BETWIXT

Between Integration and Exclusion:
A Comparative Study in Local Dynamics of Precarity and Resistance to exclusion in Urban Contexts

Final report

August 2002

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Abstract

BETWIXT: Between Integration and Exclusion

This Betwixt project aimed at describing, not so much the ways of life of people already fallen into poverty or exclusion, but the processes through which households and individuals in precarious but somehow still balanced situations get off balance and are caught into the first steps leading to poverty and exclusion. Our focus has been on the efforts of these households to resist such processes, and on the resources, which, if available to them, would make these efforts successful.

Our methodological choices derived from the conclusions of experts in poverty research, who have realised the built-in limits of the statistical approach and in particular the difficulties it has in grasping the dynamic, multidimensional, and local aspects of exclusionary processes. We have aimed at associating statistical work and case studies in several ways. First, in each of the chosen *cities* (London, Dublin, Lisbon, Helsinki, Toulouse, Turin, Umeå), we assembled existing statistics so as to draw an urban map of the spatial distribution of precarity and poverty. This provided us with an overview of the patterns of social inequality and spatial segregation across the involved cities.

From this a particular *neighbourhood* in each city was chosen, where a concentration of households in situations of precarity or close to exclusion was living. A case study of these neighbourhoods were carried out, focusing on the various kinds of resources offered to its residents, and the concrete relations of access (or non-access) to such resources.

In the next phase of the project detailed case studies of 27 *households* were made, chosen so as to cover the whole range of types of situations of precarity and exclusion. We concentrated on their efforts, present and past, to maintain or restore equilibria of their economic and social resources. In parallel we organised *focus groups* made up of residents, in order to facilitate through discussions the collective expression of their problems and common needs.

Finally, we traced the implications for policy at the EU, national, city, neighbourhood and household level of our results. At this background we suggest that a central level for protection and intervention in relation to precarity is at the individual or household level. Access to employment, good housing, and a universal and high quality social welfare system seems to be the best support and supplement to peoples´ own overwhelming and constant activity to escape exclusion.

Reduction in social inequalities between households is probably the best protection against spatial segregation and neighbourhood disadvantage. Consequently spatial policies can only offer partial solutions to disadvantages at the household level.

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1. Executive Summary[1]

Introduction

We designed our BETWIXT research project so as to study the following issues: How do urban households in various European cities cope with **precarious conditions of life**? What kinds of risks and combinations of risks do they have to face, what kind of problems and combinations of problems do they have to solve in everyday-life and in the course of their lives? Can one identify recurring patterns of problems, and identify some *'logiques de situation'* typical of precarity? How active are people in trying to cope with such situations? What kinds of planning and strategies do they develop, what are their *'logiques d'action'*, how closely do they correspond to the logics of their situation? What kinds of resources - can they and do they use in doing so? How efficient in helping them are those collective resources that insurance and service welfare systems provide? Given that public policies differ so much among European countries and sometimes even among cities, thus creating highly differing contexts and pools of available collective resources (such as citizen rights, insurance rights, welfare rights, public/social housing, urban redistributive policies), which kinds of contexts maximise or minimise, for households, the risk to slide from a precarious situation into one of poverty and eventual exclusion? What kind of policies should - and could realistically - be developed to help people in situations of precarity to successfully resist being drawn into such a downward spiral?

Our interest was therefore not on the already excluded, but on the large number of households finding themselves in situations that involved high risks to eventually slide into exclusion. We had proposed in our research bid a precise definition of precariousness or 'precarity'. It was derived from a conception of households as dynamic, open micro-systems of action. The daily re-production of a given household's way of life involves keeping on balance various equilibriums which are constitutive of this way of life (balancing the budget, but also balancing expenses of human energies vs. the risks of endangering physical health or/and mental health through exhaustion; balancing time budgets; balancing the tensions within the household so as to prevent its explosion). A household is said to be in a situation of **precarity** when one or several of its constitutive equilibriums are precarious, that is, unstable in the precise sense of the term. Events which perturb equilibria are such as losing one's job, falling ill, heavy problem with one child, banker's reaction to excessive debt; or worse, losing one's housing. Resources used by households to dampen the effects of such perturbations are such as savings, insurance rights (for health problems, for unemployment), help from kin, local availability of welfare (assistance) help, living in or moving to better housing or a more secure area.

Generally it is assumed that policies designed to help people fight the risks of sliding into exclusion when they still have resources and skills should be much more efficient and much less costly than policies aiming at helping them recover from a spell into exclusion: in the first case one could still rely on their own will and energies to fight for themselves, much more than in the second case. In this perspective the issue of how active are members of households in precarity became central.

[1] Written by Thomas P. Boje based on drafts from Susan McIntosh, Tony Fahey, Daniel Bertaux, and Therese Halskov

Our research was designed to enable us to study the issues at stake. We used available statistics to get descriptions of the urban contexts; but for the study of households' situations and actions we relied on the case study/case history method. We chose this method because it allowed us to register the diversity and the complexity of households' situations, and to monitor their courses of action in their diversity and temporal dimension.

We knew that standardised questionnaires would not be able to provide the kind of data we wanted. As concerns situations of precarity, they are very diverse depending on the main problem and they are also complex due to other problems that are combined with the main one (e.g., scarce monetary resources forcing the household to remain in a neighbourhood which is not safe or its children). This complexity has been called 'multidimensionality of poverty' by Graham Room who in his assessment of poverty research identified it as one of the three insufficiently researched aspects of poverty (the other two being its spatial and its temporal dimensions; see Room 1995). Case studies of households would allow us to get detailed description by the people themselves of the problems they had to solve, the risks they had to fight, the resources they could use - hence, description of their situation as seen through their own eyes - not the eyes of passive spectators, but those of committed and determined actors.

Situations lead to action. Typically, the awareness of risks (e.g. on one's children) will lead to preventive conduct; a chronic problem will get people to think about how to 'solve' it, to inquire around them on how to solve it, to trials and errors - hence to courses of action developing throughout time. Looking for a job, for instance, is not a one-shot behaviour (which could be adequately recorded by means of a standardised questionnaire) but a course of action developing through time; a course of situated action, since the actual situation of the local labour market and the person's actual chances to find a job have to be explored. Case histories of households appeared as the best tools to record 'thick descriptions' of courses of situated action, from which analysis would extract recurring patterns such as *logiques d'action.*

Thus the case study/case history method appeared adequate to document how active was members of households in precarity, and grasp some of their recurring patterns of action through time. This method would also allow - and actually did allow – to meet Graham's Room views that the multidimensionality and the temporal dimensions of poverty should be more closely studied. His third view - that the local dimension be also more closely studied - we took also into consideration by choosing to focus, not on households picked up at random on the territory of each of the seven countries under study (as in a European project led by Prue Chamberlayne and Michael Rustin (SOSTRIS 1999)) but on households all living in one and the same, relatively deprived neighbourhood of a given city 'representing' each country. By keeping 'neighbourhood' constant in each country we aimed at keeping constant the context of households' situations and courses of action, thus making it possible for us to study in detail this context (if households had been scattered all over a country or even an large city it would have been obviously impossible to include a study of each one's local context in the project).

'Context' here needs to be understood in different ways simultaneously: at one level it is the immediate neighbourhood, the resources and dangers it contains, the degree of solidarity or isolation that prevails in it. At a higher level the context extends beyond the confines of the neighbourhood, to these parts of

the city, which are actually 'practiced' by members of the households, e.g. if they shop outside the neighbourhood or if children are sent to a school outside of it. Furthermore, as our research made it quite clear, a deprived neighbourhood's poor reputation in the city is also part of the context: even if not true, it has real consequences (e.g. in the reluctance of employers to hire youths from this neighbourhood).

Households' use of the neighbourhood and its resources is closely related to the distribution of services, and indeed households of different socio-economic levels, across the cities in which they are located. The first third of the research project therefore consisted of studying the overall patterns of social inequality and spatial segregation across the seven cities in the study. This provided a comparison of the spatial expression of relative inequalities across those cities, and allowed us, in studying precarious neighbourhoods and a number of precarious households within them, to compare the problems faced and coping strategies used by households within a clear view of the relative degrees of social and spatial inequality in the cities

Finally, and most importantly, the context of a given household's situation and courses of action is also made up of the welfare state at city, regional and/or national levels that is: of whatever citizens' rights, social security (insurance) rights, and means-tested benefits (assistance) rights are in existence in the given city/country, and the spatial and urban policies associated with them. The situation of a relatively unskilled lone mother with a baby under three entails completely different sets of rights and entitlements in Sweden or in Portugal, the two broad situations will be very differently loaded with problems in the two countries and their cities, due to their very different 'welfare arrangements' contexts. We knew about the studies comparing entitlements for different social categories (categories of situations rather than categories of persons) in various European countries. They gave a wide-brush view of the 'background', the welfare contexts. For instance, by looking closely at concrete single-parent households we aimed to document what were the actual consequences of such differences in allowances on the lives of lone mothers and their children [2]
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We also took account of the local impact of wider regional or national housing and urban policies. These policies were related to the problem whether spatial concentration of vulnerable groups may create improvished neighbourhoods and thus add an additional layer of disadvantage of marginalized individuals and households. The problem in turn may mean that conventional welfare interventions at the household level may fail to address the social problems arising at the neighbourhood level and so may fail to lift residents in deprived neighbourhoods out of persistent patterns of precarity and disadvantage.

This led us to a five-stage research design. The first stage was to realise statistical - and statistically comparative - studies of the seven European cities under observation; that is, London, Dublin, Helsinki,

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[2] The welfare state interventions take different forms in the individual welfare regimes and in order to evaluating these differences the BETWIXT project included and compared social and spatial inequality in countries representing different welfare state system. United Kingdom and Ireland representing the liberal market -oriented system, France and Northern Italy representing the employment-centred status attainment system, Portugal representing the sub-protective minimal welfare system and Sweden and Finland representing the universalistic and equalitarian welfare system (see for different welfare typologies e. g. Esping Andersen 2000 and Gallie and Paugam 2000).

Lisbon, Turin, Toulouse in Southern France, and Umeå, a middle-range city in Northern Sweden. In this first stage the aim was to construct city maps of poverty from available census and registration data; that is, to provide pictures of the spatial distribution of precarity and poverty for these seven cities at district level. For this we used such indicators as rates of employment, youth unemployment, and proportions of foreigners or ethnic minorities. We drew such poverty/precarity maps for two successive censuses in each city, thus gaining the trend over time and the physical patterning of poverty over the city territory. We also assembled data on the degree of social inequality in each BETWIXT country (such data were not available at city level).

The second stage was to select, in each city, one district among those not at, but just above, the bottom end of districts ranking; one where it could be assumed from statistics that a high number of households in precarious situation could be found. The seven teams then focused on the district they had chosen, selecting within it a smaller but socially relevant **neighbourhood;** each made a monograph of its morphology, population, employment situation, local availability of welfare agencies, and other relevant characteristics. Interviews were held with key local actors to gain their views of the resources and challenges of the neighbourhood.

The third stage consisted in talking directly to adult members of households in precarity, focusing on the problems they faced and the resources and coping strategies they used.

A fourth stage consisted in organising group discussions between households and key local actors, to feed back project results and allow for the collective expression of people's situations.

After this series of stages amounting to three successive 'forward zooms' focusing on ever smaller units of observation and a fourth, group discussion stage beginning an ascent towards generality, the fifth stage was devoted to identifying within the locally observed patterns what was of general importance (including best practice), synthesizing it, comparing results between cities and forms of welfare regimes, in both their social and spatial dimensions, and finally drawing policy recommendations to the European Commission.

We believe that we have successfully achieved our goal to come out with general propositions based on local observations. The three fieldwork stages have shown that behind the diversity and complexity of household situations and histories, of strategies and courses of situated action, recurring patterns such as (highly constraining) *logiques de situations* and corresponding *logiques d'action* tightly determined by resource scarcity, could be identified, as they appear with high frequency over a series of household case studies and case histories. Moreover, such patterns may rather easily be connected with the availability or non-availability of resources offered by welfare regimes and their forms of local implementation.

Thus the BETWIXT project emerges from a dynamic, agency perspective on the understanding of precarity, poverty and social exclusion. It views these concepts as referring not to static conditions, but rather to dynamic processes in which the circumstances and location of households are subject to constant change; what happens to them being considered not as structurally predetermined outcome, but

as product of the interplay between externally imposed constraints and the struggles of acting individuals to preserve and enhance their well-being?

Given the knowledge accumulated along the way on neighbourhoods themselves, this dynamic, agency perspective of the project was extended to neighbourhoods themselves, a feature that appears relevant in the present context of policy-makers' interest for the development of urban policies targeted not at deprived households but at deprived neighbourhoods. We therefore extended our concern with the dynamics of precarisation and social exclusion from the household level to the neighbourhood level, recognising that neighbourhoods are just as likely to be characterised by movement and transformation in this respect as the households. Thus, BETWIXT is concerned not only with the activities of the households within a neighbourhood context, but also with neighbourhood transformations as they are affected by the collective action of households as well as by changes in the external welfare state system.

For the first year of the project our focus was on the dynamics of change in the social and spatial expression of inequality in the cities themselves. This was not only of interest in a comparative sense, but allowed us to relate these changes to housing and spatial policies at city, regional and national levels. This city level work then acted as the overall context for the study of precarity at neighbourhood and household levels. Consequently focus is not only on agency of household and individuals in their struggle to cope with precarity but also with their collective agency as neighbours and thus with the notion of collective (neighbourhood) struggles to cope.

In this Executive summary we shall give an overview of the main results of BETWIXT project, provide a brief outline of how and why each of the main research questions were phrased, and summarise the findings emerging in response to each of the questions. This summary is followed by a more comprehensive description of the scientific results and the methodologies used in the BETWIXT project in chapter 3. Chapter 4 lists the actions of dissemination of our results that we have taken so far. Finally in chapter 5 we turn to the policy implications of our findings on the European, national, and city levels.

Social inequality and spatial segregation in the BETWIXT cities – Stage A

Stage A of the project aimed to provide the city level context for the subsequent focus on neighbourhood and household levels in the study of resistance to precarity. This stage of the project aimed to answer the question: how spatially segregated are the seven BETWIXT cities, and how did this change between the 1980s and the 1990s?

In so doing, we also tested methodologically the feasibility of assembling and using comparative sub-city level data across EU cities, in the absence of standardised EU census material. The main sources were those of national censuses and Scandinavian registration data. The main problems, common to all such exercises, were those of compatibility of dates, definitions, area unit sizes, and city boundaries. Where possible allowance was made for these aspects in the analysis, which was finally based on four indicators: male employment rate, female employment rate, the rate of unemployed youth, and the proportion of ethnic minorities. The main measure of area differentiation was the inter-quintile ratio (IQR) of areas grouped according to each indicator. This was supplemented by the index of dissimilarity

(IoD)[3], which allowed some international comparison. We concluded that there was a considerable way to go in the harmonisation of the EU sub-city data.

Our substantive findings showed wide variation in the range of spatial segregation in the BETWIXT cities, using combined male and female employment rates, from an IQR of 22.7 in Dublin to 8.1 in Helsinki (1990s data). Grouping rather than ranking the cities, Dublin and London showed most segregation, the Scandinavian cities (Helsinki and Umeå) showed least, and the other cities (Lisbon, Toulouse and Turin) intermediate levels.

Since there was inadequately compatible data across the cities on social inequality, especially income distribution, we extrapolated from national level data, which indicated the most inequality in Portugal, Ireland, the UK and Italy, and the least in Finland and Sweden, with France in an intermediate position. This suggested a broad consistency between levels of social inequality and spatial segregation in the higher, lower and intermediate city groupings - with the exception of Lisbon, for which city data were particularly difficult to interpret due to the large geographical boundary used. We found two potential mechanisms for the association of levels of social inequality and spatial segregation: *spatial mixing*, where people of different economic status lived in proximity, and *spatial redistribution*, where segregated areas were nonetheless relatively equal in economic level. Explicitly *spatial* policies, as in Helsinki, could produce high degrees of spatial mixing, whereas the spatial effect of *socially* redistributive policies could be seen as responsible for relatively little difference in living standards between nonetheless segregated areas, as in Umeå – or the reverse, as in Dublin.

Generally, spatial segregation increased in the BETWIXT cities between the 1980s and the 1990s. Looking at changes over time for distinct indicators, it appears that segregation tends to rise when employment rates fall, and conversely, segregation tends to fall when they rise. This would suggest falling employment rates between the 1980s and 1990s as a context for rises in urban spatial segregation.

Since numerical measures of area segregation give little indication of physical patterns, we supplemented our statistical analysis with the mapping of segregation in the cities. This showed there to be considerable continuity over time in the location of deprived areas, largely on the city periphery in the continental cities, and mainly in the inner city, but also on the periphery, for Dublin and London – a more American pattern. We also found considerable evidence of the physical clustering of deprived areas in all the cities but Helsinki, and there were some indications of further clustering of these areas over time in two of the cities, London and Turin, thus forming larger swathes of urban deprivation.

Putting our findings in international context, even in the most inegalitarian BETWIXT cities overall spatial segregation is relatively mild by US standards. IoD scores for US cities show a mean of 0.69 for black racial segregation (where 0 means no segregation and 1 means total segregation), and several

[3] The IQR measures the distance between the top of the bottom quintile and the bottom of the top quintile of areas, thus spanning the central three quintiles and ignoring the influence of outlying variables, which can unduly skew results if the full range is taken. The IoD measures the extent to which groups at risk are concentrated or dispersed. It produces a score between 0 and 1, with 0 signifying perfect integration (i.e. groups having the same representation within each area unit as their representation in the city as a whole) and 1 perfect segregation.

cities show IoDs of over 0.8 (Massey and Denton 1989). However for the BETWIXT cities, there was no IoD on any indicator of over 0.35. Even allowing for the centrality of race indicators to the US debate on segregation, and the distinction from EU socio -economic indicators, this represents a clear difference. Segregated areas in the BETWIXT cities are not marked by the combination of large size and severity of segregation which characterise black urban ghettos in the US. However, taking area size and degree of segregation separately, some BETWIXT cities have reasonably large areas which are affected by milder levels of segregation, and there are also smaller areas of quite severe segregation (eg. IQRs of 18 and 19 in London at enumeration district level f or male and female employment rates). These patterns indicate that the potential for future ghettoisation in European cities should not be ruled out.

From the point of view of the BETWIXT project, it was clear that cities in the Scandinavian countries, with histories of strongly redistributive social and spatial policies, showed the least spatial segregation, those in the relatively less regulated economies of Ireland and the UK showed most urban spatial segregation, and the continental cities of Toulouse and Turin showed intermediate levels. It is these distinctions which provided a clear city context for the subsequent neighbourhood and household stages of the BETWIXT project.

Social profile of neighbourhoods in seven European cities – Stage B

Stage B of the project consisted of qualitative case studies of precarious neighbourhoods in the BETWIXT cities, with one neighbourhood selected for detailed study in each city. Precariousness was interpreted in this context as referring to neighbourhoods which were next-to-bottom rather bottom of the ladder of disadvantage. It was operationalised in the first instance by focusing on areas identified in the city-wide analyses of spatial segregation as located on, or close to, the boundary between the bottom (fifth) quintile and the fourth quintile on key indicators of social exclusion. The purpose of these case studies was to examine how city -wide patterns of spatial segregation manifested themselves at the local level, referring particularly to the impact on the neig hbourhood as a locus of access to resources for households who are in precarious circumstances. This in turn was intended to provide a context for the analysis of household coping strategies in the next stage.

The multiple meanings, which can be attached to the concept of 'neighbourhood' made it difficult to link the concept with specific, clearly defined areas on the ground. While recognising that the term 'neighbourhood' generally referred to small localities, the BETWIXT researchers identified at least three different bases on which such localities could be circumscribed and defined as neighbourhood. One was by reference to the catchment area served by a central set of services and amenities – local shops, school, health clinics, church, leisure facilit ies, transport connections, etc. – an entity referred to here as the **'services neighbour hood'**. The second was the **'imagined neighbourhood'** evoked by the name of the area, which encompassed not only a particular place but also the imagined quality or statu s attaching to that area. The third was the 'social' or **'community' neighbourhood** based on the face-to-face community of neighbours. This related to a smaller spatial entity than either of the previous two as it related to the usually restricted space with in which householders would know a significant number of neighbours and have regular contact with them.

Three major lessons were drawn from the findings of the neighbourhood studies. These related to the interaction between city-wide patterns on each of the three types of neighbourhood just referred to.

The first lesson was that the 'services neighbourhood' reflected city-wide patterns of spatial and social inequality more-or-less directly. All the case-study neighbourhoods in the BETWIXT project were among either the worst-off or next to worst-off in their cities, but they differed widely both in their absolute standards of services and amenities and in the degree to which their objective living conditions fell below the norm for their own cities. In other words, these neighbourhoods provided a fair reflection of how egalitarian the cities were in objective terms and how far their welfare states successfully protected against spatial differentiation in living standards. The study neighbourhoods in the two Scandinavian cities in the study were at one extreme in this regard, and were almost utopian in the quality of life they offered their residents (particularly in the case of Ersboda in Umeå). The other neighbourhoods displayed varying degrees of disadvantage both in absolute terms and by reference to normal living standards in their cities and did so in ways, which approximated to broader differences in social and spatial inequality in their host cities and societies.

The second lesson was that no matter how egalitarian the cities were in objective terms they failed to avoid status hierarchies between neighbourhoods as far as image and reputation were concerned. All the seven cities in the BETWIXT study had low-status neighbourhoods, that is, housing areas which were widely regarded in the wider city as unpleasant or even dangerous places where few people would voluntarily chose to live. Such negative cultural representation was a less material aspect of neighbourhood conditions than the objective features just referred to, but it nevertheless had powerful effects on urban spatial structure and amounted to a significant dimension of urban disadvantage. The striking aspect of this pattern was that neighbourhoods assigned a low status position in the Scandinavian cities were just as stigmatised as their counterparts in the other cities in the study, even though real inequalities – what one would expect to be the objective basis for such stigmatisation – were much weaker in the Scandinavian cases. These patterns suggested that status hierarchy was a dimension of spatial disadvantage with its own dynamic and logic, with only partial linkages to inequalities of objective condition, and with greater durability in the face of egalitarian social policy than is often recognised. They also suggest that the cities themselves, rather than any cross-city comparisons, provided residents with the primary frame of reference within which these hierarchies were constructed.

The third lesson concerns the nature of the social or community neighbourhood and the way it is shaped by neighbourhood disadvantage. The social neighbourhood, the face-to-face community of neighbours, is a micro-structure which arises among small clusters of neighbouring dwellings and which is likely to arise in a number of different forms even within relatively small areas. It does not encompass all residents equally in such micro-spaces. It relies primarily on networks among the day-time population (those who by reason of family situation, unemployment, old age or ill-health spend most of their daily lives in the area) rather than on the dormitory population (those who work outside the area and come home mainly for rest and recuperation in the evenings). Children typically provide an important focus of this form of neighbourhood both because of their own interactions with other children living close by (a form of neighbourliness in itself) and because they draw their parents into contact with the parents of

these other children. Networks of parents structured around the circulation spaces of children, in fact, are among the more common and stronger forms of neighbourhood micro-communities.

While such micro-communities are present in many kinds of neighbourhood, they take on distinct characteristics in deprived neighbourhoods. In these cases, the threat of social disorder is commonly perceived as a dominating characteristic of local public space. It typically leads to divisions between those who see themselves as the respectable mainstream versus those they see as troublemakers, even though the mainstream may themselves be considered in other contexts as verging on socially excluded (with reference, that is, to the wider city context). The perceived threat from troublemakers is of particular concern to vulnerable groups, and again parents' worries for their children are often to the fore in this context. In such circumstances, the mutual support function among networks of neighbours tends to take on a conflictual character vis-à-vis the threatening 'others' who encroach on 'their' space. As such, it becomes micro-segregationist since it may create zones of exclusion (both micro-spatial and micro-social) from which certain extremely marginalised groups are excluded. Thus, in deprived neighbourhoods where such processes have taken hold, micro-communities of neighbours have both solidaristic and fragmentary aspects – solidaristic with reference to those who belong and fragmentary or micro-segregationist with reference to those whom they see as threats to be excluded. We do not want to overstate the prevalence of such micro-communities in the BETWIXT neighbourhoods nor the level of neighbourhood solidarism they create. By their very nature, in fact, they tend to be microscopic and to be relevant to only some residents' lives. Therefore, they tend not to extend over large neighbourhood areas and can co-exist with a considerable degree of anonymity, looseness of social association and pluralism at larger neighbourhood levels. Nevertheless, they can be important, and within deprived neighbourhoods in particular can provide an important focus for the 'neighbourhood as community' at the micro level.

Households in precarity in diverse societal contexts - Stage C

Our idea, in focusing on households in precarity rather that in deep poverty or downright exclusion, was eventually to come up with recommendations on policies that would help such households to cope with perturbations of their way of life, to keep their heads above water and avoid sinking into the spiral of exclusion. What people actually do cannot be reduced to behaviour (isolated acts) conceived as immediate response reactions to given situations. Their action can also be conceived as courses of action unfolding in the course of time, following more or less conscious strategies which evolve as the situation itself evolves and as its constraints and potential resources and solutions become perceived by actors. The Stage C research consisted in talking directly to members of households in precarity. In order to find about 27 of them we usually had to look for more, and discard some which appeared at close glance as either above precarity or below it. The findings from the household stage of the BETWIXT project constitute the main basis for policy recommendations as formulated through the stage E analyses outlined in chapter 5 of the report.

Discussion groups of local key persons and households – Stage D

This stage of the project was designed as an 'action research' part of the work, to bring together interviewed households, feed back preliminary results of the research, allow for a collective reaction to their situations, and the formulation of joint responses to local actors contacted in stage B. As such, this

work was seen as integrally connected to the Stage C work, and was carried out in this way. Groups of household members and key local actors – separately or together depending on local appropriateness – were brought together in community locations, summary interim findings from the Betwixt project were provided, and reactions listened to. In most cases people were already aware of those responsible for services in their area, and often cynical about their availability for feedback. The response of key local people tended to relate the restrictions on their own pow ers to the regional and national levels of government, and to the allocation of resources. However the existence of this stage of the work did allow for a forum where local problems could be aired. We found that, in order to be successful as an ongoing outcome of the research, such a forum would have to relate to existing active community forums, since understandably the profile of the Betwixt project in particular, and of academic research in general, was not sufficiently high to retain on its own the cont inued attention of respondents.

Policy implications: Important concerns, obstacles, and facilitators for people and places in precarity – Stage E

The ultimative objective of the BETWIXT project was to contribute to policy debate and policy formation on problems of precarity, poverty and social exclusion in urban areas in Europe, both at the level of the EU and of Member States. Consequently, this fifth Stage E was devoted to drawing up policy recommendations to the European Commission.

Our task here thus is to try to identify policy lessons which emerge from looking at all the BETWIXT cities together and which might have some broad relevance despite the diversity of national approaches to urban social disadvantage found across EU countries. This will be done by looking at policy implications related, firstly, to spatial segregation and neighbourhood disadvantages and, secondly, to social inequalities and household precariousness.

Spatial segregation

As indicated earlier, the BETWIXT cities differed in many aspects of their levels and patterns of spatial segregation, with Dublin and London being the most segregated and Umeå and Helsinki the least. None of these cities had racial ghettos of the type, which are common in American cities, and no other principle of segregation was severe enough to mimic the hyper-segregation associated with race in the United States. Nonetheless, small pockets of severe segregation and more extensive patterns of moderate segregation could be found in many of the cities, as a consequence of which spatial segregation can justifiably be regarded as a policy concern.

A number of points about the nature of the social problem which spatial segregation represents arise from the BETWIXT analysis, and these carry certain broad implications for policy designed to combat urban social exclusion.

Social vs spatial inequality

The first point is that spatial segregation gives rise to poverty blackspots in urban areas primarily as a consequence of social inequalities between households and only in a secondary sense as a consequence of the spatial distribution of households. If social inequalities are narrow, it matters little what pattern of spatial distribution of households emerges since there will be too few poor households to form

significant poverty clusters. Among the BETWIXT cities, Helsinki and Umeå (in contrast with, say, Dublin and London) demonstrate this point. Although Helsinki in particular had a long tradition of urban planning which tried, with a certain amount of effectiveness, to promote social mixing at neighbourhood level, it did not succeed in avoiding spatial segregation entirely and still had its largely working class areas. However, working class households in Helsinki and Umeå were less exposed to precarity and social exclusion than their counterparts in other cities, and in consequence the clustering of such households in particular neighbourhoods was less likely to lead to the kind of neighbourhood level disadvantage found in the other cities. *Thus, the reduction in inequalities between households, rather than social mixing policies per se, proved to be the best protection against neighbourhood disadvantage.* Where social inequality between households is widespread, sharp differentiation between prosperous and poor areas is much more likely to emerge. Policies which aim to combat such differentiation by focusing primarily on its spatial manifestations (such as social mixing policies pursued thorugh housing tenure mix or special area-based policies targetted on deprived neighbourhoods) are likely to address symptoms rather than fundamental causes and so are likely only to have modest impact. The implication here is that the interest in such spatial policies as a solution to the problem of disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods which has emerged in many EU countries in recent years is at best likely to offer only partial solutions, and may even be counter-productive to the extent that they distract from the more fundamental processes leading to serious disadvantage at the household level.

Neighbourhood stigma

The second point is a qualification of the first, in that one important aspect of spatial segregation – that based on distinctions of reputation and symbolic status between different areas of the city – was present to a considerable degree in all of the seven BETWIXT cities and was largely impervious to egalitarian social policy. Neighbourhood stigma is an aspect of urban social exclusion which has its origins at neighbourhood rahter than at household level and has a dynamic which is often independent of inequalities of objective condition, either between areas or between households. Even Helsinki and Umeå, which had no objectively poor neighbourhoods (at least not of a kind found in the other cities), did have negatively stigmatised neighbourhoods. Thus, while some cities succeeded more than others in avoiding social and spatial inequalities, *none had found ways to avoid the symbolic ranking of neighbourhoods into more and less desirable housing locations and the consequent widespread labelling of certain neighbourhoods as unpleasant places to live.* Some of the neighbourhoods studied in the BETWIXT project escaped the extremes of this kind of stigma because they were a step above the bottom in the status rankings (e.g. Holloway in London and to some extent Aurora in Turin). But in all cases there was a lively sense that such a ranking existed and that the neighbourhood's position in that ranking was an important part of its character, however capriciously that position may have emerged. From a policy point of view, the important lesson here is, first, that status hierarchy matters but second that status hierarchy often has only a flimsy material base. In consequence, negative stigma afflicting a neighbourhood may be hard to rectify by addressing objective disadvantage alone (even if alleviation of objective disadvantage may be desirable in itself). Practical solutions to the capricious stigmatisation of neighbourhoods are difficult to identify, but they need account of far more serious efforts to combat urban social exclusion. Negative reputation needs to be recognised as an independent dimension of neighbourhood disadvantage and as something which even the most egalitarian societies have had only limited success in dealing with.

Micro-segregation

We have argued above that spatial inequalities between neighbourhoods ultimately derive from social inequalities between households. They do not warrant being treated as a *primary* concern in efforts to rectify urban social disadvantage since household-level disadvantages should occupy that position. Nevertheless, disadvantaged neighbourhoods do exist and some supporting role can be played by anti-social exclusion policies targeted on the collective character of such neighbourhoods. In devising such interventions, the BETWIXT findings give rise to implications as to how the interventions should be designed and implemented. The main implication is that disadvantaged neighbourhoods should not be readily assumed to have a strongly cohesive, communal character and policy interventions in such neighbourhoods should not be falsely grounded in facile notions of community participation. The reality is that the more disadvantaged the neighbourhood, the more likely it is to be fractured between competing interests, quite often in the form of conflicts between categories of residents with different levels of social capacity and different conceptions of how the neighbourhood should function, particularly in regard to the use of public space and amenities. A common form of that conflict arises from efforts of better-functioning householders to combat the impact of what they see as trouble-makers in the area, who are often disruptive young males or others with problems such as drug addiction or alcoholism. It is thus common to find that even small neighbourhoods are riven by micro-segregation, as these competing interests try to create protected spaces from which they try to exclude undesirable others.

The existence of these divisions does not mean that community participation in the design and implementation of neighbourhood improvement schemes (of whatever kind) should be avoided. Rather, *it means that the challenges of engaging with local collective life in such a way as to make it broadly inclusive have to be recognized and taken seriously – and shallow rhetoric about 'the community' and community participation is unlikely to achieve that end*. In deprived neighbourhoods, where public goods and amenities are scarce and often of poor quality, it is inevitable and understandable that sub-groups will emerge – sometimes in very cohesive and positively motivated ways – to enhance and protect their stake in the local public sphere. However, such groups are often sectional, and act at the expense of those who are most marginalised and most likely to be further excluded by efforts to raise the tone of the local neighbourhood. In short, community action is likely to be political, not only in relation to the community's relations with the outside world but also in the internal conflicts over the sharing out of local resources.

Employment and social integration for precarious social groups

We have already argued that neighbourhood disadvantage is fundamentally the aggregated version of household disadvantage. Even though aggregation of itself may add a layer of disadvantage that adds to problems, which arise at the household level, we would suggest that the household level remains the key arena where the primary solutions to neighbourhood problems must be found. We therefore now turn to the lessons for the protection of household welfare which emerge from the BETWIXT findings. In doing so, we turn to the classic concerns of the welfare state – the provision of jobs for those of working age and of adequate incomes and services for those who are unemployed or outside the labour market altogether. Here our concern is not to advance new solutions but to suggest that the old solutions

remain valid, and that no easier or cheaper way is available to protect marginal households and the neighbourhoods they live in from sliding into social exclusion.

Numerous studies of vulnerability and precarity find that the best safeguard against falling over the edge into social exclusion is gainful employment (see EC Joint Report on Social Inclusion 2002). Our study supports the validity of this point in general terms since in all the cities and neighbourhoods studied in the project, it is primarily through employment that individuals secure a stable income and are integrated into the system of social protection by being eligible for social benefits in case of unemployment or sickness.

Therefore our study suggests that employment on its own is not enough: the two cities in our study with the lowest unemployment rates (Turin and London) were at best only moderately successful in protecting the vulnerable sections of their population against social exclusion, while the two cities which were consistently most effective in this regard (Umeå and Helsinki) had quite high unemployment rates in the 1990s. These two Scandinavian cities demonstrate that it is not so much employment on its own as the combined operation of employment and social protection (broadly defined) which provides the best defence against social exclusion (Dublin, which had a long history of high working class unemployment and relatively weak social protection, provides a contrary example which supports the same point).

Employment
In our neighbourhood study as well as through the household interviews carried out in six of the countries we registered some groups for whom the affiliation to the labour market were particularly troublesome and their social conditions therefore especially precarious. These groups were:

- young people without previous labour market experiences
- adults with physical and mental disabilities
- ethnic minorities
- women with caring obligations for children, and in some countries also for elderly relatives

All four groups need special measures and treatments to be integrated in regularly employment relations. Not surprisingly these measures are different for the four groups but some general policy recommendations might be forwarded

- up-grading or re-shaping of qualifications is important for the ethnic minorities and for adults who seeking to re-enter the labour market after long periods of unemployment or because of health problems
- provision of neighbourhood care facilities for children and for elderly people to enable women to take up regular employment and to make it possible for them to reconcile care obligations with employment
- special programmes combining work training and vocational training for youngsters without previous labour market experience
- easy access to job through collective and cheap transport between home and work places

In this respect it is important strongly to emphasize the need for an active and adaptive labour market policy where individual measures are tailored to the needs of specific groups of individuals. People in different phases of their life cycle need different measures in order to be integrated into stable employment. In addition, the poverty trap escaped when moving from benefit to work may be re-established at the low paid end of the labour market. Priority must therefore be given to the creation of good quality as well as accessible employment. This includes the provision of opportunities for advancement, through training and promotion, into more skilled employment. Without good quality and decent payment, many people in precarity might be better off without employment.

Here it is important to emphasize that being active and adaptive in searching for gainful employment is not only a responsibility for individual workers but also for employers and public employment services. Only if all partners in the job searching process are active and responsive can the objective obstacles preventing the unemployed from taking and holding a job be removed and the search process be successful.

The need for an income sufficient to up-hold a stable social network and decent livelihood

The most important source of income preventing the slide into exclusion is, as mentioned, gainful employment, which typically also makes the individual eligible for a certain level of income compensation through the social security system.

For those for whom it is not possible to get a sufficient income through employment it is extremely important that the social protection system is generous and universal and the social benefits are high enough to secure the household a stable income. Social assistance must be a right for all citizens who are unable to gain a regular income through employment. Only through a solidaristic and comprehensive system of social protection will it be possible to prevent precarious social groups from sliding into poverty and social exclusion. The family is a crucial and stabilising factor for most people but when employment, income and/or housing situation becomes threatened then the risk of family dissolution increases. Research has documented, and our findings also suggest, that there is not necessarily any relationship between economic and social poverty - i.e. lack of social network and isolation - but those individuals who are economically poor tend to lack social networks more frequently than other social groups. Consequently one of the most preventative measures in keeping up a good quality of life with family and kinship will be to secure the household a decent and stable income.

