reduction in levels of socio-spatial vulnerability and improvement in their position in the urban hierarchy of their respective cities does not necessarily mean an 'improvement' for their residents. These results could reflect the 'revitalisation' of these neighbourhoods (improvement for their residents) or the existence of gentrification processes (the replacement of their residents by other population groups with a higher socio-economic status). As mentioned above, this may be an unintended outcome of urban regeneration programmes. With the data employed, common to other studies on gentrification, it is difficult to claim that such processes are taking place as we do not have specific individual data on residential mobility. Other analyses of these cities show that changes have occurred in these areas that point to

gentrification (Díaz-Parra, 2015; Navarro et al., 2013; Prytherch & Boira Maiques, 2009; Sequera & Janoschka, 2015). Therefore, the concentration of policy interventions in these areas of the city might have given rise to processes of *centre-fication*, dynamics of socio-economic development based on the concentration of services and economic activities in these enclaves of the city, so that these areas, which were previously disconnected from the dynamics of the city centre, have been brought into line with their immediate surroundings (Rigol, 2010).

This is certainly an issue that requires further discussion, but in the case of Spain, for example, it is difficult to analyse because we cannot study residential mobility flows and the characteristics of those who move between pre- and post-intervention times. Another possible avenue of future research would be to define a smaller geographical scale to 'detect' more precisely urban changes and the possible role played by the integrated urban development strategy rolled out through the EU's URBAN programme in Spain. Furthermore, this analysis could be complemented by studying the impact of the same programme in other urban areas that were its specific target: peripheral neighbourhoods with high levels of socio-spatial vulnerability. This, together with the fact that such areas are situated on the outskirts of the city, might mean that the intensity of the impact of the URBAN Initiative (or other similar programmes) was not the same as in the historical centres. Other analyses have shown that similar initiatives' impact and patterns of change are different depending on whether the intervention area is a 'marginal neighbourhood' or a 'historical centre' (Fernández-García, 2021; Navarro et al., 2016). In this chapter, we have shown how to use simple analysis techniques to approach this analysis, which could be improved with these and other possible 'controlled comparisons'.

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PART III

Conclusion

CHAPTER 12

Policy Evidence About the Added Value of EU-Integrated Urban Initiatives as Local Policy Mixes

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Abstract Have local strategies promoted better urban policies and urban spaces? This chapter reviews the main evidence about this question concerning the added value of urban initiatives promoted by the EU in Spain between 1994 and 2013. The first section summarises the evidence presented in previous chapters, in line with the two aspects of added value and the specific research questions proposed about them. The second section interprets the results of the Spanish case, in line with

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the conceptualisation of these initiatives as multi-level policy mixes and the multi-scalar comparative analysis that is appropriate to explain local integrated strategies in the framework of the European Cohesion Policy.

Keywords Urban policy · Integrated strategy · Evaluation · Comparative analyses · European Union

Introduction

In the previous chapters, different aspects of the two central aspects of added value relating to the urban dimension of the EU cohesion policy have been analysed: policy compliance and learning, as integrated urban strategies and improvements in living conditions in targeted territories. Other questions about these or different potential types of added value have not been analysed here. In addition, the study has some limitations due to its proposed aims.

First, through questions and methods, research has tried to establish—and expand—a comparative perspective for analysing urban initiatives promoted by the EU as integrated multi-level policy mixes. To this aim, research issues and the associated policy evidence are based on comparative analyses at the level of local integrated strategies and their targeted territories. Therefore, the ideas and evidence go beyond more traditional analyses that focus on the policy frame of the ECP urban dimension, studies at the programme level (at the national or regional level) or case studies in specific urban areas. We have analysed all the local integrated strategies implemented between 1994 and 2013 in Spain. Similar research questions to those in previous studies have been explored, but through developing specific ideas and research strategies that provide new and complementary policy evidence about the design, implementation and effects of EU urban initiatives.

Second, research strategies have been intentionally designed to use secondary data sources that may exist in other countries (project documentation, census data, surveys and secondary data). Therefore, other researchers, practitioners or policymakers could apply—or replicate—similar research strategies, and therefore produce evidence that could help to expand the comparative analysis of EU urban integrated strategies. The proposed research strategies allow for cross-sectional and over-time

comparisons at different policy levels (from local projects and their policy actions to policy frames).

