TOWN
Small and medium sized towns in their functional territorial context

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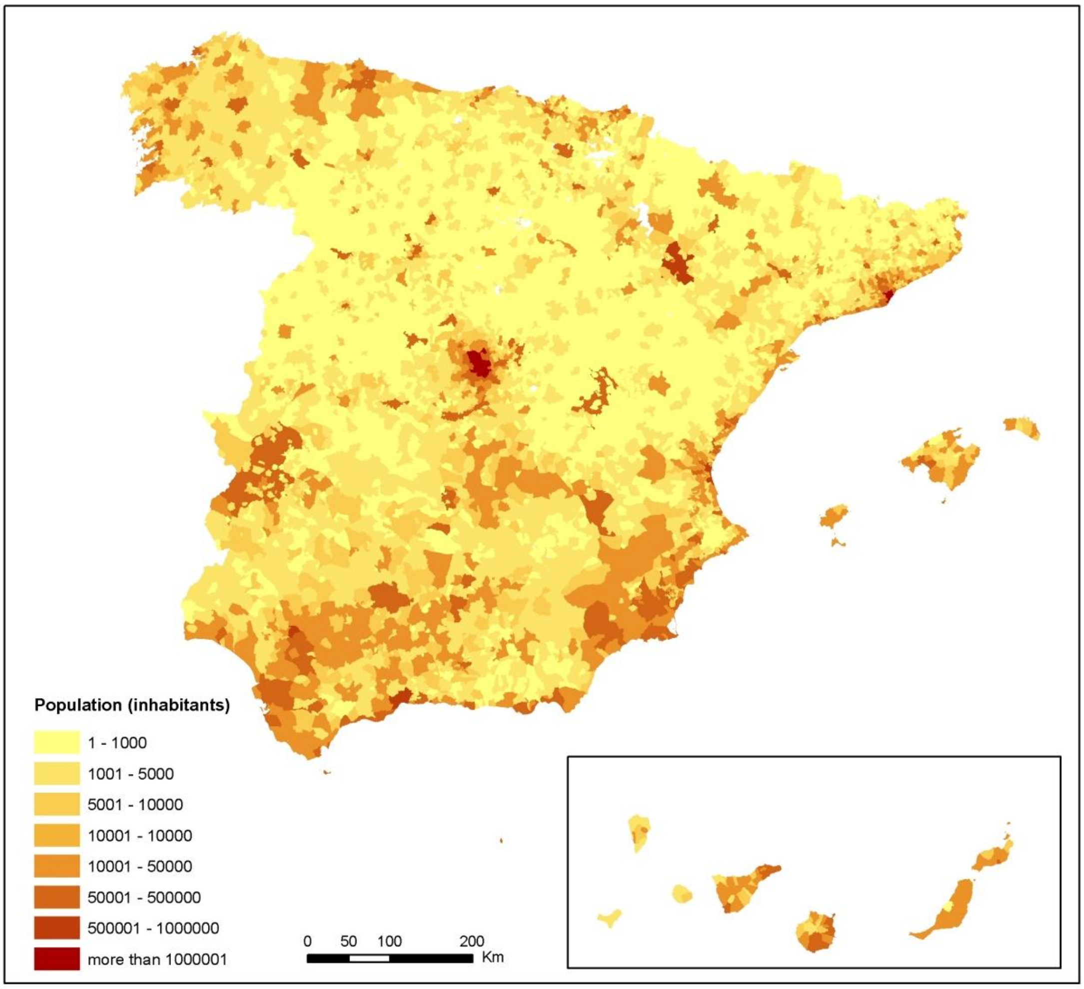
1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

1.1 Presentation

Spain is a country generally characterised by low population density, with clear contrasts in population distribution and deep interregional differences in settlements structures. The national (average) population density is 93.1 inhabitants per km^2 (2011 census data), which is far below the EU average (113 inhabitants per km^2). Figure 1.1 illustrates the strong contrasts in terms of population distribution within Spanish regions: in addition to Madrid, the main metropolitan areas are concentrated on the Mediterranean coast and, to a lesser degree, on the Atlantic coast; eight of the ten main urban areas in Spain are located in coastal or island regions, the exceptions being Madrid and Zaragoza.

Figure 1.1 - Population density by municipalities (2011)



Source: Own elaboration, based on 2011 census data.

In addition to main metropolitan systems, the coastal areas, and mainly the Mediterranean regions, concentrate also the strongest networks of small and medium towns, while central regions are rather characterized by a structure of isolated medium towns in low-density functional areas. In Tables 1.1 and 1.2 we see the distribution of population in Spain classified by the size of municipalities. Through a transversal lecture of both tables we underline the high number of low population municipalities in Spain: 4,951 of 8,108 (61.1%) have less than 1,000 inhabitants, and represent less than the 4% of total population. On the other hand, there are only six municipalities with more than 500,000 inhabitants: namely, and in order, Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Seville, Zaragoza and Malaga. The municipalities between 5,000 and 50,000 inhabitants include more than a third part of total Spanish population. Remarkably, this kind of municipalities has achieved a relevant increase of population during the last decade: in 2001 there were 1,041 municipalities with a population between 5,000 and 50,000 inhabitants, concentrating the 34.3% of Spanish population, while in 2011 there are 1,164 municipalities with this size, and their share of population is 35.1%. In other words, in a decade characterised by demographic growth without precedents in Spain, SMSTs on average have gained population above all other settlements classes.

Table 1.1 - Distribution of population by size of municipality of residence, 2001-2011

	2001		2011	
Population size	Number of municipalities	Total inhabitants	Number of municipalities	Total inhabitants
>500,000	6	7,005,000	6	7,539,304
100,001 - 500,000	50	9,446,485	56	11,014,339
50,001 - 100,000	63	4,231,284	82	5,857,902
20,001 - 50,000	197	5,839,977	250	7,422,185
5,001 - 20,000	844	8,171,713	914	9,009,440
1,001 - 5,000	1,997	4,581,594	1,922	4,475,276
< 1,000	4,951	1,571,318	4,886	1,497,471
TOTAL	8,108	40,847,371	8,116	46,815,917

Source: Own elaboration – based on 2001 and 2011 census data.

Table 1.2 - Distribution of population by size of municipality of residence (%), 2001-2011

	2001		2011	
Population size	Number of municipalities (%)	Total inhabitants (%)	Number of municipalities (%)	Total inhabitants (%)
>500,000	0,1	17,1	0,1	16,1
100,001 - 500,000	0,6	23,1	0,7	23,5
50,001 - 100,000	0,8	10,4	1,0	12,5
20,001 - 50,000	2,4	14,3	3,1	15,9
5,001 - 20,000	10,4	20,0	11,3	19,2
1,001 - 5,000	24,6	11,2	23,7	9,6
< 1,000	61,1	3,8	60,2	3,2

Source: Own elaboration – based on 2001 and 2011 census data.

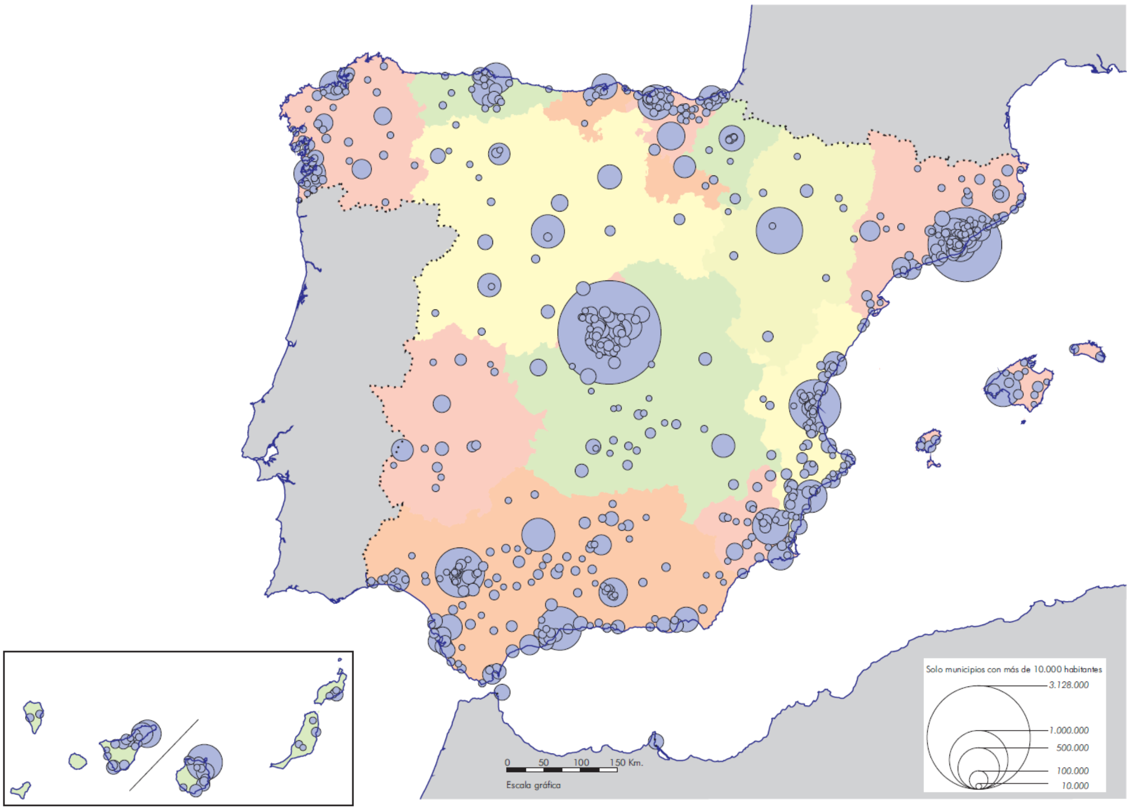
1.2. National/regional definition of SMSTs

There is no official definition of small and/or medium sized town in Spain or within any of the three Autonomous Communities included in NUTS1 area of study. Yet there are other definitions and approaches that could be usefully taken into consideration: the statistical delimitation between urban and rural areas, the political and administrative status, and their role in their territorial context as pinpointed by the existing literature.

1.2.1 Official statistical definition

The National Statistical Institute (INE) defines as "cities" or "urban municipalities" the municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants. The municipalities with less than 2,000 inhabitants are defined as "rural municipalities", and municipalities with a population comprised between 2,000 and 9,999 are considered "intermediate municipalities". The restrictions of this definition are obvious: it is associated only with the municipal boundaries, not to urban/functional areas; it does not consider any functional or territorial context for this categorisation, neither their administrative or political functions. Compared to this definition, SMSTs as defined in our morphological analysis may well include municipalities between 10,000 and the top population level for medium cities. As will be seen below, this top level differs considerably according to different authors and their approaches to the study of Spanish urban systems (ranging from 50,000 and 200,000).

Figure 1.2 - Municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants



Source: Ministerio de Vivienda, 2006.

The map in Figure 1.2 illustrates the distribution of municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants (statistical urban municipalities) in Spain. The map highlights their concentration in coastal regions; the key role of the Mediterranean coast in this respect is also evident. The predominant dimension of Madrid metropolitan area is the main exception of this pattern.

1.2.2 Administrative / political definitions

There is no political function or definition directly linked to the urban status in the Spanish system. However we consider the role of administrative capital of any regional or supra-municipal level as the most suitable approximation. All provincial or Autonomous Communities capitals have a population size large enough to be considered the centre of urban systems themselves.

In addition to Provinces or Autonomous Communities, there is another intermediate administrative level between regional and local level: *comarcas*[1], which, being a supra-municipal entity of voluntaristic nature, do not cover the whole Spanish territory. In spite of this, in the whole case study area these units are in service and represent an interesting level for the analysis of local development strategies and policies. The interesting point of *comarcas* is that they have a dimension that could be associated with a micro-regional functional area, and historically they were supposed to play this role. For this reason, the town that acts as capital of a *comarca* has historically achieved a role of administrative, service and trading centrality of its functional region. In low-density population areas, the capital town of a *comarca* usually concentrates the main public and private services.

The role of capital of a *comarca* is not generally taken care of in academic studies. But it turns out to be a useful approximation to small and medium towns and their role in a territorial context, which is indeed recognised in regional planning and local development policies – as we will see in the micro-level analysis included in Ch. 3 of this report.

1.2.3 Literature overview on definition of SMSTs

1970s – 1980s: definitions focused on population (inhabitants). The first publications about the classification of Spanish cities in relation with their population and position in urban network hierarchies date from the beginning of the 1970s. A good example of this approach is the work of Capel (1972) about the application of the rank-size model in Spanish urban system. At the end of the decade the literature extends to research specifically related to medium-sized cities, focusing especially on the classification in terms of population size. The theoretical bases were, in addition of rank-size analysis, theories and quantitative methods related to central places theory (Abellán, 1977, 1978; Juaristi, 1978).

During the next decade the research approach also focused on the population size, but also included a specific consideration of the territorial context. Serrano developed monographs on non-capital cities with around 100,000 inhabitants (Serrano, 1984) and 25,000-50,000 inhabitants' Spanish cities (Serrano, 1986). In brief, the main publications on these issues were clearly considering a demographic approach as central (Vinuesa, 1989).

1990s: SMSTs in their territorial context. Urban geography until the 1990s had focused mainly on the study of the large urban areas and their increasing size (both in terms of population and urbanisation patterns). Small and intermediate cities had occupied a secondary role within an undefined approach between rural development studies and "classic" urban approaches. In this context, since the second half of the 1990s a new approach for the definition of SMSTs in Spain has emerged. The definition and/or delimitation of SMSTs were not only oriented on its demographic size; their functional role

[1] *Comarcas* are the smallest supra-municipal administrative unit – similar to English counties. Their main competences are local development, environment policies and tourism.

on its territorial context was considered into account as well. We underline in this sense the contributions of Delgado (1995) and Vilagrasa (1999).

These new contributions increasingly underline other important qualitative components of the identification of SMSTs: economic, functional and territorial variables. The majority of the publications indicated advanced in line with the assumptions made by Vinuesa and the end of the previous decade, in the sense of the importance of the quality of life in these cities and their key role on urban networks.

Vilagrasa (1999) has also underlined the connectivity role of these cities in his general reflection on small and medium cities in Spain. He argues that the definition of SMSTs must come from the features that these behold in larger territorial networks and their internal structures. From this perspective, Vilagrasa (1996) produced a first approximation to a functional definition of SMSTs. Population size was considered a secondary aspect, while his analysis focused on the identification of conditions that, from a socioeconomic perspective, could characterize more accurately the role of this kind of cities as network nodes. To do this, to the traditional population size Vilagrasa added different variables that point to their role and status in a territorial context: airports, ports, pipelines, gross income, market share, phones, newspapers, road traffic, universities, students, number of schools, availability of new technologies, etc.

Finally, Bellet and Llop (2000, 2004), popularised the term “intermediate cities” to define medium-sized cities, yet focusing, beyond their demographic dimension, on their territorial role as “intermediation nodes”, a key issue for regional cohesion which starts to be an important issue in the Spanish political agenda in this period. These authors believe that the intermediary role would be defined not only by the position in the urban networks, but especially by the structure of the relationships with other towns, and also by the levels of concentration of equipment and social infrastructure. In the UIA-CIMES International Program (Union Internationale des Architectes – Programme on Intermediate Cities) these authors continue their work “towards a functional definition of intermediate city” based on socioeconomic characteristics, territorial functions, quality of life, built environment and socio-demographical indexes; all of these issues are combined in order to overcome merely quantitative definitions.

An intermediate city could be then defined as a centre of economic, cultural and social interaction. It could also become a centre for the delivery of more or less specialized goods and services to a population that exceeds the limits of its municipality. Intermediate cities have taken a central role as nodes for regional transport and information infrastructures at regional, national or even international levels. In most cases these cities concentrate institutions of regional government, with all the socioeconomic aspects that this function entails. The concept of intermediate city in this light is not rigid and cannot be only determined by the size. It is rather a transversal concept based on the relation between the above-mentioned variables, and it is also influenced and conditioned by the relationships with the territorial context to which it belongs. Intermediate cites are settlements characterised by a special role in the territorial structure (and producing structures) and an intensive relationship with its cohesion area thanks of the concentration of hierarchic functions, economic activities and social and cultural references.

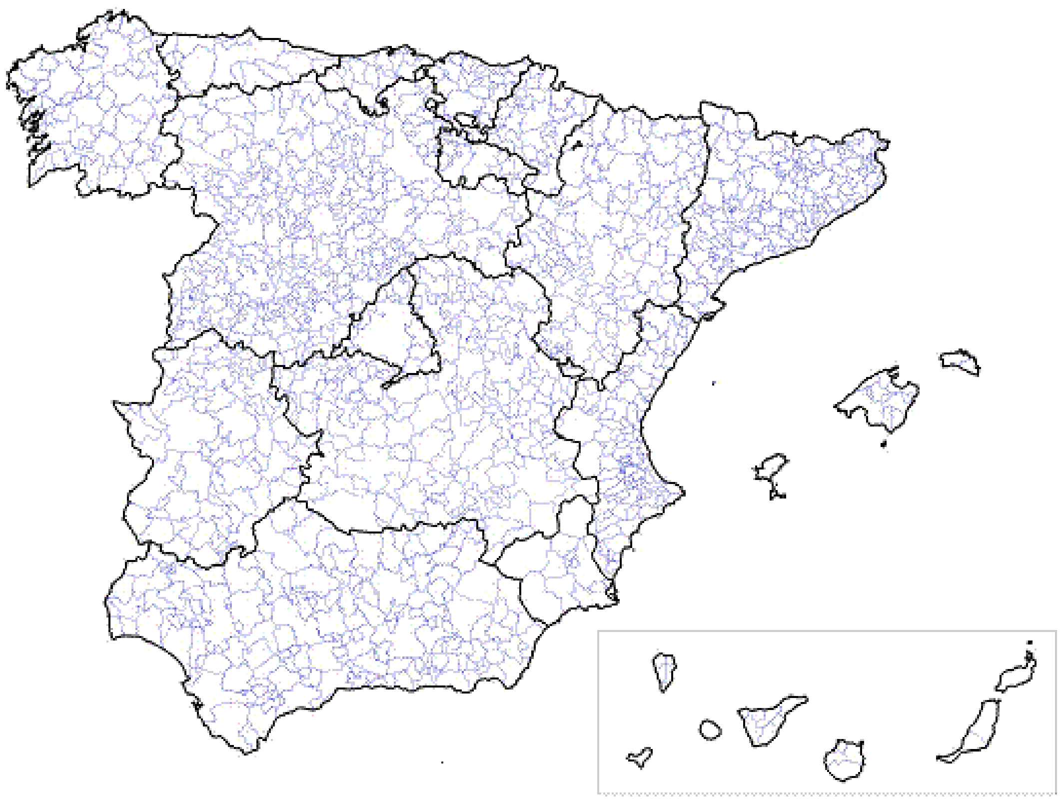
1.3. SMSTs in national/regional settlement system: literature overview

In addition to definitions and delimitations, we could summarize the literature about SMSTs in Spain through the following key issues: role in metropolisation processes, polycentric development, urban networks, changes on urban hierarchies and urban sprawl (mainly, in the last two decades), and new strategies for local development.

The first geographic congress explicitly dedicated to medium-sized cities was the "Second Urban Studies Week: Small and Medium Cities in Catalonia" at University of Lleida on 1984. The main conclusions were the expression of a need to develop a specific analytic toolbox for the study of the dynamics of change in SMSTs and the relevance of their role in their territorial context, mainly in terms of the demographic and economic growth and local development strategies.

The changes in the Spanish urban network and the increasingly important role of SMSTs have been the most common lines of research in this sense. As mentioned above, these kinds of studies were initiated during 1980s and were reinforced in 1990s. In this context in addition of studies pointed previously, we could conclude that Joan Vilagrasa's works initiated a research line on the studies of SMSTs that was picked up in recent years by other authors (see Mallarach & Vilagrasa, 2002, a quantitative study of 37 Spanish SMSTs).

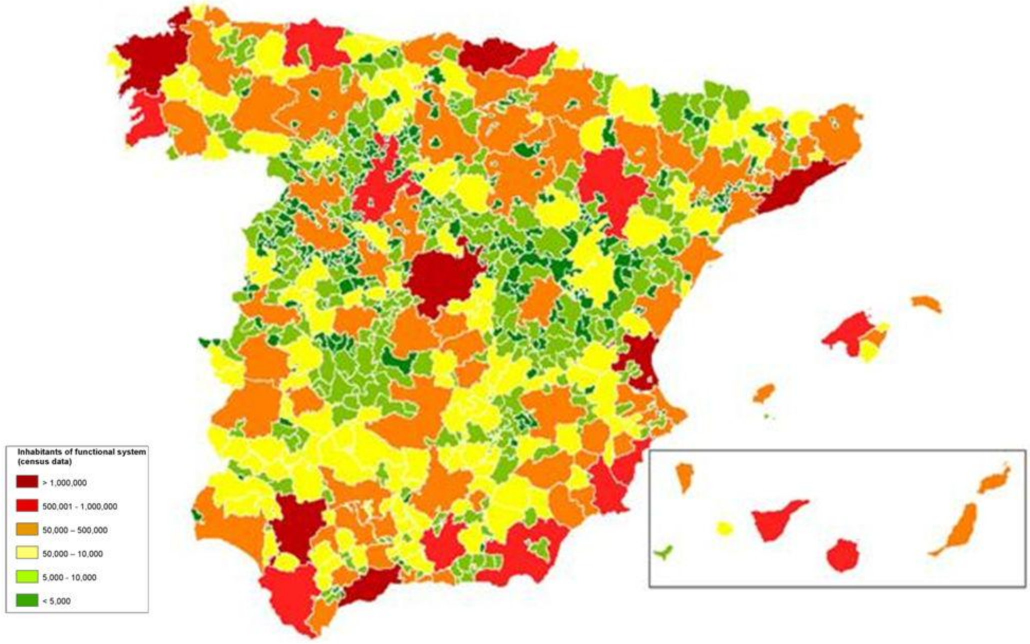
Figure 1.3 - Urban systems in Spain



Source: Roca, Moix, Arellano, 2012.

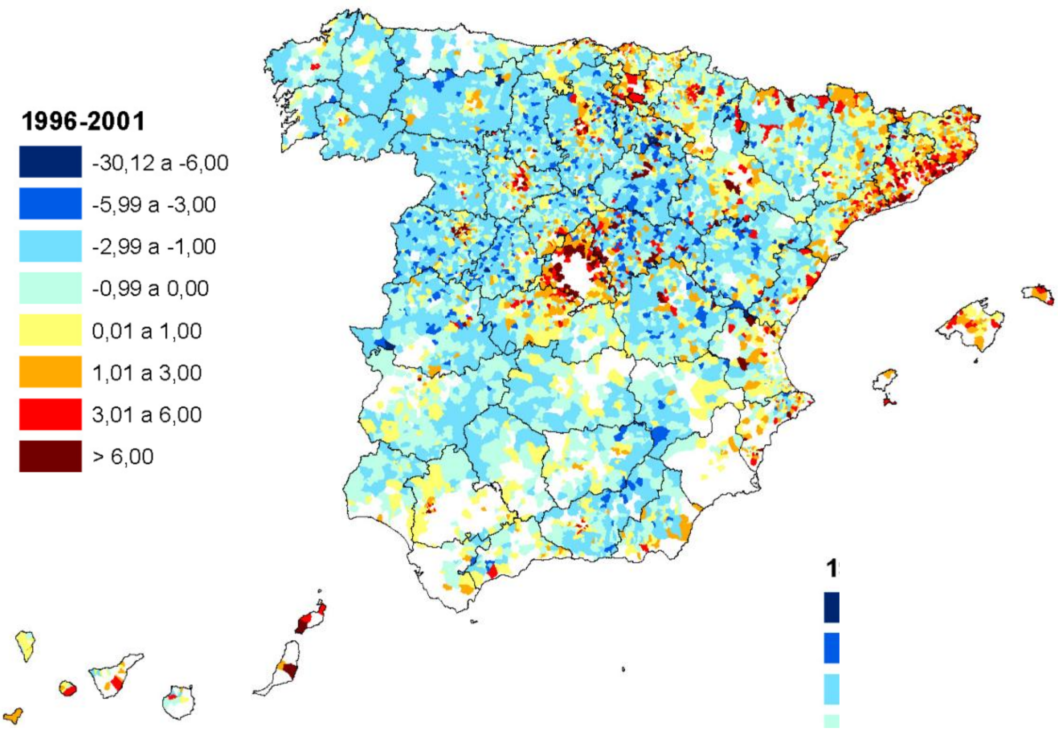
Various other authors and research groups have been more recently focusing on the reconfiguration on Spanish and Catalan urban networks and the processes of consolidation of a polycentric structure. In this context we could underline Oriol Nel·lo's publications (2001) and, more recently, Joan Roca's team works with UPC (Roca, Moix, Arellano, 2012; Marmolejo, Chica, Masip, 2011). The UPC team works with census data to elaborate mobility matrices with the objective to define metropolitan systems in Spain and their internal articulation in sub-central networks and systems. Their methodology considers different levels of interaction between housing markets and job centres. In the following maps we can see the main results.

Figure 1.4 - Functional areas / metropolitan areas



Source: Roca, Moix, Arellano, 2012.

Figure 1.5 - Population growth of < 10,000 inhabitants' municipalities, 1996-2001

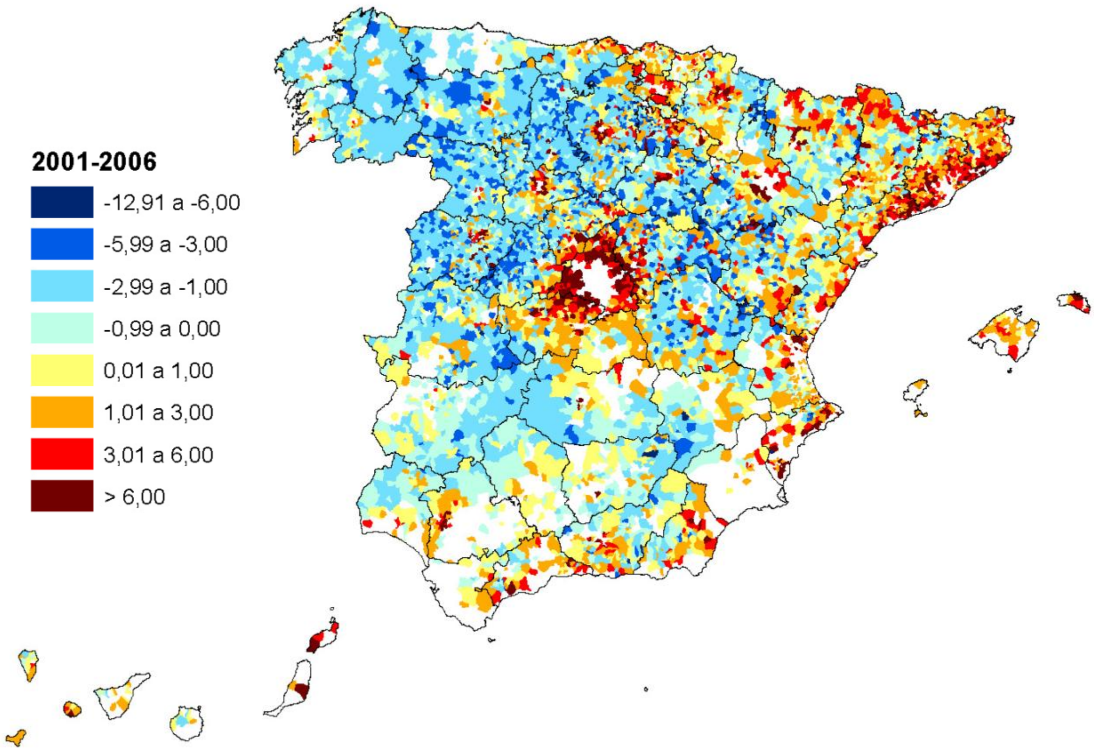


Source: Roquer & Blay, 2008.

Figure 1.3 illustrates the 1,314 urban systems defined by job market cohesion and strong relations of mobility as basic level of interaction, while Figure 1.4 maps the functional areas, delimited as high density areas with more than 50% of self-contention of the workforce.

As in the last two decades SMSTs underwent important demographic growth and changes in the urban fabric, especially those nearest to large metropolitan urban areas (see Figures 1.5 and 1.6 as an overview), research focusing on urban sprawl acquired a new importance also in the context of intermediate towns. In this area we highlight the works of F. Muñoz, studying the suburbanization process in the Barcelona metropolitan region, its territorial effects, and the role of SMSTs (for instance, Muñoz, 2004).

Figure 1.6 - Population growth of < 10,000 inhabitants' municipalities (2001-2006)

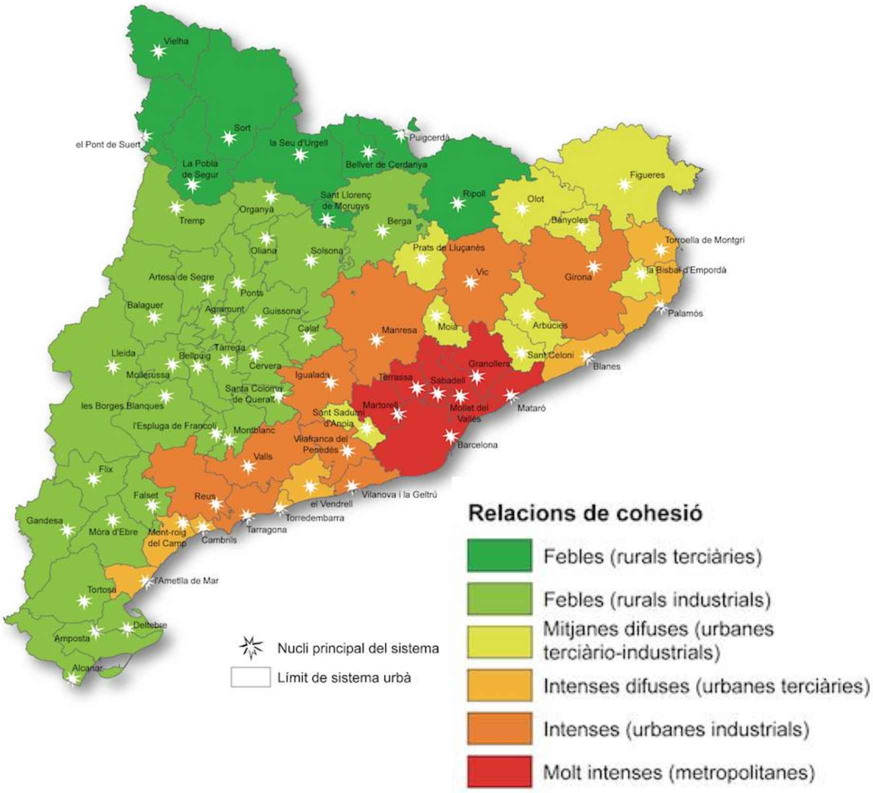


Source: Roquer & Blay, 2008.

It is also important to consider the question of demographic trends and recent changes in urbanisation process from the point of view of rural areas (municipalities under 10,000 inhabitants). From this point of view, we could underline the increasing number of publications focusing on SMSTs and their role in the rural context. The Atlas of New Rurality (Aldomà, 2009) is the most recent and valuable contribution to this line of research in Catalonia. This publication analyses the role of SMSTs as a key territorial node in low density areas and underline their hierarchical functions through a concentration of resources and services.

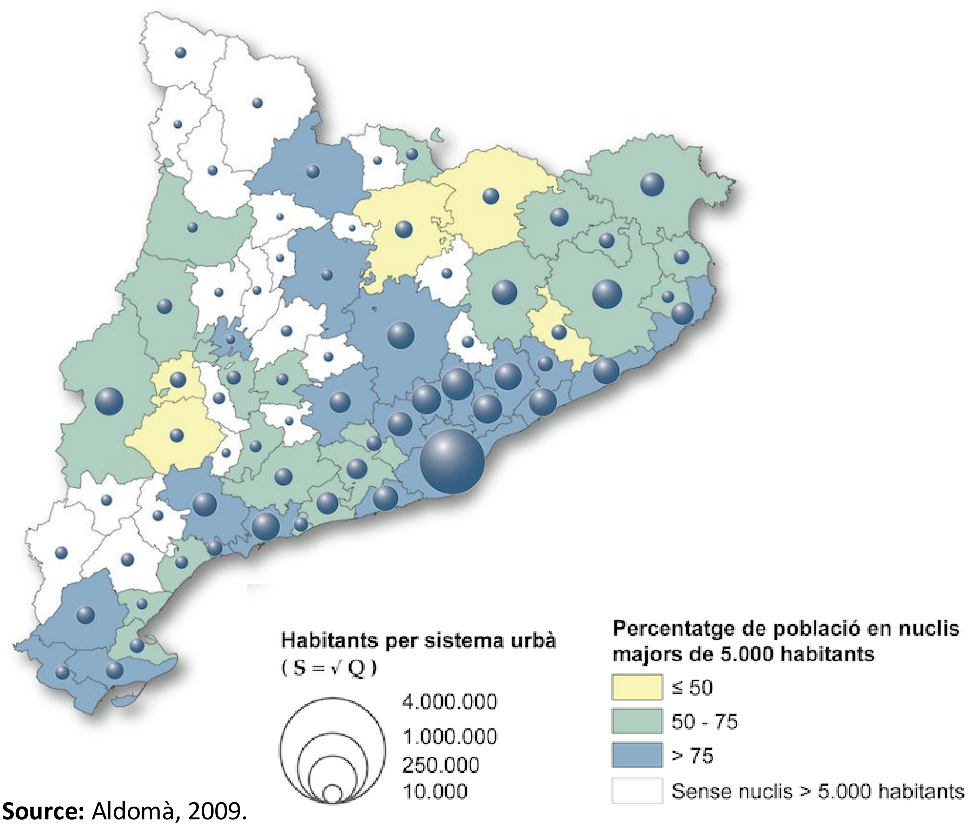
In Figure 1.7 we see an example of a delimitation of micro-regional functional urban systems in Catalonia. The areas were defined using the data provided by the datasets used in each of the seven regional planning documents that cover the territory of the Autonomous Community. In the following Figure 1.8 we see the percentage of population in municipalities under 5,000 inhabitants in each of these urban systems.

Figure 1.7 - Urban cohesion systems in Catalonia



Source: Aldomà, 2009.

Figure 1.8 - Urban cohesion systems and average population in municipalities > 5,000 inhabitants



Source: Aldomà, 2009.

The role of SMSTs in local development strategies and policies is another key issue in the recent Spanish literature. In this respect the most relevant contributions are the works of Ricardo Méndez and Inmaculada Caravaca and their research groups about the specific role of medium cities as poles of innovation and local development (Méndez et al, 2006, 2007, 2008a, 2008b; Caravaca et al. 2007). Both teams are studying the role of creativity and innovation in the strategies of local development in Spain. The interesting issue from the point of view of this project is that their works focus on medium cities, including considerations regarding flexible governance, new strategies for resilience in the present context of economic decline, and the capacities to implement strategies for local development related to knowledge and creativity in territories outside the main metropolitan areas. They are currently working on generating new comparative indicators – both qualitative and quantitative – of the development role of creative industries.

To conclude the review of main research contributions about SMSTs in the Spanish context, we underline that there are various research groups working on the analysis of territorial functions of SMSTs, like, for instance, the UNESCO Chair on Intermediate Cities and World Urbanisation of the University of Lleida. The main research line of the group is the analysis of SMSTs in a global perspective, through a comprehensive study of the territorial function of SMSTs in non-European contexts, mainly in South American African and Asian countries. This research line is developed also in the framework of the international program UIA-CIMES quoted above[2]. A European approach was developed through the contribution of this team to the ESPON 2006 Project SMESTO (ESPON, 2006). Their studies also developed analysis of the Catalan and Spanish context (Bellet & Llop, 1999, 2000, 2003, 2004). Yet their main contributions were associated to the definition of medium cities and their "intermediation" functions and the impulse of a specific research agenda on medium cities matters. Their approach to the studies of medium cities highlights the qualitative dimension of the analyses that it required:

> ' *A medium (intermediate) city cannot be defined only by its urban environment size or population level. A key issue is the role and function that city plays in its territorial context: its influence and relationship (both hierarchical and horizontal) with other settlements and the flows with external territories* (Bellet & Llop, 2004). '

This summarizes some aspects that help to define the role that a medium (intermediate) city plays in its territory. Thus, medium cities could be defined as:

- Relatively specialized centres of services and trading that have clear potential consumers at supra-municipal level (both urban and rural municipalities).
- Centres of social, economic and cultural interaction. For example, medium cities act as the economical heart of large rural regions in Global South.
- Centres associated to main infrastructure networks that connect local networks with regional and interregional networks. These cities are the nodes that join various flows and act as key access point to different network levels.
- Centres that usually play an administrative/capital function at local and/or regional level. Processes of administrative and government decentralisation have increased the role of these levels. In this context the regional level achieve a key role for local development policies.

In addition of these issues, we could point out other features that are related with their size and relationships with major urban areas. In this line, we could define medium cities as:

[2] See http://www.unesco.org/most/ciudades.pdf

- Main centres of regional systems entertaining non-hierarchical relations with their territory. Thanks to their size these cities can, in principle, achieve more harmonious, open and balanced relationships with their territory.
- Urban settlements that are more easily manageable than large cities, as they allow greater citizen participation in government and city management and a greater identification of their citizen with the town, strengthening the “place brand” (although this is questionable in the case of medium-sized cities in the area of influence of a metropolis).
- Urban settlements without the environmental problems of metropolitan areas, which is a clear potentiality of such areas and an important card to play in local development strategies.
- Urban settlements with a minor degree of social conflict than metropolitan areas, which supposes lower social costs, although this positive aspect is generally countered by inferior social and cultural diversity.
- Urban areas with less economic competitiveness than large metropolitan areas, which tend to concentrate the higher-rank functions of urban systems. In comparison with the main urban centres they have more problems to access the main flows of capital and information.

1.4. Territorial organisation of local government systems

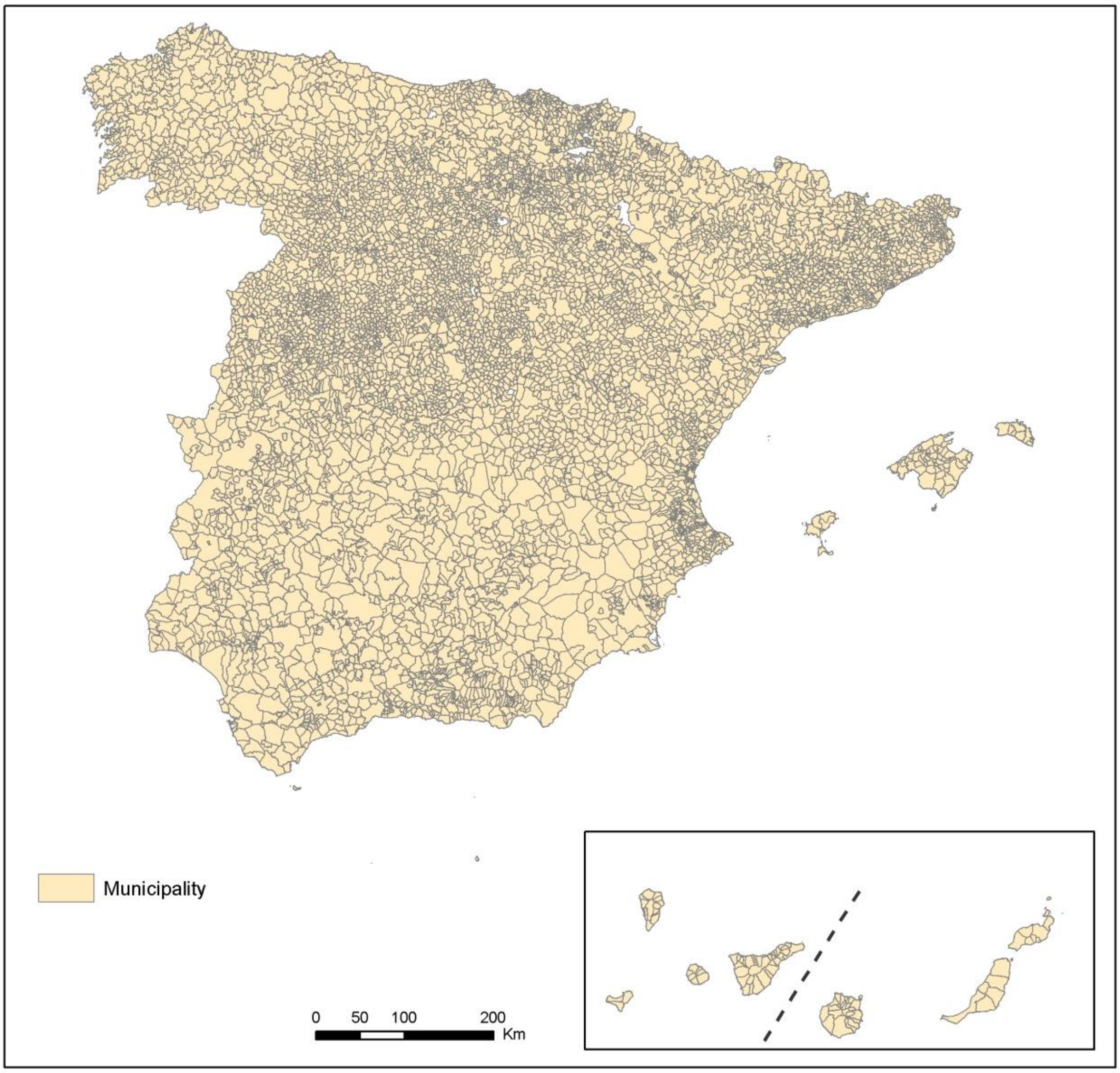
1.4.1. The Spanish territorial organisation

Spain is composed by 17 Autonomous Communities (two of them are archipelagos) and two Autonomous cities (Ceuta and Melilla, both on the North African coast). These administrative units correspond with the NUTS2 statistical level. These territorial entities were firstly recognised by democratic mandate through the national Constitution approved in 1978. In addition to these regional entities, Spain is also divided on 50 provinces (NUTS3) and 8,117 municipalities (LAU2), represented in Figure 1.9. 754 municipalities are considered statistically as urban areas, having more than 10,000 inhabitants, and concentrate the 79.7% of Spanish population. On the other hand, 7,363 municipalities are considered statistically as rural areas and represent the 20.3% of the population. These data allow us to show one of the main facts of the Spanish municipal map: the great number of municipalities and the low level of population of a significant part of them (60.2% of Spanish municipalities have less than 1,000 inhabitants).

There exist clear differences between northern and southern regions in relation with the size of the municipalities. In the map of Figure 1.9 we see clearly that, in general terms, the northern municipalities are smaller than the average. It is important to underline that the size of the municipalities is a key issue for territorial governance in Spain. Local administrations concentrate important competences, among which urban planning. In this context, there is an important number of small sized municipalities with problems to develop this competence because of insufficient funding. For this reason, in these areas the supra-municipal level of horizontal cooperation results strategic.

We will now review the most important functions and status of the various administrative levels involved in the Spanish territorial governance system.

Figure 1.9 - Municipal boundaries in Spain



Source: Own elaboration.

- Autonomous Communities (main regional level):

Spain is a decentralised State where the Autonomous Communities (AACC) are the administrative level that concentrates the main government capacities. All of them have an autonomous parliament (constituted by regional elections) with legislative capacities. The regional government, designed by the parliament, has capacities on key areas of public policy as education, culture, health, social policies and (not in all Communities) security, in addition to shared responsibilities with the State in all relevant economic sectors such as tourism, commerce, agriculture, industry or research. In brief, the regional government have a high level of autonomy in governance in key public policy, yet it is also important to underline that regional governments do not have own tax income management capacity: this issue and the regional solidarity funds are directed by the State.

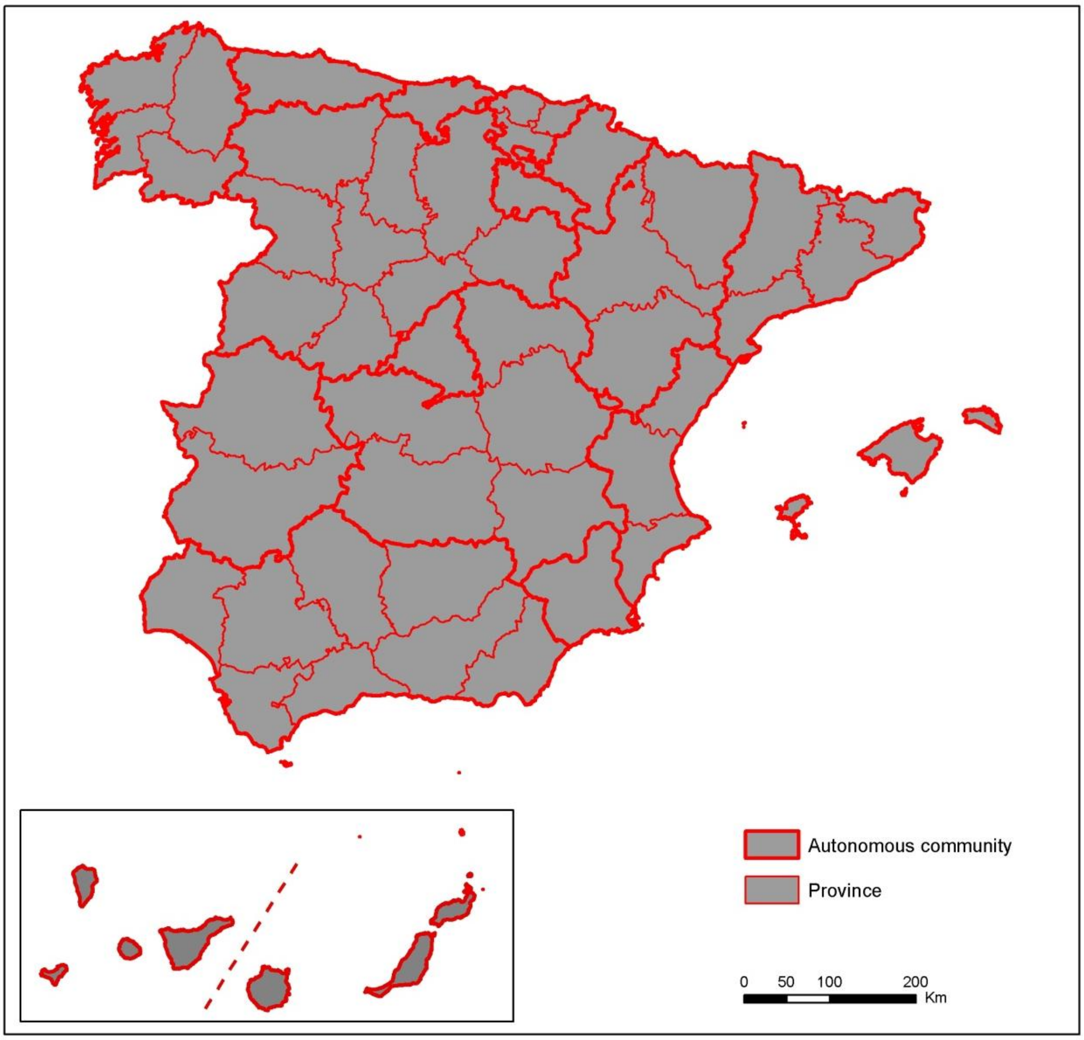
It is also interesting to underline that in this framework policies with special territorial incidence are not an exception. AACC have competences on regional planning, infrastructures (shared with the State) or rural/local development (also shared). AACC are also responsible for the application of programmes co-financed in the framework of EU

Structural Funds. In the Spanish context, the involvement of AACC in the implementation of EU Regional Policies has become a key issue in the process of learning and knowledge exchange in relation to regional and local development policies. Experiences like the Leader or Urban EU initiatives are clear examples of dissemination of best practices related to territorial policies that, in some cases, have been incorporated also in own regional policies (Gutiérrez-Palomero, 2009).

- Provinces (secondary regional level):

Provinces (see Fig. 1.10) are the basic level of territorial division of central government administration, but they have no relevant competences or self-government attributions in comparison with AACC. The origins of actual provincial division date to 1833, when a provincial administration was implemented with a similar territorial delimitation to the current one.

Figure 1.10 - Provinces and Autonomous Communities in Spain



Source: Own elaboration.

The political definition of provincial governments derives from the results of the elections at local (municipal) level. As such, provinces are not visualised as an autonomous representative government and are hardly involved in ordinary policies. Nevertheless, they have a key role for inter-municipal cooperation, mainly in the provision of services for municipalities with insufficient economic capacity. In addition of a cooperation platform, provinces usually lead strategic plans for regional development. In this context, they generally support initiatives for local and regional development, but without a strong implication in urban or regional planning, as, for instance, tourism, entrepreneurship, environmental protection and promotion (natural parks), transport and mobility, etc.

As a representation of State authority at supra-municipal level provinces have shared capacities on infrastructures, transport and mobility, environment, economic development, culture, education or social care.

- *Local (municipal) level:*

The Regulating Law of Local Regime 7/1985 defined municipalities as basic local entity for the territorial organisation of the State. The Law also assigned to the municipalities juridical capacity to act as key public actor at local level.

Municipalities have shared competences (with the State or AACC) on important areas of local development, economic and social policies. For this reason, it is usual that, in some contexts, the local level acts as main player of local development strategies. Its level of leadership is also related to its budgetary capacity. In a context where some competences are shared with other levels, but the local level has a lack of resources for develop its potential capacities, there are clear differences between municipalities with a larger size and the smaller rural municipalities. The latter thus strongly depend on supra-municipal cooperation for the implementation of public services and policies.

Finally, a key capacity of municipalities is urban planning, for which they have full competences. The ultimate supervision of these strategies is the regional level, which is responsible of regional planning. Yet, in fact, in recent decades urban planning has been clearly directed by local governments.

- *Other optional levels:*

In addition to municipalities there are other local entities, all of them optional. The most significant ones are the previously cited *comarcas* (counties) and metropolitan areas.

The possibility to establish metropolitan areas is recognised in the previously mentioned Regulating Law of Local Regime 7/1985, but this kind of entity did not achieve any relevant institutional recognition in Spain. Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao or Valencia have constituted their metropolitan areas in the decades of the 1940 and 1950s, but the newly created entities had only few years of continuity and some years later they were all ceased. Municipalities and AACC are the levels with competence for the creation of Metropolitan areas, but none of them was really concerned with their creation (Romero & Farinos, 2011). So, historically there were no officially recognised metropolitan entities with a strong history of activity associated with any administrative and/or political capacity. Nowadays, the Valencia and Barcelona metropolitan areas are exceptions, though in both cases the entity is in a primary phase, acts as an agency to promote collaboration between municipal governments and does not have any exclusive competences.

1.4.2. Case study context: Catalonia / Balearic Islands / Valencia Community

The general scheme previously presented illustrates the relative complexity of the regional and supra-municipal structure in Spain, especially in terms of competences – many of them are shared at different levels of the administration. We could summarise that, as a decentralized State, competences on spatial and urban planning are assumed by regional and local government respectively, while competences associated to local development are shared between all the different administration levels.

In this context, we could underline three main key issues: (1) regional and local levels are the key actors for planning and development policies, (2) this is a institutional context where multilevel governance is required and (3) horizontal cooperation between local governments (municipalities) for key questions like urban planning, transport or housing is general insufficient: an example of this issue is the residual role of metropolitan areas.

AACC are responsible of key policies related to regional planning, and also for questions with direct impact on territorial dynamics, as urban and rural development policies, transports, infrastructures (shared with the central government), etc. Consequently, there are remarkable differences in territorial strategies and planning policies between each AACC.

We can conclude that each AACC has its specific regional planning policy framework, with autonomous legislation and planning tools; in each one the role of municipal and/or supra-municipal levels is also clearly different. And, finally, as we will see in the next sections, the sensibility of each regional authority has led to different results.

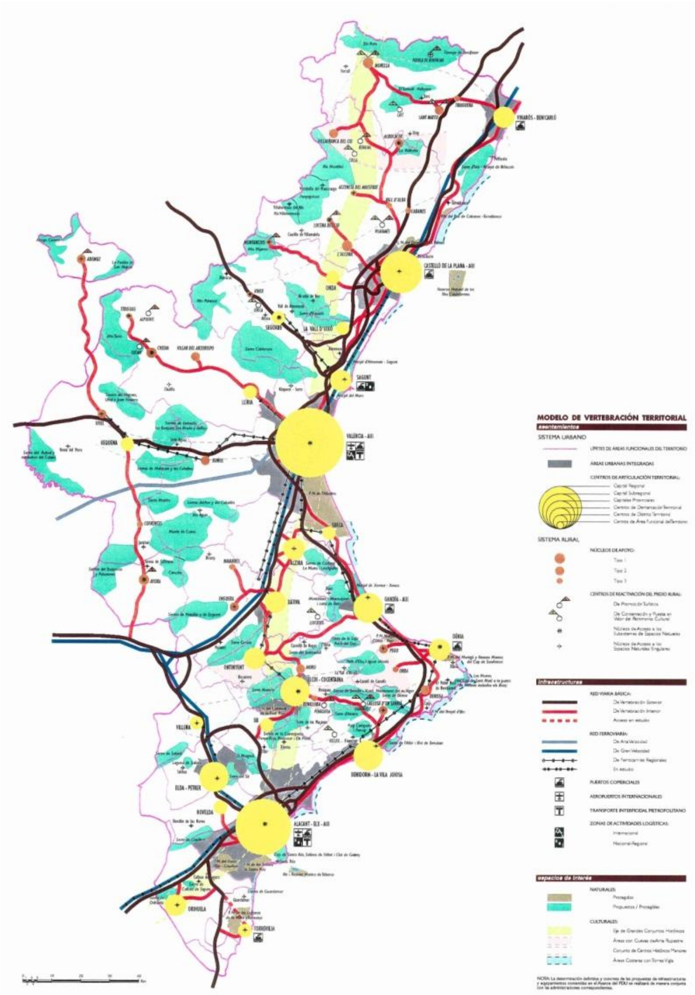
- *Valencia Community*

The Valencia Community is a clear example of deregulation of planning at regional level. In this region there have been no instruments for regional planning for the last decades. It is an unusual situation in the Spanish context, where most AACC have developed their own regional planning instruments. So, in Valencia the different municipal plans have been the only instruments for spatial planning regulation during the decade of the property boom and rapid consumption of land (Gaja, 2008).

During the 1980s and 1990s various instruments for regional analysis and definition of general territorial strategies were launched, but none of them got to the stage of functional or practical implementation equivalent to a regional plan. In 1989 the regional government approved a Spatial Planning Law that regulated the potential creation of a Regional Planning instrument – ultimately not developed. In 1991 it started the elaboration of a Territorial Integrated Action Plan for Urban Development (Burriel, 2009), but the change of regional government in 1995 hindered the activation of this document. In Figure 1.11 we see the proposal of territorial model that this document elaborated.

More recently, in 2004 the regional government approved the Law of "Spatial Planning and Landscape Protection" 4/2004, which supposed a new framework for spatial planning in this region. Since this year five Territorial Action Plans have been passed that cover supra-municipal areas. The legislative framework distinguishes between integrated Territorial Action Plans and Territorial Action Plans focused on a determinate sector, this second having to be consistent with the specifications of the integrated plans. These plans, approved between 2005 and 2009, are: *PAT del Entorno de Castellón (PATECAS)* (Castellon regional plan), *PAT del Entorno Metropolitano de Alicante y Elche (PATEMAE) (*Alicante-Elche metropolitan plan), *PAT de la Vega Baja* (supra-municipal plan), *PAT del Litoral Valenciano* (coastal plan) and *PAT de Protección de la Huerta de Valencia* (Valencian Orchard Protection Plan).

Figure 1.11 - Scheme of territorial structure of Valencia Community included in the Territorial Integrated Action Plan for Urban Development



Source: Generalitat Valenciana, 1995

In addition of these plans, a territorial strategy for the region was undertaken, the Valencia Territorial Strategy, whose definitive version was approved in 2011. The Territorial Strategy aims to "*organize the whole regional territory establishing guidelines for harmonization and coordination of sectorial policies*" and fixes its prospective objectives to 2030. Currently it is the main document of reference for regional planning policies and it is supposed to act as a general framework for territorial policies, but it is not explicitly a regional planning document.

- *Balearic Islands*

The specificity of Balearic territory, an archipelago, supposes that each island has its autonomous regional planning instrument. In this territory, in addition to the autonomous government, each island has its independent insular council that holds regional planning competences, as well as the authority over environment, transport and infrastructures. In fact, in last decades the different autonomous governments have decentralised to island councils the main competences in relation with territorial policies, as urban planning (1990), tourism policies (1996 and 2011 for Mallorca), Spatial Planning (2001) and infrastructures (2001) (Rullan, 2007 and 2010).