Employment, apart from providing an income, also provides access to a wider world of possibilities, contacts and ideas. We found that for those groups for whom employment is not a realistic option (such as older people, those with considerable disabilities or illness, and carers for these groups), the slide into precarity was less likely when social networks were good. These networks may or may not include the family, and may be informal or based on deliberate action by statutory or voluntary agencies. We found that networking was strongest where social provision was best, i.e. in the Scandinavian contexts, and that where public provision and resources were weaker (e.g. London and Lisbon), family ties, neighbourly energy and voluntary effort could be inadequate or break down completely. Thus good public funding and provision plays a crucial role in supporting the development and maintenance of good

social networks. This we found to be important not just for those broadly excluded from the labour market, but also to enable the economically active to gain or change employment, especially in those places where clear access to vocational and careers advice was lacking.

In addition to gainful employment, stable income, and social networks several other dimensions are important for preventing precarious households sliding into social exclusion and ending up in poverty:

Access to social services, which are comprehensive and of good quality
An important dimension in judging a neighbourhood as a coherent and collective social unit is the extent to which the residents have easy access to services of good quality close to their home. This concerns

- childcare facilities for children in all age-groups - kindergarten, playgrounds, after-school services etc.
- schools which are not only a place for children to learn but also an important social agency in creating a coherent neighbourhood through contacts with parents and as a local activity centre for adults
- facilities where the children of the neighbourhood for free or low costs can practise their sports, musics and other activities
- health centres with local doctors, dentists, visiting nurses etc and out-patients' facilities for treatment of minor diseases
- collective facilities for older people and carer of adults, e.g. day centres, neighbourhood centres

Most of these services concern children and youngsters. Research has shown that parents devote much of their thinking, time and money in trying to protect their children from all sorts of risks, which are present even more in deprived neighbourhoods. Therefore, all the various types of local service facilities are important in creating a socially coherent and stable neighbourhood, but even more so in precarious neighbourhoods because the social networks here often are more vulnerable and the risk of health problems greater than in better-off localities.

Access to social protection and delivery of social services should be universal citizens' rights rather than based on means-tests or conditional judgements

Instability in employment, housing and income seems to threaten people's health conditions seriously - therefore preventing health problems combined with easy access to medical consultation and treatment is important especially for precarious social groups. Good connections with social services enable health facilities (which, being universal, lack the stigma of targeted services) to provide public support to those in precarious and poor situations.

Safe neighbourhoods and good housing
The vulnerable social groups focused in the BETWIXT project clearly need good and stable housing and on top of this neighbourhood networks, which they can reply on for practical and social support.

It is important to develop a concept of the neighbourhood as a safe place considered by the neighbours as a social entity. Only when all residents - old-timers as well as newcomers - are embraced and included in informal and formal network relations will the neighbourhood be able to fight against precarity as a collective actor. In this respect it is crucial to develop urban policies, which prevent spatial and social inequality as well as segregation. Recently area-based regeneration programmes have been popular; however their effect can be questioned if they split up neighbourhoods.

Conclusion

We believe that we have successfully achieved our goal to produce general propositions based on local observation. The three fieldwork stages have shown that behind the diversity and complexity of household situations and histories, of strategies and courses of action, patterns and recurring processes involving given sequences of situations and reactions to situations are clearly identifiable, as they appear with high frequency over a series of household case studies and case histories. Moreover, such patterns may be connected fairly easily with the availability or non-availability of resources offered by welfare regimes and their forms of local implementation.

We had in the BETWIXT research team recurring discussion about the relative weight of neighbourhood 'quality' as a factor helping or hampering people's action. This discussion lasted until we realised that disagreement among us had an objective source which explained it: there was a good reason why the Swedes, the Finns and the French played down the relevance of the particular neighbourhood people lived in, while the Irish and the Italians considered it highly relevant. Sweden, Finland and France are countries where developed social security regimes mostly based on insurance principles exist and cover the whole national territory equally. By contrast, in the other welfare systems, help to the poor is both more scarce and more locally dependent, two reasons to enhance the weight of local neighbourhood 'quality'.

We would finally like to emphasize a last point that we believe relevant for future research. Our methodology has allowed us to extend research on poverty, precarity, and the efficiency of social security and welfare arrangements by combining several kinds of methods, which are often considered, if not as mutually exclusive, at least as involving conceptions and forms of data that cannot be easily combined. This combination has enabled us to take into account the spatial dimension of precarity and local arrangements (the importance of local contexts); their multidimensionality (the complexity of interactions between risks, problems, and perturbations in various spheres of life such as employment, training, health, housing, and so on); and their temporal or dynamic dimension - movements into and out of precarity and poverty zones as lifelong processes. It has also allowed us to tackle directly and include the issue of people's courses of action, that survey research cannot record empirically.

2. Background and objectives of the BETWIXT project

In the European research on social exclusion and poverty it is possible to distinguish between two main traditions. An Anglo-Saxon tradition primarily focusing upon distributive issues such as income inequalities, resources and the proportion living under the 'poverty line' and a Continental European tradition focusing more on relational issues such as social participation, social networks and lack of power. In the BETWIXT project analysing the processes of social exclusion and integration in urban contexts we wanted to combine these traditions. On the one hand we wanted to identify urban areas in deprivation through the use of quantitative methods – statistical mapping of poverty and social exclusion. On the other hand, through local case studies of deprived neighbourhoods and comprehensive interviews of precarious households we have analysed how urban households in various European cities are coping with conditions of life.

The aim of the BETWIXT project was to describe the processes through which individuals and households in precarious but still balanced situations lost this balance and became caught in the first step leading to poverty and social exclusion. We tried to contextualise these households in two ways. Firstly within city-wide mapped patterns of social segregation, and secondly in local studies of neighbourhoods where they lived. Our focus was on the resources, material, cultural and social, which were available to them, and the issue of practical access to such resources. We primarily focused on the use they made of the available resources, that is, on their efforts to resist the progression from precarity to exclusion. The social groups we focused on was thus those finding themselves in situations that involved high risks to eventually slide into exclusion.

Our theoretical framework rested on three major assumptions.

The first was that even in European cities which appear wealthy on the whole, some processes are at work which destabilize sizable portions of the population and eventually force some of them into spatial pockets of concentrated precarity, poverty and exclusion where resources are scarce and where, moreover, the mere fact of living there is an additional handicap – e.g. their address presents them being hired.

The second assumption related to self-activity of the individuals: we assumed that most people, if they still have the 'moral' and physical energy to do so, will take up any opportunity to avoid being excluded, and will work to maintain or restore some sort of equilibrium in their situation. If they don't do it, it is either because they have learned by prior experience that it is not worthwhile and they won't be given access to external resources, or because their inner physical and morale forces have been badly damaged already.

The third assumption was that the locality where households live is the immediate locus of access (or lack of it) to the resources they need to maintain their equilibrium. What they need, of course, is jobs, but also access to jobs; social benefits, provided by national or local policies, but also access to those benefits; affordable housing, but also access to it; local supportive network, but of a kind which understands and meets their most urgent needs. The term access also implied the specifically spatial

dimension in of the project.

These assumptions led us to produce analyses of: urban social segregat ion, the local community context, the lives of households living in precarity, and the policy implications of our findings at local, city, national and European levels.

The overall aim of our work was thus to contribute to greater knowledge of and policy development towards the processes through which households are at risk to move from precarity to poverty, and of their mobilisation to resist being caught by such processes.

The objectives of the project were therefore formulated as follows

- To map social segregation statistically in several European cities, and to trace emerging commonalities and differences,
- To investigate the resources, social and material, available and accessible to those living in areas of precarity and deprivation,
- To examine the social processes leading to exclusion in urban areas by focusing on those in precarious circumstances who are on the edge of poverty or exclusion,
- To identify the strategies which help to prevent precarious individuals, households and localities from falling into social exclusion, and
- To trace the implications for the content and delivery of policies related to social excluded at local, national and European Union levels.

3. Scientific description of the BETWIXT project: Results and methodology

The BETWIXT project is a study of precariousness and social exclusion in seven cities in Europe: London, Dublin, Helsinki, Umeå, Toulouse, Turin and Lisbon. Choosing to focus on specific cities has introduced from the onset a spatial dimension into our project: the struggles of people against precariousness and the risk of falling into exclusion would be studied in the context of given cities, with given labour markets and social policies. We examined first the distribution of precariousness and poverty over each city, at the level of its various districts. Then we pushed the exploration of the spatial dimension one step further, by choosing to focus on one (deprived) district only. The ways of coping on precariousness of the 27 interviewed households will be studied within the framework of a given neighbourhood, whose local resources and drawbacks we would examine closely.

This attention to the spatial/local dimension of precariousness and how people cope with it is thus located in the context of a growing interest in how the social and spatial dimension of inequality appear combined with uncertainty about the precise nature and significance of this relationship and the appropriate way for the welfare state to address it. As such, it belongs within a long tradition of social research on urban poverty yet has certain novel features. The most obvious novelty is the comparative dimension. The study not only compares seven cities but does so across seven national boundaries in Europe. As such it is among the first to enter new ground and should be regarded as an exploratory step in a type of cross-national analysis, which will have to develop further if patterns of urban poverty in Europe are to be better understood.

Another feature of the study that is relatively unusual is its concern with three different levels of urban space – the city as a whole, the neighbourhood and the household. These levels have frequently been looked at separately, although the interaction between two of them – neighbourhood and household – has been the focus of much previous research. The particular dimension we seek to add here is a contextualisation of household and neighbourhood processes within city-wide patterns of spatial segregation. In other words, we wish to explore how the differing degrees of spatial segregation found across the seven cities are reflected in the character of particular neighbourhoods and the way households cope in those neighbourhoods.

A third feature of the study is its use of different methodological emphases to look at these three different urban levels. The main emphasis of the city-wide analysis of spatial segregation is essentially quantitative while those of the analyses of neighbourhood and household are qualitative (case studies and histories); however each level contains elements of both methods. Thus the quantitative comparison of cities uses an outline of their economic and social characteristics and history, and the statistical analysis was supplemented by observation visits of each city by all the research teams. For the neighbourhood study, besides its qualitative description, quantitative methods are used by most research teams both in the selection of the precarious neighbourhood (chosen to lie on the border between the fourth and fifth quintiles on indicators of social exclusion) and in the replication of tables showing city

indicators also at the local level. For the household stage based on interviewing, efforts are made to gain information on levels of expenditure and income, including state benefits, and local and city-wide trends are taken into account as context in the analysis of the household interviews.

The substantive issues addressed in the study could be summarised in three headline questions: (1) how spatially segregated are the seven cities? (2) how are city-wide patterns of spatial segregation reflected in the character of specific 'precarious' neighbourhoods? and (3) what coping mechanisms do precarious households in such neighbourhoods use to preserve or improve their position, referring particularly to the relative importance of personal or household level resources on the one hand and neighbourhood level resources on the other, as means to avoid the descent into social exclusion? Each of these headline questions is in turn answered in the following sections.

Social inequality and spatial segregation. How segregated are the seven BETWIXT cities?

Susan McIntosh

Introduction

Social science research on urban spatial segregation was largely an American creation. It was prompted by the large-scale migration of American blacks from the southern states to the northern industrial cities in the period after the Second World War and the consequent emergence of the black ghetto as a major feature of American metropolitan life. It subsequently developed to include wider issues of socio-economic segregation as well as racial segregation, and it is rather on this broad aspect that the BETWIXT project has focused. While many of the best-known US studies of this topic from the 1950s onwards focused on individual cities or even individual neighbourhoods (see e.g. Suttles 1968, Farley et al 1979), there also developed a strong tradition of cross-city quantitative measurement of spatial segregation and its effects. This was facilitated by the rich standardised data on American cities which was available from the US Census of Population and which provided the quantitative foundation on which much of the discussion of urban spatial segregation was based (the initial study was Duncan and Duncan 1955; from the very extensive recent literature see, e.g. White 1987, Massey and Denton 1993, Quillian 1999, Jargowsky 1996, Cutler et al 1999).

European research on urban spatial segregation has been strongly influenced by this American background, its concepts and questions. In consequence, reference to ghettoisation and related aspects of spatial segregation have cropped up in debate about European cities, often with alarmist overtones (Ostendorf et al 2001).

However, in evaluating this transatlantic transfer of research focus, some researchers have questioned whether the parallels between European and American urban patterns are as strong as are often assumed. It is questionable for example whether any large ethnic minority in Europe is normally subject to the degree of spatial segregation – or 'hyper-segregation', as Massey and Denton (1993) call it – experienced by blacks in American cities. In addition, the welfare state appears to play a stronger role in Europe than in the US, mitigating the wider social inequalities that are bound up with spatial segregation (Musterd and Ostendorf 1998).

From this background, basic questions emerge about the levels of spatial segregation in European cities, whether by reference to segregation based on social inequality (as measured through socio-economic indicators such as un/employment or educational level) or on race or ethnicity (as measured by indicators of race or ethnic minority). Questions also arise about the relationship between spatial segregation and such issues as the general patterns of social inequality in cities, the presence of ethnic minorities, and the way these evolve over time.

A key problem faced by European research in tackling these questions is the lack of a strong quantitative foundation which has characterised corresponding research in the United States. Segregation patterns in

many individual cities in Europe have been examined (e.g. Edwards and Flatley 1996, see also the chapters on individual cities in Musterd and Ostendorf 1998) and these have sometimes included elements of comparison within national boundaries. But Europe as a cross-national entity has nothing to compare with the range, detail and harmonised nature of the American census. Nor, within national boundaries, has any individual European country the number and diversity of urban centres which would compare with the 300 plus cities available to American researchers. In consequence, Europe lacks the foundation for the quantitative analysis of urban segregation patterns which has existed in the United States for over half a century.

It is precisely this lack of harmonised data and research infrastructure that is being tackled by EUROSTAT and by the research programme of the European Union, which has co-funded the BETWIXT project. Other recent EU initiatives are working in this direction. On social and employment dimensions, two well established examples are the European Community Household Panel Survey and the harmonised Labour Force Survey. More recent developments include the EU social inclusion programme (DG for Employment and Social Affairs), with its emphasis on comparative evidence, policies and indicators, and the Urban Audit (DG for Regional Policy), with a more spatial emphasis on quality of life data for cities. The latter is particularly relevant to studies of urban spatial segregation as it describes data at super-, sub- and city levels for 58 EU cities. However its ability to produce results based on harmonised sub-city data is as yet embryonic, hampered precisely by the lack of a single data source such as a European census, and thus by the great variety of systems, boundaries, definitions and contexts involved in the comparison. These difficulties are well known in international comparison (European Commission 2001, Musterd et al 1999).

It is in this context that the present study undertook as its first task a comparative, quantitative analysis of segregation patterns in seven European cities. The analysis was exploratory, in both methodological and substantive terms. Its methodological purpose was to explore what could be done to overcome the diversity of data systems found across the seven cities and extract from them comparable, reliable measures of spatial segregation. The substantive purpose was to try to assess the overall levels and patterns of spatial segregation revealed by those measures and, to a lesser extent, consider the direction of change in those patterns over a ten-year period. We now turn to consider separately the responses to each of these two purposes.

Methodological results

The principal source used for the measurement of spatial segregation in the seven cities was the small-area data obtained from the national census of population. However in the case of the two Scandinavian cities in the study (Helsinki and Umeå) census data were supplemented by extensive registration data which were available on a small-area basis. Census data (much less national registration data) have not been subject to systematic harmonisation at EU level; they therefore had to be extensively trawled through and evaluated in order to extract comparable variables and area units for analysis. Census data are notoriously inflexible for secondary analysis, the more so for international comparison (Musterd et al 1997, Musterd and van Kempen, 2000). However the outcome was that certain variables were identified which were available for all of the cities and which provided a meaningful basis for analysing and comparing segregation patterns across the seven cities.

Though the findings emerging from this exercise (as outlined below) were useful and valid, they were subject to some of the usual limitations. Firstly, the common variables were few in number and were largely confined to labour market indicators. Other crucial indicators were available only for sub-sets of the cities and so could not be used for comprehensive comparisons (though in these cases useful comparisons of sub-sets of the cities could be made). The most serious gap arose in connection with income: reliable measures of income levels on a sub-city basis were only available in Helsinki and Umeå, the two cities using registration rather than census data. (In the US, by contrast, the census has covered income data since 1940 and, this, in conjunction with data on race, has provided a central source for the analysis of urban segregation patterns since then.) However, for our European analysis, spatial concentrations of income poverty could not be directly measured and compared across the seven cities. Since the spatial concentration of poverty is a major concern of nationally based research in this field, this lack represents a significant limitation for international comparisons. Even in the case of labour market indicators, there were doubts about the comparability of some important variables, particularly those relating to the definition of the borderline between unemployment and economic inactivity. Hence the main attention was concentrated on measures relating to rates of *employment* rather than unemployment.

Thus the limited range of comparable variables imposed a major constraint on the comparative analysis of segregation patterns across the seven cities. In the event a total of 17 possible comparative indicators was whittled down to five and subsequently four, of which two (male and female employment rates) were quite robust, one (unemployed youth rate) relatively so, and one ('foreigners'/ethnic minorities) barely so, but included for interest.

A second difficulty arose in connection with the area units to which these variables applied. The intention was to focus on sub-city areas of comparable population size. In practice, again for reasons of data availability, there was significant variation in the average size of area units, ranging from a low of just under 3,300 in the case of Dublin to over 15,000 in Lisbon. (There was also considerable variety in the size range around the average.) A test of the stability of measures of spatial segregation in connection with area units of differing sizes was undertaken (by Flatley) as part of the analysis of segregation (Flatley and McIntosh 2000). These confirmed the known effect that level of segregation varies inversely with size of area unit, but showed that our measures were reasonably stable for area units within the range 5,000-15,000 population. Analytical allowance was made for this, particularly for the two cities with area unit size outside that range: Dublin, with a smaller, and Lisbon, with a larger, size (see above). In general, although the diversity in size of area units did not undermine the comparative analysis, it did affect the comparability of measures of segregation; this is taken into account in interpreting substantive findings on segregation patterns set out below.

A third difficulty, partly methodological and partly conceptual, arose from issues about city boundaries. In the case of a number of the cities, legal or administrative boundaries bore little relationship to the cities as operating entities. While the concept of a city as an operating rather than legal-administrative entity is anything but clear-cut, it was nevertheless evident that in most cases the city, as it was imagined in people's minds and as it operated in day-to-day terms, spread well beyond the core municipalities

defined in legal-administrative terms, even though its outer limits were also typically unclear. There was thus a certain arbitrariness in deciding what the city was and how it should be defined for analytical purposes. For most cities, there were distinctions between the city centre, the city itself and the outer area or region beyond the city. Our aim was to identify the city as a single continuous built-up entity, in so far as that was possible. That approach seemed to be applicable in a reasonably consistent way across four of the cities (Dublin, Toulouse, Turin and Umeå). In Helsinki however the pattern of suburbanization emerging from the Finnish approach to urban planning (based on a vision of urban housing areas interspersed with forest and water) meant that the idea of continuous built-up areas had little relevance and it was necessary to focus on a more dispersed metropolitan region. London on the other hand was distinctive largely on account of the huge size of the continuous built-up area. For Lisbon there was a choice only between the old small city centre and a very large agglomeration area which included some peripheral semi-rural areas; by necessity this latter was chosen. This issue of boundaries has implications for the analysis of patterns of spatial segregation found within the cities.

These difficulties reflect the pragmatic nature of the comparison undertaken: the research teams had very limited scope for choice of data at sub-city level, having to work largely with the area unit sizes and dates available through census data. As noted earlier, this is a problem common to such international comparisons. Awareness of these methodological issues informed the whole analysis, and particularly two final summary diagrams of the data. These compared levels of spatial segregation for the cities by combined male and female employment rates, plotted against rate of change between the 1980s and 1990s. The first summary plot was based on the actual data, and the second was based on the data with (specified) adjustments to take methodological issues into account.

Measures used

Analysis of the small-area data in order to identify segregation patterns used a combination of measures and techniques. For measuring levels of spatial segregation, the main instrument was the inter-quintile range (IQR) of areas, ranked according to certain agreed common indicators (see below), and grouped into fifths or quintiles. The IQR measures the distance between the top of the bottom quintile and the bottom of the top quintile of areas, thus spanning the central three quintiles and ignoring the influence of outlying variables, which can unduly skew results if the full range is taken. This measure was visually expressed through the use of box-and-whisker plots, in which the boxes represented the IQR (the central three quintiles) and the whiskers, the top and bottom quintiles.

The Index of Dissimilarity (IoD) was also used. First developed by Duncan and Duncan (1955) to measure racial segregation, it, along with other such measures, has been subject to criticism, but has still been widely used, and is appropriate here as a back-up measure. In fact an analysis of a large number of different indices relevant to quantifying spatial segregation found that IoD scores were more robust than any other (Massey 1988). It measures the extent to which groups at risk are concentrated or dispersed. It produces a score between 0 and 1 (sometimes expressed as a percentage), with 0 signifying perfect integration (i.e. groups having the same representation within each area unit as their representation in the city as a whole) and 1 perfect segregation. A common criticism of the IoD is that the same score can represent two very different physical patterns: one where segregated areas are geographically clustered and another where they are scattered. To overcome this problem, the seven BETWIXT teams also

constructed mapped data across the cities. All cities were mapped for male employment rate during the 1990s; this allowed observation of the location and clustering of deprived areas at one point in time. Three cities further mapped change in the physical patterning of deprived areas (see below).

Between them these means provided a range of measures, visual representations and physical observation of spatial segregation of the seven BETWIXT cities.

Levels and patterns of segregation

Within the methodological limits outlined above, the findings which emerged from the analysis of urban spatial segregation in the seven cities could be summarised thus:

1. ***Levels of segregation***

On the variables examined, using the inter-quintile ratio of local areas ranked by each indicator, levels of spatial segregation varied widely across the seven cities. There were some differences in the patterns revealed depending on the indicator used, but a fairly consistent picture emerged at each end of the scale. This is exemplified by results using combined male and female employment rates, which yielded IQR scores for the 1990s ranging between 22.7 for Dublin and 8.1 for Helsinki. Grouping these scores, segregation was narrowest in the two Scandinavian cities (Helsinki, and Umeå in the 1980s) and widest in Dublin and London. The three other cities – Toulouse, Turin and Lisbon, and Umeå in the 1990s – ranged between these extremes. Uncertainties about the data make it impossible to *rank* the cities precisely in relation to each other on a scale of overall segregation (this was particularly true in the case of Lisbon, where the boundaries for the underlying data were least compatible with those of the other cities). However, this finding is more reliable in outline when the cities are *grouped*, i.e. classified into broad categories according to high, low and intermediate levels of segregation.

2. ***Spatial segregation and social inequality***

The consortium attempted to explore whether and in what ways patterns of spatial segregation in the cities were linked to background levels of social inequality. However, although much detailed work on this dimension was carried out and is available within the city reports (see Flatley and McIntosh, eds 2000), direct comparisons of social inequality at city level proved impossible due to the lack of harmonised data on some variables at sub-city level, particularly in regard to income distribution. In the absence of comparable data on social inequality for the cities, national level comparisons were drawn upon to provide a proxy comparison of levels of social inequality in the cities. The assumption was that the seven cities would broadly reflect the patterns of the societies in which they were located on this issue. These national level comparisons placed Portugal at the top end with most inequality, ahead of Ireland, the UK and Italy - and Finland and Sweden at the bottom end, with France in an intermediate position.

There was a loose association between the level of spatial segregation in the seven cities and the overall level of social inequality in the host societies of each city. Dublin and London, the more highly segregated cities, were found in societies with relatively wide income inequalities, while the low level of

segregation in Helsinki and Umeå was paralleled by the narrow income inequalities in Finland and Sweden. Toulouse and Turin occupied intermediate positions in regard to both urban spatial segregation and national income inequalities. Data for Lisbon indicated low levels of spatial segregation, which contrasted with a very high level of income inequality for Portugal; here discontinuities in the data made the relative position of Lisbon somewhat uncertain, and the final judgement (in the plotting of amended data) was that spatial segregation in Lisbon was at the higher end of the intermediate group. A certain amount of spatial mixing (see below) was evident both in central Lisbon, due to modified rent control, and across the city where shanty dwellings existed in proximity to more prosperous housing.

3. Linking mechanisms

Urban spatial segregation in the seven cities was linked to background national patterns of social inequality through two distinct mechanisms – spatial mixing and spatial redistribution. First, a narrowing of social inequalities seemed to be associated with an increase in *spatial mixing* (which is the opposite of spatial *segregation*). In Helsinki, for example, low income households often lived beside better-off households, and the gaps in living standards between the two were not very wide. Indeed, here welfare policy had an explicit spatial dimension in that spatial mixing of different housing tenure categories within neighbourhoods had long been a central goal of housing policy and urban planning. However, the association between spatial mixing and low levels of social inequality was not exact: there was somewhat less spatial mixing in Umeå despite its historically low levels of social inequality, and there was some evidence of increased spatial segregation in Toulouse, alongside relatively low levels of social inequality.

The second spatially significant mechanism which came into play was *spatial redistribution*, which is the negation of spatial *inequality* rather than of spatial segregation. Even in the more egalitarian cities, spatial mixing had its limits and segregation by social class did occur – Helsinki and Umeå had working class or disadvantaged areas, as did Dublin, London and the 'intermediate' BETWIXT cities: Turin, Toulouse and Lisbon. However in the Scandinavian cities the redistributive mechanisms of the welfare state meant that working class areas were simply better off than their counterparts in the less egalitarian cities and were less evidently different from middle class areas in their own cities in living standards and outward appearance. In other words, redistributive patterns meant not that the different social classes lived together, but rather that where they lived apart they lived relatively equally. The resultant lack of clear spatial gaps in living standards in Helsinki and Umeå was evident both through direct observation on the ground (by all research teams of all seven cities) and quantitative measures of living standards. In the other BETWIXT cities by contrast, the social class profile of an area could generally be read off simply by looking at it, that is, by noticing the standard of the housing and the quality of the local physical environment. Toulouse, for example, similar to Umeå as noted above in having relatively less social inequality but also less spatial mixing, was here quite different from Umeå, in that there was relatively little spatial redistribution, and deprived areas were clear from observation.

Quantitative measures of living conditions in these latter cities confirmed the existence of the wide disparities which appeared evident to casual observation. The overall implication is that in Helsinki and Umeå the welfare state has reduced the extent and impact of spatial segregation, through the two

mechanisms outlined above. One is the promotion of spatial mixing of the population (especially in Helsinki) and the other is by spatial redistribution, that is, by reducing the gaps in living standards between those socially differentiated areas which have emerged in spite of spatial mixing policies. This in turn suggests that even where policies which promote general social equality do not directly target or eliminate urban spatial segregation, they can nevertheless make such segregation less significant by removing the conditions under which there can exist wide disparities in living conditions between different areas of a city. In terms of the goal of overall social integration in urban contexts, this conclusion raises questions about the relative value of *general social policy* - seen as a tool for promoting overall social equality - and *urban spatial policy* - seen as a tool for directly targeting urban spatial segregation. (See further discussion in chapter 4 on the policy implications).

4. *Changes in spatial segregation over time*

Between the 1980s and 1990s, area segregation by combined male and female employment rates rose in all the BETWIXT cities except for Dublin, which started from a very high base. Rather than this movement of spatial segregation being seen as inevitable, it can be historically located in the context of falling employment rates in most cities. Some support for the latter position can be gained by looking at employment rates separately by gender and connecting the trends with the differentiation of *areas* based on male and female employment rates. Male employment rates tended to fall during the period (except for a marginal rise in Dublin), and spatial segregation of areas measured on male employment invariably rose. For women, the picture is different: in four cities (Dublin, Lisbon, London and Toulouse), female employment rates rose, reflecting women's increasing participation in the labour market. In these cities rising female employment rates were associated with falling spatial segregation measured by female employment - except in London, where both rose. In the remaining three cities (Helsinki, Turin and Umeå) where female employment fell alongside male employment, there were rises in spatial segregation. This suggests that the economic context is relevant to changes in spatial segregation, and that areas with low employment rates are particularly vulnerable to the effects of wider economic change. However the number of intervening variables and differences of historical and policy context within a comparative context make it hard to generalise here about the policy implications of the relation between economic and urban policies.

5. *The physical pattern of spatial segregation*

Location of areas of deprivation and privilege: The project elaborated on the measurement of levels of spatial segregation through mapping the small areas of the seven cities in the study according to (male) employment rates. These maps showed that for the five continental European cities (Helsinki, Toulouse, Turin, Lisbon and Umeå), relatively deprived areas tended to be located on or near the periphery of cities, and more prosperous areas in or near the city centre. However for London and Dublin, deprived areas were primarily located in the inner city with some additional presence on the urban fringe, and more prosperous areas were more likely to be suburban. This is a pattern closer to that of US cities, with their typical combination of inner city deprivation and suburban prosperity.

Our maps additionally enabled observation of *physical clustering of deprived and prosperous areas*. Such clustering was clear in Dublin, London and Turin, least clear in Helsinki, where there was considerable scattering of more deprived areas, and intermediate for Lisbon, Toulouse and Umeå. Clustering may also develop over time (see below), and is associated with a lack of effective public (planning/ urban/ housing) policy aiming to prevent the build-up of large areas of deprivation or to provide for the spatial mixing of neighbourhoods.

6. Changes in physical patterning over time

For all cities, we found considerable and not surprising *continuity in the location of deprived and prosperous areas over time*. In addition the teams in three cities, London, Turin and Helsinki, carried out extra work (though not harmonised, based broadly on employment indicators) on the changes of physical location of deprived areas between the 1980s and 1990s. These maps showed that for London and Turin, in the context of both falling employment rates and rising spatial segregation, there was clearly increased clustering of deprived areas (and in London, also of prosperous suburban areas). In both cases, those areas falling into deprivation were often contiguous to already deprived areas; thus in these cities the creation of larger areas of deprivation was evident over time. For Helsinki, the picture was mixed and open to debate: in the context of a slight fall in employment rate and a slight rise in levels of spatial segregation, the overall location of areas remained fairly scattered, but there was recent evidence of increased clustering of prosperous areas in the west of the city and the consolidation of relative deprivation in the older working class areas to the north east of the inner city. This mixed picture seems to reflect the effect of recent changes in Helsinki, superimposed on the historical background of relatively low income inequality and strong spatial mixing policy in the city. These recent changes are the deep recession of the early 1990s, and the subsequent economic recovery, led by relatively unregulated growth of the IT sector in the west of the city.

Although the consistency of indicators and the number of cities does not allow generalisation, this extra work raises the possibility that changes in the physical patterning of spatial segregation as well as its level are related both to economic context, and to the degree to which income inequality and spatial segregation are mitigated by public intervention, whether through social or spatial policy. Thus London and Turin, with relatively weak social and spatial intervention policies, show unhindered growth of deprived areas, whereas Helsinki appears to show a combination of effects reflecting the timing of varying social and spatial policies.

7. International comparisons of segregation

A. Comparing EU segregation and US ghettoisation

Although levels of spatial segregation varied considerably across the seven European cities, the variation is not so great when seen in wider international perspective. It is worth noting in particular that none of the seven cities came anywhere near the levels of segregation based on race which are found in American cities. (Here we refer to 'racial segregation' as in US parlance, to mean the equivalent of 'segregation by ethnic minority', the more usual UK terminology.) International comparisons here are difficult because racial segregation is of such – empirical and conceptual – significance as a major

structuring force in American cities (Massey and Denton 1993, Cutler *et al* 1999) that it is hard to find in the US literature recent measures of segregation based on socio-economic variables other than race.

In addition, the differing histories of the US and European countries mean that it is complicated even to compare measures of racial segregation. In the US, immigration of non-black groups is seen a relatively normal means of joining American society, whereas most discrimination, residential or otherwise, takes place against indigenous black groups, usually African Americans whose origins lie in the history of American slavery - and to a lesser extent against Hispanic Americans, who are usually initially immigrants (S. Fainstein 1998). In European countries, by contrast, (which were however often implicated in the slave trade to the US), discrimination, including residential, takes place against all non-white and many white ethnic minorities, all of which are the product of immigration, either recently or in previous generations. The implication is that a realistic comparison of racial segregation in the US and the EU should probably be between black/ African Americans (plus possibly Hispanic Americans) and all ethnic minorities in European cities.

Despite these difficulties of comparison, it still seems possible to conclude from the BETWIXT analyses that such spatial segregation as is found in European cities, along no matter what dimension, nowhere approximates to the level of racial ghettoisation found in American cities. In Massey and Denton's (1989) study of 60 US cities the mean score for black racial segregation using the Index of Dissimilarity (IoD) was 0.69 (where 1 means complete segregation and 0 means no segregation). The mean IoD score for Hispanic segregation in the same cities was 0.44. Major cities such as New York, Chicago, Miami, San Francisco and Los Angeles had IoD scores for black segregation in excess of 0.7. Chicago, the most segregated city, had a black segregation score of 0.88 (see also Cutler et al 1999 where similar data are presented for 127 American cities). What this, along with the size of such racially segregated areas, means in practice is that a black ghetto-dweller in a large American city is likely to encounter few white residents not only in the same neighbourhood but in any of the surrounding neighbourhoods; in other words significant portions of 'mixed' metropolitan cities are likely to be largely mono-racial (Massey and Denton 1989, p. 389).

In the BETWIXT cities, by contrast, *no IoD score on any variable for any of the cities exceeded 0.35*. London achieved that upper limit in its IoD score for ethnic minority segregation. Dublin had IoD scores in the range 0.3 to 0.33 for segregation on certain labour market variables (such as male employment rates and youth unemployment rates). More commonly, however, IoD scores for the BETWIXT cities were below 0.3 and in some of the cities fell below 0.1 on many variables. As noted above, IoD scores are an imperfect means for comparing levels of spatial segregation across time or place. However, the gap in IoD scores in the present instance is wide enough strongly to suggest: first, that none of the seven BETWIXT cities have racial ghettos in the American sense or *scale*; and second, that insofar as other axes of spatial segregation are present and could be measured in the BETWIXT cities, none of them offered a real parallel to the *degree* of segregation represented by racial ghettoisation in American cities. Massey and Denton (1993) pointedly entitled their classic study *American Apartheid* and elaborated: "Although Americans have been quick to criticise the apartheid system of South Africa, they have been reluctant to acknowledge the consequences of their own institutionalized system of racial separation." (op.cit, p.16) While European citizens are undoubtedly also responsible for institutionalized *social*

discrimination, our findings suggest that it would be hard to apply as strong a *spatial* concept as apartheid to the BETWIXT cities, at least in comparison to both the *degree* of racial segregation and the *large size* of ghettos in American cities.

Certain provisos need to be made here. The centrality of racial ghettoisation to American cities has to be kept in mind when drawing comparisons from American research on urban spatial segregation with the European context; and the emphasis of BETWIXT, as a European project, has been on socio-economic rather than racial segregation. Its indicators of racial segregation were the least robust of all for comparative purposes, and too much weight should not be given to them. However noting that no BETWIXT city indicator exceeded 0.35 on the IoD compared to a US threshold of 0.6 for ghettoisation, and an actual score of over 0.8 in some US cities, is sufficiently broad, and the gap is sufficiently wide, to stand. This finding is consistent with other research in European cities (Musterd et al 1997) on (ethnic minority) segregation, which finds that the level of segregation of particular ethnic minority communities hardly reaches 0.3 on the IoD in five out of their six EU cities, being higher, at about 0.4, only in Brussels). However, there are higher scores in a few specific cases (see below).

B. Questions of scale and degree of segregation

Thus, insofar as the BETWIXT cities experience spatial segregation, there does not appear to be the joint effect of the *high degree* and *large scale* of segregation characteristic of the American ghetto in the BETWIXT cities. However we have indications that the potential for ghettos cannot be ignored. *Over large areas to a lower degree* there is significant segregation by employment in some of the BETWIXT cities (Dublin, London and Turin – see above evidence on clustering, and on clustering over time). *And to a greater degree at the meso- or micro-level*, there are undoubtedly pockets, at small area - estate, street or block - level, of concentration or segregation – in terms of employment, race, and probably income (not used as an indicator here due to problems of availability and comparability). Even inter-quintile ratios (IQRs), representing spatial segregation across cities as a whole by employment rate, were significantly higher when calculated for smaller area units. In Umeå, for example, IQRs, although remaining at relatively low levels, more than doubled for 77 small, as opposed to 7 larger, urban areas, and in London reached high scores of 19.4 for male employment rates and 18.6 for female employment rates when calculated for small area units of 430 population. In some cases high scores at these lower geographical levels may be for largely methodological reasons (the 'ecological effect', see Edwards and Flatley 1996). But it may also be that small pockets of segregation group together to form somewhat larger areas whose boundaries do not coincide with those captured statistically, and whose measured levels of segregation are thus 'averaged out' by other less segregated parts of areas (Robson 1995). Thus it is possible that there are areas of some size where segregation is more concentrated than appears in our findings. Another research project, for example, (Musterd et al 1997) provides evidence from six European cities which finds significant concentration of specific ethnic minorities: Turkish and Moroccan communities in Brussels (IoDs of over 0.6), the Bangladeshi community in London (IoD close to 0.7), and the Japanese in Düsseldorf (IoD over 0.6). However even taking these arguments into account, areas of deprivation or ethnic minority segregation in the BETWIXT European cities do not appear to reach the combination of concentration, large area size and frequency of occurrence, of American ghettos.