The previous chapters have thus provided policy evidence through an extensive comparative analysis at the local level, in which local strategies are designed and implemented. Differences in policy frames are also examined across programming periods. This book does not, therefore, provide detailed information, such as case studies or the study of national policy frames and their changes according to ECP programming periods. Detailed information provided by case studies was studied to design our analytical and empirical research strategies. Further, in accordance with our perspective on urban policies as multi-level policy mixes, national frameworks are incorporated as a contextual element explaining over-time variations in policy design and policy implementation theories, and subsequently the effects of programmes. New policy evidence is provided by applying a specific analytical framework and novel or not previously used research strategies to existing data sources. As with other approaches, the evidence provided has limitations that have been indicated in each chapter. Above all, this book attempts to provide new and complementary ideas and evidence about the integrated model proposed by the EU and some of its added value aspects.

On the Nature and Added Value of Urban Initiatives Promoted by the EU: Policy Evidence About Policy Compliance and Learning from the Case of Spain (1994–2013)

Have urban strategies applied the 'integrated model' proposed by the ECP policy frame? Do these initiatives promote the improvement expected in targeted territories? This section summarises the main answers to these questions provided in previous chapters according to the specific research questions posed in Chapters 2 and 7.

Better Urban Policies? Applying and Learning About the Integrated Model Proposed by the EU

Does the content of the projects come close to the idea—the policy framework—of integrated urban development promoted by the EU? Evidence is mixed because the answer differs depending on the issue

considered (Table 12.1). Local plans stand out more for their diversity than their 'integratedness'. Goals, actors and tools across policy sectors are set. However, the complementarity and synergies that the integrated strategy entails are not as clearly evident (see Chapters 4 and 5). Other studies analysing specific CUPPA items about policy integration or applying network analysis confirm the small interrelationship between policy measures in URBAN and URBANA projects regardless of their transversality across different policy sectors (Dorado-Rubín, Guerrero-Mayo, & Navarro-Yáñez, 2021b; Dorado-Rubín, Guerrero-Mayo, & Navarro, 2021a).[1] Thus, initiatives try to promote sustainable urban development in terms of a balance between relevant policy goals (physical space, economic, social, governance, environment, etc.); however, the integrated strategy is not widely applied. The traditional sectoral logic prevails over a policy integration strategy.

This evidence does not point to an absence of added value concerning learning effects about urban policies. The quality of the local strategy design is not very high, and improvement between URBAN and URBANA initiatives is generally low. However, learning effects exist regarding the planning of instruments to ensure the coordination and participation of involved actors (governance), and to a certain extent, the policy actions included in local plans. The planning of project evaluation shows the opposite situation: the quality level is low and even lower in the last programming period. The evaluability of local strategies shows that evaluation is the cornerstone of improvements that the EU urban integrated strategy needs (Chapter 3). With regard to the implementation of the integrated strategy, the last programming period analysed (the URBANA Initiative) incorporates this policy innovation to a greater degree than previous programming periods, but more for policy content than for governance processes. However, this promotes a reduction in the relationship between policy agenda integration and governance integration from URBAN to URBANA initiatives, showing the independence

[1] Case studies have also been analysed by applying this network analysis strategy within the framework of the Urban DUSI Lab promoted by the Jean Monnet Chair in European Urban Policies (EUrPol) and the Andalusian Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FAMP). Analyses have been carried out in collaborative work between researchers and the staff in charge of integrated urban strategies in the current EDUSI programme co-funded by the European Cohesion Policy in Spain. These cases point in the same direction: diversity prevails over integration in local policy mixes.

between these two policy dimensions as regards integration in the local policy mixes studied (Chapter 5).

The policy theory behind projects shows the importance of a contextual strategy to promote better structures of opportunities (contexts) for neighbourhood residents and a more redistributive strategy focussed on residents and specific collectives through motivational policy tools (around 65% of policy actions analysed in URBAN and URBANA projects). However, an over-time comparison points to a shift from a more balanced policy theory to an approach more focussed on a 'contextual' strategy, trusting that improvements in the neighbourhood (as the context) will lead to improvements in residents' quality of life (Chapter 6).