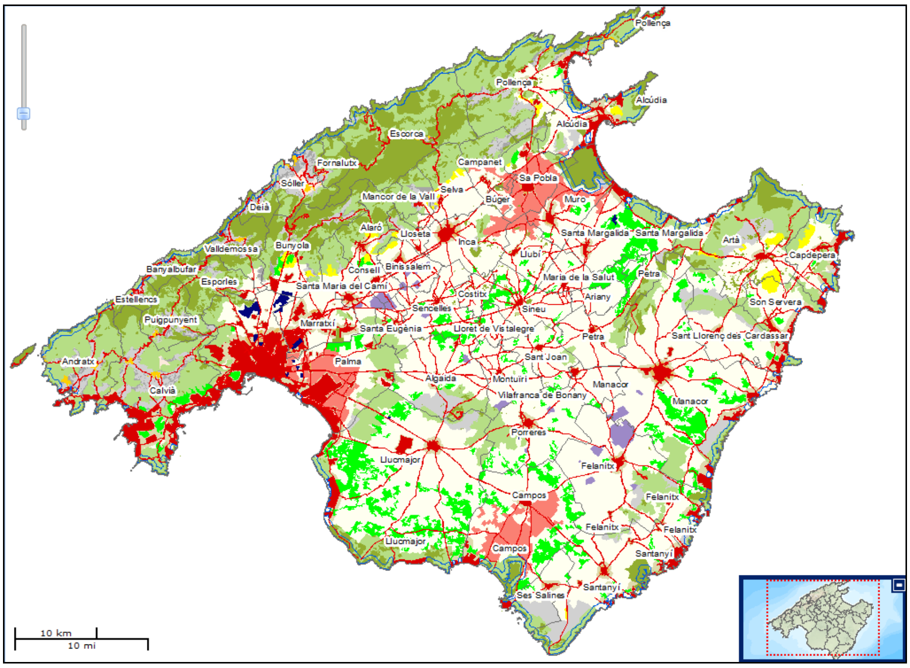
The first step for the creation of the present institutional framework for regional planning was the approval of Law 8/1987 of Spatial Planning of Balearic Islands. The law defined the delimitation of functions in spatial planning between the Islands Councils and Autonomous Community. Yet even more relevant was that the law defined the regional planning instruments that need to be elaborated above the different municipal planning instruments. These instruments are:

- A Guidelines of Spatial Planning (for the entire archipelago and approved by regional government), this is the main common framework
- Partial Territorial Plans (for some specific areas)
- Sectorial Director Plans (for specific strategic sectors)
- Special plans for the natural environment

In the following years, only Partial Territorial Plans related to the most intensively touristic areas have been approved. In Figure 1.12 we illustrate the main provisions of the Mallorca plan.

Hence, the path defined by the law was not followed by regional and local governments, although in that moment regional planning was still centralised at regional government level. The new specific urban planning tools for the touristic areas are the Plans for the Regulation of the Tourist Offer. 37 of these were passed in Mallorca, 11 in Ibiza and 2 in Formentera. These were the years of expansion of the property boom that, initially, was concentrated in the most touristic areas (Rullan, 2010).

Figure 1.12 - Overview of main land uses included in Mallorca Territorial Plan



Source: Mallorca Territorial Plan, 2004.

In the 2000s a Law of Insular Councils established the present normative for spatial planning. This law assigned the Island Councils the responsibility of spatial planning and infrastructures. Thus, since then the tools for spatial planning were the following:

- At archipelago level (Autonomous Community): Guidelines of Spatial Planning

- At island level (Island Councils): Islands territorial Plans
- At local level (municipalities): urban planning

In addition of this planning tools there also exist sectorial territorial plans (airports, costal, trade, roads, golf courses, etc.). Therefore actually each Insular Council has its own regional planning: Menorca (2004), Mallorca (2004), Ibiza and Formentera (2005)[3].

- *Catalonia*

Catalonia approved the first Spanish democratic regional law for spatial planning in 1983. This acts as reference for other Communities and was the framework for primary instruments. Actually is, clearly, one of the Communities with strongest autonomous instruments for spatial planning. In the next scheme the most relevant Catalan spatial planning tools are placed in context. The most relevant tools (numbered from 1 to 4) are presented with more detail.

- Regional Planning – Catalonia level:
    - General Territorial Plan of Catalonia (1)
    - Sectorial Plans

- Regional Planning – regional level:
    - Partial Territorial Plans (2)
    - Territorial Director Plans (sectorial)

- Urban Planning:
    - Urban Director Plans (supra-municipal level) (3)
    - Urban Municipal Plan (municipal level)
    - Partial Plans (infra-municipal level)
    - Partial Plans (infra-municipal level)

- Urban regeneration:
    - Integrated Urban Programmes (based on "neighbourhood law" – municipal level) (4)

- Landscape:
    - Landscape catalogues (regional level)
    - Landscape guidelines (regional level)

- Coastal areas:
    - Urban Director Plan of Coastal System (3)

- Mountain areas:
    - Mountain Comarcal Plans

- Transports and mobility:
    - Infrastructures Director Plan
    - Catalan Transport Infrastructures Plan
    - Catalan Ports Plan
    - Catalan Airports Plan

[3] Since 2007 Formetera has its autonomous Insular Council, as previously it was part of the Ibiza Insular Council.

- Director Plan of Mobility (approved: Barcelona Metropolitan Area, in curse: Girona and Camp de Tarragona)
- National Guidelines for Mobility
- Mobility Director Plans (regional level)
- Local, regional or Urban Mobility Plans

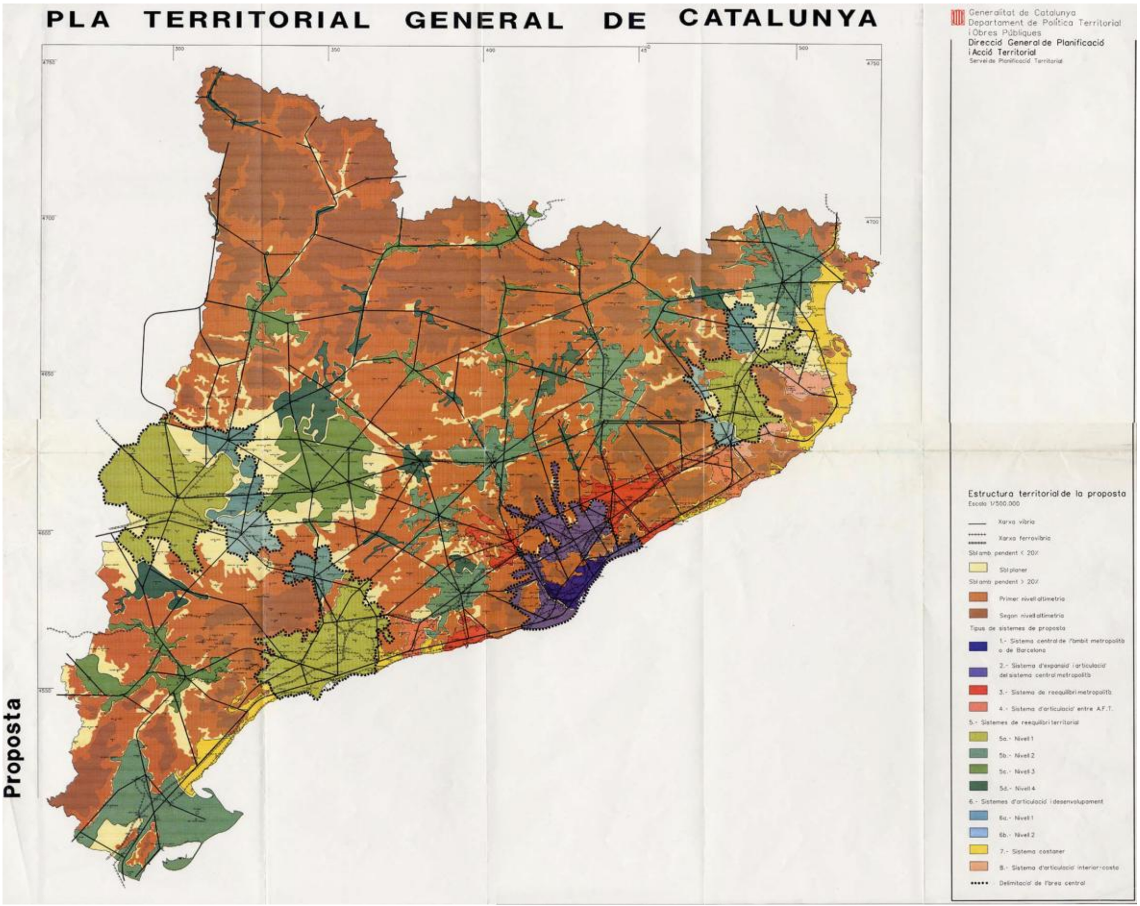
- Housing:
  - Territorial Sectorial Plan for Housing (Catalonia)
  - Supra-municipal Housing Plans
  - Local Plans for Housing (municipal level)

<u>(1) General Territorial Plan of Catalonia</u>

In 1995, twelve years after the regional law for Spatial Planning (1983) was approved, the first Catalan General Plan of new democratic governments was introduced (Fig. 1.13). More recently in 2009 the parliament approved the on-going revision of this plan.

There are also older antecedents of regional planning in Catalonia. In the 1930s, during the Republican government, a Catalan Regional Planning and a Public Constructions Plan had been approved. During the dictatorial regime there were some attempts to apply a regional plan (Comarcal Plan and Provincial Plan in the 1950s and a Director Metropolitan Plan in the 1960s). Eventually, the General Metropolitan Plan was approved in 1976 (Nel·lo, 2010).

Figure 1.13 - Proposed territorial structure of Catalan General Plan, 1995

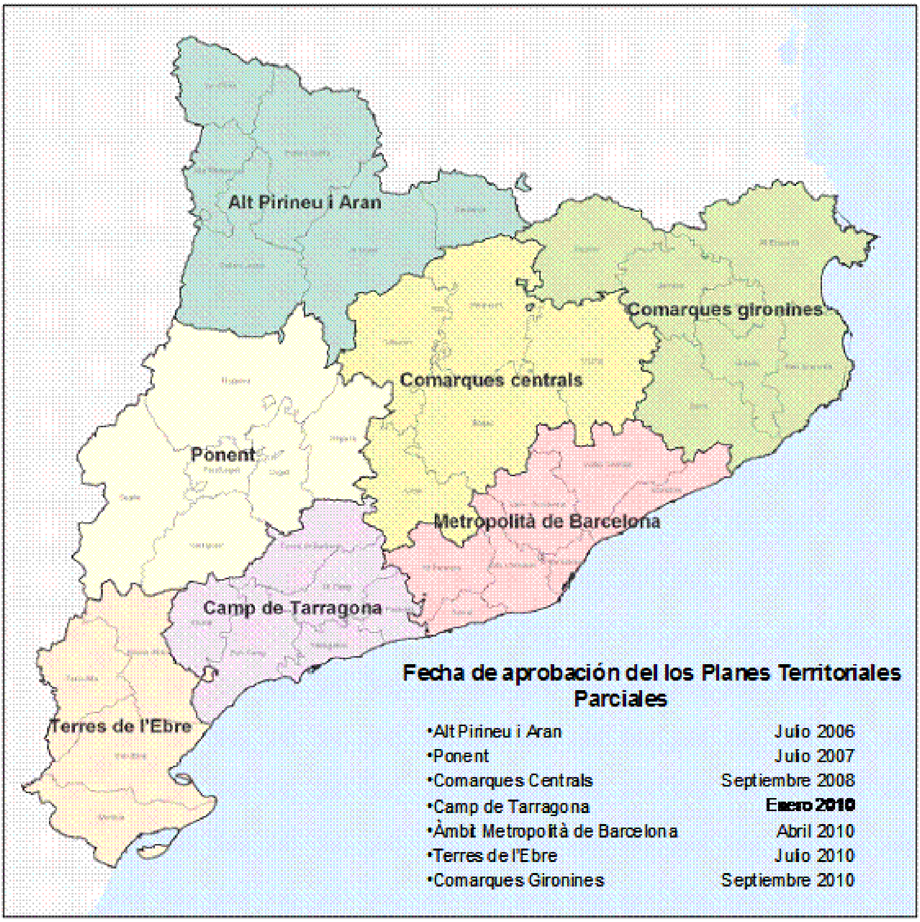


Source: Catalan General Plan, 1995.

(2) Partial Territorial Plans

A decade after the introduction of the General Plan, the sub-regional plans that this document recommended were adopted. These Partial Territorial Plans (PTP) were approved definitively between 2006 and 2010. The PTP cover seven functional areas, which have been used since for all spatial planning activities of the Catalonia government (Fig. 1.14). The regional government uses them as basic level of its own territorial administration and the Autonomous Statute recognises them officially. Yet, for the moment, they don't have any recognition at State level, which only considers provinces as own territorial administration. In the Catalan spatial planning boundaries the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, the mountain region (Pyrenees) and Ebro riverbank achieve a specific role and were disaggregated form their respective provinces.

Figure 1.14 - Regional Planning Areas in Catalonia



Source: Nel·lo, 2011.

(3) Urban Director Plans

Urban Director Plans (Fig. 1.15) are the supra-municipal urban planning tool used for the implementation of directives introduced by the respective PTP. These plans allow the local level to implement the common instruments of urban planning in a more extensive territory. In this way questions as land use, housing, transport and mobility, protection of areas of environmental interest are treated with a supra-municipal perspective.

These plans can be focused on sectorial aspects, as infrastructure corridors or their influence area (as in the case of the central rail corridor or the general infrastructure in Penedès, or industrial and tourist activities in Tarragona). These plans can also be concentrated in territories that require special protection, as coastal areas or areas with a special natural and/or cultural interest. Finally, the most common situation is that of plans focusing on a functional system (urban system or *comarcal* supra-municipal system in low density areas). A special plan to provide new areas for social housing in strategic areas with clear deficit of accessible housing (Strategic Residential Areas, 2010) was also approved, but this plan is now in a stand-by situation due to the recent changes in the real estate sector.

Figure 1.15 - Urban Director Plans in service in Catalonia

Source: Nel·lo, 2010.

(4) Integrated Urban Programmes based on "neighbourhood law"

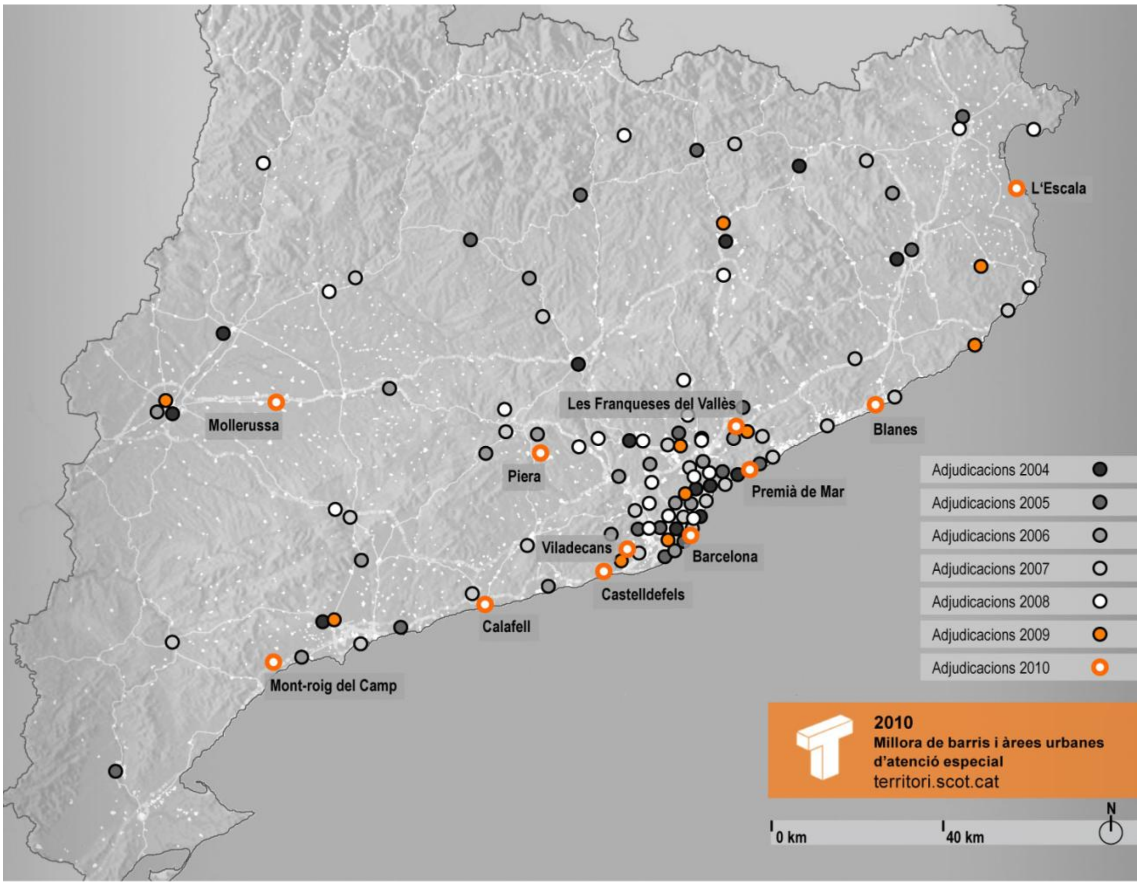
In 2004 the *law for the improvement of neighbourhoods, urban areas and towns that require a special attention,* also known as "Neighbourhoods Law", was passed. This was the first explicit urban regeneration policy with an area-based approach implemented in any Spanish AACC.

After various satisfactory experiences related to area-based urban regeneration programmes financed by the EU – mainly the URBAN Community Initiative – regional authorities decided to continue this path and implemented their own urban regeneration programme. In this context this new urban policy emerged, explicitly oriented to deprived neighbourhoods. This new programme has allowed interventions on many deprived historical city centres and neighbourhoods with a high concentration of social housing and socioeconomic problems.

The local action programmes have also been oriented to establishing a specific working methodology characterised by an integrated approach in urban regeneration practices, the sharing of responsibilities between the different levels of public administration involved, the promotion of innovative practices and the creation of networks for knowledge exchange. The main change with respect to previous programs was the incorporation of the integrated approach as a key element and, consequently, the necessary socioeconomic perspective of urban regeneration policies and practices.

In general terms the "Neighbourhood Law" has allowed the co-financing (between regional and local level) of 141 urban regeneration programmes (Fig. 1.16) and has supposed an investment of 1,300 million €. Each year since 2004 to 2010, a new open call for projects had been opened. A high number of large and medium cities but also some small towns have benefited of a 4-5 years programme for local development. Finally, in 2010 the programme was ceased by the new Catalan government. This could be explained by a change of political priorities but also by the lack of resources of local administrations produced by the impact of the economic crisis.

Figure 1.16 - Integrated Urban Programmes based approved between 2004 and 2010



Source: Catalan Society of Spatial Planning, 2011.

2. URBAN SETTLEMENT SYSTEMS IN THE MESO-CASE STUDY AREA

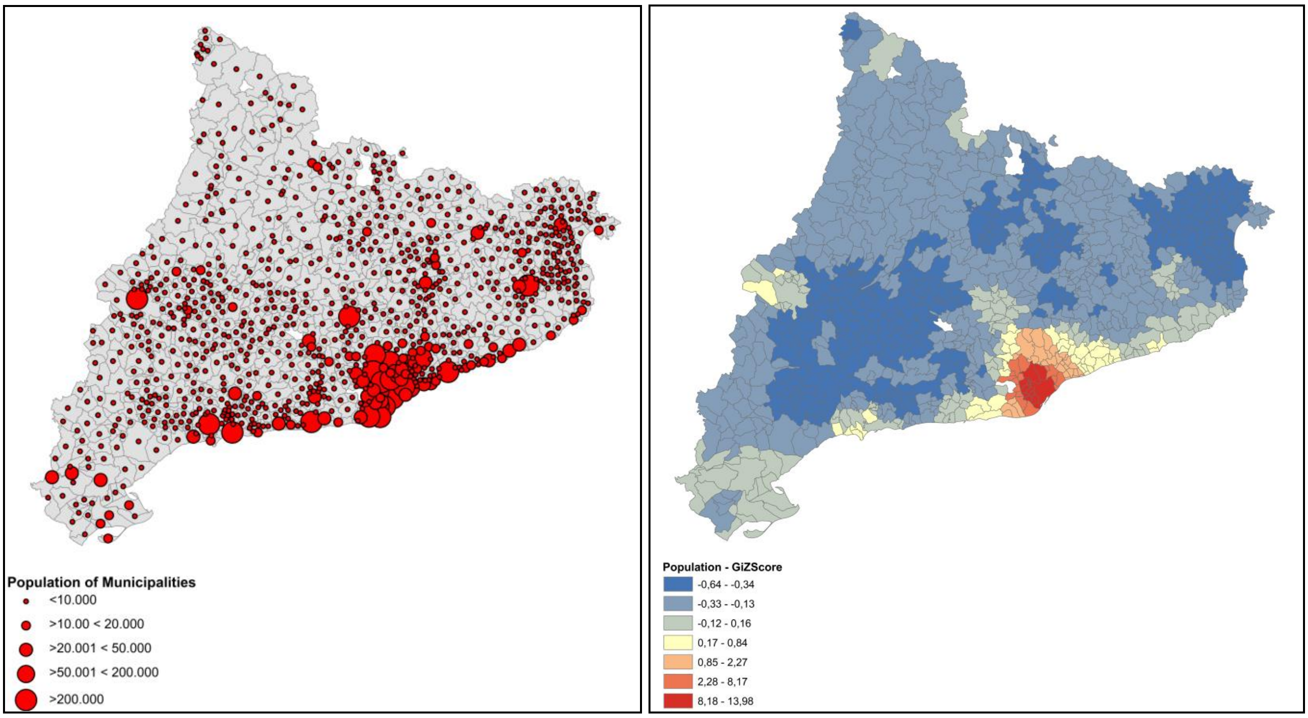
2.1 Structure of the population and mobility of the workforce in Catalonia

In this chapter, we focus on the NUTS2 region ES51 (Autonomous Region of Catalonia) for the analysis of the functional role of SMST within territorial development. We do this for two reasons:

- The consistency of this region in terms of its governance; as noted before, the ES5 delimitation consists of three separate Autonomous Communities (Catalonia, the Autonomous Community of Valencia and the Balearic Islands), each with distinct territorial government systems and policy frameworks. This issue also involves that statistical collection systems are separate, which makes, for instance, pooling data on work-related mobility at LAU2 level utterly problematic, whereas these data show a high degree of consistency at NUTS2 level.
- The "homogeneity" of this spatial delimitation from a territorial point of view, and namely in terms of the trends in development of urban systems reflecting the industrial and post-industrial trajectory of Catalonia that is quite different and more complex with respect to that of the other two NUTS2 regions included in the case study area.

We will make mostly use of 2001 census data on population and employment, including intra-municipal work-related mobility data.

Figure 2.1 - Population of Catalan municipalities, 2001 (left: n. of residents; right: hotspot analysis of population distribution)



Source: Own elaboration, based on 2001 census data.

Catalonia in 2001 had 947 municipalities (these correspond to 944 LAU2 units – in fact the 2006 LAU2 system that we used in this cartographic representation of the European territory incorporates three groups of municipalities into one), ranging in population from 1,503,884 (according to the 2001 census) in the regional capital city, Barcelona, to 26 in the tiny village with municipal status of Sant Jaume de Frontanyà (see Figure 2.1)

Table 2.1 - Population and labour market data for the top 20 municipalities in ES51 by population size

	LAU2	Name of Mun.	Population (2001)	Active Population (2001)	Employed Active Population (2001)	Labour market (2001)
1	ES51100020	Barcelona*	1,503,884	1,004,913	645,419	1,050,564
2	ES51100103	L'Hospitalet de Llobregat	239,019	169,322	103,195	119,199
3	ES51100015	Badalona	205,836	147,451	87,116	101,763
4	ES51100188	Sabadell	183,788	126,157	81,200	104,969
5	ES51100278	Terrassa	173,775	120,001	78,005	100,372
6	ES51400150	Tarragona*	113,129	79,236	48,983	85,942
7	ES51100247	Santa Coloma d. Gramenet	112,992	82,435	48,838	46,120
8	ES51300107	Lleida*	112,199	76,685	49,531	78,637
9	ES51100123	Mataró	106,358	74,843	47,100	63,235
10	ES51400124	Reus	89,006	61,235	38,158	61,510
11	ES51100075	Cornellà de Llobregat	79,979	56,831	35,292	45,006
12	ES51100220	Sant Boi de Llobregat	78,738	56,940	34,156	41,862
13	ES51200076	Girona*	74,879	51,690	35,540	62,557
14	ES51100115	Manresa	63,981	41,933	28,306	40,483
15	ES51100171	El Prat de Llobregat	61,818	45,081	27,726	45,372
16	ES51100185	Rubí	61,159	44,309	28,958	39,595
17	ES51100223	Sant Cugat del Vallès	60,265	42,268	28,912	38,296
18	ES51100298	Viladecans	56,841	41,901	26,599	26,761
19	ES51100303	Vilanova i la Geltrú	54,230	37,402	23,980	30,876
20	ES51100312	Cerdanyola del Vallès	53,343	39,613	25,004	30,971
		TOTAL CATALONIA	**6,343,110**	**4,366,994**	**2,815,126**	**4,058,541**

*: provincial capital.

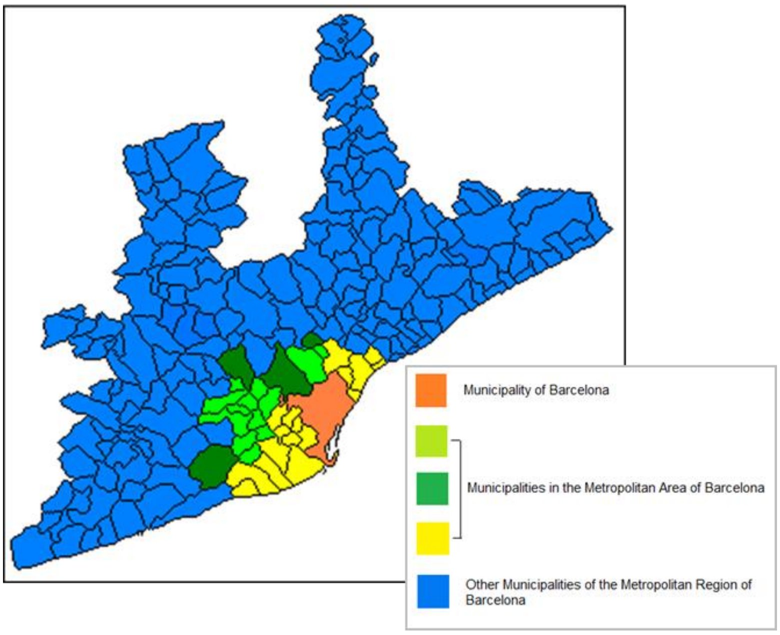
Source: IDESCAT, 2001 census data.

Table 2.1 provides some key information about population size, workforce and localised jobs in the main cities. It must be noted that the two largest municipalities by population after

Barcelona fall within the limits of the “metropolitan area of Barcelona”, a compact urbanised area of 3.225.058 inhabitants (2010) which is also constituted as an administrative community of 36 municipalities (see Figure 2.2), while the next two in the rank, Sabadell and Terrassa, are part of the wider “metropolitan region” of Barcelona (RMB), which is also formally delimited as one of 8 Catalan “planning ambits” in the Catalan planning system (Pla General Territorial de Catalunya), including some 5 million inhabitants and 2 million jobs.

The other provincial capitals of Catalonia fall short of these numbers, and among the others in this list, only Reus is not part of the Barcelona metropolitan region.

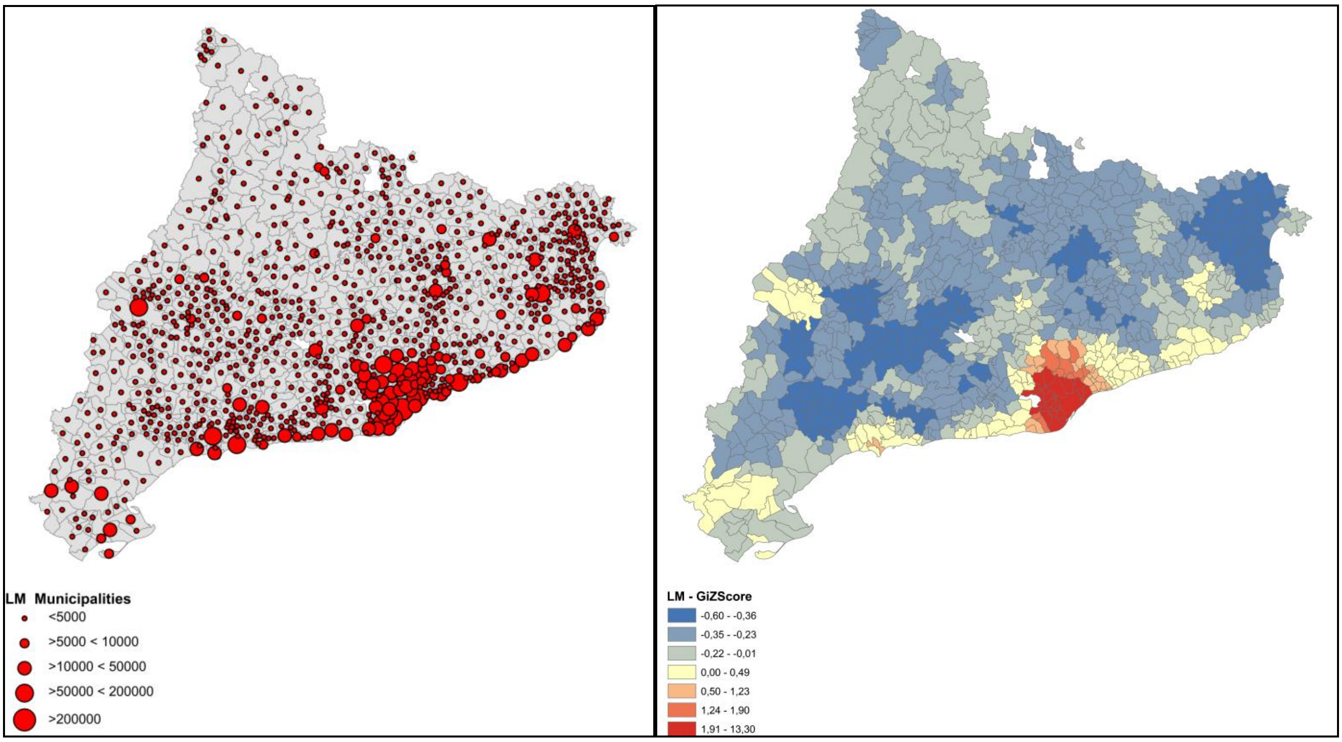
Figure 2.2 – Metropolitan Region and metropolitan area of Barcelona



Source: own elaboration on Wikipedia commons

Looking at the labour market (Figure 2.3), things do not change substantially – the largest share of jobs is still concentrated in the metropolitan region of Barcelona, and the distribution is slightly more skewed than the one of population. Provincial capitals altogether have a higher share of jobs than their population (31.5% compared with the 28.5% of population). All in all, the share of top twenty cities for all the dimensions considered in Table 2.1 (population, active population, employed active population and localised jobs) is consistently between 54% and 55% of the total in Catalonia.

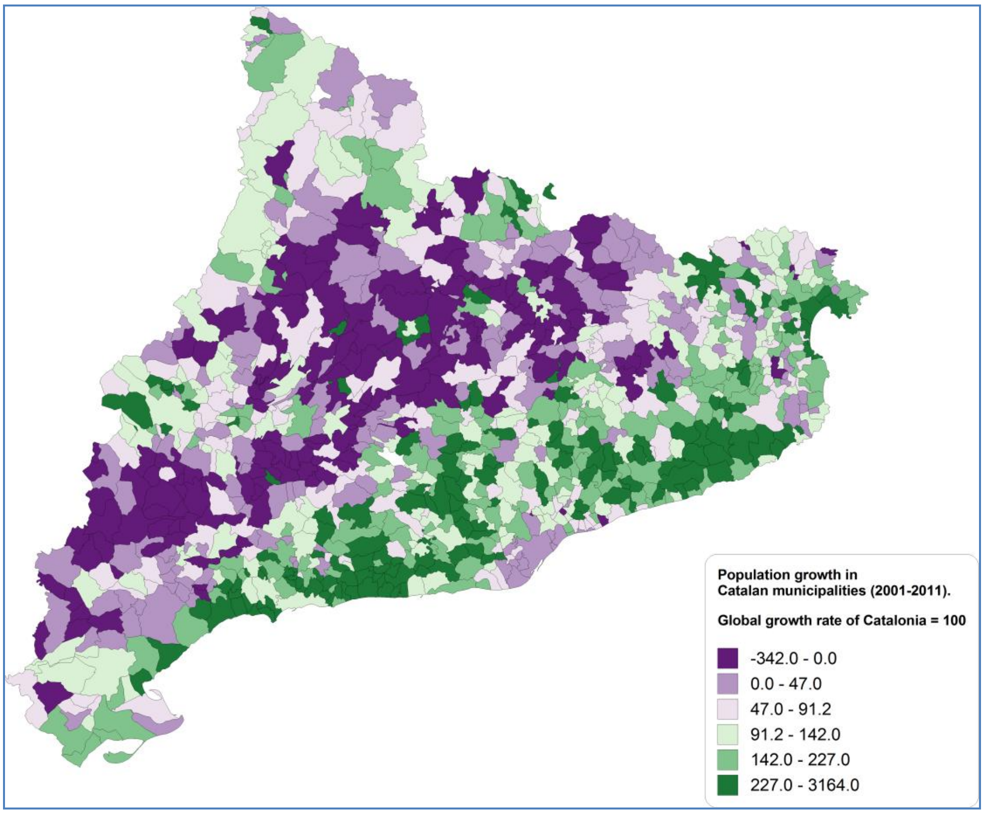
Figure 2.3 – Job market of Catalan municipalities, 2001 (left: n. of jobs; right: hotspot analysis of jobs distribution)



Source: Own elaboration, based on 2001 census data.

As a last observation, we note that the population as well as the jobs are markedly concentrated on the coast and in the metropolitan region of Barcelona. Being a coastal municipality *or* being part of the metropolitan regions increases the average size of the local labour market by a factor of 11.

Figure 2.4 – Population growth in Catalan municipalities, 2001-2011



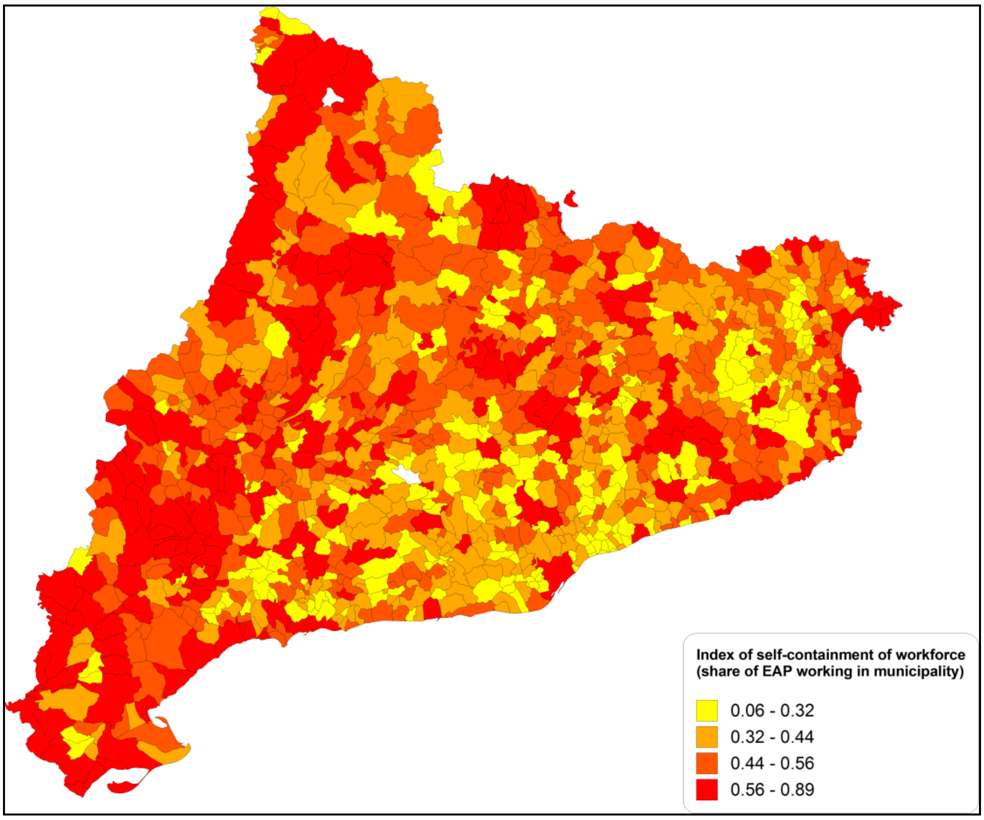
Source: Own elaboration, based on 2001 and 2011 census data.

While we don't have data for this period regarding the evolution of the job market, the population dynamics in the 2001-2011 period is illustrated in Figure 2.4. We appreciate how the strongest growth rates with respect to the global dynamics in Catalonia are clustered in the coastal municipalities (with the exception of the metropolitan area of Barcelona) and in the metropolitan region. Growth rates have been on average 1.71 times higher in the coastal municipalities than in the municipalities in the interior, and 1.61 times higher in the municipalities that belong to the metropolitan region of Barcelona.

In the last part of this section we start looking at the inter-municipal mobility of the workforce in Catalonia. For this exercise we are using work mobility data of 2001, distinguishing flows of daily commuting population by municipality of habitual residence and municipality of work (including net classes of flows from other municipalities to areas located in other Autonomous Community of Spain, to foreign territories, and to multiple working locations). For every municipality in our case study area we have derived an index of self-contention (share of residents that also work in the same municipality) and of self-sufficiency (share of local employment covered by local residents).

These indexes return a situation illustrated in maps of Figures 2.5 and 2.6. Self-containment is slightly higher in municipalities with a larger employed active population, and it is remarkably higher in coastal municipalities and provincial capitals, while it is lower in municipalities that are part of the metropolitan region of Barcelona.

Figure 2.5 – Self-containment of the labour market in Catalan municipalities, 2001

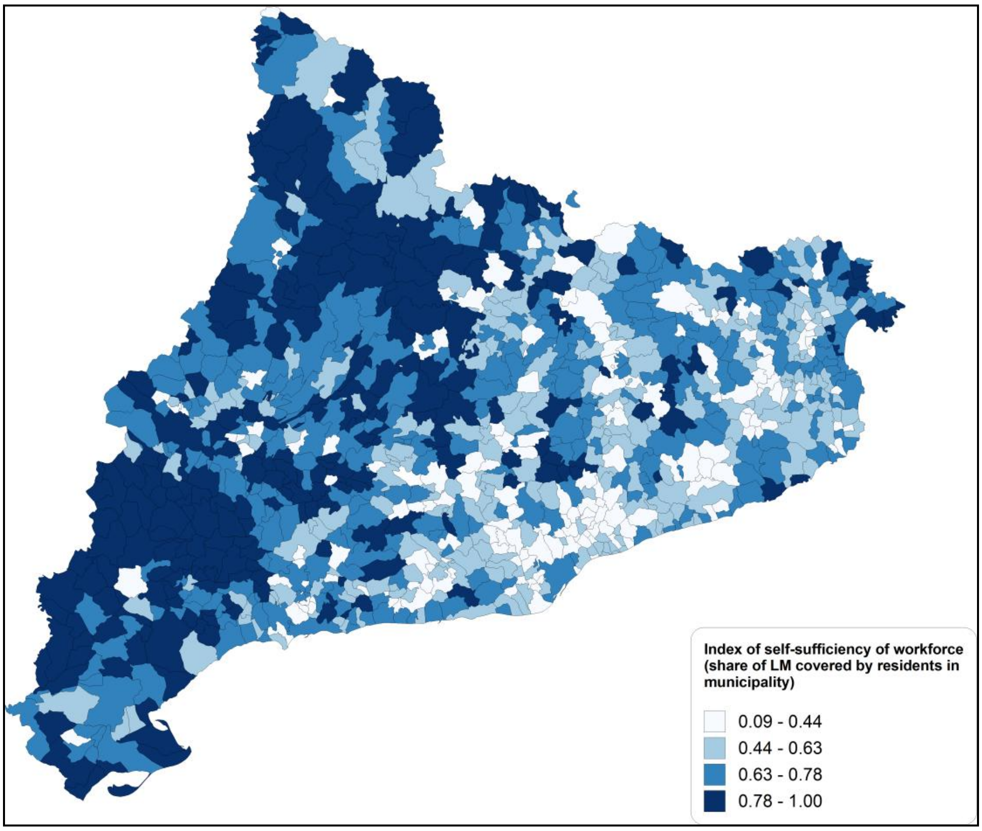


Source: Own elaboration, based on 2001 census data.

Conversely, self-sufficiency appears to be independent from the size of the local EAP; again, it is higher in coastal municipalities and provincial capitals and lower in municipalities that are part of the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona. To some extent this indicates a very high level of inter-municipal mobility in the metropolitan region compared to the other parts of Catalonia, and a job market geography which tends to be different in coastal areas than in the interior.

Catalan workers that do not work in their municipality of residence are 1,085,752. Barcelona intercepts a quarter of the global work-related mobility in Catalonia, that is a daily flow of approximately 264,000. The 91.4% of this flows come from other municipalities of the metropolitan region of Barcelona, but this leaves around 21,000 workers commuting to Barcelona from farther away (actually this information should discount for the workers from municipalities where they have only a formal resident status as being owner of second homes; this is the case of many municipalities in the Pyrenees and on the Costa Brava). Ranking far behind in terms of attracting commuters, are several other cities in the metropolitan region of Barcelona and the provincial capital.

Figure 2.6 – Self-sufficiency of the labour market in Catalan municipalities, 2001



Source: Own elaboration, based on 2001 census data.

2.2 Micro-regions and their characteristics

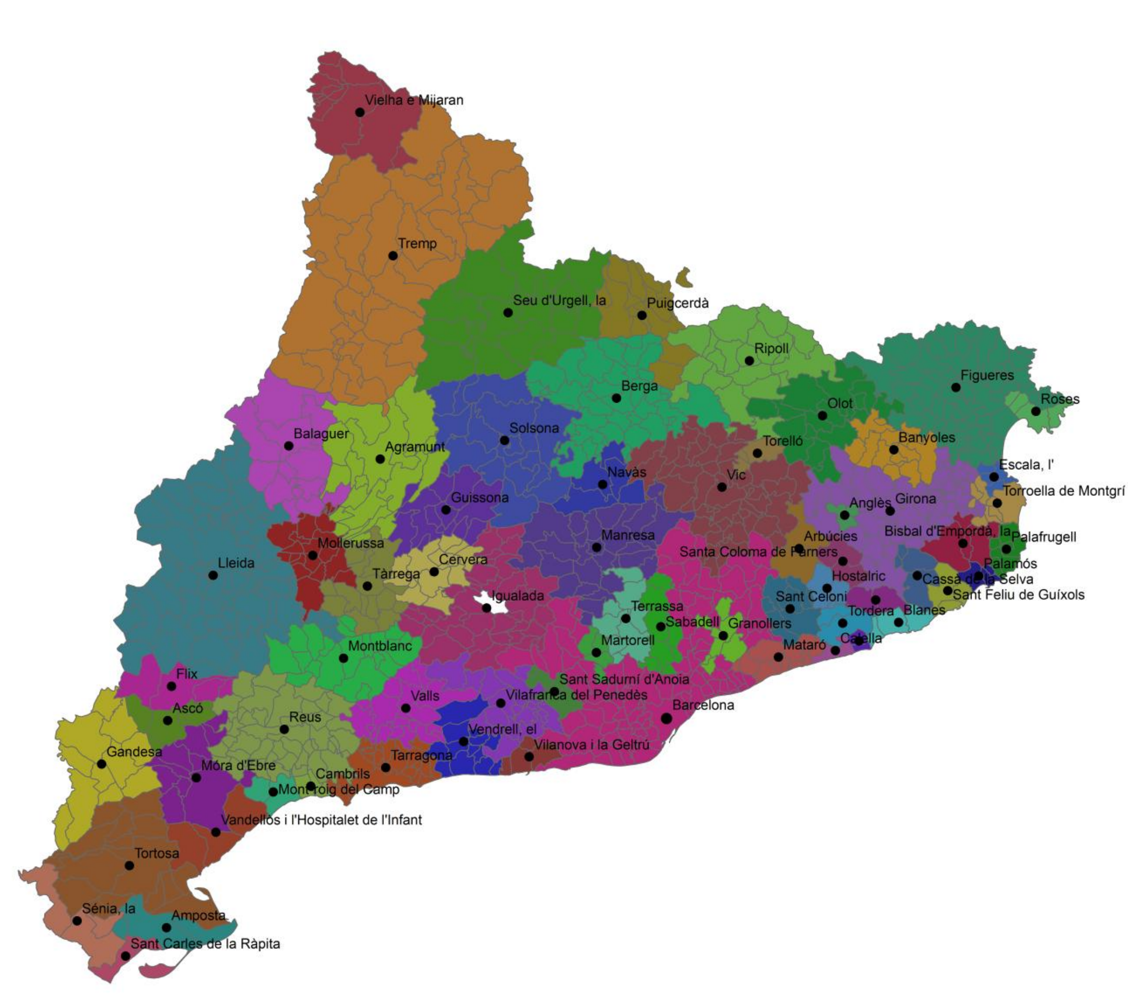
Applying the procedure described in the introduction of this chapter yielded a total of 66 micro-regions designated by job-centres which are maximum destinations of work-related commuting flows from at least one other municipality and have at least 1,000 jobs. Such micro-regions have been obtained applying a population threshold of 5,000 jobs in the MR and the criterion of physical integrity. The result is shown in Figure 2.7 below.

The key statistical information on these microregions and their urban centres is provided in table A in the Annex to this Chapter. A number of elements could be highlighted.

- The "sprawling" character of the micro-region of Barcelona. A probably more consistent delimitation for this region should have been the Metropolitan regional planning ambit illustrated in Figure 2.2. Using the designated methodology, instead, achieves a less "compact" structure, still organised in a ribbon-like structure along the main accessibility corridors to Barcelona, but leaving out as self-contained urban ambits a number of medium-sized cities at its margin (which are part of the "formal" RMB), which are important employment centres in manufacturing industry, like Martorell, Terrassa, Sabadell and Granollers.
- The larger size of the microregions in less densely populated areas at the Centre and in the North-West of Catalonia (province of Lleida), and especially the MR of Lleida, Tremp, Berga, and la Seu d'Urgell, which associate to a looser pattern of mobility in these areas (less "thick" flows are sufficient to identify a micro-regional system) and a generally larger dimension of municipalities especially in mountain regions.

- The comparatively smaller size of microregions on the coast and in the North-Eastern part of Catalonia, which reflect the smaller size of municipalities in denser populated areas and also a thicker mobility between municipalities, let alone a more compact pattern of residence of the workforce especially in the case of the more tourism-oriented municipalities of the northern coast (Costa Brava).
- The existence of a fair number of microregions whose main job centres are not provincial and neither county capitals, like Amposta, Sant Carles de la Ràpita, Roses, Sant Sadurní d'Anoia, Cassà de la Selva, etc.
- The existence of a fair number of MR which agglomerate a very limited number of municipalities (26 of them count between 1 and 3 other municipalities in addition to the main centre). In most cases these are coastal municipalities with a strong and specialised employment level in tourism.

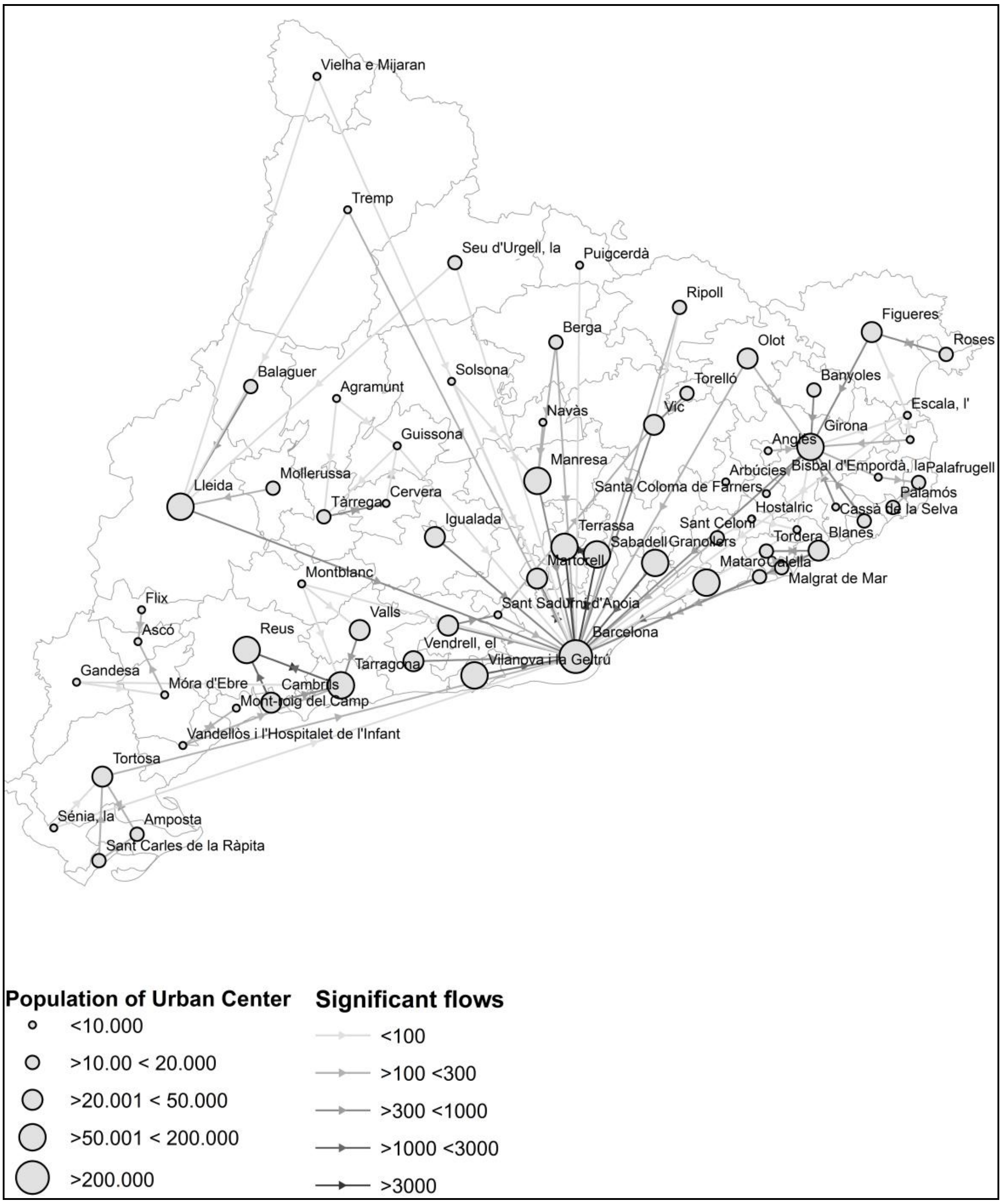
Figure 2.7 – Territorial structure of Catalonia region in 66 micro-regions



Following the general procedure illustrated in the introduction of this chapter we next analyse flows between micro-regional centres in order to identify significant flows structures and classify urban centres according to their functional sole in urban systems.

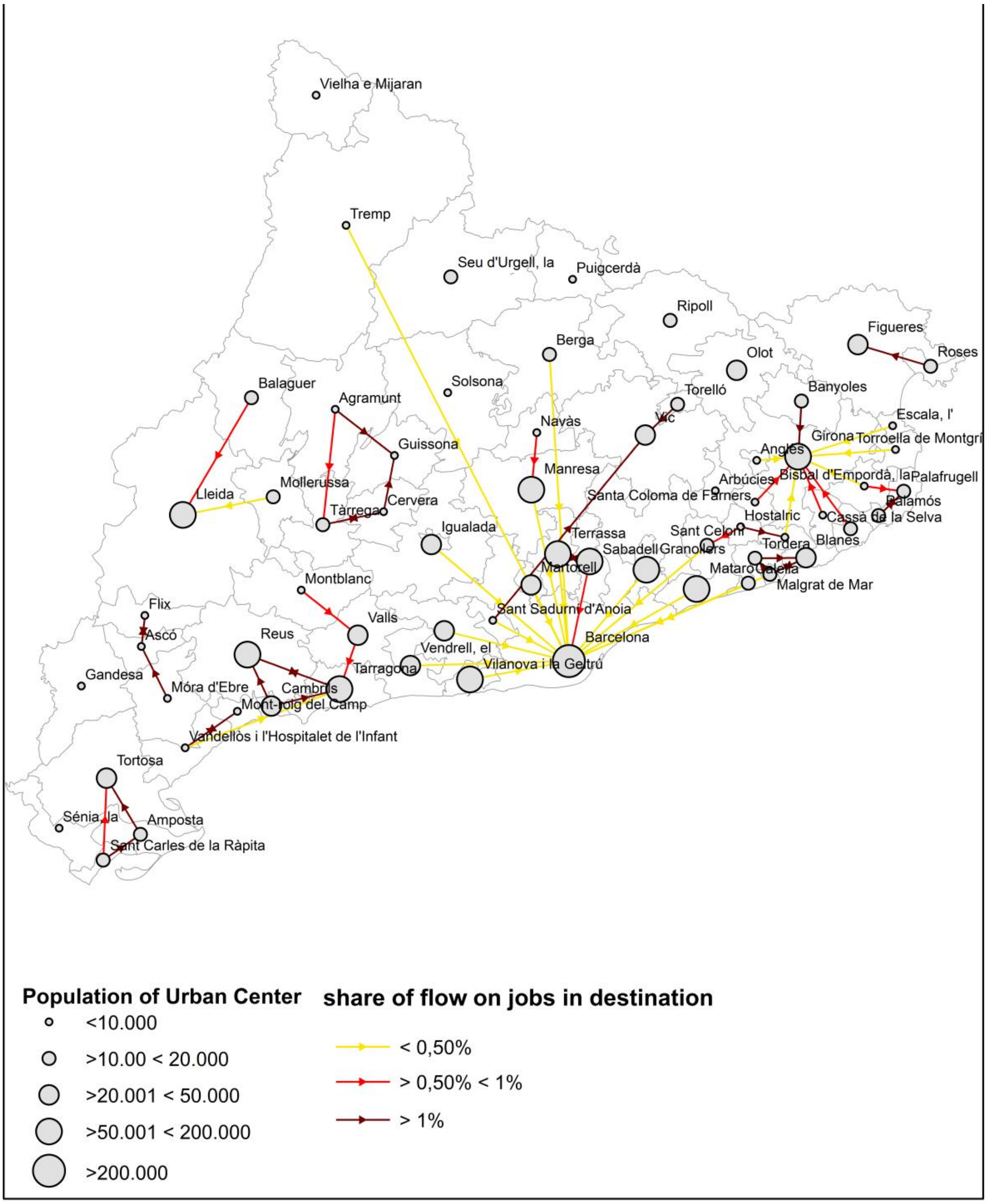
The first step of focusing on the most relevant flows originated by any micro-regional centre, applying the Van Nuffel (2007) filtering technique, yields the pattern of flows described in Figure 2.8. In this map we note the role of Barcelona as the main hierarchical centre for the whole territory even in relation to the smaller local urban systems centres on the provincial capitals (Girona, Tarragona and Lleida), and the presence of a number of networks between smaller cities.

Figure 2.8 – Significant flows between micro-regional centres, applying the Van Nuffel filtering technique



Applying the next steps of the filtering procedure which consider only flows that are significant in terms of the working population of the centre originating the flows and in terms of the working population at the place of destination, we have lowered the recommended thresholds (respectively 5% and 1%) after testing that in this way only very few such flows remain significant. With a flow-from-origin population threshold of 3% of the active workforce, we obtain the pattern represented in Figure 2.9.