C. Change over time

A further cautionary point should be made, from our findings on change. Thus *development over time in the direction of ghettoisation in European cities cannot be ruled out*. We have found increases in spatial segregation (based on combined male and female employment rates of areas) between the 1980s and 1990s in all BETWIXT cities except Dublin, where it was already very high and showed only a small reduction. Even at one point in time, some cities show considerable physical clustering of areas of deprivation (Dublin, London). And over time, there is indicative evidence in two cities (London and Turin) of the considerable build-up of larger physical swathes of deprivation, in the context of falling employment rates and rising spatial segregation. Overall, of the BETWIXT cities, Dublin and London have high enough scores of spatial segregation to suggest a potential for development in the direction of ghettoisation.

D. Socio-economic segregation

On socio-economic segregation – here, the segregation of the rich from the poor, the employed from the unemployed - we have not found directly comparable socio-economic indicators for US cities considered independently of race. The issues of poverty and segregation in US research appear to be dominated by and seen through the prism of race and are often conflated in analyses of social inequalities (see, e.g. Massey's complaint concerning 'the conflation of race and class that unfortunately has become endemic in [American] literature on urban poverty' – Massey 1998, p. 572; see also Jargowsky 1996). Thus it is difficult to say how levels of socio-economic segregation in the BETWIXT cities compare with those of US cities.

Summary

Our overall findings from the first city-wide comparison of spatial segregation based on employment in the BETWIXT cities show that there are distinct differences between the BETWIXT cities in terms of their degrees of spatial segregation, with the Scandinavian cities showing least, Dublin and London showing most, and the other cities at intermediate levels. These differences result mainly from strong policies of social mixing and social redistribution enacted in both the Swedish and Finnish cities. Generally, spatial segregation increased in the BETWIXT cities between the 1980s and the 1990s, although there is some inconsistency between indicators on this finding. There is considerable continuity over time in the location of deprived areas; there is also some evidence of their physical clustering in all but the Scandinavian BETWIXT cities, and there are indications of their increased clustering over time in two of the cities – Dublin and London. Even in the most inegalitarian BETWIXT cities, however, overall spatial segregation is relatively mild by US standards. Segregated areas in those cities are not marked by the combination of large size and severity of segregation, which characterise black urban ghettos in the US. At the same time, some BETWIXT cities have reasonably large areas, which are affected by milder levels of segregation and there are also smaller areas of quite severe segregation. In our sample of European neighbourhoods, the housing estate of Bagatelle in Toulouse was such a case. These patterns indicate that the possibility of future ghettoisation in European cities should not be ruled out.

Social profile of neighbourhoods in seven European cities

Tony Fahey

Introduction

The second stage of the BETWIXT study was an examination of how city-wide patterns of spatial segregation manifested themselves at the level of particular precarious neighbourhoods. The rationale for this stage was the view that the locality where households live is the immediate locus of access (or lack of it) to resources they need to maintain their equilibrium. The neighbourhood thus mediates between broader city and national structures on the one hand and the circumstances of households on the other. The overall purpose of the neighbourhood analysis was to examine that mediating role and thereby provide context for the more detailed analysis of household coping strategies in the next stage. The study also recognised that locality could play either a positive or negative role in residents' lives, depending on the quality of local social and physical environment, and that an assessment of its overall significance would therefore require analysis of these cross-cutting positive and negative influences.

Objectives and questions

The immediate task of the neighbourhood studies, therefore, was to focus on locality and identify both the positive resources and the negative pressures which it presented for residents' coping strategies. The comparative dimension of this analysis asked whether and in what ways the character and level of resources available in neighbourhoods reflected broader urban structures, particularly the structures of spatial segregation across the seven BETWIXT cities which were outlined earlier.

These questions in turn generated further problems concerning the definition and identification of neighbourhoods, problems which are persistent in neighbourhood studies. The difficulty is that if neighbourhoods cannot clearly be identified, it is hard to assess what difference they make to residents' lives. Thus a question which constantly recurred in the analysis of the BETWIXT neighbourhoods, and which carried through into the household interviews stage of the project, was 'What is neighourhood?' While neighbourhood in some sense is clearly a physical space, at least three different bases on which such physical space could be circumscribed and defined as a neighbourhood could be identified in advance. One was the notion of neighbourhood as the catchment area for local social and commercial services – schools, health clinics, shops, recreational facilities, and so on (this we refer to as the 'services neighbourhood'). The second was the notion of neighbourhood as defined by social networks, that is, the neighbourhood as the space occupied by the community of neighbours (the 'social' or 'community' neighbourhood). And the third was the symbolic space evoked by the name of the local area, that is, the neighbourhood as an imagined entity (the 'symbolic neighbourhood'). In the context of the BETWIXT study, this third meaning was important as it related to the possible stigmatisation of certain neighbourhoods as unpleasant or threatening places, particularly among outsiders, and thus as an intangible but nonetheless significant influence on the circumstances facing resident households.

Methods

The neighbourhood phase of the study was a qualitative investigation which selected one neighbourhood in each of the seven cities for detailed analysis. As with the quantitative analysis of city-level segregation

patterns, this element of the study should properly be regarded as exploratory, since cross-city and cross-national comparison of individual neighbourhoods is a complex process for which no ready methodological or analytical models are available. However, it also has the potential to generate useful insight, precisely because attempts to link city-wide patterns with on-the-ground local manifestations in this way are rarely included in analyses of urban poverty.

The study of the selected neighbourhoods consisted in the first instance of a social profiling of each neighbourhood. This was based on visual inspection (achieved simply by walking through the area), a study of available documentation on the neighbourhood, the compilation of available statistical data, and interviews with key local actors such as community activists, teachers, advice workers, social service personnel, local elected representatives, and so on. Included in this element of the fieldwork was a joint visit by the BETWIXT partners (comprising at least one member from each national team) to each of the seven selected neighbourhoods. This was a relatively simple device, but it turned out to have some importance as it introduced a direct comparative element into the qualitative aspect of the study. That is, at least one member from each national team directly visited and saw all of the seven neighbourhoods. Though this collective 'eye-balling' of the neighbourhood by team members from the BETWIXT partners was fleeting, it nevertheless reinforced and gave life to some of the lessons to be learned from written reports and statistical data. These lessons were further elaborated in interviews with households in Stage C and will be referred to further below.

Identifying neighbourhoods

As already indicated, the selection and analysis of specific neighbourhoods posed considerable methodological and conceptual problems. The initial intention was that the neighbourhood selected for study in each city should be linked to (though not necessarily identical with) one of the small-area units used for the statistical analysis of spatial segregation in the preceding stage of the project. In keeping with the focus on *precarious* (as opposed to totally impoverished) neighbourhoods, it was also intended that the selected neighbourhoods should be next-to-bottom rather bottom of the ladder of disadvantage among areas identified in the city-wide analyses of spatial segregation. It was decided to operationalise this criterion by selecting the neighbourhood from an area in each city which was located on, or close to, the boundary between the bottom (fifth) quintile and the fourth quintile on key indicators of social exclusion utilised in the city-level analysis. Since Helsinki and Umeå had modest degrees of spatial inequality compared to the other cities, it was recognised that the interpretation of precariousness as signifying 'next to bottom' rather than 'bottom' on the hierarchy of disadvantage would be less applicable in their cases than in others (the reason being that in those two cities, the range of variation was so narrow that areas which were 'next to bottom' came close to the centre of the distribution). In those cases, it seemed reasonable as a working compromise to define precarious neighbourhoods as those which were more-or-less the most disadvantaged in their cities.

Nested neighbourhoods

The complexity of actual neighbourhoods began to emerge as these criteria were applied in fieldwork. It was not just that different people had different conceptions of what constituted their neighbourhood but even that the *same person* might define his or her neighbourhood in different ways in different contexts. In consequence, in all of the seven cities it turned out that a definition of neighbourhood as a single

spatial entity was unrealistic. In the perceptions of both residents and the BETWIXT researchers, neighbourhoods seemed to consist rather of complex collections of nested spaces.

At the small end of the scale, these spaces typically started with the 'nuclear' neighbourhood represented by a cluster of households living in close proximity to each other. The striking feature of these face-to-face communities of neighbours (which corresponded to the 'social' or 'community' concept of neighbourhood referred to earlier) was how small they tended to be, quite often consisting of no more than ten to 20 households. (We will return below to the dynamics of these micro-neighbourhood communities and the role they played as resources in residents' lives.) From that core, the concept of neighbourhood radiated out through one or more levels of 'extended' neighbourhood. In some cases, a services centre of some sort (such as a cluster of shops and social services) might provide the unifying focus of that wider spatial entity, thus defining 'services neighbourhoods' as referred to earlier. However, households differed in the salience they attached to particular services and so could differ in their conception of the neighbourhood catchment defined by services. Thus, for example, a school might provide a neighbourhood focus for children and their parents but might play no similar role for households who had no children. Thus, the 'social services neighbourhood' could differ even for households living next door to each other, depending on which services were most relevant to their lives. Services seemed not to be the only reason for the extension of the concept of neighbourhood beyond the very local, and the geographical range in some instances could be wide. Customary travel patterns seemed to play a part here, whether for family, leisure or other purposes.

In most cases, the imagined or symbolic neighbourhood evoked by the name of the area (e.g. Bagatelle in Toulouse, Ersboda in Umeå, and so on) had the most consistent physical referent – people generally agreed on what space was designated by the name. There also seemed to be a widely shared awareness of certain qualitative characteristics evoked by the name, particularly the 'reputation' attached to it. People might not *agree* with that reputation – in particular, where a named area suffered from stigmatisation, they might dispute that the negative reputation was fair or warranted. Nevertheless, a sense of where the locality stood in the status hierarchy of neighbourhoods seemed to be shared on a reasonably consistent basis – at least to the extent that strongly divergent views on how high or low the status of the locality might be were noticeably absent.

Choosing the neighbourhoods

Given this diversity in the meaning of neighbourhood even within particular local areas, the BETWIXT researchers had to settle on some operational method of delimiting the spaces to be studied in the neighbourhood stage of the project. The solution adopted was to rely for the most part on naming conventions and thus to focus primarily on spaces to which a recognised name could be applied, even though informal boundaries at local level which differed from named areas also sometimes had to be taken into account. The focus on named areas reduced the range of possible spaces, which could be considered as neighbourhoods. But it still fell short of specifying single clear neighbourhoods, since spaces as diverse as a street, an apartment block, a housing estate, a parish or a city ward could all carry names which had some formal standing and which, depending on the context, could equally claim to be considered as designating neighbourhoods. In choosing the BETWIXT neighbourhoods, the practical and rather *ad hoc* outcome was that in all cases, at least two (and sometimes three) areas were identified

as widely-recognised but nevertheless different specifications of the neighbourhood. These generally consisted of a larger officially named area and one or more smaller areas embedded withi n it which sometimes had an official and sometimes an informal local identity. Only in a small number of cases did it seem possible to regard any one of these area units or neighbourhood level as consistently more important than the others. The more common pattern was that the salience of particular area units or neighbourhood levels changed with the context, that is, for example, depending on whether the 'services neighbourhood', the 'community neighbourhood' or the 'imagined neighbourhood' was being refer red to, or for other reasons.

Table 1 presents a schematic summary of the area units which the researchers identified as initial working conceptions of 'nested' neighbourhoods. The 'levels of neighbour hood' identified in the second column of this table a re numbered in descending order of nesting – the outer nest (the larger neighbourhood area) is numbered 1, the next sub -level is numbered 2, etc. Sub -areas which are at the same nest level within a larger area are numbered *a, b* and *c*.

Table 1. Nested nei ghbourhoods in the seven cities

City	***Levels of neighbourhood**** *(population)*	***Unemployment rates (%):***		
		City	***Neighbour-Hood***	***Ref. pop. & year***
Toulouse	1. Bagatelle (9,544) 2. High rise housing	13.2	30.0	Adults, 1 990
Dublin	[1. Kilmainham - Inchicore] 2. Kilmainham 'C' (3,446) 3 a: Bulfin estate 3 b: St Michael's estate 3 c: Tyrone Place flats	16.3	30.5	Males 25 -44 yrs., 1996
Turin	1. Aurora (18,834) 2. Little Aurora (5,565)	5.6	8.9 6.0	Adults 25 -54 yrs. 1991
Lisbon	1. Amadora (180,000) 2. Venda Nova (16,000)	7.8	7.5	
Helsinki	1. Kontula (17,000) 2. Kontulankaari 14 (500)	16.5	24.1	Adults 18+ 1996
Umeå	1. Ersboda (7,872) 2 a: West Ersboda 2 b: East Ersboda	8.8	13.3	Adults 18 -64 yrs. 1998
London	[1. Islington] 2. Holloway (9,082) 3. Lower Holloway (c. 6,000)	6	12	Adults 25-54 yrs 1999

* In descending order of size (see text) . Neighbourhood levels, which are given only limited attention in the neighbourhood studies are enclosed in square brackets.

Sources: BETWIXT Neighbourhood Reports (Fahey, T. ed, 2000).

The basis on which these area units were identified differed from case to case. In Bagatelle in Toulouse, for example, the *quartier* as a whole is easily identified as a single common space in most contexts. In other contexts, however, the internal distinction between high-rise and low-rise dwellings found in the *quartier* is important, and sometimes also distinctions are made between particular segments of each area (for example, between apartment blocks close to the main entrance and those further into the estate). In Umeå, the neighbourhood of Ersboda is administratively divided into three sub-areas (Western, Eastern and Mid Ersboda), but in popular perceptions the important internal distinction is reduced to a two-fold one between Western and Eastern Ersboda. In some contexts, however, residents emphasised an underlying sense of Ersboda as a single entity. In Dublin, the neighbourhood of Kilmainham 'C' is enclosed within the large urban village of Kilmainham-Inchicore and is also internally divided between three quite distinct and different sub-areas – the Bulfin estate, St Michael's estate and Tyrone Place flats.

There was considerable diversity in the size of the units and sub-units identified as neighbourhoods. Lisbon is something of an outlier in this regard, in that the outer 'nest' of the selected neighbourhood consists of the municipality of Amadora on the edge of Lisbon proper and is extremely large, with a population of 180,000. The smaller neighbourhood identified within that area, the parish of Venda Nova, is also relatively large, with a population of 16,000. In Turin, the extended neighbourhood, the district of Aurora, has a population of 18,000 while the inner core, which the authors label 'Little Aurora', has a population of 5,500. The inner core of the London neighbourhood (Lower Holloway) is of a similar size, with about 6,000 residents, though Holloway as a whole, with around 9,000 residents, is not very much larger. In Kontula, Helsinki, and in Kilmainham, Dublin, the smallest area units identified are quite small – about 500 residents in the case of Kontulankaari 14 in Kontula, and two blocks of flats containing 88 dwellings in Tyrone Place, Kilmainham.

The impact of city-wide segregation

The first concern of the neighbourhood studies was to assess how city-level differences in patterns of spatial segregation and social inequality were manifested at the local neighbourhood level. The results showed that these manifestations were by no means uniform but differed sharply depending on which of the different conceptions and levels of neighbourhood was being referred to. The key difference arose in comparing the 'services neighbourhood' (which included local amenities and the built environment) with the 'imagined neighbourhood' (where the question of the status or reputation of neighbourhoods came into play). Here, as we will see further below, quite paradoxical patterns emerged, in that differences across the seven cities as far as objective conditions, amenities and the services neighbourhood were concerned showed little consistency with differences in the reputation attaching to the 'imagined neighbourhood'. Reputation – that is, the 'imagined' quality of neighbourhood – seemed to be at least partly independent of real conditions: a neighbourhood did not have to have poor objective conditions in order to become stigmatised as 'bad', though some stigmatised neighbourhoods did suffer from poor objective conditions. The incomplete match between stigma and poverty of objective conditions pointed to reputation or status hierarchy and objective inequalities as two different and somewhat independent dimensions of urban neighbourhood disadvantage. Certain effects of background conditions could also

be detected in the 'social neighbourhood' (the local community of neighbours), though these linked back to city-wide patterns in more complex ways. We will now look at each of these sets of effects in turn.

The 'services' neighbourhood

All of the information sources on the seven study neighbourhoods – statistical data, local neighbourhood reports and visits by BETWIXT researchers from the seven teams – made it obvious that the neighbourhoods differed widely in the quality of objective living conditions, amenities and social services they offered to residents, and furthermore that these differences were broadly in keeping with the patterns of spatial segregation and social inequality found at city level.

As one might expect, the neighbourhoods in the two Scandinavian cities were at one extreme in this regard. They showed the benefits of the solidaristic and egalitarian traditions of the Scandinavian welfare state, particularly when it is recalled that the two neighbourhoods chosen for study in the present project (Ersboda and Kontula) were at the very bottom of the ladder of disadvantage in Umeå and Helsinki. They thus represented the worst that these cities had to offer and so give an indication of what 'worst' means in these cities as far as objective living conditions are concerned. The outstanding feature of the two neighbourhoods was how well off and well serviced they were by comparison with corresponding neighbourhoods in the other cities. All of the physical amenities and services in Ersboda and Kontula – housing, public spaces, recreational services, transport, child care services, schools, health clinics – were provided with an abundance and to a standard which was not matched elsewhere (with the partial exception of Bagatelle in Toulouse, which had benefited from intense special provision under the *Politique de la Ville*).

Ersboda, Umeå

Ersboda in Umeå seemed almost utopian in this regard. It was a reasonably small and well-established neighbourhood in a mid-sized and prosperous administrative city which had no large industrial working class. The deprivations in Ersboda were so mild that none of the usual manifestations of urban blight typically associated with poor neighbourhoods could be seen there. It had somewhat higher unemployment rates and welfare dependency rates than the city average, but many of its indicators of living standards and population resources (e. g. in regard to housing, income, and educational levels) were only marginally below the norm for the city. Though Ersboda was the least privileged area in Umeå, it was only by a considerable stretching of language that it could be regarded as 'deprived' in any real objective sense.

Kontula, Helsinki

Kontula in Helsinki was somewhat less idyllic. This was a large high-rise estate of 6,600 dwelling units built on the suburban fringe of Helsinki in the latter half of the 1960s. Because it was developed before the full extent of spatial mixing policies were adopted by the City of Helsinki in the 1970s, it had higher concentrations of social housing than elsewhere in the city (29 per cent social housing compared to a city norm of 16 per cent). The economic crisis which struck Helsinki (and the rest of Finland) in the late 1980s and early 1990s had a more damaging effect on its population, and its employment rate in 1996 (at 24 per cent) was substantially higher than the city average (at 16 per cent). Average income per person was 20 per cent below the city norm and by the early 1990s had begun to attract more than its

share of ethnic minorities (particularly Somalis) who were then newly arrived in Helsinki. There were certain senses, therefore, in which Kontula was at a disadvantage relative to the norm for Helsinki in the mid-1990s.

Again, however, as with Ersboda in Umeå, the high overall standards and the narrowness of the gap between local conditions and the city norm were striking in Kontula. Social conditions in the area showed how successful the Finnish welfare state had been in providing protection against poverty, even in the context of the local economic crisis of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Signs of urban blight were hard to find and the neighbourhood had what would be regarded in most of the other cities in the BETWIXT study as an enviable standard of public services and environmental quality. It had been connected by metro to the city centre in 1986 and its shopping centre, around which many good quality local services were concentrated, had been renovated and extended in the late 1980s. It had a new, high quality health centre, with a staff of 100, a services centre for the elderly, a swimming pool, library, church and youth centre. Particular attention had been paid to the provision of child-care services. The area had seven day nurseries and these provided almost total coverage of the pre-school population by the mid-1990s. A massive refurbishment programme had been carried out on the social housing blocks in 1996-99. The open spaces between the blocks were tidy and well-planted, and signs of vandalism or defacement of property were rare. In short, while Kontula was too large, plain and massive to be regarded as an attractive suburb, it provided its residents with physical living conditions and standards of public services that would be the envy of corresponding neighbourhoods in the other BETWIXT cities and that well reflected the egalitarian traditions of social policy both in Finland and in the City of Helsinki.

Bagatelle, Toulouse

Bagatelle in Toulouse was similar to Kontula in Helsinki in that it was a large and mainly high-rise estate of modern apartment blocks built on the fringes of Toulouse in stages from the 1950s to the 1970s. Its population was 9,500 in 1990. However, its social composition reflected the higher levels of spatial segregation and social inequality found in Toulouse compared to Helsinki or Umeå. Social housing accounted for 62 per cent of the dwellings (compared to 14 per cent for the city as a whole), the unemployment rate in 1990 was more than double the city average (30 per cent in Bagatelle compared to 13.2 per cent in the city), and only 4 per cent of the population had higher education, compared to 16 per cent in the city as a whole. On many indicators, it was one of the most deprived of the 47 *quartiers* in Toulouse. Its most evident social feature was its high concentration of ethnic minorities, particularly in the social housing blocks (though precise data on ethnic composition are not available). Most of the ethnic minorities originated either from the Maghreb or black Africa.

Despite many elements of disadvantage in its social profile, however, living conditions and social services in Bagatelle were not as sub-standard as might be expected. This was so largely because the area had become the target of intensive special intervention under the *Politique de la Ville,* a nation-wide policy of provision for deprived urban areas which had been initiated in France in 1981. In Bagatelle, the *Développement Social Urbain* office was in charge of implementing the *Contrat Ville* deriving from agreements between the Paris Ministère de la Ville and the Toulouse authorities. As a result of this provision, Bagatelle had quite a high density of social services compared to general

standards in France, though these were not as abundant or well-resourced as the corresponding services in Umeå or Helsinki. It had also benefited from considerable investment in the upkeep and refurbishment of the social housing blocks.

The physical appearance of the open spaces, streets and buildings was generally good. In sum, Bagatelle provided a mixed picture, with certain marked manifestations of spatial segregation and social inequality in its social composition on the one hand, but with considerable levels of special targeted interventions which mitigated the effects of these pressures and improved the living environment on the other. It thus provided an example of how underlying tendencies towards spatial segregation and inequality could be counteracted not so much by the welfare state *tout court* as by special area-based interventions.

Aurora and Little Aurora, Turin

The Aurora neighbourhood in Turin differs from those looked at so far in that it was an old inner-city area rather than a new suburb. It was also, for the most part, a victim of industrial decay, much of which has occurred since the early 1980s. The most striking visual feature of the area was the large number of old abandoned industrial buildings, the consequence of contraction in traditional industries in recent decades. Many of the dwellings in the area were also old and run-down and many had outdoor toilets. The area has long been the target of migratory flows, from southern Italy in the 1950s and 1960s and from non-EC countries in the 1990s. It is also clear that Aurora is internally diverse in that it has sub-areas which differ considerably from each other in social profile and general living conditions. The study focused in particular on one of these – which it labelled 'Little Aurora' – as it was an area which was somewhat better off than the average for the area but was in a precarious tension with the downwardly mobile areas which surrounded it. There was also some tension within Little Aurora between the middle and working class, between locals and foreigners, and between older residents and the youths who spent much of their time on the streets.

The local impact of city-wide patterns of spatial segregation and social inequality are somewhat more difficult to trace in the case of Aurora than in most of the other study neighbourhoods in the BETWIXT project, particularly as far as statistical evidence is concerned. These data show little by way of consistent and substantial differences in the population profile and living conditions between Aurora (or Little Aurora) and the city average. This is so partly because the statistical data relate to 1991 and do not reflect the decline in Aurora which had occurred during the 1990s. In addition, much of the sense of disadvantage in the area arose at the level of perceptions and feelings, and was based as much on a sense of decline compared to the past as on comparisons with other areas of the city. The data also fail to capture the inadequacies of the public sphere in the neighbourhood. While both Aurora and Little Aurora still possessed considerable commercial and artisanal activity, their social services and public amenities were less developed than those in the other neighbourhoods so far mentioned. They lacked public spaces, green areas, recreational and leisure facilities, and had a poor associative life. Associative life in the whole Aurora district was poor and the area lacked real opportunities or places for people to get together. During interviews it was frequently pointed out that the area does not really seem like a proper neighbourhood because there is no sense of community.

Holloway (London)
Holloway was located towards the top of the fifth quintile on a number of indicators of social exclusion, and Lower Holloway (for which there was not distinct statistical information) was the less deprived (approximate) half of that area, hence considered 'precarious' rather than 'deprived'. On most indicators, Holloway was considerably worse off than the average for London, with twice the rate of unemployment, 50 per cent more adults receiving Income Support, nearly twice the proportion in the bottom two (out of five) social classes. On some indicators the gap was even wider, for example the proportion of social renters was 73 per cent in Holloway compared to 29 per cent across London – two and a half times as high – and the presence of lone parents was 54 per cent in Holloway compared to 25 per cent in London – over twice as high. These two phenomena are connected: this is an area where the local council has concentrated social housing, and much of it is of a size seen as suitable for a lone parent with a small child. Exceptional in the other direction was the proportion of people of ethnic minority background: slightly lower in Holloway than in London as a whole. This is probably because there is a long-standing and settled Irish presence in Holloway, one of the three highest such areas in London. Thus the slightly greater white predominance in the area does not imply a greater English presence.

Did the picture provided of Holloway correspond with the position of London as one of the most socially unequal and spatially segregated EU cities among the seven? The answer to this question is mixed, and is explicable in terms of the history of the area. Islington has a reputation as one of the most radical of the London boroughs; this was gained particularly during the period of the 1980s when Thatcher led a neoliberal national government. At this time, central attempts to curtail the power and financing of local government were resisted by authorities such as Islington, with the provision of a good range and standard of public services, even if this meant borrowing extra finance in order to do so. This level of expenditure was not sustainable, and subsequent local administrations had to implement cuts in expenditure. The result is that locally there are the traces of previous public provision – for example, playgrounds, youth clubs, estate community facilities – which have subsequently been closed but act as a reminder of better days. Similarly the early very decentralised administrative provision has been considerably recentralised. Housing, although criticised by residents, and varying in its age, is reasonable by international standards; however with the continued right to buy policy, some of the previous social housing of the area is now in private hands. Some green space is provided: a local park, access to other parks outside the immediate locality, a local city farm. Street crime is fairly high, and fear of it is higher, restricting the mobility of vulnerable groups such as older or disabled people; however areas considered unsafe lie outside rather than inside Lower Holloway. But investment in activities and space for young people is poor, and educational provision in the area is notoriously poor. Transport connections with the centre and other parts of London are good but expensive, meaning that those living in precarious circumstances cannot afford them. The provision of shops in the area is not great – most people travel outside it to supermarkets or a street market. And for women with children, especially lone parents, the provision of childcare is very poor – unless they can gain a priority place for social reasons, childcare is expensive and inadequate in its coverage of working hours; thus many of those interviewed were involved as users or carers in informal childcare arrangements relying on family or friendship networks. Overall Lower Holloway is fairly pleasant to walk around, and we may say that its current

state is slightly better than might be expected from a precarious area within a city with high levels of inequality and segregation. However its social provision to enable the greater inclusion of those living on the margins is still inadequate. The future for those people is not improved by the current gentrification of the area, the result of a housing boom which is pricing local families out of the area.

Kilmainham 'C' (Dublin)
Kilmainham 'C' is a ward within the old urban village of Kilmainham/Inchicore, which is located in the inner-urban fringe of Dublin city. Like Holloway, it was selected for the present study because in terms of statistical indicators it fitted the 'next-to-bottom' criterion used to operationalise the concept of 'precarious' neighbourhood: it was located on or close to the boundary between the fourth and fifth quintile on a number of indicators of social disadvantage (particularly those relating to employment and unemployment). However, this fit with the statistical criterion is somewhat misleading as it suggests a uniformity of social conditions in the area which does not match the reality. Rather, Kilmainham 'C' consists of widely different sub-areas which when taken *on average* produce the necessary fit but which looked at separately deviate from the overall mean. One of these areas – St Michael's estate – was a social housing complex which is widely regarded as extremely deprived and which therefore was worse-off than the term 'precarious' implies (even as the BETWIXT fieldwork was underway, plans were being discussed to demolish the apartment blocks which comprised the estate and replace them with low-rise housing). Right beside it was Bulfin estate, a relatively well-off estate of row houses which was built in the 1920s for upper working class households and has been 'yuppified' to some extent in recent years. Its only claim to be considered 'precarious' would arise from its physical proximity to St Michael's estate. The third main area in the ward was Tyrone Place flats, a small social housing complex which had some social problems but which was considerably more stable and successful than St Michael's.

From a BETWIXT point of view, Kilmainham 'C' is of particular interest in that, although it was the smallest neighbourhood in the BETWIXT study, it was also extremely diverse internally and represented in microcosm the social and spatial inequalities found more widely in Dublin. By the late 1980s and 1990s, deprivation in St Michael's estate had come to be strongly associated with what were then relatively new social problems of heroin addiction and widespread lone parenthood. These problems were exacerbated by high levels of unemployment and by poor provision of social services. Family support services and drug treatment facilities were particularly inadequate in the area at this time. However, the history of poverty in this particular housing pocket was long-standing and dated back to its origins as a housing complex for former inner city slum dwellers in the 1920s. The older housing, which itself had become a slum by the 1950s, was demolished and replaced with the present apartment blocks in the late 1960s, but this had done nothing to bring about a long-term improvement in its relative standing. Better conditions in the Bulfin estate also dated back to its origins in the 1920s. Though it too started life as a social housing area, housing standards and rent levels were so high that the dwellings could be occupied only by better-off, regularly employed working class households. By the 1980s, the housing had become almost entirely privately-owned and because of its quality and location had become attractive to middle class households.

These patterns indicate that in Dublin the broad spatial inequalities between sectors of the city which had been identified in the city-wide statistical analysis in Stage A of the project could be replicated, in some instances and in some degree at least, at the local level. Spatial segregation was thus not only a matter of residential inequalities between wards, or even between clusters of wards, but could also occur at a micro-level *within* wards and strongly shape the character of micro-neighbourhoods as a result.

Reputation and the 'imagined neighbourhood'

So far we have looked at objective conditions in the study neighbourhoods and at what we might call material or real manifestations of spatial segregation and social inequality across the BETWIXT cities. Generally speaking, objective standards varied widely across the seven study neighbourhoods and did so in ways which reflected city-wide and national patterns of inequality reasonably closely.

We now turn to the imagined aspects of neighbourhood as represented by the reputation or status attaching to local areas. Here we are referring to the images evoked in people's minds when the name of an area is mentioned. Particularly important are those stereotypical impressions of the quality and character of particular neighbourhoods as places to live which seem to become widespread in the popular culture of each city. These stereotypical impressions are difficult to measure and do not have the same material character as the 'objective' neighbourhood factors we have looked at earlier. Nevertheless, they do seem to acquire a standardised character and become part of the cultural context of cities. They are important elements in urban spatial structure since they affect and reflect the desirability of different neighbourhoods as places to live. As such, they strongly influence residential choices and thereby contribute to the emergence and preservation of spatial segregation in cities. For those who live in low status areas, neighbourhood reputation can be so negative as to amount to a collective stigma attaching to their addresses. Such stigma is often cited by residents as a serious negative element in their lives. The desire to escape from such stigma is also often referred to either as a motivation for leaving the area or for taking collective action to improve its status. For all these reasons, while the imagined aspects of neighbourhood may lack a certain materiality, they are nevertheless real in their effects and make a substantial contribution to patterns of urban disadvantage.

The findings of the BETWIXT neighbourhood studies on this issue can be summarised in three general points. First, the studies showed that all the seven BETWIXT cities display evidence of a hierarchical ordering of neighbourhoods according to their reputation or status – and this was as true of the egalitarian cities of Umeå and Helsinki as it was of the more inegalitarian cities such as London and Dublin. Secondly, while the BETWIXT analysis was too limited to establish in detail in each city what that ordering was, it did find that the location of the study neighbourhoods in the city's status hierarchy was a lively issue for residents and in most cases was perceived as a negative pressure on their lives and an important component of neighbourhood disadvantage. Thirdly, the level of negativity attaching to the reputation of the study neighbourhoods across the seven cities bore little relationship either to the standard of their objective living conditions or to their level of material inequality relative to city-wide norms. To put it more precisely, where wide obective inequalities between neighbourhoods were present, they provided a foundation for status differentiation and seemed to translate fairly directly into status distinctions. But where objective inequalities were weak or absent, status differentiation emerged anyway and found its justification in imagined inequalities which imputed exaggerated faults and

distorted social attributes to low status areas. In other words, reputation echoed material conditions where these served the purpose of status differentiation, but it inflated and overstated material differences where real inequalities were too narrow to a provide a material foundation for status hierarchy. Status inequalities thus emerged as a dimension of differentiation between neighbourhoods that had a logic and dynamic of its own, not entirely indpendent of inequalities of objective condition but not wholly tied to them either.

The strongest evidence in support of these points – and this evidence is among the more surprising findings to emerge from the BETWIXT project – was the way spatial status hierarchies affected the standing of the two Scandinavian neighbourhoods in the study – Ersboda in Umeå and Kontula in Helsinki. Of all the neighbourhoods in the study, as we have just seen, these came closest to fulfilling a utopian dream of urban spatial equality. Yet, their 'objective' quality did not carry through into a correspondingly favourable symbolic status in the wider city culture. Rather, they suffered just as much from poor reputation and stigma as much more blighted and deprived neighbourhoods in the other cities.

This pattern was particularly striking in the case of Ersboda in Umeå, since in objective terms it was the best serviced and most attractive neighbourhood in the seven cities in the study and suffered least from spatial inequalities. Nevertheless, it was widely seen in Umeå as a problem area and was in low demand as a residential location. Despite a housing shortage in the city, vacancy rates in social housing in Ersboda were high. Low demand was also evident in the private rental sector. As the BETWIXT team's report for the area states, newspaper advertisements from people seeking private rental accommodation would often say 'anywhere in Umeå except Ersboda'. Residents in Ersboda strongly resented and rejected these attitudes to their neighbourhood and often expressed a defiant pride in the 'Ersboda spirit', a local sense of community, which they saw as highly positive. Nevertheless, it was clear that most residents in Umeå who lived outside of Ersboda failed to be convinced that these positive elements were real. The negative reputation attaching to Ersboda struck the BETWIXT researchers from the other countries who visited the neighbourhood as difficult to comprehend and as depressing in its implications. If such an attractive and well-resourced neighbourhood as Ersboda could suffer from this kind of negative representation, what hope was there for deprived neighbourhoods in other cities which had much more serious objective disadvantages to deal with?

A similar problem of low reputation affected Kontula in Helsinki. This problem dates back to the earliest days of the development of the suburb. Youngsters in Kontula were already hitting the headlines in 1967, arising from street clashes, which arose between male teenagers from rental housing and privately owned housing. Media reporting of these clashes established an image of the area as disturbed and dangerous, which it has never shaken off since. Residents strongly reject this negative imagery and deny that the reputation for social disturbance is valid. From the vantage point of the more deprived neighbourhoods in the BETWIXT study, it is easy to understand the residents' point of view, since none of the usual signs of youth disorder, such as graffiti, vandalism or petty criminality, are evident in the area. As we shall see further below, Kontula does have marginalised sub-groups, particularly alcoholics who are openly visible in public places, but these are small in number and would seem to be less threatening and disruptive than marginalised groups in the other neighbourhoods in the BETWIXT study. Nevertheless, the objectively mild nature of the social problems in Kontula is not enough to

preserve it from stigma. Rather, any hint of objective social disadvantage seems to be enough to consign it to the bottom of the city's status hierarchy and thereby cause it to be widely regarded with the kind of disdain that is reserved for truly bleak and dilapidated neighbourhoods in other cities.

Of the seven neighbourhoods in the study, the one which was least subject to stigmatisation was Holloway in London. This arose not because London is less status conscious about residential neighbourhoods nor because Holloway was a high quality neighbourhood in objective terms. It arose rather because Holloway was adjacent to neighbourhoods, which were worse off than it was and which therefore occupied the steps below it on the status hierarchy of neighbourhoods (in this respect, Holloway could be considered well-chosen as a precarious neighbourhood, since it was at a level above the bottom of the status hierarchy). Other adjacent neighbourhoods, particularly the Upper Street Islington/Barnsbury area, were located well above Holloway on the same hierarchy. In consequence, while Holloway did not enjoy a particularly elevated prestige rating, neither did it stand out as the lowest of the low in neighbourhood reputation terms. It thus escaped the worst forms of stigmatisation. Many residents regarded this as conferring a relative advantage on their neighbourhood, despite the many objective deficits which they experienced in local services, amenities and social environment. It also emerged during fieldwork that, in the context of a general housing shortage in the housing market in London, Holloway's stock as a housing location was tending to rise, thus providing an upward push to its image as a neighbourhood.

The other neighbourhoods in the study suffered in varying degrees from negative reputation. Bagatelle as a whole occupied a lowly position in the status hierarchy of neighbourhoods in Toulouse. For residents, there was also some degree of status differentiation *within* the area – generally speaking, the apartment buildings closest to the main entrance were widely regarded as having a higher status than those further in.

Kilmainham in Dublin had a less clear-cut reputation than some of the sub-areas which comprised it. This was particularly true in connection with the distinction between the Bulfin Estate (the row housing which was largely in private ownership and had experienced a considerable influx of middle class households) and St. Michael's Estate (the complex of Dublin Corporation flats which was immediately adjacent to Bulfin Estate). The former area did not have a pronounced reputation one way or the other in wider city terms, since it was small and little known, though it was generally regarded locally as a 'respectable' and settled area. The latter, however, was notorious as one of the worst housing complexes in the city. While some residents in the estate resented that its image caused them all to be tarred equally with the same brush, there was a widespread acceptance that it had severe social problems. Most of these were attributed in one way or another to the high level of heroin use by young people in the estate and to its prominence as a centre for drug dealing. In terms of real living conditions, St Michael's estate appeared to the BETWIXT partners as the worst of any neighbourhood sub-areas in the study, with the possible exception of the shanty housing areas in Amadora, Lisbon. Though the apartment blocks were less than 30 years old and were of good underlying build quality, they had a bleak, devastated appearance which was not found in any of the other study neighbourhoods. Even the shanty dwellings in Amadora, though of lower underlying quality as buildings, had a less of an air of decay and destruction. For that reason, St Michael's negative reputation seemed understandable.