Previous chapters accordingly show that the level of policy compliance and learning is low as regards the policy frame proposed by the EU among local strategies. The policy evidence was produced by applying the comparative urban policy portfolios analysis (CUPPA) (Chapter 2). This approach provides analytical tools and a research method to perform comparative studies across local initiatives. In addition, by aggregation, comparative studies for higher policy levels (from policy actions to general policy frames) correspond with the multi-level character of policy mixes that EU urban initiatives entail. Here, some aspects have been analysed: the quality of local strategy design, the content of the policy agenda, the application of the integral strategy and the policy theory for implementation as the causal mechanisms linking goals and outcomes (according to policy tools used in policy actions included in policy mixes). This provides researchers, practitioners or policymakers with the framework to be used to attribute effects to integrated initiatives, as the theory-driven evaluation approach proposes (Weiss, 1997; Rogers, 2008), or to compare the character—and change—of different urban policies or programmes as multi-level policy mixes (Navarro, 2020, Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2020; Navarro-Yáñez, 2021).

Better Urban Places to Live? 'Average' and 'Heterogeneous' Effects of EU Urban Initiatives

Have the initiatives produced the expected impacts on socio-spatial cohesion and the quality of life? Once again, the answer depends on which aspect is under consideration, in accordance with the distinction between the socio-spatial context as an opportunity structure for residents (physical space, infrastructure, economic activity, etc.) and different individual

Table 12.1 Better urban policies? policy quality, compliance and learning in local integrated strategies

Research issue	*Research question*	*Main policy evidence*
The nature of EU urban initiatives as integrated urban development strategies (policy compliance as regards policy frame)	Is the idea of integrated urban development applied? Do local projects/strategies adopt this policy frame?	*Sectoral logic prevails over policy integration: diversity does not mean integrated strategies* Local strategies include the sustainable idea (as a balance between different sectoral goals), but policy content and governance processes are not planned to produce complementation and synergy among policy sectors
	What policy theory is behind sustainable and integrated strategies?	*The increasing importance of a 'contextual strategy' as the policy theory for sustainable and integrated urban development* Policy theory combines intervention strategies of traditional urban policy sectors (their objectives and tools). However, there is a shift from a more balanced approach to the primacy of the 'contextual strategy'
Added value I: the 'learning effect' promoted by the integrated urban development strategy (changes over-time)	Does the policy design of local strategies improve over-time? Are there learning effects?	*Some improvements in governance and evaluation as the 'pending subject' in policy design* The level of policy design quality is slightly higher in the most recent programming period (the URBANA Initiative) Learning effects exist for governance, the opposite for evaluation

(continued)

Table 12.1 (continued)

Research issue	*Research question*	*Main policy evidence*
	Has the application of integrated strategy been extended over-time? Have local authorities adopted this urban innovation?	*Some increase in policy agenda integration* Policy integration is slightly higher in the most recent programming period (the URBANA Initiative) but more for goals than governance Thus, the timing of policy integration for content and governance are different; they are two independent policy dimensions in policy mixes (especially in the URBANA Initiative)

aspects of residents' quality of life and that of their households (education, employment, health, etc.) (Table 12.2). With regard to the first aspect, the evidence shows clear impacts on dwellings, economic activity and the density of cultural amenities, although residents' perceptions of improvements in the physical environment do not point to this as clearly (Chapters 8, 9 and 10). The effects on residents' quality of life are quite moderate, and above all, very different depending on the issue considered; a common finding in other evaluations conducted on these initiatives or similar area-based policies (Lawless, 2012; Navarro, Moya et al., 2016; Rae, 2011; Thomson, 2008). Positive effects exist for educational attainment, occupational status and, to some extent, health. However, the effects are less clear regarding employment or the household socioeconomic situation (Chapters 8 and 9). Thus, the causal relationship between improvements to the socio-spatial context and improvements among residents is not clear-cut for all potential outcomes. Other analyses should be carried out into this policy theory, specifying (or proposing) more concrete causal mechanisms about the impacts of these contextual interventions on different expected outcomes. More so, if the current and following programming periods stress this trend towards a contextual approach over a more redistributive approach or a more balanced approach between them (as with the original initiatives in the 1990s).

