Final Report

Project: Commons-led coproduction in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area: type of experiences and learning at the territorial level

[catalan: La Gestió Procomú a l'Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona: tipus d'experiències i aprenentatge a nivell territorial]
[castellan: La Gestión Procomún en el Área Metropolitana de Barcelona: tipos de experiencias y aprendizaje a nivel territorial]

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ABSTRACT & Keywords

English
This study aims to advance the characterization of the social practice of commons-led coproduction as well as analyze innovative processes of collaboration between the public administration, the SSE and urban commons in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. The study builds for this purpose on data from a previous edition of this project as well as newly collected large-n, interview and workshop-based data. As we find, the more than 400 instances of commons in the MAB can be meaningfully cluster around 4 groups: the "Social rights", "Social rights +Eco", "Food prosumer" and "Niches of sustainability" commons. All commons share a "prosumer" nature but diverge in terms of their internal democracy, internal and external transformation ambition and whether this is social and/or environmental, whether they produce goods and/or services and whether they constitute alternatives to the welfare state, markets or both. The "Food prosumer" commons stand out for concentrating relatively fewer experiences of co-production than the others, particularly than the "Social rights +Eco" and the "Niches of sustainability" commons. More broadly, our results show that many instances of co-production take places between SSE organizations of second and third level and the public administration. For the commons co-production model to consolidate there is the need of a framework that moves beyond the public-private logic that has so far guided the relationship between the public administration and the third sector and fits the idiosyncrasies and added value of commons initiatives. Beyond this, a better integration of street level technicians in the co-production processes would be desirable.

Keywords
Commons, Social Solidarity Economy, coproduction, Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, collaboration

Catalan
Aquest estudi pretén avançar en la caracterització de la pràctica social de la coproducció liderada per la utilitat pública, així com analitzar processos innovadors de col·laboració entre l'administració pública, l'ESS i la utilitat pública urbà a l'Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona. Per a això, l'estudi es basa en les dades d'una edició anterior d'aquest projecte, així com en les noves dades recollides a gran escala, mitjançant entrevistes i tallers. Com trobem, els més de 400 casos de béns comuns al MAB es poden agrupar significativament al voltant de 4 grups: els "drets socials", "drets socials + Eco", "prosumidor d'aliments" i "nínxols de sostenibilitat". Tots els béns comuns comparteixen una naturalesa de "prosumidor", però difereixen quant a la seva democràcia interna, la seva ambició de transformació interna i externa i si aquesta és social i / o mediambiental, si produeixen béns i / o serveis i si constitueixen alternatives a l' estat de benestar, als mercats oa tots dos. Els béns comuns "Prosumidor d'aliments" destaquen per concentrar relativament menys experiències de coproducció que els altres, especialment que

els béns comuns "Drets socials + Eco" i els "Nínxols de sostenibilitat". Més àmpliament, els nostres resultats mostren que moltes instàncies de coproducció tenen lloc entre les organitzacions de ESS de segon i tercer nivell i l'administració pública. Perquè el model de coproducció dels béns comuns es consolidi és necessari un marc que superi la lògica publicoprivada que ha guiat fins ara la relació entre l'administració pública i el tercer sector i s'ajusti a la idiosincràsia i el valor afegit de les iniciatives dels béns comuns. Més enllà d'això, seria desitjable una major integració dels tècnics a peu de carrer en els processos de coproducció.

Paraules clau

Béns comuns, Economia Social i Solidària, coproducció, Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona, col·laboració

Spanish

Este estudio pretende avanzar en la caracterización de la práctica social de la coproducción liderada por el procomún, así como analizar procesos innovadores de colaboración entre la administración pública, la ESS y el procomún urbano en el Área Metropolitana de Barcelona. Para ello, el estudio se basa en los datos de una edición anterior de este proyecto, así como en los nuevos datos recogidos a gran escala, mediante entrevistas y talleres. Como encontramos, los más de 400 casos de bienes comunes en el MAB se pueden agrupar significativamente en torno a 4 grupos: los "derechos sociales", "derechos sociales +Eco", "prosumidor de alimentos" y "nichos de sostenibilidad". Todos los bienes comunes comparten una naturaleza de "prosumidor", pero difieren en cuanto a su democracia interna, su ambición de transformación interna y externa y si ésta es social y/o medioambiental, si producen bienes y/o servicios y si constituyen alternativas al estado de bienestar, a los mercados o a ambos. Los bienes comunes "Prosumidor de alimentos" destacan por concentrar relativamente menos experiencias de coproducción que los demás, especialmente que los bienes comunes "Derechos sociales +Eco" y los "Nichos de sostenibilidad". Más ampliamente, nuestros resultados muestran que muchas instancias de coproducción tienen lugar entre las organizaciones de ESS de segundo y tercer nivel y la administración pública. Para que el modelo de coproducción de los bienes comunes se consolide es necesario un marco que supere la lógica público-privada que ha guiado hasta ahora la relación entre la administración pública y el tercer sector y se ajuste a la idiosincrasia y el valor añadido de las iniciativas de los bienes comunes. Más allá de esto, sería deseable una mayor integración de los técnicos a pie de calle en los procesos de coproducción.

Palabras clave

Bienes comunes, Economía Social y Solidaria, coproducción, Área Metropolitana de Barcelona, colaboración

Contents

1. Introduction and justification

1.1. Background and state of the art: urban commons and coproduction with governments

Commons experiences in the urban environment of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (MAB) have grown exponentially in the last 10 years. Most of these experiences have emerged in response to the 2008 global financial crisis and the 2011 austerity measures as community-led alternatives to the state and the market to generate responses to the lack of capacity of different levels of governments, and to the market to satisfy social needs and provide services and goods. At the municipal and metropolitan scales, these initiatives have sometimes received direct and indirect public support from public authorities, which in some cases was key to ensure their consolidation over time (Bianchi, 2018).

Urban commons can be defined as urban spaces or services that are conceived by and for the benefit of a community and produced and/or managed more or less directly by members of that community, understood as networks of people sharing a common interest and often based in the same territory (Lapniewska, 2015).. Examples include community gardens and urban parks, housing co-operatives, consumer cooperatives or cultural centres managed by collectives or neighbourhood associations. Common to many urban commons is the reclamation of urban spaces and self-organization around principles of cooperation, empathy, and social goals in society's development.

Research on urban commons has notably increased in the last decade. Associated primarily with the remarkable body of work on the governance of common goods and common pool resources by Ostrom and her colleagues (Ostrom 1990), a new strand of commons research has started to use the concept to analyse alternative forms of collective (re-)production (Angelis 2003; Bakker 2007; Linebaugh 2008; Harvey, 2012).

At present, there is a current debate within the new literature on whether the state, and particularly the local administration, can play an active role in the long-term sustainability of these communities and be an essential component of the network of urban commons (Pera 2020, Bianchi, 2018; Bianchi et al., unpublished). Some scholars (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Mattei, 2011) see the state as a political institution to avoid because its rationale and workings can often destroy or co-opt the commons; however, a more nuanced position rejects the idea that governments have to be completely outside the common urban experiences (De Angelis, 2003; Bianchi, 2018). Indeed, as work on community-based natural resource management and co-management has already advanced, the recognition and even material support of common initiatives by governments can play an important role in the long-term continuity of such initiatives (Ostrom, 1990; Cox et al. 2010).

In the MAB context, a third actor plays a central role in the governance of urban affairs and services: the Social and Solidarity Economy (SEE). Following Fernàndez and Miró (2016), the SSE is, at the same time, an economic practice based on cooperatives and a social movement. It proposes and exercises the economy at the service of the people, democratically organized, with social responsibility and strong belonging to the community. Similarly to the urban commons,

the SEE has been promoted by grassroots and certain local governments as a solution to the declining public services and growing inequality that followed the 2008 crisis as well as other problems like climate change, or mass migration. In this vein, Guttmann (2019) proposes to capture the burgeoning movement of commons and reinsert it into the SSE by linking commons to cooperatives. Other authors and social movements such as the Network for the Solidarity Economy (see Miro, 2018) argue that the three actors, the public, the commons and cooperatives, can yield a powerful new institutional thrust around which to mobilize new ways of providing goods and services that satisfy basic rights and wellbeing standards, the democratization of the economy and environmental sustainability.

Current research studies have tended to focus on the commons' internal working. However, there is a growing body of work that call for scholars to pay attention to the relationship between urban commons, the SSE and local government (Huron, 2018; Foster and Iaione, 2016). Studying the relationship between commons initiatives, the SSE and public authorities requires a systematic and empirically-grounded approach to the social processes through which the common goods and services are created and reproduced, as well as to the interpersonal and inter-organizational relationships that underpin them. Similarly, there is the need of new concepts like that of 'co-production', which invites to identify and discuss different forms of collaboration between the public sector and community-led organisations.

In this study, we build on Müller (2015) to argue that urban commons initiatives can be a significant component of the co-production of urban policy towards social and environmentally transformative local development. Additionally, we look at co-production through commons-centred lenses, showing how urban commons enhance their everyday politics by engaging in relationships with local governments; and call this practice 'commons-led co-production' (Bianchi et al., unpublished). Thus, this study aims to advance the characterisation of the social practice of commons-led coproduction as well as analyse innovative processes of collaboration between the public administration, the SSE and urban commons. To characterize these social practices and governance structures, we examine which actors are involved and their collaborative relationships as well as the processes and structures framing collaboration.

The study draws on a previous project on commons initiatives in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (MAB) called *Commons co-production and territorial development in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona*, financed by the Càtedra Barcelona UPF on Política Econòmica Local (Ferreri et al., 2020). In this previous project, our research team mapped and characterized more than 1,100 citizen initiatives and carried out a preliminary qualitative analysis of their socio-environmental impact and the social network of the initiatives through two case studies. The project further provided public policy recommendations to promote local development oriented towards social and environmentally transformative territorial development. The results of the project yielded interesting statistical results on which this project is based. On the one hand, we found that commons initiatives[1] have a greater weight than expected as compared ot other citizen initiatives within the MAB (41% versus 39% for non-commons and 20% for "no data"), although they are unevenly distributed spatially . We also found that commons initiatives tend to collaborate more frequently with governments (41% versus 44% who do not) than non-

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[1] We considered commons initiatives those defined to be prosumer initiatives. In prosumer initiatives, the good or service is produced by the users themselves, at least in some phase of the productive process, which includes its governance.

commons initiatives, especially with local governments. Such collaboration, however, is sometimes marked by problems of mistrust and by the purely economic / instrumental nature of the collaboration (e.g. grants, delegated management of spaces). These results invited us to deepen our analysis to better understand the types of urban commons initiatives and their relationship with the public administration.

The results of the case studies of the previous project also inspired the current study. The case studies consisted, among other things, on the identification and visualization of the network of urban commons organizations in two municipalities. The municipalities were selected based on their similarity in the number and type of initiatives. However, the results indicated that the network structures are quite different, which invited us to ask ourselves about the importance of this structure in the operations of the initiatives. Also, the results indicated that the impacts of the initiatives are substantial and quite diverse, ranging from economic to social inclusion and environmental impacts. This further justified our interest in the potential of said initiatives to effectively with local governments.

1.2. Objectives and outline of the study

The objectives of the study are:

1) To improve our understanding of the commons phenomenon in the MAB and identify aspects that promote learning between the public administration and citizen-led organizations around the commons-led coproduction.

2) Identify the current advantages, disadvantages and challenges of commons-led coproduction approach as a new model of public administration and define with commons groups, policymakers and public administrators the characteristics of this model in the case of the MAB.

3) Design and implement an assessment framework to evaluate the commons-led coproduction approach.

In chapter 2, we characterize the urban commons of the MAB based on several characteristics such as their degree of internal democracy, their transformation aims, their internal transformation processes, the nature of the alternative, their production, their legal form and whether they collaborate with the public administration. In chapter 3 we identify existing commons-led coproduction processes in the MAB and explore their advantages, disadvantages and challenges. In chapter 4, we propose a methodology to analyse the dynamics and processes of commons-led coproduction at the local scale using an analytical framework based on the Theory of Collaborative Advantage (TCA) developed by Chris Huxham and Siv Vangen (Huxham, 2003; Vangen and Huxham, 2014). In chapter 5, we test this methodology on a particular neighbourhood of a city of Catalonia, the Centre-East neighbourhood of Sant Cugat del Vallès. Sant Cugat del Vallès is a city with social and critical mass on initiatives and also with a public administration willing to collaborate with them. However, not all urban common initiatives are eager to participate with the City Council. In a previous work, we mapped the urban commons initiatives present at Sant Cugat and explored them. We further mapped the social network of those commons initiatives, with a particular emphasis on the relationship with the local state. Here we analyse the dynamics, structures and processes characterizing the collaboration and the tensions underlying it that can hamper potential commons-led coproduction.

2. Concepts and experiences of urban commons in the MAB

Discussions of commons in developed industrial economies in the Global North have remarked the bewildering diversity of "goals and modes of operation" of commons in the supply of health care, carpooling, food, energy, insurance, and infrastructure like open source software (Berge and Mckean, 2015). Despite this diversity, collectives that self-organise are often represented as an indication of community responses to the failures of other forms and rationales of provision and distribution, like the welfare state and markets. Moreover, while some commons initiatives develop completely outside of welfare state or market relations, others have been associated with the third sector and the social and solidarity economies (Eynaud, 2016; Fernández and Miró, 2016; Guttmann, 2019).

Urban commons can be defined as physical urban spaces or services which are considered "community goods" or "local common goods" (Lapniewska, 2017; Harvey, 2012). Urban commons range from local parks, gardens, squares, local streets, and public spaces to a number of services such as public transportation, water service, urban health, gas and electric distribution with their facilities. These commons are very often created by local communities as a response to market and state failure in delivering quality goods and services. Citizens organize themselves and change the environment they live in by simulating imaginary cities they would like to inhabit (Foster and Iaione 2016).

We can distinguish three different academic schools working on the commons, including most prominently, the new-institutionalist economics school (Ostrom, 1990), the environmental justice school (Calvet-Mir and March 2019), and the Marxist school (Harvey, 2012; De Angelis, 2017; Federici, 2018). The different schools understand the commons as an organizational form through which a group of citizens self-organize to manage a material or immaterial resource. The main difference between the different schools relies on their object of research. New-institutional studies aim to understand whether and how citizens are able to design and change the rules that promote cooperation and collective management of shared resources (i.e., commons). The environmental justice school focuses on the political nature of commons initiatives as solutions to ecological distribution conflicts and their entanglements with social movements (Villamayor-Tomas and Garcia-Lopez 2018). The Marxist school is interested in understanding how the commons can develop a path of emancipation from capitalism by building an alternative mode of production to the state and the market. As defined by Caffentzis and Federici (2014), a commons' mode of production is distinguished by, inter alia, collective labour; commons must involve a 'commonwealth' in the form of shared natural and social resources used for non-commercial purposes; commons require a community who should not be selected on the basis of any privileged identity but rather on the basis of the care-work done to reproduce such commonwealth and regenerate what is taken from them; finally, commons should entail equal access to the means of (re)production and egalitarian decision making.

The "social" economy has as long roots as capitalism. According to Guttmann (2019), the French scholar and activist Charles Dunoyer was the first to provide the first recorded definition of social economy in his 1830 *Nouveau Traité d'Économie Sociale*. He defined it as "a network of cooperatives and mutual associations financially helping workers and consumers pay patronage dividends and pool enough income from every participant to invest in housing, fair distribution,

and addressing domestic and social conditions of each implicated body" (taken from Guttman, 2019). In its origins the aim of the social economy was thus to empower disadvantaged groups of workers through collective action to survive the difficult living conditions during the early phases of the industrial revolution and capitalism. More recently, the social economy has specifically referred to the economic activities of cooperatives, mutual associations, and similar types of self-help organizations.

The "solidarity" economy concept emerged much later and implies economic democracy and a high degree of participation of the members and workers of the initiatives. It involves a political project of transformation against capitalism, which is not distinctive of the social economy (Estivill and Miro, 2020). Solidarity economy is a concept under construction, which incorporates conceptual ideas from the *buen vivir* of Latin American communities and from the emerging feminist economy such as the notion of care and the role of women in the economy (Estivill and Miro, 2020). It also seeks the involvement of neighbourhood communities and local actors who are involved in territorial development. It contributed to the launch of the movement of 'cooperativism' during the 1980s. Jorge Schoster, a Colombian scholar, defined cooperativism as a sector with diverse enterprises that share common rationality based on cooperation, mutualism, and solidarity. The values of cooperativism reflected self-help, self-responsibility, equality, equity, democracy, and above all, solidarity. The work of Luiz Razeto, a Chilean scholar, brought a lot of international attention to create a global network of solidarity economies (For an in-depth analysis of the social and solidarity economy, see Guttmann, 2019).

In 1997, Latin American and European regions assembled the first international meeting for the globalization of solidarity in Peru that was made up of about 275 participants who passed the "Lima Declaration". The main objective of this meeting was to transform the economy of solidarity into a global project, with several groups from the social economy (such as cooperatives and mutual associations) being recognized as major contributors to this larger global movement. This international movement became later known as the Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Social and Solidarity (RIPESS). This was also the first major and global attempt to merge the Social Economy and the Solidarity Economy together, creating a new alternative economy known as the Social Solidarity Economy (SSE). Until today, RIPESS is the largest organization that represents SSE in the world, and the work created by RIPESS provides the most extensive overview of concepts and terms that define SSE today. Laville (2010:3) defines SSE as a "sphere of transnational activities and relations created by collective actors, such as social movements and civil society networks and organizations, that are independent of governments and private companies functioning outside of the state and the market."

In the Catalan context, a growing interest in the SSE has grown among social movement and civil society actors also due to the large number of SSE initiatives. The report *"L'economia Social i Solidària a Barcelona"* developed by Anna Fernàndez and Ivan Miró (2016) is a detailed explanation of the multiple initiatives of the social and solidarity economy currently existing in the city of Barcelona. They consider the social and solidarity economy as formed by different groups, such as labor, services, consumption, education, housing, and credit cooperatives; labour societies; the associations and foundations of the Third Social Sector; insertion companies and Special Work Centres; social security mutual and ethical finance societies; or community-led economies.

Guttmann (2019) argues that cooperatives have the potential to set an example of what a fair and equitable SSE model would look like. Therefore, cooperatives are crucial to the future of a thriving SSE sector, particularly if they are be capable of integrating with commons initiatives. According to Guttmann, both cooperatives and commons initiatives produce with goods and services; however cooperatives do it within the market economy, while commons would do it outside it.

While we agree with Guttmann´s (2019) interest in differentiating the SEE cooperatives from commons, these different categories often overlap in reality. Indeed, the organizational principles put forward by the International Cooperative Alliance's (ICA) are quite similar to Elinor Ostrom´s well-known design principles for robust common property regimes in the natural resource management context (Ostrom 1990), and the more recent co-city model developed by by Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione (2016) to feature urban commons.

In an attempt to understand "actually existing commons" (Eizenberg, 2012), as opposed to idealised purist versions of what urban commons should be, we explored the existing commons of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona and their characteristics.

2.1. The Metropolitan Area of Barcelona as territorial case study

The selected territorial case for this study is the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, an administrative delimitation that comprises 3.2 million inhabitants over 36 municipalities, including the City of Barcelona. It is one of the most densely populated urban areas in Spain and is characterised by wide wealth disparities and social and economic inequalities (see indicators of the MAB in *https://www.amb.cat/en/web/area-metropolitana/dades-estadistiques*). The choice of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona is grounded in established and recent history of the development of alternative modes of economic development and governance in its municipalities, as a key specific hotspot of wider regional dynamics, particularly since the 2008 global financial crisis (Varvarousis et al., 2020). The MAB, and particularly the city of Barcelona, has a long tradition of self-organization and community projects, which is the result of the legacy of different mobilizations and transformation agendas. These include the popular Athenaeums that emerged in the 19th century, which aimed to provide a space for the formation and cultural expression of the working class (Solà, 1978). They also include the long tradition of cultural and civic associations that emerged clandestinely during the Franco regime, becoming one of the backbones of the social and political life of the region and everywhere in Catalonia (Andreu, 2014). Of particular importance are the neighbourhood associations that fought for the improvement of lower income, working-class neighbourhoods, and undertook practices of self-management and self-construction of services that lacked in many neighbourhoods of cities in the MAB and throughout Catalonia. An example is the neighbourhood of La Verneda in which in the late 1960s they diagnosed the lack of services in their neighbourhood and decided to occupy a disused building and founded a school for adults (Sánchez Aroca, 1999).Finally, there is the influence of the mobilization of the 15M movement in 2011, which spread out from the events in Plaça Catalunya, across the different municipalities and neighbourhoods of the MAB and led to the creation of some community-led experiences, such as urban gardens, or reinforced local grassroots that already existed (García Espín, 2012).

The MAB context is an interesting case not only due to the abovementioned developments, but also due the recent developments in party politics and policy. The self-organising values and demands of the last wave of urban commons have entered regional and local political debates producing a set of policy innovations. Also from the 15M onwards, discourses in support of the commons have penetrated the action of the metropolitan and municipal authorities - also thanks to the presence of recently emerged left-wing political parties (i.e., Barcelona en Comú) linked to commons initiatives and strongly committed to supporting them, -resulting in the development of a series of policies aiming to consolidate commons initiatives.