However, it was also notable that the reputation of St Michael's estate seemed no worse than that attaching to some of the other study neighbour hoods. For example, Kontula (or at least parts of it) seemed to be disdained as much by the people of Helsinki as St Michael's estate was by the people of Dublin, and seemed to be viewed in broadly similar terms (for example, in connection with imagery of social breakdown). In the early stage of the BETWIXT project, that fact led the research partners to expect that there must be a similarity of objective conditions between the two neighbourhoods (while recognising that this expectation was counter-intuitive, given Finland's welfare traditions and its reputation for socially conscious urban planning). It was only as the comparisons of the neighbourhoods progressed that it became clear how misleading the similarity of reputation was and far removed from each other the two neighbourhoods were in real terms. In fact, no housing area in Helsinki came anywhere close to the level of objective deprivation found in St Michael's estate in Dublin (and St Michael's was by no means the only housing area of its kind in Dublin). The similarity of reputation and the dissimilarity of objective conditions between Kontula and St Michael's thus highlighted in stark fashion the disjuncture between image and reality as far as neighbourhood representation is concerned.

The community neighbourhood

Having looked thus far at both the services/amenities neighbourhood and the imagined neighbourhood, we now turn to the third main conception of neighbourhood which was used to structure analysis in this stage of the BETWIXT project. This is the social or community neighbourhood, that is, the neighbourhood as formed by the face-to-face community of neighbours. The findings on this topic presented here are informed not only by the neighbourhood profiling carried out in Stage B of the project but also the household interviews carried out in Stage C. Part of the purpose of the Stage C interviews was to establish whether and to what extent neighbours provided either a resource or a negative pressure on households. That purpose in turn required that information be collected on whom respondents regarded as their neighbours, what those neighbours meant to them, and whether or not they engaged in interaction or collective action with neighbours.

General findings

The general findings on the community neighbourhood which emerged from the project can be summarised as follows.

First, the neighbourhood community was small for the vast majority of residents. Few residents had regular interaction with more than a handful of neighbours, the usual outer limit being less than 10 or so households. It was quite common for residents in particular localities never to visit or pass through many parts of the locality and to know nobody even in streets or housing blocks that were close by. Only community activists, church groups or those heavily involved in other local social organisations tended to have a wider network of neighbourhood contacts. It was only in their case that the community neighbourhood extended over something close to the same physical space occupied by the imagined neighbourhood or services neighbourhood. Generally speaking, therefore, community neighbourhood tended to be microscopic in scale and so tended to act as a source of social structuration at a micro level within larger neighbourhood areas

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Second, residents related to their neighbours to different degrees. The level of participation in community neighbourhood varied considerably from household to household and even from person to person. In other words, in addition to being small in spatial terms, the community neighbourhood rarely was comprehensively inclusive of all those who lived within the space. Some residents scarcely participated at all and so could be said not to belong in a real sense to any community neighbourhood. Others participated quite intensively and these were the main 'carriers' of the neighbourly face-to-face community.

The distinction between the 'dormitory' and the 'day time' population helps account for these different levels of participation, though it does not do so entirely. The dormitory population consists of those who work outside the area and who return to their homes at night for rest, recuperation and (unless they live alone) to spend time with their families. They are less likely to interact with their neighbours, largely because much of their time and energies are spent elsewhere. The day-time population consists of mothers in the home (especially if they have young children), school-age-children, the unemployed, the ill or disabled and the elderly – that is, those whose mobility is limited and who are much more confined to the locality in their daily lives. Community neighbourhood depends heavily on the day-time population.

Thirdly, while the basis for the micro-level social networks which go to make up communities of neighbours is partly spatial, it is also based on other factors. Of these, commonality of interests and life circumstances are the most important (though of course personal compatibility also plays a major role). It is thus common for many distinct but sometimes overlapping communities of neighbours to be found even in relatively small neighbourhood spaces.

Fourthly, of all the interests and common circumstances which provide a focus for neighbourly interaction, children are particularly important. Children themselves are often more neighbour-oriented than are adults. They lack the capacity and freedom to move freely outside their local areas, they spend a great deal of their time in public space (playing outside, going to and coming from school), and depend heavily on children who live nearby for play and social interaction. Parents and other adults who have responsibility for caring for children are often brought into neighbourhood activity primarily by the need to provide structure and support for their children's activities, to protect them from real or imagined dangers in public space, or to deal with the public agencies relevant to their children's lives (schools, health clinics, sports clubs, etc.). For many such adults, this involvement with children is the dominant influence on their relationship with the neighbours and the neighbourhood. It means that the spatial unit comprising the neighbourhood in their lives is largely determined by where the children's school and play areas are located. One could say, in fact, that it is heavily defined *by the daily circulation space of their children*. Furthermore, the community of neighbours they interact with is often constructed around their children's social contacts. That is, the neighbours with whom they have most interaction are the parents of their children's classmates and playmates, or other adults who are involved in their children's lives.

Community, social order and micro-segregation

The character of community neighbourhood as just outlined often reflects city-wide patterns of spatial segregation and social inequality and is particularly influenced by how marginalised and deprived the locality is. A key mediating factor is social disorder – or at least the perception of social disorder. This commonly stands out as a defining feature of marginalised neighbourhoods, while at the same time acting as a major influence on how micro-communities of neighbours emerge and behave. These patterns are of particular interest in the present context.

The key issue here is that neighbourhood deprivation often manifests itself in a growth of local social disorder and a consequent emergence of conflict between groups who make different and competing claims on the use of public space and local amenities. This process is often represented at neighbourhood level as a conflict between decent people and hooligans, between the respectable mainstream and trouble-makers at the margins. It is usually reflected in the growth of vandalism, petty criminality and disorderly behaviour on the streets, most commonly on the part of young people and often in connection with either drunkenness or drug-taking.

It should be noted that social disorder is a relative term. What might count in one city or neighbourhood as disruptive or hooligan behaviour might be counted as tame and harmless in another. In other words, residents typically judge the orderliness or otherwise of a neighbourhood by reference to prevailing local standards, so that what in one neighbourhood might seem like slight ripples of disturbance can cause disproportionate local alarm about impending social breakdown in another. Nevertheless, a common factor distinguishing marginalised neighbourhoods in all of the BETWIXT cities is a concern about social disorder, even though the objective level of disorderly social behaviour giving rise to such concern may differ widely from city to city.

Whatever the objective basis for such concern, it gives rise to processes which infiltrate the structure and meaning of community and shape the way neighbours relate to each other. Such processes are so powerful and pervasive in marginalised neighbourhoods that they can become the defining features of the social networks and micro-communities which comprise the local social neighbourhood. They centre on a mixture of solidarity and conflict: solidarity with those who are on the same side, conflict with those others who are seen as the source of threat and danger. They thus give rise to both communal bonding and fragmentation or micro-segregation. The bonding aspect of this syndrome means that certain aspects of community may be strengthened, at least between certain residents at the micro-neighbourhood level, who band together for defence against the threats posed by what they see as the disturbed social environment. The fragmentation means that divisions between 'them' and 'us' become part of local daily life. Micro-segregation emerges as micro-communities strive to create physical and social space from which they can exclude threatening 'others' who live in the same locality. We do not want to over-simplify the processes involved: one can rarely speak of *the* mainstream community versus *the* marginalised fringe as if these formed two well-defined categories in local areas. The reality is closer to a shifting kaleidoscope of groupings and divisions which is difficult to pin down in empirical terms. Nevertheless, residents themselves often think and speak in relatively simplistic 'them' and 'us' terms so that the divisions they refer to become real at the level of perception even if they do fully reflect the facts on the ground.

An example

The neighbourhood report from Kontula gives a detailed description of a particular instance of such micro-segregationist processes. This instance is of interest since it occurs in what by objective standards is one of less deprived neighbourhoods in the BETWIXT study. Yet it contains many of the elements common to such processes in the other neighbourhoods in the study.

This instance centres on a cluster of three apartment buildings in Kontula which were regarded locally as one of the more 'difficult' sub-areas in the neighbourhood. Located in the central space between the three buildings was a small children's playground. This playground in turn centred on a sand-box which was a popular play area for small children. For parents, this play area was a valuable and heavily used resource in their children's lives and for that reason was an important part of the physical space they defined as their neighbourhood. However, it was also subject to what they saw as a threat. That threat emanated from a mixed group of figures who lived locally. It consisted mainly of heavy drinkers who regularly became drunk in public, along with others who were mentally ill or otherwise eccentric in their appearance or behaviour. Many of them lived alone and some were loners in all aspects of their day-to-day lives, but others formed loose networks among themselves (particularly the drinkers).

A group of neighbours from the three buildings formed a strongly bonded network which was directed at minimising the incursions of these 'threatening' individuals into the children's play area and the space surrounding it. The neighbours in this network consisted mainly of women, for the most part mothers and grandmothers who formed a community around the sand-box, all united in protecting the children against the dangers in the environment and drawing help and support from one another. A number of efforts were made over the years by social service agencies to reduce tensions over this issue in the area. The women who struggled to exclude threatening others readily acknowledged that it would be better if those on the receiving end of their efforts could somehow be integrated into the micro-community. However, attempts to achieve that end had little success. At the time of the BETWIXT fieldwork, a community integration initiative had been underway centred on the provision of a community drop-in centre intended for the use of all the residents, including those formerly shunned to the margins. At its inception it was hailed as a model of its kind, but it soon collapsed in the midst of accusations and recriminations over the control and use of the drop-in centre and its budget.

A number of elements of this example of collective action and micro-segregation were common to similar processes in other neighbourhoods. These included the smallness of the space and the groups of people involved, the centrality of the day-time population to the process, the relevance of children and their role as a focus for the involvement of adults, and the micro-segregationist tendencies between a 'respectable' mainstream and various categories of extremely excluded individuals (though many of those in the mainstream in this instance themselves suffered problems of unemployment, ill-health, family disruption or low incomes which would normally be regarded as placing them on or across the edge of social exclusion). Neither the respectable mainstream nor the marginalised in this instance encompassed all the population in the apartment blocks involved, since the central issues were of primary interest only to families in the blocks with small children and to the marginal individuals who crowded in on the spaces used by those children for play. We cannot therefore speak of the collectivity of families engaged

in this issue as *the* neighbourhood community (as if there were only one). However, we can speak of it as *a* significant local micro-community and also take note of how its dynamic was shaped so much on local social conflicts over access to and use of public space. This instance also shows how community, even at the micro-level, can be exclusive as well as inclusive, since one of its central functions was to define certain residents in the area as 'other' or as 'outsider' and to unite 'insider' residents in a common cause against them.

Conclusion

This section has provided an account of the case studies of precarious neighbourhoods which comprised Stage B of the BETWIXT project. The purpose of these case studies was to examine how city-wide patterns of spatial segregation manifested themselves at the local level, referring particularly to the impact on the neighbourhood as a locus of access to resources for households who are in precarious circumstances. This in turn was intended to provide a context for the analysis of household coping strategies in the next stage.

The section first considered the uncertainty of the concept of 'neighbourhood'. While recognising that the term generally referred to small localities, it identified three different bases on which such localities could be circumscribed and defined as neighbourhood. One was by reference to the catchment area served by a central set of services and amenities – local shops, school, health clinics, church, leisure facilities, transport connections, etc. – an entity referred to here as the 'services neighbourhood'. The second was the 'imagined neighbourhood' evoked by the name of the area, which encompassed not only a particular place but also the imagined quality or status attaching to that area. The third was the 'social' or 'community' neighbourhood based on the face-to-face community of neighbours. This related to a smaller spatial entity than either of the previous two as it related to the usually restricted space within which householders would know a significant number of neighbours and have regular contact with them.

Three major lessons were drawn from the findings of the neighbourhood studies. These related to the interaction between city-wide patterns on each of the three types of neighbourhood just referred to.

The first lesson was that the 'services neighbourhood' reflected city-wide patterns of spatial and social inequality more-or-less directly. All the neighbourhoods were among either the worst-off or next to worst-off in their cities, but they differed widely both in their absolute standards of services and amenities and in the degree to which their objective living conditions fell below the city norm. In other words, these neighbourhoods provided a fair reflection of how egalitarian the cities were in objective terms and how far their welfare states successfully protected against spatial differentiation in living standards. The study neighbourhoods in the two Scandinavian cities in the study were at one extreme in this regard, and were almost utopian in the quality of life they offered their residents (particularly in the case of Ersboda in Umeå). The other neighbourhoods displayed varying degrees of disadvantage both in absolute terms and by reference to normal living standards in their cities and did so in ways which approximated to broader differences in social and spatial inequality in their host cities and societies.

The second lesson was that no matter how egalitarian the cities were in objective terms they failed to avoid status hierarchies between neighbourhoods as far as image and reputation were concerned. All the

seven cities in the BETWIXT study had low-status neighbourhoods, that is, housing areas which were widely regarded in the wider city as unpleasant or even dangerous places where few people would voluntarily chose to live. Such negative cultural representation was a less material aspect of neighbourhood conditions than the objective features just referred to, but it nevertheless had powerful effects on urban spatial structure and amounted to a significant dimension of disadvantage for those living in affected areas. The striking aspect of this pattern was that neighbourhoods assigned a low status position in the Scandinavian cities were just as stigmatised as their counterparts in the other cities in the study, even though real inequalities – what one would expect to be the objective basis for such stigmatisation – were much weaker in the Scandinavian cases. These patterns suggested that status hierarchy was a dimension of spatial disadvantage with its own dynamic and logic, with only partial linkages to inequalities of objective condition, and with greater durability in the face of egalitarian social policy than is often recognised. They also suggest that the cities themselves, rather than any cross-city comparisons, provided residents with the primary frame of reference within which these hierarchies were constructed.

The third lesson concerns the nature of the social or community neighbourhood and the way it is shaped by neighbourhood disadvantage. The social neighbourhood, the face-to-face community of neighbours, is a micro-structure which arises among small clusters of neighbouring dwellings and which is likely to arise in a number of different forms even within relatively small areas. It does not encompass all residents equally in such micro-spaces. It relies primarily on networks among on the day-time population (those who by reason of family situation, unemployment, old age or ill-health spend most of their daily lives in the area) rather than on the dormitory population (those who work outside the area and come home mainly for rest and recuperation in the evenings). Children typically provide an important focus of this form of neighbourhood both because of their own interactions with other children living close by (a form of neighbourliness in itself) and because they draw their parents into contact with the parents of these other children. Networks of parents structured around the circulation spaces of children, in fact, are among the more common and stronger forms of neighbourhood micro-communities.

While such micro-communities are present in many kinds of neighbourhood, they take on distinct characteristics in deprived neighbourhoods. In these cases, the threat of social disorder is commonly perceived as a dominating characteristic of local public space. It typically leads to divisions between groups who see themselves as belonging to the respectable mainstream versus those they see as troublemakers, even though the mainstream may themselves be considered in other contexts as verging on socially excluded (with reference, that is, to the wider city context). The perceived threat from troublemakers is of particular concern to vulnerable groups, and again parents' worries for their children are often to the fore in this context. In such circumstances, the mutual support function among networks of neighbours tends to take on a conflictual character vis-à-vis the threatening 'others' who encroach on 'their' space. As such, it becomes micro-segregationist since it may create zones of exclusion (both micro-spatial and micro-social) from which certain extremely marginalised residents in the area are excluded. Thus, in deprived neighbourhoods where such processes have taken hold, micro-communities of neighbours have both solidaristic and fragmentary aspects – solidaristic with reference to those who belong and fragmentary or micro-segregationist with reference to those whom they see as threats to be excluded. We do not want to overstate the prevalence of such micro-communities in the BETWIXT

neighbourhoods nor the level neighbourhood solidarism they create. By their very nature, in fact, they tend to be microscopic and to be relevant to only some residents' lives. Therefore, t hey tend not to extend to extend over large neighbourhood areas and can co -exist with a considerable degree of anonymity, looseness of social association and pluralism at larger neighbourhood levels. Nevertheless, they can be important, and within deprived neighbourhoods in particular can provide an important focus for the 'neighbourhood as community' at the micro level.

Households in precarity in diverse societal contexts

Daniel Bertaux[4]

Introduction.
One specificity of our project was to combine observation of precarity at three different levels or 'scales': city-wide, neighbourhood, and households themselves. This succession of ever greater 'close -ups' of the observation scale was to allow us to map out the relationship between structures, institutions, mechanisms and processes, between *logiques de situation* and *logiques d'action* ; and to test the feasibility of combining statistical data and case studies. To follow the same sequence of empirical observations in seven different cities was to provide us with a comparative framework for the interpretation of each city case, and to allow us to eventually move back from case histories and neighbourhood descriptions to higher levels of generality: to identify recurring mechanisms and processes generating precarity situations, to document how people suffered in and coped with such situations, and to formulate policy recommendations aiming at helping them to help themselves.

While the two preceding sections have presented our main findings for the first two stages of observation (city-level and neighbourhood level), this section presents our findings at household level. In each neighbourhood covered by the project we were able, not without some initial difficulties, to interview at length the heads and often other members of about 27 households. In a few cases it appeared that a household was too well-off to be called 'in precarity'; such cases were discarded from the sample and the snow-balling went on. In even fewer cases it appeared that the household was already in a situation of hopeless exclusion and were also dropped from our sample.

To recall, our definition of 'precarity' focuses on the situation of the households. *Precarity* characterizes some household's situation in which the balances or equilibria are unstable. It means, concretely, that these equilibria are very sensitive to any perturbation, which might disturb at least one of them. Loss of balance in one of the constitutive equilibra may destabilise other equilibria and threaten to eventually send the whole micro-system off balance.

Our research has led us to consider that the most important 'external' domains of everyday life are the following: housing; employment; income as input for consumption and savings; health; schooling; social rights and access to their actual fulfilment, assistance 'rights'; and safety of the neighbourhood (that is, low level of risks for children, adolescents and adults). We see the 'internal' domain of everyday life as characterised by (the amount of) housework; of childcare and possibly adult care; by (partial) sharing of resources; and by multilevel and possibly conflictual communication between household members.

In a situation of precarity, everyday life is characterised by the fact that the household's general equilibrium is constantly threatened by external (or internal, i.e. family crisis) perturbations. External perturbations are events which happen on one of the domains of everyday life, interrupting the normal

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[4] The text is written by Daniel Bertaux. Thomas P. Boje has carefully edited the first draft. Furthermore two of the described themes are based on contributions from Mary P. Corcoran (Neighbourhood) and Susan McIntosh (Housing)

re-production in that domain, as for example: los s of job and hence of salary, unexpected large expense, health events such as illness or accident, expulsion form the dwelling. As one sees through these examples, a perturbation of re -production equilibria in one of the domains will disturb other equilibr ia if the perturbed equilibium is not rapidly restored: a health event may threaten employment; the loss of a job, if there is no substitute income for the lost salary and another job cannot be found rapidly, it will send the household budget astray; debts will accumulate, expulsion will become a realistic threat. Nobody wants this to happen to her or his household. Thus the will to avoid it may be assumed to be present, and this initial hypothesis of our project has been confirmed by fieldwork: we have wit nessed that households do to try to prevent falling into exclusion within their limited means. The whole point of public and social policies is precisely to help them go through such 'crises' as rapidly and as unharmed as possible.

Most of our households numbered one or several children; that is, families - either two-parents or single-parent - are over represented in our samples, while single men, single women, ageing couples are underrepresented. For any adult, to organise one's life becomes an altogethe r different matter when he or she moves from the status of childless individual to the one of parent having the responsibility of a child: a large number of new problems arise, requiring attention and mobilisation. A stable housing needs to be found, the u se of time, money, every day life's structuration as a whole drastically changes. Furthermore the 'actor' itself changes its nature: it is not anymore a more or less autonomous individual organising her life; it is now a couple - a more complex actor - and as the child grows up and family size increases, the household itself becomes a collective actor.

In fact, in the core triangle (welfare arrangements, labour market regulations, and 'the household') which has come to figure at the centre of social policy research, the latter is by far the one's which has been less studied - in spite of efforts such as the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) - and is the least understood to-day. Esping-Andersen admits it in his most recent book and devotes a whole ch apter on 'the household' reference (Esping-Andersen 1999) Wholly based on statistics, this chapter on households shows what kind of knowledge statistics can bring on European households, but also what statistics cannot bring: for instance what households a ctually do to resist exclusion and try to better their situation; how severe the problems are which they face here or there, and how efficient are local public policies in helping household to cope in various societal and local contexts across Europe.

Extensive methods such as the survey methodology provide thin data on a high number of cases; but they fall short of providing dense information or 'thick description' of cases and to provide knowledge about how they are embedded in the local context. On the other hand, intensive methods such as household cases studies will provide such dense information, but on a necessarily limited number of cases. In case study research the problem is to observe a limited number of household situations and their members' ac tion so as to gain understanding about *logiques de situation* and *logiques d'action* that recur from case to case, and to identify mechanisms, dynamics, processes that appear to have their own consistent inner logic of development and inner dynamics. In look ing for such mechanisms and dynamics one may make findings of general import.

The empirical approach we have implemented in this stage of our project provided us with the possibility

to advance poverty research in four directions : the multidimensionality of problems characterising precarious situations, their embedment in spatial/local contexts, their inner and outer dynamics and evolution through time; and last but not least, tapping, observing, recording, analysing people's courses of situated action.

The full report of Stage C demonstrates in detail how this approach works and what kind of results it brings. Here in the Final Report we will concentrate only on some of our main findings, those, which appear to have highest relevance for policy recommend ations at the European level.

Households, not Individuals - does it makes a difference in analysing precarity?
Before going into a more detailed analysis of the main findings just a short comment on the relationship between individuals and households in conceptualising poverty and welfare. When the unit of observation is a *household*, not an individual, and when the instrument of observation is not a pre - structured questionnaire but a series of focused interviews oriented towards the construction of the household's case history, one eventually gets a very different picture about ways of living in and coping with precarity.

The point is not that the household picture is better than the statistical one based on individuals; the point that it is different. T he two kinds of 'data' cannot be evaluated comparatively using the same criteria. Although this is taken for granted by most specialists, the relative abundance in poverty research and welfare research of statistical data, together with the scarcity of cas e study and case history data, leads to a misunderstanding: it is often assumed that the two types of picture are different only because the 'case study' type lacks some of the properties of the statistical type. What is not perceived are the hidden links between the specific statistical form of poverty -research data and the notions, the concepts, the theoretical models used by researchers to build a representation of 'the poor'. Indeed, as long as there is no alternative form of data available, it is cogni tively normal -although scientifically wrong - to 'assume' that people in poverty or precarity are a collection of individuals facing problems which are individual by nature, such as unemployment, low salary, lack of skills or poor health.

As it is, however, most people live in households, and households are not 'like' individuals. Households do have some characteristics in common with individuals: they have a dwelling, an income, they may receive as households some benefits, and they do pay rent. But this is about all. Households have no gender, no age, no specific level of skills or degree of employability, no position on the labour market; no health to speak of; no individual rationality; they are not full of motivation or depressed, they don't drink or take drugs; they don't commit offences, they don't go to jail. One just cannot speak of households as one is used to speak about individuals; the language one commonly uses to speak about individuals just is not adequate.

But an adequate language account ing for what takes place within households cannot either be developed *in abstracto*. In order to solve these problems a first step is to develop empirical research, and especially case studies and case histories focusing on households. Stage C of the Betwix t project represents a step in that direction. It has brought much data relevant to the development of a new vision of households in precarity.

Universality of household needs

When comparing what households in precarity do in our seven neighbourhoods, what kinds of problems they try to solve not to lose balance, a first conclusion comes up immediately: although we have chosen everywhere households which occupy roughly the same rank in their respective societies - near the bottom but not quite at the bottom - the most salient problems they are confronted with appear not to be the same if they live in the Lisbon area or in Scandinavia, in Dublin or in Turin, in London or in Toulouse.

Does this mean, that household needs themselves are different whether one lives North or South, in a Protestant or a Catholic culture, whether one is European or immigrant? Or does this means, on the contrary, that basic needs are the same everywhere, but that obvious differences in what are the most salient problems come from the context of people's actions: the nation-specific (or city-specific) level of economic development, of labour market regulations, perhaps the family norms, and most of all the system of social protection characterising the country?

Comparative fieldwork makes us think the second hypothesis is the right one. But what, then, would be these common or universal household needs? There are at least two opposite ways to approach the issue. One is from theory: there is a whole literature already on 'human needs' (see e.g. Doyal and Gough 1986). Knowledge of this literature is necessary for our purposes, but it is not sufficient: one will find in it a theory of *individual* needs, but not of *household* needs. As we have tried to explain above, households are not individuals or sets of juxtaposed individuals; households have their own specific needs.

The other approach is to start from the empirical observations, which we have done during our household interviews, and to examine them in a comparative perspective. Following this second approach one is first struck by both the similarities between the sets of problems households have to deal with in the chosen (relatively deprived) neighbourhood of a given city/country, and with the rather radical differences between such sets of problems when comparing this neighbourhood to other ones. Very schematically: the problems that Ersboda households are concerned with, whether native Swedes or foreign-born, are the quality of the local school and, for some adults, access to proper retraining so as to move from a relatively poorly-paid and uninteresting job, often a dead-end job, to a better segment of the labour market. Such are not the problems that the Portuguese households in Venda Nova have to solve: their problems are to find a decent dwelling for a rent they can afford; a job that either would pay a bit more and/or that would be officially declared, that is, that would bring to the employee a minimum of social rights as officially recognized entitlements. Portuguese households also have to solve the difficult problem of getting proper healthcare (there is a healthcare public system, free of charge, but it is much overcrowded and the quality of services is not top-level); the problem of affordable childcare, as one salary only is not enough for a household to live on nowadays; of living on a very tight budget; and of convincing the local welfare officers that one's household really needs help. True enough, the official rate of unemployment in Portugal is very low, but it is largely a consequence of the fact that for most persons it is not worth registering as unemployed as it will not bring them any unemployment allowance anyway.

In Bagatelle the problems are again different: the housing question is solved there, but by defini tion, since the deprived neighbourhood we chose is a housing estate whose flats have reasonable comfort and low rents . The main problem there appears to be the one of entering the labour market: on top of overall competition between persons looking for a job, there is apparently much discrimination in Toulouse, by employers, against young 'Arabs' and especially those living in Bagatelle : an Arab name and an address in Bagatelle is enough to reduce to practically zero a young man's chances to get a job in the private sector.

In Turin there is apparently some ethnic discrimination too, but as the immigrant population is much smaller the overall magnitude of the (nevertheless very real) problem is less important. What households suffer from in Little Aurora is the difficulty for young men and women to get on the labour market: male family heads seem to systematically get priority over them. Given the systematic and even systemic privileges of male household heads on the labour market, one would have expected that the needs of lone mothers, who must raise their children without the support of the father, would be given priority by welfare institutions; but this is not the case, since the moral stigma on lone motherhood seems still alive in Italy. The stigma co ncerns primarily the relationship between social workers and lone mothers. As the needs of lone mothers are recognised by legislation but in any case are subject to means -tests (no other resources must be found in the family), the duty of social workers is to deeply investigate the life of lone mothers in order to check the presence of a family network to support or the availability of whatever other resources. This ‘detective’ pattern sounds as intrusive and make mothers suspicious and reluctant to use res ources from the social services (Meo, Naldini and Olagnero 2001: 14)

In London, in general people are primarily concerned with employment, income, housing and community safety. However the concerns of respondents vary with the group. Thus for example lone parents have as their main concerns coping on low income, children’s education, future employment, childcare, relations with previous partner, size of housing. Older people are primarily concerned with issues of safety in an environment where street crime is high, and with their low income which cannot be supplemented with employment. Young people also face issues of low income, and of employment and training. Disabled, older, gay and minority ethnic residents speak of the impact of discrimination on their lives. In the recent period of economic upturn, low quality, low paid employment is relatively available, but difficult to sustain or escape upwards from. However for many groups, and for all in periods of economic downturn, even its availability is more limited.

As for the problem with which Kilmainham residents in Dublin seem most concerned, it is still of another kind: it is the collapse of working -class community ties that, say the residents, once provided formerly a dense network of social ties, a co llective 'social capital '(in Putnam's sense) that proved very helpful to Kilmainham families: they could rely to it for keeping an eye on children playing in the street, for finding casual childcare at very low cost, for getting information about jobs or the best shopping places. Community ties provided concrete solidarity and moral support that boosted morale. Now all this is gone, say residents; each household lives on it's own, keeping its children inside by fear of drug addicts brought in the vicinity by the construction of a social housing estate. Where possible, those who have aspiration for their children, send them to schools outside of the neighbourhood. They hope that this will

open new social networks for the children as well as offering some pro tection against the invidious effects of drugs and deviance in the neighbourhood. The issue of safety seems thus prominent there, while in other neighbourhoods we visited, including some that had a terrible reputation in their city, we did not observe the same obsession with safety.

Within the perspective of formulating European -level policy recommendations, this seems embarrassing. If the most salient and urgent problems differ so much from one city or country to the next one, how could one hope to ident ify universal problems for European households and recommend European -wide public policies? Our view however is that behind very apparent differences there are much in common across all our neighbourhoods and households. Striking differences in the problem s arising from lack of need-satisfaction may not be related to differences in needs themselves, but in the level, shaping and implementation of the system of social protection. In this perspective, households living in precarity in either Sweden or Portuga l would have the same basic needs; simply, most of these needs would be already satisfied in Sweden through the universal and generous system of social protection helping people to solve themselves their problems of need -satisfaction; but not in Portugal. At one given historical moment, the various European countries would simply stand, from the point of view of need - satisfaction of their 'precarious' households, on various points of the same scale

This hypothetical 'scale' needs not be one -dimensional or non-linear: it could be a combination of various 'dimensions', each corresponding to one of the basic household needs. In some European countries, the welfare state has principally expanded the citizens' social rights in its attempt to help them solving al l these needs of protection. The modern welfare state can thus be characterised as a complex structure capturing both the needs for social assistances and social services. The system of social insurance grew up to safeguard the position of wage earners whi le the system of social services acts to guarantee the continuity of social reproduction and social cohesion in a still more differentiated and individualised society. Various European countries at a given moment of their history might qualify better, be m ore 'advanced' on some of these dimensions of social protection, for instance healthcare, or housing, childcare, or universal access to jobs, than on some other dimensions. But in this period of European convergence, the challenge could be to develop some common benchmarks no matter which welfare mix between market, welfare state and civic institutions prevails in a given society in providing social protection.

Now of course the question, which remains, is: what could be, within the context of contemporary Europe, universal household needs to which European policies of social protection should address?

According to our findings, the universal household needs are (1) access to stable **housing**, (2) reliable sources of **income** either through work or social assi stance, (3) access to **employment,** and (4) a universal, comprehensive, and reliable system of **social protection** both in relation to services and transfers.

What we found important for all households in all seven countries were the level, the quality and t he reliability of their social rights as citizenships and breadwinners in the households. As we know from the literature on welfare regimes, these rights have been defined highly differently in each of the seven

BETWIXT countries and we have witnessed very directly how these differences have a crucial impact on the strategies pursued by the households in their attempts to combat precarity and prevent social exclusion.

An important finding was in this respect that, by comparison with European societies with other systems for social protection, the existence of a well-developed social security system based on social rights appears of immense import to households in precarity: not only in helping them absorbing the shock when hit by a severe perturbation (loss of job, loss of partner, illness, accident, loss of housing) but also in helping them to help themselves. In societies characterised by universal and generous systems of social protection our fieldwork shows that the general level of individual's physical as well as 'morale' energies is significantly higher than in countries without such systems. It is so, because people in difficulty know their efforts will not be in vain: efforts have sizable chances of succes, and people know about it because they can quote examples around them of such cases.

Interestingly enough, the main dimension in this respect appears not to be the general level of economic development of a given society or city, but the specific development of social protection: precarity appears to be more difficult to live in and more difficult to get out from in globally rich cities such as London or Turin than in perhaps less rich but more equalitarian cities such as Umeå and Helsinki, which have more developed systems of social services and social assistance – and more supportive social networks. Thus differences in people's capability to combat precarity seem to depend strongly on the level of social capital - social resources and networks in the local societies. Recent research on social capital, citizenship rights and welfare find that there exists a positive relationship between a well-functioning and comprehensive welfare society and social capital. In societies with a high level of social protection combined with an equalitarian socio-economic structure and comprehensive welfare institutions, one normally also will find strong and supportive social networks and a high level of non-profit activities and consequently also better conditions for fighting poverty and social exclusion (Putnam 2000; Rothstein 2002)

Most persons in precarity are very *active*, they do *work a lot* and are *willing to find a job*.
There is a strong tendency to assimilate 'work' with 'employment', and to consider that people who are not employed "do not work", as if they spent their days doing nothing. For instance the 'poverty trap' hypothesis familiar in the economic literature on poverty assumes that people have a built-in tendency to live off welfare benefits rather than take up low paid work; but it offers no empirical evidence to ground the hypothesis. Indeed surveys cannot, by construction, tell much about what people who are not working are doing of their time.

A major finding of our project, coming out of the interviews with household heads, is that in fact people in prearity, and this includes many who are economically poor, whether 'working poor' or 'not-working poor', show a very high degree of activity. On top of that they also show a high degree of reflexivity, which is understandable: the more difficult the problems they have to solve, the more reflexive they need to be. Some of them may be employed, some of them not; some of them living slightly above economic poverty line, some under it. But what they have all in common is a high degree of activity. The image of the passive and un-reflexive welfare recipient, whose contemporary

origin seems to lie in the neoclassical economic discourse, appears very largely inaccurate. In Europe, while it might apply to persons who have been victims of exclusion, we can testify that it does not apply at all to the persons we have met, which we believe are representative of those Europeans that constantly struggle to try and avoid sliding into exclusion

Much confusion on this issue comes from assimilating 'activity' to 'work', and 'work' to 'employment'. The range of *activities* that are necessary to maintain one's household on balance is not limited to working in employment; it is much wider. It includes, besides holding a paid job (working in *employment*), many activities that are not work in a paid job but should nevertheless be considered as *work* properly said[5]. No analysis of what people in precarity are actually doing may avoid distinguishing between activity, work, and work in employment.

Let us describe how we moved from the common sense representation of work to this three-fold categorisation. For instance, we knew that the French neighbourhood of Bagatelle (Toulouse) was characterised by very high rates of unemployment. We therefore expected to find unemployed men spending their days in cafés, youths hanging around all day in small groups doing nothing, and women staying home looking at TV. But it was not at all what we found. Unemployed men were trying hard to get hired into some formal job, meanwhile finding ways to get some cash from informal jobs. Adult women all had children, sometime large families - especially the ones coming from Morocco or Algeria - and they were extremely busy taking care of their children. (Childcare is work, as feminist research has shown long ago). As for youths, a number of them, all males, did indeed spend their days hanging around in groups: they were highly visible. But they were a minority. Other, much less visible young males were following some retraining program in the hope of finding a job, or already working for pay - but in the hardest, most dangerous and least-paid jobs, those that nobody else in Toulouse wanted to take on; temporary factory or construction jobs. As for young women, a number of them had fallen in love and started a new family with some young, often unemployed young man from the neighbourhood: they were busy taking care of their first child and trying to convince local housing authorities to give them an independent flat in the estate. Other young women either were employed or did look hard for a job, but - as their brothers - they met explicit racial and class discrimination on the Toulouse labour markets, with added gender discrimination by employers who were unwilling to hire a young woman and soon find that she had got pregnant and was asking for maternity-leave.

In other neighbourhoods of our research project we observed similar phenomena: while there was always a sizable proportion of adults and youths who were 'not working', that is, who were not working for an employer, every day they were very busy doing something. Everywhere childcare was the focus of mothers' activities; it took them a lot of energy and time, and also 'mind-work', reflexivity. In Umeå, Sweden, not only childcare but monitoring the growth of each child was mobilising much of their parents' attention and time - perhaps because most of households' other problems were solved

[5] We propose to consider an activity as work if its result is roughly proportional to the amount of activity invested in it: in this way, housework, shopping, or taking care of a child may be considered as work; while looking for a job, looking for better housing, looking for the right cure to one's or a child's illness, are activities which may be very constraining and exhausting, but which are not 'directly productive' in the sense that their result is directly proportional to the amount measured in terms of time and skill, of activity invested into them

more easily than in other neighbourhoods: parents were keen that each of their children would fully develop physically -through sports -, intellectually - parents kept a close watch on school work and were active in parents' associations which kept control of what the teachers were doing.

