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The European Mayor

Political Leaders
in the Changing Context
of Local Democracy



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1 Introduction

Henry Bäck, Annick Magnier and Hubert Heinelt

There are various images of the political leader in Europe's cities and towns. There is the time-honoured ceremonial mayor watching over the keys of the city. But there also is the political boss ruthlessly governing his/her 'subjects'. We might also offer the streamlined university educated professional or the executive committee leader promoted to a *primus inter pares* after long service in a political party.

With this book we aim to describe and analyse the selection, daily life, networks and values of local top political leaders in seventeen European countries. The empirical basis for the investigation into town halls across Europe is a survey conducted mainly in 2003 and 2004 with mayors and corresponding top local political leaders. The data covering responses from more than 2,700 leaders¹ constitute a unique and rich material allowing descriptions and analyses pursuing a number of lines of inquiry.

1.1 The changing context

An important point of departure for the book is that major structural changes have been taking place in European local government systems around the turn of the millennium (see e.g. John 2000; Le Galès 2002; Kersting and Vetter 2003; Denters et al. 2003; Haus et al. 2005; Heinelt and Kübler 2005), changes that have already had substantial consequences for local political leadership and are likely to bring about further change in the future. A number of such restructuring trends are sweeping over the continent, but - and this may be significant - from different starting points, at varying pace and in various mixed configurations. Local governments in Britain and Scandinavia with traditionally a heavy emphasis on the provision of welfare state services do not start out from the same circumstances as newly erected local authorities in post-communist

¹ For inter-country comparison we have weighted data to compensate for varying national response rates. This means that inferences are made to the total population of European mayors (restricted to the participating countries).

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2 Typologies of Local Government Systems

Hubert Heinelt and Nikolaos-K. Hlepas

Local government systems are usually perceived as independent variables when considering (possible) differences in recruitment patterns, professionalisation, the position of mayors in local and multi-level governance arrangements (or horizontal and vertical policy networks), the interpretation (or notion) of democracy, problem definition as well as attitudes and opinions towards decentralisation or centralisation and reforms ('modernisation') of the public sector ('new public management'). However, a decision on the most suitable conceptualisation or typology of local government systems for joint research such as that undertaken here is more problematic than might be assumed: firstly, a lot of typologies are available in the scholarly debate, and secondly, it proves difficult to apply the available typologies because none of them cover the whole spectrum of countries included in this study, and many do not include the 'new democracies' in Middle-Eastern Europe. Therefore, existing typologies will necessarily have to be adjusted and updated.

In the following, different typologies will be discussed, offering a rationale for the use of two in particular for our analysis (i.e. the Hesse/Sharpe and the Mouritzen/Svara typology) and outlining a third approach proposed on the basis of the two cited typologies. The reflection on different typologies of local government systems is grouped around two issues: vertical power relations, that is, between municipalities and upper-level government(s) – and horizontal power relations, between the council and the mayor and/or other political and administrative leaders within city hall.

2.1 The vertical dimension

Comparative analysis of local government systems employs different distinctions according to vertical power relations or the distribution of competencies between the local level and upper layers of government. Bennett (1989; 1993a; 1993b) makes a distinction between

- a *dual* structure where at the local level central government agencies and the municipalities exist side by side but with different competencies (as in the UK),¹
- *fused* systems where local authorities and their competencies are determined by local as well as by upper-level government and
- *mixed* systems (as in Denmark or Sweden).

Bennett classified the 'new democracies' in Middle-Eastern Europe (Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic) as moving *towards fused* systems. This typology has not been adopted widely in the past, mainly because all European countries should, based on Bennett's typology, have been subsumed either under fused systems or those moving towards fused systems, with the exception of the UK (dual) and Denmark and Sweden (both mixed). This would seem too simplistic to capture differences not merely in connection with certain aspects of vertical power relations but also possible effects resulting from such relations. Furthermore, fused systems have been thoroughly changed during the last decades: In several countries territorial (new layers of government, amalgamations etc.) and functional (decentralisation, devolution, new public management) reforms have been implemented (Kersting and Vetter 2003), and thus increased the differentiation among "fused systems".