Figure 2.9 – Significant flows between micro-regional centres

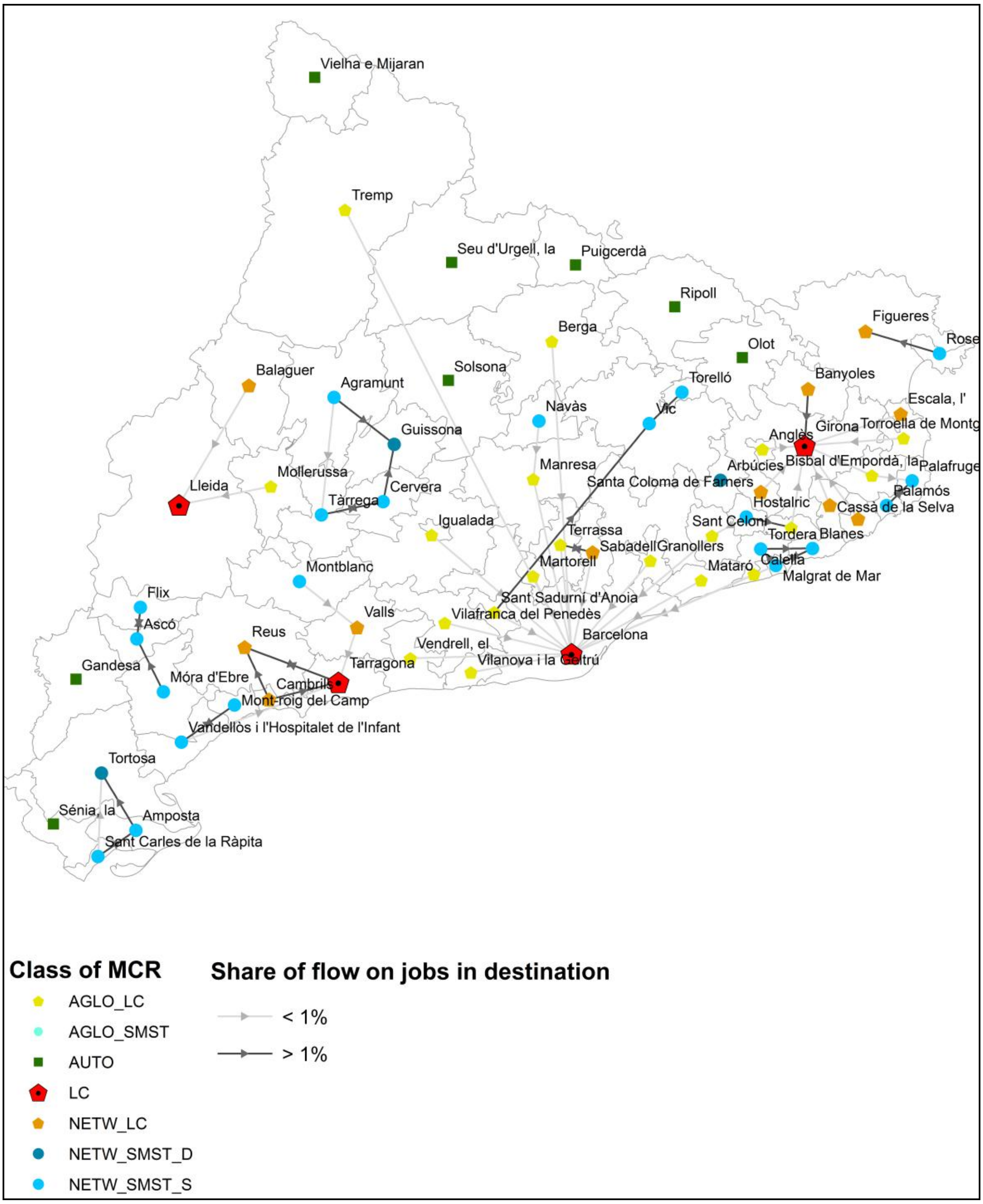


Note: only flows representing more than 3% of the working population in the place of origin.

In this map, we obtain a clearer-cut structure of the urban system patters in Catalonia, with one dominating hierarchical structure centred on Barcelona and including a number of secondary metropolitan nodes that are large cities; then we identify an important hierarchical role for Girona, and less articulated hierarchical structures for the other two provincial capitals. These main urban centres also involved some networked relations between larger and smaller centres (as in the case of Barcelona and Sabadell in the Barcelona metropolitan region, Tarragona and Reus, Girona and Santa Coloma de Farmers, Lleida and Balaguer) or between "peer centres" within hierarchical systems (as between Terrassa and Sabadell in the Barcelona system, Cambrils and Reus in the Tarragona system). A small number of cities that are not large (from the point of view of the morphological analysis conducted in RA2) have their small hierarchical systems or networked relations, as in the case of Manresa, Tortosa, Palafrugell, Figueres, Malgrat de Mar, Vic, Ascó, Mont-roig del Camp, Tàrrega.

As a last step, we classify micro-regional centres on the basis of their role in urban systems and character of their networked relations, using the taxonomy introduced in the introduction of this chapter. The classification of MR according to the criteria indicated above is included in the Table A in Annex, mapped in Figure 2.10 and summarised in Table 2.2.

Figure 2.10 – Functional structure of urban centres of Catalonia



We then count among micro-regional centres four large cities, which are the four provincial capitals; 19 small and medium cities that are agglomerated to them, and 11 other cities that stand in a networked relation with them. The metropolitan system of Barcelona is dominated, as expected, by the capital city and includes other 11 smaller cities that are hierarchically agglomerated to it, plus one that is in some kind of a networked relation with it (Sabadell). Girona has a more hierarchically "flat" system also including 2 networked smaller centres, and so do Tarragona (3 networked centres) and Lleida (1). Besides, there are other 20 urban centres that are in some kind of networked relation between them (2 only as destinations of flows) and 12 autonomous centres. These are mostly capital centres of sparsely populated counties in the Pyrenees area or in the extreme south of Catalonia.

Table 2.2 – Synthetic information (average values) on MRC classes

MRC class	N.	Pop 2001	EA 2001	Jobs 2001	Av. Pop 2001	Av. EA 2001	Av. Jobs 2001
LC	**4**	**1,804,091**	**1,212,524**	**1,277,700**	**451,023**	**303,131**	**319,425**
AGLO-LC	**19**	**629,209**	**432,657**	**415,635**	**33,116**	**22,771**	**21,876**
NETW-LC	**11**	**413,175**	**282,988**	**263,007**	**37,561**	**25,726**	**23,910**
NETW-SMST-S	**18**	**182,387**	**124,067**	**122,748**	**10,133**	**6,893**	**6,819**
NETW-SMST-D	**2**	**45,429**	**30,702**	**35,152**	**22,715**	**15,351**	**17,576**
AUTO	**12**	**148,258**	**97,421**	**104,031**	**12,355**	**8,118**	**8,669**

Source: **Own elaboration, based on 2001 and 2011 census data.**

Table 2.2 indicates that on average centres that are networked to large cities have more population and jobs than centres that are agglomerated to them in a hierarchical relation. Smaller cities that are in a networked relation with others as source are smaller and have remarkably less jobs than others that are in a networked relation with others as destinations, while autonomous centres have populations and job markets that are larger than the former but smaller than the latter.

Table 2.3 – Comparison of growth rates of population and workforce 2001-11 by MRC classes

Non MR centres	Mean	**22,0%**	**22,4%**
(N=880)	Std. Deviation	,33	,27
LC	Mean	**18,9%**	**17,9%**
(N=4)	Std. Deviation	,09	,09
AGLO-LC	Mean	**31,6%**	**29,5%**
(N=19)	Std. Deviation	,19	,19
NETW-LC	Mean	**26,8%**	**25,3%**
(N=11)	Std. Deviation	,13	,12
NETW-SMST-D	Mean	**40,2%**	**37,9%**
(N=2)	Std. Deviation	,21	,20
NETW-SMST-S	Mean	**31,3%**	**30,9%**
(N=18)	Std. Deviation	,23	,23
AUTO	Mean	**21,5%**	**23,4%**
(N=12)	Std. Deviation	,10	,11

Source: Own elaboration, based on 2001 and 2011 census data.

Finally, we look again at population data from the 2011 census (residents and active population). Population in the whole of Catalonia has grown from 6,343,110 to 7,514,130 units in the 2001-2011 period, and the workforce from 4,366,994 to 5,051,575, that is, growth rates have been of 18.5% and 15.7% respectively. In municipalities that are micro-regional centres, growth rates of population have been on average 30% higher than those which are not, and growth rates of the workforce 23% higher. The average values of growth rates by classes of micro-regional centres are displayed in Table 2.3. The largest average growth rates of both variables have been experienced by networked smaller cities as destinations, followed by smaller cities agglomerated to large cites and smaller cities networked as sources. The lowest growth rates have been registered in large cities and autonomous urban centres.

2.3 Characteristics and performances of micro-regional centres

An introductory analysis of our case study area approaches it in terms of comparative performances of towns (delimited in administrative terms) when they have been identified as MR centres with respect to the rest. In this sense, we have produced a list of "performance indicators" with the available data for the case study period and tested the significance of different performances for MR centres through a t-test at a 5% significance level (see Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 – Selected municipal indicators: difference between performances of MR centres and other municipalities

Selected municipal indicators	Not a MR centre (n= 880)	MR centre (n= 66)	*t-test (*= sign. if <0.05)*	
Growth of resident population, 2001-2011	22.0%	28.3%	*0.011*	*
Growth of active population, 2001-2011	22.4%	27.6%	*0.029*	*
Unemployed residents as a share of the active population, 2001	2.7%	3.5%	*0.000*	*
Unemployed residents as a share of the active population, 2011	8.9%	12.4%	*0.006*	*
Growth of unemployed population, 2001-2011	367.3%	378.9%	*0.790*	
Dependency rate in 2001	55.4%	48.3%	*0.000*	*
Dependency rate in 2011	54.0%	49.1%	*0.000*	*
Difference in dependency rate, 2001-2011	0.4%	2.2%	*0.477*	
Res. born in foreign country as a share of total resident population, 2001	4.0%	6.4%	*0.000*	*
Res. born in foreign country as a share of total resident population, 2011	10.3%	19.3%	*0.000*	*
Foreign residents born in OECD countries, 2001 as a share of total population	1.1%	1.1%	*0.977*	
Foreign residents born in OECD countries, 2011 as a share of total population	4.6%	6.5%	*0.001*	*
Foreign residents born in non-OECD countries, 2001 as a share of total population	2.2%	4.6%	*0.000*	*
Foreign residents born in non-OECD countries, 2011 as a share of total population	4.6%	12.0%	*0.000*	*
Self-employed as a share of total employed, 2000	38.6%	39.4%	*0.751*	

Self-employed as a share of total employed, 2011	43.8%	24.0%	*0.000*	*
Difference in self-employment rate, 2000-2011	51.9%	-10.3%	*0.000*	*
Companies per inhabitant, 2000	3.3%	4.2%	*0.000*	*
Companies per inhabitant, 2011	3.4%	3.5%	*0.730*	
Difference in n. of companies per resident, 2000-2011	15.5%	-16.7%	*0.000*	*
Highly educated population, 2001	9.3%	8.9%	*0.574*	
Change in total housing provision, 2001-2011	28.0%	23.2%	*0.236*	
Secondary + vacant housing units as a share of total housing, 2001	36.6%	34.0%	*0.221*	
Secondary + vacant + non main housing units as a share of total housing, 2011	50.2%	57.6%	*0.078*	
Difference in secondary + vacant housing units, 2001-2011	67.8%	68.3%	*0.951*	
Municipal budget per inhabitant, 2001	1,337.9 €	1,040.4 €	*0.482*	
Municipal budget per inhabitant, 2011	1,863.3 €	1,213.9 €	*0.000*	*
Difference in municipal budget per inhabitant, 2001-2001	74.9%	22.8%	*0.000*	*
Growth of employment in municipality, 2001-2011	58.1%	9.2%	*0.000*	*

- First of all, MR centres are consistently larger (which is also a result of their method of identification in the FA) but also have grown more in terms of both population and active population than their counterparts in the case study period, with a growth rate more than – respectively – 6 and 5 percent points higher, suggesting that a general trend of "urbanisation" has taken place throughout the 2000 decade, with functionally relevant employment centres attracting more population and active workers than centres with a secondary role to this respect. Unemployment is also consistently higher in these centres, both at the beginning and at the end of the case study period, comforting the assumption of a higher mismatch of work demand and supply in areas where the workforce pool is larger. Unemployment rates, though having increased substantially (more than quadrupled) in the case study period have not been growth in significantly different patterns between MRC and the other towns.
- The dependency rate is and stayed significantly higher in secondary employment centres during the 2000s, suggesting the presence of a younger active population (and possibly higher migration rates, as confirmed by another indicator of the share of foreign-born population) in MRC, and this gap has widened in the case study period though not significantly.
- Foreigners have more than doubled in non-MR centres and more than tripled in MRC, and the difference between MRC and non-MRC has stayed significant in the case study period, both for what regards OECD-born foreigners (that registered the highest growth rates) and non-OECD, supposedly unskilled migrants.
- The financial crisis is generally assumed to trigger self-employment as a result of people losing their jobs in larger companies, and this trend has been observed to be larger (and more significant) in secondary employment centres that in MR centres, which, supposedly, have managed to retain a larger share of employment, as will be seen below. Thus, companies per inhabitant, which were significantly more in MRC than in non-MRC in 2001, are substantially the same in 2011.
- An interesting indication comes from the education rate of residents, which in 2001 was slightly higher in non-MRC than in MRC (we have no such data for subsequent years),

maybe suggesting the larger incidence of unskilled work in main employment centres and an early trend of “suburbunasation” of the skilled population.

- The provision of a total number of housing has grown significantly between 2001-2011 by a rate of 27.7% face to a population growth of 18.6%, indicating the dimensions of the “real estate bubble” that emerged and subsequently burst in this period. This growth rate was relatively higher in places that were not MR centres. The housing market structure was not significantly different between 2001 and 2011; secondary and vacant housing units have grown consistently in all towns.
- Municipal budgets (in per capita rates) have suffered large cuts as a result of the crisis and recovery measures, however, considering the whole case study period and the fact that the larger cuts have been actually enforced only in the period following the 2010 Catalan elections, these have grown between 2001 and 2011 and this growth has been significantly larger in 2011 in places that are not MR centres, suggesting some effort from the political level to strengthen the position and liveability of secondary towns.
- Finally, the size of labour markets in towns in Catalonia has grown 9% throughout the case study period in spite of the current recession, but non-MR centres have growth substantially more than their employment centres counterparts touching an overall growth rate of 58%.

Secondly, we have focused on MR centres deepened this analysis looking at the different performances between classes of MRC as from the Functional Analysis displayed in this chapter. In this sense, we provide information among four large blocks of structure and performance dimensions in the same logic of the organisation of sub-case studies in the next chapters. We have run one-side ANOVA tests to test the significance of differences in indicators between classes.

Among demographic indicators (Table 2.5), we find significant differences among MRC types only with the dependency rates in 2001 (highest in Autonomous centres, lowest in Large Cities), while 2011 has seen an equalisation of these rates among classes, with largest growth of such index in MR centres agglomerated to largest cities (and a negative one in Autonomous centres). In all other cases, the highest values of indicators in Table 2.5 highlight the primacy of centres networked to small and medium towns as destinations. Large cities have experiences the less dynamic demographic growth while centres agglomerated to large cities have especially low values for their foreign population.

Table 2.5 – Demographic indicators – mean values of performance differences between classes of MR centres and their significance

Class of Microregional centre	AGLO-LC	AUTO	LC	NETW-LC	NETW-SMST-D	NETW-SMST-S	ANOVA TEST (sig. If value < 0.1)
Growth of resident population, 2001-2011	31.6%	21.5%	18.9%	26.8%	40.2%	31.3%	.346
Growth of active population, 2001-2011	29.5%	23.4%	17.9%	25.3%	37.9%	30.9%	.514
Dependency rate in 2001	**47.0%**	**51.8%**	**45.9%**	**48.0%**	**47.0%**	**48.3%**	**.094**
Dependency rate in 2011	49.3%	49.5%	47.2%	49.6%	49.4%	48.6%	.752
Difference in dependency rate, 2001-2011	**5.4%**	**-4.0%**	**3.0%**	**3.9%**	**5.2%**	**1.2%**	**.012**
RES. BORN IN FOREIGN COUNTRY 2001 as a share of total resident	6.6%	6.3%	5.7%	5.5%	12.8%	6.4%	.743

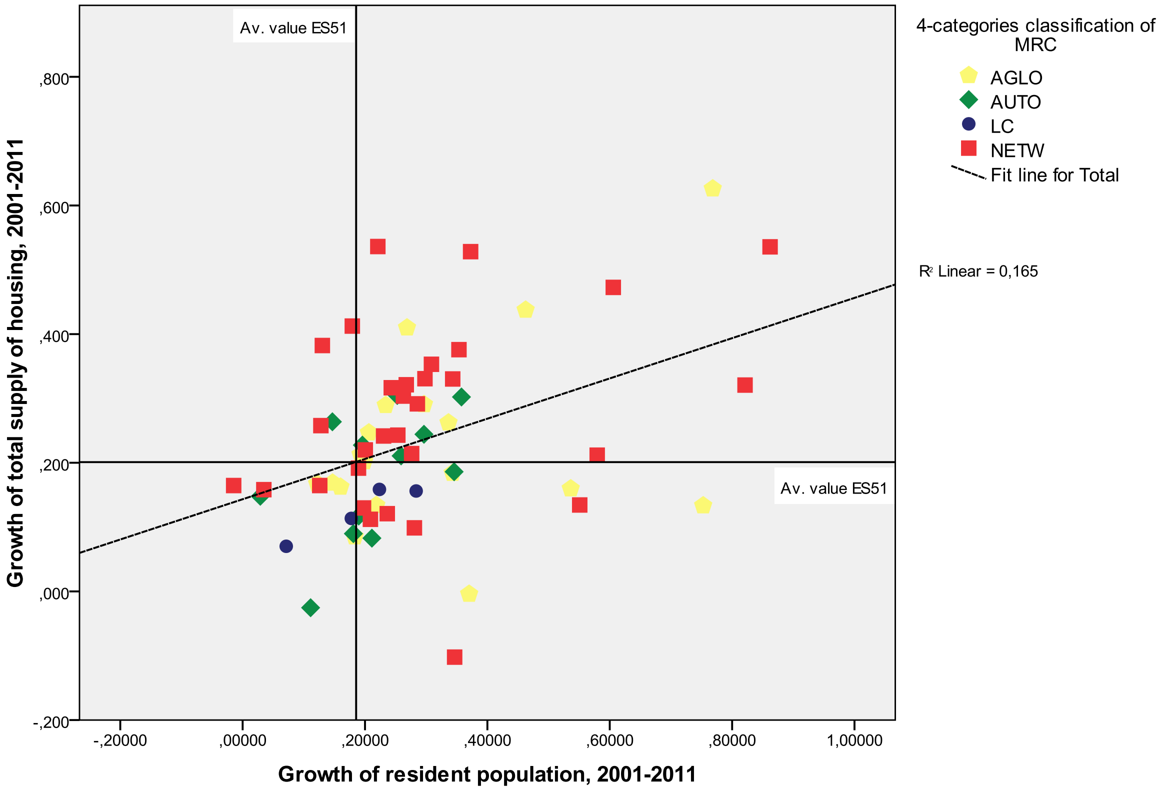
population							
RES. BORN IN FOREIGN COUNTRY 2011 as a share of total resident population	18.4%	20.9%	20.2%	17.8%	28.6%	18.8%	.747
Foreign residents born in OECD countries, 2001 as a share of total population	1.2%	0.8%	1.0%	0.8%	2.8%	1.2%	.754
Foreign residents born in OECD countries, 2011 as a share of total population	5.2%	8.2%	6.2%	5.2%	8.9%	7.2%	.244
Foreign residents born in non-OECD countries, 2001 as a share of total population	4.6%	4.6%	3.5%	4.1%	9.7%	4.4%	.849
Foreign residents born in OECD countries, 2011 as a share of total population	12.5%	11.4%	12.2%	12.0%	20.4%	11.1%	.987

Table 2.6 suggests the existence of larger provisions of vacant and secondary houses in centres networked to SMST as destinations, while Large Cities score lowest. The growth of this segment of housing has been significantly largest in centres networked to SMST as sources. In total, the provision of housing has grown significantly more in centres networked to SMST as sources and lower in Large Cities.

Table 2.6 – Housing indicators: mean values of performance differences between classes of MR centres and their significance

Class of Microregional centre	AGLO-LC	AUTO	LC	NETW-LC	NETW-SMST-D	NETW-SMST-S	ANOVA TEST (sig. If value < 0.01)
Growth of total supply of housing, 2001-2011	22.6%	17.9%	12.5%	21.8%	18.9%	31.1%	**.053**
Secondary + vacant housing units as a share of total housing, 2001	32.6%	35.8%	26.8%	29.6%	52.0%	36.5%	.516
Secondary + vacant + non main housing units as a share of total housing, 2011	52.0%	59.9%	35.7%	53.2%	87.3%	66.9%	.211
Difference in secondary + vacant housing units, 2001-2011	**54.1%**	**67.8%**	**34.1%**	**81.0%**	**58.7%**	**85.4%**	**.052**

Figure 2.11 - Population and total housing growth by class of MR centre between 2001 and 2011



Plotting population growth against the growth of total housing provision between 2001 and 2011, we see in Figure 2.11 that the provision of housing in relation to the growth in population has been more moderate in large cities whereas it has been on average (but with a greater variability) larger in networked and agglomerated centres. In the former the total provision of housing has grown by 27% over the study period, face to a population increase of 30%, but in the majority of such centres housing has grown more than proportionally compared to the average population growth.

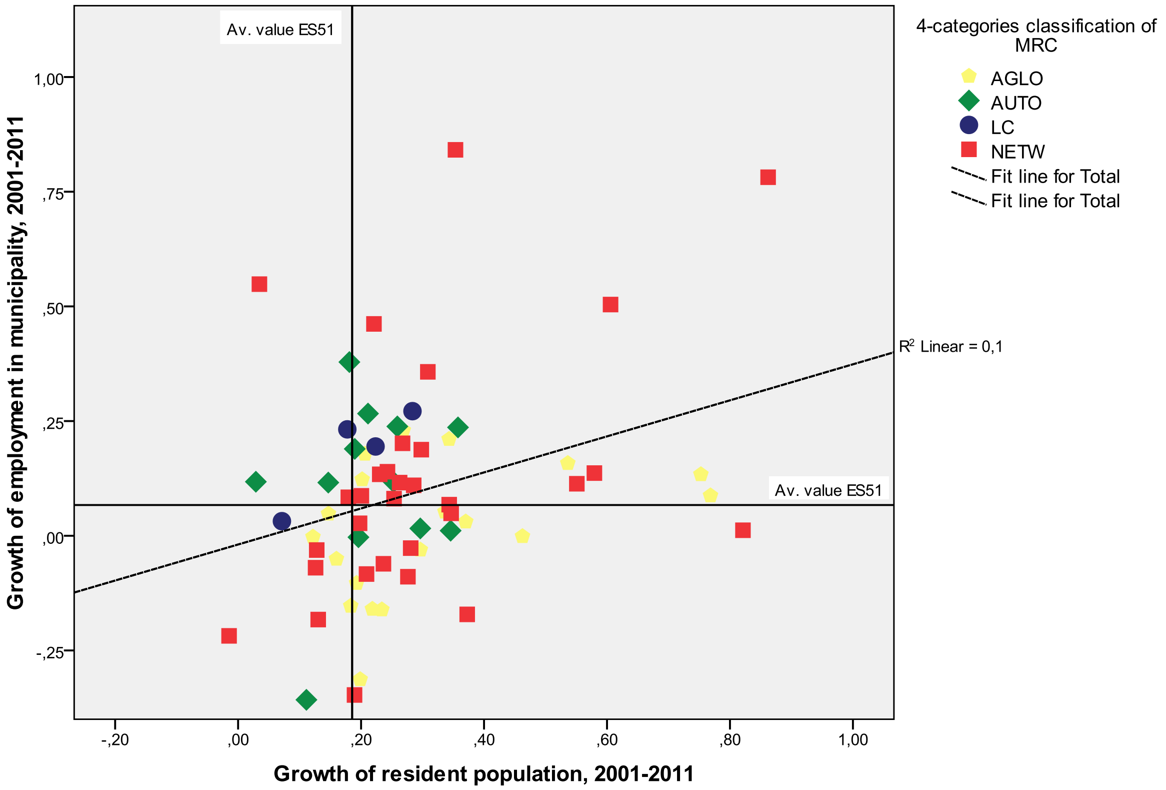
Table 2.7 deals with socioeconomic indicators. It highlights a significant difference in values of the self-employed population (higher in Autonomous centres, as arguably physiologic, in 2001, but a larger score for centres networked to large cities in 2011). It also shows that unemployed residents are highest (though not significantly so) in centres agglomerated to large cities in 2011, that the highest educated residents live in Large Cities (and are relatively rarest in centres networked to SMST as sources), that growth in the size of the job market has been larger in Large Cities, and that centres networked to SMST as sources have the largest municipal budgets per capita in 2011, whereas these were higher in centres networked to SMST as destinations in 2001; the greatest growth between was experienced by centres networked to Large Cities and was only negative in centres networked to SMST as destinations.

Table 2.7 – Socioeconomic indicators – mean values of performance differences between classes of MR centres and their significance

Class of Microregional centre	AGLO-LC	AUTO	LC	NETW-LC	NETW-SMST-D	NETW-SMST-S	ANOVA TEST (sig. If value < 0.01)
Unemployed residents as a share of the active population, 2001	3.9%	2.9%	3.8%	3.6%	4.4%	3.4%	.134
Unemployed residents as a share of the active population, 2001	13.4%	11.2%	11.8%	12.6%	13.1%	11.9%	.235
Growth of unemployed population, 2001-2011	361.2%	447.1%	265.4%	358.9%	328.5%	395.2%	.466
Self-employed as a share of total employed, 2001	**40.7%**	**56.4%**	**35.8%**	**28.2%**	**6.8%**	**38.0%**	**.015**
Self-employed as a share of total employed, 2011	**23.1%**	**25.0%**	**11.1%**	**26.5%**	**26.0%**	**25.3%**	**.010**
Difference in self-employment rate, 2000-2011	-29.6%	-39.4%	-46.2%	12.9%	329.0%	-14.4%	.188
Highly educated population, 2001	**8.7%**	**8.9%**	**15.6%**	**9.0%**	**9.0%**	**7.5%**	**.000**
Growth of employment in municipality, 2001-2011	1.5%	11.1%	18.3%	2.8%	9.7%	18.1%	.153
Municipal budget per inhabitant, 2001	970.9 €	855.4 €	889.4 €	842.0 €	1,621.9 €	1,327.2 €	.182
Municipal budget per inhabitant, 2011	1,086.4 €	1,008.4 €	1,091.5 €	1,082.6 €	1,319.2 €	1,593.3 €	.579
Difference in municipal budget per inhabitant, 2001-2011	16.9%	23.2%	31.8%	38.4%	-8.4%	22.4%	.646

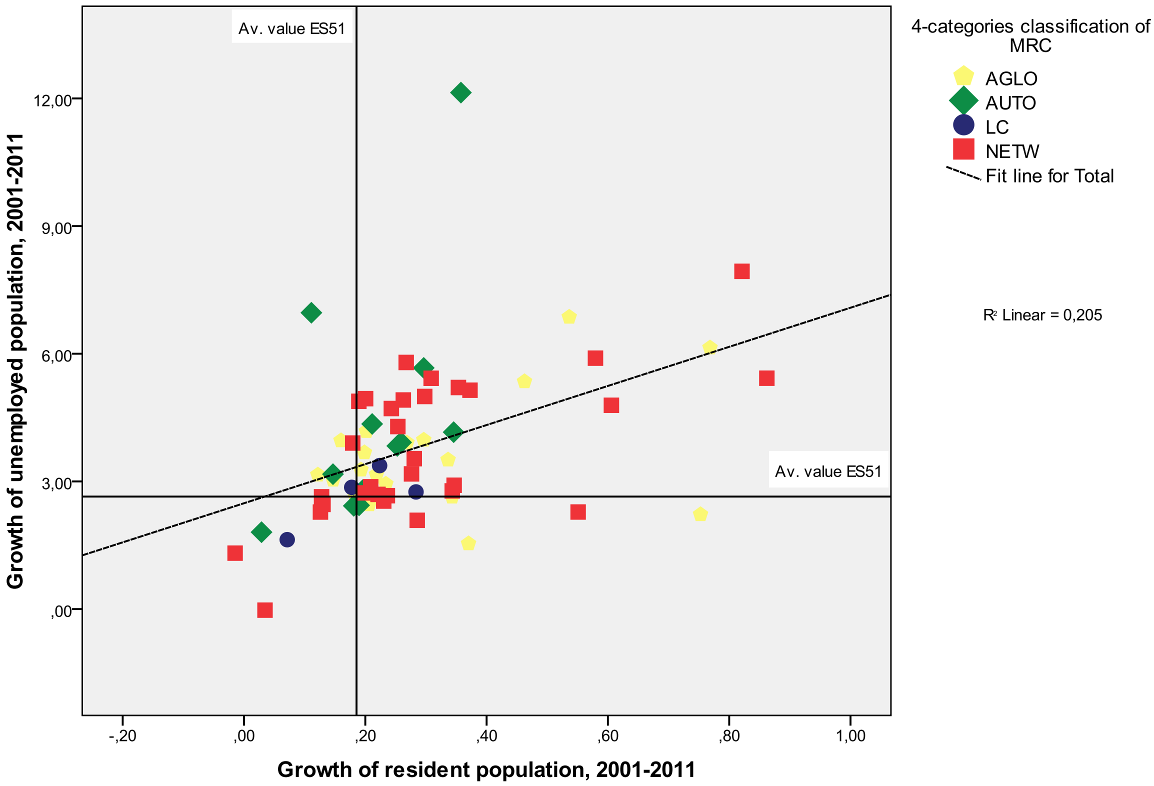
Two scatterplot diagrams (where all classes of networked MRC have been grouped into one category) in Fig. 2.12 and 2.13 help assess the performance of MR centres even further. In the first we plot the growth in local employment (localised jobs) against population growth. Large cities (dark blue circles), with an average value of 18%, get on the whole the better growth rates face to a very similar rate of population growth. All the four Large Cities, the four provincial capitals, have positive rates of both variables, though Barcelona has values of both that are lower than the average values in Catalonia. In any case, all of them sit above the fit line, indicating that population growth is matched by more-than-proportional increases of employment generated locally. The plotted scores of networked centres are more dispersed around central values. The average score is higher than that of Large Cities (30%) for increase in population and lower (12%) in terms of growth of labour market: this indicates that these centres may be "borrowing size" from larger cities offering residential alternatives to people working in the largest employment centres, but maintain their capacity to employ. In comparison, agglomerated centres have the highest population growth rates but their average employment capacity hardly grew, indicating something more problematic than residential suburbanisation, rather their lack of resilience to economic instability face to a continued attractiveness as residence centres probably because of housing affordability compared to Large Cities.

Figure 2.12 – Population and employment growth by class of MR centre between 2001 and 2011



Considering unemployment rates in Fig. 2.13, we see that in all four Large Cities unemployment grows less than their population in the case study period, while this growth is comparatively higher in Autonomous Centres and especially in agglomerated centres. The situation in networked centres is of a certain proportionality between demographic growth and unemployment.

Figure 2.13 – Population and unemployment growth by class of MR centre between 2001 and 2011



Finally we have analysed the sectoral composition of MRC in terms of employment, and their change over the case study period. Table 2.8 provides this information and tests the significance of differences between MRC classes, while the radar diagrams in Figures 2.14-16 provide a visual illustration of these data in terms of differences from the Catalan average.

Thus, the only sector that was distributed unevenly (with a 10% significance level) in 2001 was services, overrepresented in Large Cities (where more than two thirds of the residents are employed in the tertiary sector), whereas this share was lowest in centres that are networked to SMST as sources (24%). The other three macro-sectors for which we have consistent data across all Catalan municipalities did not significantly diverge in representation between MRC types, although we can note the relatively large presence of manufacturing in centres that are agglomerated to large cities (especially secondary industrial towns in the metro area of Barcelona). In 2011 the situation has partly changed; whereas the share of services increases in Large Cities, reaching 73%, agriculture becomes significantly overrepresented in Autonomous centres and centres that are networked to SMST as sources.

In fact, as can be gauged especially in Figure 2.16, agriculture is the sector that registers the largest growth rates throughout the case study period in all classes of MRC, and services exhibit consistently moderately positive growth rates, whereas construction declines in all MRC classes and manufacturing only grows moderately in centres that are networked to SMST as destinations.

Lastly, the highest company per inhabitant rates are registered in Large Cities in 2011 and the lowest in centres that are networked to SMST as sources, whereas they were highest in centres that are networked to SMST as destinations in 2001. In all MRC classes see a decrease of this indicator, which is significantly higher in centres that are networked to SMST as destinations and more moderate in Autonomous centres.

Table 2.8 – Economic structure indicators – mean values of performance differences between classes of MR centres and their significance

Class of Microregional centre	AGLO-LC	AUTO	LC	NETW-LC	NETW-SMST-D	NETW-SMST-S	ANOVA TEST (sig. If value < 0.01)
Employed in agriculture as a share of active population, 2001	0.35%	0.93%	0.35%	0.61%	0.41%	0.71%	.173
Employed in manufacturing as a share of active population, 2001	19.54%	16.81%	9.03%	15.30%	14.14%	18.26%	.730
Employed in construction as a share of active population, 2001	7.15%	8.03%	6.87%	8.60%	8.06%	8.97%	.385
Employed in services as a share of active population, 2001	32.60%	33.81%	68.29%	29.12%	41.28%	24.05%	.000
Employed in agriculture as a share of active population, 2011	0.42%	1.40%	0.32%	0.91%	0.44%	1.23%	.016
Employed in manufacturing as a share of active population, 2011	11.82%	10.27%	6.77%	8.70%	10.53%	12.40%	.814
Employed in construction as a share of active population, 2011	4.10%	5.59%	4.10%	4.85%	4.57%	5.01%	.171
Employed in services as a share of active population, 2011	30.89%	35.62%	73.47%	29.92%	37.08%	28.11%	.000
Growth of residents employed in agriculture, 2001-2011	86.29%	150.89%	2.77%	108.82%	44.71%	230.83%	.077
Growth of residents employed in manufacturing, 2001-2011	-22.40%	-17.33%	-7.27%	-24.44%	24.58%	-1.60%	.303
Growth of residents employed in construction, 2001-2011	-24.12%	-13.73%	-29.67%	-28.33%	-21.62%	-23.88%	.422
Growth of residents employed in services, 2001-2011	23.09%	31.89%	27.07%	27.13%	19.17%	56.70%	.068
Companies per inhabitant, 2000	4.10%	4.80%	4.92%	4.13%	5.21%	3.78%	.017
Companies per inhabitant, 2011	3.21%	4.27%	4.28%	3.28%	4.09%	3.18%	.000
Difference in company per resident rate, 2000-2011	-21.09%	-10.56%	-12.81%	-20.30%	-22.04%	-14.39%	.074

Figure 2.14 – Sectoral composition by classes of Microregional Centres (4 sectors), deviations from Catalan average, year 2001.

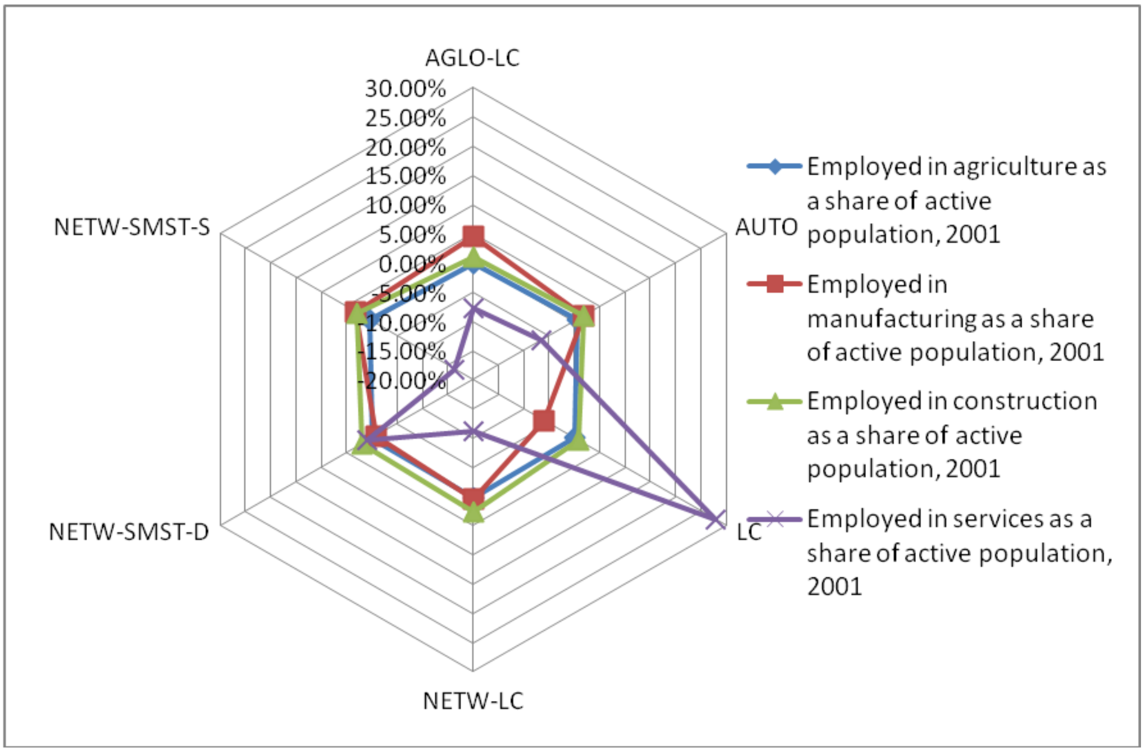


Figure 2.15 – Sectoral composition by classes of Microregional Centres (4 sectors), deviations from Catalan average, year 2011.

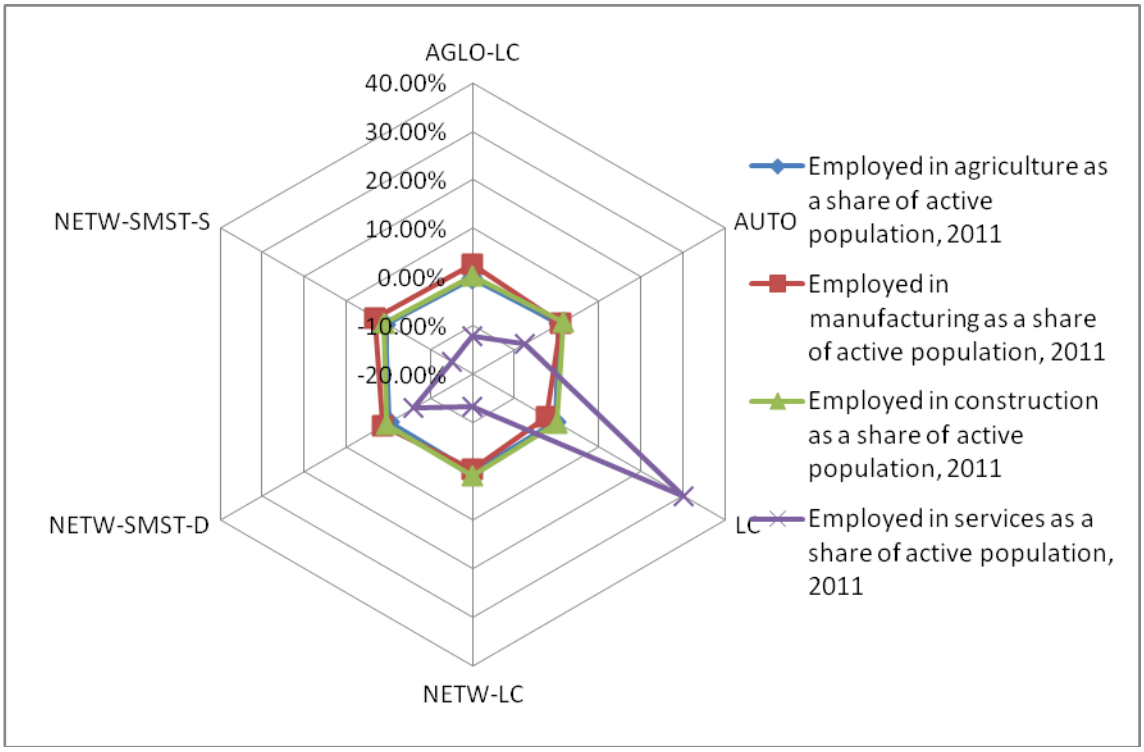
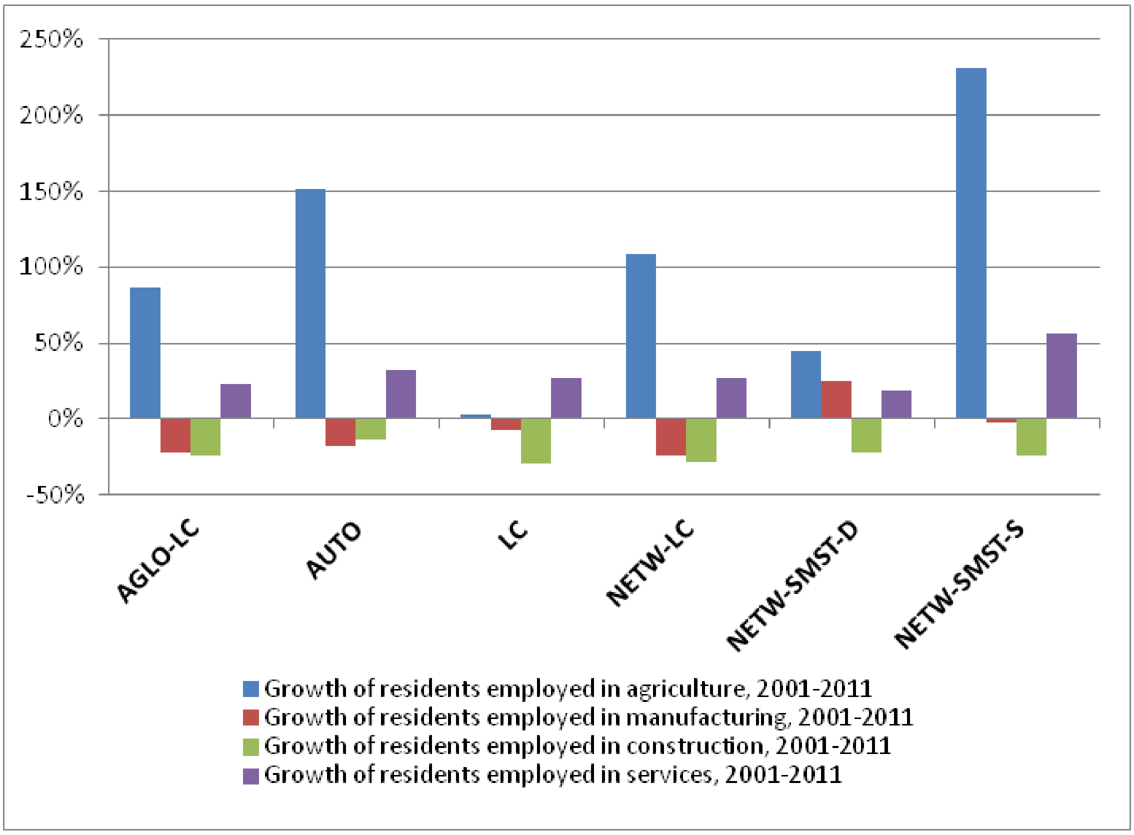


Figure 2.16 – Sectoral composition by classes of Microregional Centres (4 sectors), percent change in employment 2001-2011

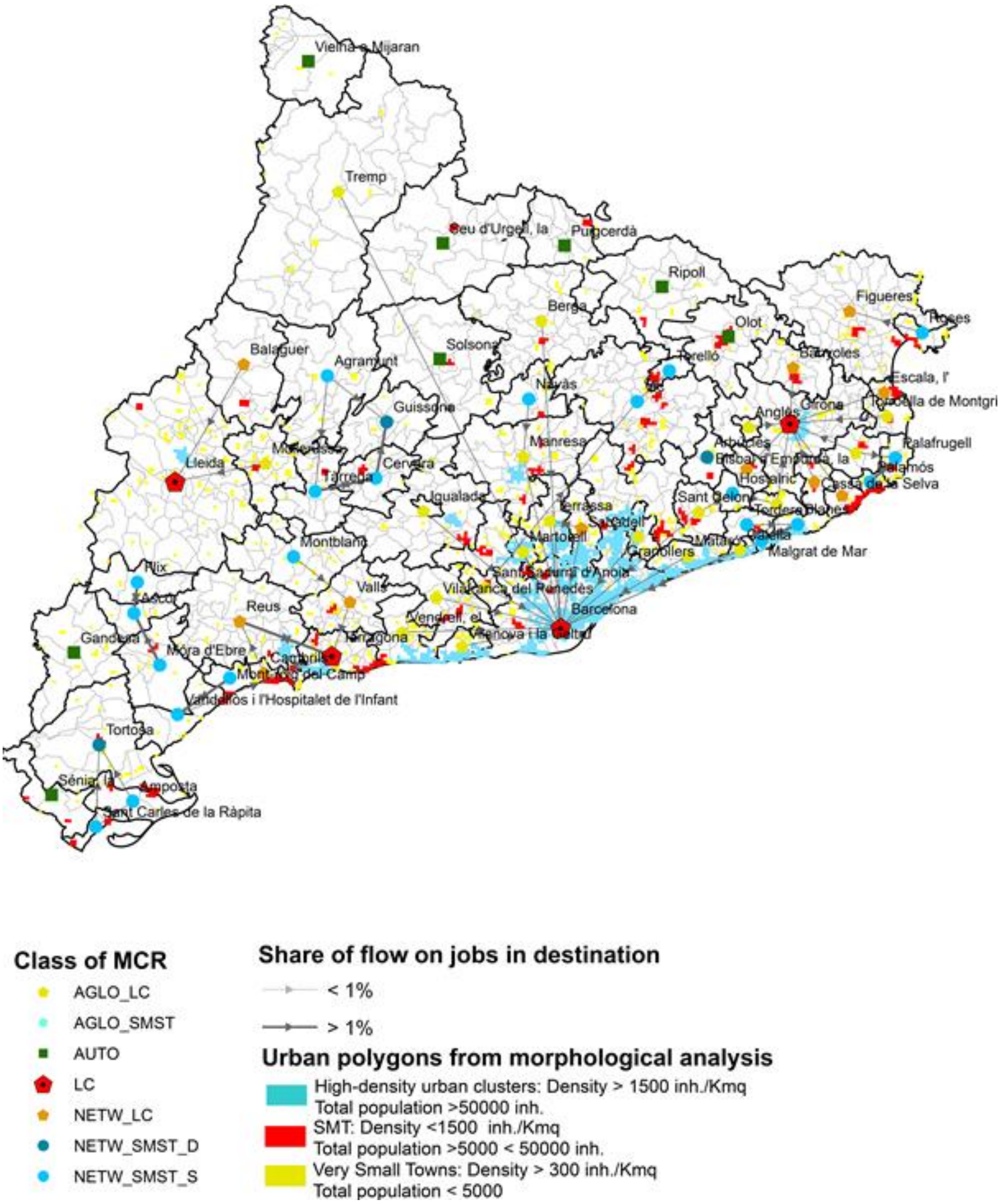


3. MICRO-LEVEL CASE STUDIES

3.1 Selection of micro-level case studies

The selection of three “local level” cases to study in depth in order to assess the role and performance of SMST in regional development and the scope for territorial policies takes into account the results of the Functional Analysis performed in this Chapter and also the results of the Morphological Analysis conducted as part of RA2, and strives to take into consideration the variety of situations encountered but also cases that are of particular significance in the sense of geographical context and policy initiatives.

Figure 3.1 – Functional relations and morphological structure of urban centres in Catalonia



In Figure 3.1 we include the evidence already illustrated in Figure 2.10 and the morphological structure of urban areas. Our choice of case study aims to provide and discuss meaningful evidence in the Catalan territory about the role of SMST, representing its functional articulation – as captured by the micro-regional centres' taxonomy – and also its geographic diversity. In any case, we focused on cases that are at the same time micro-regional centres and their micro-regions, so as to emphasis the "functional" relations to which they are subject and on urban areas that are characterised as SMST polygons.

Thus we selected the following ythree cases of MR / MR centres:

- **Tàrrega**, in the Province of Lleida, is a county capital (Urgell). The case study area includes 19,240 inhabitants (2001) in the micro-region, 12848 in the micro-regional centre. Tàrrega is networked into a regional system composed by various SMST, which balances the urban system of the provincial capital (Lleida). Tàrrega as MR centre is a SMST polygon (small SMST; high-density SMST). Other VST polygons are included in the MR (and no other SMST or HDUC). The town of Tàrrega is clearly surrounded by agricultural activities, but networked with other SMST. Agriculture and agro-industry have a key role in the economy of its NUTS3 region (Lleida). Tàrrega play a role of service and administrative capital in this rural area, but this town also concentrate some the most important industrial activities in the area. In this area, and specifically in Tàrrega, the impact of the recent rapid growth of unemployment is clearly minor than the Spanish or Catalan average. Local policies (co-financed by EU Funds) for support entrepreneurship in service, agriculture and/or agro-industry have presumably had a role in strengthening its position in the regional context. There is also a local strategy of tourism development in place, especially related to cultural activities.
- **Cambrils** is a SMST in the Province of Tarragona. It had 22,264 inhabitants in the micro-region, 21,000 in MR centre. Cambrils is part of a networked metropolitan system that also includes two HDUC (Tarragona and Reus). Cambrils municipality (LAU2) is part of a SMST polygon of almost 47,000 inhabitants that also includes the urban centres of Salou and La Pineda (which are nevertheless parts of the MR system of Tarragona). It is a coastal community with dominance of tourism sector and port and fishery related sectors. It will be interesting to study the role of a medium-sized coastal city (and adjoining urban centres that are part of the same morphological unit or functional micro-regional system) with a strong incidence of Tourism activities within a "bipolar" metropolitan urban system like Tarragona-Reus. Interesting aspects in this context are the incidence of metropolitan development, accessibility, sectorial specialisation, and tourism zoning schemes in development.
- **Vilafranca del Penedès** is a city in the Province of Barcelona and the county capital of Alt Penedès. It counted 58,250 inhabitants in 2001 at micro-regional level, 31,248 of which lived in the micro-regional centre. It is a SMST that is agglomerated to Barcelona metropolitan regional system. The town is a (medium; high-density) SMST polygon of some 35,000 inhabitants. One other SMST is included in the MR, and some other smaller VST. Town clearly surrounded by agricultural activities, it stands in a hierarchical relation with largest metro area in Catalonia. Vilafranca is a centre for the local wine industry, along with neighbouring Sant Sadurní d'Anoia (another MR centre in our Functional Analysis). Other local industries include textiles, metallurgy, and food processing and construction materials. It is also an important commercial centre. Vilafranca del Penedès has grown steadily at the expense of the more rural areas of Alt Penedès, aided by its excellent transport links and by the strength of the local economy (particularly the wine industry). It will be interesting to check how the relation of a SMST has evolved within a metropolitan regional context as a result of planning initiatives, and at the same time

evaluate its "intermediation role" between a hierarchical metropolitan system and a county network with a string specialisation in wine production. Vilafranca d. Penedès, as other medium sized cities in the metropolitan Region of Barcelona, has been and still is the object of planning policies aiming at broadening the range of functional specialisations within the context of multi-polar metropolitan development, and at strengthening its capacity to attract and retain population.

The three case study areas selected are analysed in the next three sections with a standard format so organised. Next, we introduce the general information on each case study areas, including the resulting structure both from the Functional Analysis – thus highlighting the microregional centres and relations with other microregion and their centres – and from the morphological point of view, thus highlighting the overlapping structure and status of urban settlements. Following, we provide information on the following dimensions in each case study area: demographic profile, housing, socioeconomic performance, economic structure and evolution, and policy issues. For each such fields, we provide compared information on the situation of the MR centre in the framework of its microregions and benchmarking it with the general situation of Catalonia, the MR centres to which the case study area is functionally related, and comparable morphological structures both in the MR itself and in functionally related microregions, both in terms of their status at 2001 and in terms of changes experienced throughout the case study period (2001-2011). In the last section, we carry out a comparative reading of the three case study results in order to address the main research questions and highlight trends and singularities that could have general value in the framework of this project.

3.2 Vila-franca del Penedès

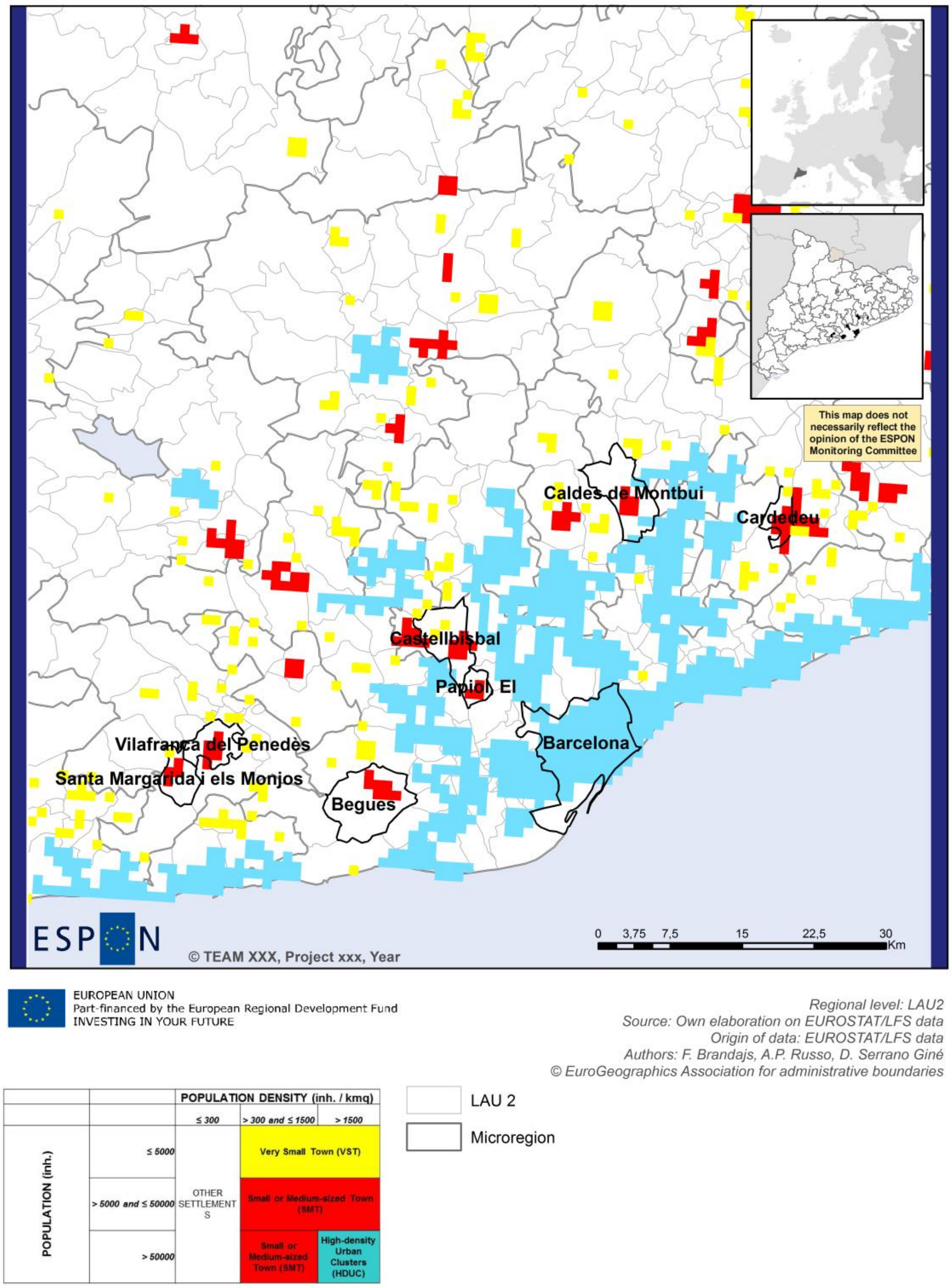
3.2.1 Presentation

The microregion of Vilafranca del Penedès (henceforth: MR-VdP) as identified in the functional analysis of Ch. 2 is situated to the northeast of Barcelona. In 2011 this microregion counted 75.895 inhabitants, which represents the 1% of the total Catalan population. In spite of its small size, this area is a node of reference of a productive system integrated around the production of wines as the Catalan champagne (*cava*). The historical importance of this sector combines with a diversified economy, something especially evident in its main employment centre, the city of Vilafranca del Penedès, which plays a key role as commercial centre and communication node for the entire area. Vilafranca del Penedès is the capital and an important economic centre of the Alt Penedès county and its border areas. It belongs to the Province of Barcelona and to the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona. This city experienced strong growth in the 1950-1981 period, with the implantation of different industries, among which the wine and cava sector, and today is one of the major intermediate cities in Catalonia, a commercial and economic hub with good road communications which bring it close to major cities in Catalonia and the State.

This medium sized town is covered by a morphological unit as from the analysis of RA2 with the characteristic of a SMST with a population of 35,877 inhabitants in 2001, and a population density of 5979,5 inh. per sq.km., classifying it as a “medium SMST” from the third urban settlement typology introduced in RA2 and a “high-density SMST” according to the fourth. In this microregion, another SMST polygon was identified (a small and medium-density SMST of 5.512 inhabitants and 1.378 inhabitants per sq.km.), covering the municipal area of Santa Margarida i els Monjos (and fractioned in various settlement nuclei), which, as will be discussed in the following pages, is distinctively oriented to a productive economy.

According to the analysis carried out in the previous chapters, the Vilafranca del Penedès is associated, in a hierarchical relation, with Barcelona, whose own microregion (henceforth: MR-BCN) corresponds roughly in shape and number of municipalities with the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. Within the larger metropolitan region of which Vilafranca and its MR are part (see Figure 3.2), Vilafranca shows an intense "urban relation" in the first place with the city of Barcelona.

Figure 3.2 - The microregions of Vilafranca del Penedès and of Barcelona: morphological structure of main urban settlements



Thus this case study will compare the main trends in Vilafranca del Penedès in its microregional context, with that of the Barcelona microregion. We'll also benchmark Vilafranca del Penedès against other municipal centres that configure as SMST from the morphological analysis (S. Margarida i els Monjos in the MR-VdP; Caldes de Montbui, Cardedeu, Castellbisbal, Begues and El Papiol in the MR-BCN). Figure 3.2 illustrates the key spatial dimensions of this case study area.