Everywhere housework was a complex task, because the households whose way of life we were studying lacked monetary resources; thus their members - women, men, and even older daughters - had to do themselves many activities that, in families with higher income, would have been done by specialists (plumbers, electricians, house-painters) in exchange of money. Take even shopping, which is so simple and even pleasurable when one has a car and enough money. We observed that for households in precarity it requires much physical and mental (e.g. planning) work. Here are some examples taken from interviews: "*The shops down the road would rob you, so I do my shopping in Crumlin supermarket; but I have to walk there and carry the bags back. It's a long enough walk when you're carrying bags and dragging the kids too* " (Lorraine, Dublin; separated, 3 children aged 6, 16 and 17). "*I go to buy meat and I get it without money, our clothes I get in the market, the same with vegetables without paying* (meaning: on credit*) and when I have money I pay* " (Fatima, Turin, 38, unemployed widow with a daughter of 10.). The last quotation also points to the complexity of shopping as a challenge to the capacity in finding non-expensive goods, and, overall, getting trust and credit. *"I don't do my shopping in the area. Over the years you learn where to go. I have a system now. I go into Meath Street to a butcher I've dealt with for ages and get my week's meat like rashers and stuff there. I would say I save about 75%. I'm on 77 £* (Irish pounds) *a week Unemployment Benefit, and after I pay my rent I have less than 10 £ a day to live on, and that is for everything: bills, food, clothing and everything. You learn to add pennies up.* (William, Dublin, 52, single)."*I have 1000 Francs* (1000 French Francs, about 150 €) *each week to feed ten people. I spend two hours every day at the market getting the best bargains. I ask the price but I don't buy straight away; instead I go and compare prices. Every Thursday there is a second-hand clothes market for small children. I go and kit them out with stuff from there. You always have to plan ahead; if you don't... Last week Saïd (15 years old son) wanted a pair of Nike. He said: "Mum, they're not expensive!" and he put them in the shopping trolley. I thought they were for 200 FF. When they passed through the check-out: 450 FF! (70 €). I could feel my blood pressure rising. There were a lot of people in the queue behind me...in the end I paid up. But the following week I had to make up by saving on the (food) shopping"* (Mrs Khazir, Toulouse, 45, eight children aged 10 to 23; the family lives on the father's small disability pension and family allowances).

Besides, interviews showed that people spent much time and energy in activities, which, without being considered as work, are absolutely needed to be done. One of them was, to look for a job, which is all the more difficult when one has none of these skills eagerly sought for by employers. To visit local welfare institutions to get something from them, even if it was a right: during the first meetings with an officer one never has the right papers, or the right information, or the right way of presenting one's situation. In Holloway, London, residents' opinions on welfare officers appeared quite critical and the interviews show that there is a general sense of disenchantment about the motivations and commitments of those in service provision agencies vis-à-vis the clients. The same criticism could be heard in other cities such as Turin, Dublin and Toulouse (much less in Umeå and Lisbon, but for opposite reasons: in Umeå Welfare officers seemed quite helpful; in Lisbon social rights were almost

inexistent, welfare officers had hardly anything to offer anyway). In Kilmainham, Dublin, a local resident who had worked as voluntary community/youth worker was interviewed shortly after she had been elected as councillor to Dublin corporation. She said that after her election she found that her primary task as a public representative was smoothing access and helping people claiming their entitlements. "*I can't understand how elderly people who are out there don't have that access to a medical card when they retire or get their pension. They are entitled to it, but they don't seem to know how to access them. Since I took up my job all we seem to be doing is... applying for medical cards*". She added that before her election, *'the people around here had never seen a politician. If they see them it's on the telly, that's the nearest they come to them*". In Toulouse, where many a former worker was disabled, they had it extremely difficult to get recognition of their disability and the corresponding rights to a disability pension. The process often lasted years and induced feelings of extreme frustration. In the same vein, many mothers had to try and solve some of their children's chronic health problems such as asthma, dyslexia, potentially-deadly kidney illnesses; they had to fight with doctors, hospitals, social workers to try and find the right medicine, the right cure.

Thus it is through observation and case studies that we became persuaded that most adults in 'precarity' households are indeed very active; and that we came to understand that to account for the variety of activities we were observing, not one but three compassing categories were needed: (1) the smaller one **employment** (the ordinary language will call it 'work'); (2) a more compassing one, **work**, which is not to be reduced to employment, and comprises also many other kinds of activities, which are not paid; (3) the most compassing category, **activity**, which comprises not only all those activities that can be considered as work, but also other kinds of activity whose outcome, unlike previously defined 'work activities', is uncertain; that is, not proportional to the amount of effort invested in them.

Much of our policy recommendations depend on this finding that persons in precarious situations **are active**. If one believes that 'poor people' tend to tip on the lazy side, policy-makers will develop a certain kind of policies which will entirely focus on getting them 'back to work' (back to *work for an employer* actually); for instance by keeping welfare benefits at such a low level that the unemployed will desperately look for a job, any kind of job for any kind of wages. If on the other hand one shares our finding, based on fieldwork, that people in precarity are actively looking for ways to stabilise their household's situation, a different kind of public policies will be in order: the problem will be to analyse accurately what are their problems and to help them solve them themselves. Talking for instance about the problem of unemployment and low income, once one believes that persons are ready to take on a job, one needs to first identify the various *objective obstacles* preventing the unemployed taking on and holding a job, and to develop policies that will remove such obstacles. The issue of whether people in precarity are willing or not to get a job should not be a matter of belief, but of facts, of evidence gathered by empirical observation. Actual attitudes and conducts of adults as well as the problems and obstacles they are confronted with can be documented out of our interviews. Here it will be done by the case of Leïla

Cases.
Leïla is a 28 years lone mother born in Bagatelle. When 18 she fell in love, left school, got pregnant and married. The couple had a second child three years later. Her young husband however remained

unemployed for years, perhaps because of local discrimination against 'Arab' youths; and after five years, when he started to drink, she kicked him out. She was then 23. She still lives in Bagatelle, Toulouse, with her two children now aged 9 and 6, and has been living mostly on benefits for several years; benefits which, in France, are sizable for a lone mother with two young children. A typical case of *poverty trap*?

Actually, since Leïla's first child reached age 3 and could go to the *maternelle* she consistently tried to get a job. Having left school at 18 when she met her husband she had no special skill; and most unskilled or semi-skilled jobs had working hours which did not fit with the school hours during which her two kids were taken care of (that is, from 9 am to 4:30 pm).

But she eventually found a part-time job cleaning rooms in a hotel from 9 am to 1 pm. Taking on this job meant that she would lose her means-tested benefits, 366 € in her case (a lone mother with two kids aged 5 and 8); the job was paid 460 € per month, only 30% more. Was it worth the effort? It was not only a question of money: *"I was not going to do that job all my life; but I needed to show on my CV that I was willing to work, I mean: to take up ANY kind of job"*.

The job however turned out to be very demanding. The pace of work was of three and a half rooms per hour, a tough pace for this thin woman: "*some rooms are left really dirty, what with ashes and disorder and junk all over the place; it takes much more than a quarter of an hour to really clean them properly"*. On top of it she had to do childcare, shopping and cleaning work for her own household: she could not recover from her intensive efforts from one week to the next. "*After three months I had lost twelve pounds. I really looked like a zombie, I scared people, I had lost too much weight (...).I don't want to wreck my health and, at age forty, to find myself unable to take on a job anymore...* '. She resigned and went back to Welfare benefits.

She knew however that she would eventually have to go back to employment: " *I wanted something better for my children and me than to live off from Welfare for ever* ". She tried several training programs, but none led her to a job. Exactly one year after having left the hotel job she got a government-sponsored back-to-work contract. :" *it was in a hospital and there was the possibility to be hired long-term afterwards*". The job consisted in cleaning the tools after use in the dentistry service of a public hospital: "*I liked the job: I felt that my work was useful, that I was learning a skill; I also liked the human environment. In short I was very pleased to work, and was looking forward to grow in this job* ". She was making only 442 € and losing her right to benefits (or at least she thought so; in fact the law had been changed, as she discovered later, and she kept receiving a fraction of them for a transitional period). She was dreaming of eventually getting hired by the hospital for good.

There was however a problem with the job's afternoon hours, 4 pm to 8 pm : her two children were getting out of school at 4:30. "*I asked my younger sisters, high school students, to pick up my children from school and keep them at my mother's house until 8 pm. My mother was very tired, even often in bed* ". After a few months the sisters got fed up; the mother supported their point of view; tensions grew. Leïla asked her supervisor to modify her afternoon hours: " *It does not bother me to start at 8 a.m. in the morning, I put my children in the morning nursery; but after 4 I'd like to be able to leave and*

pick them up from school". But the supervisor's answer, a lady without children, was: "*Make up your mind, will you*: *do you want to work or not?"*. Just before tensions with her mother and sisters reached the breaking point she very regretfully - and to the amazement of her supervisor, so she says - left the job.

In the following months she lived on unemployment allowance. The problem came when it stopped: although she had prepared in time a request for getting the *Revenu Minimum d'Insertion* (Minimum Income, *RMI*) it had not been yet processed and she received only - 30 € for the whole month. Her situation was desperate as she had been unable to save anything. She asked for emergency help, and was eventually granted, after much negotiation, 150 € for the whole month…Now she gets *RMI*, but the experience has taught her a lesson: *" I don't want to keep on being pitied. Not to be dependent on anyone anymore. It is not a way to live, not a situation, to be living on RMI* (means-tested minimum income). *I want to have a* ***salary***. *One must try to find a way out*". She has started again to look for a job, or for a training program, which would lead to one.

All along Leïla has acted rationally, but not according to the kind of crude 'instant cash' rationality that the poor are supposed to follow in economists' 'rational action' models of them. Her rationality is, as with so many other persons we have interviewed, a long-term reflexive rationality. Other cases illustrate the same kind of 'logiques de situation' and subsequent 'logiques d'action'. Here is a quote from a lone mother living in Holloway, London. She has three children, a teenager and two kids under 5: *" I was working from October 98 through to June 99 believing that the Government was telling me the truth about me being better off financially, but -as I found out - I was only 10 £ a week better off working a 36 hours week, and my children suffered, and I suffered: they suffered by them not seeing me, and vice versa. My house suffered because (…) by the time I did get home I fell asleep on the settee with the children, so… I just gave it up"*.

In Amadora – the neighbourhood analysed in Lisbon - publicly-subsidised childcare is very scarce, and children are not taken by schools until age of 6. Isabel, 32, has a husband and five children of age 14 to 5, and was pregnant when she was interviewed. The husband works full-time for the municipality as street cleaner and road mender for about 350 € per month. This was not enough for the family: Isabel used to do house-cleaning on an informal basis; but then she got a job in the hospital as 'assistant of medical action' (she got there through recommendation of an uncle whom she happened to meet when taking one of her children to the hospital; when she realised he was actually working there she begged him to arrange for her to be hired). The monthly salary is about 260 € Both salaries total 610 €, not too bad as compared with many other households in the Portuguese sample but still insufficient for a family of seven - soon eight - although the family does not pay rent: the two-rooms small house, built illegally but which now belongs to the municipality which does not wish to repair it as it plans to destroy it, is in a very poor state - beetles, mice and rain water come in uninvited. "*Our main source of expenses is food*", says Isabel. She is very happy to have the hospital job, for this is a job in the formal sector, and such (unskilled but formally registered) jobs are quite scarce in Portugal. However she could take it thanks to her two elder daughters: when offered the hospital job she asked them to stop going to school - they were 14 and 13 - and stay home to take care of the three younger siblings (ages 10, 8 and 5). They are not allowed to go outside with the younger children as the streets of the deprived 'bairro' -

neighbourhood - are not perceived by the mother as totally safe; hence they stay the whole day with the younger children in the small dilapidated house. The mother regrets that she could not study further, and knows well that - as she herself says - "*nowadays to get a job, nine years of school are not enough* ". But there was no other way for her to take on and hold onto the hospital job. To summarize, Isabel demonstrates her eagerness to be employed. She has found a way to solve the problem of childcare, at no immediate monetary cost; the costs will be paid later by her two daughters.

The four conditions necessary to take on a job and to hold it

These cases, and many others we have collected, demonstrate the fallacy of the 'poverty trap' assumption. We believe this is an important finding, since the poverty trap hypothesis, as long as it is taken as a model of behaviour which is empirically accurate and - because of its apparent rationality, universally valid leads directly to the conclusion that means -tested benefits should be kept at a low level, lest beneficiaries will prefer to stay home 'doing nothing' than to take on a job.

This is by far too crude a model. To assume that persons who are not employed ('who do not work') have chosen to live off social benefits appears not to hold when confronted with concrete cases: it is **not** an assumption accurately describing what is really happening. From analysing a number of cases and synthesizing analytical conclusions, we have eventually come to identify the structural features of the general *logique de situation* characterising the relation to employment. It can be summarized this way: in order to take up and hold a job an adult:

a) must be physically and psychologically able to hold the job ;
b) must be relieved from other 'vital' social commitments such as care of dependent relatives (a young child, a sick family member or an elderly relative), *or* be able to find affordable care services in the immediate vicinity ;
c) must find an employer willing to hire her/him;
d) must be willing to 'work' - to take a job and hold it - , i.e. to accept the employer's conditions: working hours, conditions of work, level of wages and benefits.

This schematic grid captures practically all facets of the issue of 'finding and holding a job'; for instance the issues of skills -level, of *employability*, or of labour market discriminations. Thus it appears that the reasons for not having a job are many, most of them being beyond the control of the individual. These reasons might be physical or psychological disability, care commitment, and/or unwillingness of employers to hire the person because of ethnic or gender discrimination, of alleged lack of skills, and so on.

Our interviews tend to show that such reasons are more prevalent than the individual's reluctance to accept the employer’s conditions. Hence not only does it appear clearly that most persons in precarious situation will develop a high level of activity (and reflexivity); but some of the reasons why this high level of activity is generally not perceived do also appear more clearly.

One is related to the technique of observation itself. Most 'strategic' activities (strategic for keeping the household on balance) take up the form, not of instant behaviour, but of *courses of situated action*: they

unfold through time, as the actor tries to find ways to re ach her fixed goal (say, to get a job; to find affordable childcare arrangements ; to get one's right to a disability pension recognised; and so on) and as she discover obstacles and perhaps new resources as she explores possible ways. Surveys are excellent to record frequency of simple acts of behaviour; but they are unable to describe complex courses of situated action; only interviews oriented towards their accounting may yield fair descriptions.

The second reason is a propensity to 'blame the victim', in this case to blame the person who is unemployed for her unemployment. We have tried to show how the reasons for being unemployed are many; how they may be classified into four main categories; and how three out of four categories of reasons for not hav ing a job are beyond the control of the unemployed.

The third reason is the reduction of the meaning of 'being active' to 'work for an employer' which is operated by some very common discourse. It could be called a 'semantic trap'. It is not only a quest ion of gender bias, which would remain blind to the idea that there are many other kinds of work than work for an employer. This semantic trap is deeply ingrained in the language that is in use to build up representations of 'the poor.' But more important perhaps, the common daily language has borrowed its categories and vocabulary from those of employers and financiers who have come to be seen as the sole actors in economic processes. As a consequence, the error is a recurrent one. It is not new: forty yea rs ago, Franco Ferrarotti, professor at the University of Rome, was conducting a research project on a slum of self-built shacks in the periphery of the Italian capital city, he interviewed a woman, head of a large family and according to hearsay a local l eader. He asked her: "*So the main problem here is that there is no work, is that right?*"

She looked at him, quite surprised that such a man of knowledge, who talked so well and must have read so many books, would make such an elementary mistake *:" No work? Oh no, no, there is plenty of it!*" (she must have been thinking about all there is in a day's work: wake up the children one by one, get them dressed, fetch water from the pump out there, try to wash their face, feed them; organise their day, then go to t own to look for food for the day, free food - for this you must arrive at the right moment to the street market, just when they are closing, and pick up vegetables, fruits and other eatable items that have obviously lost all freshness and cannot be sold anymore, and get them from the street merchant before the others will; fetch them back, do the cooking - only the eldest daughter will help - ; take care of the younger kids, mend some of their clothes; talk and negotiate and if need be fight with other fa mily heads - there are always some quarrels to be settled, and some opportunities to hear about before others do -and on and on, until dinnertime, until the moment at last comes to take some night sleep). " *Our problem here is, there is no* ***employment***".

The well-being of their children is at the very centre of low -income parents' activities and reflexivity. Rather than being victims of distrust, publicly blamed and threatened, parents should be considered as the prime partners of their children's socialisat ion and education.

During fieldwork we have recurrently met parents who explained to us that their children represented everything to them: the object and source of meaning of their daily efforts, the main locus of their hopes - and fears. "*My children are all that I have", "my children are all to me"* , such sentences we very often heard. Parents talked much: mothers, at great length; fathers, with more restraint but no less emotion -

about the variety of risk that children were exposed to because of their parents' lack of objective resources (material, cultural, relational resources); and also because of the risk-dense environment in which they were growing up. Parents showed great awareness of these risks, and they used a variety of techniques to prevent their children being hit or captured by these risks.

Thus the image we got stood in stark contradiction with what is often heard about low-income parents: that they do not know how to socialise and educate their own children; that they show them bad examples of behaviour; that they do not care about how their children grow up. In fact, as we soon realised, it is much more difficult to raise one's children properly when one has very little objective resources at one's disposal, and when the neighbourhood is risk-dense: it takes much more reflexivity, planning and strategic thinking, and much more energy expenses and stress, than when one lives with a middle class income in a middle class neighbourhood. By comparing the fate of children in our various neighbourhoods, we came to the conclusion that welfare policies explicitly oriented towards children of poor families, or towards providing activities to children and adolescents in deprived neighbourhoods, are extremely important in preventing truancy, drift towards delinquency and anti-social behaviour. Parents of deprived households need and deserve help from public authorities.

Risks to which children are exposed vary according to their age and sex. Small children run health risks (including such ones as dyslexia); safety risks; being bullied, or becoming victim of sexual abuse by older children; and school failure. (Father's alcoholism is also such a risk, clearly observable in some households - but, and this is not a coincidence, in those households where the scarcity of resources, poor working conditions, difficulties in everyday life, and the derived tension among adults, are the highest). Public stigma shed on parents (because they are immigrants, unskilled workers, illiterate, poor; or in some Catholic countries, because their mother is raising them alone) is harshly felt by children who are very sensitive to it. Children who experience risks and stigma tend to lose confidence in 'society' as a whole, as well as their own self-esteem. As a result, when they grow up into adolescence, they have already lost their faith into the virtues of behaving properly, and they'll be more prone to associate with slightly older neighbourhood youths whose habits of 'getting high' and anti-social behaviour will appear to them as morally legitimate, emotionally exciting, and even socially rewarding (as for the case of young drug-dealers or robbers). To the despair of their parents they will be led by those local gang leaders to explore such a line of conduct, thus contributing in making their own neighbourhood unsafe. Although the above description is admittedly sketchy, we have found elements of it in practically every neighbourhood we studied, except perhaps the Umeå one.

It took illiterate immigrants parents to remind us that socialisation and education of children is not done only by parents. These immigrants from the Maghreb missed one feature of their own childhood spent in a village: there, they remarked, all villagers felt in charge of the socialisation and education of all village children. In the French housing estate where they were now making their life, they were trying to associate neighbours, teachers, educators, social workers, even in some case policemen to the education of their own children; with mixed results, as they felt victims of the stereotypes cast on them as unskilled, incapables parents.

They helped us to realise that in modern society, whatever the social class, middle class or working

class, socialisation and education involves **many** socialising/educating actors - kindergarten personnel, primary school teachers, summer camps counsellors, and so on ; in fact such 'socialisation/education helpers' are much more numerous for middle class children, who can also rely on school tutoring, piano or judo teachers, speech therapists and many other specialists including child psychoanalysts. However, lack of monetary resources prevents poor parents to resort to such help in educating their children. They can count only on themselves - and, if available, also on children activities organised on public funds if the welfare state in the country they live is developed and preoccupied with children's development.

Once one understands that in urban modernity socialisation (to society's moral values) and education (in its aspect of learning socially and occupationally useful skills) is done through a number of actors, and not only the parents, the question becomes: do all these actors work on unison, or are there discrepancies among them? It is obvious that in societies where working class parents or poor lone mothers are stigmatised and deemed incompetent as parents, a rift is built between them and other, institutional socialisation actors, which appear as the only legitimate ones. We feel this is highly damageable to these children's socialisation and education. Their parents should be considered not only as full-fledged educative partners, but also as the prime ones, since none else knows their children's specific dreams, potentialities, and weaknesses better than these parents.

Our fieldwork, based on case histories and parents' interviewing, had led us to focus on parents' socialisation/ educative strategies and has brought elements of one further step in clarifying the complex processes of growing up in a deprived neighbourhood. Two main types of strategies seem to be used by parents in raising up their children: one is based on very tight, authoritarian control (basically, children are told what to do and what not to do, and kept locked in the home as much as parents can); the other would called 'controlled opening': children are given some measure of leeway in participating in 'outdoors' (out of the home) activities, but under strict control of other adults such as teachers, educators, camp counsellors (Delcroix 1999). In this second educative strategy parents take the time to try and persuade their children of the goodness of behaviour norms, and negotiate with them areas of limited independence. While in the literature the first strategy is supposed to characterise the working class, and the second one, the middle class, we found both strategies in the field. Furthermore we came to realise that the same families had used the first, authoritarian strategy, and later on the second, more 'liberal' one: it seemed to depend of the level of their monetary resources, as well as of the level of publicly financed -that is, free to them - youth activities supplied locally.

The link between resources and style of bringing up children seems to work as follows. If the monetary resources of the households are extremely tight, parents cannot afford to take the risk that one of heir children, left to play in the street, will come back with torn clothes, bruises that would necessitate expenses, or worse, would commit offences that would need to be repaired. Because children do not necessarily understand the tight situation of their parents, the latter have to resort to imposed guidelines on behaviour and very tight control of whether children respect them. This strategy may work until a certain age; however, the desire of children to win some degree of freedom and independence is bound to grow with age (and comparison with friends); so that this strategy is bound to fail at some point.

Parents know it, and if possible resort to the second type of bringing up their children: limited and controlled freedom. Here the desires of the child are not only understood but explicitly recognized; and if they cannot be fulfilled, an explanation is given. This strategy works through persuasion and attempts to have the child internalise the situation, its necessities, more than through imperative dictates.

All parents use a range of 'techniques' to try and socialise/educate their children; but depending of the main style they have adopted, they will use them differently. For instance, control of children's time use, of their comings and goings, of their frequentations, of their use of whatever little money they have at their disposal, or of their school grades, will differ on the dimension authority / persuasion. Religious values, norms and prohibitions, when used as a tool, will be either presented as a given, or explained through links with ultimate beliefs. Parents' own history, when told to children - which appears always as helpful in the shaping of their own identity and sense of self - will either be mentioned briefly and normatively (" since I have done it, you should do it too") or rather narrated at length, letting the moral lessons emerge by themselves. And so on with other techniques of socialisation.

In the short run the authoritarian style may seem more efficient; but in the long run, the persuasive style yields much better results. However, it takes more resources; and it also requires greater coordination and consensus among the range of actors participating in the socialisation and education of the child. This is clearly the key: wherever childhood policies do exist, such as in Sweden, Finland or France, bringing up children appears easier, or even much easier. In Umeå the risks are thin, and parents can concentrate on the harmonious growth of their child; they do participate, sometimes critically, to the orientation of such institutions as local schools or local sports clubs. At the other extreme, in Amadora by Lisbon parents receive very little public help and struggle with all kinds of risks and problems; and if there is some misbehaviour they are immediately considered as the sole responsible.

The conclusion is inescapable: public policies oriented towards children are essential to the well-being and harmonious development of children from households in precarity; and such policies are all the more efficient if they associate parents as partners.

Housing is a pivot: between social inequality and spatial segregation, in characterising neighbourhoods, and acting as both problem and resource for those in precarity [6]

Housing was not a major area of enquiry in the household interviews, and it is not covered in all the Stage C reports. However it established itself in several as a pivotal enough factor in the lives and coping strategies of respondents to merit inclusion here. This confirmed the role housing had assumed in earlier stages of the work – in the Stage A report, as a crucial bridge between social inequality and spatial segregation across cities – and in the Stage B report as central to the creation and history of local neighbourhoods. Thus *at macro, meso and micro levels, housing appeared as a pivotal force in both the causation of precarity and as a resource in dealing with it.*

Evidence on the importance of housing comes mainly from the households in the chosen neighbourhoods in Dublin, London, Toulouse and Turin, but there is also background material in the

[6] This section is written by Susan McIntosh

reports of earlier stages from Helsinki, Lisbon and Umeå. It is worth noting that in Helsinki and Umeå, housing did not feature greatly as a problem because due to strong social housing policies, it was not a major issue for residents, and this in itself is instructive.

The housing situation of those interviewed broadly reflected wider patterns of housing provision (or its absence) in the member states represented. Thus in Kontula/Helsinki and Ersboda/Umeå most respondents lived in public social housing, as also in Bagatelle/ Toulouse. Oddly this is also true of Holloway/ London, since despite the relatively liberal nature of the British welfare regime, the tradition of social housing in the UK, especially in London, is strong. As Murie points out, the delineation of welfare regimes based only on social security arrangements crucially omits other wider aspects of provision such as housing: Murie, 1998). In Kilmainham/Dublin there is a mixture of private and public rented housing. However in Little Aurora/ Turin, the majority of respondents lived in privately rented or owned housing, with a small minority in public housing. And for Lisbon, where there is a limited form of rent control on some older city centre properties, the sample came from Venda Nova/Amadora outside Lisbon itself, and was entirely housed in a private sector that was the result of uncontrolled residential development over a period of years.

The degree to which housing appeared largely as a problem or a solution, a negative or positive resource, was related to the level of provision and administration of social housing, although the precise meaning of this term varied from direct state to voluntary sector provision, and from allocation primarily on the basis of need with subsidised rents, to a fair degree of marketisation (see Fahey ed, 1999).

For all those living in precarity, housing is clearly a fundamental need, both a cause and an effect of their precarious situation, and one which, within a dynamic time perspective, can be an important influence on the ability to prevent the slide into exclusion, or the climb out of precarity. The report on Turin makes this point well: *"Home is the focal point of survival strategies and life plans of the households under study, but obtaining and keeping a flat without having to worry about the future is very difficult to reach"* (Olagnero and Meo, 2001). The first part of the sentence could have been written by many of the research teams, but the second part would only be true of some.

Thus in those cities where social housing provision was adequate, this source of risk and worry was largely removed from people's lives. This was best expressed by a lone parent in Ersboda/Umeå, who intended moving to another Swedish city and saw getting a job as her only worry; she knew that within a matter of weeks she would be allocated suitable social housing.

In Helsinki too, the city owns two thirds of the land and implements not only a policy of well designed social housing – indistinguishable from neighbouring private housing in design and appearance – but also a policy of the social mixing of housing. The observation visits undertaken by members of all teams to all cities and neighbourhoods confirmed this, and more broadly the extraordinary differences between the housing conditions of the respondents in the study. Housing precarity means very different things in different societal and welfare contexts, and, as found in the neighbourhood stage of the work, there is also a distinction to be made between what might be called objective housing precarity, and relative/ perceived precarity within a specific city context.

In complete contrast, in Venda Nova/Lisbon, there were some shanty dwellings and no social housing provision. In Little Aurora/Turin, only three respondents lived in public housing, which accounted for only 6 per cent of all housing stock in the city, and even less, about 4 per cent, in the chosen neighbourhood. Most lived in private rented or owner occupied housing. Here many people told of inadequate housing conditions, overcrowding, and tremendous struggles to compete for the very small amount of public housing available, and in this context of competition for scarce resources, resentment against non-European immigrants was a feature. Lack of transparent procedures for allocation meant the need to use informal social networks, and the need constantly to chivvy social workers or public officials to gain information about rules, and the progress, or reasons for refusal, of applications.

In Kilmainham/ Dublin, and Holloway/ London, there was social housing provision, but in the context of some 'recommodification' through right-to-buy policies, and the poor resourcing of public provision. Here too there were many examples of overcrowding and poor housing conditions. In Holloway/ London, where since the 1980s social housing rents had seen increasing elements of marketisation, respondents with growing children were caught between their need for more space, and the implications of this for cost and budgeting: one lone parent with three children had succeeded in moving into a larger house, but was considering moving back to reduce the high cost of rent and bills. This case pinpoints *the balance between need and cost, which is at the heart of the debate between market and socially based housing policies*. Households living in systems with full social housing policies are supported on the basis of need, to which cost is subordinated. One such is Bagatelle, Toulouse, where allocations are made on the basis of family size, location, income, etc, and where no-one had more than two children sleeping in one bedroom – an impossible dream for many in the chosen neighbourhoods of Lisbon, Turin, London and Dublin. However households living in systems where housing policies are non-existent or largely market-driven have to subordinate considerations of housing need to those of cost, and cost assumes increasing importance with the level of market influence in social housing policies

Little Aurora/ Turin provides a case where there is significant *private sector presence*. Here conflict with landlords was endemic, often around issues of repairs and overcrowding, and the fear of eviction was ever-present. For those having bought their homes, usually in the somewhat easier era of the 1970s and 80s, problems centred around the high cost of maintaining properties with old plumbing, wiring and flooring. In both cases issues of need were again subordinated to those of cost.

However ample social housing provision alone is not sufficient for a carefree life in relation to housing for those households living in precarity. Thus there were some accounts in Bagatelle/ Toulouse, where provision – of both housing itself and associated housing benefit - was generally good, of *direct or indirect discrimination* in allocation, against lone parents and against immigrants. For both groups there were systemic barriers to the allocation of good quality social housing: for lone parents, the demand of both a deposit and a guarantor against rent default; for immigrants, a structural policy (ironically under the heading of 'social mixing') which aimed to 'avoid the concentration of families of foreign origin … in neighbourhoods where there are already none'. This in fact led to the greater concentration of such families in already segregated areas, emblematic of the residualisation process for social housing reported in many of the studied neighbourhoods. Such a clear policy

however helps to explain the contradiction noted in the Stage A report whereby the city of Toulouse showed patterns of low social inequality caused by nation ally progressive redistributive policies, combined with relatively higher levels of spatial segregation. This connection further illustrates the pivotal role played by housing and housing policy at every level, in connecting social and spatial patterns.

Bagatelle/Toulouse was not alone in providing evidence of inefficient and possibly discriminatory administration of housing. Obscure procedures in Turin, sluggishness and poor resourcing in Kilmainham/Dublin and Holloway/London meant constant delays and fru strations for tenants in seeking repair and maintenance of their homes. Here it was not the administration of a large bureaucracy, as in France, that seemed to be at fault, so much as a reduced priority given to public services in general, in contexts wher e the private sector was dominant.

That housing is a pivotal domain in the experience of coping with precarity is illustrated in relation to most of the BETWIXT neighbourhoods. *Payment of rent* was one of the top household priorities, along with food and bills, in allocating expenditure in all the cities studied. (One mother in Bagatelle/Toulouse said *"I try to make use of our difficult conditions to try and teach them* [her children] *some of the basic rules of life: first pay the rent and the bills; then on ly you can begin spending what remains, but only what remains."*) For those who had succeeded in gaining good housing, this was a major source of security. A lone parent from the Maghreb living in Little Aurora/ Turin said: *"My daughter has school and home, she has everything she needs."* We found that housing had a fundamental impact on the relationships of household members. Thus one southern European family in Holloway/ London, with a couple and two children, were living in the one -bedroom flat of their mo ther while awaiting social housing, and the tension in the house was palpable. A young respondent in Kilmainham/Dublin spoke of constant rows with her siblings because of the lack of personal space at home, and this was the theme also of another case in Lo ndon. In Little Aurora/ Turin, one woman described trying to entertain friends, choosing between the crowded living room and children's bedroom. Under such circumstances, poor housing severely affects social life and mental well -being.

In a more positive sense, *housing could act as a catalyst for development in other domains* . Two cases of the effect of good housing on educational chances emerged. One was in Bagatelle/ Toulouse, where a young mother, who had been sleeping with her child on the sofa of her p arents' living room, and had been asked to leave the house by her father, had subsequently gained public housing. This enabled her then to resume her studies, which had been interrupted by overcrowded living conditions. In Holloway/ London, a respondent wh o had defaulted on mortgage repayments in his previous owner -occupied home chose to live in relatively low cost housing cooperative accommodation in order to enable him to spend part of his week retraining for better employment. These examples reveal a num ber of other domains centrally affected by housing: income, education, training and employment.

Where the effect of housing on the lives of those living in precarious circumstances is negative, we found a variety of coping strategies employed by responde nts. Occasionally broadly political action was taken against the relevant authorities: lobbying groups formed in Holloway/London, rent withheld and threats to expose poor housing conditions in the press in Little Aurora, Turin. Sometimes collective

action was adaptive rather than challenging. In Kilmainham/Dublin, women neighbours formed groups to rub out graffiti as soon as it appeared, or to wash down the neglected balcony once a week. In Holloway/ London, a group of friends had made contact with each other and arranged to exchange their flats according to their altered housing needs, and the local authority was supporting them in this, as a local variant on a nationally based social housing exchange scheme. In a wider sense *social networking* was in itself a coping strategy against housing precarity, essential to the hope of gaining public housing in Little Aurora/ Turin, for example.

Often coping strategies were more household - or individually based. We have mentioned the constant need to chivvy the housing authorities in some areas, eg. Little Aurora/Turin, Kilmainham/Dublin, Holloway/London. The connection of housing with other domains of life **is** illustrated here too: households in Kilmainham/Dublin and Holloway/London mentioned the effort to send their children outside the area for schooling, so that housing would not affect educational and social chances. This connects to another strategy of planning a better future. Some households saw their residence in the precarious area as strictly temporary – a necessary stage in their housing careers, involving little real local commitment (Kilmainham/Dublin and Bagatelle/Toulouse). Some fantasised about revenge in the future (e.g. one woman in Little Aurora/ Turin gave a graphic description of how she would tell all to the press: *"When I get fed up, I will get everyone into trouble, I will name names, drag them all into it ..."*). Perhaps the double role of housing as cause and solution of problems is best illustrated here by the fact that for several people in our sample, moving into social housing was in itself seen as a coping strategy, indeed sometimes as a victory. Given the variety of housing policies, and of conditions of social housing across the cities in the study, this victory represented more of a lasting achievement in some contexts than in others.

Thus our central finding on housing is that it is pivotal to the problems and coping strategies of those living in precarious circumstances. It has a major impact on the relationships and lives of household members, and can also have a large influence over other domains of their lives – negatively on health, for example, or positively on education and future employment and economic chances. Where social housing is scarce, housing becomes a major arena of worry, and cost has to take precedence over need: overcrowding and poor conditions may result. Where social housing is good, there may still be problems of poor conditions, mal-administration, and potential discrimination. On a positive note, housing is often in a unique position to change the lives of its residents, and given the impact of housing on many domains of life, social investment in it represents investment in the whole lives of those living in precarity.

Neighbourhoods are a resource that could be used to mobilise around the challenges of the present[7]

Although the focus of the BETWIXT project was primarily on the presence or absence of resources the fieldwork also provided insight into the significance of nonmaterial resources in the struggle to cope. For example, place was frequently constructed through a repository of shared memories and

[7] This section is based on Mary P. Corcoran 'Place Attachment and Community Sentiments in Marginalised Neighbourhoods: A European Case Study' Canadian Journal of Urban Research, Volume 11, Issue 1, pp. 201 - 220

traditions. A sense of place rooted in the past was deployed as a resource that could be used to mobilise around the challenges of the present. Such feelings of place attachment resonated as a significant marker of identity and community in changing neighbourhoods. In other words, our respondents showed us that *it is impossible to separate how place is experienced in terms of material social practices from how it is imagined*. While the BETWIXT study sought to problematise the social milieu of the neighbourhood, particularly in terms of material social practices, what emerged in the biographical narratives gathered from urban dwellers was a sense of ambiguity and indeterminacy in relation to place.

Richard Sennett contends that as capitalism spreads its tentacles globally into the public space of the city, "attachment and engagement with specific places is dispelled … and the accumulation of shared history, and of collective memory, diminishes …" (Sennett 2000). This is particularly relevant in the context of the European cities' precarious neighbourhoods, which are frequently characterised as interstitial urban spaces (Balsa and Caeiro 2001) undergoing processes of industrialisation, de-industrialisation and, in some cases, rehabilitation through urban renewal projects and gentrification. The place becomes a disembedded milieu. Whether the changes are wrought by the influx of immigrants in Aurora (Turin), drug dealers in Kilmainham (Dublin) or gentrifiers in Kilmainham and Holloway (London), they all threaten to dilute shared history and collective memory.

Our case studies of relatively deprived neighbourhoods in a number of European cities demonstrate *the continuing relevance of place attachment and its perceived importance to quality of life.* Numerous commentators have expressed concern that neglecting to foster and support the 'soft architecture' of places has deleterious consequences. This argument has been most forcefully (and controversially) articulated by Putnam who focuses on the disappearance of civic togetherness – in terms of everyday community-based practices such as participation in meetings and local organisations, church attendance and voting – in the United States. The impact of this decline in civic togetherness, he concludes, diminishes social capital and undermines community (Putnam 2001). Place is considered as a possibility to bridge the gap between structure/agency and objective/subjective frameworks of analysis. In this respect we want to focus on three aspects of the neighbourhood / place: *locale*, the setting in which social relations are constituted; *location*, the effects upon locales of social and economic processes operating on a wider scales; and *a sense of place*, the local 'structure of feeling'.