Page and Goldsmith (1987; see also Page 1991 and Goldsmith 1993) and later – John (2001) draw a distinction between the North and the South by considering the 'relation between the number and type of functions allocated to sub-national government, the legal discretion open to local policy-makers and the access of local politicians to the central state' (John 2001: 26). Their key idea is that there is an inter-relationship among the functions allocated to local government, the respective discretion given to local authorities and the access of local politicians to the central state. Clearly, the policies enacted as well as the corresponding leadership roles fulfilled by mayors may differ sharply, depend-

¹ The concept of 'dual structure' has been strongly disputed by P. John (2001) especially regarding the UK. John argued (referring to the related 'dual state thesis'):

'Observers need to be cautious about the ascription of Britain as a dual state – or any state as dual – as this proposition has been stated in the theoretical literature (Bulphitt 1983; Saunders 1980), but has not been tested. Far from being a separated polity, the UK has always had a high degree of contact between central and local government in professional and policy-making communities (Dunleavy 1981; Rhodes 1986). Central government took initiatives through its field offices and politicians in powerful local parties, such as in Birmingham and in London, had an influence on national politics. Once researchers examine central-local policy systems in detail and according to policy sector, there is less difference in political relationships than the allocation of functions to tiers of local government would suggest' (John 2001: 33).

ing on the pattern of this inter-relationship. The suggested dichotomy of Southern versus Northern local government systems in Europe is marked by the following characteristics:

- Southern European systems are characterized by municipalities with few functions and competencies, low legal discretion and high access of local politicians to the central (and regional) level of government. In other words: local politicians may be powerful at the central level, but they represent politically weak communes.
- Northern European systems are, on the contrary, characterized by a strong decentralisation of functions, a high level of discretion and low access of local politicians to the central state.

The reasons for these differences between North and South have their roots in the historical background. In the South of Europe, the 'Napoleonic' state model expanded throughout all the modern nation-states, which created a uniform administration over their entire territory and administered the secularised education service directly from the centre. In the Southern states local elites were looked upon with suspicion by the central government, which built up its own territorial organization, directly establishing the administrative authority of the central state over the whole country. When the welfare state emerged in the European South during the twentieth century, these functions fell to state authorities. Local Governments embody local cultural and political identities represented to the higher levels through local politicians who tend to act as local patrons and use different networks of access to the national (today also regional) centres of political power, including parties, in order to address local demands (Page 1991; John 2001). High access and low legal discretion is linked to the tendency of actors (both local/national politicians and central/regional bureaucrats) within large and dysfunctional, legalistic bureaucracies to exploit areas of uncertainty by blackmail and/or using clientelistic networking techniques. Local politicians are compelled to act within a given framework of territorial representation and political localism. The size of local government units remains small, since, within the given context, community identity is more important than service efficiency. The South has many levels of government, partly as a means of increasing the potential for territorial representation.

In the North of Europe the nation states did not develop centralized bureaucracies in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries but relied on local elites to carry out national policies (Page 1991). Education was decentralized to local government institutions and in many modern North European countries the Protestant church remained a part of the state. National law, strictly imple-

mented by impartial, professional and effective bureaucracies, safeguarded the unity of modern statehood. Subsequently, when the state expanded in response to demands for equality, legal entitlement and social security, a welfare system was created where local government, being highly responsive to local society, is responsible for welfare service provision. Northern democracies, based on the independent power of the locality to decide matters of importance, developed the theory of local self-government, which has become 'a political system in miniature' (John 2001: 30). Local politicians must achieve results, primarily by using local resources and focusing on local service provision. Since the early 1950s, a number of municipalities have merged in order to increase efficiency and achieve better service provision. The North, in the analysis put forward by Hesse and Sharpe (see below), has few levels of government, in order to avoid problems of vertical coordination.