3.2.2 Demographic profile

In 2011 the MR-VdP counted 75.895 inhabitants, distributed in 21 municipalities. Half of the population concentrates in the MR centre, the town of Vilafranca del Penedès. The next town in importance in Santa Margarida i els Monjos, even if its weight in the total MR is far below that of Vilafranca. The rest of the municipalities are small, ranging between 300 and 2.500 inhabitants, and include (completely or sections of) other 12 "very small towns" according to the RA2 typology. The centrality of Vilafranca in its MR has slightly decreased between 2001 and 2011: even if Vilafranca del Penedès has gained 7.591 inhabitants in the period 2001-2011, the rest of the MR has gained globally more than 10.000, being especially relevant the growth of Santa Margarida i els Monjos (41%). The entire MR has shown a 30% population growth in the period considered, a much higher rate than the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (12%), but similar to the other SMST identified in that MR.

The central city of the MR-VdP also exhibits a similar pattern to Barcelona: they both lose "centrality" to their MR between 2001 and 2011, probably due to a suburbanization process which affects any central location of a functional area. Table 3.1 shows how both centres have decreased their weight in their MR during the reference period, while the rest of municipalities have increased it.

Table 3.1 - Population growth 2001-2011

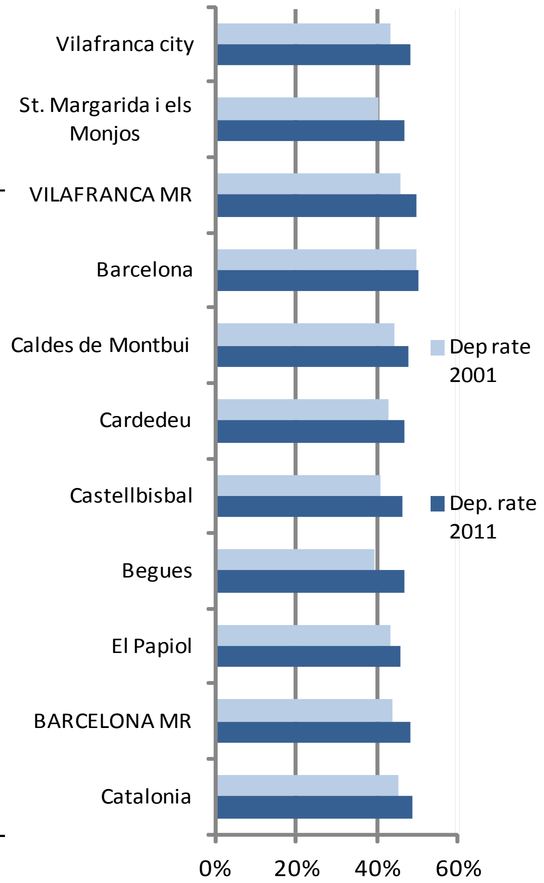
	2001	Weight in MR 2001	2011	Weight in MR 2011	Growth 2001-2011	Diference of weight over total MR
Vilafranca del Penedès	31.248	53,6%	38.839	51,2%	24%	-2,5%
Santa Margarida i els Monjos	5.042	8,7%	7.091	9,3%	41%	0,7%
VILAFRANCA MR	58.250	100%	75.895	100%	30%	
Barcelona city	1.503.884	45,2%	1.611.013	43,3%	7%	-1,9%
Caldes de Montbui	13.848	0,4%	17.192	0,5%	24%	0,0%
Cardedeu	12.792	0,4%	17.336	0,5%	36%	0,1%
Castellbisbal	9.128	0,3%	12.340	0,3%	35%	0,1%
Begues	4.697	0,1%	6.488	0,2%	38%	0,0%
El Papiol	3.314	0,1%	3.990	0,1%	20%	0,0%
BARCELONA MR	3.329.336	100%	3.718.965	100%	12%	
Catalonia	6.361.365		7.539.618		19%	

However, according to the interviews with local politicians, this tendency is somehow reverting since 2012; a certain recentralization is observed, especially interesting young local residents that had moved outside the city towards the smaller municipalities and are now returning to it looking for cheaper housing and reduced commuting costs.

The evolution of the dependency rates, as shown in Figure 3.3, provides further insight on the demographic performance of the case study area units. We observe an overall increase in the dependency rate between 2001 and 2011, yet the two MR centres illustrate quite a different trend: Barcelona is a big and mature city that experienced a slight increase of an already high dependency rate, while Vilafranca city's dependency rate has increased above its microregional average, stressing again its role as residential centre in the MR.

Figure 3.3 - Dependency rates MR-VdP, micro regional centres and polygons. 2001 and 2011

Dependency rate relative growth 2001-2011	
Vilafranca city	11%
St.Margarida i els Monjos	17%
VILAFRANCA MR	8%
Barcelona	1%
Caldes de Montbui	8%
Cardedeu	10%
Castellbisbal	14%
Begues	18,7%
EL Papiol	6%
BARCELONA MR	11%
Catalonia	8%

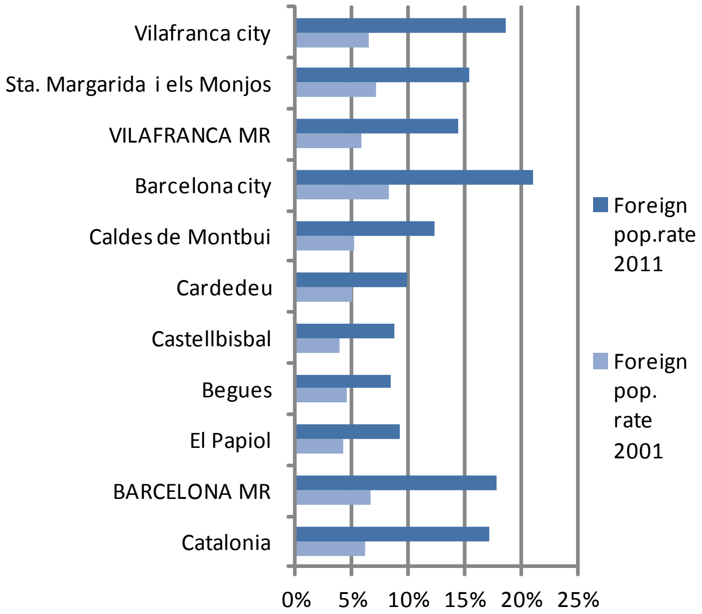


The demographic growth experienced by the MR-VdP can be attributed to the increase of the foreign population, which for the entire area more than triplicates between 2001 and 2011 (from 3.377 to 10.965 foreign residents). Their distribution has followed an opposite trend to that of the population as a whole, showing a tendency to further centralize in the centre of the MR. If in 2001 the 60% of the foreign residents of the entire MR were living in its central city, in 2011 this weight increases to 66%, while the rest of municipalities show a similar concentration of foreigners over the total compared to 2001. Nevertheless, all cities of the MR show a remarkable increase in the number of foreign population between 2001 and 2011, a similar trend to the national context as a whole and especially to the MR-BCN. More recent trends, as stated by local actors, denote a loss of foreign population, a phenomenon also affecting Catalonia and Spain as a whole, due mainly to the loss of employment in most low-skill sectors brought about by the deepening of the economic crisis.

The majority of the foreigners living in the MR-VdP originate from non-western countries, not unlike the other area units considered. However, the internal composition of this foreign population differs substantially from the Catalan average and from the patterns in the MR-BCN and its SMST: half of it is of African origin (mostly Moroccans), mainly employed in the agricultural sector. The residents of South American nationalities account for the 22% of the total foreign population, below the figure of the MR-BCN.

Figure 3.4 - Weight of foreign population over total population and relative growth, 2001 and 2011

Foreign population relative growth 2001-2011	
Vilafranca city	180%
Sta. Margarida i els Monjos	166%
VILAFRANCA MR	116%
Barcelona city	87%
Caldes de Montbui	122%
Cardedeu	100%
Castellbisbal	134%
Begues	153%
El Papiol	149%
BARCELONA MR	114%
Catalonia	184%



The town of Vilafranca has an even higher proportion of African residents, and a lower proportion of South Americans, while the other SMST of the MR, Santa Margarida i els Monjos, is similar in this respect to the MR-BCN and its SMSTs, which is arguably related to the productive profile of their economies.

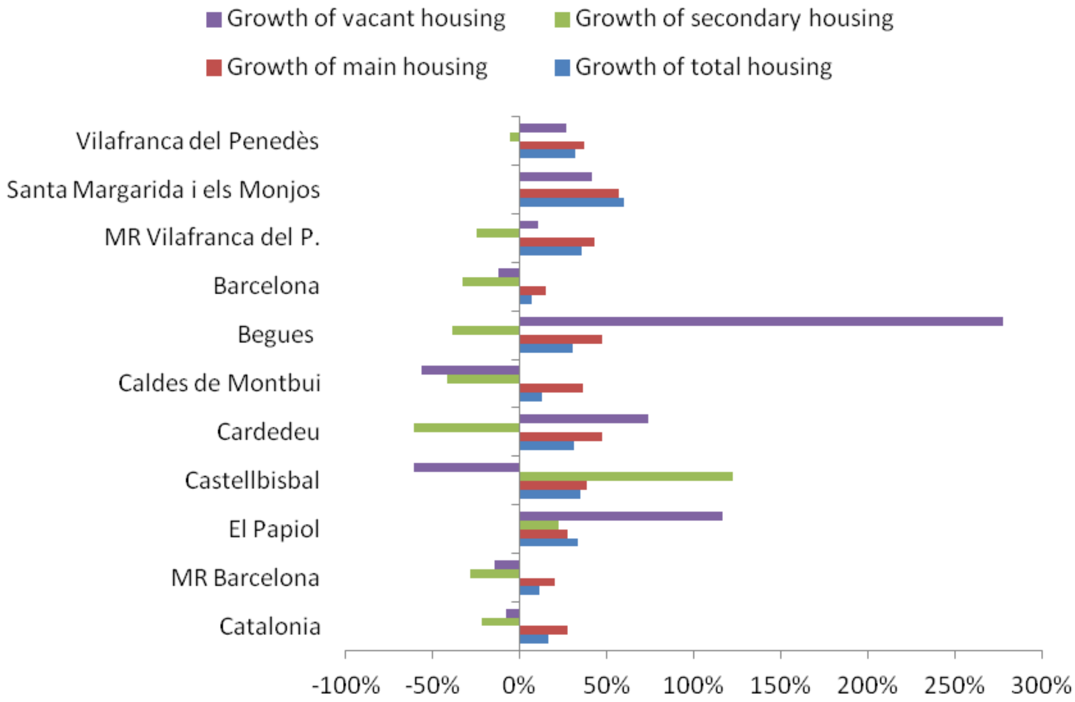
3.2.3 Housing

The evolution of the housing stock in the MR-VdP, and its comparison with the MR-BCN, complements the population profile of this case study. The two MR central cities concentrate half of the housing stock of their correspondent MR in 2011. Vilafranca also concentrates more than the half of all primary residences in its MR. A fact to emphasize is the high concentration of vacant homes in the centres in their own microregional context: Vilafranca del Penedès concentrates the 70% of them and Barcelona the 51%.

The evolution of the total housing stock between 2001-2011 (Figure 3.5) is positive for Catalonia (16,6%), for the Barcelona and MR-VdP and each centres and for the SMST polygons, which gives a hint of the housing bubble developing since the late 1990s and early 2000s. The housing stock increment for the MR-VdP reached a 35% rate, well above the MR-BCN (11%), while the growth rate of the stock in the town of Vilafranca more than quadruplicates the correspondent rate in the city of Barcelona.

Primary housing has grown at a higher pace than the total rate in all of the area units except in Santa Margarida i els Monjos and El Papiol, that shown large increases of the vacant housing. In Vilafranca primary housing grew by 42.7%, double than in Barcelona. The new houses are mainly concentrated in the centres of the MR. Vilafranca del Penedès city concentrated the 46% of the housing stock growth in its MR and Barcelona the 31% of its own. In relation to primary housing, the figures grow respectively to 47% and 37%. This shows that for every new inhabitant, 0.6 new homes were provided in this period in the town of Vilafranca as well as in its MR; this ratio is quite higher than in the MR-BCN (0.44) and in Catalonia (0.46).

Figure 3.5 - Housing structure evolution, 2001-2011 (growth rates)



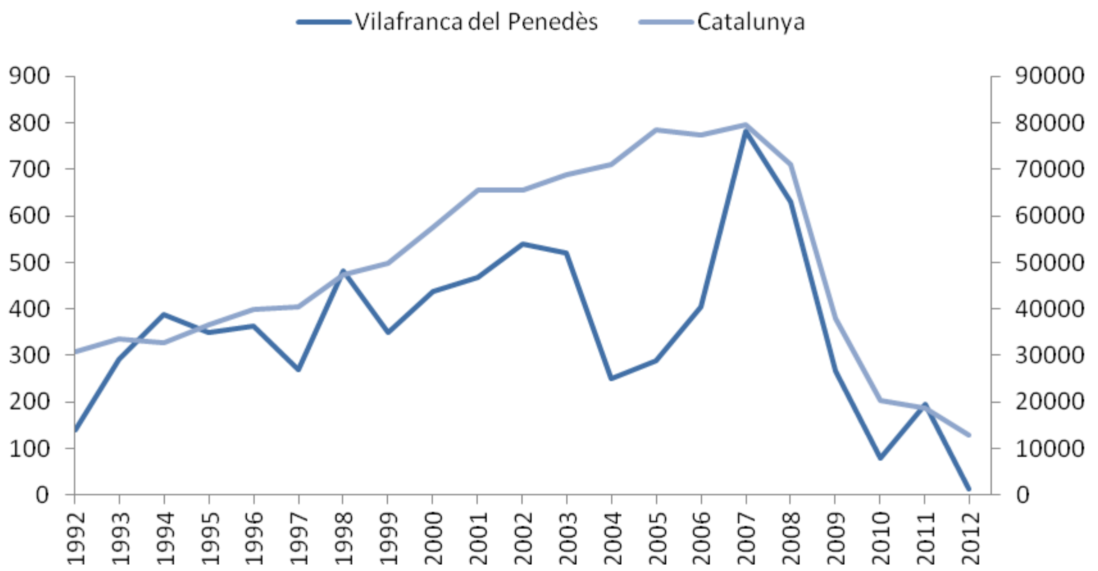
* Rate of growth for secondary housing at Santa Margarida i els Monjos is 833%, (in absolutes represents 100 units more) but data is excluded for exposure reasons.

In 2011, the housing stock structure is by and large similar in the two MRs and their centres, with more than two thirds of the stock used as primary housing, followed by vacant housing and finally by secondary residences. In other SMST polygons in both MRs there is a similar distribution (though in Castellbisbal and El Papiol secondary housing is higher than vacant housing). The proportion of primary housing in Catalonia was three fourths of the total housing in 2011, the same than in MR-VdP.

The main evolution trends for the housing structure observed in the case study area are an increase of primary housing, a decrease of secondary housing and variable scores for vacant housing. During the last decade primary housing increases its weight in all the SMST of the two MR, with an exception in Santa Margarida i els Monjos and El Papiol. Vacant homes reduce their share of the total in all SMST with the exception of three SMST situated in the Barcelona MR (El Papiol, Cardedeu and Begues).

The analysis of the annual evolution of built houses (Fig. 3.6) allows us to better understand the extent of the housing boom problem witnessed during the last decades and its drastic reversal from the year 2008 on. At the top of the bubble (2007) as much as 781 new houses were built in one year in Vilafranca del Penedès, a number that in 2012 drops to 12, while in Catalonia as a whole the figure drops from 79.580 to 13.003. This situation had a strong direct impact on the profile composition due its many direct and indirect linkages with other economic sectors.

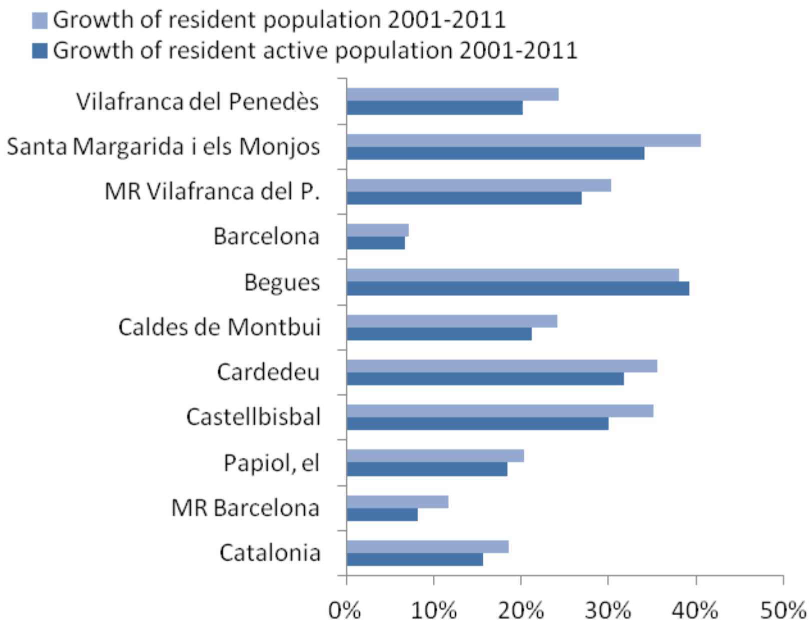
Figure 3.6 – Construction of new housing units, 1992-2012



3.2.4 Socio-economic characteristics

The working age population in the MR-VdP represented in 2011 67% of the total population, a rate similar to the Barcelona MR and most of the analysed SMST, with taxes between 67 and 68%. The evolution of this variable between 2001 and 2011 has been positive in the MR-VdP and in all other units, but we can find significant differences in its pace, ranging between the 7% of Barcelona and the almost 40% one a SMST like Begues. The growth of the working age population has been however lower than the increase of the total population in all cases except the Begues one (Fig. 3.7).

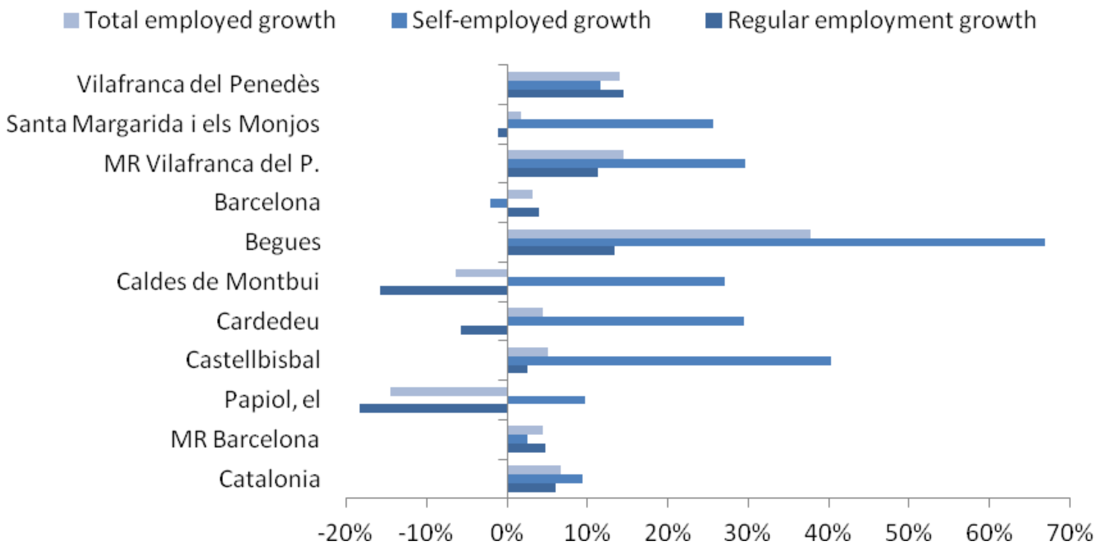
Figure 3.7 - Resident population & resident active population evolution, 2001-2011 (growth rate)



*The active population refers to the 15-64 years old population due to the lack of data.

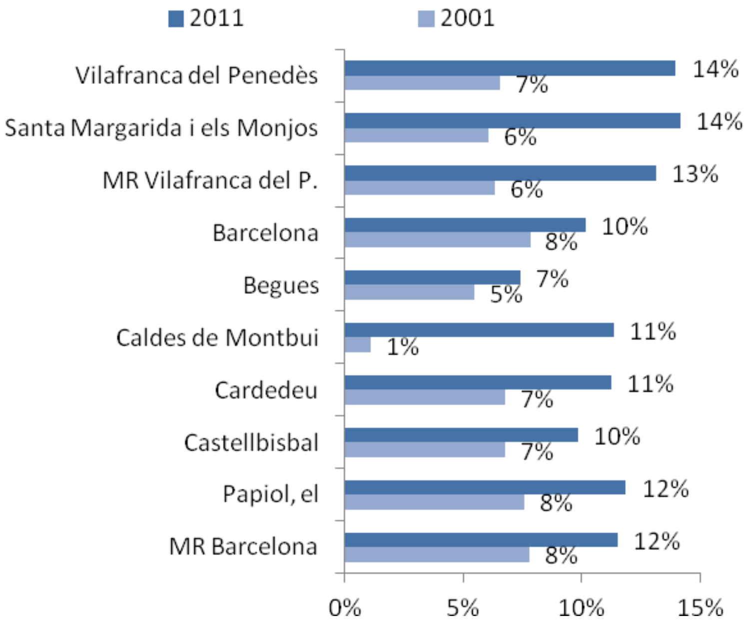
The increase of resident active population (15 to 64 years old population) has been, nonetheless, higher than the increase in the total resident employed (Social Security Affiliation data) in the period studied (Figure 3.8). In the MR-VdP, employment growth has been 14%, and it was higher in the MR centre than in the other SMST polygon (S. Margarida i els Monjos). This MR, however, shows a better performance in employment growth (14.5%) than in the MR-BCN (4%), where some SMST even exhibit negative growth, as Caldes de Montbui and El Papiol. Of the total employment created between 2001 and 2011, it is self-employment that stands out with the most significant increases in most area units. In the MR-VdP it is noteworthy that S. Margarida, which has witnessed the lowest employment increase of the two SMST, has, nonetheless, the highest increase in self-employment. This could be explained by those who remained unemployed when large establishments closed down and choose self-employment as their only job opportunity in a period of heavy economic crisis. Moreover, self-employment has also been enhanced by policies that made it possible to capitalize the unemployment subsidy. On the contrary, Vilafranca shows a more equilibrated growth of self-employed and regular employment, probably due to the commercial and public administration occupations, something that will be explored in more detail when analysing the productive profiles.

Figure 3.8 - Employment evolution (Social Security Affiliation), 2001-2011 (growth rate)



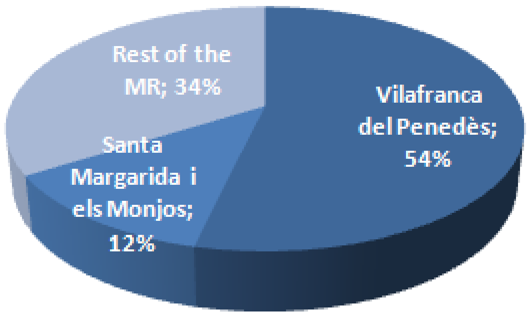
The impact of the economic crisis was in any case visible already in 2011, as shown by the important increase in the proportion of the unemployed over the working-age population between 2001 and 2011. Both MRs have these ratios above the 10%, being slightly higher in the MR-VdP and its SMSTs than in those of the MR-BCN, something related to the fact that Barcelona is the most dynamic labour market of Catalonia. In any case, both MRs had in 2011 lower unemployment rates than Catalonia as a whole (20%), which is a sign of their relative economic dynamism.

Figure 3.9 - Unemployment/Resident active population, 15-64 evolution, 2001 and 2011.



Leaving aside the impact of the economic crisis, it could be argued that the MR-VdP has a relatively equilibrated labour market. In the following data, based on the 2001 Census[4], the town of Vilafranca concentrates almost 54% of all the jobs in the MR, a percentage very similar to its weight in population terms. On the contrary, S. Margarida concentrates relatively more jobs (12.4%) than population (9%), indicating again its role as a productive centre.

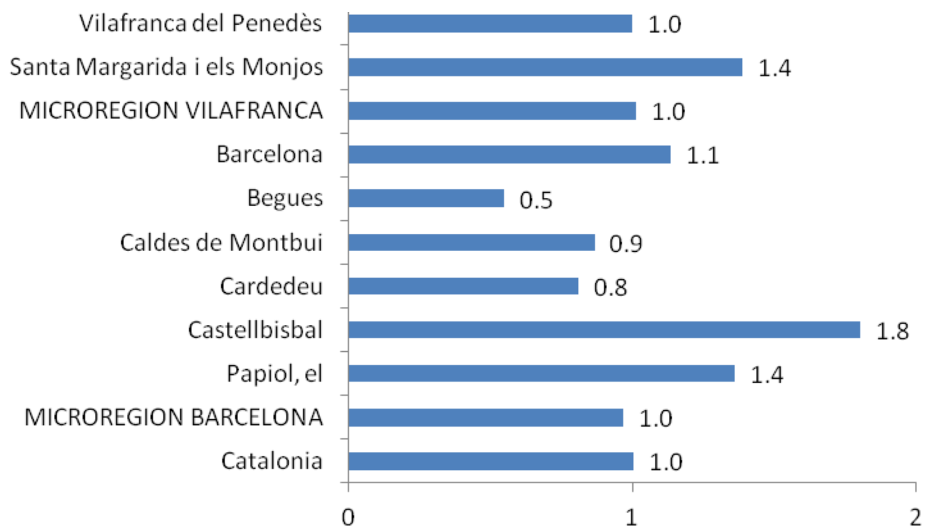
Figure 3.10 - Jobs distribution in Vilafranca MR, 2001



This is further confirmed when analysing the employment-residence ratio, which is next to 1 in the case of Vilafranca (indicating similar numbers of jobs and the employed residents) but is higher in S. Margarida. In fact, according to one of the interviewed stakeholders many residents of Vilafranca work in neighbouring municipalities where most industrial lots are located. In the MR-BCN, on the contrary, the central city has more jobs than employed residents, as happens in other productive nodes as Castellbisbal, while the MR as a whole tends to be more residential than productive oriented.

[4] 2011 Census data is not available in the moment of elaboration of this case study.

Figure 3.11 - Employment-residence (E-R) ratio[5], 2001



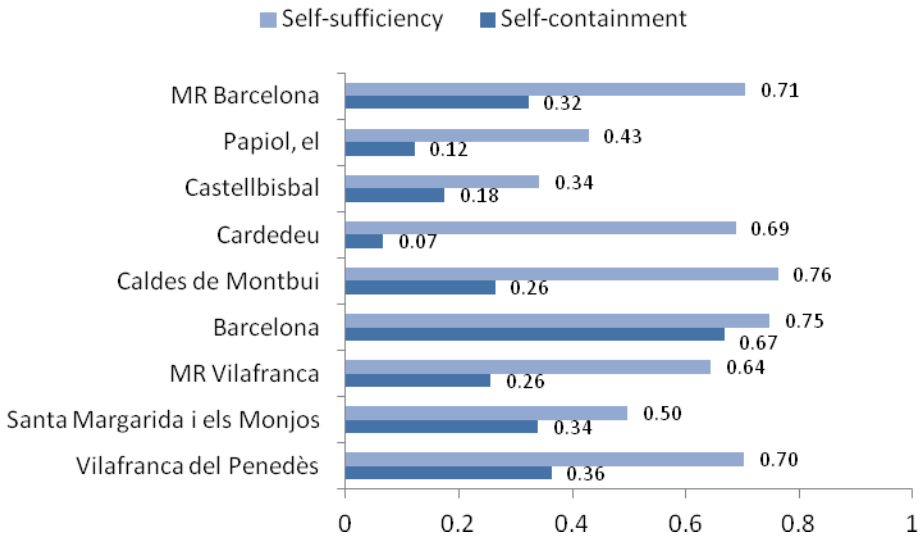
The self-containment index for the MR-VdP (0.26) is smaller than its associated MR Barcelona (0.32). Nevertheless, the town of Vilafranca has a greater self-containment index (0.36) than the others area units with the exception of the city of Barcelona. Auto-contention is slightly higher in Vilafranca (0.36) than in Santa Margarida i els Monjos (0.34) (Fig. 3.12). The share of local employment covered by local residents in the MR-VdP (0.64) is smaller than in the MR-BCN. The town of Vilafranca has a very high self-sufficiency index (0.70) - similar to that of the MR-BCN (0.71) but smaller than Barcelona city (0.75). In S. Margarida the proportion of residents who work in other municipalities is higher than in Vilafranca.

The high self-sufficiency index is confirmed by the daily mobility data[6]. In Vilafranca, 67% of the residents' mobility is intra-municipal, while the remaining 30% corresponds to mobility outside the municipality, mainly to other areas of the same county (54% to Alt Penedès) and to Barcelona city (18.6%). Inside the county, two of the main destinations correspond to the centre of the other MR identified in the area, Sant Sadurní d'Anoia (7.6%), the town Olèrdola (9.6%) and the other SMST of the MR-VdP, S. Margarida (7.3%). The Tarragona area is an important destination for the remaining mobility. Most of the mobility is attributed to work-related commuting, and is drastically reduced during weekends. Most commuters use private transportation, especially those working in industrial areas where public transportation is scarce. This problem has been highlighted by local stakeholders and is being addressed in policy documents as the Mobility Plan of Vilafranca del Penedès as well as others with a regional scope, which will be illustrated in 3.2.6.

[5] Number of jobs in LAU2/Employed economically active population living in LAU2.

[6] Data from the Daily Mobility Survey (EMQ in its Catalan name) of the year 2006. This survey covers the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona.

Figure 3.12 – Self-sufficiency and self-containment indexes of the labour markets[7], 2001



3.2.5 Economic structure and evolution

Comparing between different economic profiles across time has important methodological problems: on one side, the difficulty to separate the NACE sector groups to be included in each profile, because of the insufficient disaggregation of the social security affiliation data, especially for municipalities with less than 4,000 inhabitants; on the other, the NACE codification change between 2005 (NACE1993) and 2011 (NACE2009), that makes the correspondence between classifications inaccurate at higher levels of disaggregation. The creative & knowledge-based profile is the most affected by the comparative methodology, thus its weight is not exactly representative of the profile definition, especially in the years before 2011 and for 2011 in municipalities below 4,000 inhabitants. The 2011 data, with the new classification NACE2009 allows a better approximation to the profiles.

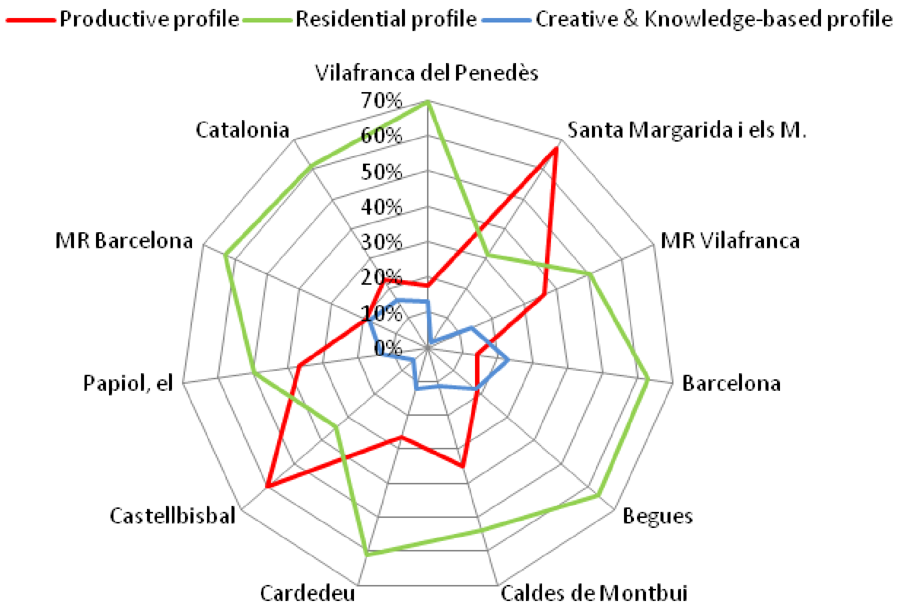
Only two (Vilafranca del Penedès and S. Margarida i els Monjos) of the twenty-one municipalities of the MR-VdP have disaggregated social security affiliation data. Therefore for small municipalities we make a gross approximation of the three profiles from the basic disaggregation in agriculture, industry, construction, services, applying the weights of the sub-sectors (NACE divisions) at the respective provincial level to each municipality.

The town of Vilafranca can be classified as a "pure" residential economy, with a 69% of the labour force working in the sectors aggregated in this profile (see Fig. 3.13). This weight is above the average of Catalonia (61%) and above all area units compared here. The MR-VdP also can be classified as a primarily residential economy (50% of the total labour) however with less intensity than its own centre and with a significant weight of the productive sector (36%). The importance of the residential sector in Vilafranca is also more significant than in the city of Barcelona (63%). Both centres of the Barcelona and Vilafranca MR have the residential economy as the main profile, but its weight is greater in Vilafranca than in Barcelona. Whereas in Vilafranca the second profile in importance is the productive one (18% of total economy employment), in Barcelona the creative and knowledge-based comes second with 23%. The creative and knowledge-based profile at Vilafranca del Penedès (13% of the labour force) is slightly smaller but close to the average weight for Catalonia (16%), and it is in line with this weight at the others SMSTs in the MR-BCN.

[7] Self-contention is the share of resident that also work in the same municipality. Self-sufficiency is the share of local employment covered by local residents.

It is possible to conclude that the town of Vilafranca has a very different economy than the other SMSTs in this MR (S. Margarida i els Monjos), a distinctively productive town with 67% of the labour force working in those sectors. Vilafranca has a more similar profile structure to Barcelona than to S. Margarida. The comparison of the whole MR-VdP with the associated MR-BCN suffers from statistical inaccuracy, since not all the municipalities of each region have disaggregated sector data. Bearing in mind that situation, it is possible to say that in the MR-VdP the creative profile has a smaller weight (11%) than in the MR-BCN, with a difference of eight percentage points. This difference hints at a larger residential sector in the MR-VdP.

Figure 3.13 - Employment distribution by profiles, 2011

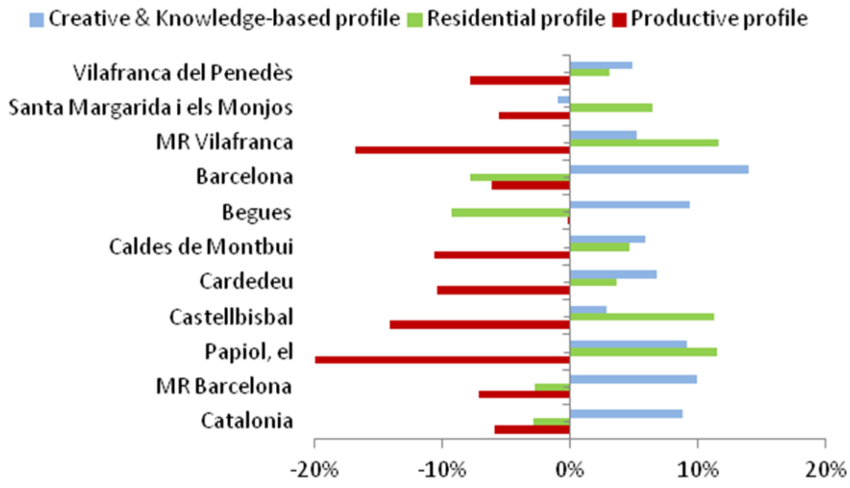


Source: Social security affiliation data, December 2011.

Figure 3.14 captures the evolution of these profiles (with all the methodological issues cited above duly taken into account). At the beginning of the period the town of Vilafranca already had a residential profile but with a slightly lower weight (66% of the labour force). The main change during the 2001-2011 period is that the productive sector lost eight points, offset by the increases in the residential profile (3 percent points) and the creative and knowledge-based profile (6 percent points). On the other hand, the trend in the MR-VdP coincides with that of its centre in that the residential sector increases its importance, but with a more pronounced reduction in the productive sector (- 17 percentage points).

In the same period, the MR-BCN saw a reduction of the residential and productive profiles (7 points) in favour of creative and knowledge-based sector. Therefore, Vilafranca and its MR had a different evolution from its associated MR and its centre. The residential profile rose in the MR-VdP 12 percentage points, whereas it declined in the MR-BCN by 3 percentage points. On the other hand, the town of Vilafranca had a similar evolution than S. Margarida i els Monjos with respect to their productive (reduction) and residential (increment) profiles, but with a different evolution in the creative and knowledge-based profile, that decreased in S. Margarida.

Figure 3.14 - Change in weights of employment profile structure, 2001-2011



Source: Social security affiliation data, December 2001 & 2011.

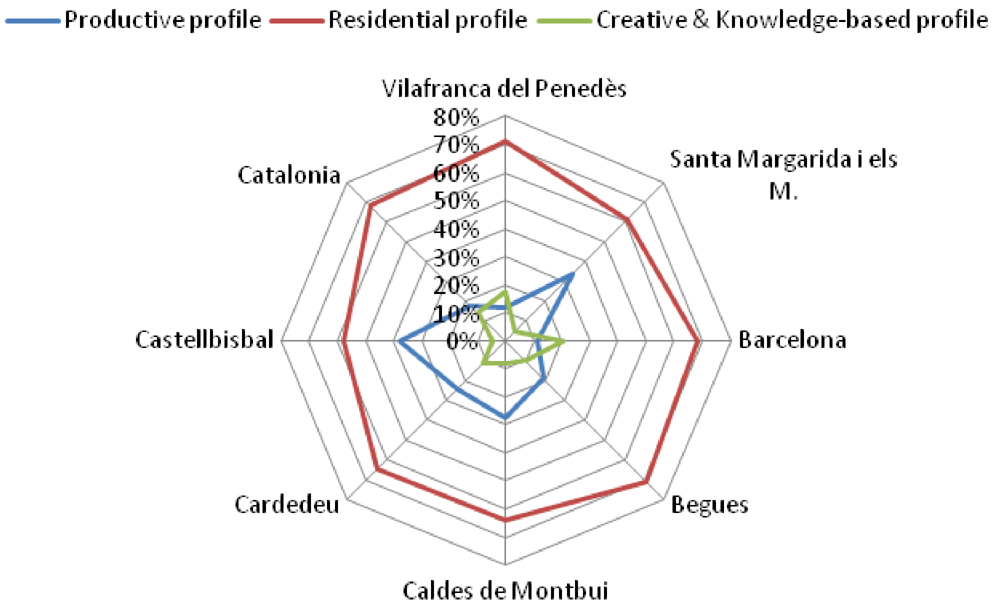
These trends compare with an increment of the creative and knowledge-based profile (9 percentage points) and a reduction of the others profiles (-6% points the productive, and -3% points the residential) in Catalonia as a whole. The main trends for the 2001-2011 period in the case study area units are an increase in sectors related with the creative profile, a reduction in the productive sectors, and varying scores for the residential profile.

From the point of view of the companies (Figure 3.15), the town of Vilafranca strengthens its residential profile with 71% of the companies belonging to this sector. The second sector is the creative knowledge-based sector (17%) and the last is the productive sector (12%). This order is different from average Catalonia where the main sector is residential (68%) but the second (18%) and the third are productive and creative (14%).

The profile of the town of Vilafranca is thus clearly residential, based on the local demand of residents and tourists. Landscape and the culture of wine, heritage (winery tours, tastings), popular culture (*castellers,* the human towers) and quality of life are the main attractions of the city and its area of influence, which is complemented with good accessibility to the metropolitan area of Barcelona, with several road and rail infrastructure and good quality and quantity of services provision. Likewise, Vilafranca del Penedès as the county capital provides services to surrounding municipalities, especially education, health, financial services, administration (public and private) and retail trade. These features make Vilafranca and its MR an attractive site for residents and tourists. The town of Vilafranca provides most services (67% of the labour force of the MR in the service sectors works in Vilafranca) and the rest of the municipalities in the MR provide the landscape and the raw material for wine culture: the 85% of the agriculture sector and the 75% of the employed in the industrial sector works outside the MR centre. Vilafranca's role as a service provider for its inhabitants and for the other municipalities in the Alt Penedès county has been highlighted by local actors as one of the strengths of the city.

If we compare the weights of the following subsectors in total employment for 2011 we obtain almost the same percentages for each one (10%): a) "residential" administrative -activities of public administration and administrative support-; b) "residential" family -activities in health, social work and real estate; c) "residential" creative- activities in accommodation and food services, art, entertainment, and information and communications. These proportions corroborate the residential character of the economy of Vilafranca. Besides, the wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles subsector is the biggest employer with 29% of the economy jobs. Financial and insurance activities have great importance in the town (21% of the labour force) but this might be influenced by a statistical bias problem that assigns social security affiliates to the site where the company headquarters are located; thus, the regionally relevant 'Caixa Penedès' bank, headquartered in Vilafranca, overestimates this figure.

Figure 3.15 - Firm distribution by profiles, 2011



Source: Social security affiliation data, December 2011.

This characterization is similar to the other SMSTs in the MR-BCN but differs from that of S. Margarida i els Monjos, where the productive profile dominates the economy, and the weight of residential-family and residential- administrative subsectors is approximately 5% each. The city of Barcelona has more important residential-administrative and residential-creative subsectors. The productive sector is mainly constituted by manufacturing industries that account for 79% and 94% of the labour force respectively of the productive profiles of Vilafranca and Santa Margarida. This weight is similar in the three SMSTs in the MR-BCN (Caldes de Montbui, Cardedeu, Castellbisbal) but lower for Barcelona and Begues where manufacturing represents only the half of the productive sector.

Within the sectors belonging to the creative and knowledge-based profile the professional scientific and technical activities and education stand out in the MR-VdP and its SMSTs: both sectors represent around the 70% of the total creative and knowledge-based labour force, teh same figures registered in the SMSTs of the MR-BCN. In the town of Vilafranca, the arts, entertainment and recreation sector also has an important weight (17% of the labour force of the creative sector) also, surprisingly, in comparison with Barcelona where this occupies the 11% of the labour force of the creative sector. Instead, the information and communication sub-sector is larger in Barcelona (22% of the creative and knowledge based profile) than in Vilafranca (12%).

When trying to detect the degree of dynamism of the different economic sectors, in terms of employment generation we face two problems, one related with the economic situation and the other related with the lack of statistical data. The financial and economic crisis taking place in Catalonia and Spain since 2008 has significantly reduced absolute employment in all sectors as well as the number of companies, which makes it difficult to distinguish how many jobs have been lost as a direct result of the crisis and how many as a result of a restructuring or downsizing of the different sectors. Indeed, the latest data from total social security affiliation in Catalonia (march 2013) are similar to those of 2000 (the last 10 years are being called for the economists “the lost decade”), while in Vilafranca the latest data for total social security affiliation was 13,582, quite similar for the 2001 data with 13,077. For all Catalonia, the increase in the number of total employees (social security affiliation) has been only 6.7% for the period 2001-2011. Moreover, due to the lack of suitably disaggregated data the creative sector is underestimated in year 2001, so that the 2001-2011 evolution of this profile is likely to be overestimated.

Table 3.2 shows how the creative sector has experienced an important growth (more than 100%) during the last decade in all the area units considered, while the productive sector has a decrease with different significant variations according to the area concerned. The residential sector of the MR-VdP and its centre exhibits positive growth rates, the opposite of the MR-BCN and its centre. It is worth noting that the residential economic profile has risen, even though the construction industry is part of this profile. In the town of Vilafranca, the construction sector has lost as much as three points of its weight in total employment between 2005 and 2011.

Table 3.2- Evolution of employment by profiles, 2001-2011 (growth rate)

	Productive profile	Residential profile	Creative & Knowledge-based profile
Vilafranca del Penedès	-10%	2%	138%
Santa Margarida i els Monjos	-8%	7%	157%
MR Vilafranca del P.	**-6%**	**9%**	**159%**
Barcelona	-23%	-5%	119%
Begues	26%	20%	168%
Caldes de Montbui	-30%	-2%	132%
Cardedeu	-28%	-1%	167%
Castellbisbal	-26%	54%	272%
Papiol, el	-48%	6%	161%
MR Barcelona	**-25%**	**-1%**	**130%**
Catalonia	-18%	0%	136%

Source: Social security affiliation data, December 2001 & 2011.

The evolution of the economic structure (2001-2011) based on the classic disaggregation in 4 economic sectors (labour force) shows increments for the agriculture sector in all municipalities of the MR-VdP, giving evidence of the growth strategy of the region linked to wine and wine tourism. Some small towns have multiplied by six and even by ten the number of workers in the agricultural sector. This sector has increased its participation in the labour market in 20 of the 21 municipalities of the MR. The construction and industry sectors are those who have suffered most from the effects of the current crisis, which is reflected in the loss of weight of both sectors in the vast majority of municipalities in the

MR. On the other hand, the service sector increases the proportion of workers in total labour force at 19 of the 21 MR municipalities during the studied period.

The agricultural sector has not grown in the “metropolitan” MR-BCN as in Vilafranca. However some of its SMSTs show positives growth rates for the employment in this sector. With few exceptions the growth rates for industry and construction are negative in all the case study area units. The industrial and construction sector have lower decrease rates in the MR-VdP (-14% and -18% respectively) than in the MR-BCN (-38% and -23% respectively), and the rate of growth in services is higher in the MR-VdP (38% and 20% respectively). This can be the sign of a better performance of the MR-VdP in front of the economic crisis than in the MR-BCN, a larger and more urban region.

Figure 3.16 - Evolution of total employed by sectors, 2001-2011

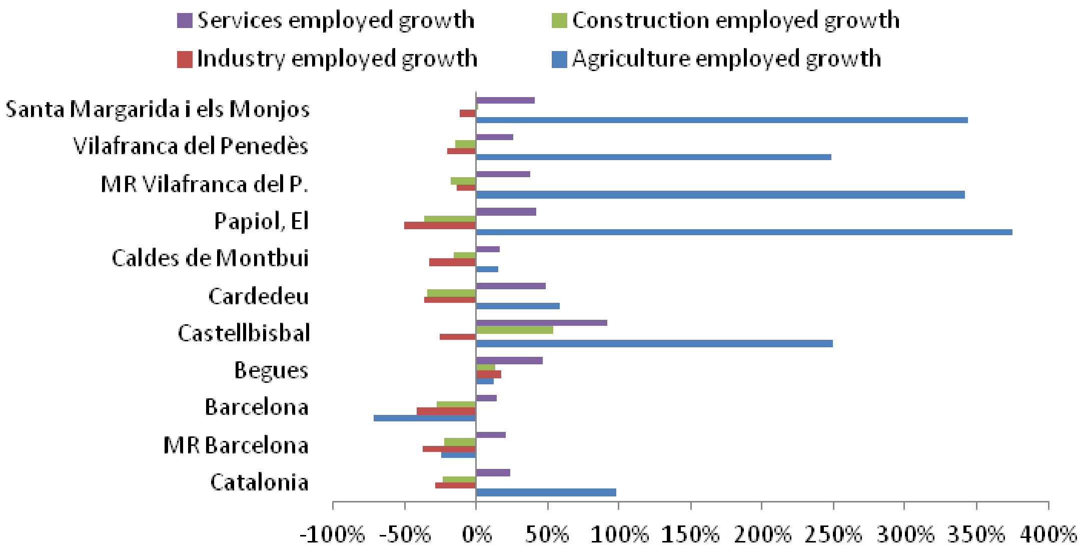
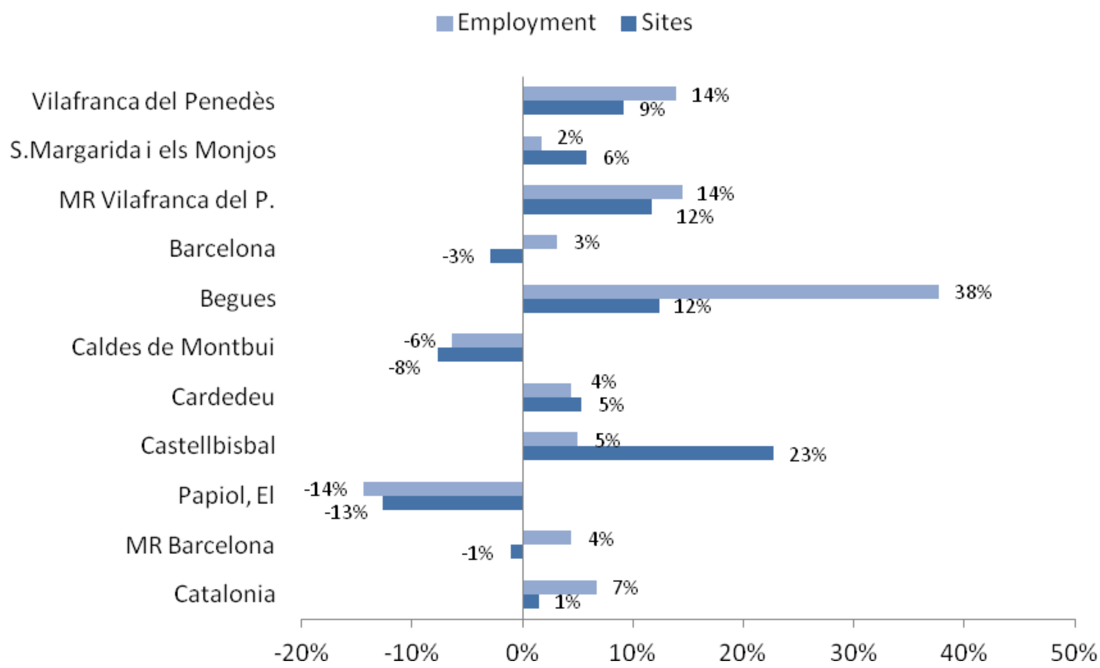


Figure 3.17 - Evolution of affiliation centres and total employment, 2001-2011 (growth rates)

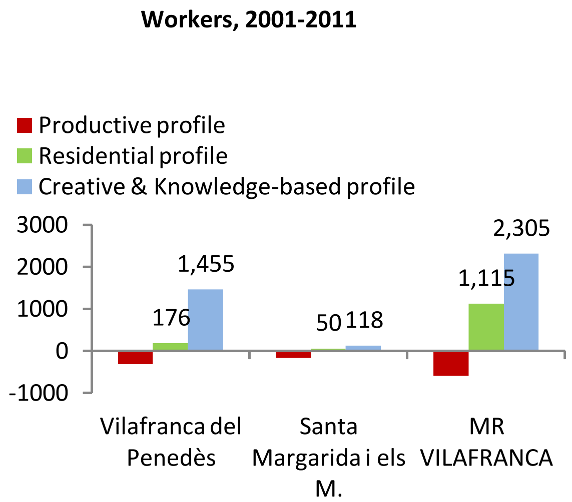


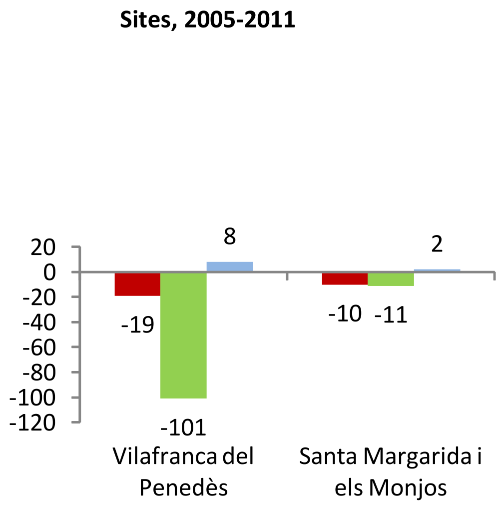
The town of Vilafranca exhibits a sharper decline in industrial employment (-21%) and a lower rate of growth of the service sector with respect to its MR (26%). The majority of the SMST in the MR-BCN decreased more than Vilafranca in terms of employment in the industrial and construction sectors. S. Margarida, unlike Vilafranca, has positive employment growth rates in all sectors except manufacturing. Growth rates in S. Margarida present a better performance than those of Vilafranca, in the sense that the services have grown more and industry had a less pronounced decline.

The MR-VdP and its central town show a better performance than the MR-BCN and the city due to the growth rates of employment and number of firms in the former in the 2001- 2011 period (+14% and +9% respectively in Vilafranca versus +3% and -3% in Barcelona). The economic sectors associated with creative and knowledge-based profile are the ones with the highest increase in the number of workers (2,305 new jobs in the MR-VdP, the majority located in Vilafranca) during the 2001-2011 period. The second most dynamic profile is the residential one with 1,115 new jobs in the whole MR-VdP.

The available data do not allow the calculation of the annual rate of newly created firms in the three profiles for the period 2001-2011. Therefore, we have done this exercise for the period 2005-2011 bearing in mind the important limitation that the crisis started in the middle of this period. The creative and knowledge-based sectors seem to have a relative dynamism despite the crisis, with the creation of a sizeable number of new companies in the two SMSTs of the MR-VdP, while the other two profiles exhibit business destruction. If we focus on the four broader sectors only the agricultural sector in Vilafranca and the services sector in S. Margarida achieve a net increase in the number of firms, while the rest of the sectors in the SMST of both the Vilafranca and Barcelona MRs experience a reduction of firms. The number of service companies in Vilafranca remained constant, demonstrating that in spite of the crisis this town maintained its role as service provider to its MR.

Figure 3.18 - Employment & firms by profile, absolute increments





With the exception of the agricultural sector in the town of Vilafranca, where the number of firms remains constant, all other sectors reduced the number of enterprises per 1,000 inhabitants in the period 2005-2011 (Table 3.3). The number of companies per capita was higher in Barcelona than in Vilafranca in 2005, and this difference remains more or less constant in 2011.

Table 3.3 – Production sites statistics

Production sites (affiliation centres), rate of change 2005-2011					
	Agriculture	**Industry**	**Construction**	**Services**	**Total**
Vilafranca del Penedès	14%	-29%	-39%	0%	-7%
Santa Margarida i els Monjos	-25%	-22%	-39%	10%	-10%
Barcelona	-57%	-41%	-15%	-5%	-8%
Caldes de Montbui	-29%	-26%	-39%	-12%	-19%
Cardedeu	-45%	-14%	-43%	-10%	-17%
Castellbisbal	-33%	-6%	-34%	-2%	-8%

Production sites (affiliation centres), Absolute values per 1,000 inhabitants, 2011					
	Agriculture	**Industry**	**Construction**	**Services**	**Total**
Vilafranca del Penedès	0.2	2.6	2.8	30.1	35.8
Santa Margarida i els Monjos	0.4	6.3	3.2	15.5	25.5
Barcelona	0.0	2.1	3.1	39.5	44.7
Caldes de Montbui	0.6	6.5	3.5	20.9	31.4
Cardedeu	0.3	5.4	3.8	19.9	29.5
Castellbisbal	0.2	12.6	4.4	24.4	41.5

3.2.6 Policy issues

From an administrative point of view, the towns that compose the MR-VdP belong mostly to a single county, Alt Penedès, which, in turn, belongs to the planning ambit of the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona. However, two of its towns belong to other counties, Alt Camp and Baix Penedès, which are part of another of the seven territorial areas that the Catalan Government settled in 2004 for spatial planning purposes. This reflects well enough how a functional area as this one has surpassed by far the administrative boundaries settled in Catalonia more than a century ago. Moreover, this MR has long advanced claims for the creation of a new territorial unit (*vegueria*)[8] and for the separation from the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona, to which it now officially belongs. This vegueria includes municipalities from 3 other counties, and would overlap with other MR identified in this project as those whose centres are S. Sadurní and Igualada. According to the defendants of the creation of the *vegueria* of Penedès, there are historical, geographical, cultural and economic reasons supporting the creation of this new spatial unit and the liberation of the municipalities from its current institutional divisions (the Metropolitan region of Barcelona and the Tarragona

[8] The veguería is a new territorial unit under political and administrative discussion for long time. They correspond to the seven spatial planning units approved by the Catalan Government in 2004, but some territories)as Penedès) claim boundaries that differ from those defended by the regional government.

area). Even if this is not still a reality, it shows the strength of the identity of the area, reinforcing the claim not to be “satellites serving the bigger metropolitan areas”. Partly due to these claims, in 2010 the Catalan government recognized that this area needed a specific spatial plan to set in order its growth in the near future, which resulted in the drafting and approval of the “*Pla Director Territorial de l’Alt Penedes*”.

Having in mind this complex framework, there are several planning initiatives that in recent years have affected the MR-VdP, which have been both the specific aim of the policy or part of the wider planning context, be it metropolitan or for the entire Catalonia. Table 3.4 below summarizes the current planning instruments that affect the area, by thematic area and institutional driver. Most such plans are hierarchically related, the PTMB encompassing all the others. This plan, approved in 2010, is one of the seven Spatial Plans that the Catalan Government approved between 2007 and 2010 in Catalonia to facilitate planning initiatives the region[9] regarding urban planning, infrastructure development and sectoral planning. Most of the proposals of this plan are gathered up in the above mentioned *Pla director territorial de l’Alt Penedès (PDAP)*, which also collects the proposals of the transport infrastructure plan of Catalonia, approved in 2006.