A Sense of Place

> *When we moved in here [in 1929] that road was there but there was no through road at the top. The canal was there but no bridge. Drimnagh [an adjacent neighbourhood] wasn't yet built . .. it was a brickworks with the big chimney, steeples and a quarry. Kids were drowned in that quarry too. There was a hill that was probably built out of what came out of the quarry. We used to play on it. Old motor car bumpers, we used them to slide down the sides. But that extended right over to the wall of St. James Gate ... that whole area now is changed. Here [on Suir Road] you could play football on the street safely. We could play snowballing in the winter. We played rellevio. A plainclothes garda [policeman] used to come around on his bicycle and if he found you playing football he could charge you or give you a telling off. We would see him coming, and we would all run up the passages [back alleys]. Playing football on*

the street, that was the height of the garda's problem. [Respondent, Kilmainham Dublin]

Old time residents of the neighbourhoods display a strong sense of emotional rootedness to their local area. This is predicated on a sense of the historical past and feelings of nostalgia often arising from the experience of a lifetime lived almost exclusively within the locale. The neighbourhood's past and, in particular, embedded memories from childhood form an integral part of their interpretive frameworks. Our interviews were gathered at a time when the neighbourhoods were undergoing transformation from gentrification (in Dublin and London) and from increased ethnic diversification (Turin). These changes are viewed and interpreted through the summoning up of collective memories of how the place 'used to be.' When asked to talk about the neighbourhood, respondents frequently resorted to elaborating specific memories – of childhood games on the street, of sociability between neighbours, of communality born of a shared hardship. Attachment to place seems to derive from composite memories of people and experiences – a game of football played on the streets, a gossip at the local bakery, an afternoon spent with friends in the pub. These are all practices of doing and sustaining shared history and collective memories. *The ambiguity of place here is evident in the divergence between how the place continues to be imagined, and how it has actually changed.* The material characteristics of the neighbourhood have altered – the roads are no longer safe to play on, the local shops are disappearing, the local pub has taken on a yuppie veneer – yet the memories of the neighbourhood as a particular kind of place remain highly salient for those who live there.

Placelessness and its Resistance

Marginalisation of the neighbourhood and the people who live in it may be experienced as alienation. For example, our respondents spoke of exhaustive waits to gain access to basic social services, the 'address effects' and stigmatisation associated with living in a deprived area, and the seeming reluctance of city administration to address deterioration in the physical environment. However, marginalisation and feelings of placelessness may be resisted through a continuing attachment to sense of place. Many residents living in the seven precarious neighbourhoods feel trapped in a 'bad part' of the neighbourhood, have little sense of local identity and view the possibility of moving out positively. But while there is a palpable sense of placelessness, there is simultaneously a basis for resistance:

> *This used to be a good block but now look at it. It's the worst block now. The stairs are terrible; you get vomit and people going to the loo and not just a piss. There's used durex and syringes and everything, it's terrible. Years ago it was different, people kept the place clean. Years ago you had friends on all the balconies. My ma and the others used to clean every Saturday evening. There's only a couple of us who clean it now.* [Tyrone Place Respondent, Kilmainham, Dublin]

For the tenants at Tyrone Place, Kilmainham, however, internal differentiation is a reality that has a strong impact on place attachment and quality of life. Antisocial behaviour such as drug dealing and intimidation are widely experienced. People who do not live in the estate may deal drugs in the forecourt, hide from the police, and generally use the stairwells as a toilet. Similar differentiations we find in several of the other neighbourhoods. In the neighbourhood of Aurora in Turin, tensions run deep

between Italians who had migrated from the South and established their presence in the neighbourhood, and incoming groups of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Long -term working class residents see the district's identity threatened by the arrival of foreigners who speak other languages and have different customs. Similarly, in Holloway, London, some original working class residents felt threatened by those coming from outside, sometimes reacting violently, although in general there was relatively little overt evidence of prejudice, except towards recently arrived refugees; there were conversely some positive statements about living in a diverse community.Longterm middle class residents may also feel this, but living mainly across the railway line, they can rely on their spatial segregation to distance themselves on class or race lines from incomers to the neighbourhood. In the Bagatelle *quartier* of Toulouse, the population is overwhelmingly of North African origin in terms of ethnic composition. The neighbourhood consists of a series of high-rise tower blocks, sited around relatively open public spaces. A range of municipal services and facilities including school and health services are provided locally. But this also means that there is little interaction between the people of Bagatelle and other city communities. Furthermore, many respondents expressed the view that because they were perceived by the authorities as second-class citizens, they were provided with second -rate services.

In all of the neighbourhoods there is ample evidence of a *resistance to placelessness*. Residents, facing changes that have a deleterious effect on their quality of life, must rely on their own capacity to act as part of a repertoire of coping strategies. In the examples shown, the residents' agency is enlivened through a strong sense of difference from their material conditions of existence and the use of this sense of difference to act in their own interests (by complaining, by moving, or by trying to reinvigorate a sense of place). Neighbourhoods and communities are imbued with public meanings and, as such, serve as symbolic locales with distinct cultural identities. As we have seen in terms of residents' formulation of a sense of place, selective appropriation of favourable community imagery for self-characterisation simultaneously facilitates the construction of a positive self -image. This self-image is challenged when the effects of de-industrialisation, state abandonment, and gentrification begin to play themselves out within particular urban neighbourhoods.

Displacement

The process of gentrification is in a more advanced stage in Kilmainham in Dublin and Holloway in London. A different kind of newcomer – the affluent, professional worker – challenges the shared history and collective memory that the longer-term residents associate with sense of place. Most of the residents interviewed fear there will be little or no integration, either socially or economically, between the new residents of the apartment blocks and the existing 'community':

> *The neighbourhood is changing with the building of the new apartment blocks. There are new apartments around the old terrace but you only see them [the residents] driving in and out in their cars. That's the only point of contact. They drive in behind those gates, and the gates are locked. They shop outside the locality so there's no regeneration of the neighbourhood going on.*
> [Respondent, Kilmainham, Dublin]

The landscape is changing with the arrival of these new gentrifiers. While urban regeneration will bring

much-needed investment into the area, long term residents are concerned about what may be lost. Gentrification pushes housing prices beyond the reach of the local population, thus leading to further displacement, and the fragmentation of the extended family unit. Without a network of support, ageing parents may see their quality of life deteriorate. Those who move may also find themselves in a precarious situation as they, too, have lost these networks of support and attachment to place. Furthermore, the social networks that sustained the neighbourhood over the years are not likely to be maintained if newcomers don't wish to engage.

Lessons to be drawn on the relationship between neighbourhood and precarity

This kind of research conducted at the level of everyday life in the neighbourhood helps to illuminate the way various social identities can become embedded in and communicated through the local environment, reinforcing the sentimental bonds for people and places. It also demonstrates how place attachment articulations are imbued with a shared sense of history and collective memory. Place itself becomes more ambiguous as residents struggle to locate themselves within the changing environment, to hold on to the lineaments of a shared past, and to draw on that collective memory in mobilisation and resistance practices.

Residents' sense of attachment to place is connected to the microcommunities of which they form a part. This might be an area as small as the street on which they live or the balcony they share in a block of flats. There are clear intra-neighbourhood distinctions, which result in people in one area 'looking down on' people living in another area, even when they all share the same class position. What is at issue is the dialectic of developments in self-identity and of developments in modern city places which challenge the old sense of place. These neighbourhoods and those who reside within them have been battered by the effects of de-industrialisation, environmental degradation, and stigmatisation. Yet they draw on their 'memory traces' to motivate and mobilise themselves to resist the effects of these exclusions. New challenges are now presenting themselves.

Is it possible to develop a concept of the neighbourhood as an 'un-oppressive place' where the interests of all residents, including old-timers and newcomers, are embraced? Is it possible to revitalise the concept of 'community' in a way that affirms and enhances diversity? How might this be achieved? This research sought to employ a qualitative research approach to gather knowledge that would contribute to the understanding of informal and formal network relations and to help families identify and reinforce the indigenous strengthening components of their networks. In other words, urban policies and urban practices need to develop an integrated framework of analysis, which simultaneously addresses the locale (the city neighbourhood where social relations are constituted); location (the effects upon locales of processes such as de-industrialisation, environmental degradation and gentrification); and a sense of place – the local structure of feeling, time-deepened and memory-qualified. *It may not be possible to create 'communities of interest' because of the tensions that arise over the ambiguity of place within the neighbourhood.* Neither should we assume that those who have access to the least material resources in the city should be at the forefront of building and exercising collective capacity in response to broader social, economic, and political change. Nevertheless, it is clear from the foregoing analysis that for residents in deprived neighbourhoods their sense of themselves as agents and as members of communities are intimately bound up with a sense of place.

4. Summing up of findings - Policy implications for BETWIXT: Important concerns, obstacles, and facilitators for people and places in precarity.

Thomas P. Boje and Therese Halskov

Introduction

The ultimate objective of the BETWIXT project is to contribute to policy debate and policy formation on problems of poverty and social exclusion in urban areas in Europe, both at the level of the European Union and of Member States. As already outlined, the study addressed three substantive questions concerning the seven cities in the BETWIXT project – how segregated those cities were, how city-wide patterns of segregation were reflected in the character of specific precarious neighbourhoods, and how households in those neighbourhoods coped with their circumstances, referring particularly to the relative importance of personal or household level resources on the one hand and neighbourhood level resources on the other as means to avoid the descent into social exclusion. This chapter provides a summing up of some central findings from the different stages of the BETWIXT project, and outlines some social welfare policy experiences, implications and recommendations, in order to stimulate the debate about current directions in policy on precariousness and social exclusion in European cities.

The BETWIXT project takes place in a period of great changes in economic policies constantly in a tension between social democratic and liberal dominance, and at the same time a period with a great deal of innovation in European welfare states in connection with urban disadvantage and the problem of deprived neighbourhoods. Classic welfare approaches directed towards individuals and households have been supplemented by "area-based" and neighbourhood focussing approaches in the delivery of welfare responses to urban disadvantage. This development reflects a widespread view in EU and national state policy circles that household-level and neighbourhood-level disadvantages are closely interrelated and should be tackled in a coherent, integrated manner rather than as two distinct spheres of policy.

The concept of "precarity" applies to households (or in some instances individual people) and refers to an intermediate state of social detachment lying between integration and social exclusion. It presages a possible descent into social exclusion and the reverse, an ascent into a more secure position of integration. Precarity - like poverty - affects multi-dimensions and multi-facets of life domains (following Room et al., 1995). In the same multidimensional sense, the meaning of precarity can be, and has been here, extended to apply to neighbourhoods rather than to individuals or households and thus reflects the BETWIXT interest in the impact of locality on welfare risks, - possibilities, and the coping strategies of households.

This means, in other words, that the BETWIXT project is interested in poor people as well as poor places – or rather, given its focus on precarity, it is concerned with precarious neighbourhoods as well as precarious individuals or households. With this double perspective and analytic frame a huge range of

social problems and constraints related to or causing precarity emerge and a similar range of different welfare policies are affected – reflecting life domains - such as the labour market, education, social security and social service, housing, health, urban and spatial planning.

These welfare provisions and the problems of reform and intervention that go with them can be separated out of the different levels of local presence of the welfare state. Three broad categories can be distinguished, ranged along a continuum from those, which are totally area-independent at one extreme to those that are totally area-linked. *First*, many of the benefits that were central to the classical welfare approach are provided directly to households and are not connected with or influenced by the neighbourhood in which households live (for example pensions and unemployment benefits which are delivered independently of locality). *Secondly*, many of the important welfare services in the classic welfare approach are provided universally but delivered locally. This is true of education (public (state) schools are maybe the most characteristic manifestations of the welfare state) but also of a range of social and health services which must be locally accessible to those who use them. *Third*, there is the relatively new wave of area-targeted benefits and services, which are provided only to disadvantaged areas or neighbourhoods and introduce an explicitly spatial dimension into eligibility for and delivery of welfare benefits. These may consist either of specially targeted top-ups for classic welfare services (e.g. special supports for schools in disadvantaged areas) or of purposely designed innovations in state provision which go beyond what is available to other areas, as for instance state-sponsored area regeneration initiatives or local partnerships for development. These three categories of welfare provision interact with each other and with neighbourhoods in different ways.

Furthermore the above mentioned double perspective on both households and neighbourhoods also comprises the internal dynamics which arise from, among other things, the changing life events, behaviour and composition of resident households, and the movement of households in and out of the neighbourhood. Thus from a dynamic perspective, the Betwixt project has been concerned not only with the activity of households within a neighbourhood context, but also with neighbourhood transformation as affected by both the actions and movements of constituent households as well as by change in the external environment. In that way the Betwixt project has attempted to analyse coping strategies in precarious neighbourhoods by looking not only at how households try to help themselves but also at how they try to help, or fail to help, each other, and how collectively, within the constraints imposed by the external environment, they shape, or fail to shape, the local conditions within which households struggle to cope.

The distinction between spatial and urban policies as it affects cities and neighbourhoods, on the one hand, and welfare policies as they affect households, on the other hand, cannot be rigidly applied. There is much overlap between the two domains, and while some analytic separation is possible, mechanisms operating in one domain are often difficult to understand without reference to the other.

The Betwixt project has been developed through three analytic phases at three different levels (urban, neighbourhood and household) in the seven countries involved. Each of the phases and their findings in relation to segregation and precarity has been intensively reported en route (Flatley & McIntosh eds. 2000; Fahey ed. 2000; Bertaux ed. 2001).

In these studies the great differences in the development and organisation of the welfare regime in the seven countries have been documented. The diversities and different standards of welfare provision naturally reflect, that the European Union Member States still form and decide themselves in matters related to social welfare (and the underlying tax systems). Consequently the findings are so mixed that to some degree it can be regarded as both risky and meaningless to draw a set of general policy recommendations from them. Given the differences, they are also addressed to a variety of levels of policy making.

Our findings are in many aspects consistent with the repeated statements from the SOSTRIS project (Sostris Final Report, 1999), that due to differences in national (or regional) societal context, policies need to be sensitive to variations of "national" kind. Social policies that are appropriate or relevant in one national setting are not necessarily applicable or relevant in other.

However, from our Betwixt experiences we already here want to emphasize, that in spite of differences in societal contexts and standards of welfare provisions, the basic problems and existential needs of people in precarity are very much related to the same issues - work, domestic economy, housing, health, education and training, safety, freedom from discrimination - and can often be met with the same social policy answers in different countries. Consequently we will not describe national differences systematically, but present trans-national reflections and implications when this is possible and reasonable. In this way we hope also to contribute to the current political debate in the EU concerning the social conditions for the new Member States entering the union in the coming years.

In the first part of this chapter - section I - we outline the policy context for welfare interventions towards problems in precarious urban neighbourhoods. We briefly describe the main findings concerning the relationship between urban spatial segregation and social inequality in the seven cities studied in the BETWIXT project and end by suggesting some major policy recommendations concerning housing policy, urban planning and urban policy.

Afterwards in section II the most important lessons and concerns from the following two phases of the BETWIXT project are described: first a neighbourhood from each of the seven cities was selected according to common defined criteria and a social profile was drawn up for each, and afterwards around 27 households in each neighbourhood were interviewed.

Section I: Urban segregation and social inequality[8]

The Policy Context

One central element in the policy context of the BETWIXT study is the high level of interest and

[8] This section is written based on inputs drafted by Susan McIntosh and Tony Fahey

innovation in 'area-based' and neighbourhood responses to urban precariousness which is present in welfare policy both at the EU level and in many Member States. Large-scale area-based welfare responses to the problems of deprived urban neighbourhoods have a long history. They became particularly prominent in the form of slum clearance and social housing programmes, which were central to welfare provision in many European states in the post-war period. By the 1960s, the more advanced European welfare states had largely eliminated old-style urban slums, and had also largely lifted the poorer social classes out of the severe destitution, which had formerly been widespread in deprived inner cities.

However, despite the welfare successes of this period, urban spatial segregation remained a fact of life and new forms of localised urban disadvantage soon began to appear. Though these new forms of disadvantage tended to concentrate in particular blackspots in urban areas, they differed from the former slums in that they did not arise so much from the 'old' problems of run-down, over-crowded housing, poor sanitation, exorbitant rents, greedy landlords, hunger and disease. Rather they had novel, more social characteristics, reflected in rising levels of family breakdown, social alienation, petty crime, violence and vandalism in particular neighbourhoods. The stereotypical figure in this new social malaise was the alienated, disruptive teenager or young adult who performed badly in school, had poor job prospects, had little ability to form and sustain stable family relations, and who often had recourse to violent or self-destructive behaviour as a means of expressing his or her frustration. Such stereotypes had already become prominent in the United States in the 1960s, and apparently similar patterns emerged in European cities in the late 1970s and early 1980s. They were likewise characterised by various kinds of social instability, dramatically highlighted by the outbreak of civil disturbance and youth rioting (most notably in the violent eruptions which took place Les Minguettes in Lyons in 1981 and in Brixton and Toxteth, Liverpool in Britain in the same year – Power 1997, p. 157).

Social inequality and urban segregation in the BETWIXT project

Background

In its first stage the main focus of the BETWIXT project was asking whether or not there has been increasing social inequality and urban spatial segregation within the studied cities and what impact segregation has had on the households living in precarious neighbourhoods. Social segregation - measured in the BETWIXT project by level of employment / unemployment and proportion of ethnic minorities - and spatial segregation occur in all European cities. Most projects analysing social exclusion and urban spatial segregation rely however on case studies and the results are typically difficult to compare across Europe. Due to lacking a common set of indicators on both social and spatial dimensions European comparisons have not existed until recently. The BETWIXT project aimed at comparing social inequality and spatial segregation across Europe within different types of welfare regimes to estimate differences in the level of urban spatial segregation and to analyse the degree to which social inequality, precarious living conditions and urban segregation are combined or maybe even reinforce each other. In formulating policy implications for individuals and households living in precarious neighbourhoods it is important to figure out whether social inequality and urban spatial segregation go together or need to be tackled separately. In this respect it is crucial to evaluate the impact of welfare state interventions in for example income distribution, employment conditions or housing on the urban spatial segregation.

Three aspects of urban disadvantage or precariousness are of particular relevance in the context of the BETWIXT project. One is that in European cities, the greatest concentrations of disadvantage tend to be found in social housing estates, that is, in housing areas created by the welfare state as a solution to former problems of slum housing and urban destitution (Emms 1990, Harloe 1995, Power 1997). The paradox created by this outcome was that a social welfare solution to an earlier social problem had produced some spectacular failures and as a result had itself come to be widely regarded as a problem by the 1980s. Even among those who supported social welfare ideals, this created a view that effective sustainable intervention in certain severe forms of urban social disadvantage was an elusive goal and required not only generous funding but also a more sophisticated and realistic understanding of the complex underlying processes.

A second, related feature of the persistence of concentrated pockets of urban disadvantage was that, superficially at least, they seemed to be present in all countries of Europe (particularly within their social housing systems), irrespective of the generosity of their welfare states (Harloe 1995, Emms 1990). It seemed, therefore, that standard social provision on its own, even in the most advanced welfare states, could provide no guarantee that patterns of severe local disadvantage in urban areas could be avoided. In keeping with this view, Power's (1997) comparative case studies of deprived mass housing areas in European cities emphasised both their ubiquitousness and their underlying similarity. In Britain, concern about problem neighbourhoods emerged as early as the 1960s, that is, when the British welfare state was at its height and full employment had been achieved. These problems may have worsened in the aftermath of the 1973 oil-shock and the subsequent weakening of the welfare state, but even in the preceding golden age of welfare capitalism in Britain, concentrations of urban deprivation had proved to be stubbornly persistent (Power 1997). More strikingly, even the Scandinavian welfare states, despite their exceptionally high levels of social provision and social solidarity, seemed also to be afflicted with problems of 'worst neighbourhoods' and urban 'blackspots'. In Sweden, Cars and Egren-Schori (1998) provided a description of social conditions in a typical deprived suburb of Stockholm (the neighbourhood of Blåkulla), which seemed astonishingly similar to those of deprived urban areas everywhere in Europe. The catalogue of problems listed for this neighbourhood in an inventory undertaken in 1991 was depressingly familiar – high rates of turnover in housing, high welfare dependence, high rates of lone parenthood and unemployment, large immigrant minorities, social tensions between migrants and natives, and a widespread incidence of drug abuse, youth criminality, family violence and social exclusion (Cars and Egren-Schori 1998, p. 258). Here the question still remains whether these areas in Scandinavian societies are only relatively deprived in their national contexts, or objectively as deprived as similar areas in other European countries. It is an issue which deserves additional comparative research to be clarified.

A third feature of these patterns is that efforts to tackle urban problems thorough various kinds of targeted area interventions have recurred repeatedly, in some cases from as far back as the 1960s or 1970s. The effectiveness of these interventions has often been questioned and few would suggest that clear formulae for their successful implementation have yet been found. This is particularly evident in Britain, which has the longest tradition of planned efforts to rescue deprived neighbourhoods. While the succession of programmes which has been launched in Britain since the 1960s has had some successes,

they have also had many failures:

> *The condition of many of the most deprived areas has either not improved or in some cases has actually worsened. Many of the neighbourhoods that are most deprived now have been so since Victorian times, despite the amount of public money spent on them and their appearance in one Government regeneration programme after another (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998 , p. 34.)*

Social Inequality and Spatial Segregation in the BETWIXT Cities

The BETWIXT countries have been chosen to represent the different types of welfare systems prevailing in Europe. By analysing the social processes, which prevent precarious individuals, household and localities from falling into social deprivation in highly different institutional contexts the project has been able to evaluate the importance of various types of resources and interventions provided through city-based as well as national welfare policies. In choosing this research strategy the BETWIXT project compare countries/cities representing marked differences in social conditions and in the national welfare policies. At the national level these differences can be synthesized in a variety of welfare regime systems based on the principles for social protection and the type of household organisation prevailing in the individual welfare systems (see Gallie and Paugam 2000, Esping -Andersen 1999). Through a wide range of labour market and social policies the national welfare apparatus aims at modifying social inequalities. The BETWIXT project has aimed at extending this knowledge on the social processes of integration and exclusion in relation to urban spatial segregation - to what extent does the national welfare state intervene in the spatial pattern of precarity and does a reduction in universal social and economic inequality lead to a modification of the urban spatial segregation?

Looking at the pattern of spatial segregation in cities analysed in the BETWIXT project the result is in very general terms that the lowest level of segregation appeared in cities (Helsinki, Umeå in the 1980s) within the relatively strong Scandinavian universal welfare regimes; [9] most segregation appeared in cities (Dublin, London and partly Lisbon) within the weakest national welfare regimes (liberal/minimal and sub-protective regimes). Intervening levels of spatial segregation were found in a city (Toulouse) within an employment-centred welfare regime and a city (Turin) which is placed in a society in which the national welfare regime might be characterised as a sub -protective welfare system but where the social condition and welfare protection vary considerably between regions and even between cities (see Figure 1)

[9] The labelling of the welfare regimes is taken from Gallie and Paugam 2000 – see also Boje and Halskov 2002.

Figure 1. The relationship between social inequality and spatial segregation in the BETWIXT cities

	Social Inequality			
		High	Middle	Low
Spatial Segregation	High	Dublin London		
	Middle	Lisboa	Turin Toulouse	Umeå (1990s)
	Low			Umeå (1980s) Helsinki

The degree of spatial segregation within cities seems to be associated with the strength of welfare regimes; social policies aimed at reducing inequalities are lessening the degree of differentiation on social indicators between urban areas. This is a basic finding in most welfare studies. However in the BETWIXT project we also found that comprehensive welfare policy interventions do reducing the urban spatial segregation. In the two Scandinavian countries characterized by a unive rsalistic welfare policy the impact of the economic crisis of the 1990s on the spatial segregation was clearly modified through a long tradition for both housing policy, active labour market policy and the provision of welfare benefits. And conversely, eve n a remarkable economic upturn with overall growth in employment and income does not seem to modify the level of spatial segregation in the liberal, market-regulated welfare systems. The UK during the period studied saw a fall in employment rates and generally a rise in levels of spatial segregation; the great economic boom only applies to Ireland, and that very recently, for which figures on spatial segregation are not available. (For wider analysis of the relation between falls and rises in employment rat es and changes in spatial segregation, see Stage A Report, page 9.9, paragraphs 1 and 5; McIntosh and Flatley 1999). This major finding from the BETWIXT project to some degree contradicts the findings from the previous mentioned study of Power (1997). In the liberal/minimal welfare regimes the social and spatial segregation are closely related and the urban deprivation strongly concentrated to specific localities while the universal Scandinavian welfare system seems to have a mediating role reducing social inequalities as well as spatial segregation. In neither Helsinki nor Umeå do we find major localities characterised by urban

deprivation because of comprehensive redistribution of social resources and profound public intervention in urban planning and housing.

Policy Implications on Urban Spatial Segregation

Here we first turn to the general policy lessons arising from the findings on segregation in the BETWIXT cities as outlined above.

Housing policy

In understanding the described connection between social and spatial segregation in an urban context the type of housing policy proceeded by the public authorities seems to play a crucial role in understanding the forces enhancing or diminishing the level of spatial segregation. Among the BETWIXT cities the different types of national or city-specific housing policies such as provision of social housing, rent control or policies for mixing of public and private housing have been important in explaining low or intermediate levels of urban spatial segregation. Housing policy as a part of welfare policy intervention can thus be seen as an intermediary between social and spatial segregation and a full social housing policy may be an important reason why social inequality is not necessarily translated into spatial segregation or vive versa. The housing market has usually been regarded as the principal cause for spatial segregation along ethnic and social class variables. However, in all the BETWIXT countries we have found significant city- or national-level interventions in the housing market. On the demand side access to housing has been regulated through public intervention in the setting of rents for the different types of housing or subsidising the payment of rent for specific groups of tenants and on the supply side provision of high quality social housing and the gentrification of housing complexes through public-private co-operations have to some extent led to a changing social mix of the neighbourhoods analysed in several of the BETWIXT cities - Helsinki, Turin and Toulouse. The intervention of the state through social housing or its recommodification has thus modified spatial segregation and in some of the cities to such a degree that it is no longer possible to read off the spatial pattern of segregation from the socio-economic composition of households in the neighbourhoods (Murie 1998).

Social mixing of housing

This is best exemplified by the historical policy of the City of Helsinki and on a much smaller scale the City of Umeå. Both these Scandinavian cities have had a comprehensive policy of social mixing of housing. This has prevented large differences emerging between areas of the city. Policy instruments include: low interest loans for house construction, control of price and standard for owner-occupied housing, housing benefit, housing distribution according to income limits, mixing owner-occupation and social rented housing, strong planning controls, and – not least – in the case of Helsinki: ownership of 66% of land in the city.

Urban policy

Given the importance of the location of social housing to the physical pattern of deprived areas, public authorities need to take into account the impact of their housing location and planning policies on urban segregation. In cities where there is little public intervention to prevent the build-up of large areas of deprivation over time, any attempts at spatial policy need to consider the population size of areas targeted by urban policy. Urban funding is traditionally aimed at relatively small isolated areas of

the worst deprivation in a city. However our findings from London and Turin suggest that, in periods of falling employment rates and economic recession, areas contiguous to deprived areas tend to fall into deprivation themselves, thus forming wide swathes of deprivation. This pattern we do not find in Helsinki for example, which show a more scattered pattern of deprived areas due to a long-term policy of social mixing of housing.

Targeting of specific small deprived areas has been shown by other evaluations (e.g. Robson et al 1994) to have questionable effects in improving those areas let alone improving the overall pattern of segregation in the whole city. To prevent this, *funding a small number of larger urban areas is likely to be more effective than funding a large number of small isolated areas. Thus rather than fund areas of about 5,000 – 10,000 residents, we suggest funding much larger areas of at least 20,000 inhabitants.* Hence spatial policies aimed at reducing the differences between areas, or at creating social mixing within them, appear to have a greater impact on the degree of spatial segregation in the city. However this is more the case when the spatial policy is widened to include social mixing across the entire city than when it is targeted at specific areas. In the latter case, any impact is confined to that specific area rather than to the overall pattern of spatial segregation in the city. This implies at the policy level, that spatial policies should be widened rather than targeted at particular areas.

The emphasis in the BETWIXT project on precarious rather than the most deprived areas is important to this argument. We found in Stage A that precarious areas seem often to be located near to other deprived areas, and, in some cities, those areas shifted over time from precarity into deprivation. *The urban funding of wider areas of precarity and deprivation would allow the whole sub-region to be addressed, rather than simply small parts of it.* It would be reasonable to suggest that this might contribute to the function of preventing the development of these larger swathes of deprivation over time. There is clearly a question here about the resourcing of this recommendation. It could be said that the wider the area funded, the less spatially targeted it is, and the more socially, it is universalised over the city area. However by funding precarious areas, this borderline between spatial and social policies is being addressed. We may also reasonably expect that funding aimed at larger areas of precarity rather than smaller areas of deprivation will show a greater effect on the city-wide pattern of spatial segregation.

The distinction between reputation and objective living conditions is crucial

The BETWIXT project suggests an important and paradoxical finding about overall patterns of spatial inequality and neighbourhood deprivation in European cities. On the one hand, it confirms that *all* European cities, irrespective of the kind of welfare regime they are located within, have their ’worst’ areas, that is, low-reputation neighbourhoods, which outsiders strive to avoid. There are striking similarities in the way these are represented in the local public imagination. On the other hand, objective inequalities and spatial segregation are quite narrow in some cities and quite wide in others: the gap in social composition, real living standards and the quality of neighbourhood environment between the ’worst’ areas and the city-wide norm is striking and obvious in some cities but in others (esp. the Scandinavian cities) is narrow and hard to detect. Thus, all cities order neighbourhoods in a hierarchical way as far as reputation or status is concerned, but these status hierarchies are not necessarily paralleled by similar hierarchies of objective conditions. A key issue of importance is here the need to distinguish

between *reputation* and *objective living conditions* in speaking of precarious or marginalized neighbourhoods and in interpreting the precise character of neighbourhood deprivation in particular cities. Markedly different policy measures have to be implemented.

Harmonised data on spatial patterns in Europe is needed
One of the major methodological purposes of the BETWIXT project was to explore how possible it is to establish a common set of indicators of social exclusion across the European Union. The answer we found was that this is quite difficult. There is a great need for considerably more harmonisation of data collection across EU-regions. The statistical information base for a comprehensive policy debate about patterns of neighbourhood deprivation and urban disadvantage in Europe is consequently poorly developed. Today there is an excessive tendency to generalise and assume Europe-wide patterns from nation-specific or even city-specific studies within Europe which according to the findings from the BETWIXT project lead to insufficient or even false policy conclusions. A key recommendation would therefore be to *establish harmonised data on social indicators based on varying levels of area units if a consistent, coherent approach to urban disadvantage is to be developed in Europe.*

Recommendations

- Provide urban funding to a smaller number of larger areas, including both deprived and precarious neighbourhoods, in order to:
  1. prevent the absorption of funds targeted at small areas
  2. prevent the shift of precarious areas into deprivation over time
  3. impact on overall city patterns of spatial segregation
  4. shift spatial policy in a more social direction

- Specifically, provide urban funding to areas of around 20,000 population.

- Establish EU wide harmonised urban data at a variety of levels including neighbourhood and sub-city levels.

Section II: Obstacles and facilitators for people in precarity.

In the remaining part of this chapter we will turn to some of the central spheres and domains being the empirical focus points in the two stages of the Betwixt project concerning the neighbourhood and the households.

Out of an enormous body of empirical material – case studies of precarious neighbourhoods in the seven BETWIXT cities and long qualitative interviews with almost 200 households living in these neighbourhoods as the most central sources – some central spheres and domains emerged as decisive and in the coping and fighting strategies for people living in precarious life conditions with risk of "falling over the edge". These spheres and domains, which will be dealt with in the rest of this chapter, are:

- safe neighbourhoods

- good housing
- access to good services
    - Childcare
    - Schools
    - Administration and coordination of social benefits
- access to the labour market
- living on tight budgets
- health problems
- family networks

Safe neighbourhoods

If you say you are from Inchicore, people will turn around and say "oh, all the junkies and scumbags". But we say, hop, skip out o f here now. And they will say, go on back up to your flats you junkie bitches. If someone calls you a junkie or a prostitute or a slapper you have to kill them (physically fight them.) You have to stand up for yourself in this area. (P, Dublin)

Whereas in the past the little local shops were a point of reference for everybody... you met at the bakery and had a chat, you knew each other and had a chat, you knew each other and said hello... in the last 3 or 4 years these shops have disappeared and there is less opportunity to meet. There aren´t enough meeting places, there is nothing left in this area, not even the old associations, not to mention the football clubs we used to go to in the 1970s (Bartolomeo, 49, Torino)

When people put graffiti on the wall it g ets painted over immediately. Not by the Corporation but by our next door neighbour, Edel. She hates the sight of it. Every Friday everybody comes out with their sweeping brushes and buckets of disinfectant and we all sweep and wash the balcony. All of us do it, all the snobs don't do it'cos they say we're not your skivvies. When it is done it does be spotless clean like on the Friday, but on the Monday it does be the same again. (Respondents P and Q, Dublin)

Then there were (and still are) the local drunk s.… They would buy their beer from the shop in the yard still operating at that time and drink it out in the yard. In other words, there was a constant stream of drunks passing through the yard to and from the Päättäri and woods.… Some of the drunks behave d in a peculiar way so the children were afraid of them. One, known as Rubber Face, would drink anything in the least a bit intoxicating. He could hardly stand. Lurch, lurch, slump. He´d always cut diagonally across the yard on his way home, right through the children´s playground. The children would gather around him as he lay there on the ground, trying to get him up throwing his arms around and pulling peculiar faces... The children have come to fear him. Their fear had spread to all drunks.… (woman with four children, Helsinki)

The first year, when I lived alone and he (my husband) just had left, it was New Year's Eve. I was rather depressed and had decided just to stay home having a boring and sad evening. The children were with me and my ex -husband was out enjoying himself with his new girl friend. I sat in my kitchen reading an Ikea (furniture) catalogue. I was in my pyjamas because I did not even have the energy to dress up a little bit. Then the neighbours started gathering outside in our yard, as th ey do every New Years Eve to shoot up rockets and fireworks. I thought "you have to switch off your light, otherwise they can see you sitting here in the kitchen, you cannot sit here being so sad that it can be seen by people outside." I switched off the light and then got the idea that I could put on a coat over my pyjama and take a little look outside my door. And then suddenly they (my neighbours) placed a glass of wine in my hand and several said: "Yes, for you it will be a real New Year now that he ha s moved out. Happy New Year to you!!" I felt like some sort of a wolf, who is inside his pack, these – my neighbours – are my wolves and I have to stay and howl with them. (Hanna, 34, Umeå)

The basic assumption of the BETWIXT project is that processes of exclusion and resistance to exclusion are to some degree shaped by their spatial context. The locality where households live is the immediate locus of access for – or lack of - resources that they need to maintain equilibrium. At one extreme, the locality may have positive significance for households and may provide them with valuable supports or resources in their struggle to cope, as seen from some of the above quotations. At the other extreme, the locality may provide a poor social or physical environme nt for daily living and so may be the source of additional forces of social exclusion, over and above those which operate at the level of the household. Some localities among the Betwixt neighbourhoods had undergone serious shifts from having had a solidar istic and supportive nature to a present state of threat and danger to the residents. One example of such a shift is Kilmainham in Dublin, where one segment of the neighbourhood in a short time was penetrated by drugs and became a centre of drug dealing. T he public strategy to combat drug abuse in the area was to place a methadone maintenance clinic in the local pharmacy, which soon attracted drug abusers from many areas, and consequently enlarged the whole problem. Within a short time those residents who h ad the choice left the area, and the empty flats were taken over by people with heavy social problems. This represents a micro -level example of the process of residualisation of much social housing.

All sorts of combinations and graduations between these extremes have been found in the neighbourhoods involved in our study, which may indeed affect households in the same locality in different ways. The samples of households were composed of different groups: families with and without children of different ag es, singles, older people, people with disabilities. Consequently the meaning, importance, and effect of the character and quality of the neighbourhood mattered differentially to these groups of residents. Very different demands on the neighbourhood are ma de by those remaining outside it during a whole working day compared to those who are part of the day -time population in it, such as children and their carers, older people, the unemployed, the sick and mentally ill, etc. Especially for children, the local area is the central circulation space, as children lack the capacity and freedom to move freely outside their local areas. For that reason, parents and child carers often define the quality of the neighbourhood by reference to its safety for their childre n.

The nature of space

The nature of the built environment and the location of the neighbourhoods varied from the modern peripheral social housing estate (Kontula in Helsinki, Ersboda in Umeå, and Bagatelle in Toulouse) to older inner city neighbourhoods (Holloway in London and Aurora in Turin). They also ranged in quality from the high standard, highly organised products of Scandinavian urban design (Kontula and Ersboda) to the loosely structured outcomes of uncontrolled urban development in the outskirts of Lisbon (the parish of Venda Nova which is the core of the Lisbon case study evolved on a largely unplanned way and contains significant numbers of shanty dwellings).

In all of the seven cities, it turned out that a definition of neighbourhood as a single spatial entity seemed difficult or unrealistic. For both residents and Betwixt researchers, a nested or multi-level model of neighbourhood provided a better fit with reality. Neighbourhoods seemed to consist of a series of nested spaces. These could start with the small "nuclear" neighbourhood in the immediate environs of households and radiate out from that through one or more levels of "extended" neighbourhoods. Distinctions of this kind are implicit in everyday usage, where the "neighbours" are often thought of as people living next door or very close by, while the "neighbourhood" may be a larger space to which residents might feel some sense of attachment – strong or weak.