This typology has clear advantages: it is simple and straightforward; furthermore, it avoids a legalistic approach, a characteristic of the traditional, if not 'old' institutionalism that long dominated comparative government analysis (incl. the analysis of local government). Instead, this typology clearly opens the venue for reflections inspired by sociological but especially historical institutionalism.

But certain disadvantages can be pinpointed as well: Page and Goldsmith examined only Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Britain, France, Italy and Spain, i.e. only 'unitary' states at that time, and did not consider the ('teutonic') federal systems of Germany, Austria and Switzerland. In a later study, John (2001: 35), while adapting the typology of Page and Goldsmith, included Belgium, Greece and Portugal within the Southern Group, whereas he subsumed Finland, Ireland and the Netherlands into the Northern Group. However, he again excluded Germany and Switzerland (without mentioning Austria), considering these countries to be 'hybrid systems containing states or cantons which have both sets of traditions and structures' (John 2001: 36). In addition, at the time when the Page and Goldsmith typology was originally developed, Central East European countries could not be included, whereas John specifically confined himself to 'Western Europe'. One might consider whether the two groups – and especially the Nordic group – would become more heterogeneous if other countries were included.

In a study performed at a slightly later date, Goldsmith elaborated another typology of local government systems based 'on the objective or ethos which underlies them' (Goldsmith 1992: 395).

- According to this criterion, a first model is labelled '*the clientelistic/patronage model*', where a strong presumption is that the primary duty of local

politicians is to ensure that the interests of their community are well promoted (not least regarding specific public goods and services) and defended at higher levels of government (especially in France, Italy, Greece and – to a lesser extent – Spain; Goldsmith 1992: 395).

- In some other countries (especially in the U.S.) the paramount task of local government is to promote the economic development of the city. Basic services and protection for citizens (fire protection, policing and transport networks) provide the foundation on which growth policies can be formulated. According to this '*economic development model*' (or '*Boosterism*' or '*Growth machine*' model), local politicians are expected to enhance local economic development.
- According to the third model, the '*welfare-state model*', efficient service delivery, 'linked to national norms concerning equity and redistribution' (Goldsmith 1992: 396) has shaped local government. This applies for countries like Germany, the Netherlands and Great Britain as well as Scandinavia. Normally, local interests are not defended through single local politicians but through local government associations at the national level. Local politicians are expected to be good managers. Furthermore, the emphasis given to effective local delivery of collective goods has resulted in the importance of highly professional paid officials, although this has been criticized as '*local bureaucratic paternalism*' (Goldsmith 1992: 396).
- In some of these European welfare states (especially in Britain), the so-called '*market-enabling*' or '*consumerist*' model emerged, following earlier U.S.-experiences. In these cases local government has moved away from a role as a producer of services to that of an agency enabling others to produce services (independently or in partnership with local government). The main difference compared to the previously mentioned model of '*economic development*' (or '*boosterism*') is that '*consumerist*' local government is confined to a merely '*enabling*' role, relying on market mechanisms for the economic development of the city.

While reference to the particular objectives or ethos characterising the local government level as criteria for a typology can provide interesting insights, these criteria may not be adequate to give a complete account of the local government system of a whole country: The so-called clientelistic model may no longer be fully applicable to metropolitan municipalities of Southern Europe, where it has been claimed that the '*economic development model*' may emerge instead. Furthermore, in municipalities of Northern Europe the prevailing system could prove to be a mix between the '*welfare*' and the '*consumerist*' model.

This question raised above, enquiring whether the two groups forming the original Page and Goldsmith typology would become more heterogeneous if other countries were included, is addressed by Hesse and Sharpe (1991). They offer a distinction between three types of local government systems which reflects (i) the distribution of competencies in service provision as well as (ii) the political power/influence of the local level in relation to upper-level government and the importance dedicated to local democracy. Furthermore, Hesse and Sharpe subdivide the Northern group of the Page and Goldsmith typology into two branches and offer a broader coverage of countries.