In the previous project (Ferreri et al., 2020), we deployed an inductive approach of "actually existing" urban commons in the MAB from a meta-analysis of existing cartographies of citizen initiatives in the Metropolitan Area. The existence of this previous work, the historical tradition of the region as well as more recent networked territorializations of commons and commoning make the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona an exceptional case study for understanding both spatial articulation and relationship with local and regional governance.

2.2. Methods

2.2.1. Data collection

We selected 458 urban commons initiatives from a database elaborated in the previous project which consisted of 1160 citizen initiatives[2] of the MAB. These urban commons initiatives were selected based on their prosumer nature. In prosumer initiatives, the good or service is produced by the users themselves, at least in some phase of the productive process (which includes its governance). This does not mean that all users are also part of the productive process. Indeed, the use of the good or service may be open, meaning that there may be other users beyond those who are part of the initiative itself. . Other variables in the database included:

1. **Internal democracy**. Democratic decision making processes are key in the organization of commons initiatives.. We distinguish three degrees of internal democracy:
    a. **Without Internal Democracy**. There are clear protocols known by all the people who are part of the initiative about the decision-making processes and the consultative and binding processes have been differentiated.
    b. **Basic**. All the people in the initiative have periodic spaces of participation where decisions are made and sufficient information is offered to them to guarantee quality and equality in the decision making and evaluation of the work carried out.
    c. **Advanced**. The active participation of members is encouraged and/or methodologies are used to dynamize and facilitate meetings and joint workspaces.

2. **Transformation aim**: We understand that commons have the aspiration to produce some kind of long-term socio-environmental change through the promotion of alternative i.e., to

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[2] The previous project elaborated a database of citizens initiatives drawing on public data, sometimes open access, from 14 sources. For more information on the sources see the report Ferreri et al. (2020) Commons Coproduction and territorial development in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (p.11) in *https://igop.uab.cat/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020-14-04_Final-report_Commons-coproduction-web.pdf*

mainstream, models of development. We divided this aim into two levels, i.e., internal and external, and also into two dimensions, social and environmental.

  a. **Internal**. It refers to productive process and/or the management dynamics of the initiative itself:

      i. **Social**. The initiative guarantees decent working conditions and redistribution of income (wage ratio less than 5) and/or incorporates a feminist perspective (promoting content and/or measures with a gender perspective).

      ii. **Environmental**. The initiative incorporates ecological criteria in the production process and/or in its management (purchases and suppliers with ecological criteria, use of low impact materials, waste reduction, energy efficiency, etc.

  b. **External**. It refers to the ambition to generate changes beyond the initiative:

      i. **Social**. The will of the initiative is to promote social transformation, and this is made explicit in statutes, manifestos and internal or public documents, or is reflected in political advocacy activities and/or activities that respond to social needs.

      ii. **Environmental**. The initiative's aim is to promote environmental sustainability transformations, and this is made explicit in statutes, manifestos and internal or public documents, or is reflected in political advocacy activities and/or activities that respond to social needs.

3. **Nature of alternative.** A key definition of commons which emerges from the literature as much as from the initiatives themselves, and the ways in which they self-represent, is their nature or aspiration as alternatives to existing forms of provision of goods and services.

  a. **Alternatives to the Welfare State**: The initiative performs an alternative to goods or services that are produced within the framework of the Welfare State in one of its four pillars: education / health / social services / dependence.

  b. **Alternatives to the Market**: The initiative performs an alternative to the production of goods or services that are typically (i.e., in the MAB context) produced by the Market.

  c. **Alternatives to the State and the Market**: The initiative performs an alternative to goods or services that are not part of the four pillars of the Welfare State and that in our context can be produced by both the State and the Market.

4. **Production of goods or services**. This variable capture whether the initiative produces a good, service and/or knowledge. We thus distinguish between:

  a. **Good**. The initiative produces a material good (e.g., food).

  b. **Service**. The initiative produces a service (e.g., food distribution).

  c. **Good and service.** The initiative produce a material good and also offer a service.

  d. **Knowledge**. The initiative produce/offer knowledge (e.g., information, culture, historical memory).

5. **Relationship with the public administration**. This variable captures whether the initiatives collaborate with the public administration, including:

  a. **Local** administration (e.g., municipal governments, district goverments)

  b. **Supralocal** administration (e.g., regional government, state government)

  c. **Both**

6. **Legal form**. It indicates the legal form of the organization that promotes / manages the initiative (regardless of the existence or not of collaborators and / or funders).
   a. **Public administration**
   b. **Association**
   c. **Cooperative**
   d. **Business** (e.g., limited responsibility firm)
   e. **Foundation**
   f. **Platform, social movement or informal group**
   g. **Others**

7. **Sector**
   a. **Agroecology, energy and the environment**
   b. **Consulting, social finance and other products**
   c. **Culture and leisure**
   d. **Education and knowledge**
   e. **Health and mutual support**
   f. **Technology and logistics**
   g. **Housing**

The original database included missing data in variables (e.g., internal democracy, internal transformation) that we planned to use to further characterize the initiatives. Data had been originally collected mostly from existing databases (see in particular the PAM a PAM site) or the webpages facebook accounts of the initiatives (in case existing). In order to fill data gaps, we now expanded the search to any social media or webpage that would profile the initiatives. We also use the opportunity to double check that the initiatives were active by taking into account the existence of online publications in the last two years. Finally, we delivered an online survey to the initiatives for which we were not able to fill gaps online. We sent the survey to 120 initiatives and obtained a response rate of 36.67%.

2.2.2. Data analysis

In order to better understand the diversity of urban commons in the MAB we run a hierarchical cluster analysis. Cluster analysis or clustering is the task of grouping a set of objects (here urban commons initiatives) in such a way that objects in the same group (called a cluster) are more similar (in some sense) to each other than to those in other groups (or clusters). Hierarchical cluster analysis is a technique that groups objects intro clusters according to a logic of nesting (smaller groups within larger groups). A usual visual representation of hierarchical clusters is the dendrogram, which takes the form of a "decision tree" where each branch represents a group. The classification of objects, or urban commons initiatives into clusters can serve not only theoretical purposes (here, better conceptualizing urban commons in the MAB) but also practical ones, such as reducing the complexity of a dataset and make it more amenable for further analysis. Here, we use the results of the cluster analysis to explore the distribution of the initiatives (i.e., clusters) across sectors, spatially, and regarding coproduction (i.e., collaboration with governments at different levels).

To run the cluster analysis, we used the data from five of the collected variables that we deemed important to create types of urban commons that can potentially be extrapolated to other

2.2. Characteristics of the urban commons of the MAB

The cluster analysis resulted in the identification of 4 groups (see Figure 1). As shown in Figure 1, three of the clusters (1, 3 and 4) are more similar with each other and can be distinguished from cluster 2.

Figure 1. Dendrogram of urban commons in the MAB
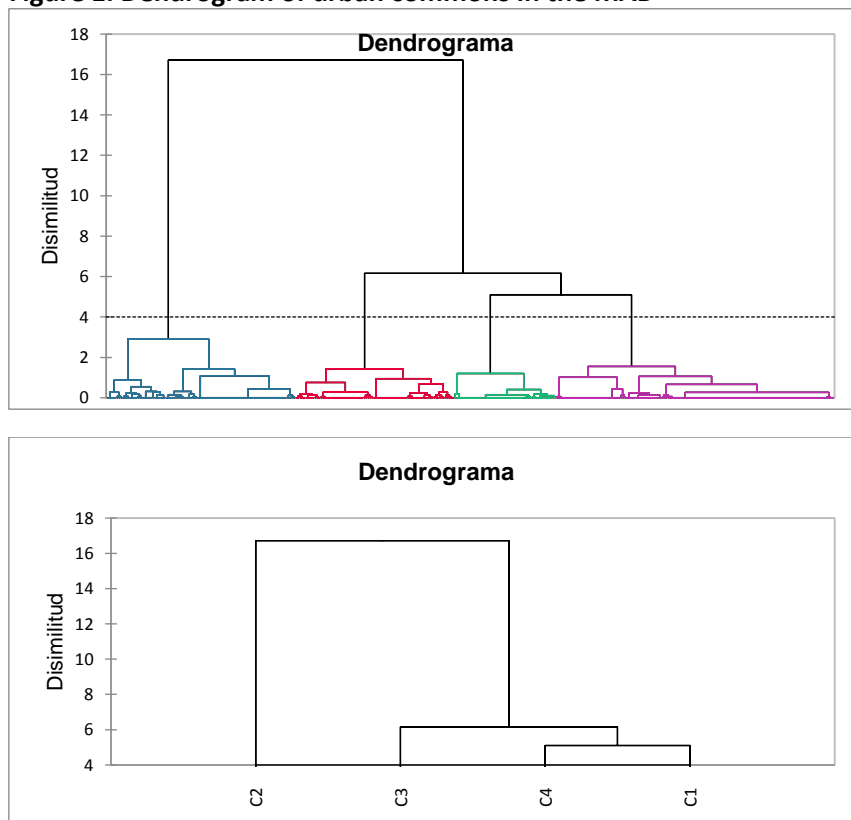
Uncontextualized analysis of clusters

A closer look at the dominant features behind each cluster (see Table 1) shows that the characteristics that discriminate the two "blocks" are "Internal democracy" and "Internal transformation". Cluster 2 tends to bear on no or basic internal democracy and on either no or just social internal transformation, while the rest of the clusters enjoy advanced internal democracy and socio-environmental internal transformation.

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Table 1. Number of cases per cluster across the features used in the Hierarchical Cluster Analysis

FEATURES	VALUES	CLUSTERS			
		C2	C3	C4	C1
Internal democracy	1	12	3	1	4
	2	46	11	4	20
	3	42	70	49	123
Production	Good	0	1	0	11
	Service	82	67	0	136
	Knowledge	7	10	2	0
	Good and service	11	6	52	0
Internal transformation	No	21	0	0	2
	Social	79	0	2	7
	Environmental	0	5	9	1
	Socio-environmental	0	79	43	137
External transformation	No	2	3	0	0
	Social	98	60	0	0
	Environmental	0	21	0	2
	Socioenvironmental	0	0	54	145
Nature of the alternative	No	1	0	1	1
	To the welfare state	17	12	14	4
	To the market	15	30	3	102
	To the welfare state and the market	67	42	36	40

Note: The clusters are ordered according to similarity (see also Fig 1). the numbers coloured in green indicate that the frequency of the values is higher than expected and the numbers coloured in red indicate that the frequency is lower than expected and both are significant. That is, if a group has a value in green, it could be said that it is characterized by that value. The light blue colour of the box represents the colour of cluster 2 and also covers the features that make cluster 2 different from the rest of the clusters. The light red colour of the box represents cluster 3 and also covers the features that make this cluster different from cluster 4 and 1. The light green colour of the box represents cluster 4 and also covers the features that make this cluster different from cluster 1.

Cluster 3, in turn, can be distinguished from clusters 4 and 1 based on the "production" and "external transformation" characteristics. Cluster 3 initiatives tend to fall within the knowledge production side and aim for either social or environmental external transformation. Clusters 4 and 1, on the other hand, are oriented to the production of goods and services and aim for socioenvironmental external transformation.

Finally, clusters 4 and 1 are mostly different with regard to the "nature of the alternative" and the "production". Cluster 1 initiatives are focused on providing alternatives to goods or services that are offered in the market, while cluster 4 includes more complex initiatives that provide both goods and services in alternative to both the state and markets.

Based on the above, one can start conceptualizing the 4 clusters as being more or less self-centered or "rooted" vs. outreaching, and more or less "radical" in its alternative to just the market or the welfare state or to both.

The clusters also distribute differently across sectors and legal form categories. As shown in Table 2, the two blocks can be also distinguished depending on their distribution across sectors.

Cluster 2 spreads quite broadly across the "culture and leisure", "education and knowledge", "health and mutual support" and "housing" sectors, while the rest of the clusters concentrate mostly around one sector. Clusters 4 and 1 concentrate around the "agroecology, energy and environment" sector, while cluster 4 does so around the "culture" sector.

In terms of legal form, it looks like the cooperative vs. platform/movement/informal group forms discriminate quite well cluster 3 and 1 (mostly cooperatives) from clusters 2 and 4 (mostly platform/movement/informal group).

Table 2. Distribution of clusters across sector and legal form categories

FEATURES	VALUES	CLUSTERS			
		C2	C3	C4	C1
Sector	Agroecology, energy and the environment	0	25	44	87
	Consulting, social finance and other products	6	5	0	16
	Culture and leisure	37	30	5	28
	Education and knowledge	12	8	1	4
	Health and mutual support	15	11	0	5
	Technology and logistics	5	2	0	5
	Housing	25	3	4	2
Legal form	Public administration	4	2	0	1
	Association	38	32	16	48
	Cooperative	5	23	7	38
	Business	2	0	0	1
	Foundation	0	1	0	0
	Platform, social movement or informal group	49	23	31	49
	Others	1	0	0	3
Collaboration with public authorities	No	61	46	29	115
	Local	21	27	22	16
	Supra-local	6	1	0	4
	Both	12	10	3	11

Contextualized analysis of clusters

Based on all the above we propose 4 types of commons, the generalizability of which would need to be tested in other contexts:

Social rights commons (cluster 2)

Ideal type

Internal democracy	Medium to high
Production	Service
Internal transformation	Social
External transformation	Social
Nature of the alternative	Market and State

This cluster stands out among all four for its both internal and external social transformation ambition (no environmental transformation ambition whatsoever). Another important feature that distinguishes this cluster from the other three is its low to mid internal democracy. It represents 100 initiatives of the database (52 out of which fit the ideal type). See Table 3 below for the list of cases that fit the ideal type.

More than half of the cases of this cluster are "Ateneus populars", "Casals Populars", and nodes of the "Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca" (Platform of People Affected by Mortgages; "PAH"; see all of them highlighted in light blue in Table 3).

The "ateneus" (athenaeums) and the "Casals" are very much related to the organization of civil and social rights movements that emerged during the nineteenth century in the aftermath of the industrialization in Europe, in response to the inability of the administrations to provide for basic educational and cultural services to the growing working class population. After a long period of latency, a number of "ateneus" and "casals" have been revamped in the last decades and constitute important examples of the organization of civil society in Catalunya. Their functioning is assembly-based and in some cases also include committee-like structures. The organization of cultural and leisure activities are their main functions as well as being a place of meeting, intercooperation and debate for social transformation among the social and political movements in the area. Most of these Athenaeums and Casals belong to the Network of Casals and Athenaeums of the Catalan Countries (*Xarxa de Casals i Ateneus dels Països Catalans*)[3].

The PAH has a more recent and contingent history, linked to the struggles that emerged in the aftermath of the 2008 crisis among socially vulnerable people who faced eviction and home repossession due to arrears in mortgage payments. This is fundamentally a social movement that crystalized into a more permanent, self-organized entity with multiple nodes across neighbourhoods and beyond the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. They are organized also on an assembly basis although they are not necessarily further organized into committees. Although based on a housing-related grievance, the PAH has also developed a broader discourse and activities that advocate for new legislation that guarantees housing rights. Other commons of this cluster also include occupied houses, time bank initiatives, and self-support groups, among others.

Social rights +eco commons (cluster 3)

Ideal type

Internal democracy	High
Production	Service and knowledge
Internal transformation	Socio-environmental
External transformation	Social or Environmental
Nature of the alternative	(all)

Just like the previous cluster, this cluster stands out among all four for its social external transformation ambition; it is also populated by a similar number of initiatives (84, 59 of which fit the ideal type; see Table 3 below). Contrary to the previous cluster, however, this cluster includes numerous cases with socio-environmental internal transformation ambition. Also

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[3] For a list of Athenaeums and Casals members of the Network, see https://www.casalsiateneus.cat/

distinctive is the proportionally higher presence of "knowledge provision" oriented (as opposed
to "service" or "good provision" oriented) cases.

This cluster is quite heterogeneous, and it is difficult to explain it by looking at groups within it.
A look at the cases that fit 100% the ideal type reveals some shared characteristics. Initiatives
with an internal socio-environmental transformation ambition (and external social
transformation ambition) are the most important in number (17 of the 59 ideal type cases) and
concentrate mostly in the cultural (12), and secondarily the educational (3) sectors (see in
orange in Table 3). Within the former, we find well-known socio cultural dynamization centres
and initiatives like L'Engranatge, La Ciutat Invisible, La Tòfona, Lafundició, Lleialtat Santsenca o
Metromuster. These centers have become to a great extent flagship of commons in the MAB
due to their visibility of their cultural and formative activities and their capacity to host a
diversity of events associated to other urban commons. Within the education sector there are
also well-known organizations like the Primary schools El Patufet or El Petit Molinet.

Most of the initiatives that are knowledge-provision oriented (10 cases) belong to the previous
group (environmental external transformation ambition and internal social transformation
ambition) and include some of the abovementioned centres like La Fundició, as well as networks
of knowledge exchange like the Xarxa d'Intercanvi de Coneixements i Serveis del Clot – Camp de
l'Arpa (see also in orange in Table 3).

Finally, there are quite some initiatives with internal socio-environmental transformation and
environmental external transformation ambition that are also worth pointing to (18 cases) and
include mostly agro-ecological cooperatives like Borronets, El Rec, or La Senalla Cooperative,
and groups like Coxino, Userda 9 or Cydonia. This group of cases is closer to the last of our
clusters, the food prosumers cluster (see initiatives in light pink for the cluster 3 in Table 3).

Overall, it looks like this cluster would be trading some of the political and social rights activism
of the previous cluster for some more emphasis on cultural dynamization and the promotion of
environmentally friendly practices among its members (but not necessarily beyond their
membership).

Niches of sustainability (cluster 4)

Ideal type

Internal democracy	High
Production	Goods and services
Internal transformation	Socio-environmental
External transformation	Socio-environmental
Nature of the alternative	Market and state

This cluster represents an important diversion from the previous two due to its both internal
and external socio-environmental ambition. It is also unique with regard to all other clusters for
hosting the highest percentages of initiatives that are both good and service-provision oriented
(96%); with advanced democracy (91%); and alternative to markets and the state (67%; similar
here with the social rights commons cluster). It is the least populated cluster, with 52 initiatives
(36 out of which fall within the ideal type; see Table 3 below).

This is the most homogeneous cluster among all four. It is mostly populated by self-organized, alternative urban gardens, such as the Hort Can Roger, the Hort Comunitary del Clot or the Huerto Plaça Catalunya (31; 86% of the cases that fit the ideal type; see in green in Table 3). Many of these gardens both produce and distribute the goods. Some of them (e.g., Hort de Can Batlló or Can Roger, among others) are also integrated in or host other commons projects (e.g., housing and cultural commons) and constitute spaces for political mobilization. Relatedly, most of these initiatives are barely formalized economically (e.g., into cooperatives or limited responsibility societies); they are mostly formalized into associations and platforms instead.

Overall, this cluster would be the closest to radical interpretations of 'the commons way', as experiments of decommodification and self-organization that prefigure socio-environmental sustainability alternatives to welfare capitalism for both service and good production.

Food prosumers (cluster 1)

Ideal type

Internal democracy	High
Production	Service
Internal transformation	Socio-environmental
External transformation	Socio-environmental
Nature of the alternative	Market

Just like the previous cluster, this cluster stands out for including a majority of cases with both internal and external socio-environmental transformation ambition. Contrary to the previous cluster, however, this cluster is limited to cases that are only service provision oriented and that constitute alternatives to market provision. It is also by far the most populated cluster, with 147 initiatives (84 of which fit 100% the ideal type; see Table 3 below).

This is a relatively homogeneous cluster. The group that fits the best with the ideal type of this group includes mostly consumer groups and exchange markets (60 cases; 77% of the ideal type cases), such as La Civada, La Cebolla Roja, La Cistella, La Seca, La Trilla, o Verdures Roges (see initiatives in light pink in Table 3). These consumer groups represent an alternative to large distribution corporations (e.g., supermarkets) and also to the food distribution market. They enter into arrangements with agro-ecological food producers to distribute their products among their membership on a seasonal and very local basis. They are relatively formalized into either cooperatives or associations.

Also within the ideal type group there is also a very small set of initiatives (6) that echo some of the initiatives included in the sustainability niches and social rights clusters. These initiatives include the well-known communal/occupied houses Can Masdeu and Can Batlló, and ateneus like La Base or La Bobila (see initiatives in grey Table 3 for this cluster). As per our database, the main difference between these initiatives and the initiatives included in the other two clusters have to do with their focus exclusively on services and their socio-environmental transformation ambition, respectively.

Overall, although this cluster shares a both internal and external socio-environmental transformation ambition with the niches of sustainability cluster, its scope would seem less integral or radical, and limited instead to the articulation of out-of-the-market

exchange/distribution circuits, mostly in the food sector. Maybe because of this, this cluster fits better than the niches of sustainability cluster the cooperative form (as opposed to the platform form).