Table 3.4 – Main planning documents affecting the Vilafranca d. Penedès area

Name of plan /policy initiative	Thematic area	Driver	Relation with MR
Pla director territorial Alt Penedès	Spatial planning	Public - Catalan Government	Direct
PTMB Pla territorial metropolità de Barcelona	Spatial planning	Public - Catalan Government	Indirect
Programa Llei de Barris	Urban planning	Government and Municipality	Direct
Pla estratègic de l'Alt Penedès	Strategic planning: economy, territory, social	Partnership of local actors	Direct
Pla estratègic agrupació empresarial innovadora vitivinicola	Strategic planning	association /Vilafranca	Direct
Veguería del Penedès	Legal /Adminstrative	Public - civic society	Direct
Pla d'infraestructures de transporte de Catalunya PITC 2006-2026	Transport	Public -Catalan Government	Indirect
Agenda 21 Alt Penedès County	Environment	County	Direct
Pla de Mobilitat Urbana	Mobility	Municipality	Direct
Pla d'Ordenació Municipal de Vilafranca del Penedès	Urban planning	Municipality	Direct

Thus, the PDAP prices the specificities of the Penedès area within the Metropolitan region related with the strength of its agriculture activities, especially viticulture, and the important population growth experienced during the last years. This plan is positively appreciated by the local administration as they consider that it takes into account most of their claims, as for instance the protection of the open spaces and the landscape linked to the wineries. In fact, about 93% of the county land is currently protected, mostly as wine, forest and agricultural landscapes. However, this is not an “empty” region, but rather a transit area for the metropolitan area, for the rest of Catalonia and even internationally; it also suffers the pressure of residential and production sectors that does not always benefit directly the territory, the object of much concerns expressed in the interviews with local stakeholders,

[9] For more information on this plans, go to: http://www20.gencat.cat/portal/site/territori

who want to avoid Penedès becoming a “place of passage” where only low value-added economic activities remain rooted to the region. In fact, the PDAP defends that the future residential and economic growth of the area has to happen around the main communication infrastructures, the AP7 highway and the railway, and concretely around Vilafranca del Penedès and S. Sadurní d’Anoia, both identified as microregional centres in RA2. Besides these, only S. Margarida i els Monjos is allowed to have some residential growth in the area.

On the other hand, this MR has strong historical relations with other cities of what is known as the “transversal axis”, an arc connecting Granollers, Martorell, Mataró, Sabadell, Terrassa, Vilanova i la Geltrú at the outer edge of the metropolitan area of Barcelona; in this sense, the PDAP also insists in the improvement of the connectivity with the “arc cities”, both by road and railway. The plan states that most of the mobility generated by growth can be absorbed by train transportation, something that, however, can be questioned considering what has been executed out of the infrastructural proposals: the current economic crisis has paralysed some of the most ambitious plans, as the creation of a railway and highway connection between these cities.

Landscape and agriculture are, therefore, key aspects of the territorial identity of this place, and their strategic value is indeed also recognized for cultural, social and economic reasons, and defended by all local actors, from policymakers to private sector representatives. However, they also recognize the need of an efficient connectivity to the Barcelona metropolitan region and in fact different proposals of the PDAP (which are also included in the PITC) promote this aspect, with the improvement or enlargement of the regional highways connecting with the Barcelona area and the reconversion into an highway of the Mediterranean corridor which crosses through this region. However, the improvement of connectivity should happen with the least impact for the landscape, as this is a key aspect of their future growth strategy related to the ecological energy sector, the wine industry, wine tourism and popular culture. Such concerns are embedded in a vision of sustainable growth, and more specifically link together the development of the following initiatives:

- A thorough “wine landscape” economy, involving wine tasting, culture and heritage, museums and related tourism and knowledge sectors such as a graduate management program for wineries and wine establishments. A consortium to promote wine tourism has been created by the Vilafranca Town Council and the County Council of the Alt Penedès. Alt Penadès has received 480,000 visitors annually principally oriented to wine tourism. In conjunction to this, there is an effort to develop rural tourism through cottage accommodation.
- Green energy: The use of biomass from the vineyards to achieve an eco-label for the entire area, in addition to the denomination of origin Penedès. Processing the biomass from the vineyards for production of green energy is supposed to close the ecological cycle of wine production.
- Popular culture, which involves the “*castellers*” culture, the main festival of the town (“fiesta mayor”), and homemade gourmet pastry. The *castells* (human towers formed by men, women and children a tradition that goes back 400 years) have provided international visibility to the city, and are an important tourist attraction in occasions of actuations and rehearsals. The key local actors seek to use this brand to spur new business creation, as the development of coaching techniques based on *castellers’* values and techniques.
- Manufacturing industries are welcome but only if they do not require much physical space and do not disfigure the landscape.

Wine sector initiatives are thus the main current drivers of the policy initiatives in the area and have an important ecological dimension. The Alt Penedès county has three designations of origin (D.O.) and currently the 66% of the wine-cava production holds the title of ecological, with the goal of arriving to 100%. This would help to raise the price of wine products and to provide support and reinforcement to policies that maintain the landscape. The wine sector has been valued in different initiatives, many of them involving different public and private stakeholders. The Vinmuseum, for instance, is a wine museum created by private initiative in the 1930's that has become a public centre in 2011 with the collaboration of the local and Catalan administrations. The Catalan government also supports the INCAVI (Catalan Wine Institute) located in Vilafranca and devoted to the regulation and promotion of the wine sector in Catalonia. Another relevant initiative is the Strategic Plan of the Wine Business Association, a public-private partnership promoted by the city council that develops projects to increase the knowledge of the wine market and consumers, to promote energy efficiency in wine production and to support the promotion of the Penedès brand.

In conclusion, as a local authority expressed, a successful small/medium town should be capable of taking advantage of new technological advances, such as new information, communication and education technologies, without being overly dependent on the large city to which it is linked. In this sense, they consider that Vilafranca del Penedès and the other municipalities in this MR have done well to foster a "smart rural economy" based on the local identity values and brands, and to maintain at the same time a good relationship with the Barcelona metropolitan region avoiding a situation of dependency.

The local agents are convinced that the actions that have been carried out to defend their vision have been effective, also thanks to the strong leadership capacity of the municipal government of Vilafranca. This town and its region of influence has managed to protect the territory more than neighbouring counties as Baix Penedès, and has been able to make its claims heard by the regional government. The strong cohesion between the different towns in the MR is articulated through various formal and informal networks to which the different municipalities in the county (and in the MR) are part. Interviewed stakeholders highlight the role of the Alt Penedès County Council and the consortium for wine tourism as two important institutions that lead territorial promotion and push towards the achievement of the strategic objectives[10], besides the above mentioned ones.

European projects are another key instrument to achieve the strategic objectives of the region. They enabled investments not quantitatively important in terms of money, but with a great qualitative importance, principally related with training and education and the promotion of the wine sector. Economic funds for European projects are channelled through the government of Catalonia.

Vilafranca del Penedès is part of two networks of cities of wine, Spanish (ACEVIN) and European (RECEVIN), and is one of the main promoters of the creation of both networks. It also has headquarters and the representation of the General Secretariat of the European network, and this allows the territory to be recognized at European level as a reference wine territory. ACEVIN membership has been successful and has allowed that for three years Vilafranca del Penedès was the most visited site of the wine route in Spain. The stakeholders work for the internationalization of the territory, and they are currently developing an external projection plan in conjunction with the provincial government of Barcelona. Vilafranca del Penedès is currently involved in three EU projects related to youth exchange, energy self-sufficiency in the field of viticulture, and culture (culture program Euroregion

[10] The consortium for Promotion of Wine Tourism in the Alt Penedès includes Chambers of commerce from Reus, Valls, Tarragona y Tortosa; the university Rovira i Virgili; and the Consortiums of Denominations of Origin (DO) Conca de Barberà, Montsant, Priorat, Tarragona and Terra Alta, as well as a private consultant.

2013). The European project VINTUR completed in 2006 was the basis for planning and wine tourism in the territories in which they start promoting the wine routes. According to local agents, EU project consortia, as they respond to the strategic objectives of Vilafranca del Penedès, help to join forces and facilitate the mobilisation of internal and external resources.

Public-private collaboration is considered a must for the territory. In particular the 20 years-old Pro Penedès Foundation works for the economic and social development from the consensus between employers, trade unions and local government, in order to include all stakeholders in the growth of Alt Penedès. This foundation promotes the design of the third strategic plan for the Alt Penedès, leads projects related to the employment of people with disability, and promotes social responsibility practices of companies and municipalities. The foundation takes advantage of networking, coordination and partnership in order to find collocations and jobs for the collective objectives.

Besides these social policies, one of the most relevant policy initiatives affecting this area is the strategic planning. The first strategic plan goes back to the 1990s; currently, the third strategic plan is being elaborated, always with a strong involvement of local administrations, private sector and the civil society of the area. These strategic plans are highly effective and display a strong degree of consensus between the different stakeholders; in fact, the second strategic plan met all the objectives proposed, especially those related to landscape protection, committing all concerned agents to "landscape charters" promoting actions and strategies regarding landscape assessment and improvement. Others objectives fulfilled were related to good practices in wine valorisation and spatial planning (the strategic plan supported the above mentioned *Pla director territorial de l'Alt Penedès*).

The 3rd strategic plan shows important steps forward over the previous ones. On one hand, it involves a larger territory, extending to portions of the counties of Anoia, Garraf, Alt Penedès and Baix Penedès, and so recognizing the increasing complexity and functional relationships between these areas, spanning from sea to mountains. The main guideline for this 3rd strategic plan is to develop economic activities linked with the landscape, the beauty and heritage of a territory that, as explained above, surpasses administrative boundaries, and recognising that landscape protection and valorisation needs to include the neighbouring counties. The plan focuses on agriculture and the agro-food industry, beach and wine tourism, non-polluting industries and economic activities associated with culture (as the enhancement of the four counties' museums, the promotion of *castells* and their value as a unifying and dynamic element of the local society) and education, like the promotion of a master in higher education in conjunction with the University Rovira i Virgili.

The main strategic lines also include territorial balance and coordination, in order to be a single interlocutor with the government of Catalonia; the commitment to the brand Penedès, identifying it with cultural belonging and environmental values; the boost of the communications infrastructure, with new regional train stations and the improvement of commuter lines; the claim for a free toll system for the AP-7 and C-32 highways and the prevention of the construction of a new projected highway (A-7); the strong impetus to tourism related to coast, culture, industry and in particular wine. The new strategic plan also aims to promote the innovative character of the local industries, especially those linked with the auxiliary vehicles.

The activity of strategic planning is an illustration of the strong cohesion existing among the different municipalities of the area, including the MR-VdP, with the town of Vilafranca as a clear leader and fulfilling its role a service centre. From the interviews we proved that the degree of cooperation and collaboration between MR-VdP and the other MR in the area – S. Sadurní d'Anoia – is good and related with the specific issues affecting both regions, as described above. This unity also explains the “independence” of this area from the metropolitan region of Barcelona, with respect to which they exhibit a “love and hate” relationship. They are aware that being close to a big city is beneficial to them from the point of view of enjoying a large demand market of residents and tourists, but they do not want to be “eaten” by the centrality and mass of Barcelona. In fact, most plans described here are in large part conceived to deal with this contradiction (from the PDAP to the Urban Mobility Plan) and manage to achieve the desired equilibrium.

This situation is further helped by healthy local finances. Vilafranca del Penedès is one of the few municipalities in Catalonia that have a low municipal debt, and the MR as a whole has had an increase of its municipal budget of 16%, while in the Barcelona microregion the total budget available of all municipalities has decreased 40% between 2001 and 2010. In any case, local agents in Vilafranca consider that the Catalan government investment in the provision of infrastructures and services related to sports, health and education is not sufficient, as they are also used by citizens of smaller towns in the MR that have more facilities per capita than Vilafranca itself.

The plans and policies described here illustrate the effectiveness of partnerships in this MR both at inter-municipal and at multiagency level, with a strong shared vision and strategy, which is, without doubt the key element to its success. Moreover, this unity, the wine sector and its cultural identity serves also to position themselves at regional level, making their claims being heard more than in other similar territories in Catalonia.

<u>Interviewed local actors and stakeholders:</u>

Montse García i Sancho , Fundació ProPenedès (private sector).

Jordi Cuyas, former mayor from City Council Vilafranca del Penedès and responsible of Strategic Plan for the Penedès.

Carme Ribes International relations of the City Council Vilafranca del Penedès.

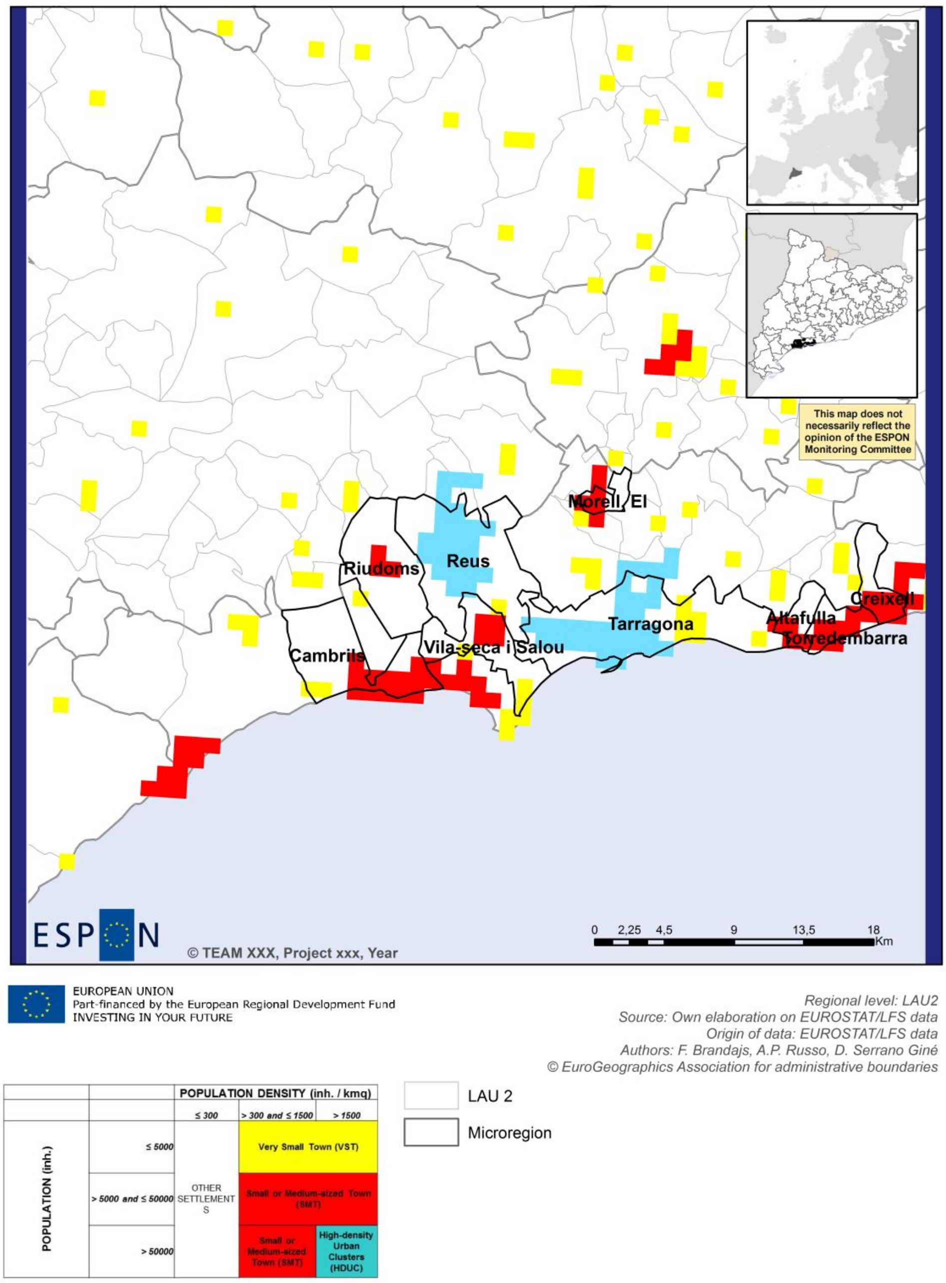
Josep Maria Carrera al Puente, director of Territorial Plan for Metropolitan Region of Barcelona.

3.3 Cambrils

3.3.1 Presentation

The MR of Cambrils (see Fig. 3.19), located in the Baix Camp county, is part of a "bicephalus" networked metropolitan system that includes also two HDUC, Tarragona and Reus. Even if it is a self-contained employment system, it is strongly related to the Tarragona area, being in a fact formal part of Camp de Tarragona spatial planning area with four other counties (Alt Camp, Conca de Barberà, Priorat and Tarragonès).

Figure 3.19 - Map of the microregion of Cambrils in its territorial context



Cambrils is located at the core of the Costa Dourada (Gold Coast), one of the main tourist destinations in Catalonia and the largest resort area in terms of accommodation capacity, with more than 100,000 hotel beds mainly located in the Cambrils-Salou-La Pineda urban strip. The MR of Cambrils is also part of the Tarragona province, an administrative division larger than the spatial planning area and with a strong role in the territory through its organ Diputació. The MR of Cambrils has a peculiarity, as its main centre, the town of Cambrils, almost entirely coincides with the MR extension, formed by this town and Vinyols i els Arcs, a small municipality which wedges into the central area of Cambrils.

The main municipality of the Cambrils MR, Cambrils, is divided into two continuous urban sectors united by a narrow stretch of 300 meters and covering an area of 35,2 km2. The northern block has an almost agricultural use and the southern block is formed by 2 subsectors: one is an infrastructure corridor (AP7, N340, TV-3141) intercalated with isolated urban centres and the second is the dense urban grid parallel to the coastal line. Cambrils is located in a strategic position within the Costa Dorada, at a short distance from other sites and towns of interest as Tarragona (Roman), Reus (Modernist), and Cistercian routes. According to the analysis done in previous chapters, the urban settlement of Cambrils is part of a SMST polygon that includes the urban centre of Salou, which is part of the Tarragona MR, but that has a strong relationship and continuity with Cambrils based mainly on their tourist infrastructure and brand. In this territorial context, aside from the two larger cities (HDUC polygons) of Reus and Tarragona, approximately coinciding with their municipal extension, we considered in our analysis also other urban settlements with similar morphologic characteristics (SMST polygons): Vila-seca (and its littoral section, La Pineda), which is also generally considered part of the Cambrils-Salou conurbation, and includes in its delimitation the major part of the theme park of Port Aventura; El Morell, an industrial town on the north of Tarragona; Riudoms, a community centred on agro-food production in the Reus MR; and the conurbation joining three towns characterised by smaller historical centres in the interior and touristic strips on the coast, Altafulla, Torredambarra and El Creixell on the east of Tarragona.

3.3.2 Demographic profile

In 2011 the Cambrils MR counted 35.096 inhabitants, 94% of which lived in the employment centre, the town of Cambrils. Thus, the behaviour and performance of this MR coincides to a very large extent to that of its centre. The dwellers of this area, however, increase between April and September, reaching a peak in August (112.809 persons), due to the presence of a large seasonal population. The area has witnessed a remarkable increase in its population between 2001 and 2011, three times higher than Catalonia as a whole and higher than its comparable MR of Tarragona and Reus. In fact, the Cambrils MR is more similar in terms of demographic growth to other polygons of the Tarragona microregion, namely Vila-seca and el Morell, probably following a similar pattern of suburbanization from the largest cities. According to the interviews, Cambrils has become a residential centre for the Reus area and also, to a lesser extent, to the Tarragona one. As can be seen in Table 3.5, only Tarragona city and Reus city (both centres of their respective MR) have lost population between 2001 and 2011.

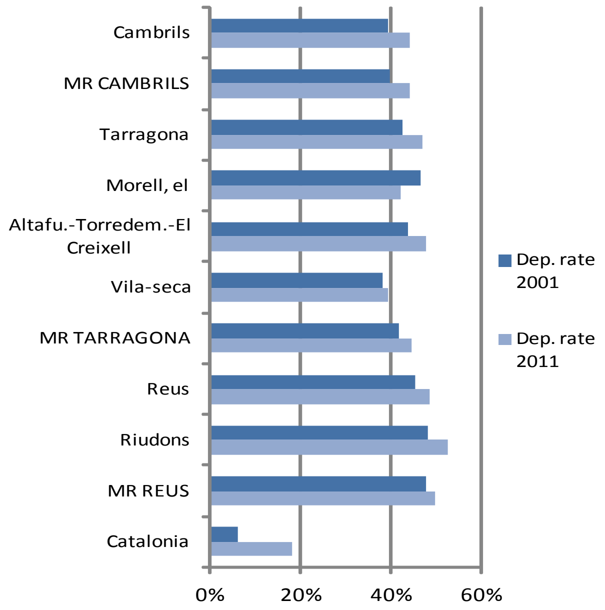
The dependency rate of this MR (Fig. 3.20) is one of the lowest in the areas compared (a little higher than 40% in 2011), even if it registered a remarkable increase between 2001 and 2011. This is the case in most of the areas considered here, and in Catalonia as a whole, due to the increase of the elder population more than to the increase of the young one. Only El Morell, a small municipality of the Tarragona MR shows a decrease in the dependency rate, indicating that its increase in population might have been caused by an increase of working age inhabitants.

Table 3.5 - Population growth 2001-2011

	Pop. 2001	Weight in MR 2001	Pop. 2011	Weight in MR 2011	Growth 2001-2011	Difference of weight over total MR
Cambrils	21.000	94,3%	33.169	94,5%	58%	0,2%
Cambrils MR	**22.264**	**100,0%**	**35.096**	**100,0%**	**58%**	**0,0%**
Tarragona	113.129	63,6%	133.223	56,0%	18%	-7,6%
Morell, el	2.332	1,3%	3.486	1,5%	49%	0,2%
Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell	16.566	9,3%	23.499	9,9%	42%	0,6%
Vila-seca	13.353	7,5%	21.783	9,2%	63%	1,7%
Tarragona MR	**177.910**	**100,0%**	**237.879**	**100,0%**	**34%**	**0,0%**
Reus	89.006	73,9%	106.849	72,5%	20%	-1,4%
Riudons	5.257	4,4%	6.504	4,4%	24%	0,0%
Reus MR	**120.437**	**100,0%**	**147.394**	**100%**	**22%**	**0,0%**

Figure 3.20 - Dependency rate, growth 2001-2011

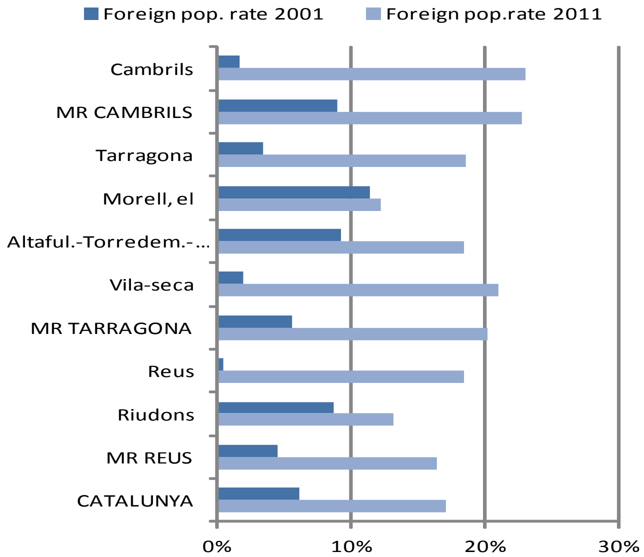
Dependency rate relative growth 2001-2011	
Cambrils	11%
MR Cambrils	**11%**
Tarragona	10%
Morell, el	-9%
Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Cr	3%
Vila-seca	9%
MR Tarragona	**7%**
Reus	8,0%
Riudons	9%
MR Reus	4%
Catalonia	8%



As in Catalonia as a whole, and witnessed also in the other sub-cases, this area has experienced a huge increase of the foreign population in this decade, going from 2% of the total residents in 2001 to 24% in 2011, the highest increase of all the areas compared. the Cambrils MR has one of the highest proportions of foreign population, higher than the Catalan average (18%), which is related to its role as a tourist destination, attracting workers to the area. This also happens in the town Vila-seca; both polygons have the highest proportions of active population of the areas compared. the Reus MR shows, comparatively, a lower share of foreign residents.

Figure 3.21 - Weight of foreign population over total population and relative growth, 2001-2011

	Foreign population relative growth 2001-2011
Cambrils	1242%
MR CAMBRILS	153%
Tarragona	437%
Morell, el	7%
Altaful.-Torredem.-El Creixell	101%
Vila-seca	950%
MR TARRAGONA	260%
Reus	3585%
Riudons	52%
MR REUS	261%
CATALUNYA	180%



Cambrils profiles then as an attractive destination for foreigners, and according to interviews this is true both for those coming from wealthy countries (a large number of them being retired “silver age” migrants) and for those coming from less developed regions who provide labour to the local tourist industry. The data show that Cambrils is the microregion with the highest proportion of foreign residents from other EU countries of all the areas compared and higher than Catalonia as a whole (18%), only surpassed by Riudoms, which as a matter of fact is not relevant in absolute numbers.

Table 3.6 - Distribution of foreign population by continent of origin, 2011

	EU countries	Other European countries	Africa	North & Central America	South America	Asia & Oceania
Cambrils	41%	10%	19%	4%	21%	5%
CAMBRILS MR	**42%**	**10%**	**19%**	**3%**	**21%**	**5%**
Tarragona	24%	4%	39%	3%	22%	9%
Morell, el	32%	4%	38%	4%	13%	8%
Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell	26%	4%	43%	2%	22%	3%
Vila-seca	30%	8%	33%	5%	19%	6%
TARRAGONA MR	**27%**	**6%**	**35%**	**4%**	**20%**	**8%**
Reus	24%	3%	46%	4%	18%	5%
Riudons	46%	2%	44%	1%	6%	2%
REUS MR	**29%**	**3%**	**44%**	**3%**	**17%**	**5%**

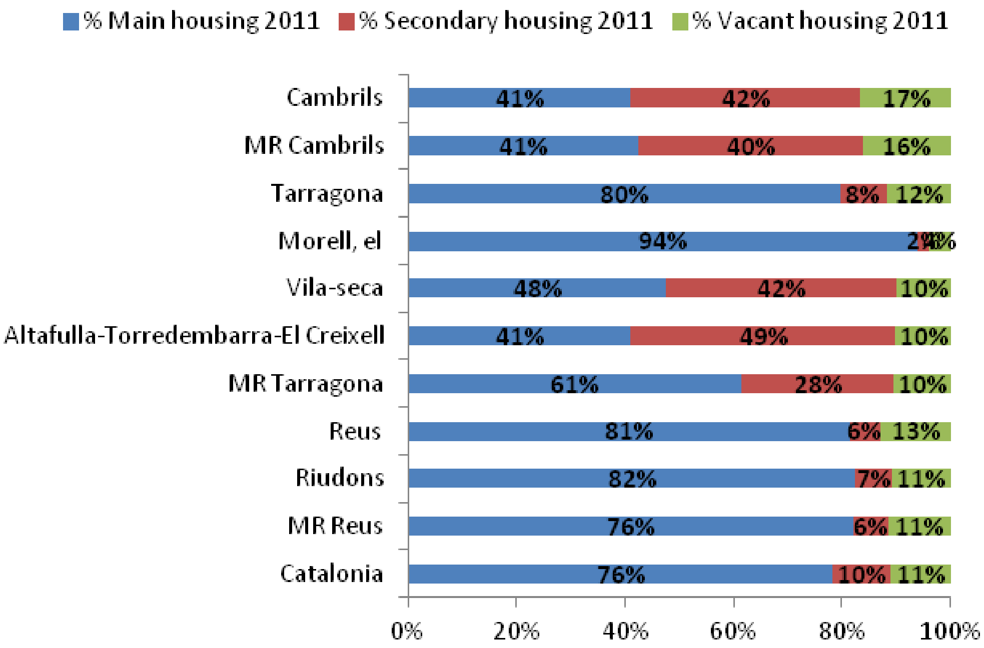
Local interviewees highlighted that the high presence of immigration from less developed regions has been properly addressed by local policies with programs of cultural exchange and integration for newcomers. Moreover, they claim that there is no “ghettoization” of this population, as immigrants are distributed in a balanced way in the town’s neighbourhoods.

3.3.3 Housing

One of the main factors explaining the transformation in the urban form and functions of Cambrils since the 1960s has been tourism development and especially and the construction of new housing linked to tourism. In morphological terms, the city has widened along the coast east and west of the old nucleus around its port, and from the core of the old castle of Vilafortuny. In this area there is today a degraded neighbourhood which is earmarked as the object of a project of urban renewal.

Cambrils, the main municipality and the centre of the MR, counts with more than 95% of the MR total housing. This, as can be seen in Fig. 3.22, differs from the MR of Tarragona and Reus which concentrate a smaller proportion of total housing of their MR (43% and 68% respectively).

Figure 3.22 - Housing structure, 2011



The importance of Cambrils as a tourist destination clearly influences its housing structure, exhibiting a low share of primary residences (41% in 2011, 35 percent points below the Catalan average). Nevertheless, the weight of the main housing has increased in the last decade nearly by 10 percent points. The demographic development and the splitting of households – a result of the increase in divorce and single-parent families – arguably boosted this figure.

The high representation of non-primary housing in the Cambrils MR (59%) differs from the associated MRs where this ratio is lower and represent respectively the 38% and 17% for the MR of Tarragona and Reus. the Cambrils MR housing structure is closer to that of Vila-seca and the Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell conurbation, where main housing represents less than half of the total stock.

The main trend detected for the housing structure in the case study area (Fig. 3.23) is a relative increment of main housing, a reduction of secondary housing (highest in the Cambrils MR), and an increment of vacant housing at Cambrils but a reduction in its associated MRs. Cambrils and its MR show a more similar typology structure evolution with to the SMST polygons of Tarragona MR (Vila-seca, Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell) than to the Reus MR. In the former secondary housing reduces its share by 15-19 percentage points and vacant housing rises its weight by 3-9 percentage points, whereas in the latter, secondary homes remain almost constant and vacant homes reduce their share in total housing.

Figure 3.23 – Evolution of the housing structure (change of shares), 2001-2011

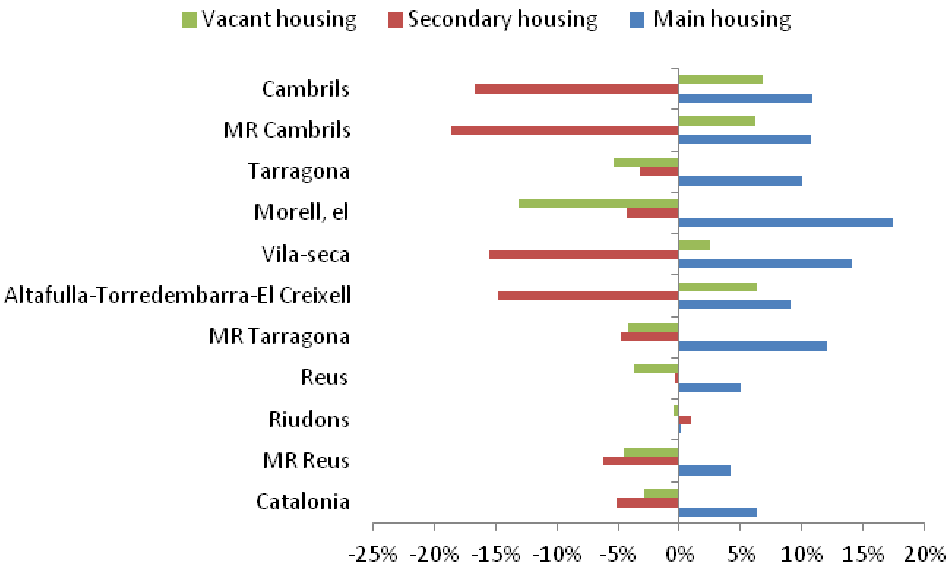
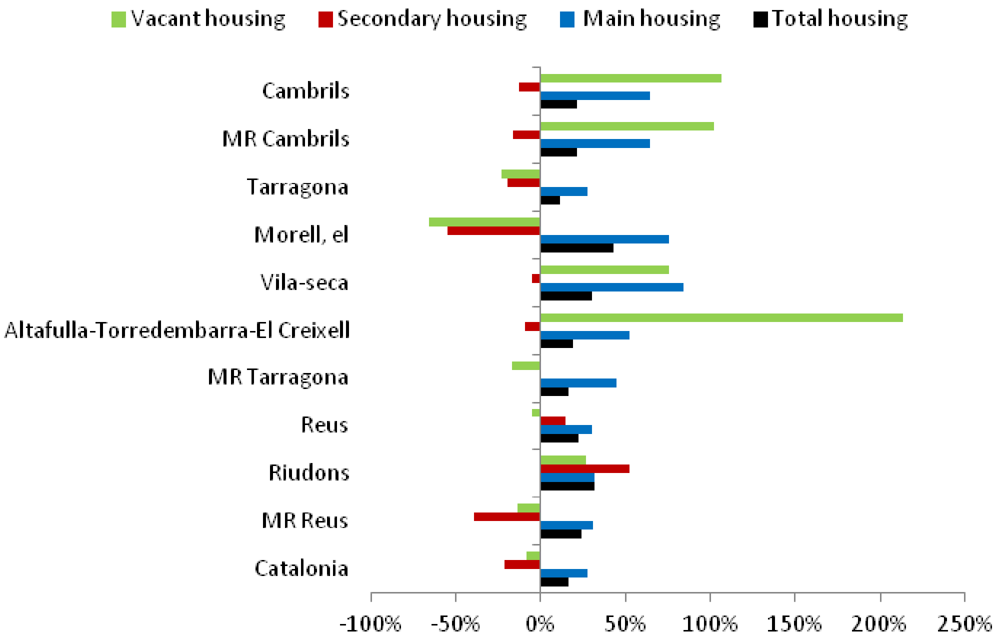


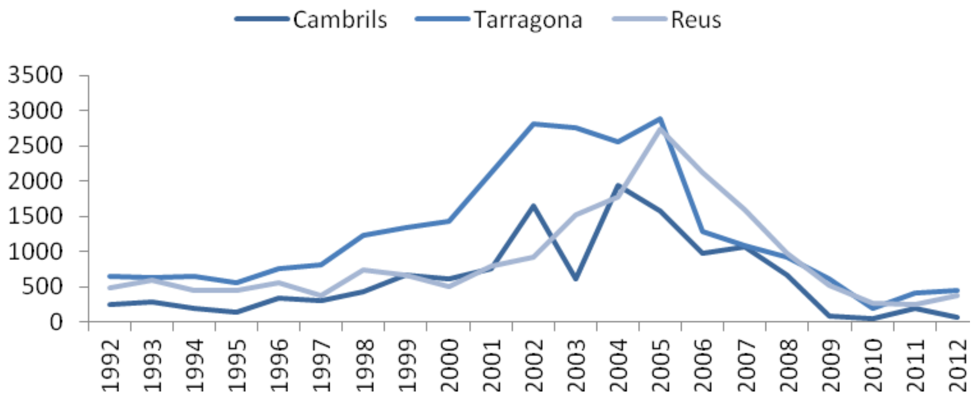
Figure 3.24 - Evolution of the housing structure (growth rates by typology), 2001-2011



As can be seen in Figure 3.24, the Cambrils MR increased its housing stock by around 6,000 dwellings during the last decade, 92% of which were concentrated in the town of Cambrils. The total housing growth in 2001-2011 for this MR was larger (22%) than the Catalan average (17%) and the MR of Tarragona (16%), but inferior to that of the Reus MR (24%). On the other hand, the increase for Cambrils's main housing (65%) is much higher than that of both associated MR (around 45%). Vacant homes had a very significant growth rate at Cambrils with a 102%, contrary to its associated MRs with negatives growth rates. The high levels of construction in the area and the inability to sell the stock because of the economic crisis increased the number of vacant homes.

Annual data of new housing construction (Fig. 3.25) evidences the effect of the housing bubble in the area. 0.45 new homes have been built per each new inhabitant in the period considered in the MR of Cambrils, a ratio quite similar to the Catalan average (0.46), larger than the Tarragona MR (0.35) and smaller than the Reus MR (0.53). At the beginning of the decade the number of new homes annually built in Cambrils was 608, growing to near 2,000 in 2004 and reduced to 188 and 60 in 2011 and 2012 respectively. Between the year 2000 and those with the highest building rate (2004-2007), the rate of change of new built housing was much higher in Cambrils than in Tarragona and the Catalan average, but smaller than in Reus. According to a national study, the stock of unsold new housing is mainly concentrated in the provinces of the Mediterranean coast[11] (55.7% of the new housing stock pending sale in the third quarter of the year 2011).

Figure 3.25 - New housing built in case study MR, 1992-2012



Source: Statistical Institute of Catalonia (Idescat).

3.3.4 Socio-economic profile

As can be seen in Figure 3.26, the Cambrils MR has more than doubled its active population between 2001 and 2011, a growth that also occurred, even at higher pace, for the total population. This pattern is repeated in the towns on the coast in this area, namely Vila-Seca and the Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell c conurbation. On the contrary, non-coastal municipalities have experienced a much lower growth of both categories, with the exception el El Morell, an industrial SMST polygon near Tarragona. This important growth has been confirmed by the experts interviewed, who highlighted the evolution of Cambrils (and other coastal towns) into residential enclaves for the entire area of Tarragona.

[11] Catalunya Caixa, Informe sobre el sector inmobiliario residencial en España, January 2012.

As in the case of the Vilafranca MR, the growth of active population has not been accompanied by a similar growth in employment (Fig. 3.27). In fact, between 2001 and 2011 employment has grown 15%, less than half of the growth in the active population, a fact that can attributed to the economic crisis that started in 2008. Moreover, much of this employment growth has to be attributed to self-employment, phenomena related again to the economic crisis but also, according to interviews, to the tourisc profile of the economy, which favours this type of employment.

Figure 3.26 – Evolution of resident and active population, 2001-2011

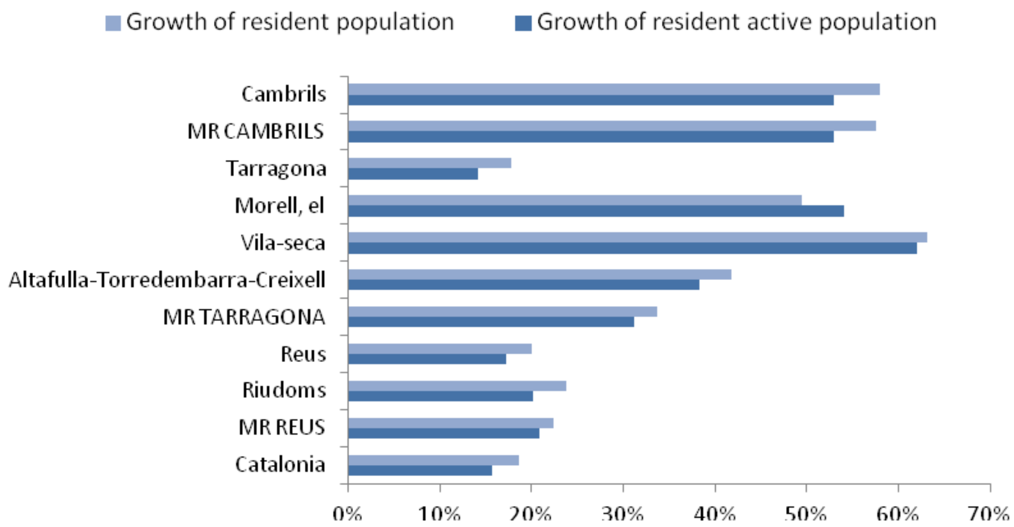
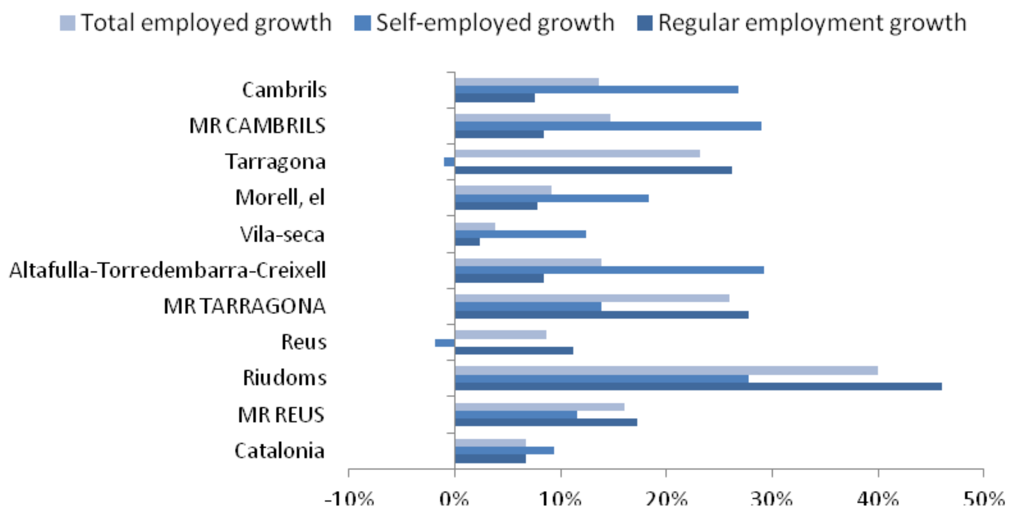


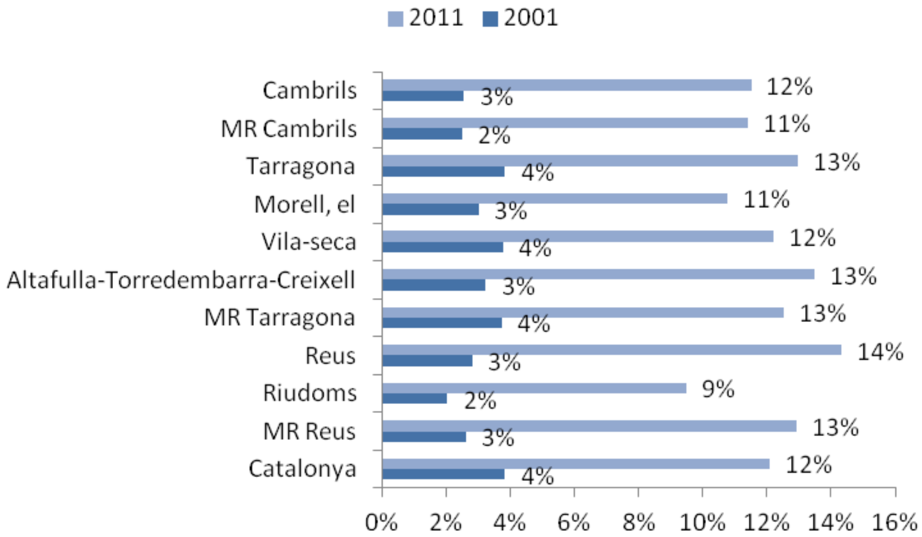
Figure 3.27 - Employment evolution, 2001-2011



The employment growth in the Cambrils MR is similar to that of the other areas compared and better than that of Catalonia as a whole. The Tarragona MR shows a slightly better performance in total employment and regular employment, but the highest employment growth rates are achieved in the small municipality of Riudoms, while other important centres as Reus or Vila-Seca have experienced a less intense employment growth than Cambrils.

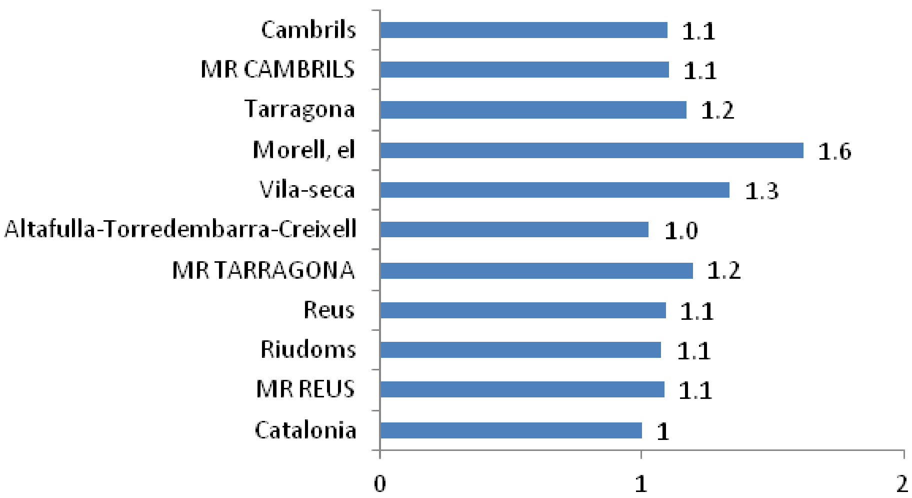
The 2001-2011 employment data, however, do not fully reflect the impact of the economic crisis in the labour force, something made evident by the evolution of unemployment, which as shown in Figure 3.28 is in 2011 on average six times higher than in 2001. The highest increase in unemployed residents occurs in the MR of Cambrils and its town centre, both coming from a situation of a very low unemployment rate, while the lowest occurs in Tarragona city, which in any case more than triplicates the number of unemployed in this decade.

Figure 3.28 - Unemployed active population (15-64 y.o.), 2001 and 2011



The MR of Cambrils is a relatively balanced labour market, with a similar proportion of jobs available (employment) and residents employed (residence). In the rest of the areas compared we find a similar situation, with the exception of El Morell which has more jobs that employed residents, indicating a certain specialization in manufacturing activities.

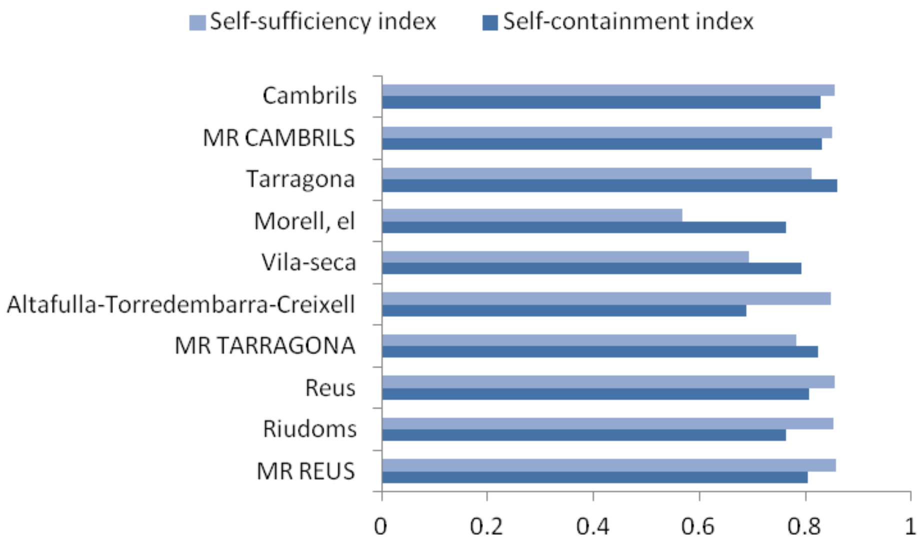
Figure 3.29 - Employment-residence (E-R) ratio[12], 2001



[12] Number of jobs in LAU2/Employed economically active population living in LAU2.

In 2001 (latest available data), all the towns in MR considered here had self-sufficiency indexes around 0.8, indicating than most jobs available in each town are occupied by local residents. The highest rates are found in Reus and its MR and in the Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell conurbation, which have, on the contrary, lower self-containment rates, indicating then a higher labour-related mobility for their residents. On the contrary, Tarragona, El Morell and Vila-seca have higher self-containment indexes, indicating that a great part of its residents have a job in the place where they live, also being net importers of workers from other places. Cambrils and its MR have both characteristics, even if with a slightly lower self-containment, indicating a situation of labour-related mobility of part of its residents, something that has been confirmed by the local actors interviewed.

Figure 3.30 – Self-sufficiency and self-containment indexes of the labour market[13], 2001



Data on residents' mobility[14] indicates that 64% of the daily trips are within the Cambrils municipality and 38% correspond to external movements, outside the municipality. In any case, about 45% of the mobility is return to home, indicating then that most of the flows correspond to labour-related commuting. Most of this mobility is by private transportation (92%), while public transportation has a very low share: only 2.4% of the commuters use buses and trains, something that has been addressed in several plans, as will be explained in 3.3.6.

Experts interviewed mentioned that the external mobility occurs mainly with Reus, as Cambrils has been acquiring over recent years a residential role for that city, and to a much lesser extent for Tarragona. The "suburbanization" of Reus has occurred in the direction of Cambrils and not towards Tarragona, as the former is considered as offering a better quality of life and housing.

[13] Self-contention is the share of resident that also work in the same municipality. Self-sufficiency is the share of local employment covered by local residents.

[14] Mobility data comes from the Urban Mobility Plan of Cambrils and refers to 2009 and only to Cambrils municipality. http://www.cambrils.cat/ca/serveis/transports-i-mobilitat/pla-mobilitat-urbana-pmu

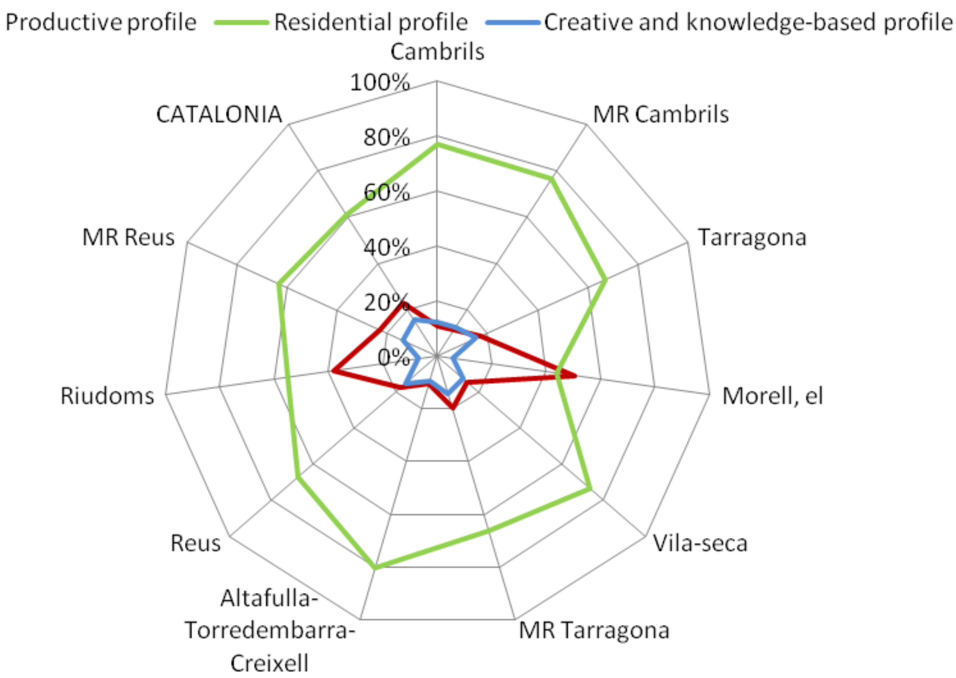
3.3.5 Economic structure and evolution

One of the main factors explaining the transformation of Cambrils' economy in the last four decades has been tourism development and the related construction activity. The town economy, formerly based on fishing and agriculture, has shifted to services, especially those related to tourism and to its role as administrative centre and service provider for the towns in the southern part of the Baix Camp county.

This MR is mainly a tourist area characterized by economic specialization in the service sector whereby tourism and related activities are the main source of the gross domestic product for the the municipality (74% of total GVA according to data from the *Pla d'Ordenació Municipal de Cambrils* (POUM in its Catalan acronym, the Municipal Urban Plan). The main economic profile based on the number of workers by sector is the residential one with 76% of the labour force. The others two profiles have a similar proportion with 11% of the workers for the productive economy and 12% for the creative and knowledge-based economy.

As illustrated in Figure 3.31, the weight of the Cambrils MR residential profile is 15 percent points above its weight in Catalonia, while the weights of the productive and creative sectors are significantly inferior. Cambrils has a different profile than its associated microregions, which are more productive and more creative-knowledge intense. The productive sector in the associated MRs almost doubles the weight of the Cambrils MR, while the creative and knowledge-based profiles of Reus and Tarragona are two percentage points above Cambrils. The economic profile structure of Cambrils is more similar to that of the SMSTs in this area: the Vila-seca one, although this is slightly more productive (14%), and the Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell conurbation, which is slightly more residential than Cambrils.

Figure 3.31 - Employment distribution by profiles, 2011 (Weights)



Source: Social Security Affiliation data, December 2011.

Therefore the Cambrils MR has a dominant residential economy specialized in tourism and construction sectors; in fact construction (14%) and accommodation and food services (18%) represent jointly the third part of total employment in 2011. Besides, if we aggregate to these sectors the wholesale and retail trade activities (20%) they represent in total over half of the labour force, due to the fact that Cambrils also has an important residential and administrative role in its county. The sum of residential-related sectors (real estate, health, social work and education) on the one hand (12.4%) and activities of public administration and administrative support on the other hand (11.5%) represent almost a quarter of the MR labour force. The former mayor of the Cambrils city explained that the town has worked even at an international level to attract regional administrative functions, given that the people who come to the city to carry out transactions consume and use other services in the city.

Local agents have reaffirmed the statistical data regarding the importance of tourism in the economy of the MR, and have highlighted in particular the importance of the sun and beach, gastronomic, familiar and sports products. While most local actors in the tourism administration affirm that in their opinion there is no evidence that this type of tourist model is being depleted, or could lose its competitiveness in the future, highlighting its "brand" value and its role as main source of income for the region, the POUM includes a SWOT analysis for Cambrils and mentions the excessive economic specialization in the service sector (especially tourism and construction) as a weakness. As potential threats the POUM hints at the excessive occupation of the territory as a result of the pattern and intensity of urban growth, especially in relation to second homes and resort hotels along the coast. The plan also recognizes the potential threat of the exhaustion of the drive of sun and beach tourism, and calls for further diversification of the tourism product and the overall economy of the municipality with the aim of extending tourism activity beyond the summer season. The POUM acknowledges that great steps forward in this sense have been possible because of the presence since the early 2000 and continuing success of Port Aventura, a large thematic park which is at a short distance from Cambrils, a major attraction for national and international tourism throughout the year.

However, this is seen as not anymore sufficient to support the diversification and differentiation of Cambrils' product and a new emphasis is placed on other "cultural" and experience-based tourism forms, such as gastronomic tourism. Cambrils is known as the gastronomic capital of the Costa Daurada. It has a wide range of restaurants, tapas bars, and selected restaurants with Michelin stars, with an emphasis on local agricultural produces and seafood. Cambrils is a founding member and promoter of the Spanish Association of Destination for Culinary Tourism Promotion (*Saborea España*), a partnership created to develop and promote food-based tourism products from raw materials to the restaurants, and promotes its implementation through a taskforce involving town authorities, tourist companies, the fishermen association, the agricultural cooperative and the local hospitality and tourism school. The Tourism Board of the city sees gastronomic excellence as a factor that might diminish the seasonal pattern of tourism, also thanks to gastronomic events and fairs that are organised throughout the year.

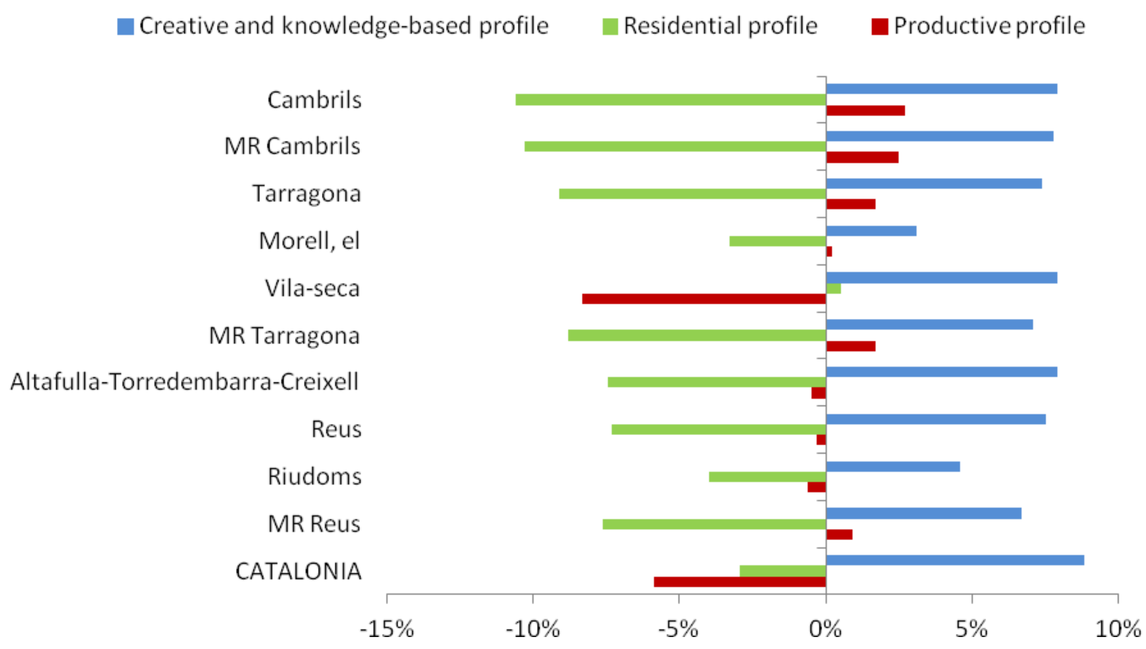
The productive profile of the Cambrils MR economy is mainly constituted by manufacturing and agriculture, and forestry and fishing (39% and 16% of the productive labour force respectively). The manufacturing production in the MR is small (4% of the total workforce) but sufficiently diversified (chemical, petrochemical, plastics) and takes advantage of good communication with the main transport corridors.