- The first subdivision of the Hesse/Sharpe typology is the *Franco* group (so named after its Napoleonic roots), which corresponds to the Southern group in the Page/Goldsmith typology. In this case local government is considered to cover territorially defined communities and to form structures of territorial interest intermediation at the lower level of government. The mayor is expected to represent the interests of this community towards higher government levels. France, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Portugal and Greece are subsumed by Hesse and Sharpe under this (Southern) type.
- A second subdivision is the so-called *Anglo* group covering the United Kingdom and Ireland (as well as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and in some respects, the USA). In these cases local government has a weak legal and political status, but is important in shaping and delivering public services. Therefore, local government has a more functional than political role. The weak formal (legal) political status of local government has to be considered in accordance with the 'supremacy of parliament' principle, i.e. the central role of national parliament in a unitary political system. This is reflected in a weak position of the mayor – as a political leader – and in the strength of 'executive officers' and councillors in respect of service provisions.
- The third subdivision is the *North and Middle European* group with the Scandinavian countries, Germany and the Netherlands (to which Austria and Switzerland can be added). Although in these cases strong emphasis is given to the shaping and delivering of public services (as in the Anglo group), local government is equally perceived and institutionally defined (by a strong constitutional status and relatively high financial independence) as a de-centralised level of autonomous democratic policy-making.

Because the Hesse and Sharpe typology of local-central governmental relations is a convincing synthesis of the before mentioned ones covering already from the beginning a lot of the 'old democracies' in Western Europe and can also

quite easily be extended to the other countries included in the present analysis, it will be adopted in most of the chapters of this book where the dimension of vertical power relations within local government systems is addressed as a contextual or an independent variable.² However, both the Hesse/Sharpe and the Page/Goldsmith typology share the disadvantage that the 'new democracies' in Eastern Europe are missing. For the purposes of the present study, the three Eastern European countries in our sample, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, have not been subsumed under one of the three types, but rather classified as a separate group: the *Central East European type*. Although local-central relations in Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic have some features in common with the North and Middle European group with respect to local competencies and fiscal or financial discretion of local governments, they are here considered as a distinct group because their historical background and, in particular, the quite recent (radical) decentralisation in these countries needs to be taken into account in discussion of vertical power relations. These power relations are (as the different schools of neo-institutionalism emphasise) not just characterised by certain formal (legal) rules for the distribution of competencies and resources but also by particular meaning systems of what is perceived as appropriate – or inappropriate.

A further inevitable shortcoming of the Hesse/Sharpe and Page/Goldsmith typologies can be singled out: the surveys were conducted prior to the fundamental changes in central-local relations which have taken place in many of the East European countries since the early 1990s (for an overview see for instance Deters and Rose 2005). Therefore the present study attempts to update the previous typologies and capture the current situation in the countries covered by this study. The individual national teams thus firstly performed an assessment of

- the responsibilities of municipalities in providing social policies and especially social services (0 = none or few, 2 = many, 1 = some) and

2 Loughlin's (2001) distinction between an *Anglo-Saxon* group with UK, US, Canada (without Quebec) and Ireland, a *Germanic* group with Germany, Austria, the Netherlands Spain (after 1978) and Belgium (after 1988), a *French* group with France, Italy, Spain (before 1978) Portugal, Quebec, Greece and Belgium (before 1988) and a *Scandinavian* group with Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland (see also Loughlin and Peters 1997) has been considered seriously but has finally not been taken into account because it explicitly emphasises broader aspects of 'state traditions' (incl. state-society relations, policy styles, dominant approaches to academic disciplines of public administration) – and is not focussed on local-central power relations. Rather, the latter is just one aspect of this typology addressed by its dimensions 'form of political organisation' and 'form of decentralisation' (Loughlin 2001: 5).

- financial autonomy of municipalities in raising own taxes and/or discretion in using grants from upper-level government (0 = low, 2 = high, 1 = some).