Table 3. Lists of commons initiatives that correspond to the ideal types of each cluster

Cluster	Cases
Social rights commons (cluster 2)	Ateneu de Nou Barris
	Ateneu Popular de les Corts
	Ateneu Popular l'Eixample
	Ateneu Popular Octubre
	Casal de Joves Guineueta
	Casal independentista La Cruïlla
	Casal Popular Tres Lliris
	El Rec – Ateneu Popular del Fort Pienc. (desallotjat)
	PAH Badalona
	PAH Badia del Vallès
	PAH Barberà del Vallès
	PAH CORNELLÀ
	PAH ESPLUGUES
	PAH MOLINS DE REI
	PAH MONTCADA I REIXACH
	PAH RIPOLLET
	PAH Sant Cugat del Vallès
	PAH SANT FELIU DE LLOBREGAT
	PAH SANT VICENÇ DELS HORTS
	Banc del Temps de Gràcia
	Banc Del Temps Dreta de l'Eixample i Fort Pienc
	Babàlia
	500×20
	Confederació de Cooperatives de Catalunya
	La Tinta
Social rights +eco commons (cluster 3)	La Tòfona
	Xarxa de Consum Solidari
	Associació Mujeres pa`lante
	Barceloneta Proa a la Mar
	Coop57
	Taula Eix Pere IV
	Antic Forn de Vallcarca
	Associació Cultural Casa Orlandai
	Ateneu Layret
	Ateneu Popular de Sarrià
	Casal de Joves Queix
	Casal popular 3 voltes rebel
	Centre de Cultura de Dones Francesca Bonnemaison (La Bonne)
	Directa, sccl
	El Lokal
	Espai Obert Ca la Sisqueta
	L'Engranatge
	La ciutat invisible

	Lafundició Lleialtat Santsenca Metromuster Zumzeig cine cooperativa El Petit Molinet Trama Xarxa d'Intercanvi de Coneixements i Serveis del Clot – Camp de l'Arpa El Monstre de Paper. Associació per la Criança compartida Titània Tascó
	Arrels, Cooperativa de Consum Crític Carmela Verdulera Col i Nata Col·lectiu de consum agroecològic Pinyol Vermell - Ateneu Independentista i popular La Torna Consum Ecològic Faves Comptades Cooperativa Borronets Cooperativa de consum El Rusc Cooperativa El Borró Cooperativa El Rec Cooperativa Giras-sol de Sant Martí Cooperativa La Senalla Cooperativa Pam a Pam CooXino Cydonia Userda 9 Valldures VERDnou Verduretes
	ACFAMES Associació de Familiars de Malalts Mentals de Catalunya Ateneu Entrebanc Ateneu Llibertari de Gràcia Ateneu Llibertari La Filosa Ateneu Mulei Banc de temps de la Sagrera Banc Solidari d'Intercanvi de Serveis Grup d'usuaris Programari Lliure Llefià La Cinètika La Electrodomèstica Xarxa d'Intercanvi (Xic) de Can Cuiàs MAKERCONVENT
Niches of sustainability (cluster 4)	Akí me planto: Sant Andreu, Can Valent connect HORT Espai polivalent Espai Gardenyes Hort bé

	Hort Can Roger
	Hort Comunitari de Clot
	Hort del Xino
	Hort Fort pienc
	Hort Indignat del Poblenou
	Hortantoni
	Huerto Plaça Catalunya
	L'hort urbà dels Lluïsos de Gràcia
	L'hortet de la l'Autònoma
	L`Hort de Cologne: Colonia Castells, Les Corts
	L`Hortet del Forat
	Porta'm a l'Hort
	Poblenou II
	Poblenou IV
	Poblenou VI
	Poblenou VII, Jardins de McGyver
	Hort Sec
	Vallcarca
	Hort de Can Batlló
	Torre del Moro
	La Experimental
	Ágora Juan Andrés
	La Vanguardia
	Solar de la Puri
	Skamot Verd
	HorTaxonera
	Pomaret
	Quirhort
	La Borda
	Grup local Som Energia Badalona
	Grup local Som Energia Barcelona
Food prosumers (cluster 1)	El Plat
	Xarxa d'Aliments de l'Assemblea de la Vila de Gràcia30 Panxes
	Acció Hortera
	Associació de consum ecològic La Pastanaga de Mas Rampinyo
	Besos Verd
	Carxofa Rebel
	Catifa Verda
	Cistell bio UAB
	Cistellaires El Brot
	Cooperativa Esplet
	Cooperativa La Fresca
	Cooperativa La Vinya
	Ecoaranyó
	Ecocoope
	El Bròquil del Gòtic
	El Cabàs
	El Cabàs de Cerdanyola
	El Carretó

El Cistell de l'Alegria
El Garrofer
El Guaret
El Llevat de Nou Barris
El Llevat de Nou Barris (Nucli Gràcia)
El Llevat de Nou Barris (Nucli St. Andreu)
El Rebost del Delta
El Senglar
Estèvia
Faves Comptades
Germinal Farró
Germinal Poble Sec
Germinal Sants
Germinal Sarrià
Grup de consum Cals Karxofa
Grup de consum de Gràcia de la Cooperativa XCS
Grup de consum de la Xarxa de consum solidari de l'Eixample esquerra
Grup de Consum Ecològic de Biologia
I un rave!
L'Aixada
La Carbassa
La Cebolla Roja
La Cistella
La Civada
La cooperativa del Clot
La iaia Mercè. ASiA
La Sardineta. Grup d'ecoconsum de la Barceloneta.
La Seca
La Trilla
La Unió del Poblenou - La Datzira
Les Horteres de la Ribera
Les Verdures de Roxanne
Les Vinyes de Can Roquetes
Mespilus
Panxacontenta
Ridorta
S'ha acabat el Bròquil
Tota Cuca Viu
Travalera
Verdures Roges
Xarxa de Consum Solidari – El Congrés
Xarxa de Consum Solidari – Santa Eulàlia
Xarxantoni
Trocasec
EcoXarxes Barcelona
Associació Cal Temerari
Ateneu La Base
Ateneu La Bòbila
Banc Expropiat

| | Can Batlló |
	Can Masdeu
	Grup Ecos
	EcoRocaguinarda
	Cooperasec
	Cooperativa Mujeres Pa'lante
	Observatori del Deute en la Globalització
	L'economat social
	La Fusteria de Can Batlló
	La igualitària
	mésOPCIONS
	La Garrofera de Sants
	El Rusc
	Arcàdia
	Calàbria 66

Notes: Note: Each colour but the grey colour represent the colours of each cluster. The initiatives that are coloured constitute relatively homogenous groups within each cluster that in our view represent well the context of the cluster.

Spatial distribution of clusters within the MAB and Barcelona

An exploration of the distribution of initiatives representing the ideal types of the different clusters within the MAB is also revealing (see Figure 2). Expectedly, most of them concentrate in Barcelona, followed by Sant Cugat, Hospitalet the Llobregat, Santa Coloma, Badalona y el Prat the Llobregat. The cluster of "Social rights +eco" commons are present in all these municipalities. They also tend to coexist with the "Social rights" commons more frequently than not in the municipalities.

A detailed look at the Barcelona´s case (see Figure 3) also reveals an unequal distribution of commons across the city´s neighbourhoods. Vila de Gracia, Poble Sec, Raval, Sant Pere-Caterina-Ribera, Sants and la Dereta del Eixample display the highest concentrations. Vila de Gracia displays the highest concentration of "Food prosumer", "Social rights" and "Niches of sustainability" commons, and Poble sec displays the highest concentration of "Social rights +eco" commons. The concentration of "Niches of sustainability" commons is also relatively high the Gotic and Poblenou neighborhoods.

Figure 2. Distribution of initiatives belonging to different clusters and with different relationship with public authorities across the MAB
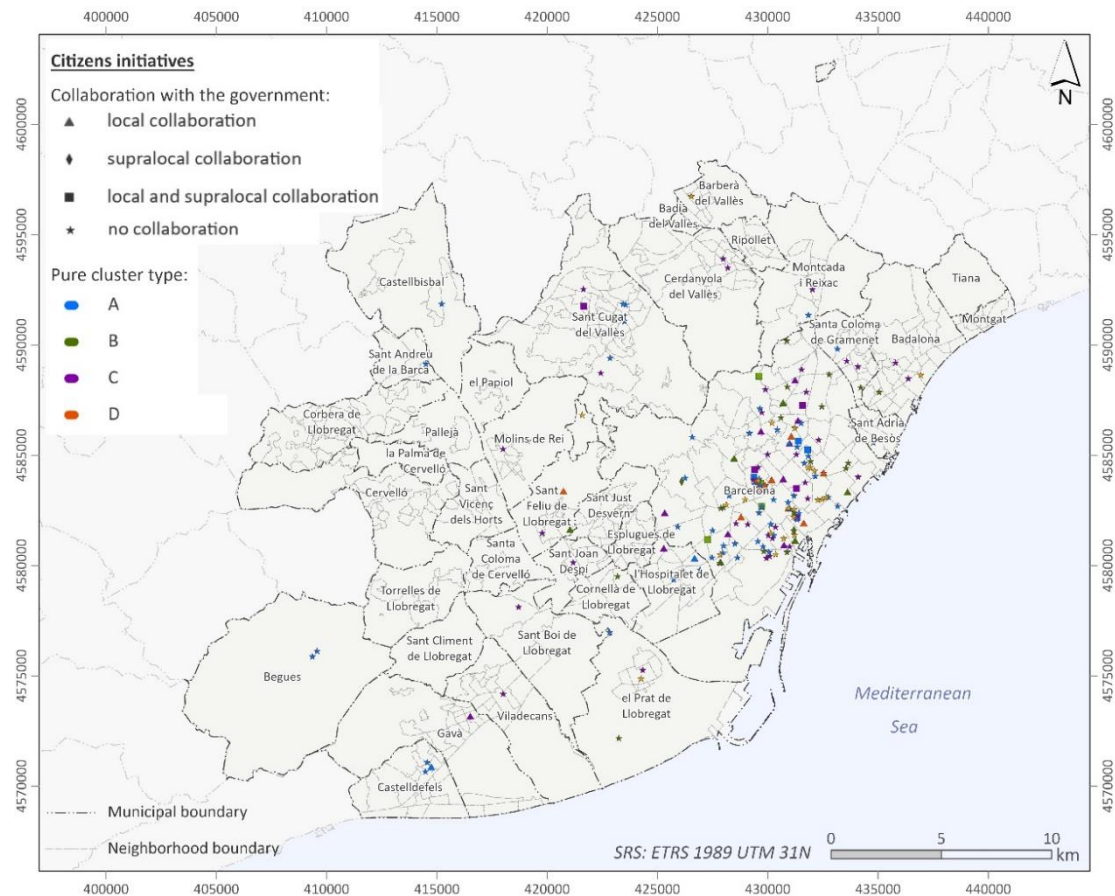
Note: Cluster A: Food prosumer; B: Social right commons; C: Social right +eco commons; D: Niches of sustainability
Elaborated by Marta Borrós (ICTA-UAB)
Sources: PROCOMU databas; *Base municipal de Catalunya 1:5000*, Generalitat de Catalunya - Direcció General d'Administració Local (DGAL) and Institut Cartogràfic i Geològic de Catalunya (ICGC) https://www.icgc.cat/, 2020; *Mapa de barris metropolitans*, Institut d'Estudis Regionals i Metropolitans de Barcelona (IERMB), https://iermb.uab.cat/, 2016.

Clusters and coproduction experiences

A look at associations between the clusters and collaboration with public authorities points to some patterns of co-production (see Table 2). The "Social rights" commons tend to concentrate (in relative terms) more experiences of co-production when this takes place with supra-local authorities. This is not surprising given the tradition of this type of commons in the MAB and the organization of many of them (Ateneus Populars, PAH, Casals) into second order organizations.

The "Food prosumer" commons stand out for their general lack of experiences of co-production with either local or supra-local governments. This aligns with their narrow focus out-of-the-market exchange/distribution circuits in the food sector (consumer groups) and their expectedly less radical external socio-environmental transformation ambition, i.e. as compared to, e.g, the "niches of sustainability" commons. Correspondingly, the "Social rigts +Eco" and the "Niches of sustainability" commons share a relatively high proportion of co-production experiences which would align precisely with their more ambitious external transformation agenda.

A look at the distribution of the clusters and their collaboration with public authorities is also revealing (see symbols in Figures 2 and 3). Most of the collaborations between commons initiatives and public authorities are located within the Barcelona city. This does not seem to be just an artefact of the higher concentration of commons initiatives in this city. Indeed, there are almost no examples of coproduction in either Sant Cugat, Santa Coloma, Badalona or el Prat the Llobregat, which also hold a relatively high concentration of commons initiatives.

A closer look at the Barcelona case reveals also differences across neighbourhoods. Vila de Gracia holds the highest proportion of experiences of commons-coproduction, mostly with local authorities, or with both local and supra-local authorities. Sant Pere-Caterina-Ribera also includes a relatively large proportion of collaboration experiences. All this is in stark contrast with the cases of Raval or Poble Sec and to a lesser extent with Sants and la Dereta del Eixample, which hold almost none or relatively few experiences of coproduction, respectively.

Figure 3. Distribution of initiatives belonging to different clusters and with different relationship with public authorities across Barcelona´s neighbourhoods.
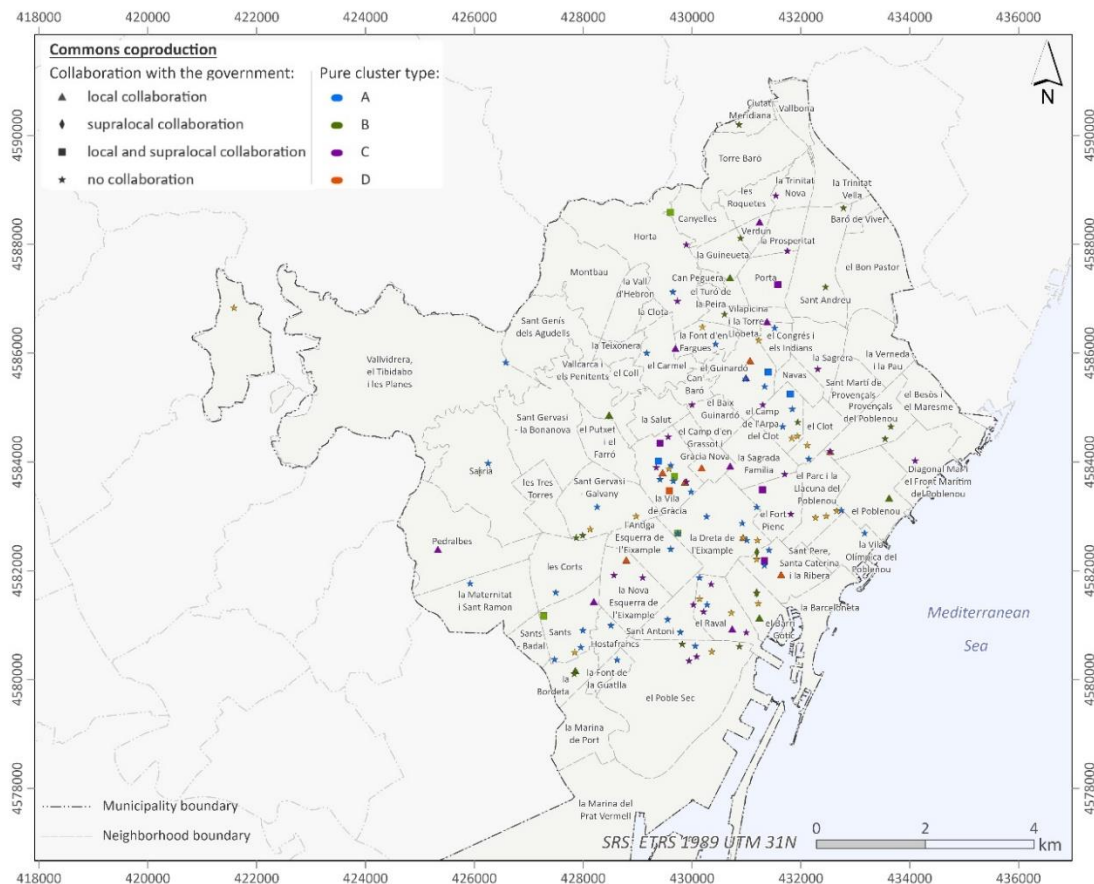
Note: Cluster A: Food prosumer; B: Social right commons; C: Social right +eco commons; D: Niches of sustainability
Elaborated by Marta Borrós (ICTA-UAB)
Sources: PROCOMU databas; *Base municipal de Catalunya 1:5000*, Generalitat de Catalunya - Direcció General d'Administració Local (DGAL) and Institut Cartogràfic i Geològic de Catalunya (ICGC) https://www.icgc.cat/, 2020; *Mapa de barris metropolitans*, Institut d'Estudis Regionals i Metropolitans de Barcelona (IERMB), https://iermb.uab.cat/, 2016.

3. Conceptualization of commons-led coproduction and experiences in the MAB

The emergence and establishment of commons initiatives in Catalonia build on a long tradition of citizen participation in municipal policy making and administration. Since the end of the last century, local governments in Catalonia have promoted participatory governance through consultation with the aim of informing and listening to citizens. This, however, does not seem to have satisfied citizen needs and demands of more recent times (Parés et al., 2015). Evidence points to the need of new forms of participation that make citizens co-responsible for the entire process of designing and implementing public policies and make the process more transparent and democratic. The idea of co-production responds to this need. Unlike co-governance (participation of civil society and private actors in the processes of elaboration and planning of public policies), co-production refers to the mechanisms through which citizens lead the production of services with the involvement of the public sector (Pestoff, 2014). Public sector involvement can be direct (as part of the production process) or indirect (through various instruments such as regulation, funding, or fiscal stimulus). In co-production processes, therefore, citizens take a central role, and are actively involved both in the design of the co-produced services or goods (diagnosis, decision, planning) and in their implementation. In other words, co-production has to do with the active involvement of citizens both in the definition of problems to be solved and in the production of goods and services of a public nature.

As pointed out by Sorrentino et al. (2018:277), the term coproduction "lacks conceptual and definitional clarity, given that it is used to refer to a variety of collaborative governance arrangements that can involve a wide range of actors in a wide range of activities of the public service cycle". Much of the mainstream literature on co-production (see Evans, 1996; Ostrom, 1996) understood it as a 'process through which inputs used to produce a good or service are contributed by individuals who are not "in" the same organization' and are built on the notion that synergistic relationships can be created between the state and civil society in the production of goods and services.

Criticisms have risen against the theoretical ambiguity of coproduction and its openness towards privatisation (McMillan et al., 2014; Becker et al., 2017; Turnhout et al., 2020). As a response, some authors have complemented the scholarship on co-production with research on urban commons and processes of 'commoning' to settle the debate in favour of alternatives to privatization and markets. Becker et al. (2017) argue that the notion of urban commons addresses the critique directed towards co-production by addressing explicitly questions of ownership and the character of the service provided (e.g. common good); and gives clarity on the model of urban governance promoted (collaboration between the state and urban commons). Hence, commons-led co-production (Bianchi et al., unpublished) is understood as the practices of commons-state interaction that enhance commons' everyday politics (Arampatzi, 2017a; Roussos, 2019), i.e. the processes through which commons build alternatives and spread their values through everyday collective action.

In Barcelona and the MAB, the 2008 crisis triggered an important wave of commons and commons co-production initiatives (Pera, 2020). A paradigmatic example of this wave is the *School of the Commons* (Escola dels Comuns de Catalunya), . The *School* is a horizontal platform

for the production, exchange and dissemination of knowledge resulting from communal management of squares, gardens, software, or digital information. Since 2011, they have organized bi-monthly training sessions around different topics such as commons and democracy and public space, commons and the market, natural commons, digital commons, models of commons governance, economic sustainability, etc.

At the same time, the SSE sector has gained visibility and institutional recognition. From in 2016, the Generalitat and many city councils have actively promoted the SSE. In many cases, commons initiatives have benefited from the new SSE-sponsoring policies. For instance, in addition to the creation of a network of Athenaeums, the Barcelona City Council approved the first strategic plan to boost the SSE (2016-2019), with 124 actions planned. At the same time, councils from other municipalities have initiated a Network of Municipalities for the Social and Solidarity Economy (XMESS) with the aim of developing SSE policies across their jurisdictions. Constituted formally in May 2017, the Network includes now more than fifty municipal members. These experiences have benefited from and contributed to the institutionalization of a commons discourse across local and supra-local levels of government, also thanks to knowledge exchange and political forums.

In our research, we have looked at instances of commons and their overlaps and interactions with the SEE and local administrations, to identify existing commons-led coproduction processes in the MAB and explore their advantages, disadvantages and challenges.