Before the tourism boom, the Cambrils economy hinged on agriculture and fishing, thanks to the ideal local climate conditions for the development of these activities and the fertile land. Near 60% of municipality land is currently cultivated. The main crops are wine, cereal, citrus, nuts, artichokes, potatoes, tomatoes, lettuce, squash, peaches, and notably the olive and especially olive oil PDO (Protected Denomination of Origin) Siurana. The POUM highlights, within the opportunities of Cambrils, the enhancement of agricultural space as a basic component of the municipality open spaces matrix and landscape integrator. In our interviews, the respondents mentioned several times the importance of the agricultural cooperative of Cambrils. The Cooperative is one of the oldest one in Catalonia, where the first reference of the cooperative movement in Cambrils date in 1902 with the founding of the Agricultural Union and Rural Savings Bank. The cooperative performs various tasks such as control of farms, land preparation and planting, control of product in its growth phase, collection, sorting and marketing, credit lines.

The seafaring tradition of the village makes the fisheries sector is also important, and rests on a port that is the ninth in Catalonia according to POUM data, although the sector has suffered particularly from the European provisions concerning restrictions on catch quotas, not to mention the impact of the crisis on household consumption and the swelling production costs. Also to overcome these problems, Cambrils is pioneering the development of a fishing tourism project that will begin this year, which also helps reconnecting this productive vocation with the promotion of intangible heritage. Under the guidance of rules set by the fishermen association, tourists will be able to take part in daily fishery works, observing the fishermen’s techniques, their language and lifestyle.

The creative and knowledge-based sector mainly consists of educational, professional, scientific and technical activities. The town has a School of Hospitality and Tourism, offering vocational higher education diplomas in hotel, restoration and tourism management that is unique in the province.

Figure 3.32 - Change in weights of profile structure by employment, 2001-2011



Source: Social Security Affiliation data, December 2001 & 2011

The occupational structure by profiles changed during the last decade (see Figure 3.32 and Table 3.7) in similar ways in all areas included in this sub-case, seeing the increase of the weight of the creative and knowledge-based sector, the reduction of the residential sector (with the exception of Vila-Seca) and an increment in the productive sector in all three MR (with local decreases in some SMST), a trend in opposition with that of the rest of Catalonia that took place in spite of the demise of the construction sector in the latter part of the decade.

In the Cambrils MR the reduction of the residential sector's weight is very relevant and reaches 10 percent points, against a 3 points reduction in Catalonia; this is compensated by an 8 percent points increment of the creative and knowledge-based profile (almost the average increment for Catalonia), and a 2% increment in the productive profile. The reduction in the residential sector is arguably due to the strong downward restructuring of the construction sector after the burst of the housing bubble (mid 2008). The occupational weight of this sector decreases from 27% at year 2001 year to 14% at year 2011.

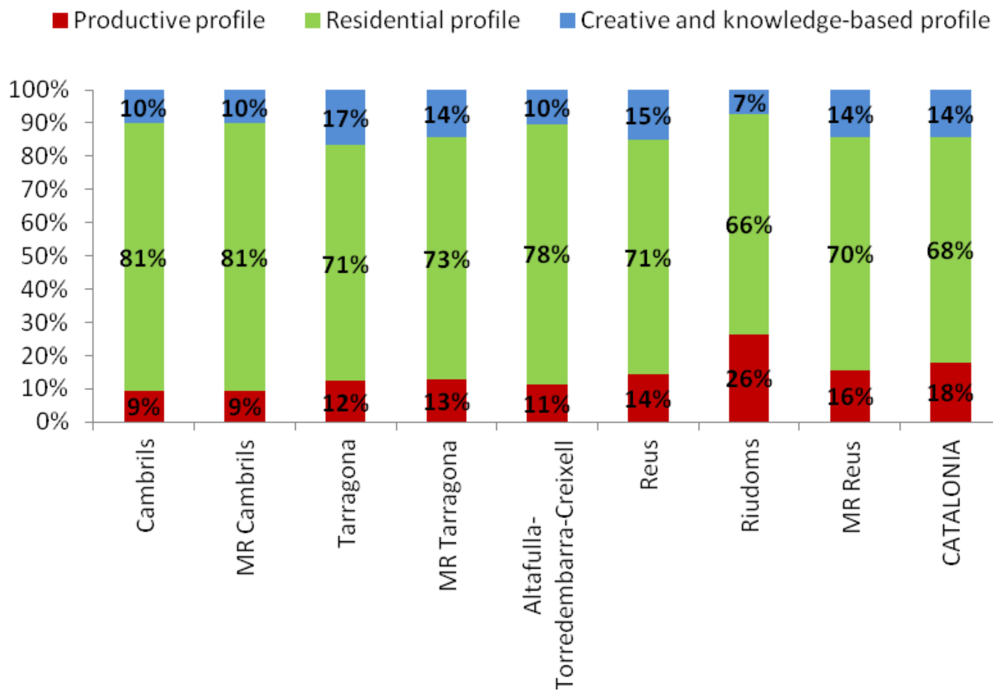
Table 3.7 - Evolution of employment by economic profiles, 2001-2011 (growth rates)

	Productive profile	Residential profile	Creative & knowledge-based profile
Cambrils	34%	-7%	166%
Cambrils MR	**33%**	**-5%**	**164%**
Tarragona	34%	6%	159%
Morell, el	6%	-2%	123%
Vila-seca	-35%	3%	187%
Tarragona MR	**32%**	**6%**	**165%**
Altafulla-Torredembarra-Creixell	-15%	-19%	106%
Reus	2%	-7%	139%
Riudoms	26%	20%	167%
Reus MR	**14%**	**-2%**	**149%**
Catalonia	-18%	0%	136%

Source: Social Security Affiliation data, December 2001 & 2011

Firms distribution by profiles (Fig. 3.33) maintain the proportions order observed in employment terms, even if the residential sector deepens its importance concentrating the 81% of the total enterprises in the Cambrils MR. The productive and creative profiles have similar importance with the 9% and 10% of the firms respectively. Creative and knowledge-based firms in the Cambrils MR have a smaller weight than the Catalan average (14%) and productive firms weighs a half of the Catalan ones, but the residential sector has a weight 13 percent points higher than in Catalonia. The structure of firms in the Cambrils MR is very similar to that of Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell, but slightly different from the other associated MR where the residential sector firms are less important and the productive ones have a larger representation.

Figure 3.33 – Firms' distribution by economic profiles, 2011 (weights)



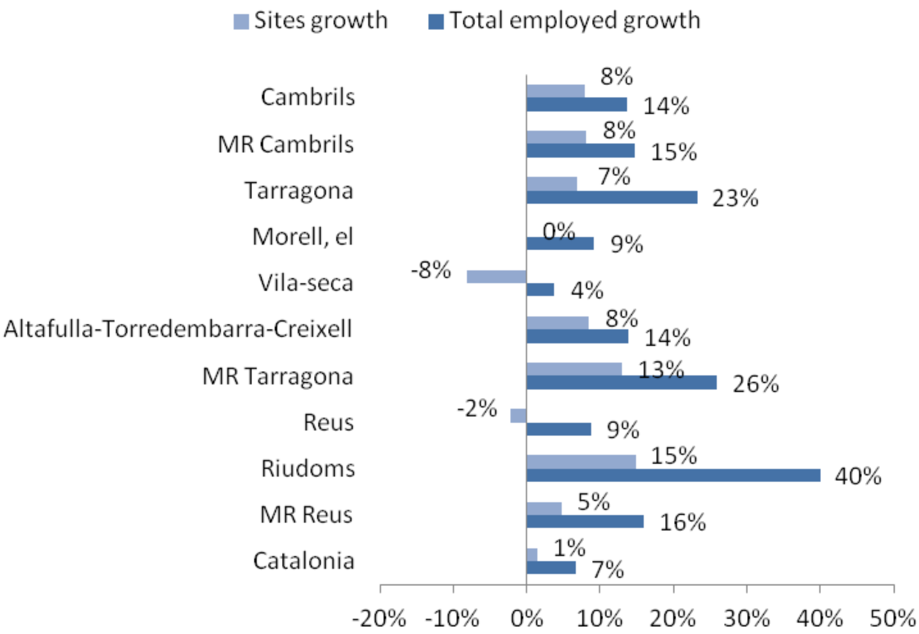
Source: Social Security Affiliation centres, December 2011

In December 2012 Cambrils had over 10,873 affiliated to Social Security (Fig. 3.34), an increase with respect to 2008 (when the crisis started to produce its impacts), when it counted with 7,544. Since then, the Cambrils MR performed better than the Catalan average both in terms of workers and firms. While the increase of total employees (social security affiliation) has been only 6.7% for Catalonia in 2001-2011, in the Cambrils MR this growth is more than double (15%). On the other side, the increment of firms in Catalonia was only 1% while in Cambrils it reached 8%. The evolution of Cambrils in this sense was similar to that of the MR of Reus and of the Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell conurbation, with similar increments at workers and firms, though it was less intense than that of the Tarragona MR.

During the last decade, the evolution of the productive profile in the Cambrils MR in terms of workers' affiliation was positive (33% growth rate) but not as significant as creative and knowledge-based sectors (164%), while the residential profile suffered negative growth rates (-5%). The most dynamic sector in terms of job creation was the creative and knowledge-based which had growth rates above 100% at all the areas here compared. This rate for the Cambrils MR was superior to the Catalan average (136%) and to the Reus MR (139%) and similar to the Tarragona MR (165%). It is worth keeping in mind that due to the lack of reliable disaggregated data the creative sector is underestimated in year 2001, so that the 2001-2011 evolution of this profile is likely to be overestimated.

The productive profile of Cambrils has a positive growth rate (33%) in the last decade whereas at Catalonia this evolution was negative reaching a -18% rate. Associated MR had a positive evolution too, with the exception of SMST polygons like Vila-seca and Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell. The residential profile had a negative dynamic during 2001-2011 period (-7% growth rate), a less more negative evolution that Altafulla-Torredembarra-Creixell (-19%) but higher than the Catalan average, where this sector remains constant. Reus MR had a negative growth rate for residential profile (-2%), but Tarragona MR had a positive one (6%). In spite of being the most important in terms of number of employees, the residential profile was not the most dynamic, with many jobs lost to the economic and financial crisis in construction, real estate, and financial activities.

Figure 3.34 – Production sites and total employment evolution, 2001-2011

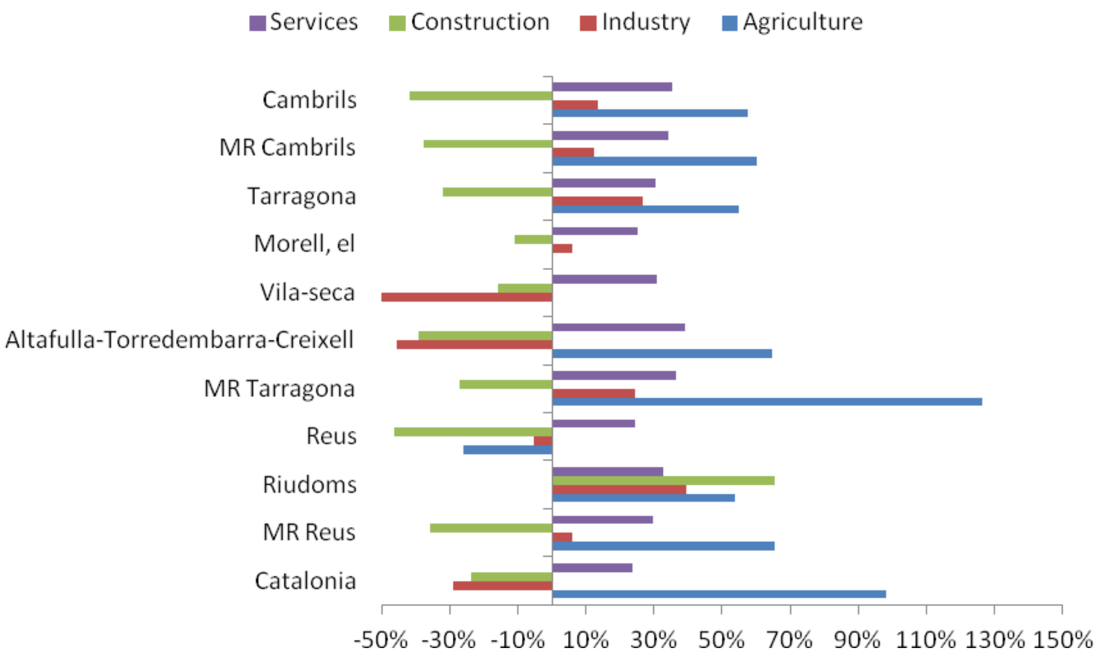


Source: Social Security Affiliation data & affiliation centres, December 2001 & 2011

The economic structure evolution for the classic four sector division at Catalan level during 2001-2011 was positive for services and agriculture and negative for construction and industry. This evolution repeats for the rest of the studied area with a particularly good performance: the crisis induced a sector restructuring by which the sharp reduction in construction and the less intense reduction in other industries were offset by an increase in the importance of the service sector. The reduction in the share of construction sector in such MR specialised in tourism had an intensity of more than ten percent points both for the Cambrils MR and for Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell. This reduction was less intense in the Reus MR (-7 percent points), Tarragona MR (-6), and Catalonia (-3). The increment of the service sector labour force was 11 points higher than the increment observed for the Tarragona MR (+6) and the Reus MR (+8), and similar to Catalonia (+10), but less than some other SMST polygons like Vila-seca and Altafulla-Torredembarra-El Creixell (both +15).

The agriculture sector increases its share of the total labour force by 0.6 percent points in Cambrils during the studied period, more than the Tarragona MR (0.2 percent points) and less than the Reus MR (0.8% percentage points), but similar to the El Morell, Vila-seca and Riudoms SMST polygons.

Figure 3.35 - Evolution of total employment by Sectors, 2001-2011 (growth rate)



Source: Social Security Affiliation data, December 2001 & 2011

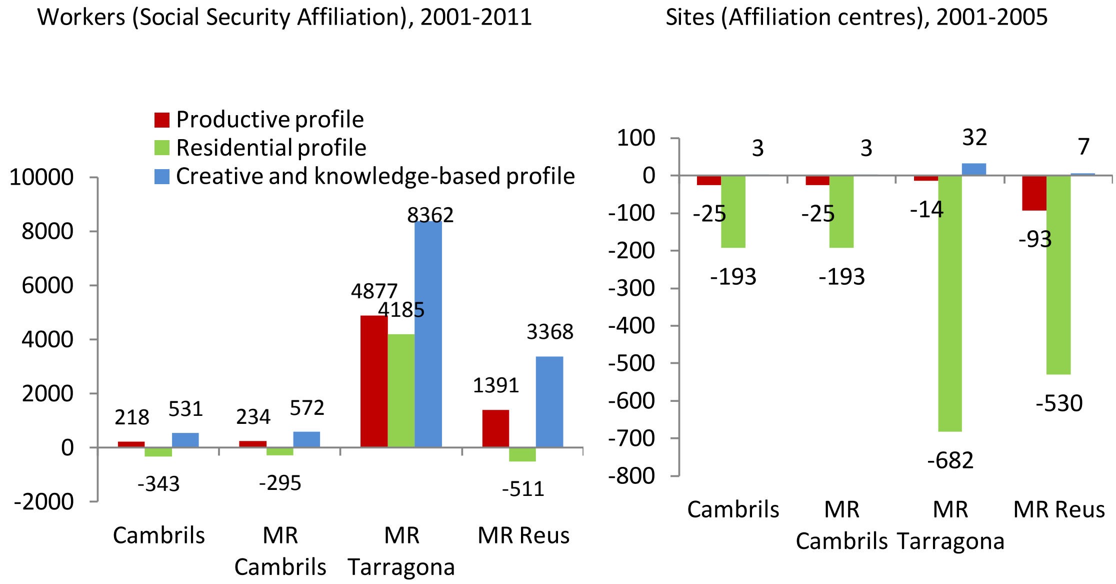
The rate of growth of the main 4 sectors for the period 2001-2011 was positive for all them except for construction at the Cambrils MR (Fig. 3.35). The manufacturing and service sectors had a better performance than Catalonia as a whole, because the industry had a positive growth rate in the Cambrils MR (12%) but negative for the Autonomous Community (-29%). On the other hand, the increment in service was 35% for the Cambrils MR, 10 points higher than Catalonia's rate. The agriculture sector of the Cambrils MR had a positive dynamic (60%) during the last decade but not as intense as the whole Catalonia (98%). The construction sector with a dramatically reduction had a negative growth rate, reaching -38% in the Cambrils MR and -42% in the town of Cambrils.

The net employment generation has been led by the sectors related to creative and knowledge based activities in the Cambrils MR, with almost 600 jobs created in the last decade. This tendency is also reflected in the statistics of the associated MR, with more than 8,000 new jobs in the Tarragona MR and almost 3,400 in the Reus MR. The productive profile has also created new jobs during the 2001-2011 period in all the MR considered, but less than half of those created in the creative and knowledge related sectors. Sectors linked to residential profile destroyed employment: 295 workers less in the Cambrils MR, primarily in the construction sector and its suppliers. The residential sector has also reduced the number of workers in the Reus MR but not in the Tarragona MR where residential profile workers had increased.

The available data does not allow the calculation of the annual rate of newly created firms in the different three profiles for the period 2001-2011. Therefore, we have done this exercise for the period 2005-2011 bearing in mind the important effect of the crisis started in the middle of this period.

Activities related with creative and knowledge profile show some dynamism at the Cambrils MR with a net increment of 3 firms. On the other hand the residential sector show a drastic reduction on the number of firms with almost 200 destroyed. The construction sector explains much of this reduction, with a 46% decrease in the number of firms during 2005-2011 for the Cambrils MR similar to the Reus MR (-45%) but greater than the Tarragona MR where the destruction was milder (-39%). Productive profile also reduces the number of firms in 25. The industry is after construction the other sector severely affected by the crisis, where the number of firms dropped 28% at the Cambrils MR, reduction that was more dramatic than in its associated MRs (-13% the Tarragona MR and -22% the Reus MR).

Figure 3.36 - Employment & firms by profile, absolute increments



The number of firms (Fig. 3.36) dropped by 18% during 2005-2011 in the Cambrils MR showing a worse performance than its associated MR (see Table X). The number of firms in the four main sectors show negative rates in all three MR here compared and in all the SMST polygons with available data (Tarragona, Vila-seca, Reus, Riudoms, Cambrils) with the exception of the Riudoms' services sector (+16%) and Vila-Seca's agriculture sector (constant).

In the Cambrils MR the number of firms per 1,000 inhabitants dropped from 43 to 28 during the 2005-2011 period, only surpassed by Vila-seca (54 to 34). the Cambrils MR had a worse performance than the Tarragona and Reus MR where the reduction was around 7 firms by 1,000 inhabitants in this period. In the year 2005 the Cambrils MR had more firms per 1,000 inhabitants (43) than the Tarragona MR (40) and the Reus MR (33) but in the year 2011 this relation changes, as illustrated in Table 3.8. The construction sector reduce almost to the half the number of firms by 1,000 residents stepped from 9 to 4. The same was truth for agriculture that change from 0.7 to 0.3 firms by 1,000 inhabitants and for industry that reduce from 2 to 1 this ratio at the same period.

Table 3.8 – Statistics on production sites

2005-2011 Sites (affiliation centres), rate of change					
	Agriculture	**Industry**	**Construction**	**Services**	**Total**
Cambrils MR	**-50%**	**-28%**	**-46%**	**-9%**	**-18%**
Tarragona	-67%	-16%	-39%	-5%	-10%
Vila-seca	0%	-27%	-38%	-8%	-15%
Tarragona MR	**-52%**	**-13%**	**-39%**	**-2%**	**-8%**
Reus	-41%	-24%	-47%	-6%	-15%
Riudoms	-27%	-22%	-42%	16%	-7%
Reus MR	**-36%**	**-22%**	**-45%**	**-5%**	**-14%**
Sites (affiliation centres), absolute values per 1,000 inhabitants.					
Cambrils MR 2005	0,65	1,70	9,17	31,44	42,95
Cambrils MR 2011	0,26	0,97	3,88	22,68	27,78

*Data for MR only include the municipalities of more than 4,000 inhabitants. Altafulla-Torredembarra-Creixell it is not included because only Torredembarra has available data.

3.3.6 Policy issues

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the microregion of Cambrils is in the Province of Tarragona, an important area of Catalonia in term of population and economic structure. Cambrils is also part of the Camp de Tarragona spatial planning area, which limits are slightly different than those of the province, within which Cambrils has been able to develop an identity of its own, finding its “niche” both in economic, social and cultural terms. The Cambrils area belongs also to the county of Baix Camp, and it is the second city in importance in this county after the capital, Reus. In fact, Cambrils has been able to consolidate its role as service and administrative centre for the municipalities in the southern part of the county, in part (according to interviews) due to the lack of push by Reus to develop this function. Cambrils, therefore, is an active commercial and administrative centre, something that serves to balance its strong tourist profile.

Unlike the other case studies in this report, Cambrils has not received outstanding attention in the planning and policy initiatives that have been developed at provincial and spatial planning scale in the Tarragona area, or only in an indirect way. However, the City of Cambrils (which represents 94% of the population of the MR) has set three important policy and planning instruments that have oriented its growth in recent years: the Pla d’Ordenació Municipal de Cambrils (the town urban planning plan or POUM), the Pla de Mobilitat (mobility plan) and the program “Millora del barri antic” (urban regeneration program of the old city). The local actors interviewed consider the POUM their reference policy document, and in fact, even if this is an urban planning document it is used almost as a strategic plan for the future development of the city and surroundings. The POUM embraces the other local plans and includes many of the proposals made by the higher-level plans.

Table 3.9 – Policy documents affecting the Cambrils area

Name of plan /policy initiative	Thematic area	Driver	Relation with MR
Pal Territorial Parcial del Camp de Tarragona	Spatial planning	Public - Catalan Government	Indirect
Pla d'infraestructures de transporte de Catalunya PITC	Transport	Public -Catalan Government	Indirect
Pla Estratègic Camp de Tarragona	Strategic planning	Partnership of local actors	Indirect
Pla d'Ordenació Municipal de Cambrils	Urban planning	Municipality	Direct
Pla de Mobilitat de Cambrils	Urban mobility	Municipality	Direct
Pla de millora integral del barri antic de Cambrils	Urban regeneration	Municipality	Direct

It is interesting to note how a town that lives mostly of tourism has no specific strategic policy document devoted to this sector. The local actors interviewed mentioned in this respect that the POUM includes already all the key strategies in this field and that the fact that Cambrils works closely with Salou and Vila-seca in tourism promotion and strategy is sufficient to reach the objectives fixed by the most important economic stakeholders of tourism. In addition, the Camp de Tarragona planning area as a whole counts with a strong university campus devoted to tourism studies, including a Science and Technology Park for Tourism and Leisure that provides the area with the know-how related to the tourism trends and management. In fact, this campus is one of the five of the Southern Catalonia Excellence Campus sub-campuses, integrating the Science and Technology facilities launched by the University Rovira i Virgili during the last 5 years as innovation centres transferring the knowledge produced by the university departments and educational centres to the territory in its five key specialisation areas. The Cambrils Tourism Board is very active in drawing on this knowledge to formulate tourism strategies.

In addition to these, we now refer to the higher-level plans with an (indirect) incidence on the Cambrils MR, which are: the *Pla Territorial Parcial de Camp de Tarragona* (Spatial Plan of Camp de Tarragona, PTPCT), the Strategic Plan of Camp de Tarragona and the *Pla de Infraestructures de Catalunya* (Infrastructure Plan of Catalonia). The latter defines the network of road and railway infrastructures that Catalonia needs in the next years with an emphasis on sustainable mobility, and is coherent with the current spatial planning directives; therefore, the recommendations and proposals of this plan affecting the Cambrils MR are already included in the Spatial Plan of Camp de Tarragona. The same happens with the Strategic Plan of Camp de Tarragona, approved in the same period of the PTPCT. This plan focuses on the socioeconomic development of the Camp de Tarragona area, and in general, supports the proposals of the PTPCT.

The Strategic Plan of Camp de Tarragona (SPCT from now on) set 10 strategic axes for the entire area covering 5 counties. These ranged from landscape and agriculture protection (especially the wineries of the Priorat and Conca de Barberà); the improvement of the railway internal connectivity; the creation of a territorial system of innovation and territorial clusters in clean energies and chemical industry (located in the Tarragonès county) and the promotion of the Costa Daurada tourism brand, as well as more in general the culture and identity of the Camp de Tarragona[15]. The plan does not set specific proposals or strategies for municipalities; nevertheless Cambrils is affected by this plan in three specific areas:

[15] http://www.urv.cat/plaestrategiccamp/

mobility/transportation, quality of life and tourism. Concretely, aspects as the promotion of the Costa Daurada area and the development of a tourism cluster or the protection of the agricultural landscape indirectly benefited Cambrils as they coincide with the local policies articulated through the POUM and the Mobility Plan. These issues will be analysed in more detail when referring to these local policy documents. Yet, the reach of the SPCT has been limited in the Camp de Tarragona, mostly due to the lack of committment of the public administrations, as neither the city councils nor the *Diputació* (Provincial Government) were actively involved in its drafting. Moreover, there is no clear leadership among the agents and institutions involved in the plan (the Chambers of Commerce, the port of Tarragona, the unions, etc.); only the University Rovira i Virgilli has some leading role, but not enough political responsibility to effectively implement the strategies.

The Spatial Plan of the Camp de Tarragona encompasses most of the proposals with a supra-municipal scope. This plan (PTPCT from now on), approved in 2010, established the spatial development strategies for the Camp de Tarragona area until 2026 for the open spaces, population settlements and transport infrastructure. the Cambrils MR territory is object of several proposals of the plan in the three aspects considered. In regard to open spaces, the PTPCT defines special protection areas of the Baix Camp county near Cambrils because of its landscape and agricultural value; in the settlements strategy Cambrils municipality is assigned a "medium growth" strategy, as it is considered it should consolidate its role as a small-medium urban area with a nodal function in relation to its surroundings[16]. This strategy was specified in the POUM of Cambrils with the project to create a new extension of the city with almost 6,000 housing units until 2015, which would mean about 20,000 new inhabitants in the area. This project is today on hold as due to the economic crisis no private developer wants to take on these investments, but in any case it serves to illustrate how Cambrils aims to become an important centre in the Camp de Tarragona area. In the last aspect of the PTPCT, the transport infrastructure, Cambrils is affected by several of the proposals both in rail and road transportation, which are also considered in the *Pla de Mobilitat de Cambrils* and the *Strategic Plan of Camp de Tarragona*. In general the infrastructure proposals emphasise the great endowment of high capacity road infrastructures with connectivity functions in the Tarragona area, but the important deficit of internal connectivity among the urban nodes (Tarragona, Reus, etc). The PTPCT wanted to improve the connectivity both by road and train and in this sense Cambrils was object of several interventions, something that local agents considered key as they mention mobility as one of the problems in the Cambrils area.

Concerning the road infrastructure, the main proposal was the reconversion of the old national road N340 which crossed the town into a "pacified area". As a counterpart the plan proposed to enlarge the AP-7 highway to redirect the transit of the N340 and create a non-paying highway. Both proposals have been already implemented. The railway infrastructure proposals sought mainly to improve the rail connectivity among the main towns, and the "star project" was the creation of a tramway (the TramCamp) that should connect Cambrils with Salou, Port-Aventura, Vila-seca, Tarragona, the highway station, the Reus airport and the Reus town centre. For some actors, this tramway should serve to reinforce the metropolitan character of the Tarragona and would give Cambrils further elements to become an important node in it. In fact this project was also included in the Strategic Plan of Camp de Tarragona and the local plans of Cambrils, but is now on a hold due to the

[16] This Plan, as all the other spatial plans approved by the Catalan government between 2008 and 2010, defends the nodal structure of the territory based on specific "polarities" where the growth should be concentrated. It defines a hierarchy of urban nodes according to how much they can grow until 20206, according to criteria of territorial equilibrium and environmental sustainability. See: http://www20.gencat.cat/portal/site/territori/menuitem

impossibility of financing it. Some local and regional actors have questioned the viability of this project as the costs (financial and environmental) might easily overcome the benefits (number of passengers), and proposed an improvement of the current system based mainly on road public transportation (buses), as it is cheaper to implement. As a matter of fact, the Territorial Mobility Authority of Camp de Tarragona approved in 2010 the integrated fare for the public transportation in the area, which caused an increase in the public transportation demand of 20%. This has been used by those opposing to TramCamp as an example of how cheaper proposals can better reach the goal of facilitating public transportation in the area.

Other proposals on the railway system were oriented to improve the external connectivity of the area, being the main intervention the improvement and finishing of the Mediterranean Corridor, a railway following the Mediterranean coastline both for passengers and freight, and that should also pass through Cambrils. In this sense, the Plan forecasted the construction of a new railway station in Cambrils, moving it from its current location in the city centre to the new extension mentioned above that should also serve as intermodal transportation node, connecting Cambrils with the local, regional and high-speed trains, and also to the Reus airport (the closest to this MR). However, this project is also currently stopped, due to the economic crisis, even if the project is still valid.

As mentioned before, and unlike the Vilafranca case study, in Cambrils MR the local-municipal scale is key in the definition of the policy visions for the area. In this sense, the POUM includes and unfolds the main strategies for the city, together with a strong collaboration of the city council with the private sector in the issues linked to tourism. If one should characterize the local policy vision of Cambrils two words are recurrent: tourism and quality of life. These two aspects configure also its position in the metropolitan area of Tarragona and in the area as a whole and its relation with the surrounding municipalities and MRs identified in this study.

The POUM is the municipal urban plan that arranges the physical growth of the municipality in the next years. The first POUM of Cambrils dates from 1963, which shows the long-term interest of this town in this issue. The current POUM was approved in 2006 and is still valid. As mentioned, one if its most relevant parts is the one related to the tourism strategy. For our purposes, what is said in the POUM of Cambrils affect completely the entire microregion object of this study, since 94% of the MR population resides in Cambrils. Other strategies of the POUM include the urban expansion of the city, the protection of the open spaces and some areas of the coast near Cambrils.

According to tourism agents and the other interviewees, the Cambrils region is a bright, quiet destination, cosy, authentic, with links and attachment to traditions, a medium-sized town with good connections and residential-oriented, boasting a high level of quality of life. Besides sun and beach Cambrils offers tourists a historic downtown, the waterfront, cultural roots, diverse shopping and gastronomy. Moreover Cambrils is offered as a destination from which one can easily reach other attractions offered by the neighbouring municipalities as well as a gateway to the wine regions like Alt Penedès and Priorat. The tourist who comes to Cambrils is a faithful tourist who repeats its visits. Local authorities want to maintain this feature giving good services to tourists in order to win their return and obtain a good testimonial promotion from them at their origins. Over 80% of the tourists who came to Cambrils in year 2011 were repeaters.

Cambrils is committed to quality tourism, giving priority to family, gastronomy and sports tourism. In this sense, local authorities and private sector have progressively specialised their tourist promotion in these three areas, and they only assist, for instance, to fairs specialized in this type of tourism. Other important strategic line is to promote not only Cambrils' attractions, but also those touristic attractions located nearby (Tarragona, Port

Aventura, Salou, Reus, Vila-Seca/La Pineda, Alt Penedès), in a joint strategy. Local actors commented that the town's tourism strategy is consensual and does not change according to the political party that is governing.

The development strategy of the city is to continue investing in tourism, but to diversify in order to reduce seasonality and increase the number of tourists coming to the region. Besides gastronomic and family tourism already discussed above, a straight line is to promote sports tourism based on watersports, cycling, football and golf. Many cycling routes with all difficulty levels start and arrive in Cambrils. Some local restaurants have specific facilities to receive this type of tourism (bicycle parking, menu tailored to the athlete, etc.). Cambrils does not have golf courses on its territory but it is close to those offered in other municipalities, like that of the Port Aventura resorts. This type of tourism attracts visitors throughout the year, especially from northern European countries. Moreover, Cambrils is growing as a destination for sports events, tournaments, conventions and meetings. Local actors point out the increase in the number of companies linked to sports events' organization. Cambrils is also a major nautical resort on the Costa Daurada, has a sailing club with a long tradition in organizing events and a sailing school. In relation with football, student groups are coming during the spring for their seasonal training.

Table 3.10 – Key tourism statistics of Cambrils, 2012

Tourists arrivals		Accommodation	Absolutes	%
Spain	48%	Hotels	1,001,934	43%
France	14%	Camping	976,374	42%
Russia	8%	Apartments	339,745	15%
United Kingdom	7%			
Netherland	7%			
Other countries	16%			
Total	100%	Total	2,318,053	

Source: Science and Technology Park for Tourism and Leisure (PCT).

The strategy for foreign and domestic promotion of Cambrils as a tourist destination is very important for the MR and one of the priorities of the local authorities involved. Cambrils' promotion is carried out at national, provincial (Diputació de Tarragona) and local levels. From national level the promotion of the Cambrils MR is framed within the national promotion of the tourism brand Costa Daurada. The provincial level has been very important, especially in the development of Russian tourism. Currently Russian tourists are is one of the nationalities that are growing in terms of tourism not only in Cambrils but throughout the Costa Daurada. The tourists' origin is half international and half national. Most foreign tourists come from France, Russia, the Netherlands and the UK (see Table 3.10). The French and the Dutch favour stays in campsites and apartments; on the contrary the Russians prefer hotels. Respondents point out that the Russians have come to the area thanks to the great promotional effort done in the last years, mainly by the provincial government of Tarragona networking with tour operators in origin countries.

At local level, Cambrils' Tourism Chamber works in the promotion of new touristic products in a very coordinated approach with the private sector. Furthermore, 50% of Chambers' rector council came from the private sector. Currently the Chamber's funding is basically public (from city council), but they are working to have more self-financing from resources that come from the private sector through the use of new technologies. The tourist promotion of Cambrils is done in partnership with other destinations in the Costa Daurada, like Salou and Vila-Seca/La Pineda, the major attraction/resort of Port Aventura and since recently with the city of Reus.

This is part of a strategy of tourism clustering, defined by an interviewed as a "competition-cooperation" strategy, where each place offers different and specialized products. Salou offers large-size infrastructure, beach and parting atmosphere, and numerous leisure attractions, Vila-Seca/La Pineda offer high standard and quality services, Port Aventura is the largest entertainment park in Spain, Reus has modernist architecture (it is the birthplace of Gaudi) and traditional commerce, and Cambrils offers gastronomy, maritime tradition, nautical activities, a port, and tranquillity. The partnership also provides a common calendar of activities and events, and shared merchandising. This alliance allows better efficiency in promotion through shared costs between contiguous municipalities offering complementary products, and allows offering a broader tourist supply leading to improved satisfaction levels. Besides, it strengthens the area position and bargaining capacity in respect to the provincial government, especially in promotion issues. These destinations are not fighting a zero-sum competition them but have opted for complementarity and collaboration. According to the agents interviewed, this position is different from that of the world heritage city of Tarragona, which does not hold a strategic collaboration with their neighbours or network with them, probably considering that the tourist profiles that they attract do not sum up with the Costa Daurada vacationers. In this respect Reus – in spite of its size and urban dimension – sees things differently and decided to engage in such collaboration.

This partnership has its parallel version in the private sector with the Hotel Association Salou-Cambrils-La Pineda. It is a 20-year old organization with 82 partner hotels that offer 44,000 hotel beds. It aims to commit tourism professionals to joint promotion and innovation projects, linking to universities and other organizations, and sharing experiences and knowledge for tourism excellence. They collaborate to enhance and promote the destination Costa Daurada and to they manage a web page for joint promotion and hotels booking.

Second-home tourism is increasingly popular in Cambrils, something related with the proportion of secondary houses (42% versus a Catalan average of 12%). According to our interviews, the economic crisis has made those with secondary residences in town return to it for summer holidays, after a period in which they preferred to travel abroad. Now Cambrils tries to take profit of this and to increase the loyalty of this type of tourism to complement the attractiveness to foreigners and to promote low season tourism, for instance during weekends in winter time. The local administration also sees positive aspects of second residence, as for instance in relation to energy and water supply taxes as these are paid by residence unit even if not inhabited, which reduces the cost for the population as a whole.

One relevant partner in the tourist strategy and analysis of Cambrils is the Universitat Rovira i Virgili. The Science and Technology Park for Tourism and Leisure, or PCT, located in the Vila-seca campus of the URV, aims to generate valuable innovation and knowledge in the fields of tourism and leisure at both the regional and international level. They also participate in international research networks and transnational collaboration in tourism and territorial management and technology projects that focus on the Costa Daurada as case study or practical applications. The PCT is also part of the Consortium for Increasing Competitiveness in Tourism and Leisure in the Counties of Tarragona, which manages a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) aimed at the consolidation and innovation in tourism in this area.

From the former section we can conclude that tourism is a key aspect of the economic and social life of the Cambrils MR and shapes most of its performance. Nevertheless, we also highlighted the efforts to broaden the spectrum of tourist activities and to diversify the economy. In this respect, local politicians interviewed mentioned that the services linked to administration were consolidating as an important economic sector and showed their interest in the manufacturing as a sector to which Cambrils should give further attention. Today this sector is very small in the local economy (4% of total employment as mentioned in 3.3.5) but the town shows certain location advantages that could attract further firms in this sector: on one hand, the low business taxes, secondly good accessibility by road and thirdly a new industrial district (Belianes) planned in the POUM and counting with state of the art facilities (broadband internet, electricity, good accessibility) to attract new firms. The industry attracted should be non-polluting, related to services and compatible with tourism. However, the same interviewed question the viability of this project in the present times of economic crisis.

The administrative services, on the contrary, are a real complement to tourism. Cambrils is, according to local interviewed, the county “sub-capital” and is intentionally specializing in concentrating several county level services, with the consent of the County Council, besides the already mentioned role as commercial centre. Over the years, Cambrils attracted the headquarters of the property registration office, the unemployment office and even the local police serve other municipalities in the county. A last example, and considered a good practice, is waste management. The headquarters and plants of the waste management companies of the county are located in Cambrils. The economic crisis has stopped other projects in this sense, as the creation of a theatre or the headquarters of the county social services. The economic crisis is also tangible in the municipal budget, which is now in a state of relevant deficit due to the debt acquired during the economic expansion period. In fact, the current council has presented a huge restructuration of the local administration to reduce expenses.

It is clear that the economic crisis is affecting the growth strategy of the town and might hinder the diversification strategies pursued. In this respect, recent new investments in the area of leisure in the area are more inclined to support the consolidation of the current tourist model in Costa Daurada, with ambiguous effects on Cambrils. The new mega-project Barcelona World consists in the development of a large hotel and gambling resort located close to the Port Aventura theme park, in the municipal terms of Salou and Vila-Seca. Conditions to attract promoters include substantial tax breaks and a modification of the PTCTP. The project involves the construction of several hotels, casinos and game rooms, a theme park, a water park, golf courses, a beach club, convention centres, theatres, offices, shopping centres, restaurants, swimming pools and sports facilities. There are conflicting opinions on the continuation of this type of tourism development model. Some political authorities feel that this is not the model they prefer to Cambrils, while others see the project as an opportunity to adjust further seasonality and attract large numbers of visitors to the area and therefore also to Cambrils. Stakeholders mention that Port Aventura caused tensions in issues related to taxes revenue distribution between Salou and Vila-seca, as the distribution criterion is 50% for each municipality and is not proportional to the area that each municipality contributes.

As a last point, we should highlight that the policies implemented in Cambrils are highly influenced by other administrations. On one hand, European projects have financed urban regeneration interventions and cultural activities (through ERDF funds) and have also settled restrictions that affect Cambrils, as the fisheries directives. The Spanish government had great influence in the development of the coastal front, especially through the *Coastal Law*, which settles the norms for the sustainable use of the coastline. In this sense, also the

Catalan Government approved in 2006 the Director Plan for the Catalan Coastline, which developed restrictions for the urbanization of the coast, also affecting some parts of Cambrils; however the degree of protection has been considerably relaxed recently, in the hope to revitalise the constructions sector as a possible exit strategy from the crisis. The Catalan government also helps in financing the urban regeneration plan of the old neighbourhood of the city (*Pla de Millora Integral del Barri Antic de Cambrils*), which aims to rejuvenate the area, to potentiate its singularity, to revert the process of urban decline and to improve the quality of life of its neighbours[17]. Lastly, the Provincial Government of Tarragona works with Cambrils in the tourist and economic promotion, as has been explained before, and the Baix Camp County Council has helped, as said above, in the configuration of Cambrils as a relevant sub-centre in the area, through the location of key administrative services.

In conclusion we present the different views of local stakeholders about how they conceptualize a successful SMST. From the political point of view, a medium-to-long term planning is necessary in order to avoid unexpected events. Besides, this planning must be politically stable and not change when change political party authorities, as happened in Cambrils (the city's tourism strategy has not changed with changes in local government). Another issue suggested as a characteristic for a successful SMST is to provide an adequate quantity and quality of services to the residents. From the regional science field, success for a SMST imply having a clear strategy for the productive sectors that wants to empower and develop, a governance structure linked to the city model and not to political affairs, and to have good communication infrastructures.

Local stakeholders interviewed

Josep Oliveras, regional geography professor at the University Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, in charge of urban issues in the redaction of the Municipal Plan of Cambrils

Antoni Duro, economy professor at the University Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, coordinator of the redaction of the Strategic Plan of Camp de Tarragona

Amelia Rico, director of Cambrils Tourism Board.

Robert Benages, former mayor of Cambrils City Council.

[17] http://www16.gencat.net/idigol/sub2008/processos/2008010610.pdf

3.4 Tàrrega

3.4.1 Presentation

Tàrrega is a small town situated in the east of the province of Lleida (NUTS3 region), a relatively sparsely populated province to the west and northwest of Catalonia. The area is characterised by the central role of agriculture and related economic activities, like the agro-food industries and trade services. The municipality of Tàrrega counted 16,676 inhabitants in 2011. It is the capital of the Urgell county, which includes 20 municipalities and counted 36,823 inhabitants in 2011. Tàrrega is the third municipality of the Lleida province for population after Lleida (137,283 inhabitants) and Balaguer (16,868). In this territorial context, Tàrrega as well as Balaguer play the role of secondary nodes, whereas the capital has achieved a clear hierarchical centrality.

The functional analysis developed in Chapter 2 confirms this role of Tàrrega as secondary node in the Lleida province and also its relative centrality within its own microregion. The Tàrrega MR includes 15 municipalities (most of them in the Urgell county) and counts 23,195 inhabitants. The town of Tàrrega concentrates more than the 70% of total population of the MR. The other settlements of the MR are, all of them, very small: there are only two municipalities with more than 1,000 inhabitants, nine have less than 500 inhabitants and the population density of the MR is less than 50 inhabitants per km^2.

The FA also highlighted that Tàrrega as a MR centre is s part of a networked system involving other two MR, whose centres are Cervera and Guissona, to which it is directly related, besides Agramunt which is linked to Guissona. All these MRs have a low population density and their central towns concentrate a high share of their total populations. In this sub-case of Tàrrega we have thus included data and information on Cervera and Guissona, which are the MR with closest relation with Tàrrega. These towns have been identified respectively as a SMST and a VST polygon in the morphological analysis of RA2. Figure 3.37 maps this territorial structure.

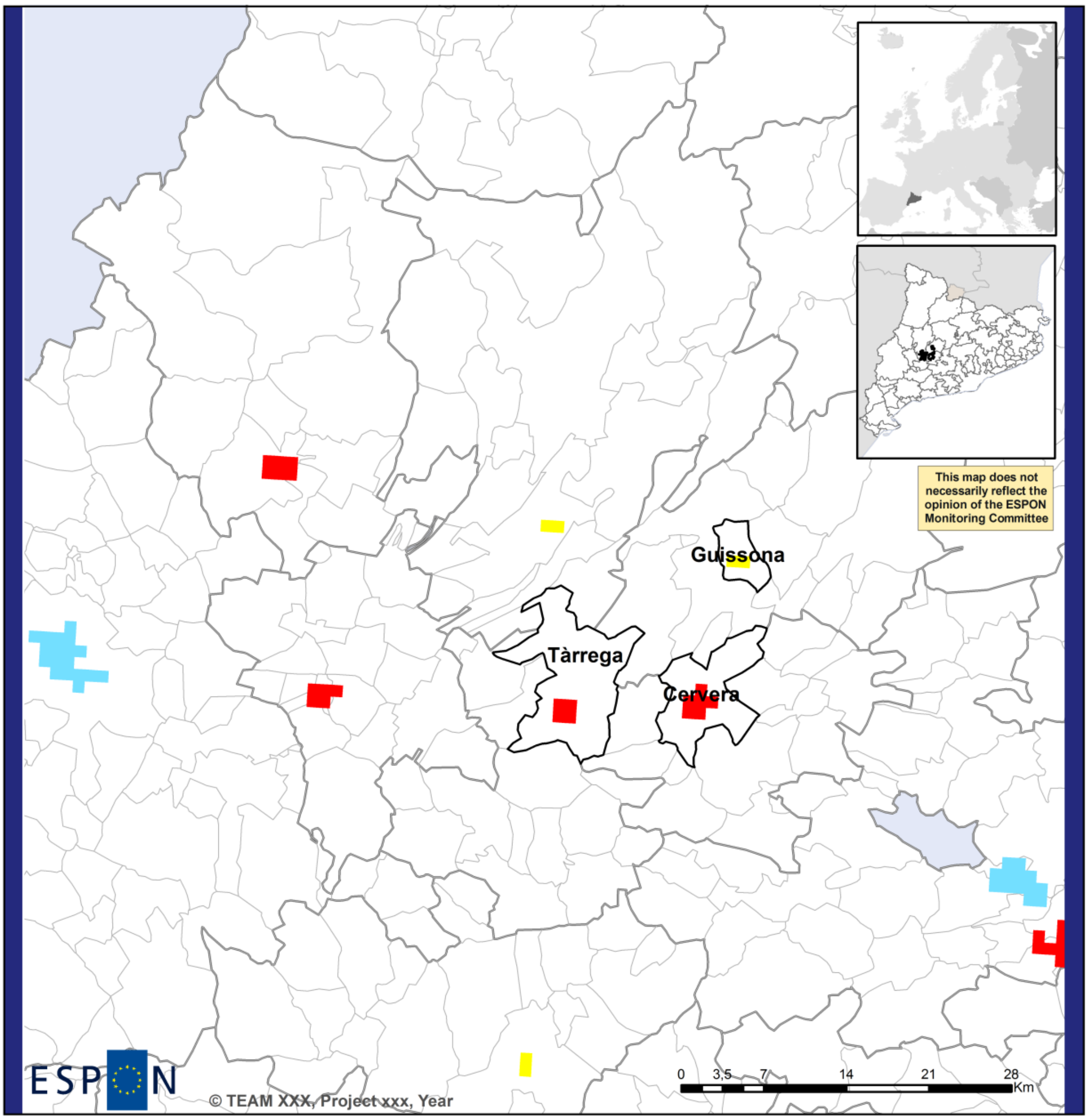
A key factor to explain the relationship between Tàrrega and Cervera is their situation along the A2 motorway. This highway, which connects Barcelona with Lleida, Zaragoza and ultimately Madrid, is the main structural infrastructure in the region. For this reason it has historically defined a strategic corridor through the province of Lleida, concentrating population, other secondary infrastructures and economic activities. A good indicator of the relevance of this infrastructure is that the 23 municipalities crossed by the A2 account for the 59.5% of the provincial population, face to 16.5% of their surface.

Tàrrega plays the role of service and administrative centre in this rural area, but it also concentrates some the most important industrial activities in the region, as the most relevant agro-industrial activities. Besides, the town is a regional service centre. This context provides Tàrrega with a diversified economy structure. In addition of these traditional sectors, since the late 1990s Tàrrega has embarked in a strategy of local development based on culture and heritage, both as lever of tourism and as an impulse to the development of creative industries.

3.4.2 Demographic profile

Demographic trends between 2001 and 2011 have strengthened the central role of Tàrrega in its MR. Tàrrega gained more than 3,800 inhabitants in this period, a growth of 29.8%, whereas the rest of MR gained globally only 127 inhabitants. This is remarkable because it happened in a decade characterised by generalised suburbanisation in Catalonia, with a particular impact on most SMSTs. It is also interesting to underline that the entire MR has achieved a 20.6% population growth in this decade, which is a higher rate that the average of Catalonia.

Figure 3.37 - The Tàrrega MR and associated polygons and microregions



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Regional level: LAU2
Source: Own elaboration on EUROSTAT/LFS data
Origin of data: EUROSTAT/LFS data
Authors: F. Brandajs, A.P. Russo, D. Serrano Giné
© EuroGeographics Association for administrative boundaries

		POPULATION DENSITY (inh. / kmq)		
		≤ 300	> 300 and ≤ 1500	> 1500
POPULATION (inh.)	≤ 5000	OTHER SETTLEMENTS	Very Small Town (VST)	
	> 5000 and ≤ 50000		Small or Medium-sized Town (SMT)	
	> 50000		Small or Medium-sized Town (SMT)	High-density Urban Clusters (HDUC)

LAU 2

Microregion

The other MR analysed here – Guissona and Cervera - have experienced opposite dynamics (see Table 3.11). While Guissona achieved substantial growth, the growth rate in Cervera is behind the average of Catalonia. As we will see below, this difference can be accounted for by different economic performances.

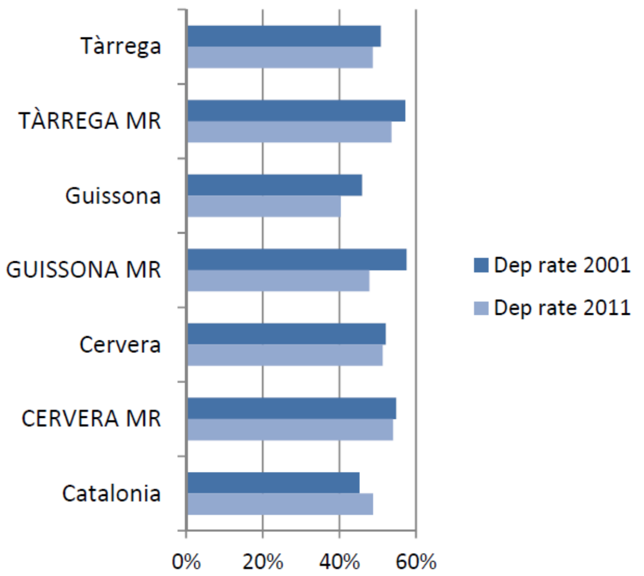
Table 3.11 - Population growth in the Tàrrega case study area, 2001-2011

	Pop. 2001	Weight in MR 2001	Pop. 2011	Weight in MR 2011	Growth 2001-2011	Difference of weight over total MR
Tàrrega	12,848	66.8%	16,676	71.9%	29.8%	5.1%
Tàrrega MR	19,240	100%	23,195	100%	20.6%	
Guissona	3,581	47%	6,668	61.8%	86.2%	14.8%
Guissona MR	7,622	100%	10,785	100%	41.5%	
Cervera	7,917	70.2%	9,416	73.6%	18.9%	3.4%
Cervera MR	11,278	100%	12,802	100%	13.5%	
Catalonia	**6,361,365**		**7,539,618**		**19.0%**	

Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 and 2011 census.

Figure 3.38 - Dependency rates Tàrrega, Guissona and Cervera – 2001 and 2011

	Dependency rate relative growth 2001-2011
Tàrrega	-4,1%
TÀRREGA MR	-6,2%
Guissona	-1,5%
GUISSONA MR	-1,5%
Cervera	-12,2%
CERVERA MR	-16,9%
Catalonia	8%



Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 and 2011 census.

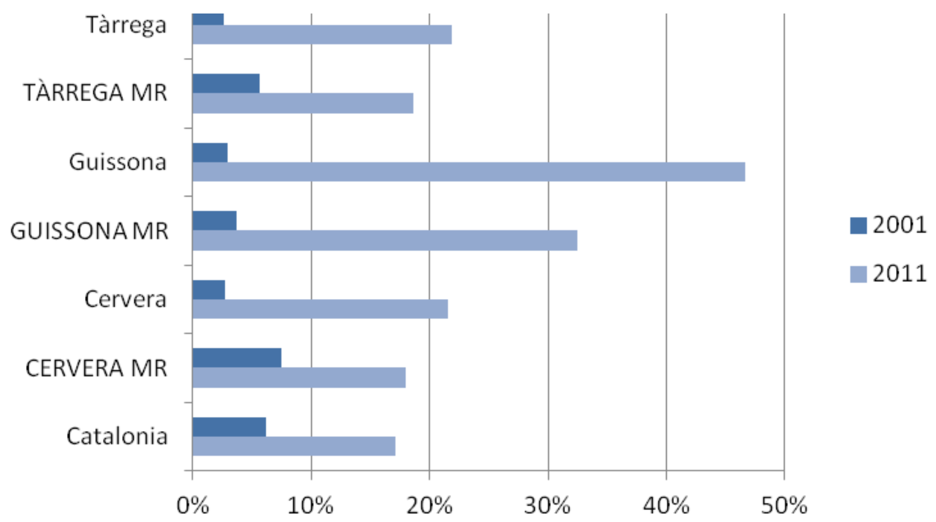
The demographic characteristics and changes of these MR in recent years present interesting differences in relation to Catalonia as a whole. Figure 3.38 shows the evolution of dependency rates between 2001 and 2011 of Tàrrega, Guissona and Cervera (both MR and towns). All of them have decreased dependency rates during this period, in a context where the general trend of Catalonia has been a relative increasing of dependence. This could be explained by an immigration rate above the rest of Catalonia, which supposes a higher level of active population (and a high masculinity rate).

During the last decade, Tàrrega has quadruplicated its foreign population (from 919 in 2001 to 3,640 in 2011), similarly to its MR (from 1,093 to 4,330). This represents an increase well above the Catalan average. Tàrrega concentrates in both years the 84% of total foreign population of the MR – a percentage higher than its weight in terms of population.

Cervera and Guissona – both towns and MR – have also experienced higher increases of foreign population than the rest of Catalonia (Fig. 3.39). Guissona presents the highest growth rates, growing from 11.7% of foreigners in 2001 to 46.7% in 2011 – and data of 2012 from the inhabitants register suggest that 50% may have been exceeded. This town is known as the municipality with the largest foreign population share in Catalonia, a situation explained by the high number of jobs generated by the large food processing company located there and its capacity to employ low skilled workers. Eastern Europeans constitute the largest share of foreigners in Guissona, most of them employed in the agro-food industry. Instead, in Cervera and Tàrrega more than half of the foreigners have African origin (mostly Moroccan). The Romanians ranks second as the most numerous collective in both MR. The agricultural sector is the main activity of these foreign groups in both the Tàrrega and the Cervera MR. Guissona has experienced the fastest growth in foreign immigration over the case study period (a net increase of 282 persons, absorbing approximately the 9% of population growth in this period).

In fact, the central role of agriculture in Lleida helps to explain the difference between the patterns of immigration in this province and the rest of Catalonia. Tàrrega, Guissona and Cervera MR, but also the province of Lleida as a whole, have a low weight of South American and Asian immigration in comparison with the rest of Catalonia, and especially with the province of Barcelona – both are communities traditionally more concentrated in large cities and associated to the service sector.

Figure 3.39 - Weight of foreign population over total population, 2001 and 2011



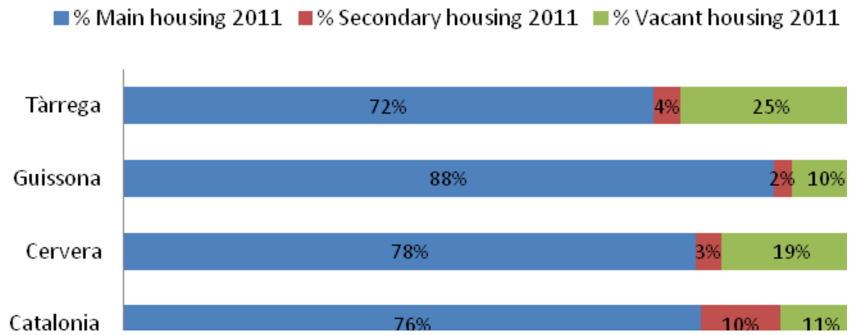
Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 and 2011 census.

3.4.3 Housing

The towns of Tàrrega, Cervera and Guissona include a high proportion of the total stock of housing in their MR: 69%, 67% and 48% respectively in 2011, and increasing in Tàrrega and Cervera since 2001 when the weights were 61% and 42% in 2001, while Cervera has lost 2 percent points to its MR. These data are a good example to show the differences of the recent economic dynamics of these towns in recent years: Guissona growing fast and Cervera facing relative problems.