The character and orientation of neighbours

The quality of supporting contact at the closest level of neighbourhood: the neighbours – can be important both at a practical and emotional level. And a majority of people seem almost instinctively to appreciate good neighbour contacts, and highlight this in their general evaluation of the neighbourhood. But even if good neighbours can matter, they are only seldom regarded as the most central support in relation to difficult life events and pressing personal life situations. Here family and mainstream welfare services play a major supportive role.

The role of services, resources, and activities

The resources in terms of public social services, market services (shops, leisure facilities), informal social networks, local voluntary organisations, collective identity and cultural practices definitely influenced quality of life for residents involved in the Betwixt study. The variety in levels of formal social service provision across the seven neighbourhoods is in part a function of the different levels of welfare state development at the national level and in part a function of local city circumstances. The Venda Nova/Amedora area of Lisbon has quite limited social service provision, the Holloway/London area has provision limited by recent cuts and many changes in management, in Kilmainham/Dublin, the extremely deprived St. Michael's estate has become the target of intensive special initiatives which might lead to improvement of so far limited social services, Bagatelle/Toulouse has a high social service provision due to special targeting on large social housing estates, and finally, Kontula/Helsinki and Ersboda/Umeå have extended social services reflecting the strong Scandinavian welfare state. Below we will focus on some of the services, that seem to be most crucial for people's judgement of their neighbourhood: childcare, school and health services, and comment on the administration of social service provision.

However other dimensions than good formal services in the local area are emphasized as significant from the household interviews: a social life through local activities, close and cheap shopping facilities, good transport – and maybe most important: a *feeling of safety* without violence, crime, harassment, racism and discrimination both inside and outside one's home. These are qualities that are essential to all residents independent of age, class and ethnicity. As soon as the feeling of safety in the neighbourhood is compromised, e.g. because of crime and vandalism by young people (perhaps due to cuts in local facilities for young people) or drug penetration (maybe due to concentrated placement of addicts in a poor housing estate), most residents feel that living in the neighbourhood is an extra burden, making their fight against precarious living conditions even more difficult.

For residents in some neighbourhoods, most clearly expressed by households in Bagatelle/Toulouse and Ersboda/Umeå, *the poor reputation* of their neighbourhood in the eyes of the wider populations in the cities leading to being shunned by others as a place to live, is experienced as negative stereotyping not reflecting an authentic or reasonable image of the area. In that sense the bad reputation in itself can create marginalisation and discrimination. And it is surprising to see how static and deep-rooted a poor reputation is, even when positive changes take place and the residents clearly appreciate the area.

Social policy implications
One of the classical discussions in urban planning policy is about whether a poor neighbourhood makes its residents poorer – or living with other residents with similar living conditions creates a sense of solidarity and a possibly supportive community, and consequently also provides people with internal resources and empowers them to overcome social pressures by mutual help and support (Friedrichs 1992) A strong favour of the latter thinking has motivated many area-based social supportive programmes and projects over the last decades, financed by European Union, national or regional funds.

The Betwixt study on the one hand demonstrates that residents do attach great importance to their residential space, its atmosphere, services, neighbours, and its safety as described above. On the other hand, from the households' accounts, it seems evident that households with young or adult persons of working age in precarious situations most of all need individual economic security, and advice and educational support, to enter or stay in the labour market. This kind of welfare support at the individual household level is given priority to area-targeted welfare "top-ups", even if for instance improvements of poor local schools are considered as very important. Therefore, community area-based projects can never stand alone, when improvements for poor people in poor neighbourhoods are on the political agenda, but always have to be followed by generally accessible, individual economic and educational welfare support, and labour market activities. Thus mainstream provision combined with individually tailored advice and support provides a useful combination that can be seen to address both short term and long term issues of disadvantage. [10]

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[10] From another perspective the debate on the role of local communities has been raised by Carnoy & Castells (2000). They argue that the reconstruction of local communities is the most essential current issue in many different aspects in the post-modern society. The reconquest of public space by the citizens is an important task in creating safe and societal neighbourhoods. Here introduction of flexible work, care and leisure time schedules might be seen as an important mechanism to reconstruct the web of social networks needed to establish long-lasting relationships between the work organisation and the local civic organisations in the neighbourhood. In order to create these type of networks innovative local

Housing

Mrs. F tells that when she first came from Cape Verde with her parents and seven brothers and sisters the first residence of the family was in an i llegal construction "bairro" (neighbourhood) in Amadora. Next, due to economic difficulties (a large family and the health problems of the children did not allow the mother to work), they moved to another illegal "bairro", where they did not have to pay re nt. At the place of a "barraca" (shanty) they built together a house made of brick, which is still today the residence of Mrs. F's mother and younger brothers. (Case Mrs. F., Lissabon)

They always give houses to people who complain the loudest…(Case B, To rino)

They´re even knocking down my mate´s flat and they´re gonna build luxury homes…. It´s always been going up market and getting posher and posher and pushing more people out… (Case 14/2, London)

The flat has two bedrooms and a small kitchen and a liv ing room. Like there is me Ma, me little brother and me Ma´s boyfriend in one bedroom, and then me, me other brother and me other sister is in the other bedroom If you are trying to do homework it´s impossible with the other brother running in to do the pl ay station or whatever. You can´t have anything of your own stuff like without the others coming in and messing with it, throwing it around, robbing it. (Respondent R, Dublin)

I have holes all over the ceilings and walls from when they put the heating and windows in. The workers who did the work were terrible. They just left it like that and they still haven't fixed it. They think that because you are getting it done for nothing you should be grateful. Everyone thinks that. They left this place and I´m not going to fix it. I´m just going to move out. I´m on the transfer list and they told me they´d house me next September. (Respondent I, Dublin)

It is important for me to have a bright, healthy and spacious flat for the children. We have that, as almost everybody here. And a modern kitchen and good bathroom. But I can only pay the rent because of the housing benefit. And every time I earn a little extra, the housing benefit is reduced. That is hard…(G, lone mother, 34, Umeå)

The issue of housing is t he domain within the BETWIXT project where the differences in relation to possibilities of access and quality are most marked. The effect of welfare regimes is evident with Scandinavian countries providing easier access to social housing of good quality an d Southern regimes

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governments provided with decentralized resources an d power has to be built and in this respect the organization at the neighbourhood level of schools, both elementary and secondary, can be seen as one of the most 'powerful' institutions and network creating mechanisms together with child development centre s. We will come back to this issue later in the section.

with insufficient and grossly inadequate quality in much housing. Between these two extremes, there are sometimes differences between levels of welfare and housing provision (Murie 1998). Thus Britain, for example, has (except for the 1980s) had a fairly high level of social housing provision, while welfare provision has been less comprehensive, and declined between the late 1970s and late 1990s.

Housing holds a pivotal position as a dimension of precarity. In most BETWIXT cities housing is connected, as a " life chance" at the individual level to others such as income, employment opportunity, quality of family life, social networking and such issues as health and safety in the local area. Housing also acts more symbolically as a bridge between the social and spatial aspects of social exclusion and precarty. Lack of housing or poor housing is often the determinant in a vulnerable social situation as has turned up during several household interviews.

The housing market in the EU has been characterised by some liberalisation over the last decades, with an increase in privately owned houses compared to social housing. Naturally this development is crucial to people in marginal life conditions. The scarcity of social housing units, the extremely strong competition to obtain them, and the long waiting lists create serious problems. The private housing sector usually demands rents that exclude people with limited and unstable economic resources as is the case for the BETWIXT families. These problems have been clearly reflected in the accounts from the households with a scent of victory feeling when obtaining a social housing flat of reasonable quality in a safe neighbourhood – and at an affordable, reasonable price.

However, from those having obtained a flat in a social housing estate many complaints are presented about the difficulties in accessing maintenance and the second class services provided.

Recommendations

Social housing must be regarded as central to future housing policy in EU, and marginalized citizens in all countries would improve their chances of gaining a better social standing if proper, affordable and secure accommodation was available. Today's social housing market is definitely not able to meet the needs of poor people, and the expected waves of immigration might require planning and building of social housing on a larger scale. Therefore the following recommendations are highlighted:

- Increase in the stock of social housing – provided through the central or local state, or indirectly through partnerships (state-voluntary sector, or through subsidised private provision).

- Independently assessed rent control in social as well as in private housing

- Access to social housing on a means tested basis

- Proper maintenance and management of social housing estates to be connected to: original building design and construction, responsibility of tenants for good care, anti-vandalism initiatives by community and police services.

Access to good services
In its more elaborated forms the welfare state is a complex structure covering the concept of social insurances as well as social services. The system of social insurance grew up to safeguard the position of the wage earners while the system of social services acts to guarantee the continuity of social reproduction and social cohesion in the households as well as in the local communities. The quality and extension of services - school, childcare, health etc. - provided in the locality play an important role for the social cohesion of the neighbourhood and will often be decisive for the strategies adopted by the residents in fighting social disadvantage and in preventing social exclusion. In our recommendations for social services in the BETWIXT project we will primarily focus on the three core issues coming up in the household study in all seven cities repeatedly - access to comprehensive and affordable *childcare*, better quality of *school* in the local area and higher trust in administration and better coordination of *social benefits*.

Childcare

> <u>Case story:</u>
> *'I've even spoken to (the) childminder and she says ' For me to take her on it would be UKP 30 a day' and that's 150 UKP a week for one child, and you sit there thinking ' there's no way I'm gonna find a job that will pay me 400 UKP a week; so I can pay her 150 UKP, plus pay another childminder to pick my other children up from school because it wouldn't be worth my while, and there's no way on this earth I'm gonna get a job that is gonna pay over 300 UKP a week, no way (London - lone parent with 5 children)*

GOOD PRACTICE

<u>Bagamômes, Toulouse: a social resource with a purpose</u>
Bagamômes is a latch-key association which takes primary school children after school hours. The small building is very bright, and in front of it is a sand pit. Professionals and parents do the best they can to develop successful educational methods which will give back children confidence. *Nadja, older sister of 19, says: My brothers and other people on the housing estate, they feel rejected, that is what they feel. At Bagamômes, when the children are still very small, they teach them self-worth and the ability to figth against failures they come across.*
The professionals aim at a close and broad contact and cooperation with parents: *Bagamômes is a place where you can talk, exchange information and try new things so as to get away from the idea of failure and to think positively (director of B.)*
All parents interviewed see Bagamômes as a structure where they can work in partnership and where not only their requests but also their suggestions are heard.
Perhaps it is not a coincidence that the permanent members of the team at Bagamômes have grown up in similar areas, and that several of them have worked there since its creation in 1983.

Parental leave and right to part-time work, Sweden

Swedish legislation concerning parental leave is gender neutral. The total leave period comprises 450 days to be shared by the parents at their discretion (except for 30 days which must be taken out by the other parent or will be forfeited). The leave can be taken full-time or part-time and can be postponed until the child reaches the age of 8. In addition to parental leave fathers are allowed 10 days of paternal leave in connection with the child's birth. Until the child reaches the age of 12, parents also have the right to take 'temporary parental leave' if a child is ill. The maximum period per year is 30 days per parent. The level of compensation was 80 % of the income in 1998 (increased to 85 % in 2000).

The interest in childcare and other types of services for young children is closely related to the possibilities for working parents to enter the labour market or to pursue education. In the Betwixt project the question of childcare has come up again and again as a major concern in the interviewed households – mostly as a woman's, especially lone mother's, troublesome problem. We are here referring to organized, reliable everyday childcare, and not to the informal, occasional childcare delivered and/or exchanged by family, friends or neighbours, however important this support might be for most families.

For most women the difficulties in reconciling work and family responsibilities are great in all BETWIXT-countries, meaning that only a minority of women with dependent children have the possibility of getting a permanent full-time job. The provision of institutional services for dependent children - childcare centres or family day care - is most comprehensive in the Scandinavian countries where a significant proportion of women with small children are in employment. But even here they are often forced to take up part-time jobs. In several of the BETWIXT-countries the organisation of work time is often not coordinated with opening hours for childcare centres – as for instance in Toulouse and Turin. In London and Dublin access to childcare is clearly insufficient or - if available - too expensive compared with the income earned by the women interviewed.

Care services for young children are not only important to allow an increasing number of parents to be gainfully employed. It has increasingly been recognised that these services have an important pedagogical role. Backing up and strengthening of vulnerable children's self-esteem is thus an important aspect of childcare and this task emphasises the importance of good professional training of the staff working with young children. In this respect developing a closer integration and more coherent relationship between the education and welfare systems for children is a major challenge in all the Betwixt-countries. In this respect the French and Swedish systems for childcare and education are more integrated and better equipped than the other Betwixt-countries (Finland as an associate partner did not carry out Stage C of the BETWIXT work – therefore not mentioned in this context)

Childcare has been on the EU social policy agenda for years, discussed and recommended at the highest EU level as a tool to benchmark equal opportunities for women in the paid labour market. In all action programmes for equal opportunities for men and women the need for comprehensive 'childcare provision' is mentioned (see European Commission Network on Childcare 1996 and Women and Work 1999). In the recommendation on Child Care 1992 by the Council of Ministers the Member States have

to 'progressively encourage initiatives to enable women and men to reconcile their occupational, family and upbringing responsibilities arsing from care of children' and in 1995 the European Commission instructed the Member States 'to propose measures aiming at setting higher standards for the care of children.'

Over the last years this ideological aim has been supplemented by an urgent request to the Member States to provide childcare in order to facilitate women's labour market activity as a tool against exclusion and poverty, especially child poverty. (Esping-Andersen 2000, EKSPRO 2001). But the Member States can use their own discretion and interpretation of the need for childcare, and no sanctions can be raised. As a matter of fact, the level and quality of child care still presents a huge variety within the different countries, a variety which is also reflected within the seven countries of the Betwixt project as described in the reports on the local neighbourhoods and households. (Fahey, 2000, Bertaux, 2001))

Within most Member States political decisions about childcare facilities are to a high degree made and administered at a local level, and consequently the issue of accessibility to, quality of, and price for childcare is very important for the way parents in the Betwixt households experience their local neighbourhood as a source of support (or not) when needing childcare provision. Access to safe, reliable and high quality childcare for all families with small children is one important demand. But just as important is that they are located in the neighbourhood and priced reasonably and with costs graduated according to the number of children and family income.

Recommendations

- Establishing of universal, comprehensive and local childcare facilities with flexible hours in relation to school and parents´ working hours for all children (after experience of maternity / parental leave). Flexibility in provision of services for young children is crucial for the parents, ensuring that they are able to reconcile the demands from their work with their caring obligations.

- Securing healthy and high standard day care buildings in local surroundings, where older children can walk safely to and from their homes themselves.

- Investment in publicly controlled good professional training and reasonable payment of childcare workers in order to raise and secure the quality of the services provided for young children.

- Children have common needs whether or not their parents are employed - for example for learning, socialisation and recreation. Consequently children should have access to child care provision whether the parents are in employment, in training or are outside the labour market.

- Better integration and coordination between the services for young children and the education system to ensure that the social 'responsibilities arising from the care and upbringing of children continue up to and throughout the period of children's schooling' (Council of Ministers, 1993). The need for services differs with the age of the children and with changes in their parents'

labour market position. These changes are more easily handled in a coherent care-education system.

- Raising public funding for childcare services to make the access totally free – or approximately free. Childcare should be regarded as a children's right as is the case with school education. If the families are charged fees for childcare these must not be constructed in a way that might impede them from improving their standard of living through gainful employment.

Schools

We are trying to keep them at school as long as possible. Everyone wants to do their own thing but we can talk things through. I talk with my children about things they want to do, especially when they are at college. They try to make the grade, but it is not easy. There is a lot of work. They are disadvantaged because we have never been to school. I try to make them understand that education is everything! The minimum they need is Baccalaureat (higher school leaving certificate), otherwise you are nothing these days. The same applies for girls as for boys. You have to keep at them all the time. First of all, to help them out, we have to go without things, so that we can pay for their education. It is not easy to save, especially when you get the minimum wage. In all honesty, I can tell you, that there is a limit to what we can do, since it is all a question of means. (Mr. Tahar, 46, Toulouse)

*(*If there is a problem*) They never let you down, the head teacher always... takes them out of their classroom and he has a chat with them.... They are very good, you can't even moan about the school.* (Case 4, London)

The problem of Ersboda has always been the schools here. And this image is following Ersboda even today and has created this branding about Ersboda having arranged badly for its children in relation to schools. Many articles in the newspaper have been written about that subject over the years. And it is a fact that they made a great mistake when they planned building Ersboda. Unfortunately they have been one school behind what was needed for many years... (K, 45, Umeå)

Most kids go to Goldenbridge (convent school) for the girls and St. Michael's (Christian Brother's school) for the boys. I didn't send my kids there. It was a conscious decision. You see my house is situated on the banks of the canal where the drug problem is terrible. I have to protect my children. I see the drug element that is there in the schools - I chose to take my children out and put them in a different school. It was a hard decision, but bringing my children up on my own it was great to say that sure, I was living in it, but I didn't want them to go to school in it. It has worked. The boys that would have been in playgroup with my son would be the boys that he would be in school with now and those boys don't stand a snowball's chance in hell. (Respondent C, Dublin)

As is the case of services for the youngest children the quality of the local school is a core element in parents´ evaluation of their local neighbourhood. But unlike childcare, children in all EU countries have a right and obligation to receive school education to the age of 16. Rules, organisation and administration of the school system are a national decision, often decentralised to regional or municipality level.

The variety in parents´ reported experiences with their children's school was great, with a range of examples of bad as well as good examples. Generally the parents in the BETWIXT households are very concerned and feel much responsibility to secure their children good schooling, even if their influence in relation to daily education is often small or absent. What parents complain about is the size of classes, the standard of teaching, the lack of special support in relation to minor or major disabilities e.g. dyslexia, and the costs around schooling, e.g. school uniforms. And the physical state of the school buildings. Some feel insecure about the influence from other children living in the precarious neighbourhood, maybe having violent behaviour.

In managing their concerns the parents have chosen two radically different strategies. There are parents primarily in Ireland and the United Kingdom who have chosen the 'exit strategy' moving their children to other state schools with a better reputation in a better area to get better teaching or protection of their children, for instance from contact with drug problems. But this strategy obviously does not help to reduce the deficits and problems in the local school or to strengthen it in its role as neighbourhood reinforcement. In other BETWIXT-neighbourhoods - especially mentioned in Sweden and France - the parents have chosen the 'voice strategy'. Here the parents decided to let their children stay in the local schools and through a constant fight and dialogue they tried to improve the quality of day care and schools in the local community.

Some parents, several of them with immigrant backgrounds, reported the importance of training children in school in democracy, equality, anti-racism as well as maths, reading etc., and to create an atmosphere and use of pedagogy based on positive-feed-back in the class room.

Communities have traditionally been structured around the place of residence, but the current conditions of urbanisation and the transformation of sociability have significantly reduced the potentials of neighbourhoods as an integrative device (Carnoy 2000). On the other hand working parents rely increasingly on local childcare centres, preschools and elementary schools and they spend even more time and energy choosing day care and schools for their children inside or outside their residential area and transporting them there. In this respect most families with children define their community space by their children's day care and schooling, which gives these institutions a tremendous importance for the community as we have seen in several of the BETWIXT-neighbourhoods.

Schools as well as local institutions for adult education thus play a central role primarily in educating future generations of workers but also in continuously ensuring a re-qualification of the adult population to fulfil the demands arising in the labour market and in society as a whole. When schools are viewed and used as knowledge-production centres in communities they change their role from specialised educational institutions to community centres dealing with youths in the daytime and

adults at night. In this respect the schools could have great importance in building strong local communities and in strengthening the social networks between households. By making schools a community project coordinating sport s, cultural activities as well as knowledge -production for all age groups the communities 'take back' their school sites and rebuild them into institutions that help to strengthen sociability and self-reliance (Carnoy 2000). This type of investments in soc ial and human capital also contributes to the reduction of social inequality in the communities by facilitating labour market integration and political involvement among citizens (See e.g. Esping -Andersen (2000) and Carnoy & Castells (2000)).

Recommendations

- Resources to reduce class sizes and pressure on teachers, thereby raising standards in all schools, especially in deprived areas.

- Allocation of extra resources for detection and treatment of dyslexia and other educational problems among the pupils.

- Greater emphasis on cooperation with parents of young but also of older children, so that possible social and psychological problems can be tackled and followed up at an early stage.

- Improve the integration of preschool programmes - day care, école maternelle etc - ordinary teaching and after-school programmes to keep unsupervised preteens and teenagers off the streets

- Generally more interaction between local schools and parents through school councils and/or by involvement of parents in the daily life of schools (after-school and weekend arrangements).

- Free help for homework – organised by public means or on a voluntary basis. In some BETWIXT-cities this has been organised by elderly citizens adopting a class or on a voluntary basis by teachers in after-school arrangements

- Transforming schools from specialised educational institutions into community centres providing education to both youth and adults, hosting after -school programmes and sports activities for teenagers.

Administration and coordination of social benefits

> *I could get a supplement to my part time salary, but I prefer to manage without. Then I avoid all their control and painful discussion...(lone mother, 34, Umeå)*
>
> *I was in a special stressful sitation, I simply needed more money, a lot of ho usehold things broke down, all my son´s things and clothes were too small....I asked for a little extra, but they refused. I did not have any money for a whole month, it was such a degrading and terrible experience.. (lone mother, 29, Umeå)*

I´m sure it´s half the time just to cover up their mistakes and their fiddles and the rest of it, that is why they´re constantly changing things. As soon as somebody begins to understand the system they change it…. They speak down to you, y`know, they speak over you as though you are not there (Case 14, London)

As the BETWIXT project has had its focus on people living in precarious and vulnerable living conditions with various social risks and pressures in their former and present existence, it is not surprising that a high proportion of the involved households have had or currently have contacts with a wide range of agencies and public offices in charge of the administration of social assistance, social benefit, housing benefits etc., most of them on a means tested basis.

In spite of enormous diversity in type of social benefits, rules of accessibility and level of coverage of these benefits, some mutual and general patterns appear cross-nationally from the evidence of the almost endless string, or list of contacts and meetings between the worlds of the citizen and the system. The SOSTRIS project in their socio-biographical study also point to weaknesses and problems in the meeting between client and professionals representing the system in service delivery. (SOSTRIS Final Report, 1999)

The first problem is uncertainty about entitlements. People's lack of information and understanding of the system and their rights means that they often do not understand why they are getting a certain amount or getting nothing. Being in a weak and inferior position in relation to the powerful system most people feel unwilling to ask, and are left with the feeling of "a lottery." They are unwilling to question decisions or change claims in case of delays or withdrawal of benefit. When assessments of personal issues are required in order to verify actual needs, feelings of humiliation and stigmatisation are frequently reported. It seems as if the relation between citizen and social worker is much more fragile and tense depending on the extent of discretion in the administration of social benefits. This is not only in cases of the use of discretion, but also of those when regular decisions have to be made about the applicability of benefit rules to individuals (e.g. degree of disability).

Consequently much mistrust and lack of confidence in cases of managers´ and social workers' discretionary power is constantly present and strains the possibilities of entering into wider cooperation about changes in social conditions.

The French report (Bertaux et al 2001) points to another aspect of the relation between poor families and social welfare administration. The powerful administration represents French middle class values; this suggests that help and support from social community workers placed more independently in the local area would be a much better policy option for deprived people.

Another problem is the inefficiency of bureaucratic organisations in charge of the different benefits and allowances. It is experienced as really hard work and extremely time consuming to gain granted benefits or make alterations in fixed benefits when one's situation changes. A considerable part of these sort of benefits affects each other in positive as well as negative directions, and changes will often leave the

citizen without money for food and daily living costs in a waiting period, and later with the same total amount of money as before, but with great irritation and mistrust in the meantime in public administration.

These issues relate to policy and workplace culture which may – in a period where means-testing is becoming more common – encourage staff to treat recipients with suspicion rather than respecting them as people claiming their rights.

Recommendations

- Intensive, active, and professional information and transparency about entitlements and social rights. This could include involvement of independent advocacy and legal advice agencies in a monitoring capacity.

- Change of welfare office culture from control to service.

- Simplification and integration of social benefits and social insurance systems.

- Investment in staff training, ensuring a professional, and respectful approach.

- Community workers working closely and in an involving way with local people and local associations.

Access to labour market

> *I am asking for a job, I am not asking anything else. Welfare feeds you only up to a certain point, but my objective is to work. I don't claim any right to benefit, I claim a right to a job. (Fiorenza, 43, separated with three children, Torino)*
>
> *I phoned a nursing home and said I had come to find work and was willing to do anything. They said fine, are you from Peru? When I said I was Tunisian they said they didn't need anybody… (Fatima, 38, widow with daughter, Torino)*
>
> *I was told by the Labour Exchange that I had to get a job or they'd stop my benefit. That's easier said than done. When my parents were old I had to look after them. When they died I found myself long-term unemployed. The longer you're unemployed the worse it gets because you age goes against you as well. Everyone wants young computer minded people. I've gone for job interviews but no luck. If you read the newspapers you'd swear there was employers knocking on peoples doors begging them to work. They're looking for cheap labour. For them yes there's plenty of work but for people my age there's nothing. I don't care how PC they are, they still look at women as a cheap form of labour and not as equals in their own right. There's a lot of work but it pays really bad and then you lose your benefits and you're in a worse position. (Respondent G, Dublin)*

Case story:
Hakim, 20 years, has worked as an artisan on a public employment scheme. He was very happy with his employer, and proved that although he had been unable to get his CAP (vocational training) he could work with metal in a skilled way. However on his 18th birthday the employer told him that he 'could not keep him'. He found himself unemployed for two and a half years. During this period he has called dozens of employers who were looking for young workers. When he began to realise that the phone calls were turned down systematically, he asked his sister (a law student) to call for him. According to her it was clear in many of the phone calls that the employer were interested until they discovered that Hakim was of Moroccan descent and lived in Bagatelle (Toulouse, Khazir family)

GOOD PRACTICE

The Community Employment Scheme, Dublin
This system provides temporary part-time employment for up to one year and is open to people unemployed for 12 months or in receipt of One-Parent Family Payment for 12 months.
It includes training support. Participants must be aged 25 years and working 39 hours over a two-week period. The scheme also offers those aged over 35 years part-time employment for up to three years. In the case of lone parents´ income under Community Employment this is only partly deducted. Free medical care is retained regardless of income.
Community Employment Scheme is attractive to lone parents because of the flexible working hours, the retention of benefits, and the fact that most jobs are provided in the locale. Women who had been out of the working force for sometime see Community Scheme as a way of developing confidence and self-esteem.

Part-time work for parents, Sweden
Swedish parents with children below the age of 12 have a legal right to part-time employment. The fathers and/or the mothers have the right - independent of the company - to reduce his/her work time to 1/2 or 3/4 of full-time. The reduction in work time and thereby in salary might be compensated by taking out part-time parental leave up to a total of 450 full-time days per child.

Even in the BETWIXT country where employment conditions have improved radically during the late 1990s – e.g. Ireland and to a lesser extent the United Kingdom - long-standing labour market problems such as long-term unemployment, low rates of employment and contingent employment conditions still dominate the labour market situation for specific groups of citizens in all seven cities. These vulnerable groups are **young people** entering the labour market, **ethnic minorities** who often lack qualifications or recognition of previous education and therefore face systematic racial discrimination in all the BETWIXT countries, and **lone mothers and women in general** who are not able to reconcile work and family because of comprehensive caring obligations in relation to dependent children and elderly

family members. In the following discussion of the lack of proper access to the labour market and its implications for welfare policies we shall therefore concentrate on these three groups.

The overall aim of active labour market policies is to facilitate the integration of disadvantaged groups in the labour market. Here the problems and consequently also the solutions are different for the three groups. For many young people the problem is to get into employment for the first time and even youngsters who have some education and vocational training have difficulties in finding a job. Therefore the idea of getting further education and training is often not convincing for the youngster or their families in disadvantaged social groups. These problems of entering the labour market are especially widespread in the case of Turin and Toulouse where for institutional reasons the labour market is highly divided between a protected group of insiders with long-term employment contracts and a contingent group of outsiders who, in a situation of slow employment growth and therefore few job-openings, have extremely few chances of getting a regular job (see Olagnero, Meo and Naldini 2001 and Bertaux et al 2001). The pattern is different in the Northern European labour market. Here we find a large number of part-time and temporary jobs for youngsters and at least in the Scandinavian labour markets these casual jobs are covered by labour law and universal social protection like ordinary jobs, and therefore make the progressive integration of youths easier.

For these precarious groups it is important to create schemes combining training and work and through long-term employment contracts ensuring stability in their employment situation. This can be done through government-sponsored employment contracts where youths - of both native and foreign background - have preference. Furthermore it is necessary to invest large resources in occupational training programmes and job orientation schemes for those groups of people who have often failed in school and therefore are reluctant to undertake long and tiring apprenticeships with no guarantee of success in the immediate future.

Ethnic minorities in all seven BETWIXT cities are over-represented among the long-term unemployed. These groups - and especially ethnic minority youth - tend to face serious labour market problems. First generation immigrants, despite usually being energetic and highly motivated to succeed, may lack the social and cultural capital needed for hearing about potential job-openings and establishing contact with mainstream employers - although they are sometimes able to use contacts within their own communities for either formal or informal employment. As employees they are sometimes not members of unions, due to discrimination or fear of opposition from employers. Furthermore, they are discriminated against by both employers and employees who often are reluctant to recognise their qualifications and experience or accept them in the work organisation. Members of more established ethnic communities might still face discrimination although their social capital, both within their own communities and in relation to mainstream employment, may be somewhat better. Ethnic minorities - especially in the United Kingdom and Portugal - often have their own social networks through which they create their own labour markets characterized by small businesses. Generally it is important that the legislation on discrimination is strengthened and that explicit focus is put on the importance of cultural diversity in the workplace. In this respect special quota arrangements, positive discrimination or positive action in recruiting to government-sponsored employment contracts and in community programmes for job creation might be positive for these

precarious groups in their efforts to be integrated into the labour market. More active labour market policies need to be implemented in all seven BETWIXT cities and these policies have to be closely coordinated with both the education system and social assistance in order to overcome the barriers which exist between school and work and between being on welfare benefit and in work. In addition, attention needs to be paid to equality policies, linking for example with childcare policies, and making the workplace a genuinely accessible place for those disadvantaged on the basis of gender, race, disability, age, etc.

In several of the BETWIXT cities – Turin, Dublin and Toulouse – one of the reasons for high unemployment in the analysed neighbourhoods and thereby widespread precarity among the citizens is mass redundancies or the closing of traditional manufacturing industries in or nearby the neighbourhoods while most of the new jobs are created in the new economy – services and IT - and these jobs are not located in the nearby neighbourhoods. Consequently a large group of the unemployed citizens living in the precarious neighbourhoods are not qualified for these types of jobs or have to commute long distances to get a job for which they are qualified. Commuting between home and work is in several of the neighbourhoods a huge problem because the public transport facilities between work and home are insufficient and extremely time-consuming, which creates tremendous barriers for unemployed people to access regular employment.

It is important to develop work organisations and labour laws, which facilitate integration of precarious groups of workers. Here the concept of lifelong learning has been introduced by the EU to improve the quality of and access to continuing education and training for all groups of employees. Partnerships between authorities and local social partners might provide training and address barriers in investment in training. Often the work organisation is not adapted for combining work and education and the income support under periods in education is often so low that it acts as a disincentive. The success of lifelong education relies strongly on better coordination between work, education and social benefits. Finally the demands of the 'new economy' have brought about a variety of new types of short-term work contracts as an expedient alternative to traditional life-time contracts. Today, the majority of new job-openings fall into this category but labour laws are not adapted for this type of employment contracts which means that absence for holidays, leave for care responsibility, illness etc become the individual employee's own responsibility, and may in practice threaten the continued employment of the individual.

In addition to the difficulties getting the youths and ethnic minorities integrated into the labour market much attention has been given to women's low and often contingent participation in employment. One of the benchmarks set by the EU is a female employment rate of 60 per cent in the European Union. Today this has been accomplished by the United Kingdom, Finland and Sweden while especially Italian women have very low levels of employment.

In contemporary welfare states work and care have normally been constructed as mutually exclusive. For men this means that the concept of work is completely internalised in the male concept of citizenship, but for women it leads to a complicated dilemma between their caring work in the family and their searching for independence through wage labour. In solving this dilemma it has been proposed that the concept of decommodification is replaced and / or supplemented by the concept of defamilialization.

Defamilialization as a criterion for social rights can be defined by 'the degree to which individual adults can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living, independently of family relationships, either through paid work or through social security provisions' (Lister 1997; 173). The consequence is that welfare system might then be characterised according to the degree to which all individuals are able to provide a socially acceptable livelihood independently of both the family and the market.

The extent of defamilialisation may be crucial for the welfare of individuals and families but also in determining the extent to which social provisions through welfare programmes might have altered the balance of power between men and women and between dependents and non-dependents within the families (MacLaughlin and Glendinning 1994). Furthermore, this means that the goals of family policy need to be formulated in such a way that they allow families and individual members to develop their own strategies in taking up family responsibilities and caring obligations.

The problems with combining work and care and providing the necessary income to run independent households are especially found in many of the BETWIXT families with only one female breadwinner. Lone mothers are expected to provide an income for the family and in all countries gainful employment is considered as the main route out of poverty. But lone mothers are up against tremendous barriers - in a labour market which is primarily organized on male conditions, in a system of social protection where previous employment and income define the level of compensation and in a care system which in most communities is insufficient and badly organised in reconciling work and care (Rubery, Grimshaw and Smith 2000).

Recommendations

- Tighter regulation of equal access to the job market for all groups – ethnic minorities, youth and women. Actions against institutional or statistical discrimination have to be reinforced in all BETWIXT-countries. Several EU-directives have been approved on equal opportunities and against discrimination on age, gender and ethnicity but these directives should be enforced more strictly in all Member States.

- Family-friendly work schedules and flexible forms of employment have to be implemented for both women and men in order to reconcile gainful employment and care for dependent relatives. For people with comprehensive caring obligations - dependent children or elderly relatives - a legal right to choose a reduced work time schedule should be available combined with supplementary benefits.

- Job training – education schemes. Locally based job creation schemes either through local welfare agencies or local employers might facilitate parents' possibilities of combining work and care, give disabled people better access to the job market, and mediate the often tense relation between young people and local small and medium-size employers.

- Free vocational training and study grants beyond the poverty level to all individuals without at least upper secondary education. The importance of education and vocational training has to be emphasized. Improvement of vocational guidance from Employment centres and if possible

guaranteed employment after ended vocational training for the most vulnerable groups might overcome the frequently mentioned attitude 'it does not matter - they won't give me a job anyway.'

- Reducing the risk of women, ethnic minorities and youngsters ending in a poverty trap by taking low-paid work. A more generous balance between earned salary and benefits has to be established for those starting up employment after periods of long -term unemployment or long periods outside the labour market because of caring obligations. Retention of benefits during the first months of employment as in the Irish Community Employment S cheme or the possibility of combining part-time work and benefits as in the Swedish parental leave scheme might be a solution or the use of a tax credit system for low paid employment as is being introduced in the UK.

- A universal state organised social se curity system providing benefits above a fixed minimum to all individuals who are temporarily absent from work or are looking for a job. This will prevent the sharp division of the social benefit system between permanent and contingent employed individuals found in France and Italy, which tend to lock individuals with a loose labour market affiliation into permanent vulnerability.

- Facilitate mobility between the EU Member States and Non -member States through more open-minded procedures and attitudes in rec ognition of education and vocational training experiences from countries outside the EU.

- Quota-arrangements for disadvantaged groups in connection with production financed through public contracts

- Cheap, frequent, and reliable public transport facilities between home and work.

Living on tight budgets

Sao asserts, that when it is not possible to cook meat, - then she cooks fish, if she does not have fish, she does not do (cook) anything – "and besides, before people did not eat meat and nobody died (Sâo, R 114-Lissabon)

What they (social services) give us is enough to last 15 days. We´re grateful anyway, but to tell the truth, we do not manage to get to the end of the month! Sometimes we really have to tighten our belts, but at least we adults can go withou t eating whereas the children can´t.(Veronica, 22, married, two children, Torino)

I don't do my shopping in this area. Over the years you learn where to go. I have a system now. I go into Meath St. to a butcher. I have dealt with him for ages and get my weeks meat like rashers and stuff there. I would say I save up to 75%. I stay with my friends and his wife on Thursdays and when I'm there I go to the supermarket in their area and get the rest of my shopping. That saves money as well because when you are o n

Benefit and after I pay my rent I have less than £10 a day to live on and that's for everything – bills, food, clothing and everything. You learn how to make savings and add the pennies up. (Respondent G, Dublin).

If giving up little luxuries means not going to the movies, nor to the pizzeria, nor going out on Saturday night, we haven't done these things for twenty years. (Agata, 43, Torino)

How to cope on a low income has been a central question to households in the BETWIXT study. The core research interest has not been in knowing exact levels of domestic income, but to learn about people's experiences from living in vulnerable economic conditions usually over longer periods and learn about their strategies to survive in daily life, and about situation s where no money or sources of money were available.

Domestic incomes for the BETWIXT households reflect that many pressures and serious social events have characterized life courses for many (i.e. divorces, loss of employment, work accidents, health problems, asylum/immigration). Few have stable incomes from work, but low part -time wages from shifting jobs, sick pensions, social assistance benefits, unemployment benefits etc. For many households it means living with a short time economic perspective not k nowing from where future income will come. This is especially the case in those BETWIXT countries where no social right to a basic income (like social assistance) has yet been established.