3.1 Methods

We initially identified the experiences of urban commons initiatives that collaborate with the public administration at the MAB through a web-based search. We realised that most of this collaboration takes place within the framework of second-order entities, that is, entities that bring together urban commons initiatives. In order to have a good understanding of the commons-led coproduction experiences happening at the MAB, we carried out thirteen interviews with representatives of the Solidarity Economy Network *(Xarxa d'Economia Solidària, XES)* and its local groups in the MAB, the Cooperative Athenaeums *(Ateneus Cooperatius)* of the MAB, and local and supra-local administrations of the MAB who are developing public-community-cooperative collaboration projects. We did two interviews with representatives of the XES, one interview with a cooperative and six interviews covering all the Cooperative Athenaeums of the MAB: Coòpolis-Ateneu Cooperatiu de Barcelona; La Col·lectiva - Ateneu Cooperatiu de l'Hospitalet, Ateneu Cooperatiu del Baix Llobregat; Ateneu Cooperatiu del Vallès Occidental; Ateneu Cooperatiu del Barcelonès Nord. We further interviewed five representatives of the public administration, such as the General Director and a technician of the Department of Social Economy of the Generalitat de Catalunya, a representative of the Network of Municipalities for the Social and Solidarity Economy (*Xarxa de Municipis per l'Economia Social i Solidària*, XMESS), a representative of the Citizen Assets Program *(Patrimoni Ciutadà)* of the Barcelona City Council, two representatives of the Commissioner of Social Economy of Barcelona City Council, and a representative of Barcelona Activa and researcher specialized in responsible public procurement at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. The aim of conducting these interviews was to analyse the existing (or potentially existing) co-

production processes between the urban common initiatives and the public administration in the MAB, how the interviewees perceived this collaboration, to know their opinion regarding the advantages and disadvantages as well as the challenges of this new form of management and the necessary conditions to advance in commons-led coproduction. We also collected insights on the internal organization and collective action of urban common initiatives to promote said co-production.

To delve into the challenges and potential of public-community-cooperative management, we co-organised a seminar within the 5th Summer School of the Network of Solidarity Economy together with the Training Commission of the Network of Solidarity Economy (XES), the Network of Municipalities for the Social and Solidarity Economy (XMESS) and the Atheneum Cooperative of the Vallès Occidental. The seminar took place on the 17th June from 4pm to 6pm virtually.[4] It had five speakers. The first speaker was Ivan Miro, a sociologist and cooperativist member of the XES, who delved into this new form of management, where it comes from and what strategy and conditions are needed to move forward on public-community-cooperative management. The second speaker, Jaume Salmerón, Councilor at the City Council of Arbúcies, explained the process of remunicipalization of the Home Care Service in Arbúcies and its management by a public cooperative. He identified the difficulties and challenges they had and the public policy tools that have been generated to support and increase stability in cooperative and community processes. Afterwards, Miguel Doñate, Councilor for the Social Economy and Public Procurement in the municipality of Cabrils, gave a brief summary of the conclusions of the Seminar organized by the XMESS and the Association of Auditors. He explained the main challenges identified to advance in the public-community-cooperative management and the tools that are being developed to address them. Fourth, Sara Maestre Andrés, a researcher at the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ICTA) of the Autonomous University of Barcelona and member of the Commons-led coproduction project, explained a methodology they have developed to evaluate the collaborative processes needed to establish this form of management and the preliminary results of its implementation in the case of the municipality of Sant Cugat del Vallès. Finally, Jordi Estivill, a sociologist, cooperativist and founder of RIPESS-Europe, spoke about how this form of management is being deployed in France, Italy, Great Britain and Portugal.

3.2. Experiences of commons-led coproduction in the MAB

Several commons-led coproduction experiences have been identified in the MAB. We describe here the main ones:

i) The Citizen Assets Program (*Programa de Patrimoni Ciutadà)* of the Barcelona City Council

The Citizen Assets policy was approved in 2016 and aims to provide a response from the Barcelona City Council to all those experiences of citizen-led organization that manage a municipally owned space. This policy creates a political and administrative framework to consolidate, protect and promote community-managed spaces, which had until then emerged rather spontaneously across districts in Barcelona. These spaces range from empty slots and

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[4] The seminar can be seen online at https://peertube.plataformess.org/videos/watch/e8473ec4-2659-46b6-8b0b-c71d5c85f94d.

premises to a municipal facilities. In the own words of the Program, its main goal is "Supporting, encouraging and consolidating the community use and management of municipal public assets through the construction of an institutional and regulatory framework that allows the recognition and promotion of citizens' experiences of community use of the public goods" (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2017:3). The Program is an innovative policy because, among other things, it aims to introduce the notion of "commons" in public policy, understood as the "assets that belong to a community, with strong social ties and local roots, based on the practice of solidarity at an intergenerational scale; and assets managed through participatory and democratic governance, which give a renewed prominence to different collectives" (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2017:4).

Beyond the protection of citizen assets, or commons, the Program aims to create "new forms of interaction between the public municipal institution and community citizen initiatives" (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2019:2) through the establishment of standardized mechanisms based on democracy, transparency and community empowerment that respond to the existing practices or new demands for citizen management of municipal spaces. In other words, the Citizens Assets Program contributes to the transfer of public assets from the City Council to citizen groups by formalizing "a clear and coordinated commitment between different areas and districts of the municipal administration" (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2019: 2).

The Citizen Assets Program involves three types of experiences: the Civic management, the Empty Plots Plan and the transfer of premises.

The Civic Management consists of the transfer of city-owned facilities to grassroots non-profit organizations. This is formalized via an agreement between both parties, which, among other things, guarantees that the social centres have economic and infrastructural stability. Civic Management centres present a variegated scope of activities, ranging from cultural centres, youth centres and sports centres. Paradigmatic examples include, among others, the community center of *Casal del Pou de la Figuera* in the district of Ciutat Vella, or the youth centre of *Casal de joves de la Prosperitat* in the Nou Barris district.

The last decade has witnessed a burst of civic managed facilities, summing a total of 56 of them in the city of Barcelona in 2019 (Pera, 2020). Civic management facilities have, however, a longer history that can be traced back to the 1970s and the approval in 1999 of the Municipal Charter of Barcelona, which recognized the Civic management category (*Carta Municipal de Barcelona,* article 34). The Charter establishes that the City Council of Barcelona can transfer the management and provision of some services to the organized population with public funding to offer a service to the population. In 2015, the city government approved a Guidance of Civic Management (*Bases de Gestió Cívica)* to, among other things, standardize and add transparency to the allocation of available facilites to citizen organizations across districts (Pera, 2020).

The Empty Plots Plan began in 2012 and focuses on the transfer of underused real state plots (12 in the first edition) to community-led organisations for temporary use, initially three years (Cruz and Martínez, 2016). Most plots are empty only temporally; they are supposed to host new public facilities in the long run, or are affected by municipal planning plans that have not yet entered into force (Baiges, 2016). The community-led initiatives that won the transfer of empty plots presented community projects from different fields, such as social, sports, community, and in many cases urban gardens, all of them open to citizen participation. Thus,

the Plan aims to give use to abandoned spaces, and at the same time respond to the demands of grassroots initiatives to develop their projects (Cruz and Martínez, 2016). A second edition of the Plan started in 2015, including six more plots (Barcelona City Council, 2016). Paradigmatic spaces in the Plan are a community garden called *Espais Gardenyes* in Sarrià-Sant Gervasi district, and *Espai Germanetes* which is a socio-cultural project that has an urban garden and also a space for cultural events, and one of the oldest of this kind of experiences in the city.

The assignment of public assets consists of transferring available spaces to community-led organisations to allow the development of their activities. Assignments are usually made through agreements with a wide variety of non-profit grassroots initiatives. It is developed through the Local Plan Program approved in 2012, or through other existing mechanisms belonging to the management of the city's districts. One of the iconic examples is Can Batlló, which is an area of industrial buildings that had been abandoned and that the neighbourhood recuperated to develop different citizen projects, training, social and solidarity economy, cultural activities, etc. There are also other examples of smaller premises that correspond to neighbourhood organizations.

Currently, in 2021, and according to the interview done to a political representative responsible for the Citizen Assets program, the different bodies and processes of the Program have been implemented or will soon be implemented:

- The Citizen Assets Board: an internal body in the City Council of Barcelona that aims to coordinate the different areas that work with any of the self-organized initiatives included in the Citizen Assets program. This body looks for the standardization of the criteria for the selection and the assessment of the organizations that demand a public space to develop their project.

- The Community Monitor mechanism: An assessment tool that help to evaluate the performance of the projects. It has been created in collaboration with members of self-organized initiatives that participate in the Citizen Assets program. This mechanism is composed by a series of indicators that aim to evaluate the characteristics of the work developed by the self-organized initiatives emphasizing their transformative character and community work.

Two other tools that are being developed and will be soon ready to be implemented are the Citizens Assets Catalogue, which lists all the assets that are currently concessioned to non-profit organizations and the characteristics of the concession. The second tool is the Citizen Assets Office that will offer support to the experiences of citizens-led organisations included in the Citizen Assets Program.

ii)Projects of the Direction of Socioeconomic Innovation of Barcelona Activa and the Commissioner for the Social and Solidarity Economy of the Barcelona City Council.

Most projects of the Direction of Socioeconomic innovation are developed together with the relevant entities of the Social Economy. These coproduction processes are binding, i.e., entities can make changes, modifications and incorporate new issues, although it requires the final approval by the public administration. There is a direct relationship between the team leading the projects and the initiatives involved. Clear examples of coproduction processes in the development of public policy are, *inter alia*, the Strategy 2030 of the Social and Solidarity Economy which has been developed together with the entities of the Social Economy; the first version of the Municipal Instruction of earmarked contracting (*Instrucció Municipal de*

contractació reservada) which was carried out in collaboration with the relevant entities. The Municipal Instruction is an instrument to promote the City Council's contracting of insertion companies and special work centres. Another example is the Sustainable Public Procurement Plan for 2022 which was presented in a Public Procurement Table with the participation of SSE entities, especially second-level ones. They also have a line of subsidies for entities of the SSE. In 2016, the XES demanded to the new municipal government of Barcelona en Comú, the creation of an SSE Commissioner with management autonomy, its own budget and the capacity to draw up a policy of promotion for the SSE. A first Plan was developed and it was inspired by 14 measures elaborated by the XES to promote SSE through public policy and established for the first time an open and equal negotiation with the City Council to define a SSE Strategy in the city.

iii) The Cooperative Atheneums programs at the MAB scale.

The Catalan Network of Cooperative Athenaeums is made up of 14 athenaeums and more than 360 public, private and community-led entities that are articulated into SSE networks throughout the whole Catalonia to dynamize and create collective, democratic, just and solidary socio-economic relations and to contribute to the strengthening and growth of economic activity as well as the creation of quality jobs.

The Network is steered by the Department of Labour, Social Affairs and Families which promotes the public-cooperative-community collaboration to generate collective entrepreneurship, new projects in the SSE and social transformation, as well as jobs of quality. It is funded by the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Spanish Ministry of Work and Social Economy. The origin of the Cooperative Athenaeums is the Aracoop program of the General Directorate of Social Economy of the Generalitat, which was convened in 2013 and since 2016 implemented two lines of actions: the athenaeums and the so-called singular projects.

The General Directorate of Social Economy, the Third Sector and Cooperatives of the Generalitat de Catalunya has created axes within the framework that regulates the workings of the Athenaeums, including: action, formation, public awareness, support, transformation, entrepreneurship, frame of company, management entities, institutes and associations, and transformation of companies in cooperatives, and are equal for everyone. The Athenaeums are managed by the local SSE networks themselves and promote the intercooperation. They are composed by the networked entities, which are the ones that receive part of the subsidy and are represented in the technical team that develops the core axes of the subsidy. There are also collaborating entities within the territory with which the network entities establish agreements and develop join actions.

In the MAB, there are five Cooperative Athenaeums: the Coòpolis-Ateneu Cooperatiu de Barcelona; La Col·lectiva - Ateneu Cooperatiu de l'Hospitalet; Ateneu Cooperatiu del Baix Llobregat; Ateneu Cooperatiu del Vallès Occidental and Ateneu Cooperatiu del Barcelonès Nord. The Athenaeums have constituted an informal third-level organisation to develop joint work between the Athenaeums and negotiate with the General Directorate. They are jointly discussing with the General Directorate the necessary improvements to the functioning of the Program and the structure and function of this public service. The agreements are also shared and discussed later with the rest of actors of the SSE, such as within the Catalan Association of Social Economy (*Associació d'Economia Social de Catalunya*, AESCAT) and the Table of the Third

Sector. The Athenaeums were based on an annual call which will be extended to a three-years call to give more stability to the entities composing them.

The Coòpolis-Ateneu Cooperatiu de Barcelona covers the whole area of the city of Barcelona. It is composed by ten cooperatives or associations of cooperatives. It is located in the Can Batlló, a community socio-cultural centre. The assembly of citizens of the Sants neighbourhood in the city of Barcelona formed Can Batlló in 2010-11. In 2014, members and several cooperatives did a process to identify the necessities in the neighbourhood, and creating a cooperative athenaeum was one of them. Within Coòpolis, there is the Impuls Sants platform which group together the cooperatives of Sants and has capacity to negotiate directly with the City District. The physical space of Coòpolis has been financed by the City Council and a very large part of the activity has been financed by the Generalitat. Meetings have been developed between the City Council, the Generalitat and Coòpolis to strengthen the collaboration between the three institutions to promote the Athenaeum. There are three clear lines of collaboration with the City Council. The first one is a more operational relationship based on the different spaces in the city where public policies are developed to support "other economies" in terms of advice and cooperation, and the local networks such as around Coòpolis and Torre Jussana (a service for Associations). There is also space to coordinate the resources the different entities of the city offer and disseminate them. There are also working groups and the direct participation in joint campaigns. The second line is developed at a strategic level through the planning and implementation of the SSE 2030 Strategy of Barcelona where the Atheneum participates in providing inputs. The third level is the purely financing one where the Atheneum applies to subsidies.

La Col·lectiva - Ateneu Cooperatiu de l'Hospitalet: it is currently composed by 18 grouped entities, all of them entities of the SSE, which means that there is no public administration directly involved in the atheneum. In a similar way as Coòpolis, La Col·lectiva is an atheneum that covers the territory of a city, Hospitalet de Llobregat, not a county territory. La *Fundició* is the entity that currently coordinates it, a cooperative created in 2006 that promotes collective processes of knowledge construction, cultural practices and forms of relationship.

Ateneu Cooperatiu del Baix Llobregat: it covers the territory of the Baix Llobregat region (*comarca*), which has four differentiated areas: the centre, the delta, the low part and the north area. The Atheneum is composed by 23 grouped entities of which 10 are public institutions. The coordinating entity of the Athenaeum is the County Council of the Baix Llobregat. It is the largest athenaeum in terms of participating entities and in terms of budget. They have four areas of action, three areas are territorial and another one is sectorial.

Ateneu Cooperatiu del Vallès Occidental: it is divided in three areas, the area of Sabadell covers the east of the comarca, the area of Terrassa covers the west of the comarca and the area of Sant Cugat involves the south of the comarca. The main organisations forming the Atheneum are the three nodes of the XES: Sabadell, Terrassa and Sant Cugat and during the first editions the City Council of Sabadell was also a member. The County Council has been a member too.

Ateneu Cooperatiu del Barcelonès Nord: It involves the territories covering Santa Coloma de Gramenet, Badalona and Sant Adrià del Besòs. The coordinating entities of the athenaeum is L*a Sargantana*, a cooperative restaurant, which is also member of the XES *Barcelonès Nord*. There are six grouped entities composing it, two of them are public administrations, the city councils

of Santa Coloma de Gramenet through its public company for economic promotion *GrameImpuls S.A.* and Badalona through the *Institut Municipal d'Ocupació de Badalona*. They collaborate with the Diputació de Barcelona on agricultural issues regarding the *Serralada de Marina* Natural Park. They have collaborated with the Department of Dietetics and Nutrition of the University of Barcelona located in Santa Coloma de Gramenet on agricultural issues. They have also collaborated with the Department of Social Work and the University of Girona through the organisation of a subject to train on the economy of the commons, the social and collaborative economy.

iv) Cooperative Poles (*Pols Cooperatius*)

The cooperative poles are paces of territorial and physical intercooperation that function as a replicating agent and connector among initiatives of the SSE (Ateneu Cooperatiu del Vallès Occidental, 2020). By pooling services, resources and infrastructure, the initiatives belonging to the Cooperative Poles multiply their socio-economic impact, bring economic alternatives closer to the local population and facilitate community involvement. In collaboration with popular movements, Cooperative Athenaeums, local administration and ethical finance, they become strategic agents for the local socio-economic transformation characterized by a collective and rooted nature, oriented towards economic democracy and eco-social transition. The Athenaeum Coòpolis has promoted together with the City Council a Cooperative Pole. The City Council has paid the rehabilitation of the physical space.

v) The development of policy documents

The development of policy documents has been done following participatory processes. One of these documents is a draft for a Catalan Law of the Social and Solidarity Economy. The process to elaborate this draft included joint discussions among the five big organisations composing the Social Economy Association of Catalonia (AESCAT, *Associació d'Economia Social de Catalunya*) and the commitment of the Department of Labour, Social Affairs and Families of the Generalitat de Catalunya to promote the future debate of this document with the political parties composing the Parliament of Catalunya and its approval as a Law. The AESCAT is a fourth level organisation composed by the Confederation of Cooperatives of Catalonia (la Confederació de Cooperatives de Catalunya), the Board of Entities of the Third Social Sector of Catalonia (la Taula d'Entitats del Tercer Sector Social de Catalunya), the Business Confederation of the Third Social Sector of Catalonia (la Confederació Empresarial del Tercer Sector Social de Catalunya), the Federation of Mutual Societies of Catalonia (la Federació de Mutualitats de Catalunya) and the Solidarity Economy Network of Catalonia (la Xarxa d'Economia Solidària de Catalunya). This document was publicly presented in December 2020, and will be converted into a Law soon. Another example is the elaboration by the Solidarity Economy Network (XES, Xarxa d'Economia Solidària) of two documents with policy proposals to enhance the SSE by municipal governments, one was presented several months before the municipal elections of 2015 containing 14 proposals and the other one before the municipal elections of 2019 containing 15 measures. Some municipalities governed by left-wing parties as a result of these elections incorporated some of these proposals in their political programs to enhance the SSE through processes of joint discussion with the XES, such as the Barcelona City Council and its process to develop the Commissioner of the SSE. Although these processes took place at the Catalan regional scale, not at the MAB scale, they have an impact on the relationship between the SSE and the local and metropolitan administration located in the MAB context.

3.3. The collaborative relationship between SSE organisations and the public administration and its main challenges

Our results show that in most cases, the collaboration takes places between SSE organisations of second and third-level and the public administration. The relationship between the organisations of the SSE and the public administration is a complex one. During the interviews and the seminar, we have identified several factors that determine this relationship: the political willingness to promote the SSE of the party governing the public administration; the motivation of the technicians to promote the SSE and the inter-personal relationship they have with representatives of the SSE; the regulatory limitations and the role of the municipal secretariats and inspectors; the type of relationship established (trustful collaborative relationship or a supplier-relationship); the position the SSE organisations take in agreeing with the local policies; and whether the organisation belongs to a formal public-cooperative-community project such as the Athenaeums or whether it is an autonomous organisation. In the following section, we illustrate these factors in collaborations undertaken at the local and the supra-local scale.

The relationship between SSE organisations and the public administration at the local scale

One of the key aspects identified is the political will of the local government to promote the SSE. Since the municipal elections of 2015, left-wing political parties rule the municipal government, usually in coalition with other progressive political parties (*Barcelona en Comú* in Barcelona, *Crida per Sabadell* or *Guanyem Sabadell* in the city of Sabadell). These governments are politically committed to support commons-oriented policies. At a local scale, the city of Barcelona is one of the municipalities where the collaboration between the SSE and the public administration is more advanced. There is a consensus among the interviewees about the positive impact o the *Barcelona en Comú* party-based government on the collaboration between the City Council and the entities of the SSE. There is a mutual recognition between the City Council and the SSE entities, and the Council recognizes the qualitatively different character of the SSE compared to conventional enterprises. The City Council promotes the SSE politically. As explained in section 3.2 subsection ii), the XES demanded to the new municipal government the creation of a SSE Commissioner and the development of a Plan to promote the SSE inspired by the 14 measures elaborated by the XES to promote SSE through public policy. As pointed by a representative of the XES and member of the bilateral commission with the City Council, out of the 14 measures they proposed, the Council has fully adopted some, implemented others, and left aside others. Still, he valued the relationship as cordial, even if this is not except from political tensions. The experience of collaboration is a novelty regarding the history of the relationship between the SSE and the public administration. An interviewee from the Athenaeum Coòpolis also recognised that they have a good relationship with the municipality; however, sometimes the collaborative processes that are set up are quite demanding for the entities. The slow decision-making processes of the initiatives may be a limitation. As she explained:

"There is a feeling that it is very good that this City Council promotes the SSE and gives it a lot of strength but at the same time it demands a lot, and we are very small entities that have our daily duties. In addition, we belong to other second-level and third-level entities and the effort requested by the City Council in the collaborative processes is too much".