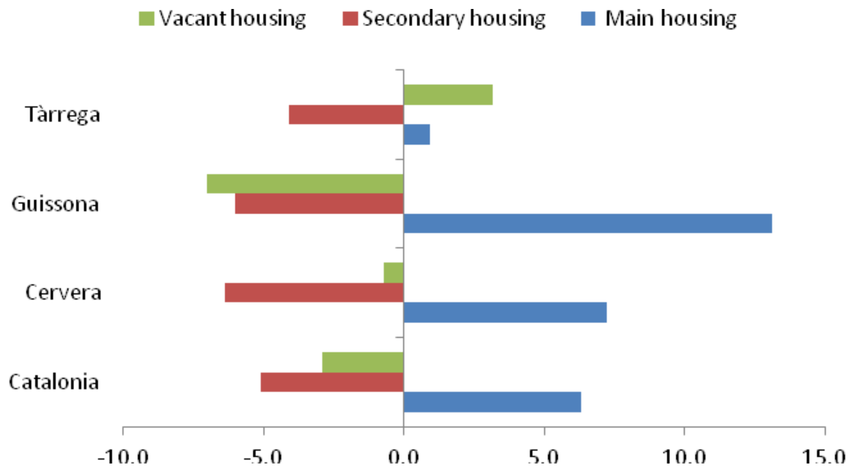
Figure 3.40 illustrates the structure of the housing stock in each town and Figures 3.41-3.42 its evolution in the last 10 years. All of them have experienced a more intensive growth than the average of Catalonia. Tàrrega has achieved a growth of 33.1% in these 10 years, Cervera 19.1%; both score higher than the average of Catalonia (16.6%). Yet we emphasise again the higher growth experienced by Guissona – both of total housing (53.6%) and main housing (80.1%).

Figure 3.40 - Housing structure, 2011 (weights)



Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 and 2011 census.

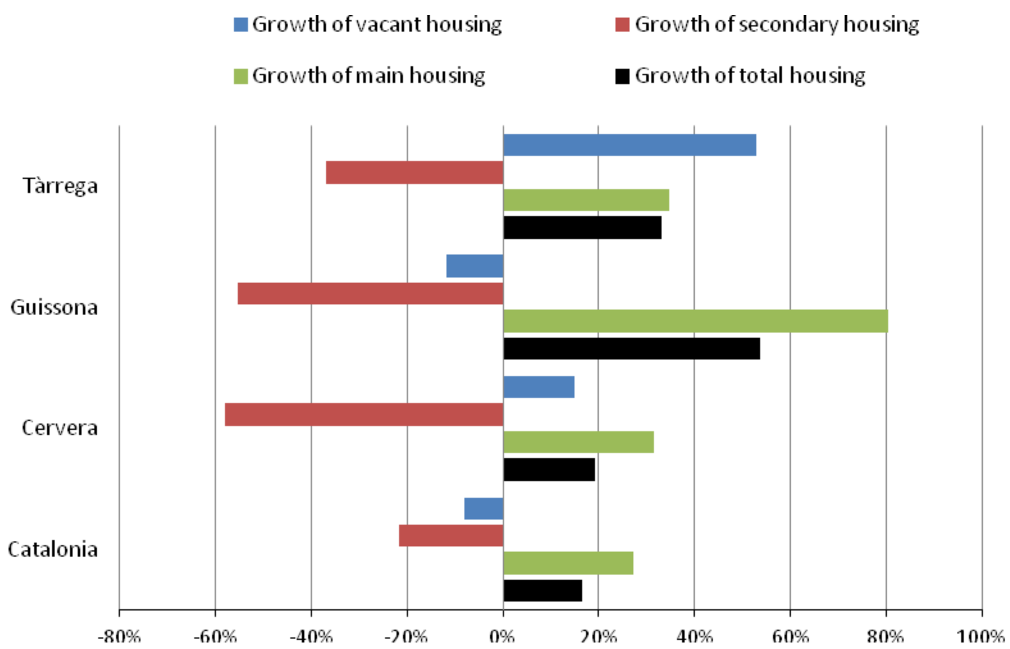
Figure 3.41 - Typology of housing evolution, 2001-2011 (change of weights in %)



Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 and 2011 census.

On the other hand, the growth of vacant housing in Tàrrega (52.8%) has been the highest of the area, bringing the share of vacant housing in Tàrrega to be more than the double of the average of Catalonia. The weight of this typology has increased by 3 percent points, which is a opposite change compared to the other towns and also to the Catalan average. The stakeholders interviewed have underlined that the effects of the “property bubble” has been especially notable in this town, which has achieved a high level of housing production in last decade and now concentrated an important stock of vacant housing. Instead, the dynamism and the demographic growth related to immigration in Guissona has supposed a significant growth of main housing in that town.

Figure 3.42 - Typology of housing evolution, 2001-2011 (rate of growth)

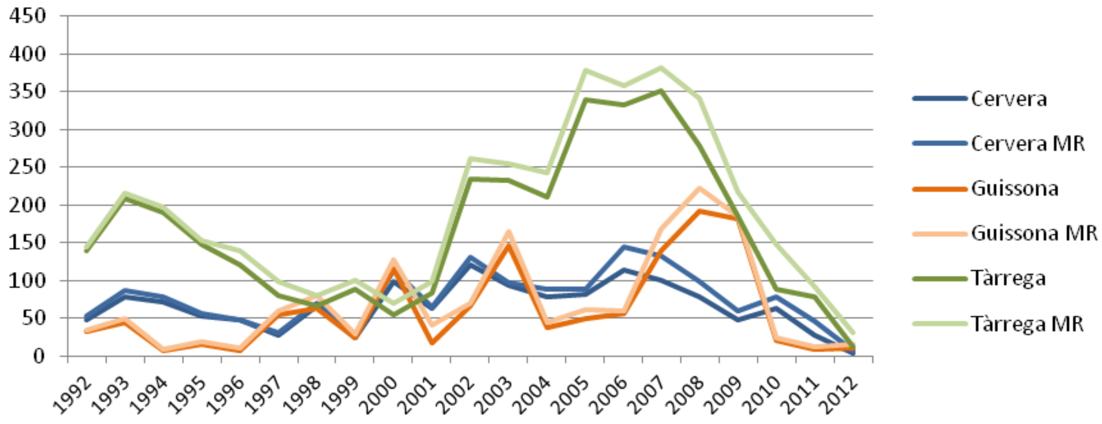


Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 and 2011 census.

In Figure 3.43 we see that Tàrrega has experienced a strong increase of newly built housing in the early 2000s. The production, in absolute terms, has been really important between 2001 and 2008, the property bubble years. Cervera and Guissona presented lower increases. After these years, the 2009-2012 period is characterised by a fast decline of property market and building sectors. This issue is reflected in an abrupt reduction of new construction to this moment.

It is relevant to underline that Tàrrega, Cervera and Guissona concentrate respectively the 87%, 86.5% and 88% of the new housing production in their respective MR in this decade. This percentage is superior to their weight in terms of population in the MR, and it is also superior to the demographic growth experienced in these years. This comparison illustrates the concentration of building sector interests in these towns, mostly in the case of Tàrrega.

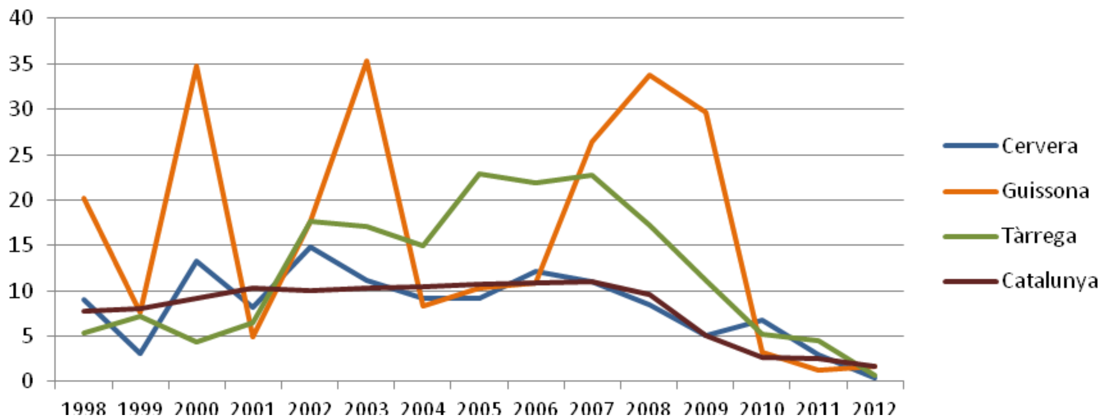
Figure 3.43 - Built Housing, 1992-2012



Source: Own elaboration with data from Catalan Statistical Institute.

Figure 3.44 clarifies further this question, putting new housing in relation with the population of the town. Tàrrega and Guissona's indicators of per capita housing production are well above Catalonia as a whole. The case of Guissona is explained by the previously mentioned local conditions: the growing of the population as a consequence of the impulse of a large agro-food industry. But Tàrrega presents a clear situation of overproduction of housing. In the central years of the property bubble its ratio of built housing per inhabitant was more than the double of Catalonia average – which was itself high.

Figure 3.44 - Built houses per 1,000 inhabitants, 1992-2012



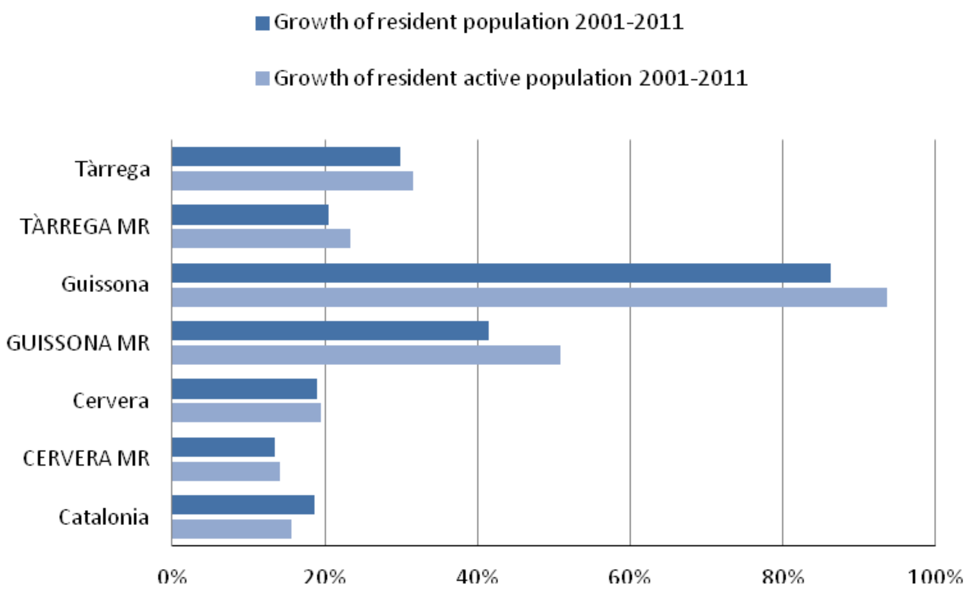
Source: Own elaboration with data from Catalan Statistical Institute.

3.4.4 Socio-economic profile

The active population represent the 65.1% of the population of the Tàrrega MR and 67.2% of the town's (aligning with the Catalan average). If we consider the data of the MR without Tàrrega, the active population only represent 59.7% of total population. This difference shows one of the most relevant differences between the town of Tàrrega and its MR: the other municipalities of the area are characterised by a relatively older demographic structure. The immigration experienced in the early 2000s has changed the intensity of these differences, but there still are deep contrasts. On the other hand, Guissona and Cervera present opposite structures. The working age population of Guissona is 4 points above the Catalan average, and Cervera is just 1 point below that of Catalonia.

Another relevant question is the relation between active and total population growing in last decade, illustrated in Figure 3.45. In Catalonia, the growth of working age population (15.7%) has been 3 points lower than total demographic growth (18.6%). This supposes an increase of the dependency rate. But the three towns and their MR analysed here experienced an opposite trend: the active population growth is higher than that registered by the total population. It is also notable that this dynamics has occurred both in MR centres and for the whole area. This process is explained by the higher weight of foreign population in the demographic growth of this area in comparison with Catalonia average. The foreign population is mainly constituted of working age residents. So, it has contributed to inflate the workforce and rejuvenate the demographic structure of this area. This relatively high weight of new immigration also helps to explain that both Tàrrega and Guissona towns and MR have experienced a total population growth higher than that averagely experienced in Catalonia.

Figure 3.45 - Evolution of the resident and active populations, 2001-2011 (growth rates).

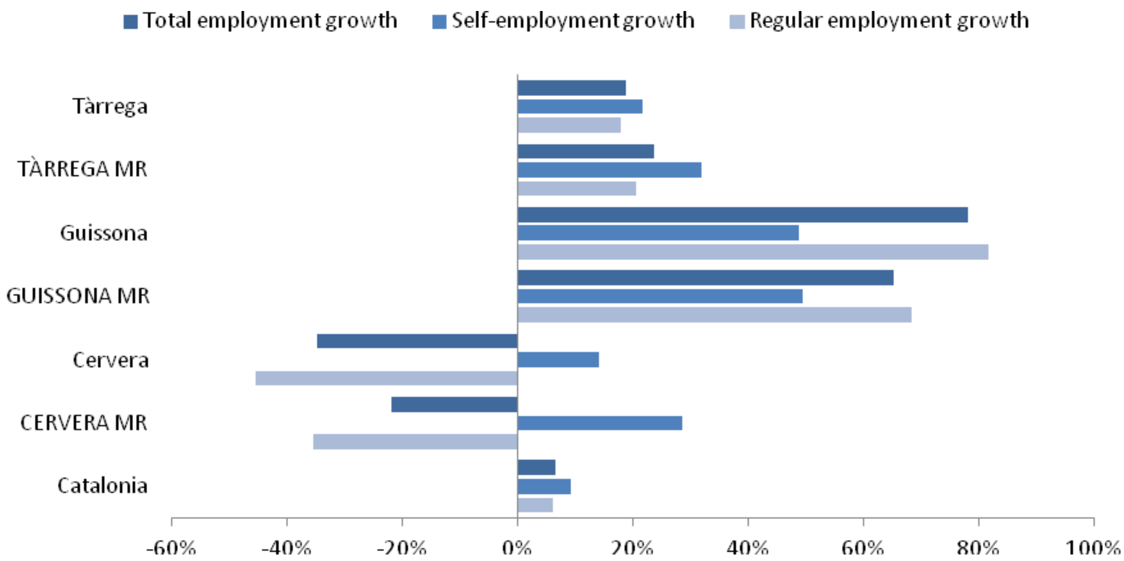


Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 and 2011 census.

The evolution of employment in this period (Fig. 3.46) clarifies further the previously illustrated data. Guissona has achieved a growth of more than 80% of number of jobs (aligning to population growth). As we have mentioned previously, this process is explained by the presence in Guissona of the most successful company of the agro-food sector in the region (it is also the largest private company of any sector for number of employees).

The evolution of employment in Tàrrega has also been better than the Catalan average in these 10 years: a growth of 23.7% of Tàrrega MR (32% in self-employment) and 6.7% for Catalonia. Cervera is, again, in the opposite situation. The closing in 2002 of a factory owned by a multinational company of electronic components for the automobile sector supposed the loss of 1,280 direct jobs in the industrial sector in a town with approximately 8,000 habitants in that moment. Nine years after, the balance of employment with respect to 2001 is still negative. This lack of alternatives explains also the relative growth of self-employment, higher than the Catalan average in the case of Cervera.

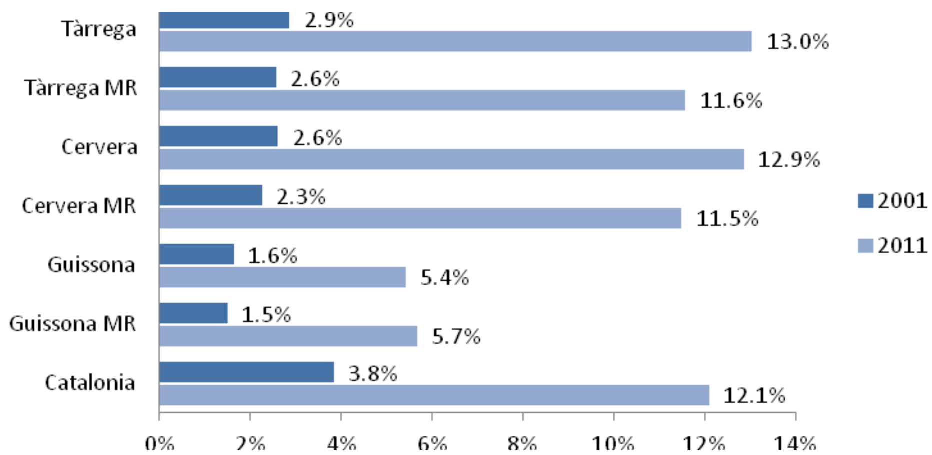
Figure 3.46 - Employment evolution, 2001-2011 (growth rates)



Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 and 2011 census.

Figure 3.47 shows one of the clearest impacts of the economic crisis in Catalonia: the fast growth of unemployment. These MRs have an unemployment rate relatively lower than the Catalan average: Tàrrega and Cervera only 0.5 and 0.6 points below, and Guissona with a special situation of low unemployment. Beyond this relatively benign trend, it is relevant to underline that both Tàrrega and Cervera towns have unemployment rates higher than the Catalan and, secondly, in the case of Tàrrega the destruction of employment has accelerated since 2010.

Figure 3.47 - Unemployment / Resident active population, 15-64 evolution, 2001 and 2011

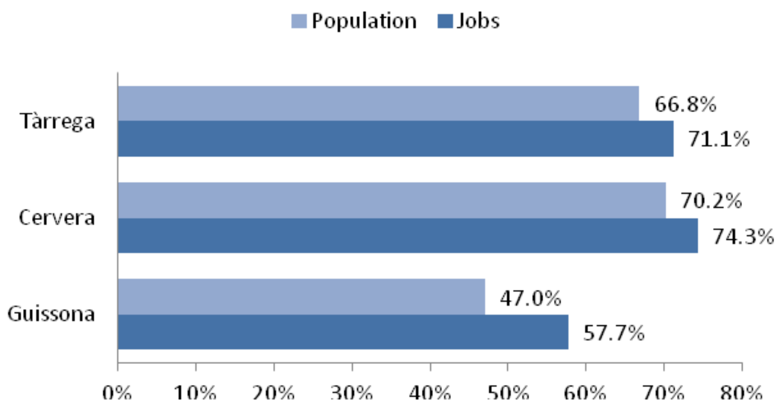


Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 and 2011 census.

All the stakeholders interviewed coincided in the identification of two keys points that may explain the particularly bad evolution of employment in Tàrrega during the last 2-3 years. First of all, micro-enterprises have an important role in this town. This kind of companies showed more resistance at the starting stages of the crisis, but the prolonging of the recession has damaged them more seriously than large ones, which have better possibilities to tap to economic and financial resources. Secondly, between 2002 and 2010 one of the biggest infrastructural projects of Catalonia (the Segarra-Garrigues water channel) was under construction in this area; from 2010 the construction activity has been almost ceased. The construction of the channel, started in 2002, was budgeted in more than 1,500 M€, making it the largest hydraulic project in Spain. The construction of this kind of infrastructure in this area, obviously, has a huge impact on employment, but also on the survival of companies of the construction sector (see 3.4.6 for more details about this project and the related spatial planning and local development policies).

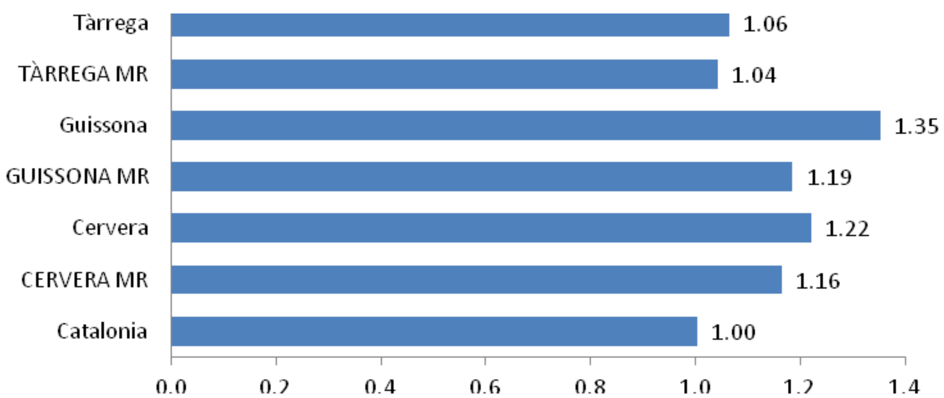
Each of the three towns analysed, according to 2001 data, have a concentration of jobs higher than the weight in terms of population in the respective MR (Fig. 3.48). This indicator, in conjunction with the E-R ratio illustrated in Figure 3.49, shows that all of them play the role of productive centre in their own MR.[18]

Figure 3.48 - Population and jobs distribution with respect to MR, 2001



Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 census.

Figure 3.49 - Employment-residence (E-R) ratio[19], 2001



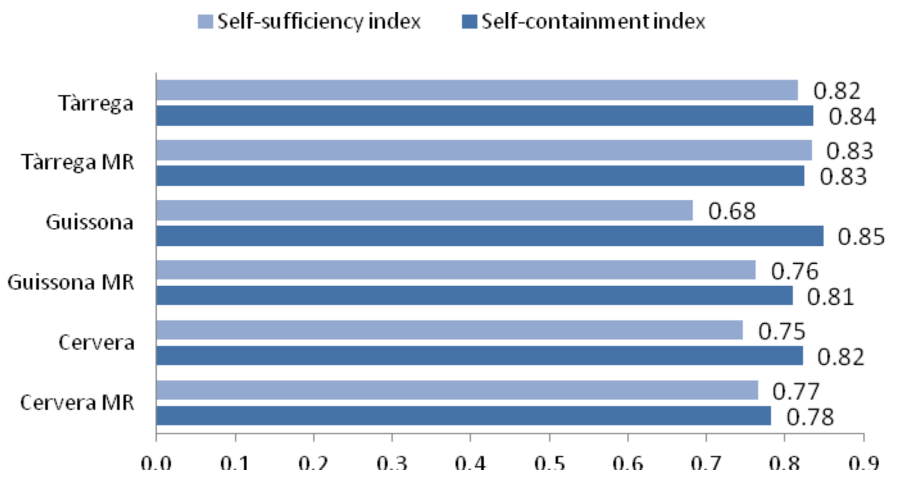
Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 census.

[18] It must be underlined that this calculation has been done with 2001 data. For this reason Cervera appears to have a strong concentration of jobs in its MR (it was before the closure of the big factory).

[19] Number of jobs in LAU2/Employed economically active population living in LAU2.

Figure 3.50 captures the self-sufficiency and self-containment indexes for each MR and town. The self-sufficiency index of Tàrrega (both town and MR) is especially high: more than 80% of local employment is covered by local residents. On the other hand, Cervera and Guissona presented lower levels of self-sufficiency in 2001: 0.68 and 0.75 respectively. The self-containment index is also high in Tàrrega, Cervera and Gussiona, which indicate a relatively low level of intermunicipal or interregional mobility. In all the areas considered approximately 80% of resident population work in the same municipality and/or MR.

Figure 3.50 – Self-sufficiency and self-containment indexes of the labour market, 2001



Source: Own elaboration with data from 2001 census.

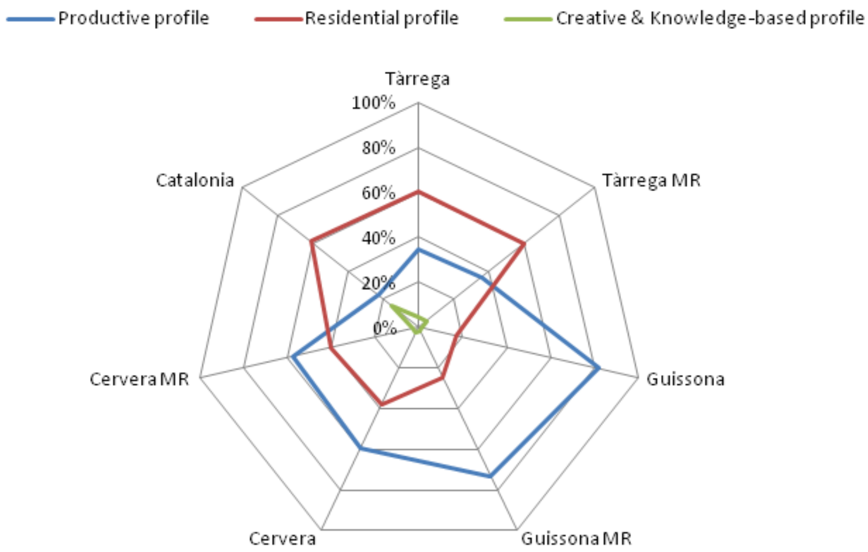
3.4.5 Economic structure and evolution

For the analysis of the current situation and recent evolution of the economic profiles we have considered data related to the distribution of employment and companies/sites (affiliation to Social Security centres) for both towns and microregions (whenever data are available) using selected NACE groups. The first picture that we get is presented in Figure 3.51: the distribution of employment by profiles (productive, residential and creative & knowledge-based) in 2011.

The first issue to highlight is the relatively high weight of the productive economy in the studied area. All the towns and municipalities have a weight of this profile higher than the average of Catalonia. Of course, Guissona presents the higher data (81.8%). Yet it is also remarkable that Cervera, both town (59.5%) and MR (57.4%), display a weight of employers in productive sectors above the average of Catalonia (23%). Tàrrega is the town (34.9%) and MR (35.7%) where this profile is less pronounced, but it is equally higher than Catalan average, and it is the only one where the MR has a more productive profile than the main town. The key role of the agriculture and the presence of industrial activities in the municipalities situated in the corridor of A2 highway help explain this data. On the other hand, Tàrrega has a weight of employment in the residential profile (60.4%, and 59.8% the MR) similar to the average of Catalonia (61%). It could thus be defined as a town mainly characterised by a residential economy, while Cervera and Guissona stand out as productive economies. The relative high weight of the residential profile in Tàrrega is explained by its role as centre of services (both public and private) and commerce for its county and surrounding areas, concentrating a number of activities of these sectors above the local demand.

A common situation for these towns and MR is the low dimension of creative and knowledge-based profile in term of employment: 2.6% in Cervera (both town and MR), less than 2% in Guissona town and MR, and 4.7% in Tàrrega (4.5% for its MR), in all cases a lower level of employment in this profile than the average of Catalonia (16%). This situation is common in the entire Ponent (western Catalonia) region, with the only exception of the capital, Lleida. But in this context it is also relevant to underline that Tàrrega has the higher weight of the creative profile in the area, in relative terms the double of Cervera and the triple of Guissona (and more than this proportion in absolute number of jobs).

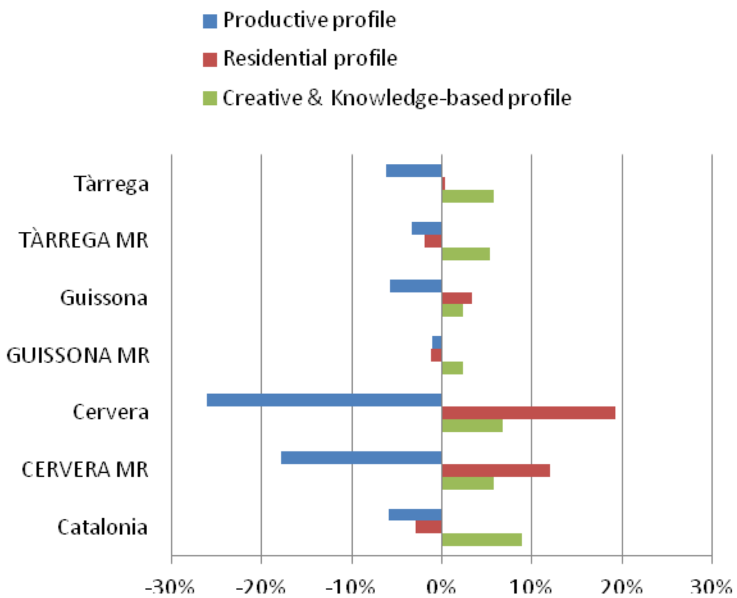
Figure 3.51 - Employment distribution by Profiles, 2011 (Weights)



Source: Social Security Affiliation data, December 2011.

The definition of the profiles needs to be scrutinized in the light of their recent evolution. Figure 3.52 shows the change of weights by profile. The most relevant issue emerging is that the demise of the productive profile has being lower than the average of Catalonia (with the exception of the particular case of Cervera) and the residential profile has achieved a relatively positive dynamic in the regional context. On the other hand, the performance of creative and knowledge-based sectors has been poor; Tàrrega was the main exception in this regard, performing like the whole of Catalonia. It is still far below the trends exhibited by larger towns and cities, but the tendency is to reduce the gap.

Figure 3.52 - Change in weights of employment profile structure, 2001-2011 (percentage points)



Source: Social Security Affiliation data, December 2001 and 2011

The evolution of these profiles in the last decade (see Table 3.12) presents notable differences between the different MR studied, and also between all of them and the average of Catalonia. Guissona appears, once again, as a story of success: all the profiles have achieved a positive balance and all of them with significant high values. Here, the productive profile, which was already important in 2001, has achieved a growth rate of 54% in the following decade. Cervera presents the opposite situation with a strong loss of employment in productive sector. Finally, Tàrrega presents a situation more similar to the average of Catalonia: a growth of creative and knowledge-based profile higher than the 100%, a small reduction of productive sectors, but a better performance of the residential profile.

Table 3.12 - Evolution of employment by economic profiles, 2001-2011 (growth rates)

	Productive profile	Residential profile	Creative & knowledge-based profile
Tàrrega	-7%	14%	155%
Tàrrega MR	6%	14%	156%
Cervera	-61%	4%	150%
Cervera MR	-44%	5%	164%
Guissona	54%	97%	378%
Guissona MR	52%	47%	273%
Catalonia	-18%	0%	136%

Source: Social Security Affiliation data, December 2001 & 2011

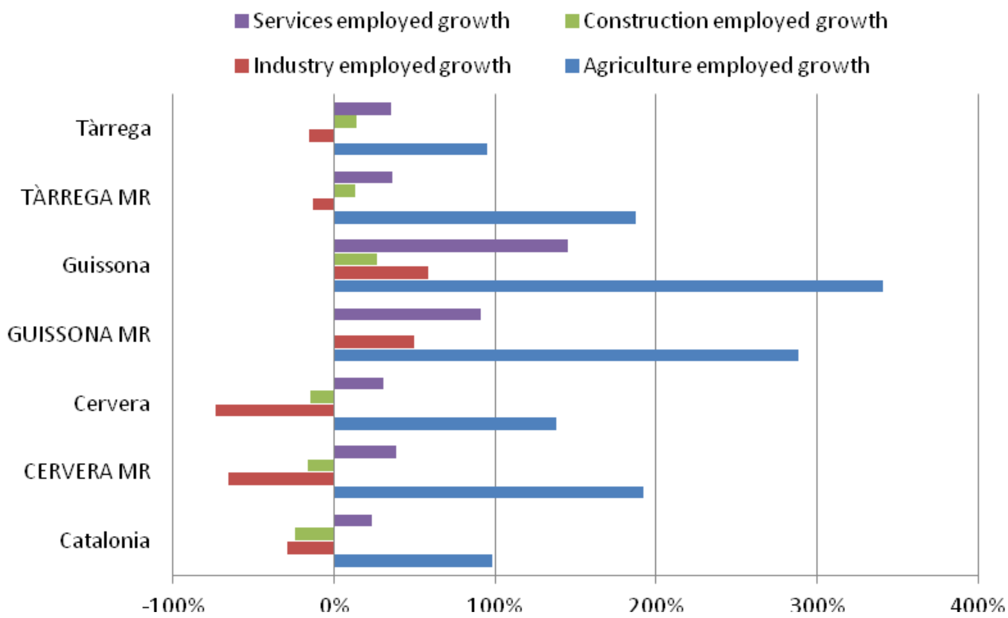
Figure 3.53 captures the change in total employment in the four main economic sectors in the period. The evolution registered related to Catalonia as a whole indicates some effects of different processes. First of all, the relatively poor growth of employment in a decade characterized by high population growth is explained by the recent impact of economic crisis and the ensuing destruction of jobs: in these ten years population growth has been 18.6% (15.7% for the active population), but employment growth has been only 6.7%.

The effects of the decline of the property market resulted in a drastic reduction of jobs in construction, even more apparent if we only consider the 2008-2011 period, which has concentrated the most intensive recession of employment. Secondly, the relative decrease of employment in industrial sector is related to the progressive tertiarisation of the Catalan economy since the early 1990s. This issue correlates with the positive growth of the service sector in the studied period rather than with the destruction of jobs caused by the economic crisis.

Finally, agriculture is the main sector in terms of employment growth. The impact of the crisis in terms of employment has been clearly lower in this sector in comparison with the others, and higher than the average of Catalonia in all the studied area, illustrating the strategic paper that this sector plays in this region.

From a general point of view, however, the growth rates of all sectors have been higher than the Catalan average. The exemption is the specific case of Cervera and its decline in manufacturing. In the case of Tàrrega, in addition to a positive evolution of the service and agriculture sectors, we underline the relative growth of construction sector, only detected if we take in care the 2001-2011 evolution, because the decline of this sector in the 2008-2011 period has been higher than the average of Catalonia.

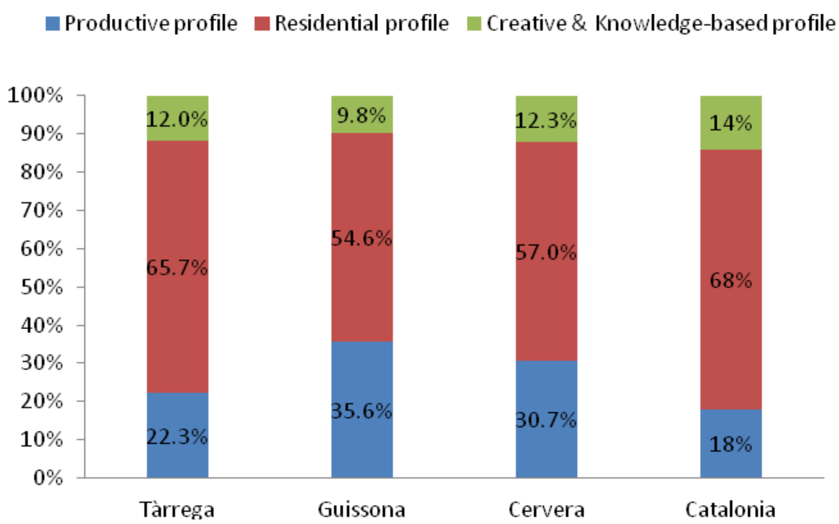
Figure 3.53 - Evolution of total employment by sectors, 2001-2011 (growth rates)



Source: Social Security Affiliation data, December 2001 & 2011.

A second point of the economic profile analysis is the evolution of the productive sites. There is no available statistical information about sites in very small towns in this period, so it has not been possible to calculate the evolution profiles of whole microregions; thus, we have only considered the data of the MR centres, and we obtain similar results than those obtained with the distribution of employment: in brief, the area is characterized by a significant weight of the productive profile. Tàrrega has the higher residential profile of the region, and the weight of creative and knowledge-based profile is lower than the average of Catalonia in all this area.

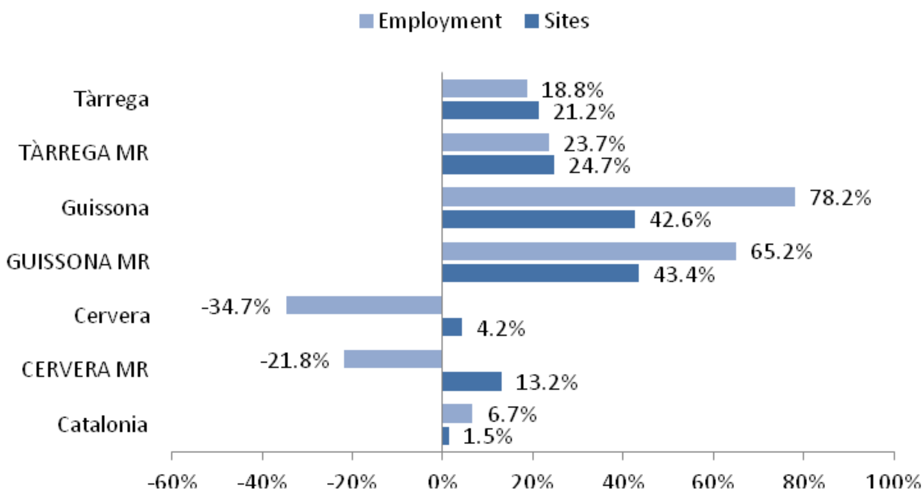
Figure 3.54 - Sites distribution by economic profiles, 2011 (weights)



Source: Social Security Affiliation centres, December 2011

The dimension of the productive profile is still larger in all the studied MR than the average of Catalonia. But it is interesting to underline that in all cases, and especially in Guissona, there is a clear reduction of the weight of this profile in comparison with the weight achieved in relation with number of employments. This divergence is explained by the presence of large industrial companies in this area. On the other hand, the weight of the residential and creative profiles increases in comparison with their size measured by employment. This situation is especially remarkable in the case of Tàrrega, which hosts a large number of micro-enterprises related to services and commerce, most of them situated in the city centre.

Figure 3.55 - Sites and total employment evolution, 2001-2011 (growth rates)

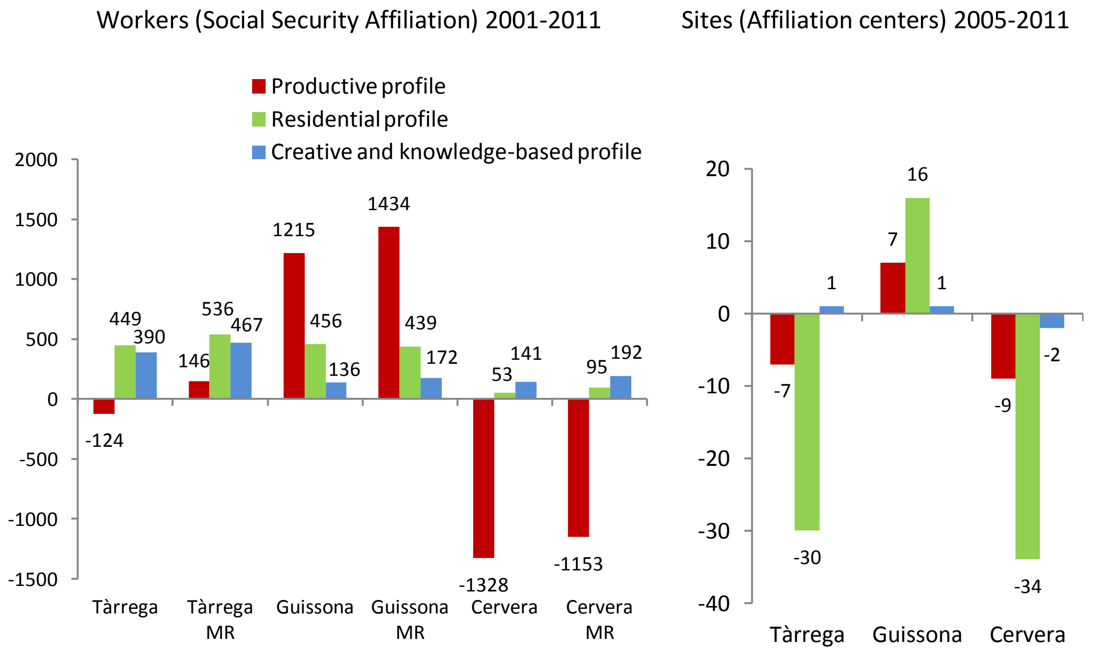


Source: Social Security Affiliation data & affiliation centers, December 2001 & 2011

Figure 3.55 provides an overview of the evolution of both variables – sites and employment – in the studied period. Confirming the previously illustrated data, it shows a better evolution of Tàrrega (both MR and town) than the average of Catalonia. Cervera and Guissona show extremely opposite situations. The first one could not offset the destruction of jobs in the large factory that closed down, while Guissona experienced the effects of a large company that continued to expand its recruitment.

Figure 3.56 presents these data in absolute numbers, presenting another significant issue. This is the remarkable good evolution of creative and knowledge-based profile in Tàrrega. The responsible of economic regeneration of the town council, interviewed, pointed to different explanations of this trend. The first one is that Tàrrega has the only high school of design and artistic creation in Lleida region (there are only two schools of this type in the whole Catalonia). In recent years, this favoured the creation of some companies in graphic and interior design, visual arts and related activities. The second explanatory element is the active policies of municipality and county councils to support young entrepreneurship. These include the provision of space for hosting new creative activities in a rehabilitated industrial building, which facilitated the implantation of five new creative and knowledge-based companies in the last two years. However, these data also underline one of the most problematic impacts of the crisis: the destruction of companies. Data related to changes between 2005 and 2011 display the negative evolution of residential and productive profiles in Tàrrega and Cervera. In the case of Tàrrega, the interviewees pointed out that the high number of micro-enterprises present in the town – and their impossibility to resist the effects of the crisis, mostly in terms of contracting demand and restrictions to credit – is a key aspect to explain the evolution of unemployment and declining of number of enterprises in recent years. For this reason the destruction of jobs and companies in 2011 and 2012 has been more intense in Tàrrega than in the average of Catalonia.

Figure 3.56 - Employment and sites by profile, absolute increments

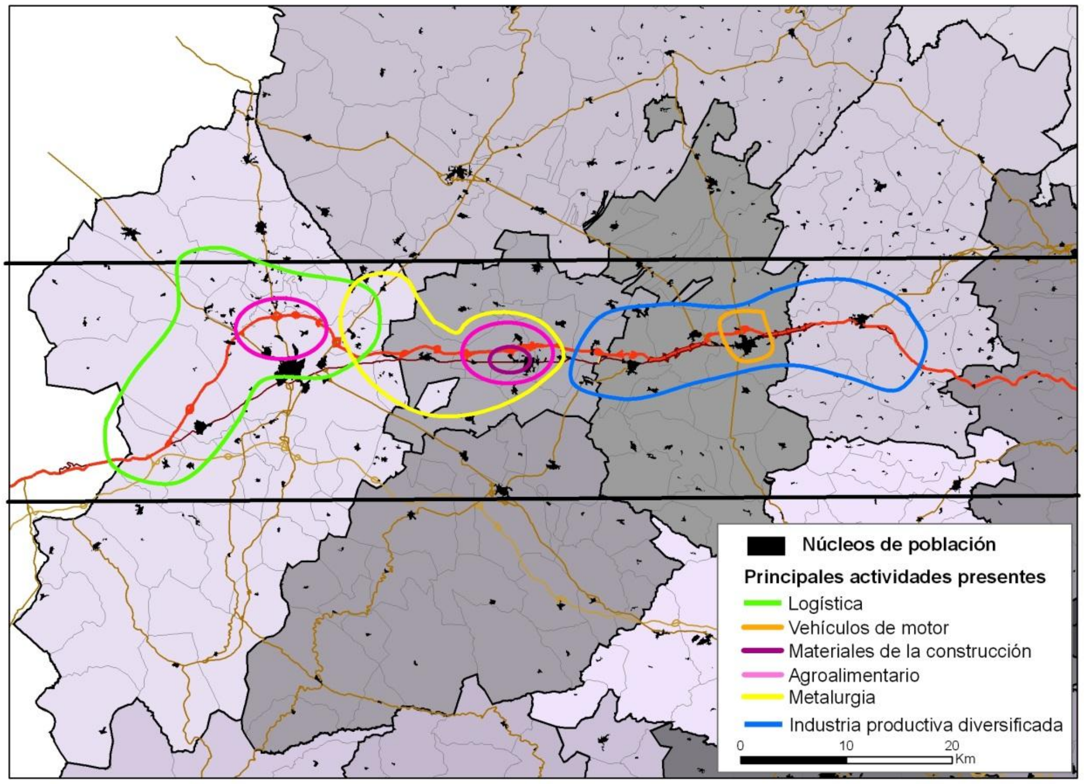


3.4.6 Policy issues

The Tàrrega MR is a complex one from the point of view of the governance structure: 11 of the 15 municipalities that compose the Tàrrega MR are part of the Urgell County; 13 of those belong also to the same Spatial Planning unit: *Ponent*, also known as *Terres de Lleida*. The other two municipalities (in Conca de Barberà county) are part of the Camp de Tarragona Spatial Planning unit.

Thus, to some extent, this MR, apart from its own centrality within the *Ponent* system, also plays a role of transition between Lleida and the Camp de Tarragona, but also between Lleida and the Central Catalonia region, which is an important fact to approach the policy context in the right tperspective. In fact, Tàrrega is a point of confluence of several of the main transport networks off the Barcelona metropolitan area. In addition to the previously mentioned A2 highway, other two mobility axes confluence in the surroundings of Tàrrega, the C14 (which connects Camp de Tarragona with Lleida region and the Pyrenees counties) and the C25 or Transversal Axis, the main highway in Catalonia outside of Barcelona, connecting directly the West and Centre of Catalonia with the French frontier. The area is served also by a railway line between Lleida, Manresa, Terrassa, Sabadell and Barcelona. In the next points we could see how this strategic situation proves a key element in recent spatial planning initiatives and regional development strategies.

Figure 3.58 - Main productive specializations in A2 corridor



Source: Gutiérrez and Paül, 2012.

In addition of these territorial aspects the main strength of Tàrrega is its relatively diversified economic basis in a context where agriculture plays a key role in local economies for its MR, but also for the surrounding areas. The changes experienced trough the recent crisis have reinforced the role of agriculture in relation of other sectors in the Tàrrega MR, and this sector has now achieved a renewed centrality: all the stakeholders interviewed pointed out that agriculture will be a key focus of economic regeneration efforts in the next years. This sector and the activities related with creativity and knowledge society have been the only ones that have not lost employment in recent years in the Tàrrega MR – a similar process occurred in most areas of Catalonia.

The town also concentrates a significant proportion of public and private services. It is interesting to underline the relevant number of services oriented to agricultural activities and companies – both public and private. The role of the agro-food industry is also relevant in Tàrrega. In addition to the biggest company, Borges (olive oil production and processing of nuts), there is a relevant network of micro-companies related to this sector. Besides, the biggest industrial company of the area – situated in Tàrrega too – develops engineering solutions for waste recollection, transport and treatment. Metallurgy and transport services related to agriculture are other activities with an important role both in MR and surrounding areas. The map in Figure 3.58 shows a distribution of the main productive sectors in the A2 corridor area. The Tàrrega MR is characterised by a diversified profile.

In addition, Tàrrega has been historically a commercial centre of this area. This role is still strong in the town, which acts as reference point for a more extensive area than the MR defined by the functional analysis. However, the decline of consumption related to the economic crisis had a deep impact on Tàrrega. Interviewers have explained that the significant presence of small commerce owned by elderly people could explain the difficulties to adapt to new requirements and, as a consequence, the growing number of ceased commerce firms and shops in the historical city centre. Most of the local development policies scrutinised above are then addressing the recovery of this sector.

Its strategic placement in relation to the Catalan transport networks and the availability of land with prices far lower than in the Barcelona, Camp de Tarragona and Central Catalonia regions have raised, during last decade, big expectations related to the capacity of the Tàrrega MR to attract activities from the main metropolitan regions of Catalonia. For this reason, the municipalities located along key corridors like the A2 highway have implemented expansive urban planning strategies with the aim to attract new industrial activities. Two remarkable cases are Tàrrega and Cervera, with 200 and 80 hectares planned for new industrial activities respectively. But the most relevant project planned for this area is a logistics platform of 45 hectares in the municipalities of Vilagrassa and Anglesola (both in Tàrrega MR), situated at the confluence between C14 and A2, and also with railway service to Barcelona. This was supposed to be a strategic project for the area, with an important impact in terms of employment; but the lack of private interest has stopped the project and some of the complementary public investments planned, as a new railway terminal for freight transport.

The improvement of the railway network is another large project for this region that has been recently stopped due to curtailed public funds. In 2005 the inclusion of the Transversal Railway Axis in the main spatial planning strategies of Catalonia was approved: all the regional planning documents refer to this project, which was also included in the Plan of Transport Infrastructures of Catalonia (2006-2026) and in the Urban Director Plan that reserved the land for the Transversal Railway Axis. This was expected to be a high-speed railway corridor that would connect Lleida and Girona before 2026 (involving six intermediate stations, one of which Tàrrega). The rail line could serve passenger and freight trains (in the latter case, at 100 and 120 km/h). The total length of the line planned, with the access to the different cities centres, would be 360 km and the amount of the investment would be over 6,000 M €. At the present moment, it is a project without date of execution.

The previously mentioned projects (logistics platform, provision of new spaces for productive activities or the new high-speed railway corridor) are good examples of the expectations generated in relation with the possibilities of this area to attract new activities. The size of the projects, which involve substantial public investment, is also explained by the previous period of availability or resources and easy financing at national and regional level.

This area is also affected by the largest infrastructural project related to agriculture developed in Catalonia in recent years: the Segarra-Garrigues channel. The construction of this new channel began in 2002, the first phase was ended on 2009 and, to date, the most relevant works have been concluded. This channel is 85 km long and it is expected to allow the irrigation of more than 70,000 hectares in *Pla de Lleida* area. This infrastructure supposes a global investment of 1,550 M€, which is the most important public investment in water infrastructure developed in Spain and the second public infrastructure by size in Catalonia – only overcome by the on-going project of a new underground line in Barcelona connecting with the new airport terminal.

Actually only 3,000 hectares of the 9,800 that could use water from this channel (2013 data) effectively do it. Otherwise, when all secondary channels will be concluded (more than 3,500 km) in response of EU regulations for areas with special environmental protection, more than 42,000 hectares will have restrictions in use of water not provided in the initial plans. There is a strong local controversy about the effectiveness of this big investment and the capacity of local micro-agricultural firms to pay the cost of this water services. Nevertheless, all available studies point out that the expected impact in general terms is going to be significant, making it a key element for the future of the agricultural sector in this region and the transformations of the landscape. According to the Catalan Government, the Segarra-Garrigues represents a unique opportunity for the development of Lleida region not only for irrigation but also to benefit the agro-food industry; it will also contribute to stabilise demographic levels in rural areas and reduce regional disparities.

Table 3.12 summarizes the different urban and spatial planning initiatives that affect the microregion and shows also the main local and regional development policies implemented. As we have mentioned previously, thirteen of the fifteen municipalities of the MR are covered by the regional spatial planning unit of *Ponent* or *Terres de Lleida*. This kind of planning is used in Catalonia as an instrument to define the supramunicipal territorial strategies, delimitate the main land uses and general disposing of future infrastructures. In this planning tool it is defined a brief territorial strategy too.

The area covered by the *Ponent* spatial planning region represents the 18% of Catalonia and counts 364,173 inhabitants (according to 2011 census). This region is characterised by the predominance of extensive land uses and relatively low levels of urbanisation in relation to the whole of Catalonia. Another specific element is the strong presence of agricultural activities, which has generated a uniquely varied landscape. The Partial Territorial Plan of *Ponent* addresses these aspects and defines specific high-level conservation measures of environmentally valuable spaces in this area.

On the other hand, some towns of this region have experienced a relevant economic transformation linked to industrial, logistics and new service activities, and also a deep impact related to recent urban growth. In addition of the capital, Lleida, the plan defines other relevant sub-centers. The networked towns of Tàrrega, Cervera, Guissona and Agramunt are four of a total of nine secondary nodes of this region. They play a key role in the main goal of increasing horizontal cooperation in this region and strengthening territorial networks. A strategic objective of the plan is to concentrate future growth in these sub-centres in order to preserve agricultural activities and related land uses and landscape around smaller centres, generating strong local synergies that could reinforce the attraction of economic activities to this area. In this context, the plan also underlines the role of A2 corridor as a key element to define the spaces capable of attracting population and economic activities.

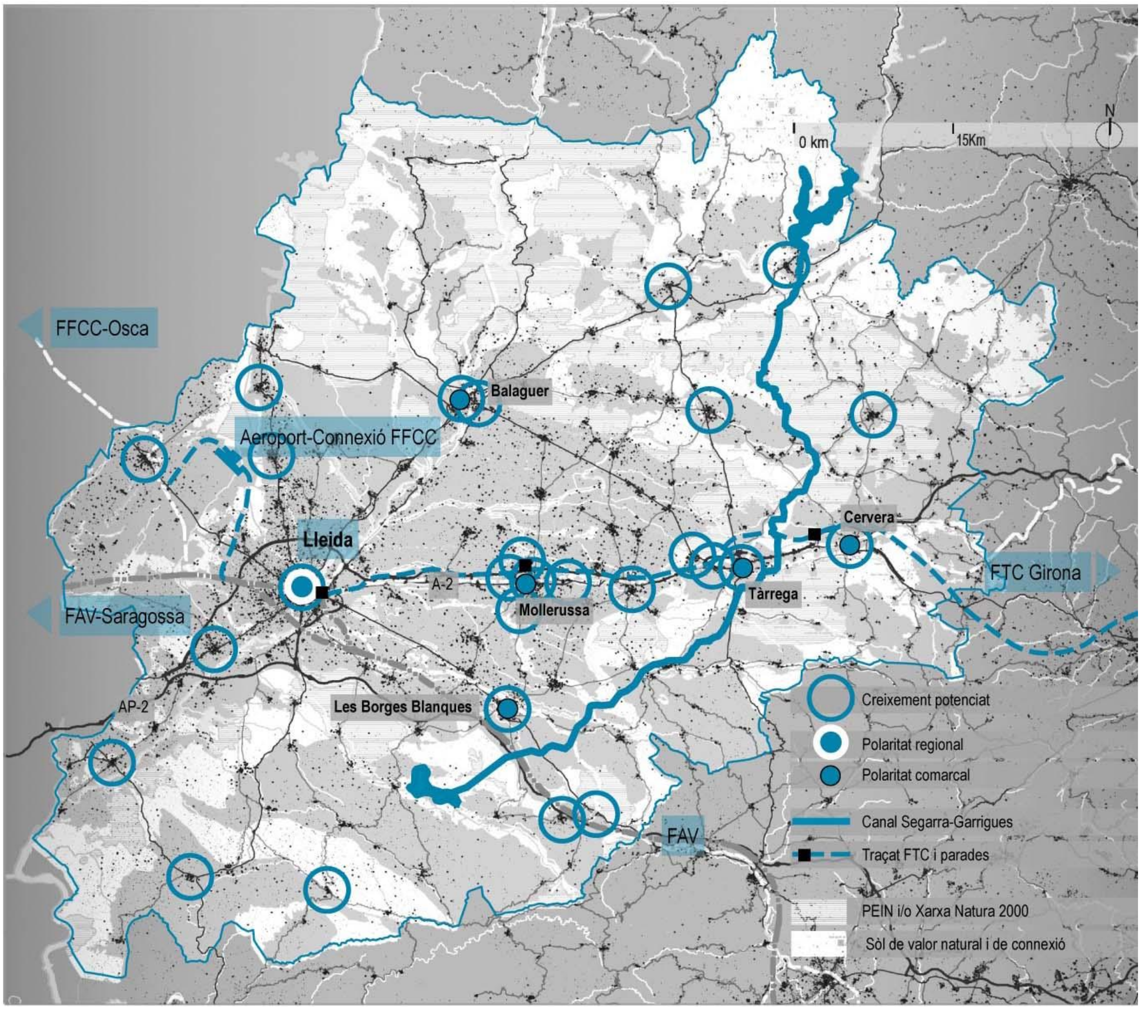
Table 3.12 – Policy documents affecting the Tàrrega case study area

Name of plan/ policy initiative	Thematic area	Driver	Relation with MR
Partial territorial plan of Ponent (*Pla Territorial Parcial de Ponent*)	Spatial planning	Public - Catalan Government	Indirect
Sectoral territorial housing plan (*Pla Territorial Sectorial d'Habitatge*)	Housing	Public - Catalan Government	Indirect
Municipal Urban Plan of Tàrrega (*Pla d'Ordenació Urbana Municipal de Tàrrega*)	Urban planning	Municipality	Direct
Local Agenda 21 Urgell	Environment	Urgell County	Direct
Leader program Urgell - Pla d'Urgell	Rural development	Urgell and Pla d'Urgell Counties	Direct
Transport Infrastructure Plan of Catalonia (*Pla d'Infraestructures de Transports de Catalunya - PITC 2006-2026*)	Transport	Public - Catalan Government	Indirect
Strategic Plan for the Development and Employment in the Urgell county (*Pla Estratègic pel Desenvolupament i l'Ocupació de la comarca de l'Urgell*)	Local development	Urgell County	Direct

In this context Tàrrega is defined as a key settlement for territorial balance. For this reason the regional spatial planning document assigns to Tàrrega a potential of growth above the average of the region, which would strengthen further its centrality. This expectation requires the provision of sufficient land for new economic activities (and housing) in Tàrrega and in the surrounding municipalities.

In the following map we can see the area covered by this regional plan. The towns with more growth potential are marked by a circle, and are notably concentrated along the A2 corridor. In addition of this, the map represents the largest projects for this area: the previously mentioned Segarra-Garrigues channel and the planned Transversal high-speed railway.