People in our study live at a low economic level often relying on means-tested benefits, which are sensitive to possible increases in income. This means that getting a job will only bring them a small extra amount of money, and therefore keep them continuously in economic constraints or poverty, (also called the 'poverty trap'.) And consequently it is expected that this lack of economic incentive will make people passive in relation to work. However, it has been somewhat surprising in the BETWIXT study *not* to find households living on means -tested benefits who corresponde d to the general image of poverty-trap-households. A high and constant activity trying to find a foothold in the labour market is the prevailing pattern. But naturally insufficient conditions such as lack of childcare or enormously expensive transport can make it impossible or meaningless to take up or remain in low paid work.

For lone mothers serious economic constraints exist, when the father of her children does not pay the maintenance of the children. Even if public advance payment is possible, this usually requires identification and pursuit of the father, and several lone mothers do not use this possibility for fear of the reaction from their former partner.

Several common traits can be seen in the coping strategies. Firstly, the high degree of ref lexivity in managing the domestic economy. Rent, basic food, bills (heating, lighting, water, telephone) and children's need for clothes and activities is the general ranking for expenditure. Walking long distances to shop for food as cheaply as possible, getting second-hand furniture, clothes, food and a small grant from charity organisations, borrowing a little money mostly from grandmother to make ends meet the last day of the week – these activities are repeated again and again.

Secondly, a high degree of activity is carried out in trying to find solutions to the economic problems with which people are confronted. In many cases it has been surprising to hear about the immense human agency constantly activated to overcome and solve problems in situations where they would normally be solved by paying with money. But when there is lack of money, problems need to be solved by other means (e.g. fixing the plumbing or car oneself, mending clothes, cooking "slow" food, etc.)

All this is very time consuming and demand much imagination, expertise and energy - and some people consequently seemed to live on the verge of exhaustion to cope with this form of life.

Recommendations

- Guaranteed minimum social wage to all on an individual basis (as harbinger of an EU cit izen social wage)
- Introduction of advance -payment schemes of maintenance to protect children against poverty
- Clarification and simplification of rules and administration of welfare benefits.
- Active information about social rights, often in conjunction w ith independent advice / advocacy agencies

Health problems – a companion to precarity

> *Everytime I sit down and try to sort out….I just start getting so depressed by it all, I don't get anywhere, y'know. (Case 14, London)*
>
> *The waiting time is extremel y long when you come with something acute. The doctor then says to me: you are only allowed to tell me one problem, not more. I only have 5 minutes for you, otherwise you have to come again, some other patient is waiting for me now…. I think that they lack professionals up there… (woman, 2 small children, Umeå)*
>
> *Before I wasn't like this (he shows his fat stomach). Now it's started, there is a lot of diabetes, a lot of diseases, there's even the liver that is run down. And all that with the accidents. Befor e I worked a lot, and now it is finished. Someone who doesn't works eats, he stays like that; he goes outside without a job; after there it goes, he's sick huh, and he stays, he stays. (Mr. Khazir, Toulouse)*

Health is a long established "life chance" cor related with social living conditions. Many studies have shown that a steady job, a reasonable predictable domestic economy, healthy housing, and a supportive network are very important protection factors against health problems and mortality.

Consequently health problems are frequently one of several hardship factors among the vulnerable

families in the BETWIXT study. Ill health often caused or aggravated already difficult situations, and over time jeopardized an individual's or family's ability to cope and manage in areas they used to deal with. Many diseases, however caused, were exacerbated by stress with an affect on their progress. A vicious circle of cause and effect between severe illness and hard life were often experienced.

Several parents were well aware of the connection between health and diet, but reported difficulties in buying healthy food on low income. The bargain deals in supermarket do not usually apply to healthy food.

The effects of ill health, whether physical or stress -related, could be devastating leading to depressions, alcohol and drug abuse. Some persons reported depression and stress directly connected with their to contact with the welfare, housing and benefit system.

One particular cause of ill health should be highlighted : work, or more precisely, physical work. Especially from the French household panel a disproportion of cases with work related health problems emerged and thus followed the very high general rate of work accidents in France. This was connected to the unusual survival of industry in the Toulouse area, based loosely around aerospace activities.

In all BETWIXT countries citizens have access to almost free public health systems. An exception is dental care, which for economic reasons left many persons in our study with unacceptable dental problems.

The relatively high level of morbidity among the household members implied many contacts with different levels of the health system, but with local medical centres as a core institution. Many local medical centres have a range of activities and programmes aimed at applying good, preventive health principles to different age groups. The local doctors and other professionals working with health issues in the local area seemed generally to be in a position where contacts and cooperation with people are characterized by more confidence and trust than is the case for other local welfare institutions in charge of e.g. social assistance, housing subsidy and family benefits. The strong element of personal control and another working culture in these institutions might explain the differences in carrying out their roles; as might the fact that, being a universal service, there is no stigma attached to attending a health centre, as opposed to a social services or benefit office .

Recommendations

- Local and accessible free health services.

- The use of local health facilities as access points for a range of social and economic advice and protection services, since as a universal service they do not carry the stigma of those targeted on deprived and precarious groups.

- Targeted, coherent, and integrated strategies against drugs with expansion of local treatment places.

- Free or better subsidized dental care.

- Training of medical professionals in responsiveness to health problems related to severe social constraints, and resources to allow time for medical staff to explore connections between health and social problems.

- Improvement of information, training, prevention, inspections and sanctions in relation to work accidents and work related disability.

Family networks

> *Yes, with 6 children, but it was never just the 6 children because my grandmother died in the meantime and my mother had to look after her brother and sisters, and of my grandfather. She did their washing, fed them, all those things and I've still got an unmarried uncle who is 76. My mother who's 90 still does things for him.... She still washes his clothes and gets his meals...(Luisa R8, Lissabon)*
>
> *An awful lot of families stayed in this neighbourhood and an awful lot of people know each other through family connections in the area...... my brother who lives in Drimnagh still has it in him to live here. He wishes he was living here. There is some kind of intangible chord there...something that draws people back. (Respondent D, Dublin)*
>
> *We had no money and my parents could never afford to help us financially; we just bought our bedroom furniture and went to live with my widowed mother -in-law (Agatha, 43, Torino)*

One of the current welfare discussions in the EU is about the role and functioning of the family, both the immediate/nuclear family and the wider family. A basic assumption behind the discussion is that family has a preventive role in forestalling social exclusion, especially in Southern welfare regimes, where changing positions of women in relation to labour market, low fertility, and increase in divorces have intensified instability in the core two -parent family. A serious issue of the household analysis has therefore been around the meaning, influence, and importance of family both at a practical and emotional level when living in precarious and stressful circumstances.

The relationship between the level of access to social services, such as childcare and elderly care, in the individual BETWIXT countries, and the necessity of providing these within the family network is evident from many cases. Raising and socialising children and caring for the elderly still seem to be almost solely a feminine tasks, (except to some degree in the Scandinavian countries). Life stories have been told of several women going from being daughters to wives, then mothers and finally grandmothers with grandchildren to look after, sometimes with an elderly parent to care for as well. The obligation of care tends to keep women inside the home, and consequently leave them highly vulnerable in surviving and coping in life situations without a male breadwinner, and with no right to

a basic social income. This pattern is especially emphasized by the Turin Policy Report (Olagnero, Meo and Naldini 2001) The Betwixt study demonstrates repeatedly the extreme risk for women of being outside the labour market and without individual social rights.

Lone parent families often seem to have great difficulties in finding new relational patterns with the former spouse, emotionally and about assisting in childcare and contributing economically to their children. As the lone parent family as a family form is increasing in number and comprise frames of childhood for numerous children increased attention need to be paid to assisting parents to find more responsible and fruitful ways of coping parenthood after divorce.

Intergenerational relations and contacts are of great importance for people in demanding and vulnerable periods – and conversely lack of or weak family ties is crucial and decisive for the possibilities of handling severe life situations. Stress events like separation and divorce can jeopardise the wider family network, but often a readjustment follows where grandparents, especially the mother's own mother take on a very strong role of both emotional and practical support both in relation to childcare, leisure time and as an economic buffer with small - but absolutely necessary - grants and loan in situations without any money.

The necessity of exchanging practical and especially economic support between generations is definitely greater in Southern welfare regimes. In the Portuguese report (Casimiro Balsa and Ana Caeiro 2001) an intensive analysis is made of the potential within the involved households/families to assist each other and survive various precarious life situations. The picture is rather bleak pointing to a pattern of repeated general lack of material resources preventing family members from giving mutual help. And over time this deficit also influences the human and emotional energy within the family. Family ties often seem to break down under the heavy load of social problems and obligations, which are impossible to meet. This is a double serious situation when neither material nor emotional needs can be met. The accounts of households in BETWIXT-countries with stronger welfare regimes such as France and Sweden show that the emotional and moral meaning and function of intergeneration relations are equally important to all people. Basic welfare security seems to support family ties more than weakening them, as is often assumed. Moving back to the "old" neighbourhood where the grandparents or siblings live, keeping frequent contact over enormous distances by means of new electronic communication are such examples, and a lot of concern and worries arise if this is not possible. Being without a wider family network, either because of conflicts or death etc., seem to be experienced as a particular personal constraint, and often difficult to compensate for by means of building up other social networks e.g. through friendships.

Possible **policy implications** concerning the position of families and the interactive practical and emotional living conditions within and between related family members will be difficult to present due to the complex nature of the issue. But for people living in families without income, or very small and unstable income, in poor and unacceptable housing, in areas with no or low quality social services, we point to the necessity of supporting these families with a guaranteed minimum income support on an individual basis, and provide access to good quality mainstream services such as childcare, schools, health centres, education etc. Relieving the constant and exhausting pressure of

"the labyrinth of poverty" will give families a better chance of fulfilling the obligations and strengthening the emotional links, that most households find so essential to preserve.

Final reflections.

Through the 3 stages and levels of BETWIXT – the urban, neighbourhood and household level – our findings continuously reflect the point that urban and social welfare policies within the EU are almost totally developed, defined and decided within a national context. A maybe ill-timed reflection is coming up at the end of the BETWIXT project, whether our findings in their pluralism altogether would have been otherwise in the case of the EU had not existing. The findings could probably have come out of a similar project comparing other western countries.

Due to the national basis of welfare policies in the EU a composite, almost kaleidoscopic picture is presented in the findings from the different stages about social inequality, spatial segregation and precarity. This situation definitely suggest that a high degree of caution is important when making attempts to formulate common appropriate welfare policy recommendations related to the myriad of differences in local tradition and culture in ways of intervening in urban planning and provision of social protection. The huge differences in social welfare protection raise the question of how to secure a reasonable standard of welfare protection for all EU citizens, and not continue to protect social policy as a "national playing field". It is difficult to find a rationale for the existing inequality in welfare protection among present EU citizens. And it is even more difficult (and threatening) to imagine the situation of the enormous social inequality arising in the perspective of the planned enlargement of the European Union.

In the EU the **O**pen **M**ethod of **C**oordination is dominant when dealing with social policy issues. The Open Method of Coordination indicates that co-operation within the EU in the social policy area is guiding and consultative, but not binding for individual Member States. They can exchange and evaluate experiences and in this way inspire and influence each other, but no common standards can be decided and no sanctions exist. Harmonisation of the arenas of market and economy are still the prevailing policy concerns of the EU.

However, the experience and knowledge coming out of the BETWIXT study about segregation and precarity hopefully give a natural platform for discussion of some general principles for common standards for social protection among the Member States.

5. Dissemination and Exploitation of BETWIXT results.

Thomas P. Boje and Therese Halskov

Pre-phase - literature review
As a common starting point all participating countries completed a phase preliminary to the project reviewing scientific literature on poverty, social exclusion, precarity and social policy issues related to these topics. Making the broad distinction between the evidence of poverty and exclusion on the one hand, and the analysis of it on the other, outlines were written based on commonly agreed questions relating to the multidimensional, dynamic and spatial dimensions of exclusion (see Room et al. 1995), and the impact of the welfare state in each country - both at the local level, and as a possible factor itself in the structuring of poverty. Themes of interest emerging from this review of literature included evidence of recently increasing differentiation within the excluded group itself across the countries involved in the project, and – at the analytical level – the emerging importance of analysis at the meso level, which was of specific interest to BETWIXT in connecting city (macro) and household (micro) levels of analysis through the neighbourhood level.

These national literature reviews were synthesised in an internal Report and formed a common, very useful, and constructive background for understanding the similarities and differences in societal development in the seven countries included in the BETWIXT project.

Research phases in the BETWIXT project
The basic and accumulated phases of collecting facts, doing analyses and developing knowledge of the BETWIXT project were - as planned - published in the national and synthesis reports concluding and linking the main phases of the project -except for Stage D, whose results were included in the reports on stage C.

- Stage A: Social Inequality and spatial segregation In the BETWIXT cities (eds. Susan McIntosh and John Flatley)
- Stage B: Social profile of neighbourhoods in seven European cities (ed. Tony Flatley)
- Stage C: Households in precarity: case histories from deprived neighbourhoods in six European countries (ed. Daniel Bertaux)
- Stage D: Analysis of Previous Phases and Feed-back to Local Neighbourhoods
- Stage E: Important concerns, obstacles, and facilities for people and places in precarity. Policy Implications (Thomas P. Boje and Therese Halskov)

These 27 working papers which are listed in Annex 7. 2 have been distributed widely to the scientific communities in Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

At the national level these reports have constituted the key materials for information and dissemination to the wide-range of people from the political, administrative and practical level who all at the same time have been simultaneously objects and subjects of the BETWIXT project.

In relation to Stage C, where households as informants were in focus, a great variety of methods were used to bring information about the project and its findings back to the households. It was very often surprising how interested households representatives were in learning and getting knowledge about other households and their experiences fighting precarity both locally and definitely also at the European Union level. And this interest challenged and urged the BETWIXT researchers in all countries to clarify and present the ideas and findings of the project to citizens outside the research community.

An extraordinarily useful way of both gaining empirical insight and distributing knowledge and experiences about the project was **the field visits** to all the selected precarious neighbourhoods in the seven cities - Dublin, Lisbon, London, Helsinki, Turin, Toulouse and Umeå. Representatives from all the national research teams visited all neighbourhoods where formal and informal meetings were arranged. The benefits of these authentic 'on the spot' contacts and the observations and feedbacks from 'the foreign eye's coming out of these visits were of surprisingly great value for the project and its conclusions. The field visits not only revealed new observations but threw into relief the national perceptual assumptions which each team brought to the research.

Focus and policy meetings
A wide rage of formalised meetings have taken place with citizens and politicians separately and in mixed forms during the three years of the BETWIXT project:

In Lisbon, London and Turin several focus group meetings were arranged where participants in the Household study were confronted with the preliminary findings of the project and were asked to give their opinions on the causes to and suggestions to avoid being pushed from a position of precarity to social exclusion. In Lisbon focus groups were arranged as a series of meetings over time.

All the national teams have held feedback meetings for top or local politicians, councillors, local officers and key social workers on all stages of the BETWIXT project. A few examples of these activities can be mentioned:

- The French team met with 42 Directeurs d'Office HLM (heads of housing estates) from a large variety of French cities in paris, November 2000 and opened the discussion with a presentation: 'precarité and logement sociale' ('Precarity and social housing')

- The Swedish team arranged a meeting in the People's House, Umeå with politicians, administrative officers and household representatives where social policy implications of the local neighbourhood study were at the agenda

- The British team presented a paper and talked to the Department of Housing and Social Research, London Research Centre, September 1999 on 'Conceptualising social exclusion and poverty in the BETWIXT project'

International Conferences
The BETWIXT project has been presented at several international conferences - here some examples (see Annex 7.1 for an extended list):

- ISA (International Sociological association) July 2002 - Brisbane, Australia
- ESA (European Sociological Association) Aug/Sept. 2001, Helsinki, Finland
- German Sociological Conference, May 2002, Bamberg, Germany
- SOSTRIS; Policy seminar, February 2002, London
- XVI Congrés de l'ASLF 'Une Société – monde- ?' July 2000, Quebec, Canada

Local and National Conferences
Numerous papers have been given at national and local conferences and seminars - see section 7.1 for further information.

Seminars with academic colleagues and national researchers
During the whole BETWIXT project all teams have been involved in, contributed to, and benefited from discussions with colleagues and researchers on important issues related to empirical, methodological and theoretical issues arising from the different analytical stages of the project.

These discussions have mainly taken place at the local level, but have also been combined with work in progress seminars in the different BETWIXT countries where the national teams have discussed the analyses and results from the BETWIXT project with local academic colleagues

Publications
See Annex 7. 2

Follow-up plans
The specific BETWIXT research design with activities at many different levels and with the involvement of several research methods naturally evoke a flow of follow -up activities both in relation to deeper research on special issues, development of the research methodology, and further publications of the enormous range of data and knowledge coming out of the project as a whole. Here we shall mention just some of the future activities:

Future research issues:
- the effect of housing policies
- the debate on 'poverty trap'
- citizenship rights in relation to work and care
- the economic and social conditions for lone mothers / lone parents
- the relationship between social and economic precarity / poverty

Future subjects related to research methods:
- the riddle about quantitative and qualitative methods and their capacity to capture social

dynamics
- the temporal / time dimension and its importance in understanding precarity and social exclusion

Future Publications from the BETWIXT project

- see the Outline of the BETWIXT book project - Annex 7.3

6. Acknowledgements and References

6. 1. Acknowledgement

First of all our warm thanks are addressed to the hundreds of **people in the households** living in Dublin, Helsinki, Lisbon, London, Toulouse, Turin, and Umeå who generously opened their doors and told us about their struggles and fights against precarious life conditions. We also thank the many **key persons in the public planning and social welfare system** who assisted us and contributed with valuable information, experiences and opinions.

Naturally we are also extremely grateful to the **European Commission, DG X II** who supplied us with the necessary funding for our research activities.

Around each national coordinator many **persons with different background and functions** have provided vital contributions to the BETWIXT project; some during one or several of the di fferent stages of BETWIXT, and some during all stages. Each contribution has been of greatest and most important value for the project as a whole and in this way reflected the necessity of a multi -facetted approach to precarity. Here we just want to list t he involved persons from each team who have been involved in the BETWIXT work:

Finland
Matti Kortteinen (national coordinator)
Markku Lankinen
Mari Vaattovaara

France
Daniel Bertaux (project and national coordinator)
Catherine Delcroix
Djamila Issolah
David Rohi
Sofie Esnouf
Christine Colpin

Ireland
Tony Fahey (national coordinator)
Mary Corcoran
Mary Benson

Italy
Manuela Olagnero (national coordinator)
Filippo Barbera
Antonella Meo
Manuela Naldini
Tiziana Nazio

Portugal
Casimiro Marques Balsa (national coordinator)
Jacqueline Barreto
Ana Cairo
António Rebelo
Alberto Teixeiro

Sweden
Thomas P. Boje (national coordinator)
Therese Halskov
Anna Marklund

United Kingdom
Susan McIntosh (national coordinator)
John Flatley
Ute Kowarzik
Sharon Field

During our working seminars and field studies we have been met with and enjoyed great hospitality from the **research institutions** behind the national teams:

Finland: Department of Sociology, STAKES, Helsinki
France: EHESS, CNRS, Centre d'Etude des Mouvements Sociaux, Paris
Ireland: Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin
Italy: Dipartimento di Scienze Sociali, Universita di Turino, Turin
Portugal: Universidade Nova de Lisboa, fac. De Ciencias Sociais e Humanas, Lisbon
Sweden: Department of Sociology, Umeå University, Umeå
United Kingdom: London Research Centre, Greater London Authority, London

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All partners in the national teams have gained a new and extended, extremely fruitful professional and personal pool of experiences about cities, neighbourhoods, households and individuals in the EU. We all hope to be able to implement our knowledge – and thus pay back – in our future academic and civic life.

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7. Annex

7. 1: Conferences and Seminars

International Conferences

- Balsa, Casimiro Marques, *Modèles de vitalité socio -anthropologique de familles en situ ation de precarité ou de pauvreté et modalités de l'intervention institutionelle dans ces situations* , Colloques International, Faire face et s'en sortir: Agir en situation de vulnerabilité, Group 7: Soutiens institutionnels et gestion de la vulnérabilité, Association Internationale des Sociologues de Langue Française, Université de Fribourg, 27 Septembre 2001.
- Balsa, Casimiro Marques, Seminaire sur Dynamiques d'exclusion, Département de Sociologie et Antropologie, Université Catholique de Louvain, 18 -21 Février 2002.
- Balsa, Casimiro Marques, *Ressources Symboliques et resources matérielles dans la gestion des risques de précarisation sur le plan socio -anthropologique,* Groupe de travail: Inégalités, identités et liens sociaux, XVI Congrés de l'.ªS.L.F., Une so cieté-monde?, Québec, 3-7 Juillet 2000,
- Balsa, Casimiro Marques, *Léxclusion et l'espace, espaces d'exclusion* , Conférences Publiques 2001-2002, Quel Avenir pour l'exclusion?, org. Chaire francophone, Département Travail Social et Politiques Sociales, Unive rsité de Fribourg, 25 Avril 2002.
- Balsa, Casimiro Marques, Séminaire sur Trajectoires d'éxclusion et vitalité socio - anthropologique, Département de Sociologie, Université de Fribourg, 26 et 27 Avril 2002.
- Balsa, Casimiro Marques, *Ressources Symboliques et resources matérielles dans la gestion des risques de précarisation sur le plan socio -anthropologique,* in Présentation des Communications, Groupe de travail: Inégalités, identités et liens sociaux, XVI Congrés de l'.A.S.L.F., Une societé-monde?, Québec, 3-7 Juillet 2000.
- Daniel Bertaux, 'Poverty of the 'poverty trap' hypothesis', paper presented at the Anglo -French Conference on Poverty co-organised by the London School of Economics and the French CNRS; with John Hills, Serge Paugam, etc.
- Daniel Bertaux, 'Between Integration and Exclusion: European households in situation of precarity', *Plenary session III of the 5th Conference of the European Sociological Association,* August 28 - September 1st, 2001, Helsinki , Finland
- Thomas P. Boje ‘Welfare State, Citize nship, Social Capital’ paper presented at the conference on ‘Welfare States and Civil Society’ Lidingö, Stockholm, 1999
- Thomas P. Boje ‘Women between work and care: Welfare Policy and Family Friendly Employment’ paper presented at *the 5th Conference of the European Sociological Association,* August 28 - September 1st, 2001, Helsinki , Finland
- Mary P Corcoran 'Place attachment, symbolic locale and the search for community' paper read at the Writing the City: Urban Life in the Era of Globalisation' Internation al Conference, Dublin Business School, Dublin August 25th, 2001.
- Mary P Corcoran 'Place, attachment and the neighbourhood' paper read at the Culture of Cities Summer Institute, Toronto, Canada June 18 -23rd, 2001.
- Catherine Delcroix, 'The struggle of hous eholds in precarious situation against the risks of

exclusion', paper presented to the *German Sociological Conference 'Social Work and Biographical Research",* Bamberg, May 2002.

- Therese Halskov 'Single mothers in the tension between the Public Social Welfa re System and Voluntary Social Organisations' paper presented at the Conference on 'Welfare Sates and Civil Society' Lidingö, Stockholm, 1999
- Susan McIntosh participation in 'Policy Seminar' SOSTRIS project, London February 2000
- Susan McIntosh participatio n in RC-Biography Conference, International Sociological Assosciation, London October 2000
- Olagnero, M. 'Lone mothers, risk of poverty and role of contexts' Paper presented to the International Congress: 'Beyond the Feminization of Poverty' Padova 29 -30 November 1999
- Olagnero, Manula The role of social support networks in struggle against poverty: the case of Turin. Paper presented at the International Sociological Association World Congress, Brisbane 7 – 13 July 2002.

Local - National Conferences and Policy meetings

- Caeiro, Ana, *Uma síntese das principais conclusões no âmbito do estudo BETWIXT/TSER* , Seminário - Pobreza e Exclusão Social - Realidades e Perspectivas: a situação no Município da Amadora, org. GIS - Gabinete de Intervenção Social da Câmara Mun icipal da Amadora, Recreios da Amadora, 23-24 de Outubro de 2001.
- Balsa, Casimiro Marques, Document on Exclusion, Meeting with social investigators and politicians - Declaração por uma Sociedade inclusiva e sem pobreza (Declaration for one inclusive and without poverty society), 18 de Janeiro 2002.
- Balsa, Casimiro Marques, *Trajectórias e Estratégias Familiares face à Precariedade da Exclusão*, Encontros do IDS - O outro lado do desenvolvimento social, Ciclo de debates, Participação: um direito de todos, 11 Abril de 2002.
- Conference of Daniel Bertaux followed by a discussion, *Précarité et logement social*, in front of an audience of 42 *Directeurs d'Offices HLM* (42 heads of housing estates all over French cities); Paris, November 2000
- Daniel Bertaux, 'Un mod èle du ménage en situation de précarité', and Catherine Delcroix, ' in *Congrès de l'Association Internationale des Sociologues de Langue Française (AISLF),* July 2000
- Conference of Catherine Delcroix at the *Institut des Hautes Etudes de la Sécurité Intéri eure*, Paris, in front of the intellectual elite of police forces in charge of law and order's maintenance throughout France. September 2001
- Mary P Corcoran 'People, Place and Community in deprived neighbourhoods: notes from a European Case Study', paper pr esented at 'Ireland 2020: People, Place and Space' conference of the Regional Studies Association in association with the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis, Bunratty, Co. Clare, Ireland, April 25th -26th, 2002.
- Mary P Corcoran 'Place atta chment and the search for community' Community Workers Forum, Kilmainham-Inchicore, April 11th, 2001
- Meeting of Catherine Delcroix with Claude Bartolone, *Secrétaire d'Etat à la Politique de la Ville* - member of French government - and members of his ca binet, at Cl. B's invitation ; Paris,

Ministère de la Ville; March 2002

- Fahey and M. Kortteinen 'Neighbourhood, micro -segregation and social exclusion in Dublin and Helsinki'. Paper presented to Annual Conference of Irish Social Policy Association, Trinit y College, Dublin, 27 July 2001
- Therese Halskov, lecture at the Department of Sociology, Umeå University on 'Marginalisering af Enlige Mødre I det danske og svenske velfærdssamfund – en sammenligning' (Marginalization of Lone Mothers in the Swedish and Dan ish Welfare Societies – a Comparison), December 1998
- Therese Halskov, presented the BETWIXT project under the heading 'Individual precarity and urban disadvantage - how these phenomena are combined' at a scientific colloqium with the theme *'Theories on Urb an Life – space, Class, Gender and Ethnicity in Modern Cities'* at Umeå University, Sweden, January 2000
- Therese Halskov, presented the result from the household survey in Ersboda, Umeå at a seminar at the Department of Social Welfare, Umeå University under the heading '*Precarious Families in Precarious Neighbourhoods'* . Umeå, 1999
- Susan McIntosh paper titled 'Conceptualising social exclusion and poverty in the BETWIXT project' presented to the Department of housing and Social Research, London Research Centr e, September 1999
- Susan McIntosh three papers presented to Greater London Authority, July 2000 on 'Making policy on social exclusion', 'Social exclusion: its meaning for London', and Main BETWIXT findings on spatial segregation: London in the EU Context'.
- Olagnero, M. 'Traiettorie di rischio e punti di biforcazione biografica:problemi empirici e possibili soluzioni analitische' Presentation at Convegno, Pavia 26 -27 October 2000. Published in m. Rampazi (ed) 'Vita quotidiana a tra incertezza e responsabilità , Milano, Guerini, Autumn 2002
- Olagnero, M. et al 'Conference on vulnerability and poverty in Turin involving social workers, public administrators and city councillors' in collaboration with the City of Turin and University of Turin (Department of Social Science) 26. April 2001

Annex 7. 2 Publications

1. Working papers and Synthesis report

- Balsa, Casimiro, Antonio Rebelo with Ana Caeiro and Alberto Teixeira 'Lisbon – Capital and the agglomeration of Lisbon, 2000
- Balsa, Casimiro, Ana Caeiro and Jacqueline Barreto 'Socio-anthropological and political-administrative reference contexts for the study of the dynamics of precariousness and exclusion at local level' 2001
- Balsa, Casimiro and Ana Caeiro with collaboration of Jacqueline Barreto 'Family trajectories of precariousness and exclusion within the context of Lisbon metropolitain process' 2001
- Benson, Mary C., Mary P. Corocan and Tony Fahey 'Kilmainham C, Dublin' 2001
- Bertaux, Daniel (ed) Households in precarity: case histories from deprived neighbourhoods in six European countries' Centre d' Étude des Movements Sociaux, Paris, July 2001
- Bertaux, Daniel, Djamila Issolah and Catherine Delcroix 'Toulouse, the unexpected regional metropolis' 2000
- Bertaux, Daniel, Djamila Issolah and Catherine Delcroix ' The Quartier of Bagatelle, Toulouse' 2001
- Bertaux, Daniel, Djamila Issolah, Catherine Delcroix and David Rohi 'Coping with precarity in a French deprived neighbourhood' 2001
- Boje, Thomas P. with Therese Halskov and Anna Marklund 'Umeå: Social and spatial segregation in the 1990s' 2000
- Corcoran, Mary P and Mary Benson 'Micro-segregation in a transitional neighbourhood: A Dublin case study' 2001
- Fahey, Tony (ed) 'Social profile of neighbourhoods in seven European cities' Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin 2001
- Fahey, Tony 'Social profile of neighbourhoods in seven European cities: Introduction and overview' 2001
- Fahey, Tony and Mary P Corcoran 'Social inequality and spatial differentiation in Dublin' 2000
- Flatley, John and Susan McIntosh (eds) 'Social integration and spatial segregation in seven European cities' 2000
- Flatley, John and Susan McIntosh 'London: increasing social and spatial inequality 1981 – 1991, 200
- Flatley, John, Susan McIntosh and Mari Vaattovaara 'Spatial segregation and the BETWIXT cities, the analysis of common indicators and maps: concluding review' 2000
- Halskov, Therese 'Voices from Ersboda' 2001
- Halskov, Therese with Thomas P. Boje and Anna Marklund 'Ersboda, Umeå a neighbourhood study about precarity' 2000
- Kortteinen, Matti 'Kontula, Helsinki' 2001
- Lankinen, Markku and Mari Vaattovaara 'Between integration and exclusion: statistical indicators in the Capital Region of Finland' 2000
- McIntosh, Susan 'BETWIXT: Reviews of Literature on Precarity, Poverty and Social Exclusion

in Seven European Countries' London Research Centre, April 1999

- McIntosh, Susan and John Flatley 'Social inequality and spatial segregation and the BETWIXT cities: the European context' 2000
- McIntosh, Susan and Ute Kowarzik 'Living in Holloway' 2001
- Meo, A. and M. Olagnero 'Little Aurora, Turin' 2000
- Meo, A, M. Naldini and M. Olagnero (2001) *Welfare in action: from virtuality to reality*. Working Paper, BETWIXT: Turin 2001
- Olagnero, Manuela with Filippo Barbera and Tiziana Nazio 'Turin in the nineties' 2000
- Olagnero, Manuela and Antonella Meo 'How to live in a post -fordist town' 2001

2. Chapters in Books

- Daniel Bertaux et Catherine Delcroix, 2000 : « Case Histories of Families and Social Processes : Enriching Sociology », pp 71-89 in Prue Chamberlayne, Joanna Bornat and Tom Wengrad Eds, *The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science, Comparative Issues and Examples,* London, Routledge.
- Boje, Thomas P. 'Social Citizenship. Work and Care – Social differentiation among women in a EU-Context'. In Max Haller (ed) 'The Making of the European Union' Berlin -heidelberg-New York 2000
- Cardano, M., A. Meo and M. Olagnero ' Rapresentazioni della povertà e discorsi sulle politische di contrasto alla povertà. Risultanze da tre quatieri torinesi e due paesi della cintura' Forthcoming, Torino, Traben 2002
- Catherine Delcroix, 2001, *Ombres et lumières de la famille Nour*, Paris: Payot,
- Halskov, Therese, Per Schultz Jørgensen and Valerie Polakow 'Diminished Rights' Bristol, Policy Press 2001
- Halskov, Therese 'Lone Mothers in the EU – Still living in poverty' In Social Report 2002, Social Policy Press. Copenhagen 2002
- Kowarzik, Ute and Susan McIntosh: *'London's Lone Parents and the Labour Market' (Greater London Authority, Forthcoming 2002)*
- Negri, N. and M. Olagnero 'Poveri and non poveri. I confini incerti dellútenza di edilizia pubblica' In M. L. Bianco 'L´Italia delle diseguaglianze' Roma, Carocci, 2001, pp. 247 -267
- Olagnero, M. 'Lone mothers, risk of poverty and role of contexts' Published as 'Madri sole rischio di povertà e ruolo dei c ontesti' In F. Bimbi and E. Ruspini (eds) Genre e Povertà, Inchiesta, April-June 2000
- Olagnero, M. 'Traiettorie di rischio e punti di biforcazione biografica:problemi empirici e possibili soluzioni analitische' In N. Rampazi (ed) 'Vita quotidiana a tra inc ertezza e responsabilità, Milano, Guerini, Autumn 2002
- Olagnero, M 'Politiche: contesti e coorti di ingresso in edilizia pubblica' In N. Negri 'Percorsi e ostacoli. Lo spazio della vulnerabilità sociale' Torino, Trauben, 2002, pp. 169 -2001

3. Articles in Journal

- Mary P. Corcoran 'Place attachment and community sentiment in marginalised neighbourhoods: a European Case Study', *The Canadian Journal of Urban Research* , Vol.11, No. 1, 2002, pp.

210-221

- Catherine Delcroix, 1999, "Les parents des cités: la préve ntion familiale des risques encourus par les enfants", Les *Annales de la Recherche Urbaine,* n° 83-84, pp.97-107
- Catherine Delcroix and Daniel Bertaux, 2000, "La dernière vague: le capital biographique d'une génération d'immigrés du Maghreb", Ecarts d'ident ité, n°92, pp.12-26
- Catherine Delcroix, 2000, "Stratégies familiales de prevention de la délinquance. Une approche biographique", *Les Cahiers de la Sécurité Intérieure* (Institut des Hautes Etudes de la Sécurité Intérieure) n° 42, 4me trimestre, pp 147 -172
- Halskov, Therese 'Enlige mødre i Danmark og Sverige. Mellem offentlig og privat velfærd' (Lone Mothers in Denmark and Sweden. Between public and private welfare) Social Vetenskapeligt Tidsskrift, vol. 7, no. 1 -2, pp. 72-86, 2000
- Flatley, J, S. McIntosh and M. Vaattovaara ' Spatial segregation in seven EU cities' Forthcoming 2002
- Susan McIntosh 'Bulletin on main London findings from BETWIXT project', Greater London Authority, August 2000

Annex 7. 3

Outline of BETWIXT book

(compiled by T. Fahey & T. Boje)

Title: The Struggle to Get By. Households and Neighbourhoods on the Edge in Seven European Cities

Section I. On the Edge: the Social and Spatial Context

Chapter 1. Introduction. Background, the focus on precarity, agency and neighbourhood; the approach, objectives and methodology of the present study. Written by the editors of the Book

Chapter 2. Welfare States Regimes and the Betwixt project. An up -dated description of the welfare regimes in the states included in the project based on an overview of th e relationship between labour market, welfare system (social protection) and the family in providing social and economic welfare. (Thomas P. Boje and Therese Halskov).

Chapter 3. Spatial segregation in the seven cities. Based on the synthetic chapter in t he Stage A report (Flatley, McIntosh, Vaatovaara).

Chapter 4. Seven neighbourhoods. Based on the synthetic chapter to the Stage B report. (T. Fahey & M. Benson)

Section II. The Struggle to Get By: Household Strategies and Resources

Chapter 5 Poverty in Metropolitan areas – identity of precarity. (Casimiro Balsa)

Chapter 6 Housing and social integration. (Tony Fahey, Matti Kortteinen and Manuela Olagnero)

Chapter 7 Mobility in and out of precarity.(Daniel Bertaux, Manuela Olagnero and Casimiro Balsa)

Chapter 8 Family relations and support from social networks. (Manuela Olagnero / Antonella Meo and Mary Corcoran)

Chapter 9 Children and Childhood. (Catherine Delcroix and Mary Corcoran)

Chapter 10 Parenthood - precarity in being lone parent. (Therese Hal skov, Sue MacIntosh, Ute Kowarzik and Thomas P. Boje)

Chapter 11 Work and precarity. (Daniel Bertaux with Djamila Issolah and David Rohi)

Section III. Conclusions and Policy Implications.

Chapter 12. Summary of findings. Draw together the findings of Chapters 2–11. Main issues: the nature of precarity, the extent and nature of 'agency' on the part of households and individuals, the significance of the spatial dimension. Responsible: the editors.

Chapter 13. Implications for Welfare Policy. (Thomas P. Boje and Therese Halskov)

Chapter 14. Implications for Urban/Spatial Policy. Chapter focusing on the policy implications of the spatial aspects of the study. (T. Fahey, S. McIntosh. Matti Kortteinen)

Appendices Include as appendices any quantitative or qualitative data from the various teams that would be too detailed to include in the main body of the volume.

The authorship of chapters listed above is provisional. Some adjustments may be made to accommodate the evolving interests and availability of authors or to allow for contributions by members of national teams who are not yet included in the list.

Chapters should average 20-25 printed pages in length (c. 8,000 words), yielding a volume of about 300 pages.