Also, we have identified that the City Council does not sufficiently recognize the idiosyncrasies of entities and organisations of the SSE. For instance, a representative of a local node of the XES explained that they have not been sufficiently recognised as a space for cooperation and articulation of SSE initiatives in the neighbourhood. He considered that they contribute to stabilize neighbourhood initiatives and projects that, because of their social nature, are not necessarily easy to sustain economically over time. Therefore, they should have the economic support of the City Council to accompany these community processes. As he explained:

"We wanted to establish an agreement with the City Council to have more regular resources to consolidate the SSE entities and services in the neighbourhood, but the City Council is still within the logic that we have to compete for resources with other private entities. We do not like this logic. We advocate a model of community management".

Indeed, they do not participate in any coproduction process together with the City Council. They have applied to some local subsidies, but, in their view, yearly municipal grants create precarity and fragility of their technical structure.

Beyond Barceona, some City Councils that have been involved in the Athenaeums program as active partners but rather intermittently (some of them are no longer willing to promote the SSE, such as Sabadell City Council). In these cases, the relationship depends a lot on the technical person in charge, whether he/she has personal motivation to move projects forwards or he/she has a lower profile and not much involved. A particular barrier identified by many interviewees is that sometimes the municipal technicians involved in the promotion of the SSE are not familiar with the values and the functioning of the SSE based on intercooperation and the generation of an alternative economy.

Some other examples show the difficulties in establishing collaborations when there is no political willingness to support the SSE. The Atheneum of Hospitalet de Llobregat, La Col·lectiva, explained that they requested a temporarily assignment of premises to the local government to carry out the distribution of food during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the government did not provide it. They had created a powerful mutual support network within the neighbourhood, together with other associations such as the Tenants' Union and individual neighbours. They were able to distribute food among more than 3000 people. More recently, the Cooperative Athenaeums has intensified interactions with members of the City Council to increase its influence on municipal governance. The Atheneaeum now seeks more recognition, also as an economic agent (not only as a civic association)[5].

Even when City Councils have a political and technical will, there is still bureaucratic barriers in the form of difficulties to interpret existing regulations and specific requests from inspectors and secretaries. Representatives of the Barcelona City Council belonging to Bcn Activa or the

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[5] This recognition gap became recently evident in the negotiations towards a City Agreement for the Reconstruction after the COVID-19 pandemic. This was an agreement signed by all political parties within the City Council and by economic and social agents. There were four axes: the social, economic, associative and institutional. There was a proposal to support the Social Economy and cooperatives but it was included in the field of associationism not in the economic axis as they requested.

Commissioner of the Social Economy recognize this barrier in the regulatory and bureaucratic limitations within the City Council to advance changes towards the co-design and co-creation of public policies together with the SSE entities . Similarly, a representative of the Atheneum of Hospitalet explained that their proposals usually receive very good informal assessments from officials but the proposals are ultimately discarded because officials do not know how to formalize the support of the City Council. In most cases, officials demand the initiatives to participate in a public tender to guarantee transparency in the disbursement of funds or to ensure that everyone can compete for said fund. This is, however, rather seen as evidence of their resistance to change. As stated by one of the interviewees:

"Anything that diverts from their public procurement mechanism, e.g., new typologies of public relationship, scares them. The City Council does not understand that it is a community policy".

The municipalization of the Domestic Care Service in the town of Arbúcies[6] illustrates the multiple challenges that emerge when trying to promote public-community-cooperative collaborations. The municipality created a public cooperative to outsource the Domestic Care Service giving employment to women who were in a vulnerable situation, and they had to manage legal impediments for many years. As explained by one interviewee: *"There may be political will, but a lot of power is needed to face inspectors and secretaries. The municipal administration is established in a way that transformative projects do not go ahead, unfortunately"*.

Another example of political and technical will but facing regulatory impediments is the set up of a Cooperative Pole in Sant Cugat del Vallès. The Athenaeum requested a public premise to allocate it, however, the City Council was not facilitating it. The representative of the Athenaeum explained that:

"We are finally looking for private spaces because the administration takes time to offer spaces, we cannot wait for things to be granted to us by the administration. We are looking for the part of the public sector to recover abandoned public spaces where we can establish the Cooperative Pole. If you have a strategic relationship as happens in Barcelona between the City Council and Coòpolis, things are easier, there the cooperative pole is managed by Coòpolis".

A representative of the City Council of Barcelona further recognised that the legal issue is a problem, because the administration is not prepared to implement collaborative projects with entities from the SSE. He considered that all parts need to make efforts, be flexible, and search for experiences that already exist in other areas or countries. He thought that many projects are being done within the philosophy of urban commons, but some programs of the Council, like Bcn Activa, has more difficulties to adapt due to their idiosyncrasies than others. The public procurement model has its logic, including a logic of accountability and control mechanisms of public spending and other instruments exist such as the agreements. He thought that not only depends on the regulatory framework but on the willingness of the person of municipal legal services to interpret favorably the regulations to allow the development of innovative SSE projects. He considered that

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[6] Arbúcies is a Catalan municipality that, although not being located in the MAB, participated in the seminar we organised.

"We need to integrate the legal team into these spaces of collaboration so that they can commit and see what can be done, because if they want to, they can allow their development. When we find a legal team that supports the innovative projects things can move forward".

One problem he explained was that the reference person of the municipal legal services changes from time to time.

The Barcelona City Council has made the commitment to push the limits of regulations, but this may be only possible via a positive discrimination in favour of SEE initiatives. A representative of the City Council showed some frustration because in the end the City Council and associations have daily relations and work in the same line, but they collide against the wall of public procurement. As he explained:

"There are projects that are invented by the neighbours, it does not make sense to call a public tender because it is that specific group of neighbours who has developed the project. We need to find mechanisms to be able to advance in the new form of public and communal management without falling into discretion, the public interest can be perfectly justified".

Indeed, there are no particular mechanisms to establish a formal relationship between the public administration and the SSE and urban commons. They are considered private entities similar to private companies. The General Directorate of the Generalitat de Catalunya recognised that they proposed to consider that if a cooperative represents a majority of citizens of a municipality, like it is the case in some municipalities, it should be considered as public company, and therefore, it should not have to go to concurrence and compete with big companies to offer a public service. However, it is not currently possible legally because it is not considered public but private. A municipality can create a public company in the form of *Limited Society* (S.L.) or a corporation, however, if a City Council wants to participate in a cooperative together with citizens, there are a lot of legal problems.

The representative of the municipal program Citizens Assets of the City Council of Barcelona reinforced this opinion. He thought that they had made changes to improve the collaboration with the SSE, however, the regulatory framework does not allow them to go beyond the current projects undertaken within the Citizens Assets program. For instance, the Civic Management is supported on a particular article of the Barcelona Municipal Charter that allows the participation of citizens in the management of public services and facilities. Nevertheless, he further recognised that legal risks exist if community-led management is not supported by stronger regulatory frameworks. There is no legal conceptualization of community-led management. The Citizen Assets model is very important, because it is a unique model of relationship between the SSE and the public administration where the entities of private capital cannot enter the cession of public premises and facilities. It resulted due to the claims of the citizens to access spaces for community use.

The SSE organisations also claim the necessity to generate a new regulatory framework that also recognizes the role of SSE initiatives beyond "providing services". as argued, the relationship established between the administration and a provider through a public tender (l*icitació*) is not the right one to carry out a commons or SSE project. The tender establishes a supplier-relationship between the parties; there is no shared governance or autonomy of the parties, it is a subordinate relationship. Agreements and conventions (*convenis*) are considered more appropriate. As one of the interviewees explained:

"The officers of the City Council are aware of this fragility, and when there is a moment of conflict, they quickly remind us that we are the provider. It generates a situation of instability, a fragile situation because we don't know if the project will continue".

As solution to facilitate convergence of adminitative cultures between the SSE intitiatives and the administration has been put forward by the Cooperative Athenaeums, which now count with representatives of City Councils or County Councils within their cadres. One representative of an Athenaeum considered that having representatives of the City Councils within the Athenaeum made a big difference because the municipal technicians are familiar with bureaucratic procedures and do already many things needed within the program of the Atheneums, especially around economic development. The experiences have revealed, however, that this is not sufficient to overcome differences on how the cooperatives and the public administration work, mainly because the intensity with which the cooperatives work is higher, and the Councils have other duties which are frequently prioritised.

The relationship between SSE organisations and the public administration at the supra-local scale

Many of the insights gained about the relationship between the public administration and the SEE organizations at the supra-local scale is based on the experience of the Athenaeums. The Athenaeums have a very close relationship with the public administration, particularly with the General Directorate of Social Economy, the Third Sector and Cooperatives of the Generalitat de Catalunya. This collaboration is embodied in the abovementioned Network of Cooperative Athenaeums. The Network was indeed created to improve the program of the Athenaeums. Most interviewees agreed that the Network has made a difference, and helped to transition from a customer-client relationship to one based on equal recognition and trust. For the last 3 years, the management team of the General Directorate has been strongly committed to the SSE and has been advised by people who are directly involved in the SSE. The representative of an Atheneum explains that they have created a very trustful relationship, the General Director of the General Directorate comes to the assemblies of the Athenaeum Network both to share news and information but also to get informed about concerns from the Network as a whole as well as from local initiatives. As the interviewee stated:

"The General Director has listened to us when we have told them, for example, that there were many quantitative indicators in the justification and we have to look for qualitative ones, it was too bureaucratic and not useful for the way Athenaeums function. There is technical and political will to promote the SSE".

A representative of one Athenaeums explained that *"the General Directorate wants the Athenaeums to become a concerted service, a public-community-cooperative collaboration and we agree on that. They should involve public administration, community-led organisations belonging to a more informal economy and part of the private sector that would be the cooperative, surely making some form of public cooperative".*

That said, interviewees also report regulatory limitations that are similar to those occurring at the local scale regarding the lack co of legal and administrative tools that articulate the relationship between the public administration and the SEE organisations. As stated already, the main challenge is to build a framework that fits the purpose and moves beyond the public-

private logic that has so far guided the relationship between the public administration and the third sector.

One promising solution is the approval of the new Law of the SSE. As pointed by the representative of the Athenaeum, there is the need of a legislative breakthrough both at the regional and local level. Legislative innovations need however to respect existing frameworks at both the national and European framework. References are the State law on Social Economy, another law in Galicia, and the draft of the Catalan law. And the SSE and urban commons have recently attracted a lot of attention at the European level, where petitions to create a specific regulation have been also raised.

The drafting of the SSE Law has so far taken five years and has been the source of important discussions around the conceptualisation of the SSE, which actors belong to it, or the role of particular actors such as mutual societies, community economies, etc. One important goal of the new Law is to generate the means to create new legal tools that articulate the relationship between the public administration and the SSE. The SSE Law is seen as a legal protection for lower rules which many times lack the frame of reference to be able to establish these new relationships.

However, legislative innovations like the Law of the SSE may find their way in the legislative and administrative agendas as far as there exists a necessity from the public administration to relate to the SSE. As long as there is no such need, political will may also be absent. The need will be generated from the growth of the SSE, of the Athenaeums, cooperatives and so on. Therefore, the first stage is to increase the SSE. As stated by one of the representatives from the Athenaeums:

"It entails a challenge which is to create alternative relational models, currently we have to adapt to the current forms of relationship that are not typical for the SSE. When there are many SSE initiatives, they will be able to determine the relational forms, we must make balances and be innovative".

Also, our results show that differences in the coproduction processes exist depending on whether the Atheneum is coordinated by an entity of the SSE or by a public entity. All of the Athenaeums except the Athenaeum of Baix Llobregat are coordinated by an entity of the SSE. The representative of the Athenaeum of Baix Llobregat explained that they have difficulties to explain that the Athenaeum is not only participated by the County Council but it is a collective structure. He explained that:

"The entities came to request money for a specific action and once they do the action and justify it, the relationship ends".

In the view of this interviewee, the Cooperative Athenaeum is a project, not an agent, and they are working to make a change towards real collaboration and co-responsibility of the entities composing the Athenaeum. He considers that there are few co-creation processes promoted by this Athenaeum. One reason he identified was that the City Councils are often reluctant to collaborate because each City Council is accountable for its own municipality and does not want to collaborate in projects that would not promote its own visibility. A private or social entity is usually more open to collaborate.

In the case of Atheneums composed by initiatives of the SSE and the public administration, such as the Barcelonès Nord, they generate projects in a collaborative way but this is mostly accomplished via division of labor rather than collaboration. For example, the cooperatives are in charge of the territorial dimension and promotion of the SSE and the City Council is in charge of the creation and support of cooperatives because they have more resources. Some of the interviewees valued this division of labor as a means to get started because it allows the entities to get acquainted with each other´s organizational styles progressively. However, they also believe that it would be more operative for the future if public entities transitioned from being a core member of the Athenaeum with executive role, to a secondary role, i.e., as a collaborating entity. This would allow a better communication with the entities of the SSE within the Athenaeums since they have similar ways of working.The role of the public administration could in turn be based on formal agreements.

The Athenaeums have rescaled the sector of the SSE from the local to the regional level. Most of the third level organisations of the SSE, although they are considered to operate at a Catalan scale, work a lot at the level of Barcelona; however, the Athenaeums have promoted a territorial cooperation not just limited to the Barcelona territorial area and engaged directly with the Generalitat. Some of the subsidies that were disbursed directly to local organizations to promote the SSE are now are allocated to the Athenaeums, mainly because they are able to work both locally and throughout Catalonia. Although positive, this rescaling has created some trade-offs. As put by some interviewees, the relationship of the Athenaeums with the rest of the organisations of the SSE needs to be strengthen. There are even some organisations that do not understand the necessity to promote the Athenaeums. For instance, agricultural cooperatives do not understand the model of the Athenaeums, mainly because they have different necessities than the ones promoted by the Athenaeums. The Athenaeums have the aim to scale out the cooperative model and by these means transform society and the economy. However, the needs of agrarian cooperatives are not to grow, but to consolidate and incorporate young people in already created structures. Moreover, the agrarian cooperatives are sectorial and the objective of the Athenaeums is to promote the territorial development through inter-sectoral work.

The General Directorate of the Social economy of the Generalitat de Catalunya also explained that dealing with the urban commons and community economies is also complex. There is a lot of diversity and some of the initiatives do not want to relate to the public administration. Also , many of them have no legal form and there is no clear strategy to dealwith this and other idiosincrasies The Citizen Assets Program of the city of Barcelona is an innovative program, however, it is only focused on the cession of premises.

City councils have needs that can be covered by the ESS and the public orientation of the administration certainly fits better that of the ESS initiatives than that of for profit private equity firms. However, the community-based economies are often framed in a self-managed model and do not want to provide state-owned services and are often very ideological. When the public administration approach them, they often don't want to collaborate.

4. Methodology to analyse the dynamics and processes of commons-led coproduction at the local scale

In this chapter, we have developed an assessment methodology to analyse the dynamics and processes of commons-led coproduction at the local scale.

We based our assessment framework on the Theory on Collaborative Advantage (TCA) developed by Chris Huxham and Siv Vangen (Huxham, 2003; Vangen and Huxham, 2014). TCA fits within the theories of organizational behaviour and is based on the premise that organizations working collaboratively have more successful outcomes. This collaboration between organizations, however, is complex and the work process can be slow and exhausting (Huxham, 2003). In that sense, TCA seeks to have a real, positive and reasonably direct influence on practice (indeed, it has been developed through action-research). It aims to empower those involved through legitimising experienced frustration and providing conceptual handles to help address the practical issues involved. Hence, TCA explains the problems of collaboration as tensions between the "collaborative advantage" of organisations working together and the "collaborative inertia", the tendency to be frustratingly slow and conflicting (Huxham, 2003). Without careful intervention, collaborations are more likely to reach collaborative inertia (i.e. apathy and disengagement) than collaborative advantage (i.e. understanding and maximisation of resources). Tensions reveal the existence of trade-offs between different forms of management; its awareness shifts the participants' research of "the ultimate formula" to an agreement that is "good enough".

TCA is not about dictating a recipe to follow, on the contrary, it gives the opportunity to generate different or new collaborative arrangements between organizations. Organizations can be very diverse from each other, they can have very different working methods or goals that are difficult to reconcile, complexities that make the existence of a "master formula" difficult (Funtowicz and Ravetz, 1993). Also, a theory that attempts to cover the full complexity of reality, with too many exceptions, can be paralyzing for organizations (Marsden and Townley, 1996).

Therefore, TCA is limited to providing the basis for how collaboration should be developed in general terms, depending this on the nature and situation of each particular context. However, TCA points out five areas in which tensions may arise, usually between two poles, the result of which leads to better or worse results in collaboration.

We have structured the assessment workshop based on four of the five dimensions in which tension may arise according to Vangen and Huxham (2014): managing cultural diversity, managing common goals, managing power and managing leadership. The fifth dimension, management of trust, is considered to be better addressed through individual semi-structured interviews with participants rather than during a joint workshop[7]. To make the concepts more

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[7] In the previous project, we conducted semi-structured interviews dealing with the topic of trust, among others. For more information on the guidelines of the interviews, see the report Ferreri et al. (2020) Commons Coproduction and territorial development in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area in *https://igop.uab.cat/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020-14-04_Final-report_Commons-coproduction-web.pdf*

familiar to the participants, we adapted them to commonly used terms. For instance, instead of using the term "cultural diversity", which is understood by Vangen and Huxham (2014) broadly as partners' "habitual ways of being and acting"; we talk about "aspects of structural and organisational functioning" of the initiatives.

We designed an online workshop because of restrictions due to COVID-19 pandemic. We proposed using a virtual pad in order to facilitate de brainstorming. In this case, we used the program Miro Board[8].

For a successful work, we recommend conducting a list of tasks previously to the workshop, see Table 4.

Table 4. List of tasks to be done before conducting the workshop

Previous tasks to bear in mind
Ask participants to create an account in a collaborative pad (we used Miro)
Distribute the link of the collaborative pad board (we used Miro) among participants
Ask participants to confirm their attendance to the workshop

We structured the workshop in five activities. Four of them dealing with the aspects of TCA described above, and another one that tackled the analysis of contextual factors that could enhance or undermine collaboration, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Table 5 shows the structure of the workshop. We recommend to undertake the assessment workshop together with all the partners involved in the collaborative process. However, if there are reluctances from the partners, the assessment workshop can be conducted individually or in small groups.

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[8] http://miro.com

Table 5. Structure of the assessment workshop

Time	Activity	Description
15 mins	Welcome and presentation	Explain the objectives of the workshop
30 mins	Activity 1. Management of structural and organisational aspects of the initiatives	Each participant lists structural and organisational aspects of his/her initiative that thinks facilitate or hinder collaboration. He/she later lists ideas to improve collaboration.
20 mins	Activity 2. Management of the common goals	Each participant lists the objectives of his/her initiative to collaborate with the City Council and the objectives regarding how the collaborative process should be. Afterwards there is a joint discussion about it.
25mins	Activity 3. Management of power	Identification of power situations and the sources of power in past collaborative processes. Joint discussion regarding who should have the agency of these power situations in future collaborative processes.
15mins	Break	
20mins	Activity 4. Management of leadership	Each participant lists the positive characteristics of leadership in past collaborative processes and the characteristics that the leadership role should have in collaborative processes between initiatives and the City Council.
15mins	Activity 5. Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on collaboration	Identification of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on collaborative process and joint discussion about it.
10mins	Closing	Thank all the participants for attending the workshop and explain the next steps of the collaborative process and its evaluation.

The first aspect we addressed was the management of cultural diversity (Vangen and Winchester, 2013; Vangen and Huxham, 2014), which we renamed as "management of structural and organisational aspects of the initiatives". Cultural diversity is understood here broadly to refer to partners' "habitual ways of being and acting" that stem from the distinct professional, organizational, and national cultures to which they belong. Cultural diversity is both a source of stimulation, creativity, and reward and a source of potential conflicts of values, behaviours, and beliefs. Therefore, a tension can exist between cultural similarity and diversity. The TCA theory points out three interrelated management tensions in this respect: accommodation tension, agency tension and quantity tension. Accommodation tension addresses the interaction between organizations in a collaboration. Usually partners have different structures and procedures to meet their goals which can lead to tensions caused by the interaction. In collaborations characterized by cultural diversity, flexibility at the

organizational level is necessary to accommodate different operational procedures and different ways of being, interacting, and working. Paradoxically, this flexibility may compromise the structures and processes that enable organisations to deliver their core goals. That is a tension between *flexibility* and *rigidity.* The second tension, named agency tension, focuses on the member that represents the organisation, the quality of their orientation toward the collaboration and their host organization. Collaborators need enough individual autonomy to act on behalf of their organizations while at the same time requiring individuals to maintain accountability towards their organization to protect her interest and their inherent contribution to the collaboration. A tension therefore exists between *autonomy* and *accountability*. Finally, the quantity tension relates to the cultural diversity present in the collaboration. When collaborations span sector and/or national boundaries, the context within which partners operate and the organizational cultures and professional practices enacted in them can be very diverse. This diversity can imply increasing levels of complexity that need to be embraced to secure advantage from cultural diversity. However, such complexity requires an increasing level of control (and simplification) to militate against complexity-induced inertia. A tension exists therefore by the poles of *complexity* and *simplification* in addressing cultural diversity.