Figure 3.59 - Regional spatial planning - Ponent Region



Source: Catalan Society of Spatial Planning. http://territori.scot.cat

Similarly, the municipal plan approved in 2005 and in service since 2006 was conceived in a period of expectation of high growth. It foresaw a growth of 11,000 inhabitants in the following 20 years (growing from 14,000 inhabitants in 2005 to 25,000 in 2025). For this reason, the plan earmarks 190 hectares for housing, where 10,000 new dwellings would be built, in addition of 200 hectares of industrial activities and 50 hectares for public services and green areas. In the current context of depression, it is an oversized planning, which could be explained in the context of property boom and economic growth experienced in Spain during the last decade. The growth achieved by the town in the following years (2005-2013), both in terms of population and new economic activities, has been clearly inferior to such expectations: approximately 3,000 inhabitants and a decreasing of number of companies.

In relation to this expectation the construction of new housing during the last decade has been intensive. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the level of new built housing per 1,000 inhabitants has been clearly higher than the average of Catalonia, and also higher than any other similar town in the region of Lleida. As a consequence of this and of the recent changes in property market in Spain, Tàrrega has now an oversized housing stock, which is characterised by a percentage of vacant housing higher than the Lleida region or Catalonia average – 9 and 13 points above each respectively (Table 3.13).

Table 3.13 - Vacant housing in relation to total housing (2011)

	Total housing	Vacant housing	% Vacant Housing
Tàrrega	8,627	2,118	24.6%
Cervera	4,590	872	19.0%
Guissona	2,517	239	9.5%
Ponent – Plana de Lleida	184,230	28,522	15.5%
Catalonia	3,863,381	448,356	11.6%

Source: Own elaboration with data from 2011 census.

Most relevant projects for local development have been developed by various supra-municipal and regional entities, which supposed the consolidation of new models of governance for horizontal cooperation.

The Leader project (2007-2013), co-financed by the EU ERDF Funds, is jointly directed and coordinated by Urgell and Pla d'Urgell county councils. The Consortium *Leader Urgell - Pla d'Urgell* includes a total of 37 municipalities with a population of approximately 70,000 inhabitants. In this period, the Consortium has been working to implement the measures related to a regional development strategy focusing on the following objectives:

- Improvement of the processes of transformation and marketing of agricultural products. The main objective is to support processes of modernization and improvement of quality and visibility of local products, with the aim to increasing the competitiveness of local enterprises in the agricultural sector and especially to help micro-enterprises to become more viable. In this context, one key line of work is the support of organic production, not only focused to the production processes, but also on distribution – i.e. strengthening the sale of local ecological products.
- Supporting the creation and empowerment of micro-enterprises, especially in regard to projects that may contribute to diversify and strengthen the local economic base, whenever oriented to the creation of new jobs and the consolidation of the emerging industrial sector in this area.
- Promotion of tourism activities, with the support to projects of creation of micro, small and medium enterprises oriented to the development and/or improvement of tourist services, with a special focus on those that promote local gastronomy as a quality brand.
- Conservation and improvement of rural (cultural) heritage. Through this the program supports the rehabilitation of selected areas of historical town centres, restoring the traditional architecture and improving the urban quality of town centres.

In addition to horizontal cooperation between local and regional entities, in the opinion of interviewed stakeholders, the programme has contributed to strengthen the commitment and participation of local economics agents to the definition and implementation of a local development strategy. The LAG (Local Action Group – the entity responsible of the ordinary management of the programme) is composed by a majority of private agents and had become a key forum to open the decision making process. A good indicator of local community involvement is the growing number of applications for the support of activities related to the enhancement of production processes and distribution in the agricultural sectors, and the creation of new tourist services.

The improvement of tourist assets and products is a strategy which is developed also by other regional projects. The most relevant is the development and enhancement of the "Cistercian Route", which was created in 1989. The aim of this route is to generate synergies between three ancient Cistercian monasteries: Santes Creus, Poblet and Vallbona de les Monges, which have a high historical architectonical value. These monasteries were founded in the XII century and constitute one of the most important examples of Cistercian settlements in Europe. The Route covers 65 municipalities in three different counties from the regions of Ponent and Camp de Tarragona, crossing over to the Autonomous Community of Aragon. The monasteries and their connecting routes develop a tourist product based on heritage, culture, nature, landscape and gastronomy (especially wine and local agricultural products). In addition to classic familiar and rural tourism, the area is seeking to attract visitors interested in hiking and mountain biking. The area is crossed by the GR175, and forms part of the large European network of footpaths.

This kind of tourism promotion is also developed through another supra-municipal and supra-county (4 counties) network: the "Corb Valley". It is a less developed programme – both in terms of institutional and economical support – focusing on gastronomy (especially olive oil and wine) cultural, heritage and landscape as resources for a growing tourist interest in this area. But it is still in a secondary position in relation with other consolidated rural tourism destinations in the Catalan interior.

Yet the most consolidated activity, in terms of visitors and synergies created, is the atre Fair of Tàrrega (FiraTàrrega). Founded in 1981, is an international event for performing arts that takes place every year, well known for the high number of street art activities that it hosts. It has become an international reference also in terms of local tourist brand, with a deep impact on the local economy. This event has also helped to construct an image of Tàrrega related to contemporary culture and has become a key tool to support emerging artists and companies, contributing to the consolidation and internationalisation of the local creative economy.

In addition to these regional development policies, the municipality of Tàrrega has focused his actions on a partnership action (with local chamber and enterprises association) for the empowerment of local micro-enterprises, especially those dedicated to commercial activities. As has been pointed out in chapter 3.4.5, the closure of many in companies, and the subsequent growth of unemployment, has intensified in the last two years, going worse than Catalonia as a whole. Thus, to support this key sector is today a major challenge.

<u>Local stakeholders interviewed</u>

Rosa M. Mora, President of Urgell County Council

Jaume Granyó, Executive manager, Urgell County Council

Esther Corvella, Technical expert of Tourism and Local Development, Urgell County council

Carles Pascual, Councillor of Economic Development of Tàrrega City council and Councillor of Tourism, Urgell County Council

Carles Domingo, Technical expert of Economic Policies and Entrepreneurship, Tàrrega City Council

4. CONCLUSIONS: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND GENERAL INSIGHTS ON SMST

4.1 Comparative analysis

In this last section, we'll try to make sense of the evidence provided by our multi-scale analysis of territorial structures, trends, and relations in Spain, focusing especially on the general analysis of Catalonia and the three sub-case studies included in the previous chapter. The ultimate objective is to gain insights on trends and challenges that are common among small-medium sized towns in their territorial context, or factors that differentiate between them, and to provide an outlook of policy initiatives and territorial strategies directly or indirectly addressing them that can be considered successful in the broader approach of this research project. We will follow the general structure provided at project level.

4.1.1 Territorial contexts of micro-level case studies, compared

The three micro-level case studies have been selected among municipal entities that coincided, totally or partially, with a SMST polygon from the morphological analysis conducted in RA2 of the TOWN project, and at the same time have been identified as employment centres of specific micro-regions as in the functional analysis illustrated in Chapter 2 of this report. We also looked for three sufficiently distinct cases as far as the geographical location and their role in the urban systems was concerned.

Vilafranca del Penedès is a the town with the clearest "urban" attributes, being closely knit in the metropolitan system of Barcelona, as shown by its relatively low self-containment (0.36) and self-sufficiency rates (0.7) in comparison to the other micro-level cases (Cambrils and Tàrrega achieve more than 0.8 for each rate). As such, it demonstrates the existence of agglomeration effects on SMSTs within a metropolitan system, but at the same time is the administrative, functional and economic capital of an autonomous system (Penedès) recognised by the planning legislation of Catalonia. The relative good accessibility and provision of transport infrastructures in comparison with other SMSTs of the region also helps to explain its relation with surrounding areas. The ratio of the number of jobs per inhabitant is also lower than the other two cases. But this situation is not only explained by a residential role in relation with the whole metropolitan system: this SMST is a centre of a MR with a clear productive profile. Local development policies are oriented to the consolidation of this identity, both in terms of economy (the wine-landscape cluster) and functional autonomy, with the strategic objective of consolidate its role of sub-regional centre with a intermediation function between the periphery of the Barcelona system and the Camp de Tarragona region.

Cambrils is part of a networked metropolitan system that includes two HDUC (Tarragona and Reus), but it is also part of a high-density coastal urban system organised around the tourist economy. The relations of Cambrils with this regional structure are characterised by the overlapping of horizontal and complementary network functions to the classical hierarchical links with Tarragona and Reus. In the last two decades Cambrils has been emerged as the third node of this urban system in terms of population, economic dynamism and functional centrality. The consolidation of tourism as a key sector in the area has assigned to coastal urban settlements a renewed centrality. In this context, Cambrils achieved a central (and specialised) role. Local development policies are oriented to reinforce this trend, and the spatial planning strategy has provided a key role to coastline settlements in Camp de Tarragona region.

Tàrrega is the smallest case in terms of population. It is a sub-regional centre, networked with other SMST, in a low density region. Its role in this kind of region is not only as employment centre; it is also an administrative, service, commerce and infrastructural hub. The most recent public policy initiatives are oriented to strengthen this centrality. The regional spatial planning strategy assigns to Tàrrega one of the highest growth potentials in the Lleida Region. Besides, two of the largest and most strategic recent public investment efforts in Catalonia directly affect this town: the transversal axis highway and the Segarra-Garrigues channel (the infrastructure work with the biggest budget in Catalonia after the extension of the high speed railway network).

Thus, all three cases are stories of towns characterised by "intermediate" size and functions within their territorial context, ranging from a SMST, Vilafranca, which cannot be analysed in isolation from the metropolitan system to which it is part but – also thanks to specific planning initiatives – is consolidating its specific role in it; to a town, Cambrils, which is a specialised node in tight metropolitan network, especially considering its morphological structure; and finally to a small county capital, Tàrrega, that achieved a certain primacy within a rural context that is typical of "market towns", but that potentially thrives from improved accessibility and has the ambition to consolidate and diversify its economy face to the slumps generated by the crisis. In each case, we can identify some elements of tension – and in a few instances the potential for synergies – between the positions of these three towns in the broader urban systems, sometimes consolidated by general regional projects, and the ambitions to strengthen their centrality at the local level.

4.1.2 Demographic and social aspects of micro-level case studies, compared

The deep changes in population dynamics experienced in Spain in the last decade are reflected in the micro-level case studies. All of them are characterised by fast population growth, and the role of immigration in this process is paramount. Between 2001 and 2008, Catalonia achieved an annual population growth rate of 2.3%, but it peaked at 3%, 6.8% and 3.8% respectively in Vilafranca, Cambrils and Tàrrega. Most such growth is accounted for by external immigration rather than natural demographic growth, though the patterns and composition of migratory flows is rather diverse throughout the Catalan territory, and also between the three case study SMSTs. The strong growth of population in this period, and the expectations for the years to follow, are closely related to the relentless expansion of the housing stock, especially in coastal and touristic areas. That was at the same time one of the determinants of the financial crisis (though the real credit crunch hit relatively late the Catalan banking system) and a major factor of transformation of the economy and the landscape of the Catalan territory as elsewhere in Spain, first inflating the construction sector and the unskilled migration related to it, then deflating employment and producing a reverse trend for migration in the latter part of the period.

Table 3.14 summarises the main demographic and housing development trends of these SMSTs in relation to their territorial context, comparing them, as we did in the cases of Ch. 3, with their own micro-regions, the other MR centres related to them, and other SMST in their proximity. The symbols the relative magnitude of differences in values for each indicator considered with the territories of reference.

The first evidence that could be extracted from the table is that SMSTs have achieved a growth rate above the regional average in 2001-2011. This could be explained by two factors: (1) the intensification of decentralisation and suburbanisation processes (a process started in the 1980s and accelerated in the 1990s), which has supposed the attraction of residents from other areas, and (2) the arrival of new immigration from non-OECD countries higher than the regional average. In 2011, the foreign residents of Vilafranca were 18.5%, thus just above the Catalan average of 17.1%; this share was higher in Cambrils (23.1%); and in Tàrrega (21.8%). The growth of the foreign population was also higher than the Catalan average in all three of them, and especially in Cambrils, in a context in which immigration levels have been rather strong in all three towns and especially the foreign-born component.

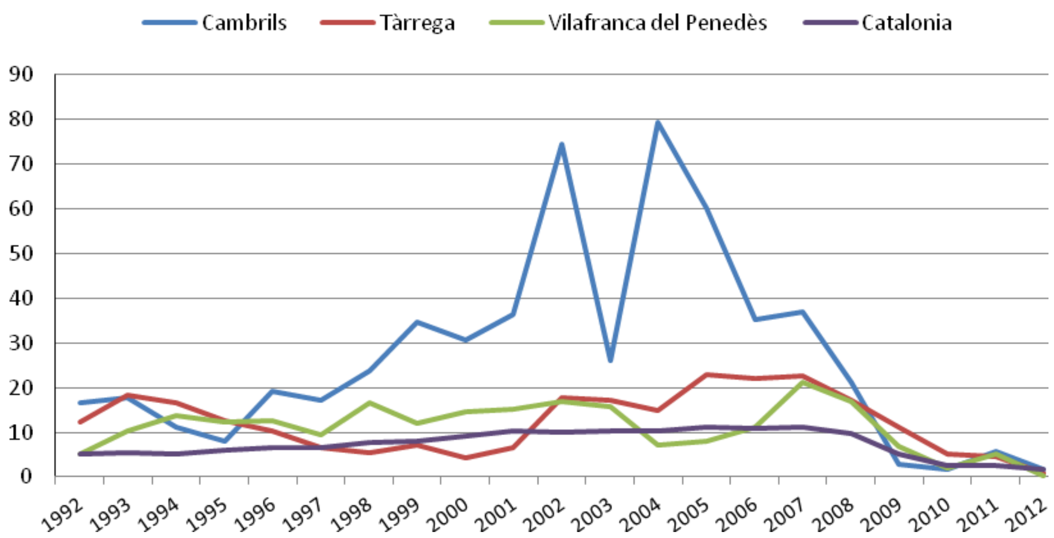
Table 3.14 – Performance trends of micro-level case study towns in their territorial context: socioeconomic indicators

	Vilafranca del Penedès with respect to:					**Cambrils** with respect to:					**Tàrrega** with respect to:				
	own MR	networked MR centres	agglomerated MR centres	other SMST (non MRC in case	Total case study region	own MR	networked MR centres	agglomerated MR centres	other SMST (non MRC in case	Total case study region	own MR	networked MR centres	agglomerated MR centres	other SMST (non MRC in case	Total case study region
DEMOGRAPHY															
Pop. Growth 2001-2011	−		+ +	−	+	=	+		=	+	+	−			**+**
Dependency rates 2011	=		=	=	=	=	−		=	−	−	+			**=**
Growth of dependency 2001-2011	=		+	=	+	=	=		+ +	+	+	+			**−**
Immigration level 2011	+		=	+	=	=	+		+ +	+ +	+	−			**+**
Growth of immigration from OECD 2001-2011	=		−	=	=	=	+ +		+ +	+ +	+	−			**+**
Immigration from non-OECD 2001-2011	+		+	+	+	=	−		−	+	=	−			**=**
HOUSING															
Growth of housing 2001-2011	− −		+ +	+	+ +	=	+ +		=	=	+	=			**+**
Growth of vacant housing 2001-2011	+		+	=	+	=	+		=	+	+	+ +			**+**

Within this general trend we find some differences between the three towns. Tàrrega has achieved a growing rate above its MR (an also above Catalan average), but Vilafranca has lost 2 perceptual points in relation with its MR. At the same time, Vilafranca grew more than Barcelona (but less than other SMSTs in this area). This is consistent with the suburbanisation process that took place in Catalonia during the early 2000s, driven by property proce differentials, both at the scale of metropolitan system (from Barcelona two medium-sized towns in the region) and at the local scale (from secondary centres to the surrounding smaller municipalities). In the case of Tàrrega, the low population density and the lack of key services (public and private) in the MR explain instead the relative concentration of population in the employment centre. Cambrils population growth has been substantial and above that of the larger cities in the metropolitan network of the Camp de Tarragona, but, as will be argued below, mostly driven by "exogenous" immigration related to tourism, lifestyle migration, and the availability of secondary housing. In general, however, the SMSTs considered in the three micro-level case study areas had a population dynamics above that of other MR centres in Catalonia that are not SMSTs.

In regard to the population structure, it should be considered that whereby the immigrant population is characterised by a relatively young age structure, this tends to lower dependency: this occurred in Tàrrega, which managed to decrease its high dependency at the beginning of the decade (typical of rural areas), to align with the Catalan average. Instead both in Vilafranca and Cambrils dependency has grown in 2001-2011 above the Catalan trend. The trends in Cambrils can be explained by the exceptional attractiveness of this town for lifestyle migration, which tends to represent an older, non-working population, especially proceeding from wealthy countries, while in the same period the capacity to attract a young unskilled workforce and absorb it in the mature tourist sectors has been below the average trends of the case study area, providing again evidence of an up-scaling process of Cambrils as a resort town. The young unskilled foreign population, however, was also the most affected by unemployment growth. In spite of the important challenges for social cohesion and integration that this provoked, the cuts in public budgets undertaken especially since 2010 have reduced dramatically the capacity of local and regional governments to respond with adequate social policies. Indeed, all social indicators nuance a scenario of growing poverty and inequality both in large cities and SMSTs.

Figure 3.59 - Built houses per 1,000 inhabitants, 1992-2012



Unsurprisingly, a similar dynamics is observed for housing construction. During the last decade, in a context defined by the property market bubble, the production level in our three SMSTs (new housing per 1,000 inhabitants) has been higher than the regional average, with Cambrils well above the rest. Between 2002 and 2006 the ratio has been seven times higher than the Catalan average (see Figure 3.60). The relatively high level of Tàrrega is also remarkable: its rate doubles the Catalan average between 2002 and 2008, which, for a rural market town, is outstanding, and has produced one of the highest shares of unsold, vacant housing stock in Catalonia at the end of the decade. Globally, the highest provision of new housing in the 2001-2011 period, however, is observed in Vilafranca (which nevertheless is overcome by its hinterland).

4.1.3 Socio-economic dynamics of micro-level case studies, compared

All three sub-cases act as employment centres of their respective microregion system. But it is relevant to underline the different economic specialisation of each one, its shifting relation within their territorial context and, finally, the different strategies pursued, especially since the deepening of the economic crisis in the last part of the 2000s decade.

Table 3.15 again compares the main trends in the micro-level case study areas within their territorial contexts in regard to economic and social indicators. Vilafranca is the “most similar" with the respect to the whole of Catalonia in terms of its economic structure, while Cambrils is the most residential and Tàrrega the most "productive" of the three; Tàrrega also has the less pronounced knowledge-based profile. In terms of their evolution, Vilafranca, and, to a lesser degree, Tàrrega, have become more residential-oriented during the last decade compared to Catalonia as a whole, while Cambrils has become decidedly less residential in the period. Looking also at the differential performances with respect to the other territorial ambits included in this exercise, we can interpret these trends in the following way: Vilafranca and Tàrrega have strengthened their residential centrality with respect to their functional hinterland (and in the case of Vilafranca, also with respect to its metropolitan context), also as a result of specific policies fostering "residential" functions. Cambrils instead has actively pursued a diversification strategy that has diluted the importance to the tourist sector, in line with the rest of this territory which has instead kept going and in some cases strengthened its productive economy. In this respect it is worth noting that of the three towns, Cambrils is the only one that managed to increase its "creative profile", something that could be attributed to endogenous changes in mature tourist destinations undergoing immigration-driven urbanisation and diversification of the original "core" product.

In the case of Tàrrega there are strong synergies between agricultural activities in the surrounding area (mainly fruit and cereal production and animal husbandry sectors) and the economic profile of the town. In addition of the agro-food industry and related activities, Tàrrega also plays a role of service and administrative centre of a larger area than its MR. This provides to the town a significant number of jobs in service sector. There is a strong public commitment to the agriculture sector in this region, with significant investments in infrastructure and local development programmes based on the synergies created from these sectors. A similar situation is faced by Vilafranca del Penedès, where agriculture plays a key role, but in this case related to a consolidated cluster of wine production and related activities that extend to environmental management and tourism.

Nevertheless, the evolution of economic indicators of both towns has been divergent in recent years. Tàrrega experienced a better response to economic decline between 2008 and 2010, but in 2011 and 2012 the destruction of jobs and enterprises has been faster than the Catalan average. Vilafranca has gone the opposite way, with a relatively positive outlook in recent years. There are various elements in Tàrrega that could help to explain this situation: (1) a higher growth of construction sector in previous years, which has supposed in recent years a faster destruction of jobs and enterprises; (2) less capacity to attract new industrial and logistic companies than expected due to the lack of continuity of regional strategies for lack of funds; (3) a higher level of low-skilled foreign population (six percent points above the Catalan average), especially vulnerable to the growth in unemployment; (4) a relatively higher weight of SME, which in the long term showed not to sustain the effects of the credit crush produced by the crisis.

Table 3.15 – Performance trends of micro-level case study towns in their territorial context: socioeconomic indicators

	Vilafranca del Penedès with respect to:					**Cambrils** with respect to:					**Tàrrega** with respect to:				
	own MR	networked MR centres	agglomerated MR centres	other SMST (non MRC in case study	Total case study region (Catalonia)	own MR	networked MR centres	agglomerated MR centres	other SMST (non MRC in case study	Total case study region (Catalonia)	own MR	networked MR centres	agglomerated MR centres	other SMST (non MRC in case study	Total case study region (Catalonia)
ECONOMIC STRUCTURE AND EVOLUTION															
Productive profile 2011 (share of workers)	–		=	–	=	=	–		=	–	=	–			+
Residential profile 2011 (share of workers)	+ +		=	+	=	=	=		=	+	=	+			=
Creative / knowledge-based profile 2011 (share of workers)	=		–	=	=	=	–		=	–	=	+			– –
Change of weight productive profile, 2001-2011	+		=	+	=	=	=		+	+ +	–	+			=
Change of weight residential profile, 2001-2011	–		+ +	–	+ +	=	=		–	– –	+	– –			+
Change of weight creative / knowledge-based profile, 2001-2011	=		– –	=	–	=	=		=	=	=	=			–
Change of n. of firms, 2005-2011	–		+ +	=	+ +	=	=		=	+ +	–	–			+ +
SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND PERFORMANCE															
Tertiary educated pop. 2001	=		– –	=	=	=	–		+	=	=	=			–
E-R ratio 2001	=		=	=	=	=	=		=	=	=	–			=
Growth of active pop. 2001-2011	–		+ +	–	+	=	+		=	+ +	+	–			+
Growth of local job market (employment) 2001-2011	=		+ +	+	+	=	–		=	+	=	=			+ +
Growth of unemployment 2001-2011	–		+ +	=	+ +	=	+		+	+	=	=			+

On the other hand, Vilafranca's profile is mainly residential (69%), but the town is surrounded by municipalities with a strongly productive economy (industry and agriculture sectors, related to wine cluster) – the Vilafranca MR as a whole almost reaches 40% in its productive profile, more than doubling the Catalan average. This has provided to the MR a better capacity to respond to recent economic challenges. The agriculture sector is the only one that has generated new jobs (in absolute terms) in recent years also in the Tàrrega MR, but its size is not sufficient to compensate the loss of jobs in other sectors.

Thus, Vilafranca provides a good example of interdependence between economic sectors. In this case, the wine sector supposes an engine not only for agriculture or commerce activities. There is a strong strategy focused on the impulse of tourism and leisure sector related to gastronomy, wine landscape and cultural heritage. This links are still thin in Tàrrega, where the development of tourist activities related to landscape and agriculture activities are modest. However, there is now a consolidated strategy based on culture and heritage as engines for a burgeoning rural tourism.

The third micro-level case study, Cambrils, presents a rather different economic structure from the other two, being especially focused on tourism and services, and a more positive performance outlook. Its profile is defined as primarily residential, more pronouncedly so than the other cases and also than the Catalan average; this said, we attribute this primacy especially to the "residential tourism" economy, which is the personal services targeting the transient population of holiday makers in the Central Costa Daurada resorts and the second home owners. The main challenge or this SMST has been and still is to diversify its tourist profile, through a commitment to boost the synergies between the traditional "sea & sand" tourist product with culture, gastronomy, leisure, sports, and to base the competition strategy on innovation and creativity. An insightful example is the active role taken by local public and private stakeholders in the support of a R&D centre launched by the local university to enhance innovation and the sustainable development in the tourism sector through applied research, knowledge transfer, clustering development and advanced training. Another important issue for Cambrils has been the development of complementary productive specialisations.

All three towns have managed to contain the loss of firms with respect to their population in the study period compared with the Catalan average, showing a certain resiliency especially in the segment of small and microenterprises offsetting the loss of jobs in shrinking manufacturing sectors and construction, but in Vilafranca and in Tàrrega this resiliency is even stronger in other municipalities of the MR (confirming the relative specification of these centres as residential).

Looking at the socioeconomic trends, the starting situation of the three towns is approximately similar to that of the Catalan average both in terms of mobility and skills of the local workforce (with a slightly less educated population in the case of the rural marketplace of Tàrrega). The evolution of their socio-economic indicators has been above the Catalan average: the three towns have grown in terms of active population and localised jobs more than the Catalan average. In the case of Cambrils, the growth of active population is very high compared to the Catalan average, as the growth of jobs in Tàrrega. At the same time, though, all three towns register a strong growth of unemployment above (and in the case of Vilafranca, well above) the Catalan figure. This apparent paradox deserves interpretation. It can be gathered that the consolidation of the central role of Vilafranca and Tàrrega and their progressive transformation into employment centres have inflated the real estate bubble and attracted a population of unskilled workers that could not be absorbed (and in large part, were expelled from the job market) during the slowdown years of 2007-2011. In Cambrils, instead than unskilled workers there has been a strong immigration of "lifestyle" residents which, again, did not sustain employment of the resident population during the slump period.

As a conclusion, we can say that these SMST have been highly attractive as residential centres in the study period, though this did not per se result in a relative good performance in terms of employment; they performed on average better than centres of a superior hierarchical order, but activated interesting synergies with both networked centres and smaller municipalities in their functional area.

4.1.4 Governance issues of micro-level case studies, compared

The micro-level case studies present three different situations in terms of local development strategies and governance structures that sustain them, with few common elements that need to be taken into account:

- The distribution of competences for urban and spatial planning: the municipal level is responsible for urban planning, but supra-municipal planning guidelines are defined at regional level. The synergies between each level are crucial to understand territorial governance structures.

- Weak supra-municipal cooperation: this low level of cooperation is made evident in relation to spatial planning strategies. The microregion of Tàrrega, with many municipalities providing new land for industrial and logistic activities at the same moment – oversized in comparison with the demand – is a good example of this issue.

- Public-private partnerships: while the post-Olympic development of Barcelona's metropolitan area and its transition to a knowledge-based economy is considered a best practice in public-private cooperation, the rest of the Catalan territory does not offer outstanding examples of regional strategies with an equal commitment of public administration and companies. However each of our three micro-level case studies showcases small-scale but significant exceptions. The most relevant is represented by Cambrils with its consolidated climate of cooperation between private and public actors especially in relation to tourism development and clustering strategies. In Vilafranca, we have an example of multilevel partnership between the town and county councils, EU organisations and the wine and tourism sectors to define a unique role of this SMST as a wine tourism destination and the main hub of the Spanish and European network of wine cities. Besides, the cooperation between the wine sector and the public administration is at the centre of the regional development strategy – although still in relative isolation with the broader metropolitan strategy. In Tàrrega, strategic cooperation between the town and county levels and the cultural sector is still young but promises to position Tàrrega as a uniquely creative and attractive town in its regional setting.

- The low level of local community involvement and lack of effective ways of participation: this is a common issue of local development policies in Catalonia. New area-based programmes started in the 2000s introduce some changes in this respect, mainly in community involvement (i.e. urban regeneration programmes implemented in the framework of "Neighbourhood Law" or rural development programmes supported by EU Leader programmes).

The policy contexts of the three case studies are anyway strongly influenced by the administrative setting, which is complex at least for two of the three micro-level cases. The Vilafranca del Penedès local development strategy as we have seen before, thrives on sectorial synergies created around the wine sector, but also depends on the strengthening of its "intermediate" role between the Barcelona metropolitan area and the Camp de Tarragona region. The area is covered by two spatial planning units (Barcelona and Camp de Tarragona), but as a partially recognised regional/functional system has been recently developing its own territorial strategy. The consistency of these territorial contexts requires a strong multi-scalar approach, but there is still a lack of vertical cooperation.

Cambrils is enclosed between two territorial structures. First of all, it is part of Tarragona and Reus urban system and the spatial planning and regional development strategies are directed by Camp de Tarragona regional unit (regional spatial planning unit and regional strategic development plan). But, in addition of it, Cambrils is a key settlement of the Costa Daurada, a consolidated touristic destination. In this context the town is involved in various regional development policies based on tourism. This situation supposes a special situation in terms of governance: spatial planning issues at supra-municipal level are directed by regional (metropolitan) public policies, but the economic development policies are guided by the public-private partnership of municipalities of coastline (mainly Vila-seca, Salou and Cambrils). The strategy is based on synergies between different tourist attractions present in the area. It represents a good experience of cooperation between public and private stakeholders in promotion, innovation, investment, guided by the common objective of consolidating a cluster of tourism and leisure. The horizontal relations between different municipalities are based on a competition-cooperation strategy, with each municipalities specialised in different products.

Tàrrega finds itself in a local/regional context characterised by common territorial elements: economic structure, demographic trends and environmental features. In spite of this, the only official framework for supra-municipal cooperation at the scale of its functional area is the Urgell County. This entity is leading the regional development strategy with the cooperation of neighbouring counties, in relation to the smart-up and greening of the agriculture sector, the impulse to logistics and distribution, and the recovery of the industrial sector, which traditionally had a significant role in the area. In terms of governance, the area suffers from a lack of formal platforms for cooperation between public and private stakeholders. The main framework for public-private cooperation is the implementation agency of the Leader programme (which is shared by Urgell and Pla d'Urgell Counties) and the punctual actions undertaken by local commerce chambers.

4.2 General insights on the role of SMST in their territorial Context in Catalonia

The following points sum up the most important findings from this report:

Urban settlement system in Catalonia – the role of SMSTs

The main characteristics of the Catalan settlement system are the centrality and primacy of the Barcelona metropolitan region and the localisation along the coast of most urban areas. Approximately the 75% of the Catalan population lives within the first 20 kilometres from the coastal line, and 80% of these are in the Barcelona province. This data portray a situation of high concentration and deep territorial disparities in population.

However, in the last two decades, two complementary processes - demographic decentralisation and the consolidation of new patterns of mobility - have introduced relevant changes on such territorial structure, and have determined a new important role for SMSTs.

First, SMSTs have been at the forefront of demographic growth in Catalonia, which gained almost 1 million inhabitants between 2001 and 2011. In this period the population growth of SMSTs, both in absolute and relative terms, has been larger than the already relevant

Catalan average figures for all Catalan municipalities. This has implied a general relative decentralisation of population from main urban areas of the region, but with extreme territorial variations: the largest growth rates have been registered by SMSTs agglomerated to Barcelona and those situated on the coastal line (respectively, the former grew 1.71 times higher than the others, and the latter 1.61 times higher than those of the interior). This decentralisation of population has also been accompanied by a decentralisation of economic activities and public and private investment. Thus, in general, the case study of Catalonia tells a story of reinforcement of the territorial role of SMSTs, both at local/sub-regional and regional level.

These changes have been reflected in mobility patterns. Standardised data on mobility from the last 2011 census are not yet available, but all recent regional surveys indicate that a deep change in mobility patterns has taken place during last two decades; first, in the sense of a general increase of daily commuting, and secondly, underlining a relative growth of mobility to and from SMSTs. In other words, the territorial networks linking small and medium towns may be acquiring a more important role in relation to their position in hierarchically structured metropolitan systems.

The analysis carried out in Section 2 based on functional relations between employment centres (proxied by commuter mobility flows in 2001) has identified 66 micro-regions with their urban centres in Catalonia. In addition to Barcelona, the largest micro-regions (in terms of surface) are low population density areas. On the other hand, the densest and most dynamic territorial structures come out as relatively small micro-regions, mainly along the coastal line. An analysis of the distribution and intensity of such flows shows how Barcelona acts as main hierarchical centre for the whole Catalonia region. After Barcelona, the other provincial capitals (Girona, Tarragona and Lleida) play the role of secondary hierarchical nodes. Finally, there is a notable presence of networks between SMSTs. Mostly outside the Barcelona region these relations are of horizontal nature between other SMSTs or larger urban areas, but in the Barcelona region the importance of vertical networks with the main centre are still predominant. Nevertheless, the available data indicate that SMSTs which act as MR centres and have networked relations with similarly ranked centres have achieved a more positive evolution (in terms of population and jobs) than centres directly agglomerated to larger cities.

<u>Urban and spatial planning in Catalonia – implications for SMSTs</u>

In 1983, Catalonia has been the first Autonomous Community in democratic Spain to approve a regional law for spatial planning. Since then, this region has been one of the most active in terms of introducing new tools and guidelines for spatial planning, becoming a reference model for other communities. In addition to territorial plans for its seven regional planning units, during the last decade specific planning tools have been introduced for transport infrastructures, coastal areas, landscape protection, mountain areas and key economic sectors (housing, ports, airports, tourism, natural areas, etc.). Most such plans cover a relatively large regional scale: the whole of Catalonia or one of the seven spatial planning units on which the Catalan territory is subdivided. Yet, as urban planning is a competence of municipal administrations, one key issue is the quality of the links between the local and regional levels for planning at different scales, and that of the horizontal collaboration between municipalities. The main supra-municipal urban planning experiences regard the Barcelona metropolitan area; there are few other experiences of coordination between municipal planning strategies, as a limited number of Director Urban Plans.

If we take into account the transformations of the urban settlement structure discussed above, horizontal cooperation become especially necessary. Nevertheless, the lack of tools and frameworks for shared territorial strategies is a common weakness of most Catalan

SMSTs. On the other hand, most of them are involved in sub-regional or local strategic development plans, which in some cases are related to EU Cohesion Funds Programs, which prove to have become key platforms to facilitate supra-municipal cooperation and partnership action within a common framework.

Employment centres and sectorial shifts

This case study provides quantitative and qualitative insights on the occupational shift among different sectors in the towns analysed. It shows in a context of extensive loss of jobs especially in manufacturing and in construction in the last part of the 2000s decade, towns of different dimensions and in different functional contexts have responded differently; metropolitan areas promoting advanced services and in general the knowledge-based, creative economy, and smaller centres reactivating industry (through processes of “smarting up” and new infrastructure investments), though these are longer term processes which have been partially hampered by the incapacity of the public administration to keep up with the financing. An important role has been taken up by the new “smart rural” economy especially in Vilafranca del Penedès, a world-known wine production and tourism cluster, and to a lesser degree, in Tàrrega especially with fruit production.

Apart from the economic shortages mentioned above, policies have accompanied these shift strategies with appropriate spatial and strategic planning initiatives, though the complexity of the institutional setting – for instance regarding wine production in the Vilafranca MR, a bottom-up local initiative, vis-a-vis infrastructure development efforts driven by the Catalan government’s general territorial strategy – sometimes generates frustration of local interests. The “mediating role” of lower level public and private stakeholders, like County Councils, Provinces and Chambers of Commerce has demonstrated its utility.

The role of the tourism economy in relation with residential/consumption-based economies

Of the three cases considered, tourism is only strong in Cambrils, which is part of the most densely developed destination area in Catalonia – that is, the Cambrils-Salou SMSTs polygon. Vilafranca is mostly a destination for bouncing tourism from Barcelona, whereby visitors take day breaks to engage in wine tasting and other wine-related activities. Tàrrega is only in its infantry as a destination for cultural tourism, peaking during the very popular Tàrrega Fair.

Thus, it makes sense to discuss the role of the tourism economy only in Cambrils, but it is a common situation to most coastal resorts in Catalonia where urbanisation patterns have been following the spatial and functional logic of tourism. Thus, we have seen that the “touristicity” of Cambrils explains the special configuration of the population structure and trends, with a large growth of population driven especially by the size of the tourism job market but also by the “quality of place” factors that characterise this coastal town and have created a situation of special attractiveness for “lifestyle migrants”, both from surrounding cities like Reus and Tarragona, and from foreign wealthy countries. Besides, we can explain recent economic trends with the efforts to scale up and diversity the tourist product, making synergies with other sectors in the service economy, manufacturing, culture and agriculture. Not all Catalan coastal towns have undertaken this path but Cambrils showcases an unity of intents among the private sector stakeholders, the public administration (especially the Provincial level) and the knowledge sector (the local URV) which make it a particularly successful case, though there is no clearly empowered strategy leader that can make the necessary scale jump in this process.

Retails and market areas

The case study provides some insights on the role of the retail sector and the so-called residential economy in all three micro-level cases considered. In Cambrils, as mentioned above, this is tightly tied to its role as an international tourist centre, face to the more inward-looking realities of the two larger towns in the metropolitan system (Reus and Tarragona). Thus, the Cambrils SMST area (extending to Salou and the adjacent Vila-seca) has been acquiring a sort of “new centrality” for residential functions. Tàrrega has been consolidating its role as central market town beyond its role of country capital, positioning itself as the centre of reference for the eastern part of the province of Lleida and acquiring a hub role also in terms of accessibility, being at the crux of different mobility corridors. Vilafranca is the reference to its own microregion but also to the larger Penedès area, including two counties, and has grown to be an important secondary node in the metropolitan region of Barcelona being positioned in the “arc” of peripheral cities now reunited by a new “transversal” highway.

Except maybe in Cambrils, the residential role of these towns has been greatly sustained by macro- and meso-level spatial policies reinforcing the role of the “periphery” versus the centre in the respective regional urban systems. Cambrils, already at the core of the Camp de Tarragona metropolitan regions, has thrived of this centrality.

Agricultural sectors and rural areas

Agriculture has undoubtedly been the sector on which all three cities have been pointing at to recover their economy from the recent downturn; in Cambrils this is mostly seen in connection with the quality tourist product, but in Vilafranca and Tàrrega agriculture has autonomous importance, and the recovery strategies pass through a “smarting up” of the sector, a renewed accessibility, and the inter-sectorial linkages with manufacturing and distribution. While Vilafranca has a “guaranteed success” for the reputation of its wine cluster, Tàrrega faces the greatest challenges to raise the added value of extensive agricultural exploitation, which depends very much on new developments in strategic planning and sectorial-spatial policy, for which the planning system of Catalonia provides a n optimal governance framework. In general, the “smart rural economy” seems particularly resilient in Catalan SMSTs situated farthest from the metropolitan system of Barcelona; in this sense, Vilafranca represents an exception.

Clusters of SME and industrial districts

Small and medium enterprises have been ravaged by the crisis in Catalonia especially in the longer term when the credit crunch started to affect the end point of the filiere. In areas that lost employment massively, microenterprises and autonomous labour often flourished but could not reduce the dimensions of unemployment. We have seen the importance of SME especially in the failing dynamism of Tàrrega as a trade centre (now the object of a thorough regeneration plan), and in the construction sector of all three SMSTs. Cambrils is rather dependent on large tourist firms, the less exposed to the effects of the crisis, which may explain its relatively positive economic outlook, while Vilafranca’s performance in this sense is very much aligned to that of the metropolitan system of which it is part. Currently the level of public support to SME is very low in all Catalonia. Wine firms and related operators in tourism and environmental management in the Vilafranca area could be seen as a virtuous exception, also using in an optimal way the EU funds channelled by local administrations.

Knowledge-based economy

All three SMSTs considered host some higher educational institutions that are particularly important for the development of strategic sectors. The most important case is that of Cambrils, and its support to the “tourist campus” of the local university, located in Vila-seca. Though today most universities are reluctant (and do not have the resources) for a veritable decentralisation strategy, local initiatives like these can be important to transfer the knowledge and human capital skills developed at universities to the territory; in this sense, Catalonia is particularly active in the development of knowledge transfer and technology centres working in close cooperation with the academic faculty and research centres and focusing on SMSTs outside the Barcelona region. Apart from this, the knowledge economy is mostly a matter of the Barcelona metropolitan area and to a lesser degree of the other three provincial capitals and university sites, with the addition of other two HDUC with university campuses, Reus and Vic. Vilafranca from this point of view could be characterised as the case of a residential town that "borrows size" from the Barcelona system in terms of its smart wine tourism specialisation. Tàrrega has an infant creative economy, strongly supported by the local administration levels, while Cambrils has mostly a "creative population" and thrives of its proximity to an important world heritage city and university centre as Tarragona.

Economic interdependencies among sectors

We have provided various examples of synergies between tourism, the residential economy, and agro-food production, on one side, and between manufacturing, services and logistics on the other, for which our three micro-level case studies and their microregions are becoming important hubs and animators (respectively, Vilafranca and Cambrils for the former type of links, and Tàrrega for the latter), especially in relation to their "intermediate" position between local and wider networks of transports and trade. In spite of these stories of success, whereby local actors exploit emerging opportunities, the policy awareness of these processes and the capacity of strategic planning to accompany them is still rather poor in areas that are not metropolitan, whereas the metropolitan dimension of governance shows to be also helpful in the development of inter-sectorial strategies.

Public sector role: services and employment

The public sector is downsizing radically in all Catalonia and these SMSTs are no exceptions, though it was pointed out how in the context of a "redistribution of functions" at a metropolitan level, Cambrils is becoming increasingly important for the provision of public services especially in relation to a resident population that is "inflated" by the transient / fluctuating population of temporary workers, second home owners and also tourists. Vilafranca does not depend overtly on the public sector economy as larger centres in the Barcelona metropolitan system, and has been affected only moderately by the failing number of jobs in the public administration (there is only one issue related to public transport to Barcelona, which has been downsized), while Tàrrega, due its relative autonomy and superior size with respect to the SMSTs networked to it, managed to maintain its importance in this sense.

In general, these three cases do not evidence new needs in terms of public sector strategies, but we have evidence of other cases of SMST especially within the Barcelona metropolitan region where, on one side, the budget cuts and rationalisation in the provision of public services is often producing a "battle of the poor" between adjacent urban areas; and, on the other, the suburbanisation trends with the emergence of sprawling urbanisation in certain areas is de facto creating "urban stains" of a larger size than what their municipal boundaries reveal (which is, to date, the most important criterion for the provision of health and schooling services). Thus, SMST (from a morphological point of view) instead than smaller size municipalities could be targeted in terms of restructuring the provision of services of general interest, leading in some cases to the need of a scaling up and integration of services that are now provided in inefficient ways.

Agglomeration effects vs. polycentric systems

The case study has provided qualitative insights about towns in the surrounding of larger urban areas. In Catalonia, the only large-size metropolitan system is that of the metropolitan region of Barcelona, that we have analysed in relation to the agglomerated centre of Vilafranca del Penedès. That case shows that especially SMSTs closer and better connected to Barcelona have been a destination of suburbanisation, growing fast in comparative terms in terms of their residential profile and job market, though they also have been hit harder by unemployment. Vilafranca however continued to do well in this framework especially because of its relative "autonomy" from the metropolitan core in terms of the economic specialisation and its local central role for the smart rural economy of its region. In any case, we assist to a polarization of the job market, with knowledge-based employment remaining grounded in Barcelona and residential sectors being drawn to Vilafranca.

Cambrils is in a different position, being tightly networked with Tarragona and Reus within a small metropolitan area whereby the urban polygon consisting of the municipalities of Cambrils and Salou has at the same time a strong specialisation in tourism and borrows size from the two closer urban areas in terms of tourist attractions, education, and other general services; nevertheless, Cambrils did manage to specialise in the provision of personal services to a "floating population", and the main provisions of the Strategic Plan of Camp de Tarragona support this shift although the scenario of population growth is now changed.

In the case of Tàrrega, the relative autonomy of the town does not presents with a situation of agglomeration effects, but the strengthening of the road and rail infrastructure for which Tàrrega is a hub could increase network externalities with other municipalities along the A-2 axis especially in terms of developing as a knowledge-based hub within a rural and productive

<u>Other centralities</u>

Cambrils is the clear case of a node within a metropolitan system that owes its centrality (defined by flows of mobility different than work-related) to tourism functions, and is also closely connected to the Vila-seca SMST in its vicinity because of the URV tourism campus located there (many of the staff and students of the campus reside in the Cambrils-Salou urban area).

Vilafranca is also relevant as an "appendix" of Barcelona's tourism (for the wine tourist product) establishing a pattern of mobility flows unrelated to employment, and is a service centre to an area that extends far beyond the county borders or those of the MR identifies in the functional analysis. Tàrrega is an important market town in its own territorial context and attracts flows of the rural population as main centre of commerce and service provision for an extensive area.

<u>Migration and social changes</u>

The three case studies show interesting migration dynamics within a context of strong attractiveness of Catalonia as a whole for the immigrant population during the 2000 decade, and represent three distinct variations on this pattern: Vilafranca has been especially attractive for suburbanising workers and middle classes from Barcelona, Tàrrega for unskilled workers from non-OECD countries employed in the surrounding rural communities and in the city itself as construction workers, and Cambrils for tourism-related migration (both workers and lifestyle migrants from OECD countries). All these trends have been subsequently influenced by the crisis: the slump of the construction sector has not only inflated unemployment but also produced a "return outmigration" to places of origin and an inversion of the suburbanisation trend, however this had minor impacts in Cambrils where migration was not totally connected to employment and tourism continue to be strong although in a context of "scaling up" rather than growth. Migration has especially influenced the housing market though in a context of excess supply and speculation that has produced an expansion of the stock of vacant housing and a worsening of the effects of the financial slump. In general though, migration, even when very consistent as in Tàrrega and Cambrils, has not produced remarkable social problems because of the success of integration and urban policies in SMSTs (the “Neighbourhood Law” plans are also a part of this strategy and had a notable success to reduce the potential conflict in problematic areas); the potential issues following from the growth in unemployment in the last part of the decade have been in part endogenously reduced through “return” migration and outmigration, but currently the budget cuts for social policies and dependence, together with the cease of the Neighbourhood Law, threaten to produce a worsening of the situation.

For many years now, spatial planning in the metropolitan area of Barcelona has especially strengthened the residential role of secondary towns in the metropolitan region and especially those in the “peripheral arc” like Vilafranca, supporting compact growth rather than sprawling development. In general, SMSTs outside of the Barcelona region have not been interested by such policies, though Cambrils does enjoy a favourable planning context in this sense in its metropolitan context.

<u>Housing</u>

We have seen how the housing problem, with an uncontrolled expansion of the stock in growth years, has been a general problem in Catalonia (and in Spain in general) and has arguably worsened the dimensions and effects of the crisis, apart from having represented, in certain circumstances and especially in coastal communities, a big problem for landscape and environmental management. The SMSTs considered in this case study are no exception. In general, housing development policies have been more moderate and ordered in the case of Vilafranca within its metropolitan context, but have been relatively unfocused in the cases of Cambrils (which manages to fill the housing stock anyway thanks to second home tourism) and Tàrrega; in general, we have seen that in networked SMSTs centres such as these, housing (and especially vacant housing) has grown more than in other types of employment centres.

<u>Social capital – local resources</u>

Of the three cases considered, Cambrils is the only one that shows an interesting development of social capital partly related to its quality as residential centre for a mostly tourist population and partly as attraction hub for high skilled residents for the rest of the metropolitan region, for which the quality of place and of the housing stock, plus local amenities, are an important magnet. In general, among employment centres networked SMSTs managed to attract a relatively more educated population than agglomerated centres, and this is consistent with the strategy of provision of knowledge facilities form the government that tended to privilege both secondary cities in the Barcelona metropolitan area and networked systems in the periphery.

<u>Quality of life</u>

Cambrils and Vilafranca are generally described as places providing high level of quality of life and urban and cultural amenities in spite of their small size, an also enjoying fast access to larger cities in their territorial context. Tàrrega is more of a “large village” in a rural setting, but does invest with a certain success in its attractiveness for tourists and in its cultural heritage. In general, SMSTs in Catalonia, especially along the coast and in rural settings, are places characterised by high levels of quality of life and landscape amenities, and are being increasingly valorised as residence centres and destinations for proximity and international cultural heritage tourism.

<u>Local development strategy and territorial capital</u>

Cambrils is pointing on coupling its natural (and antropic) capital as main asset for seaside tourism, with a valorisation of its territorial capital, looking both at its fishing community (and the maritime – gastronomic flavour that this brings with it) and at its agricultural hinterland.

Tàrrega does not enjoy a particularly favourable situation in this sense, being surrounded by plain agricultural land and industrial lots, but it does invest in its rich intangible traditional heritage and in making its fruit production a presentation card for the town.

Vilafranca has wines and the *castells* (human towers) culture which are both actively promoted also at an international level.- *castells* have recently made it to the World Heritage List for Intangible Heritage, and the town is the main hub of the International Wine Cities Route network.

Then, all three cases show a strong attention for territorial capital and have developed local initiatives and strong coalition partnerships to develop it and brand it. The other government levels, like the Catalan government, in general support these strategies.

<u>Multi-scalar policy approach</u>

This aspect has been seen in all three cases considered. All three SMSTs cases are subject to area territorial plans and strategic plans, though at least in Vilafranca the question of the ambivalence of the planning context is not solved: Vilafranca is part of the Barcelona regional planning delimitation but is also an intermediation place with the Tarragona region and claims a new independent planning context which, nevertheless, depends from a wide reform of the Catalan public administration, with the institution of the new administrative level of *veguerias*, which is not approved yet and has uncertain effects on the current governance structures. Besides, strategic plans are of volutaristic nature and as in the case of Cambrils, the weak leadership is hindering its implementation. In general, the problem of the emphasis attributed from the Spanish state to the provincial level for administration and the stronger role of municipalities and counties for planning purposes, produces a contexts of excessive complexity and confusion on the roles of the public administrations involved in spatial planning and policy, whereas only the Barcelona area managed to streamline planning instruments within its metropolitan context.

<u>Horizontal cooperation: (competition vs. partnership).</u>

In the three cases considered, partnerships between public and private agents are strong at the local level, especially in Cambrils and Vilafranca. There are not clear policies by the Catalan government to foment these coalitions, but for instance EU funding programme like ERDF and Leader require them.

<u>Funds and sectors</u>

Cambrils and Vilafranca had access to ERDF funds, while Tàrrega was especially benefited by Leader funds, which were used especially to “smart up” the local agriculture, manufacturing and logistics sectors. In the Cambrils, the ERDF funds served to potentiate a “knowledge-based” strategy of enhancing innovation and sustainability in tourism.

Currently, EU investments are channelled in the development of the “Mediterranean corridor” rail infrastructure, which promises to benefits large urban areas rather than smaller centres, although in a context of multi-scalar polarities.

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ANNEX

Table A – Microregions in Catalonia, ranked by job market size. Key figures

LAU2 code of MR Centre	Micro-region Centre	Class of MRC (Functional Analysis)	N. of munici-pallities in MR	Population of Microregion	Employed Active Pop. of Microregion	Labour market of Microregion	Labour market of MR centre
ES51100020	Barcelona	LC	96	3,340,640	1,476,973	2,072,265	1,050,564
ES51100188	Sabadell	NETW-LC	9	270,106	121,853	165,448	104,969
ES51400150	Tarragona	LC	21	177,910	77,209	137,799	85,942
ES51300107	Lleida	LC	64	190,188	82,828	131,405	78,637
ES51200076	Girona	LC	44	141,787	66,929	116,209	62,557
ES51100278	Terrassa	AGLO-LC	8	192,477	86,914	110,471	100,372
ES51100123	Mataró	AGLO-LC	12	166,642	74,508	93,110	63,235
ES51100098	Granollers	AGLO-LC	8	125,219	59,525	86,929	41,491
ES51100115	Manresa	AGLO-LC	26	138,457	62,196	82,694	40,483
ES51400124	Reus	NETW-LC	44	120,437	51,943	82,163	61,510
ES51100295	Vic	NETW-SMST-D	44	110,498	51,787	68,291	26,342
ES51100116	Martorell	AGLO-LC	4	67,924	31,535	59,798	29,505
ES51200063	Figueres	AUTO	61	75,928	32,870	52,605	24,633
ES51100104	Igualada	AGLO-LC	34	78,161	35,987	47,412	24,967
ES51100303	Vilanova i la Geltrú	AGLO-LC	4	86,848	38,765	46,160	30,876
ES51400157	Tortosa	AUTO	15	63,955	26,630	41,629	20,467
ES51400165	Vendrell, el	AGLO-LC	13	62,966	27,627	40,292	15,531
ES51100299	Vilafranca del Penedès	NETW-LC	21	58,250	26,097	37,819	20,291
ES51200021	Blanes	NETW-SMST-S	3	55,298	23,388	35,377	18,775
ES51200108	Olot	AUTO	17	44,782	20,765	32,248	19,206
ES51400163	Valls	NETW-LC	21	35,445	15,610	26,223	15,318
ES51300124	Mollerussa	AGLO-LC	18	32,279	13,928	22,847	8,533
ES51100036	Calella	AGLO-LC	4	40,785	17,116	22,790	8,126
ES51200014	Banyoles	NETW-LC	13	26,517	12,490	20,237	10,931
ES51200168	Sant Feliu de Guíxols	NETW-LC	3	27,673	12,379	19,281	11,258
ES51100221	Sant Celoni	AGLO-LC	9	29,177	13,001	18,016	9,058
ES51200111	Palafrugell	NETW-SMST-S	6	25,963	11,273	17,879	12,099
ES51100023	Berga	AGLO-LC	27	31,765	13,087	17,368	8,320
ES51200139	Ripoll	AUTO	20	26,292	12,311	17,351	7,122
ES51300037	Balaguer	NETW-LC	10	20,666	8,665	16,850	8,800
ES51400040	Cambrils	NETW-LC	2	22,264	10,096	16,253	15,285

ES51200112	Palamós	NETW-SMST-S	3	21,930	9,307	15,558	10,410
ES51400015	Amposta	NETW-SMST-S	4	21,505	9,324	14,334	11,550
ES51300210	Tremp	AUTO	32	21,708	9,209	13,164	3,252
ES51300193	Tàrrega	NETW-SMST-S	15	19,240	8,484	12,754	9,069
ES51100112	Malgrat de Mar	NETW-SMST-S	2	20,284	8,998	12,483	8,791
ES51400088	Montblanc	AGLO-LC	20	17,100	7,309	12,281	5,171
ES51400137	Sant Carles de la Ràpita	NETW-SMST-S	2	19,604	7,853	11,961	7,178
ES51300185	Solsona	AUTO	15	17,934	7,813	10,972	5,116
ES51200144	Roses	NETW-SMST-D	4	16,025	6,773	10,956	8,810
ES51300181	Seu d'Urgell, la	AUTO	18	17,398	7,437	10,723	6,769
ES51300003	Agramunt	NETW-SMST-S	17	16,463	7,028	10,295	3,182
ES51100214	Sant Sadurní d'Anoia	AGLO-LC	4	15,628	7,174	10,034	6,811
ES51200133	Puigcerdà	AUTO	17	14,908	7,131	10,014	4,948
ES51200042	Cassà de la Selva	NETW-LC	4	13,346	6,326	9,652	5,551
ES51200020	Bisbal d'Empordà, la	AGLO-LC	5	12,259	5,699	9,217	6,093
ES51100282	Torelló	NETW-SMST-S	3	16,280	7,568	8,938	6,826
ES51400094	Móra d'Ebre	NETW-SMST-S	10	13,626	5,312	8,795	3,472
ES51400164	Vandellòs i l'Hospitalet de l'Infant	NETW-SMST-S	3	11,616	4,555	8,334	3,751
ES51300067	Cervera	NETW-SMST-S	11	11,278	5,189	8,091	6,010
ES51200190	Torroella de Montgrí	AGLO-LC	8	11,370	5,164	7,947	5,637
ES51200173	Santa Coloma de Farners	NETW-LC	2	10,450	4,849	7,636	6,345
ES51100281	Tordera	NETW-SMST-S	2	10,922	4,720	7,437	6,814
ES51400046	Sénia, la	AUTO	3	11,612	5,030	7,428	3,773
ES51200100	Maçanet de la Selva	AGLO-LC	2	8,988	3,972	7,288	3,816
ES51200008	Arbúcies	AUTO	2	10,162	4,698	6,974	3,718
ES51100143	Navàs	NETW-LC	5	11,488	4,875	5,980	2,749
ES51400066	Gandesa	AUTO	11	10,995	4,206	5,950	1,821
ES51200007	Anglès	AGLO-LC	3	7,715	3,550	5,946	3,456
ES51300218	Vielha e Mijaran	AUTO	9	7,691	3,916	5,877	3,206
ES51300098	Guissona	NETW-SMST-S	12	7,622	3,572	5,567	3,214
ES51200058	Escala, l'	AGLO-LC	4	7,303	3,013	5,108	4,154
ES51400093	Mont-roig del Camp	NETW-SMST-S	2	7,285	3,196	5,054	4,751
ES51200080	Hostalric	NETW-SMST-S	3	4,179	1,980	3,970	2,559
ES51400062	Flix	NETW-SMST-S	4	5,915	2,136	3,732	2,665
ES51400020	Ascó	NETW-SMST-S	4	3,982	1,475	2,872	1,632

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