In addition to the average effects of the programmes assessed through the comparison between all experimental and control urban areas, there is also some evidence about heterogeneous policy effects, in that the initiatives do not produce the same results for different targets; as the contextualisation approach to study ECP at the national and regional level has shown (Creszenci & Giua, 2020). In this regard, it is possible to distinguish between territorial targets and within them (for groups of residents or activities). For the former, the effects of the URBANA Initiative are somewhat more evident when the analysis focusses on the most vulnerable territorial targets (see Chapter 8). Differences in the effects of the URBAN Initiative in historic centres vary according to their socioeconomic position in their cities (Chapter 10). Other analyses have shown that the effect of these and similar initiatives are different in historical city centres and peripheral neighbourhoods, in terms of different opportunity structures for the success of local plans or some of their actions (Fernández, 2021; Navarro, Moya et al., 2016).

With regard to the residents (the heterogeneous effects within targeted territories), their exposure to the neighbourhood and the local plan is

Table 12.2 Better urban places? The impact on targeted territories

Research issue	*Research question*	*Main policy evidence*
Added value II: The policy effects of the integral urban development strategy in integrated territories	Have neighbourhoods changed as structures of opportunities for residents?	*Yes, some changes promoted by programmes exist* Although moderate, there are impacts on housing conditions and the density of business or cultural amenities, but not on residents' perception of neighbourhood problems
	Have there been improvements in the living conditions of residents?	*Yes, some changes could be attributed to programmes* However, these are very moderate and mixed: improvements in education and, to some extent, health, but not in employment and the household socioeconomic situation

(continued)

Table 12.2 (continued)

Research issue	*Research question*	*Main policy evidence*
	Are there heterogeneous policy effects? (between and within targeted territories)	*Yes. Policy exposure and specific traits of territories matter* 1. The exposure of residents to the projects according to residential mobility. An analysis including only stayers shows impacts on education, occupational status and, to some extent, employment 2. The starting conditions of the socio-spatial context: specific aspects make up a differential structure of opportunities for the success of a project Among more vulnerable contexts, programmes produce some improvements (impact) on personal health and the perception of problems in dwellings and the neighbourhood City centre historical areas with worse starting conditions improve to a larger extent than those with better starting conditions

crucial. We have pointed to the importance of residential mobility, based on previous ideas and empirical analysis showing that the households that move away from a targeted area are those that improve their socioeconomic situation, reducing the possibilities of neighbourhood revitalisation in a long-term perspective. Paying attention to these ideas and evidence may lead to better analyses and understanding of the effects of urban initiatives promoted by the EU. Nevertheless, it also draws our attention to the need to incorporate actions to reduce this type of residential

mobility and its potential effect on the reproduction of socio-spatial inequalities, as well as the potential forced mobility motivated by gentrification processes after public interventions. Thus, similar to the potential forced displacement promoted by state-led gentrification processes, upgrading residential mobility in revitalised neighbourhoods could be also a controversial outcome of urban initiatives. However, only the second aspect has captured the attention of the academic (and public) debate.

According to previous chapters, the effects of urban initiatives are more evident when the analyses only include 'stayers' during the entire period of the project implementation or focus on more vulnerable populations (see Chapters 7 and 8). There is also evidence about the differential effect of these or similar initiatives on different social groups according to their exposure to policy actions or contextual mechanisms that account for the so-called 'neighbourhood effect' that urban initiatives try to change; for example, according to gender, age, socioeconomic status or social capital in the neighbourhood (Navarro, 2020; Navarro, Rodríguez-García et al., 2016; Zapata & Navarro, 2017, 2020).

The potential heterogeneous effects between and within target territories draw our attention to the importance of applying 'controlled comparisons', which address other causal mechanisms that may also explain the success or failure of initiatives, regardless of programme eligibility criteria. Here, we have focussed on this key, indispensable element to attribute the effects of policies. This allows us to provide evidence about the average impact of these programmes across targeted territories that previously did not exist. Nevertheless, as indicated, this strategy cannot show the existence of compositional effects that, for instance, could explain the low policy impact of integrated strategies. Thus, we have incorporated other factors, such as specific traits of territorial targets, and exposure to the neighbourhood and the programme among different groups of residents, either because of their social traits or residential mobility processes. We could also add the heterogeneity in the intervention strategy applied by the projects, both between programmes and within the same programme (Chapter 6), not analysed here.