To capture these management tensions, we asked each participant to write in post-its in the Miro Board:

a) structural and organisational aspects of his/her initiative that thinks facilitate collaboration with the City Council.

b) structural and organisational aspects of his/her initiative that thinks hinder collaboration with the City Council.

c) ideas to improve collaboration with the City Council.

Each representative of the initiatives had its own post-it colour which was the same in all the activities to be able to identify who responded each question. In Figure 2, we provide the design of the Miro Board used to capture information regarding the management of organisational and functioning aspects of the initiatives in collaboration. Afterwards, participants jointly discussed the ideas on how to improve the collaboration with the City Council.

Figure 2. Addressing information on the management of organisational and functioning aspects of the initiatives in collaboration (Miro Board screening).

The second tension relates to common aims, which is described between congruence and diversity (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Congruence aligns goals and makes partners committed and motivated to collaborate, but it can also make organisations compete and hide information if goals fully coincide. On the other hand, distinct members may enrich the collaboration with diverse purposes but it can make partners look for different and conflicting goals. That brings to four key considerations, which are that i) it is difficult for all goals to be in harmony; ii) it is highly unlikely that all participants know or understand all the goals; iii) different perceptions on goals can lead to misunderstanding even when not intended.; and finally, iv) agreement on the goals is in a continuous flux. The TCA developed a goals taxonomy and we used only three of the dimensions proposed. The first dimension is the level of goals, which can arise from goals referring to the collaboration, the organisation or individuals' expectations. The second dimension is the content, which can be either about what the collaboration is about, i.e. substantive purpose; or on how the collaboration should happen, i.e. the collaborative process. The third dimension is the relevance, which reveals whether goals are dependent or independent to the collaborative agenda.

We asked participants to list the objectives of their initiatives regarding the collaboration with the City Council and the objectives of the collaborative process. In Figure 3 we show the design of the Miro Board we use to collect the data regarding common goals.
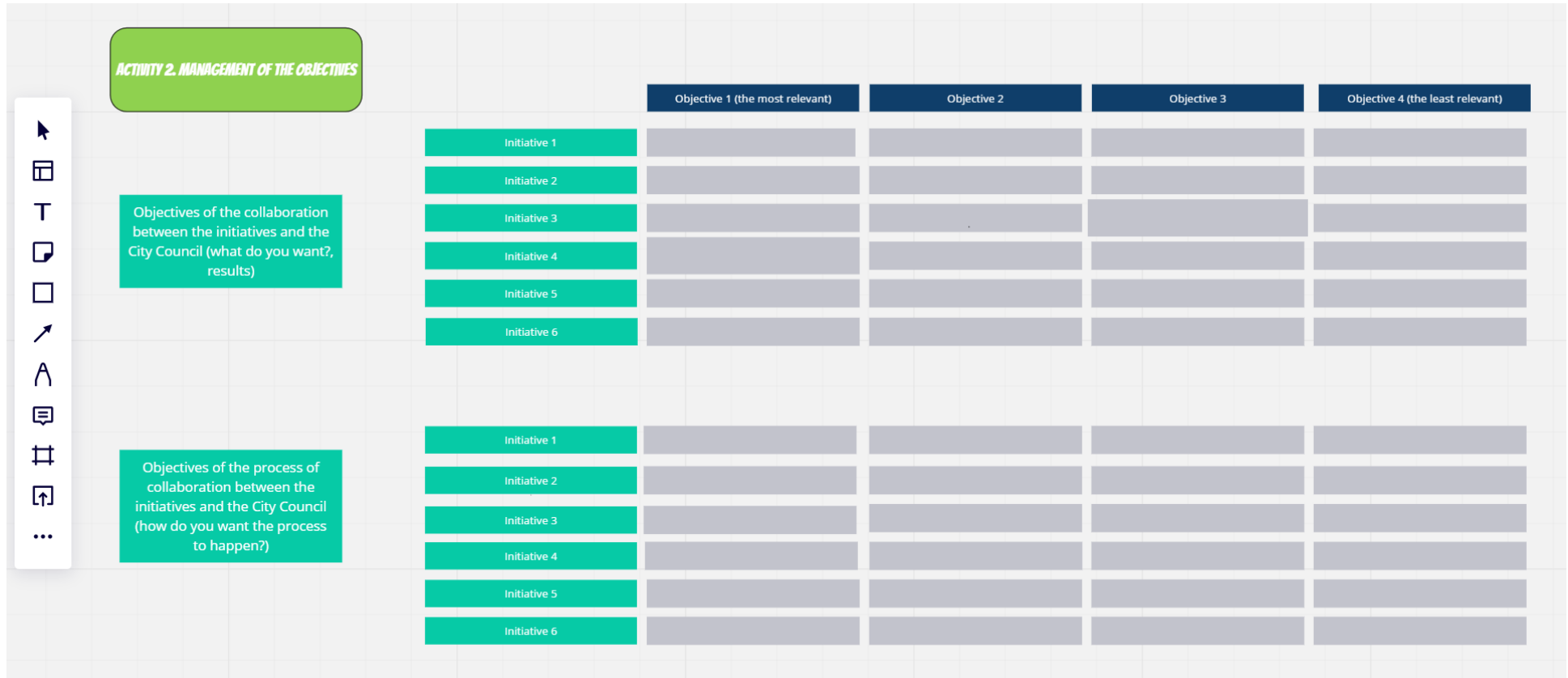
Figure 3. Addressing information on the management of common goals (Miro Board screening).

Another aspect to address is the tensions generated by power. Different situations exist inside the collaboration where power influences its development, such as deciding the process to involve participants or who has financial resources. Power in a collaboration changes over time, therefore, the practical conclusion is that it is important to identify and understand when each participant is exerting power, consciously or not, and the way to deal with it.

We asked participants to describe power situations they experienced in past collaborative processes and identify why these power situations are originated, i.e. the sources of power. In Figure 4, we present the Miro Board used to collect information in power situations and sources of power.

We later ask participants to jointly discuss who should have the agency of the responsibilities that generate power situations in the case of a future collaborative process. We previously listed examples of power situations and participants proposed other power situations using their coloured post-its. See Figure 5 for an example of Miro Board used to capture information on the agency of power situations.
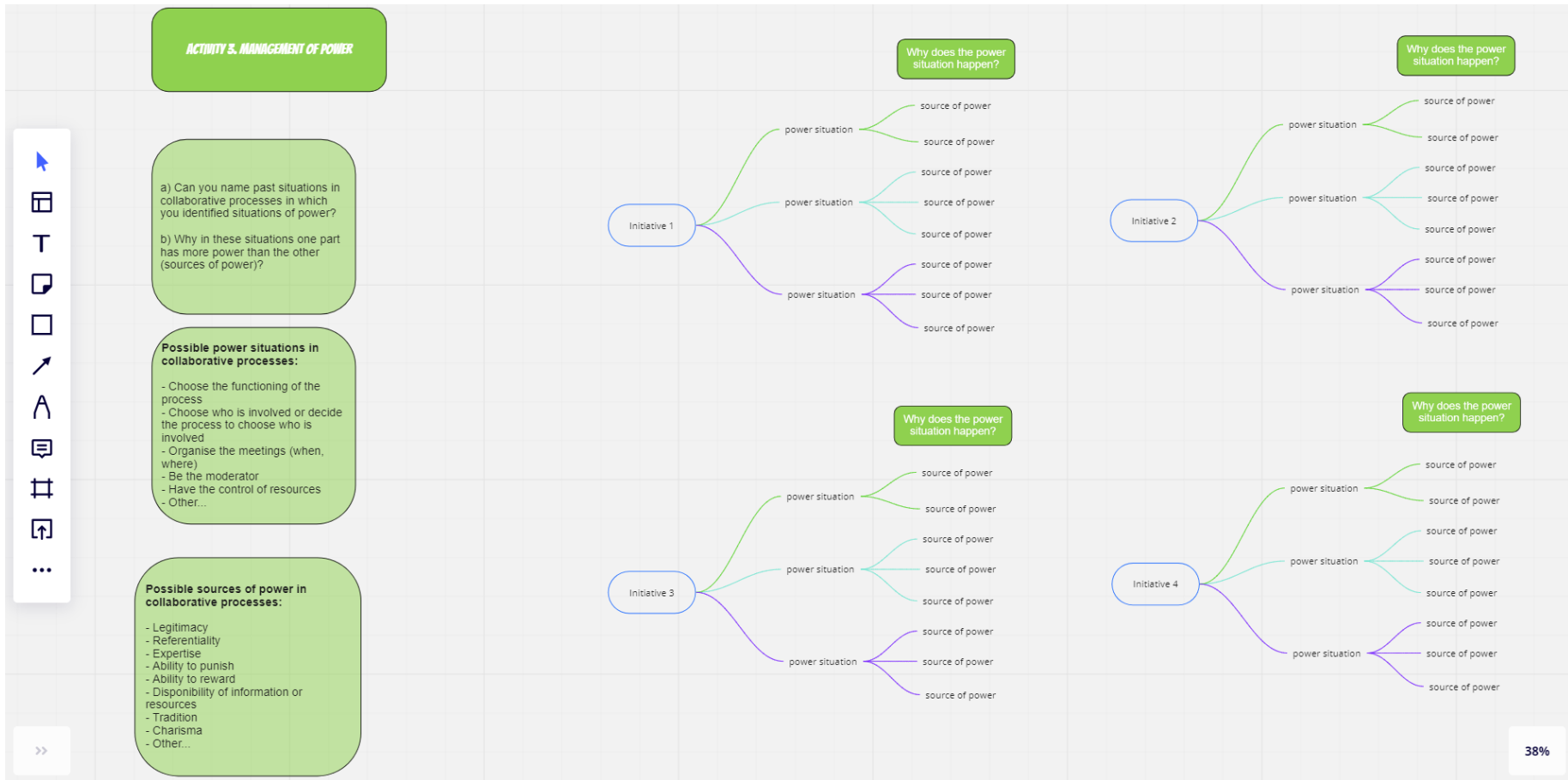
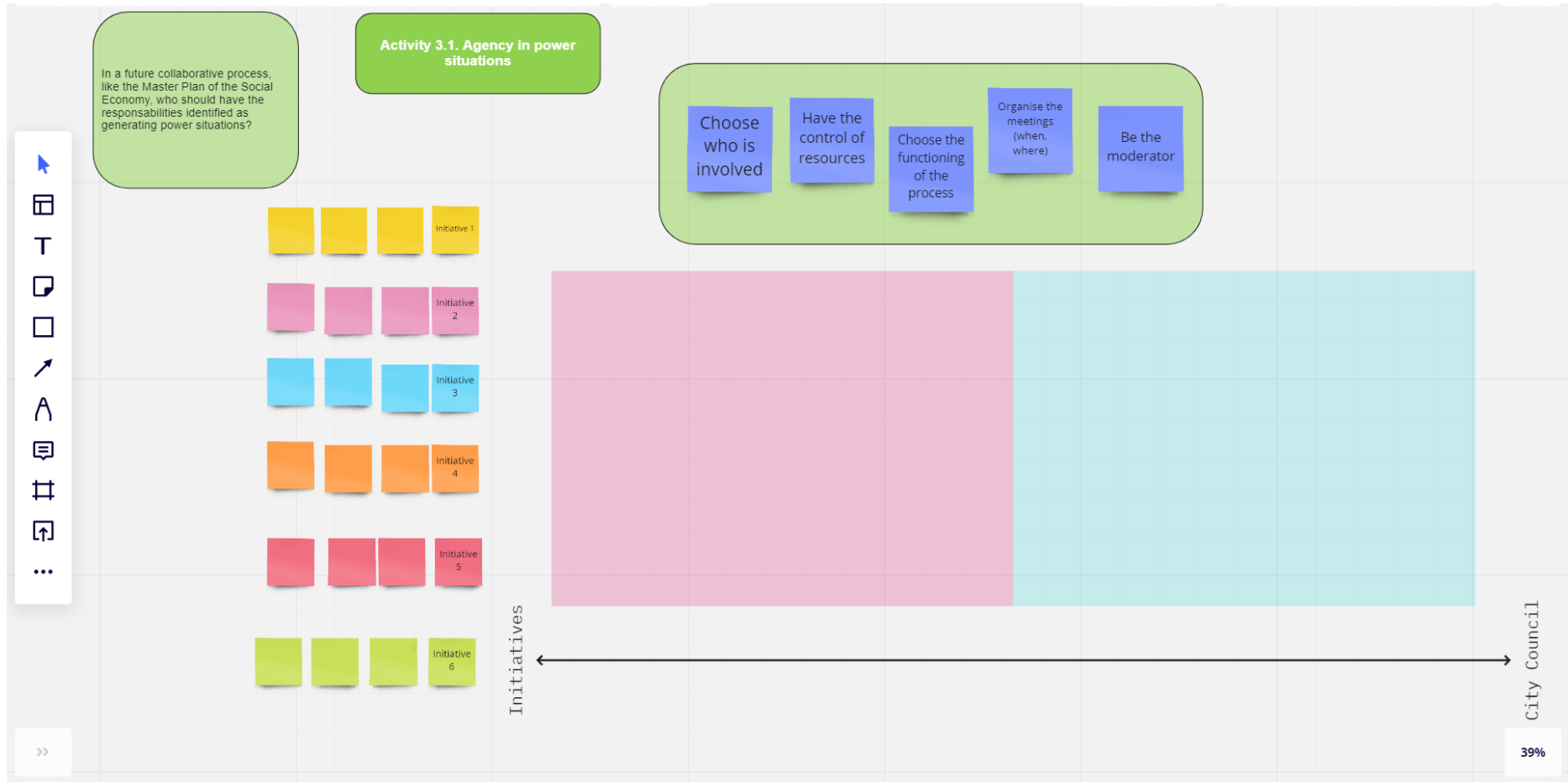Figure 4. Addressing information on the management of power (Miro Board screening)

Figure 5. Addressing information regarding the agency about power situations (Miro Board screening).

The fourth dimension is leadership, described by Vangen and Huxham (2003b) as the mechanisms that make things happen, that is, the processes that permit the accomplishment of goals. Vangen and Huxham (2014) consider structures, processes, and participants as important media to an overall understanding of leadership in collaborative situations. Leadership as it is enacted by individuals is considered within the context of the leadership influences of structures and processes. Leadership is divided in two tensions, one regarding roles and other regarding the decision on roles. The TCA highlights and legitimize the simultaneous enactment of both a facilitative and a directive leadership role in collaborations. The facilitative leadership role is characterised by promoting activities, structures and processes that embrace, empower, involve and mobilize partners. Embracing partners means including the agents that have a stake in the collaborative issue. It entails continually looking out for alternative partners that are needed while also supporting those who want to be partners. Empower refers to the creation of structures and processes that allow the community to act as a member alongside public organisations and to be empowered to play an active role. The involvement of partners also includes that the leader(s) have to promote activities specifically aimed at overcoming hindrances and the management of inequality existing between partners, like the inevitability that some partners are more central than others. The issue of mobilization is closely linked to goals and aspirations and recognising that members need to get something in return for their efforts. This leadership role implies relational skills such as patience, empathy, honesty and deference. The directive role implies taking an active lead rather than facilitating agreement and joint implementation of the collaborative agenda. It may even involve manipulating agendas and politicking or imposing issues to avoid stagnation and collaborative inertia. Understood as towards collaborative thuggery, these activities find ways of excluding those who are not "worth the bother". The theoretical framework considers that successful collaborations seem to operate from both perspectives, running the spirit of collaboration with a healthy portion of thuggery. The second tension is about who decides which of the previous leadership roles is more suitable. In some organisations a person with a designated role power is the one making this decision whereas in other organisations this decision involve all the members.

To capture this information, we asked participants to describe the characteristics of leadership they valued positively in past experiences regarding collaborative processes. We further asked them to describe the characteristics of the leadership role needed for a collaborative process between the initiatives and the City Council. We provide an example of the scheme used to address the management of leadership (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Addressing information regarding the management of leadership (Miro Board screening).

We considered interesting to know whether the effects of the COVID-19 pandemics and its related restrictions had implications on the collaborative processes between the initiatives and the City Council. Hence, we asked participants to list how their approach and attitude towards collaboration between initiatives and the public administration changed after the covid-19 crisis, and whether collaboration has become a more important strategy for developing their work. We present in Figure 7 the Miro Board to collect information on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on collaborative processes.

Figure 7. Collecting information on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the collaboration (Miro Board screening).

5. Testing the toolkit to analyse the dynamics and processes of commons-led coproduction at the local scale: pilot case in Sant Cugat del Vallès

We tested the assessment methodology on a particular neighbourhood of a city of the MAB, the Centre-East neighbourhood of Sant Cugat del Vallès. Sant Cugat del Vallès is a city with social and critical mass on initiatives and also with a Public Administration willing to collaborate with them. However, not all urban common initiatives are eager to participate with the City Council. In order to examine the social practice of commons-led coproduction in Sant Cugat, we first explored the existing urban commons in Sant Cugat del Vallès, a municipality of Catalonia (Spain). Next, we analysed the dynamics, structures and processes characterizing the collaboration and the tensions underlying it that could hamper potential commons-led coproduction using our assessment methodology.

5.1. Case background

Sant Cugat del Vallès is a municipality of the Vallès Occidental region. It includes the semi-autonomous municipal entity of Valldoreix, and five districts, each with a neighbourhood council: Center East, Center West, Mirasol, La Floresta and Les Planes. The Center-East district is contiguous to the city of Sant Cugat. It is located in the historical centre of the municipality and has a great deal of commercial and associative activity.

According to our database of urban commons, the Center East district of Sant Cugat has currently nine urban commons initiatives. The fieldwork, however, revealed that some of the initiatives had disappeared, others had evolved, and new had emerged. Out of the nine commons initiatives of the "Centre-Est" district, one initiative dates from before the 2008 economic crisis (in 2003), and five had their origins in between 2013 and 2016. Sector-wise, the initiatives are quite diverse. Two of them belong to the culture/leisure sector, two to the agroecology/energy/environment sector, two to the health/care sector and the rest to the education/knowledge, housing and consulting/ethical financing sectors (see Table 6 for more details).

Table 6. Overview of urban commons initiatives in Sant Cugat Centre-East neighbourhood.

Name	Description	Starting Date	Members	Organisational goals
El Cabàs	Ecological consumer group	2003	100	Local and fair trade, responsible consumption, health, agroecology
Cal Temerari	Cultural equipment	2015	270	Popular empowerment, politicize, raise awareness, unite initiatives
Grup de Lectura d'Ecologia Política	Reading group	2016	30	Degrowth, agroecology, environmental awareness

La Civada	Ecological consumer group	2008	70 (23 family units)	Local and fair trade, few food chain Intermediaries
elCugatenc	Digital newspaper	2015	13	Media independence, make social movements visible
XES Sant Cugat	Network of initiatives from social and solidarity economy	2015	15	Alternative economic model, degrowth, sustainability, food sovereignty, cooperative housing
4Pins Habitatge Cooperatiu	Co-housing	2019	45	Awareness of the problems in the housing system, build a co-housing project
Hora Bruixa	Not gender-mixed feminist group	2013	20	Class feminism
Sindicat de Llogateres de Sant Cugat	Tenant's union	2017	10	Awareness of the housing emergency

5.2. Methods

The assessment framework involved a combination of methods: semi-structured interviews and two workshops. To understand the emergence, objectives and functioning of the commons initiatives and the collaborations they establish with other initiatives and the Municipality Council of Sant Cugat, we buildt on the data collected in the previous project, which was based on nine semi-structured interviews with representatives of the urban common initiatives and two interviews with two public workers of the city council of Sant Cugat del Vallès (Ferreri et al. 2020). The interviews had dealt with several topics, inter alia, the objectives of the initiatives, the number of members they have, their internal functioning, the area of action of the initiatives, and the factors that promote the consolidation of the initiatives. The final part of the interviews collected data about the collaborations of the initiatives with other organisations, including public institutions. It addressed aspects such as with what other initiatives, organizations and public administration they collaborated within the neighbourhood and out.

Additionally, we applied the toolkit via two online workshops. We invited a total of thirteen people to the workshop: the nine commons initiatives identified in the Center-East district of Sant Cugat, the Ateneu Cooperatiu of the Vallès Occidental, two cooperatives from the social economy and a representative of the City Council. We expanded the attendance to the workshop beyond the nine commons initiatives to be able to have a broader picture of the coproduction with a higher-level of organisation integrating commons initiatives – the case of the Ateneu Cooperatiu of the Vallès Occidental – and to compare the relationship between commons initiatives and entities belonging to the social economy with the local state. Initially, the plan was to run one single workshop; however, the Council requested to undertake a workshop separated from the initiatives. Therefore, we run two separate workshops, one attended by the six of the nine initiatives – five commons initiatives and one entity from the

social economy (50% of attendance ratio); and another with the representative of the City Council. Both workshops implemented the same assessment toolkit explained in Section 5 to evaluate the collaboration between the entities with the local City Council. We firstly addressed the management of cultural diversity, which we renamed "structural and organisational aspects", as explained in Section 5. We asked participants to identify which aspects of structure and functioning of their initiative they thought that facilitated or hindered the collaboration among the initiatives and the City Council. Afterwards, participants had a joint discussion about how to minimize those aspects that hindered the collaboration and how to improve it. Secondly, we asked the objectives each entity had regarding the collaboration and the collaborative process. Afterwards, participants had to identify power situations within past collaborative processes, the sources of power of those situations and who should have the agency over the situations of power in a collaborative process. Fourth, participants had to list the characteristics of leadership that they valued positively in past experiences regarding collaborative processes; and the necessary characteristics of a leadership role in a collaborative process. Finally, we asked participants how their approach and attitude towards collaboration between self-managed and ESS initiatives with the public administration changed after the covid-19 crisis, and whether collaboration became a more important strategy for developing their work. The entities had time to answer the questions individually following brief introductions to them and later participated in deliberative discussions about the research topics addressed. The discussions were facilitated by researchers belonging to the project. Each discussion lasted 20 min and all discussions were recorded and reported by taking extensive notes.

