

Abstract, Index, Introduction and Background of

Final Report

The final report is in draft version. The final draft will be available in late Spring 2020 publicly and upon request.

Project: Pro-commons Coproduction and territorial development in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (cast: Coproducción pro-común y desarrollo territorial en el Área Metropolitana de Barcelona)

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ABSTRACT

The financial crisis of 2008, the austerity policies that followed it and the urban uprisings around the planet during 2011 (Arab Spring, 15M, Occupy Wall Street, etc.) revealed the inability of governments to meet the growing social needs of the population and, at the same time, gave rise to the emergence of new responses that offered solutions outside the state and the market. In Catalonia, and more specifically in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB), these new solutions have recently been studied and mapped out through various initiatives and research projects using different approaches (social innovation, social and solidarity economy, collaborative housing, etc.). However, the territorial dimension of these initiatives, their interrelations and their impact in terms of new forms of local development have not been studied in depth. This project proposes, based on the multi-sectoral and overall vision offered by existing databases and cartography, to identify pro-common (i.e., those characterized by a governance model in which the direct users of the good or service produced are also those responsible for producing it and/or managing it collectively) and analyze their capacity to generate territorial impact and relations with public institutions. The study considers two levels of analysis. First, we compare, integrate and preliminarily analyze existing maps at the level of the AMB. Then we analyze the territorial impact of said pro-common initiatives via a comparative and network analysis in two neighborhoods

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1. Introduction & justification

The financial crisis of 2008, the austerity policies that followed it and the urban uprisings around the planet during 2011 (Arab Spring, 15M, Occupy Wall Street, etc.) revealed the inability of governments to meet the growing social needs of the population and, at the same time, gave rise to the emergence of new responses that offered solutions outside the state and the market.

In Catalonia, and more specifically in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, these new solutions have recently been studied and mapped out through various initiatives and research projects using different approaches (social innovation, social and solidarity economy, collaborative housing, etc.). However, the territorial dimension of these initiatives and their impact on territorial development has not been studied in depth.

The project presented here aims, first of all, to carry out an spatial characterization of the ensemble of the initiatives that populate the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, with a focus on those that feature a pro-common nature, i.e. initiatives characterized by a governance model in which the direct users of the good or service produced are also those responsible for producing it and/or managing it collectively (Pestoff et al. 2012). Secondly, we intend to analyze the territorial impact of said pro-common initiatives.

The pro-common paradigm proposes a reinterpretation of the economy, beyond the dichotomy between the market and the Modern Welfare State, from which to re-integrate the economic and the ethical, the individual and the collective. Consequently, and this is the interest of our research, pro-common co-production initiatives articulated and rooted in a certain geographical space can give rise to alternative models of territorial development, understood as socially and environmentally just human development. In this sense, we ask the following research question: Does the concentration of pro-common co-production initiatives, articulated and rooted in a certain territory, produce socially and environmentally fairer models of territorial development?

1.1. Background and state of the art

This study builds on three major research themes: the territorialization of public policies, pro-common experiences and co-production.

A fundamental question in the study of the territorialization of public policies is to understand at what administrative level public services are best financed and provided. Traditionally, this question has been understood from the dichotomy of centralization vs. decentralization of competencies between state, regional and local governments. Currently, territorialization is understood more as an issue that concerns not only governments but also the third sector, private entities and the cooperative and associative world; and that implies not only a division of tasks (see competencies) but also the will and capacity for cooperation and conflict resolution among the different entities. Entities may manage services exclusively, but they are more likely to have to coordinate with other authorities at their own level or others to carry

out some tasks. This is why "bottom-up" self-organization has to be complemented with important coordination and collaboration tasks. There is no one governance solution that fits all contexts. Different services and areas may require different arrangements.

Since the end of the last century, local governments in Catalonia have tended to promote participatory governance as a consultative form of participation by invitation (Bonet i Martí, 2014), promoted and directed by the public administration (top-down) with the aim of informing and listening to citizens. These mechanisms of participatory governance do not seem to fit the needs and characteristics of the present times (Parés et al., 2015). Everything points to the need to think of new forms of participation that make citizens co-responsible for the entire process of drawing up and implementing public policies and that, as a result, enjoy their trust and complicity. In this sense, the co-production of public policies proposes a different way of understanding participation that is more in line with the characteristics of today's society and that can better respond to the new demands for transparency and democratization.

Unlike co-governance (participation of civil society and private actors in the processes of elaboration and planning of public policies), co-production refers to the mechanisms through which citizens lead the production of services with the involvement of the public sector (Pestoff et al., 2012). Public sector involvement can be direct (as part of the production process) or indirect (through various instruments such as regulation, funding, or fiscal stimulus). In public policy co-production processes, therefore, citizens take a central, leading role, and are actively involved both in the design of the co-produced services or goods (diagnosis, decision, planning) and in their implementation. In other words, co-production has to do with the active involvement of citizens both in the definition of problems to be solved and in the production of goods and services of a public nature.

In practice, however, co-production is a broad concept that can be materialized in various ways. In recent years, in fact, there has been a proliferation of literature, discourses, research projects and social practices not only around co-production but, above all, around other close concepts such as "social innovation" or "urban commons". Concepts and practices that, in short, refer to how citizens are organizing themselves to give community responses to (new) collective problems. The co-production of public policies, therefore, would include a wide range of diverse experiences from the point of view of their forms of organization. Systematizing and characterizing the different forms of co-production is something that has not yet been done in Catalonia. In this project, we aim to fill that gap by characterizing and analyzing a specific type of co-production experience on a territorial basis: those that are pro-common in nature.

The literature on pro-common experiences in the emerging urban environment has grown exponentially in the last 10 years. Urban commons can be defined as urban spaces or services that are conceived by and for the benefit of a community and produced and/or managed more or less directly by members of that community (Lapniewska, 2017). Examples include from orchards and urban parks to consumer cooperatives and citizen-managed cultural centers. The services and goods in question can be both tangible and intangible. For example, when a

neighborhood community decides to reclaim a plot of land to create an urban garden they are producing both an environmental and agricultural service, as well as social capital (trust among neighbors) and an object of aesthetic contemplation (i.e. a green space in the city) (Iaione, 2012). Likewise, urban communities can vary in their socio-demographic characteristics and needs, the objectives they propose and the dynamics of inter-personal relations (Eizenberg, 2012); and the management models can vary according to the management and decision-making rules used (Huron, 2015).

At present, many of the urban experiences of pro-common production and/or management in the AMB and other cities are explained as a response to the lack of capacity of governments at different levels to provide public services and goods. This does not mean, however, that these governments have to be completely outside the pro-common urban experiences. As work on community-based natural resource management and co-production has already advanced, the recognition and even material support of pro-common initiatives by governments can play an important role in the long-term success of such initiatives (Ostrom, 1990).

In Catalonia, pro-commons notions and ideas have been discussed and incorporated into practice for over a decade, in both autonomous initiatives as in public policy. The body of grey literature developed has to be acknowledged, and shows attempts at systematisation and policy recommendation