The main idea is to specify the causal mechanism that could promote heterogeneous effects and establish the appropriate controlled comparison in the research design to be applied (through a quasi-experimental design or comparative case studies). A *proxy* of this idea has been implemented in previous chapters. The main empirical result is that added value II is moderate, different according to the outcome analysed and

could be different (heterogeneous) between and within targeted territories. However, from an analytical point of view, the main conclusion is that more evaluative exercises, theoretically founded and applying controlled comparisons, are needed to confirm the added value of integrated strategies supported by ECP, going beyond the analyses of good practice based on cases and experiences in concrete circumstances without an explicit policy theory as an evaluative framework.

Towards a Multi-Scalar Comparative Research Agenda for EU Urban Initiatives as Multi-Level Policy Mixes: Policy Levels, Institutional Contexts and Integrated Local Policy Mixes

As indicated in the first chapter, the Spanish case is an outstanding example due to the continuity and extension in applying local strategies through specific programmes co-funded by the EU. Moreover, other studies indicate the EU proposal on spatial planning and the urban integrated method have promoted relevant changes, transforming the practice of urban policies and the orientation—or policy frame—of national urban and spatial policies (Bahl et al., 2019; Carpenter et al., 2020; De Gregorio, 2017, 2018), as in the case of other southern member states (Rivolin & Faludi, 2005). However, previous analyses have shown that the potential added value regarding urban policies at the national level is not as clear at the level of actual local strategies. In addition to local characteristics explaining policy design, implementation and effects among local strategies, the institutional filters mentioned in Chapter 1 could provide some explanatory mechanisms for this issue. We will try to explain this very briefly.[2]

First, from a comparative perspective, the Spanish local government system represents the traditional 'southern model' in Europe identified by Page and Goldsmith (1987). As more recent analyses also show, this model combines substantial political recognition for municipalities, with low institutional capabilities to provide local services (Sellers & Lidström, 2007). Specifically, this institutional context promotes a high level of financial dependence on supra-municipal government as well as on

[2] With regard to the effects of local characteristics on policy design quality, policy integration or policy effects, see Navarro et al. (2019), Dorado-Rubí et al. (2021a).

economic activity in municipalities, especially that linked to urban development and housing in the Spanish case, because the main local resource in municipal budgets comes from taxes on this activity. This promotes specific patterns of policy strategies, coalitions and socio-spatial effects, but it also results in urban planning and urban development forming an essential policy sector in municipalities (Navarro et al., 2017). Second, in spite of the inclusion of integral regeneration initiatives in the framework of national (and regional) urban planning policies (Hernández-Aja & Rodríguez-Suárez, 2017), the spatial planning tradition in Spain focuses on urban planning without strong policy integration with other policy sectors. This is in a general administrative culture dominated by sectoral policies instead of policy coordination or integration promoting different sectoral governing coalitions in the same city (Brugué & Gomá, 1998; Farinós et al., 2005; Navarro & Rodríguez-García, 2015). Lastly, a national urban policy did not exist for the analysed period. The main policy frame was urban planning policies and their development by regional governments with regulatory competencies over spatial planning in municipalities. Only recently has the Spanish Urban Agenda represented a general framework linked to the EU-integrated model and the Urban Agenda for the European Union (De Gregorio & González, 2020).

These institutional factors could shape a structure of opportunities less favourable for the adoption of the integrated model proposed by the EU at the local level than in other member states. For example, those with a local government system providing municipalities with more institutional capacities, integrated spatial planning traditions or an explicit national urban policy including other goals than urban planning. Thus, Spain could represent a case combining a high level of compliance with the EU model at the national level and a low level of compliance at the local scale. On the one hand, the studies mentioned above about laws, regulations or programme documentation show a progressive adoption of the integrated model proposed by the EU as an innovative policy frame at the national level, compared with the traditional orientation of sectoral policies and the centrality of the urban planning in city policies. However, on the other hand, analysis of actual local strategies shows the 'integrated model' is not mainstream in current urban policies; above all, local strategies designed and implemented in programmes explicitly based on this model from 1994 to 2013 do not show a high level of policy compliance

with the policy frame proposed by the urban dimension of the ECP and its adaptations at the national level in Spain.