In order to understand the emergence, objectives and functioning of the commons initiatives of the Center-East district of Sant Cugat, we relied on data from the interviews. The interviews were analysed as part of a MSc thesis, see Simon Mas (2020). All the interviews were transcribed and coded inductively following the steps of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). We used the information from the semi-structured interviews and the workshop to examine in detail the collaborative processes, structures and practices. The information was analysed following the method of qualitative content analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994). A list of viewpoints was compiled and reorganised based on the five categories of the analytical framework of TCA: common aims, trust, cultural diversity (renamed as structural and organisational aspects), leadership and power. In the case of common aims, we used three dimensions of the goals taxonomy provided in the TCA theory to categorize the information. The first dimensions is the level dimension of goals, which can arise from goals referring to the collaboration, the organisation or individuals' expectations. The second dimension is the content, which can be either about what the collaboration is about, i.e. substantive purpose; or on how the collaboration should happen, i.e. the collaborative process. The third dimension is the relevance, which reveals whether goals are dependent or independent to the collaborative agenda. We described trust through the insight of the interviewees towards the rest of the organisations. We analysed cultural diversity and leadership by the internal structure and the experiences explained by the interviewees and during the workshop. We extracted power dimension from the conclusions of past collaborations, the identification of power situations within collaborative processes, the sources of power of those situations and who should have the agency over the situations of power in a collaborative process.

5.3. Understanding practices and tensions in commons-led coproduction at the local scale

Our results show that collaborations were already present between the organisations studied. For example, some of them jointly participated in fairs such as the Fair on Social and Solidarity Economy (*Fira d'Economia Social i Solidària*) or the Committed Consumer Fair (*Fira del Consum Compromès*). They also organised educational and learning workshops such as the workshop on Climate Emergency and Degrowth (*Emergència climàtica i decreixement*) or sessions with leisure centres (*Casals d'Esplai*). Urban common initiatives, despite working on different subjects, have strong and encouraging relations. Concerning the collaboration with the City Council, there are some organisations that participated as consultants in several decision-making processes such as The Master Plan of the Social Economy (*Pla Director d'Economia Social*) or the Housing Table (*Taula d'Habitatge*) while others did not collaborate with the Council. The Department of Economic Promotion of the City Council has a collaboration agreement with the Ateneu Cooperatiu del Vallès Occidental based on offering advice and training to entrepreneurial and business projects that want to opt for the options of the SSE, especially cooperativism; and for the promotion of a Cooperative Pole in the municipality. Another form of collaboration is the support given by the municipality to initiatives through the cession of rooms and resources. During the workshop, most initiatives considered that the collaborative processes with the City Council tended to be disappointing. In the following sub-sections, we present the results of the analysis of the practices, structures and processes of the collaborative processes structured around the five dimensions of the TCA framework: managing common goals, trust, cultural diversity, leadership and power.

5.3.1. Managing the common goals

We analysed the common goals based on three dimensions of the TCA framework: the level, the content and the relevance. The level dimension of goals can arise from goals referring to individuals', the organisation or the collaboration expectations. Concerning the individual level, representatives of the initiatives referred to their goals as *"This topic motivates me"* or *"We got motivated and (…) formed the collective"*; therefore, we assume that representatives engage with the core goal of their organisation, otherwise they wouldn't be part of it. The same cannot be supposed in the part of the City Council, as public workers do not have to be genuinely engaged with their position. The following quote shows that when workers are involved with a goal of the organisation, they pursue it firmly, therefore, not all workers have the same amount of commitment to them:

"With the urban gardens there are some technicians who wanted to promote it a lot, because one technician believes in it, and he has fought. If it hadn't been for him it probably wouldn't have happened." (City council).

With regards to the goals of the initiatives, they are focused on different fields of expertise such as the social economy, housing market, journalism and organic food production, and feminism. Some of them produce services like assessment and activism on housing (4Pins Cohabitatge and Sindicat de Llogateres), discussions and activism on political ecology and feminism (Grup de lectura Ecologia Política and Hora Bruixa), provide space and resources to networking among organisations (Cal Temerari and XES Sant Cugat), or publish local news to make other initiatives

visible (el Cugatenc), while others provide organic food products (El Cabàs and La Civada). They have common goals, such as the alternative provision of goods and services or the transformation of society, as mentioned by all initiatives. Seven wanted to *"put these issues on the agenda of the social debate"*, three wanted to *"politicise people and initiatives"*, and empowerment was a concept used by four of them. It was recurrently stated as an objective the increase of political or environmental awareness and all of them referred to their participation in conferences, workshops and fairs, while three of them undertake socio-environmental educational activities in schools. All initiatives revealed the common goal to promote awareness and build alternatives to the capitalist system whose dynamics harm the environment and society. On its side, the representative of the City Council stated the goal of giving priority to socio-ecological benefit over economic profit in their daily processes. The City Council has developed a Master Plan of Social Economy with the objective to promote and support equity and sustainable values. Interviewees of the local administration talked about the importance of making initiatives visible, both as a way to highlight public problems and the alternatives that exist:

"Yes, it [the Social Economy] should be promoted, because they generate impact. Above all, the impact is raising awareness that economic activity is not the most important thing but to help workers and the whole society." (City council).

With regards to the collaboration expectations, we can distinguish here two types as highlighted by the content dimension, i.e. objectives that deal with what collaboration is about, and objectives regarding how the collaboration should happen. Representatives of the initiatives that attended the workshop identified their possible objectives for setting up a collaboration with the City Council. Some of these goals were generic going beyond the very interests of the initiative that mentioned them while other goals were focused on the interests of the initiative that proposed them. The generic objectives mentioned were the promotion of real intercooperation and synergies between the City Council and entities through the creation of a space for exchange and decision-making, recognize the entities as experts that can carry out certain activities on behalf of the City Council, allocate resources and specific endowment to the SSE, promote a local social currency, and implement the proposals of social movements in public policies. The objectives focused on the own interests of the initiatives are, *inter alia*, the cession of resources, such as the cession of a premises to make an agroecological food cooperative or the cession of a public land to make a first pilot project of housing cooperative on assignment of use; the reclassification of land for cooperative or similar use; carry out agroecology educational activities in schools; promote the training of all technicians and members of political parties on climate emergency and make it a cross-cutting issue to be addressed by the various City Council departments; and promote a public-cooperative consortium.

The objectives of the City Council to promote a collaboration with the entities were, first of all, to be able to build common objectives and join forces among the initiatives of the Social Economy, the City Council and other agents who may be involved as the resources for the social economy are limited and a better coordination may overcome this limitation. The representative also mentioned the strengthening of the social economy and the expansion of its values and principles.

With regards to goals that target the collaborative process, all initiatives function according to internal democracy principles and assembly structures and want to implement this way of

functioning to their collaborations and networking. With this, it should be noted that two initiatives have process goals as principal drivers for their organisations, Cal Temerari and XES Sant Cugat:

"Cal Temerari is a project to promote new projects. The priority is to make all initiatives have an impact." (Cal Temerari) and "Our main goal is to promote networking and inter-cooperation among different initiatives." (XES Sant Cugat).

All the initiatives that attended the workshop agreed that the collaboration between entities and the City Council should be based on joint work and peer-to-peer cooperation open to everyone, rather than on a formal process of assignment or a relationship through tenders and requests for bids. Some pointed out to the importance to build a cross-cutting process which incorporates the different departments of the City Council and other stakeholders relevant to the topic under collaboration. Participants further considered that the process should be efficient, transparent and characterized by sincerity and trust. It was pointed out that city representatives involved in the collaboration should have knowledge about the dynamics of the SSE to ensure a fruitful collaboration. A crucial aspect identified was to ensure that the City Council does not use its position of power to manage public resources to condition the political and social action of social entities and movements.

The City Council was also interested on how they are going to develop and implement the new Master Plan of Social Economy. One aspect they mentioned is the intention to change the wording of bids to avoid precarious wages, which is an attempt according to the philosophy behind the SSE. The representative of the local administration considered essential to build relationships of trust among the entities and the City Council and that collaboration is not understood as an interference in the tasks of the others or as a willingness to veto some projects but as a real willingness to strengthen the SSE. Fluent and continuous communication was considered important, not framed only through the participation in formal bodies but promoting other informal communication channels such as direct calls through telephone and a real social interaction.

Regarding the relevance dimension, goals can be dependent or independent to the collaborative agenda. Six initiatives seem to be dependent on collaborations: La Civada and El Cabàs because they need to get in contact with local producers, Cal Temerari and XES Sant Cugat because their organisations are focused on building collaborations, the newspaper El Cugatenc to increase its scope and number of articles and 4Pins Cohabitatge needs the City Council to get land for starting its project. The other three alternatives do not strictly need collaboration but they still collaborate to increase their impact. The City Council can also work on its own, as it has legislative and executive power, however, it prefers to collaborate with other organisations as it is considered advantageous because it allows to have a more comprehensive knowledge of the city problems and the needed solutions.

As shown, urban common initiatives embrace different goals but they do share values, which makes it easier to envision common aims. Their different fields of expertise provide heterogeneity that enriches the collaboration with resources and motivation for commitment (Vangen & Huxham, 2011). Although the City Council does not frame public problems as a cause of capitalist dynamics, the purpose to prioritise socio-environmental welfare over economic is congruent enough with the initiatives to create motivation for joint work. However, that is the

goal stated by the representative of the Economic Promotion Department, and other departments may envision goals that contradict the ones we obtained (Ajuntament de Sant Cugat, 2019). Goals are perceived by the plurality of participants involved, numerous within the public administration, and that makes complicated to understand and harmonise perceptions. The size and complexity of the City Council increases the chances to have a large number of goals, frequently contradictory, unstated or hidden, which makes it difficult to converge on goals. Besides, the Public Administration is characterised by political fluxes of positions, which makes agreements temporary (Vangen & Huxham, 2011).

5.3.2. Managing trust

Our results show that most initiatives are already in active collaboration with each other and are having good experiences. All of them, when asked, value those collaborations positively. They stated to be stronger and share tools as results of collaboration which allow them to achieve a higher level of goals. Risk, understood as the uncertainty that the other organisation will not follow through on what has been agreed (Ring and van de Ven, 1992), is not mentioned in the interviews. On the contrary, all initiatives praise networking together because it helps them achieve their own goals:

"Other movements and other spaces in the city have helped us a lot, for example Cal Temerari, which let us gather here. We have also made synergies with other social movements and entities in the city and they have given us visibility." (Sindicat de Llogateres).

Differences appeared among the initiatives regarding their perceptions about the collaboration with the City Council. Seven initiatives had already collaborated with the City Council while others have no relation at all and do not see the benefits of working together (La Civada). Nonetheless, two of those initiatives that were working with the local administration said to have an intentional minimal relation, only when asking for legal permits (Cal Temerari) or when being directly consulted (Hora Bruixa). During the workshop, one of the six initiatives valued positively the collaboration with the City Council, being the initiative from the social economy. Other two initiatives recognised having positive collaborative experiences mainly through one of its members that works within the public institution but valued negatively the overall collaboration (el Cabàs and Grup de lectura d'Ecologia Política). The other three said being disappointed with the collaboration, either because they are working with it or because they tried to start something and have not been able to move forward. On its side, the City Council seems to have confidence in the resources that initiatives can bring into a collaboration, as they stated:

"For the new Master Plan of the Social Economy, we plan to do a bottom-up process with entities and jointly define the objectives and actions of this Plan. We understand that they have knowledge which we do not currently have." (City council).

Grounded on past experiences, initiatives stated that good expectations towards collaboration with other initiatives and trust across initiatives is present and strong. However, TCA notices that trust is something that has to be maintained through constant nurturing (Vangen & Huxham, 2003a). Nurturing consists of continuous communication, recognition of power imbalances, sharing of outcomes, balance of workload, awareness of the levels of commitment and care of conflicting goals. Those parameters have to be balanced through the dynamics of a

specific collaboration, especially with the fluctuations over participants, power, goals and organisational structures (Vangen & Huxham, 2003a). Trust regarding the City Council is diverse. The local administration values working with social organisations but most of them are disappointed with the City Council which shows a lack of trust. Underlying trust is important when starting a collaboration and the proceeding would be different if trust is present or not (Hoppe 2010). In the cases where trust is already there, the strategy would be to monitor existing dynamics and continue nurturing them. With sceptical initiatives, public administration can take the "small wins" approach and build trust slowly through easy-to-achieve goals.

5.3.3. Managing cultural diversity

To analyse the cultural diversity present in the collaborative processes, we first looked at the organisational and functioning aspects of the initiatives. We found that the organisations are varied in terms of internal structure, three of them have created job positions and have a fee to participate, three only have a fee and the remaining three have neither a fee nor working groups (see Table 7).

Table 7. Description of the initiatives' organisation

Name	El Cabàs	Cal Temerari	Grup de lectura ecologia política	La Civada	El Cugatenc
Internal structure	Workers and board discuss and consult to the assembly	Assembly and work groups	Assembly	Assembly and work groups	Assembly and work groups
Fees	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Paid job positions	Two	One	None	None	Three

Name	4Pins Cohabitatge	Hora bruixa	Sindicat de llogateres	XES Sant Cugat	City council
Internal structure	Assembly and work groups	Assembly and work groups	Assembly	Assembly	Hierarchical
Fees	Yes	Yes	No	No	Taxes
Paid job positions	None	None	None	None	—

In terms of functioning, all initiatives have in common the debate and consensus building as a source of decision-making. Almost all of them are structured through thematic commissions meaning that internal structures are easily relatable. The City Council, on its side, is organised in a hierarchical distribution of positions and administrative procedures that are rigid (Ajuntament de Sant Cugat, 2017). Initiatives are quite similar in terms of operational and organisational culture while there is a high cultural diversity between the initiatives and the City Council.

Representatives of the initiatives identified several organisational aspects that enable the collaboration among initiatives and with the City Council. One aspect is the intercooperation and networking with other entities which provides more bargaining power with the City Council, which favours the collaboration. Another aspect pointed out was the flexibility of the entity,

understood as the ability of the members of the entity to be involved in the tasks that are needed at any given time. The existence of a large number of participants in the entity and the assembly structure and specialization in commissions allows to reach more areas of action, including collaboration with the public administration. However, four of nine initiatives pointed out that one of the main difficulties to collaboration is the lack of time or implication of their members, as participation is based on voluntary work and members argue that their schedules are busy working, taking care of their families or being involved in other social organisations. Technical solvency of the entity, understood as the expertise in dealing with the requirements requested by the City Council to organize events, request material, etc., was considered important because it allows entities to anticipate the problems and requirements that they encounter when collaborating with the City Council. The City Council considered that the main organisational aspect that favours collaboration is the existence of the Master Plan for the Social Economy, which was carried out through a participatory process with all the agents involved in the Social Economy of the territory.

The high cultural diversity between the initiatives and the City Council generates accommodation tensions. When asked about the organisational aspects and functioning that hinder collaboration, most participants considered that it is mostly the aspects of the structure and functioning of the City Council that make collaboration difficult. Several aspects were mentioned such as a high bureaucracy of the City Council and slow administrative processes which leaves the results of the processes uncertain. The rigidity of regulations and the interpretation of these regulations by the municipal legal services, i.e. municipal secretaries and controllers, often paralyze projects, particularly those more innovative. Some participants explained that there are City Councils that have municipal legal services which are more flexible than others and therefore do not exercise pressure to follow the rules strictly. Even the City Council recognised this drawback:

"We also find that sometimes the administration doesn't let us. For example, we are now preparing a bid for a service next year and we have decided that who bids 10% under the rest is eliminated, because we cannot allow precarious salaries as an administration. But now it has to go to the contracting department and see what happens." (City Council).

Most initiatives considered that the City Council processes are not intended for participation. As an example, they mentioned that the processes to request material from the City Council cannot be assumed by a small entity because they need a tax ID number, an insurance, be familiar with the processes and request the material a month in advance. The constitution of formal bodies to undertake the collaboration, i.e. Sectorial Tables, was considered complex by the initiatives because it requires statutes and only the City Council can set them up. Notwithstanding, they are stable bodies and the City Council assumes the commitment to carry out the consensual agreements. The alternative is to create a more informal commission, but the agreements are not binding and often the processes are not followed up. Public workers saw the need to create a workshop for training initiatives on the administrative procedures of the City Council to facilitate the collaboration. An additional aspect mentioned was the lack of financial resources from the entities which generates precarious work and demotivation. Consequently, some initiatives decided to focus on the core goals of their initiatives, such as producing and distributing organic food, and loosen up on collaborating and activism.

When asked about how to improve the collaboration, participants mentioned several aspects related with the accommodation tension. They considered necessary to improve bureaucratic processes and provide facilities for carrying out the activities of the entities. They proposed to involve the technical, legal and political representatives of the City Council simultaneously in the collaborative processes, otherwise mismatches and discrepancies appear among these actors which hinder the process itself. They also mentioned the elimination of double standards from the City Council with entities that are critical of its political management to promote an universal and feasible access to the City Council's public resources independent of the agency of the entities. Another improvement mentioned was the creation of sector-specific negotiating tables that involve regularity and a commitment on the part of the City Council to carry out the common objectives. On the part of the City Council, the representative expressed doubts about whether collaboration with entities could be improved by making it more flexible and supportive without having to bureaucratize everything because the regulations are very strict. He highlighted that it corresponds to other levels of government, such as the regional and national level, to make the rules more flexible to promote these collaborations. The cross-cutting of the Social and Solidarity Economy along the different departments of the City Council was considered important.

Initiatives have in common the simplicity and consensus, which makes them flexible when enacting collaboration to adapt to the needs of a specific agenda. Initiatives are in the "flexibility" pole of the tension. This flexibility, however, may come with the risk of dilated processes and loose members implication. In the local administration, procedures are more rigid (Ajuntament de Sant Cugat, 2017) and those structures are ill fit for the collaboration with initiatives. Several initiatives complained about its timing and effectiveness. The City Council is in the "rigidity" extreme of the tension.

Concerning the agency tension, our results reveal that representatives of the initiatives have certain autonomy to act on behalf of the organisation, but still, they are aware that they cannot make decisions on their own and that they have to give explanations to the assembly, therefore there is some degree of accountability:

"The paid worker delegates to the assembly the decisions that he believes he should not make as a person" (Cal Temerari).

The autonomy of the representatives of the initiatives goes with the risk of individuals being vulnerable to the demands of other partners and end up with decisions that can interfere into the interests of their organisation (Huxham & Beech, 2003).

The representatives of the City Council have to account their acts to the procedures and structure of the law (Ajuntament de Sant Cugat, 2017). Both the initiatives and the City Council coincided that one key aspect of the collaboration is the relationship and proximity of the entity with the technicians of the City Council. The technicians are the ones who finally have the contact with the entities, so if the interpersonal relationship is good it greatly facilitates collaboration, but if it is bad, it can hinder it. Another key aspect of collaborative agency is the existence of political will, which exists in the case of the City Council of Sant Cugat. As stated by the city representative:

"We started working on the Master Plan in 2013 more out of necessity than out of belief. We had high unemployment and the Department of Economic Promotion had to do something to

help people over 50 years old to find a job. Our intention is to continue working on this line and the councillor for Economic Promotion wants to maintain the line and provide it with staff. There is a political will." (City council)

Participants complained that there is often no congruence between the agreements of the entities with the politicians of the City Council and the subsequent technical difficulties to carry out the agreements. For instance, in some topics such as cooperative housing, the technical teams of the City Council are often collapsed due to ignorance of the subject and excessive guaranteeing attitude and lack of courage to innovate. This results in certain passivity and low participation of the entities in the collaborative processes initiated by the City Council, also explained by the overload of the most active members of the organization and their lack of time. Another aspect considered was the absence of cross-cutting work regarding the SSE among the different Departments of the City Council, which hinders the collaboration between the initiatives and the City Council as a whole. Certain projects need to be developed by different Departments due to public competencies, however, usually projects do not advance because there is no joint work. Furthermore, resources are limited, and projects that cannot be undertaken by a single Department due to budget constraints may be able to succeed joining resources from various Departments.

We asked initiatives about their opinion on how to improve the collaboration with the City Council and they mentioned that more expertise, agility and courage on the part of the City Council are needed to carry out collaborative processes and actions with the entities promoting a new way of doing politics. It further implies that municipal technicians learn how to work with entities. On its side, the City Council considered that it is both parties' duty, from the City Council and from the initiatives, to improve this collaboration. On the part of the entities, he considered that knowledge by the initiatives on the functioning of the public administration may help to enable understanding about how this collaboration has to be structured and what is required from them. He explained that many times there is a willingness on the part of City Council staff to promote joint projects with the entities but technicians usually find themselves with their hands tied to do so.

Concerning the agency tension, initiatives are located within the "reflexive autonomy" (Huxham & Beech, 2003) as representatives can accommodate the particularities of the collaboration while they still have to explain themselves in front of the assembly. On the side of local administration, some collaborations with initiatives work better than others because of the public workers that are leading them. This means that members have some freedom adapting to the needs of the collaboration still following the constraints of the regulations. Therefore, the agency of the City Council is located within "subversive accountability" (Huxham & Beech, 2003).

Finally, regarding the quantity tension, collaborations seem to be tending to simplicity. On the one hand, because most of the collaborations studied take place between initiatives and those have similar structures, thus complexity is low. Despite having different goals and discourses, similarities in language and internal structure make the collaboration easier. On the other hand, the collaborations between the City Council and the initiatives do not embrace the needs of the different parts brought together and rather keep on with the rigid administrative procedures and the political agenda of the City Council. This is a simplification of the collaboration because it is the imposition of a culture over the rest of the organizations. Supporting this argument are the claims of the initiatives for governmental support that would not cause subordination,

control or appropriation of the agenda by the government. This decreases the opportunities for collaborative advantage that heterogeneity of organisations may bring (Huxham & Beech, 2003), such as preventing initiatives to participate in public bids or other types of collaborations that are not conceived by law. The initiatives that were happier to work with the City Council had a member inside the public administration who knows both the functioning of the administration and the initiatives.

Affinity across initiatives can explain why collaboration among them is more frequent and satisfactory than with the City council. The TCA framework points out that partners with similar culture tend to join, nevertheless, homogeneity of participants decreases the opportunity for diversification and use of new resources (Huxham & Beech, 2003). Initiatives and the City Council are located within the "hesitant diversity" (Huxham & Beech, 2003) along the quantity tension, where there is some opportunity for diversification but still cultural similarities are greater.

5.3.4. Managing leadership

Two types of tensions can arise concerning leadership, one regarding the leadership roles and other regarding the decision on leadership roles. With regards to the first one, initiatives have an assembly structure and assertions like: "*we all have the same level of power*" and "*everything is done by consensus*" show that they tend to have a facilitative leadership role, also when they collaborate among each other:

"*In the April assembly, we raffled the members of the board among the people who were interested, it was simply paperwork to be able to constitute. We all have the same weight, are equal members of the assembly and commissions.*" (4Pins Cohabitatge).

This leadership role generates a high commitment and self-identification of the members with the initiative, however, often produce uncertainty on the organisation's agenda, indetermination on the tasks, and overload on the most active members. This can explain why three initiatives talked about organisation difficulties as "*it did not work,*" "*participants are overloaded*" or "*decisions are slow*". Some of them recognised that day to day decisions were made by a board or just a part of the organisation to be more practical. One even acknowledged the trade-off of tensions:

"*Participation spaces have a slower pace but we've done it to get more people involved. The assembly may not be as empowered and the operation may not be optimal.*" (Cal Temerari)

When asked about the role of leadership in collaborative processes between the initiatives and the City Council, representatives of the initiatives thought that the leadership role needs to be goal-oriented. It must be characterized by active listening and must be a shared leadership where a group of people is responsible for specific tasks. The persons must be proactive, honest, hardworking and above all they must have the courage to innovate. Other opinions considered that it is necessary to let the entities take the leadership initiative.

Our results situate initiatives in the contingent part of the first tension. On the second tension, the structure of initiatives is self- managed, this means that the leader role is never assumed by a single person and decisions are made collectively in a leaderless way. Members also complain about the pace and scope of their own organisation's performance, something characteristic of the leaderless style (Vangen & Huxham, 2003b).

On the contrary, the city council is conceived in a hierarchical structure (Ajuntament de Sant Cugat, 2019), typical of a directive leadership role (Vangen & Huxham, 2003b). Local administration shows an interest for the facilitative leadership role by starting discussion tables and other consultations with initiatives. The representative of the City Council thought that during the process of drawing up a policy, for instance, the new Plan for the Social Economy, everyone should propose and jointly decide afterwards the leadership role and who develops it. He deemed that the most appropriate would be a mixture of collaborative leadership shared by diverse members of the initiatives and the City Council but at the same time dynamic based on an agile decision-making approach. He considered that putting this leadership model into practice is moderately realistic as there are representative figures in the municipality who could play this role. However, based on past collaborations, it is not rare that the City Council uses a directive role to influence the agenda, control the resources and have the last word on decisions. This quotation shows their unequal leadership role compared to the initiatives:

"At one point we contacted the administration. We've had several meetings that have gone really well that we tore up a verbal commitment, now let's see how it goes with the change of town hall, but it's published in the press, I hope they don't change it." (XES Sant Cugat)

On the second tension, the City Council has a pre-established leadership (Ajuntament de Sant Cugat, 2019), meaning that it is internally decided in advance who is in charge of each task.

5.3.5. Managing power

When initiatives collaborate, they use the resources of participants in benefit of the collaboration:

"We share approaches and members with other groups (…) This allows us to improve the impact of environmental awareness we want to achieve. It may also be that things involve a political action." (Grup de lectura d'Ecologia Política)

When collaborating with the City Council, however, the administration has been the one deciding the collaboration procedures and inviting the participants. The outcomes of those are not always satisfactory and six initiatives have expressed dislike towards them, as expressed by the representative of the S*indicat de Llogateres (tenant's union)*:

"We participated in the Sant Cugat Housing Board but we stopped participating because the objectives were not met".

Concerning who should have the power to decide over certain aspects of a collaboration in a future new Plan for the Social Economy, some initiatives considered that the most important aspect is the control of resources affecting the topic under collaboration. The control of resources should be decided collegially between the initiatives and the City Council. The decision about defining the characteristics and functioning of the collaborative space should be shared among those collaborating, currently is the responsibility of the City Council. Some representatives thought that initiatives should play a greater role in choosing who is part of this collaborative space and in deciding how it works.

The representative of the City Council considered necessary to distinguish two phases, a first phase of elaboration of the Master Plan and a second phase of execution of the actions defined

in the Plan. On the one hand, during the elaboration phase of the Plan, the City Council should be the one in charge of organizing the meetings, choosing the functioning of the collaboration and control of resources because it is the institution that promotes the Master Plan. The choice of who should be part of the elaboration of the Plan must respond to a joint work of the City Council and the entities. The task of acting as moderator must be the responsibility of the company in charge of drawing up the Master Plan, as they have the expertise. In the case of the second phase of development of the actions, it would depend on the type of actions that are proposed and how they have been elaborated. During the process of drawing up the Plan, the role of each party must be defined. In some specific actions, the City Council may have the role of promoter and executor, but in other actions it may be the entities, with the financial and material support, if necessary, of the City Council. As compared with the previous Master Plan of the Social Economy, in this new edition a greater involvement is needed on the part of the entities to develop the actions based on a constructive process from below, transversal and collaborative among all.

Beyond collaborative processes, social initiatives have the power to decide the pace and strategy in the public perception arena. They build normative content and disclose administration or market procedures concerning public problems, which can influence public agendas. Five initiatives have stated to have impact through influencing social opinion. As the members of two different initiatives refer in these quotes:

"We forced the City Council to hold a public bid. We have also stopped some contests for malpractice. These claims have generated a reflection within the City Council to evaluate the things they do and how they are explained." (El Cugatenc)

"Thanks to our impact, the administration has done something. They have finished the tenant's manual. We gave them our work, gave them our Manual of the Tenant for information and legal advice." (Sindicat de Llogateres)

5.3.6. Effects of the covid pandemic on collaboration

Participants expressed different opinions regarding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on collaboration. On the one hand, some opinions considered that it has served as an excuse to not carry out attempts to collaborate that existed previously. The entity from the social economy explained that the will of the City Council to collaborate has always been present. During the first weeks of the pandemic, the collaboration was very active in providing masks and individual protection equipment which generated a feeling of being supported by the City Council. They have always obtained support when needed, regardless of who forms the council. On the positive side, three initiatives expressed that the pandemic promoted telematic meetings which facilitates collaborative processes because physical attendance to meetings is not needed.

On the side of the City Council, the representative thought that the pandemic influenced collaboration but not as much as desired. The City Council and initiatives of the social economy did a joint diagnosis of their situation and challenges due to the pandemic and attempts were made to promote the economic reactivation and support of the initiatives. It contributed to increase the local administration awareness not only about the need for joint work but also about the initiatives' needs and how to deal with them.

To sum up, our results show that social initiatives and Public Administration count on different resources, and cross collaboration could accomplish goals that either of them would not have on their own. Initiatives have the credibility to talk about social and environmental concerns, and the City Council has a budget and human resources to carry on programs. Organisations working together will have more impact, and even greater if they are dissimilar (Huxham & Beech, 2003). Stated in the TCA, diversity and congruence are both important in a collaboration, there is however, the need to identify the tensions to better understand them and proceed accordingly. Figure 8 shows a summary of the tensions identified.
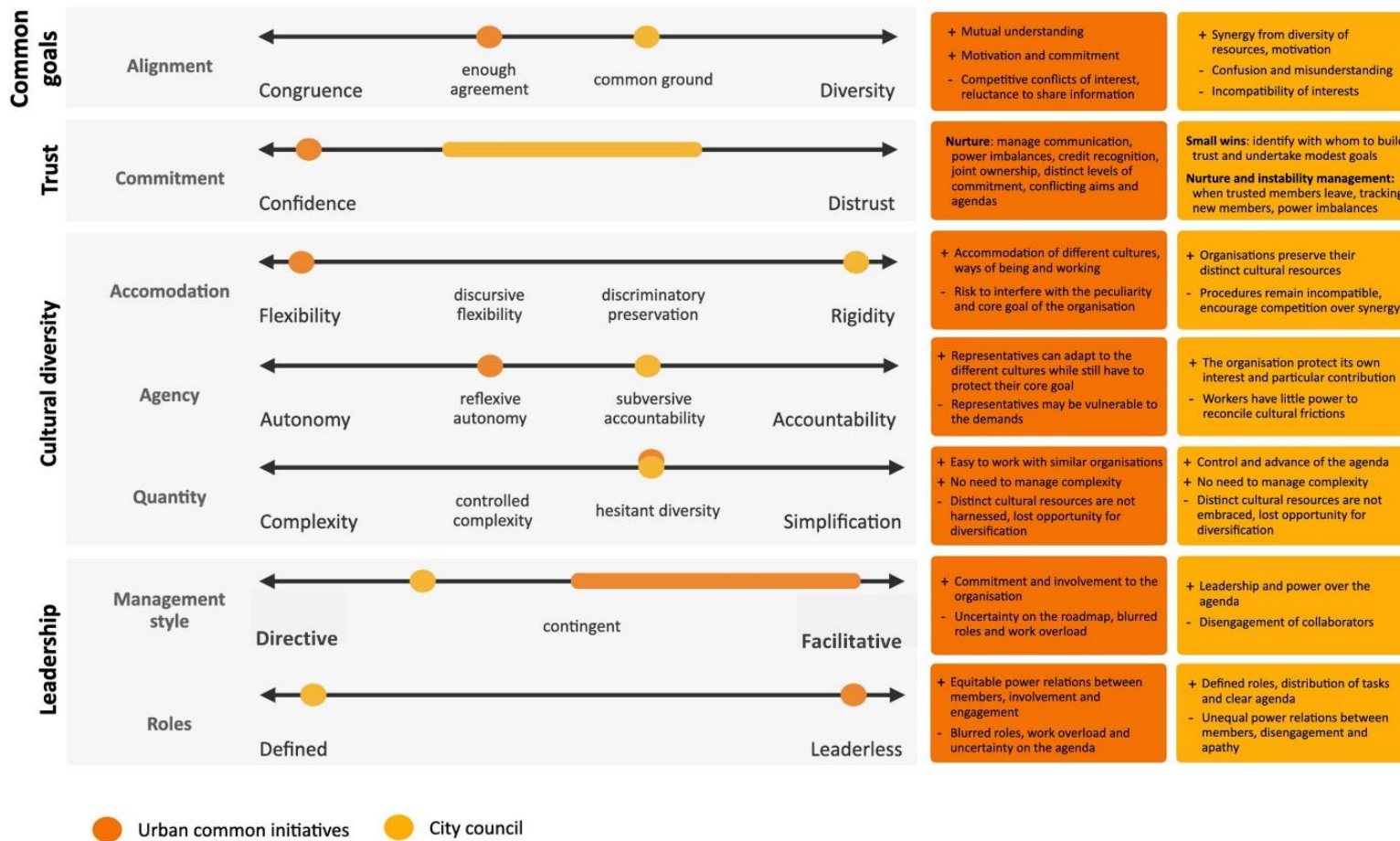
Figure 8. Tensions identified regarding the collaboration between initiatives and the City council based on the TCA framework. Based on Simon Mas (2020). *Note: Power dimension and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on collaboration are not illustrated in the figure because they do not have a continuous display.*

6. Conclusions

We have organized the Conclusions following the objectives of the study.

Objective 1: To improve our understanding of the commons phenomenon in the MAB and identify aspects that promote learning between public authorities and citizen-led organizations around the commons-led coproduction.

1.1. The more than 400 instances of commons in the MAB can be meaningfully clustered around 4 groups: the "Social rights", "Social rights +Eco", "Food prosumer" and "Niches of sustainability" commons.

    1.1.1. All clusters share a "prosumer" nature but diverge in terms of their internal democracy, internal and external transformation ambition and whether this is social and/or environmental, whether they produce goods and/or services and whether they constitute alternatives to the welfare state, markets or both.

    1.1.2. The clusters can be also associated to different trends in the history of socio-environmental activism. The "Social rights" and "Social rights +Eco" commons can be associated to the activism that emerged during the nineteenth century and the transition to democracy. The "Food prosumer" and "Niches of sustainability" commons can be associated to the more recent post-2008 crisis wave of mobilizations.

    1.1.3. The different types of commons distribute unequally within the MAB and the city of Barcelona, with a handful of municipalities (Barcelona in particular) and neighborhoods concentrating an important proportion of all initiatives, respectively.

1.2. Most of the experiences of commons coproduction concentrate within the city of Barcelona, which speaks about the potential influence of the party in government and its pro-commons program.

1.3. There is an alignment between types of commons and experiences of commons co-production. The "Food prosumer" commons stand out for concentrating relatively fewer experiences of co-production than the others, particularly than the "Social rights +Eco" and the "Niches of sustainability" commons. This can be associated to the wider scope of the external transformation agendas in the latter than the former.

Objective 2: Identify the current advantages, disadvantages and challenges of commons-led coproduction approach as a new model of public administration and define with commons groups, policymakers and public administrators the characteristics of this model in the case of the MAB.

2.1 Several coproduction experiences have been identified in the MAB. We describe here the main ones: The Citizen Assets Program (*Programa de Patrimoni Ciutadà)* of the Barcelona City Council (which involves three types of experiences: The Civic management, the Empty Plots Plan and the transfer of premises); projects of the Direction of Socioeconomic Innovation of Barcelona Activa and the Commissioner for the Social and Solidarity Economy of the Barcelona City Council; the Cooperative Athenaeums programs; Cooperative Poles; and the development of policy documents.

2.2 Our results show that in most cases, the collaboration takes places between Social and Solidary Economy (SSE) organizations of second and third level and the public administration.

2.3 Overall, the main challenge for the advancement of coproduction is to build a legal-administrative framework that moves beyond the public-private logic that has so far guided the relationship between the public administration and the third sector.

2.4 The SSE Law has the potential to be legal administrative framework needed to advance commons coproduction.

    2.4.1 The drafting of the SSE Law has so far brought important discussions around the conceptualization of the SSE, which actors belong to it, or the role of particular actors such as mutual societies, community economies, etc.

    2.4.2 One important goal of the new Law is to generate the means to create new legal tools that articulate the relationship between the public administration and the SSE.

2.5 The Citizen Assets model is also a reference, because it is a unique model of relationship between the SSE and the public administration where the entities of private capital cannot enter the cession of public premises and facilities.

2.6 A particular barrier identified by many interviewees is that sometimes the municipal technicians involved in the promotion of the SSE are not familiar with the values and the functioning of the SSE. A solution would be to integrate these technical experts earlier in the co-production processes.

2.7 There is agreement among representatives of public authorities at all levels that certain citizen initiatives that represent a majority of citizens of a municipality should not have to participate in public bids to obtain funding for their activities.

2.8 In the case of Barcelona, there is good relationship between second order organizations and the municipality; however, sometimes the collaborative processes that are set up are quite demanding for the entities.

    2.8.1 However, the City Council does not sufficiently recognize the idiosyncrasies of entities and organizations of the SSE, i.e., the fac that they give support to social services that are difficult to sustain financially in the long term. Competitive bidding processes are not necessarily a good solution to cope with this.

    2.8.2 Also, the bureaucratic procedures to apply for a grant (e.g., public bids) and its justifications are not always aligned with the capacities or timings of the initiatives.

    2.8.3 The Barcelona City Council has made the commitment to push the limits of regulations, but this may be only possible via a positive discrimination in favor of SEE initiatives.

2.9 The case of the Athenaeums has been a pilot experience that illustrates the opportunities and challenges of scaling up coproduction processes at the regional level.

    2.10 Differences in the coproduction processes exist depending on whether the Athenaeum is coordinated by an entity of the SSE or by a public entity.

    2.11 In the case of Athenaeums composed by initiatives of the SSE and the public administration, such as the Barcelonès Nord, they generate projects in a collaborative way, but this is mostly accomplished via division of labor rather than collaboration.

2.12 There are also local organizations that do not understand the necessity to promote the Athenaeums and scale up coproduction processes.

Objective 3: Design and implement an assessment framework to evaluate the commons-led coproduction approach.

1.1. We have structured the assessment workshop based on four of the five dimensions in which tension may arise according to Vangen and Huxham (2014): managing cultural/organizational diversity, managing common goals, managing power and managing leadership. The fifth dimension, management of trust, is considered to be better addressed through individual semi-structured interviews with participants rather than during a joint workshop.

    1.1.1. The representative of the City Council preferred to participate separately from the commons initiatives. Future applications shall take into consideration the preferences of parties about the organization of the workshops.

    1.1.2. Some dimensions like the goals and organizational culture dimensions were more easily understood by the participants than others.

    1.1.3. Invitations to the participants were framed very carefully to avoid misunderstandings about the goal of the workshops. The goal was purely research-oriented; there was no intent to use the workshops as a way to channel petitions or concerns from the initiatives to the City Council, although we emphasized that we would share a synthesis of the workshop insights with every participant

    1.1.4. Representatives of some initiatives showed concerns about the usefulness of assessment exercises if these do not come with sufficient leverage to promote changes in the way co-production is organized.

1.2. Our results show that urban common initiatives embrace different goals but they share values, which makes it easier to envision common aims.

    1.2.1. Although the City Council does not frame public problems as a cause of capitalist dynamics (as some commons initiatives do), it gives priority socio-environmental welfare over economic growth (at least as per the representative of the Department of Economic Development) which is a good base for joint work.

    1.2.2. The plurality of goals among commons initiatives makes complicated for the local government to understand and harmonize. Larger governments may have more leverage to accommodate diverse goals.

    1.2.3. Organizationally, initiatives have in common organizational simplicity and consensus-based decision making, which makes them flexible when enacting collaboration to adapt to the needs of a specific agenda. This flexibility, however, may come with the risk of dilated processes and lose commitment from their members.

    1.2.4. In the local administration, procedures are more rigid and those structures are ill fit for the collaboration with initiatives. Several initiatives complained about its timing and effectiveness.

    1.2.5. Grounded on past experiences, initiatives stated that good expectations towards collaboration with other initiatives and trust across initiatives is present and strong.

    1.2.6. Trust regarding the City Council is diverse. The local administration values working with social organizations but most of them are disappointed with the City Council which shows a lack of trust.

1.2.7. When asked about how to improve the collaboration, representatives of the commons initiatives considered necessary:
- Improving bureaucratic processes and providing facilities for carrying out the activities of the entities.
  involving both the technical, legal and political representatives of the City Council simultaneously in the collaborative processes,
- Eliminating double standards from the City Council with entities that are critical of its political management to promote an universal and feasible access to the City Council's public resources
- Creating sector-specific negotiating tables that involve regularity and a commitment on the part of the City Council to carry out the common objectives.

1.2.8. On the part of the City Council, the representative
- Expressed doubts about whether the flexibilization of collaboration with entities could circumvent bureaucratic protocols.
- Pointed to the need of regulatory changes at the regional and national level shall first facilitate such flexibilization.
- Emphasized the importance that the Social and Solidarity Economy priorities crosscut the different departments of the City Council.
- Also, knowledge by the initiatives on the functioning of the public administration may help to enable understanding about how this collaboration has to be structured and what is required from them.

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