Other evidence also seems to confirm this result. Changes in spatial planning traditions between 2000 and 2016 across European countries show that policy integration is not in the mainstream of Spanish spatial planning (Nadin et al., 2021). A recent survey among Spanish researchers and practitioners shows that urban strategies remain focussed on urban planning goals and apply a low level of policy integration (Dorado-Rubín & Ortega, 2022). Moreover, the design of local strategies implemented under the most recent EDUSI programme, launched by the Spanish government for the 2017–2020 programming period, also shows a similar level of policy compliance regarding the integrated model to those implemented in previous programming periods analysed here (Guerrero-Mayo et al., 2022). Thus, potential changes in policy frames among member states do not mean the adoption of the integral strategy at the local level and their potential effects on living conditions, as two of the main added value aspects of the ECP urban dimension. More comparative analyses at the local level—between and within institutional contexts of member states—are needed in order to confirm the spread of the EU proposal and their effects in transforming urban policies and places.

We have no systematic comparative evidence about local strategies in other countries. However, based on the literature concerning urban policies and governance, 'institutional filters' could explain cross-sectional variations among member states and regions in terms of the content, instruments and actors involved in local strategies supported by the EU. They could also influence over-time and cross-level differences between supra-municipal policy frames and their actual implementation and effects at the local level. Examining this has been the primary goal of the current book, due to the fact that main institutional traits in Spain have remained constant for the period analysed (1994–2013). Of course, other cross-national comparative analyses could provide evidence about the explanatory capacity of policy frames and institutional contexts on local integrated strategies promoted by the EU.

In sum, the proposed conceptualisation and analysis of EU urban initiatives as multi-level policy mixes presented in the first chapter needs an appropriate multi-scalar comparative analysis that integrates policy levels and policy dimensions (Fig. 12.1). This means the study of the general policy frame proposed by the EU for each programming period, the specific policy frame designed by member states (and regions) and,

above all, local strategies as complex policy mixes combining goals and implementation styles across different policy sectors. Moreover, this book has proposed that policy evidence about the added value of ECP on the actual character and effects of urban policies can be—and should be—provided through the systematic and comparative analysis of the local strategies implemented, not only at the policy frame level.

Therefore, we do not claim that the evidence provided is similar to that of other countries with different institutional conditions. However, based on theoretical perspectives concerning urban policies and governance, systematic and replicable methodologies have been proposed and applied using data sources that may exist in other European countries. Some research strategies are new (such as CUPPA) or are used in a pioneering way to analyse the urban initiatives promoted by the EU; for example, quasi-experimental designs at the level of the territorial target to analyse change trajectories between pre- and post-implementation periods. The proposed ideas and methodologies could be used to advance the comparative study of EU urban initiatives at the local level, as the primary implementation agents of the ECP urban dimension. The main aim is to complement the traditional and more common analyses based on the

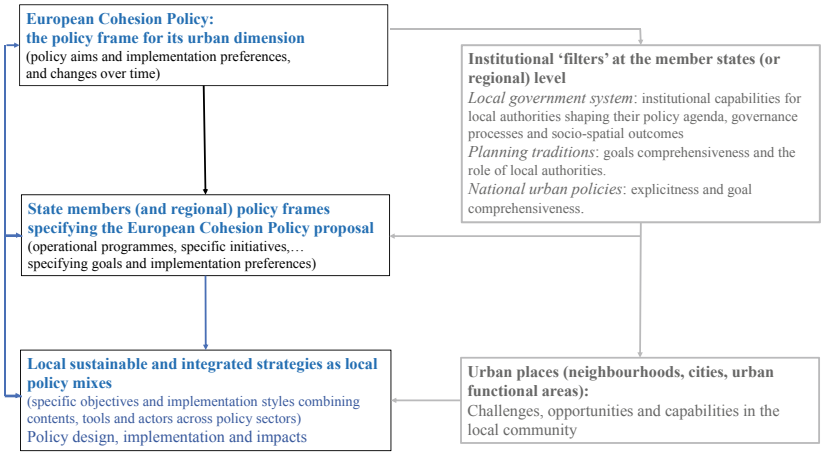

Fig. 12.1 A multi-scalar comparative approach to analyse EU-integrated urban strategies as multi-level policy mixes (*Source* Author's own elaboration based on Navarro and Rodríguez-García [2020] and Navarro and Guerrero-Mayo [2022])

normative study of the policy frame proposed by the ECP, its specification in each member state, or through case studies. Therefore, more systematic comparative analyses of local strategies as multi-level policy mixes applying a multi-scalar comparative approach could expand the research agenda of EU urban integrated development strategies and their expected added value.

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Index

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