Table 1: European municipalities in vertical power relations

Countries	Municipalities are responsible for social policies, especially social services (1)	Financial autonomy of municipalities (2)	Spending of municipalities in % of GDP (3)	Sum of indices (4)
France	0	0	0	0
Greece	0	0	0	0
Portugal	0	0	0	0
Spain	0	0	0	0
Italy	1	1	0	2
Czech Rep.	1	0	1	2
Ireland	2	0	0	2
England	2	0	1	3
Belgium	2	0	1	3
Poland	1	1	1	3
Austria	2	1	1	4
Switzerland	2	2	1	5
Germany	2	2	1	5
Netherlands	2	2	1	5
Denmark	2	2	2	6
Hungary	2	2	2	6
Sweden	2	2	2	6

Column 1: 0 = none or few, 2 = many s, 1 = some,
 column 2: 0 = low, 2 = high, 1 = some,
 column 3: 0 = under 5 %, 1 = between 5 and 10 %, 2 = over 10 %
 column 4: sum of columns 1 to 3.

Sources: Columns 1 and 2 are based on assessment by the national teams and column 3 on *Local Finance in the Fifteen Countries of the European Union*, Paris: Dexia, 2002 (data refer to 2000) and *Local Finance in the Ten Countries Joining the EU in 2004*, Paris: Dexia, 2004 (data refer to 2001). For England, spending by counties (according to *Finance and General Statistics 1996/1997*, London: CIPFA) has been subtracted.

- Furthermore, the level (and relevance) of public spending by municipalities is measured by its proportion of GDP (0 = under 5 %, 1 = between 5 and 10 %, 2 = over 10 %).³

As shown in Table 1, the assessment of the role of the municipal level in vertical allocation of competence and resources in the European countries covered by this study regarding these three indicators demonstrates that the grouping of countries according to the Hesse/Sharpe typology seems to be appropriate.

2.2 The horizontal dimension

Typologies of local government systems focusing on horizontal power relations at the local level, i.e. between the council, the mayor and the administrative executive, also provide relevant insights. Examination of differences in the roles and distribution of competencies/tasks between the mayor, the council and the municipal administration is of importance because they may be cross-cutting with respect to the three above described types of local government systems or they may even highlight differences among them.

A common general distinction reflects the legally defined distributions of task between legislative and executive functions. Whereas in *dualistic* systems the two functions are separate, they are merged in *monistic* systems. Or more precisely: 'In the *monistic* type of local government the elected local council is regarded as the (sole) supreme decision-making body, while the local administration, including its head/chief executive, acts under the instruction and scrutiny of the council without any autonomous 'executive' decision-making power of its own. In a *dualistic* system the elected council is recognized as the prime decision-making body of local government, but the head/chief executive of the local administration is seen as possessing some ('executive') decision-making powers of his/her own that are not derived from the local council' (Wollmann 2004: 151). This typology can be further refined to explore additional distinctions: (i) the role of the mayor exercising – or not – the executive function, (ii) exercising the executive function alone or together with a collective or collegiate body, and (iii) the form through which the mayor is elected (Wollmann 2004: 151-152).

3 Relating the spending of municipalities to GDP may be problematic because in some countries the public sector comprise larger share of GDP than in others. However, alternatively measuring the share of municipalities in the total public spending implies even greater problems because it is very difficult to identify what is and what is not a public spending, and respective information be very hard to compare across countries.

Drawing on 'traditional' ideal types in comparative constitutional analysis (of national government) and combining the distinction between (i) a monistic versus dualistic organisation with (ii) a majoritarian versus consociational form of democratic local decision-making Bäck (2005: 82-83) proposed the following typology:

- *Assembly Government*: represented by situations where executive power is in the hands of a proportionally composed committee of the council, i.e. *monism* in combination with *consociationalism*.
- *Parliamentarism*: the combination of *monism* with *majoritarianism*, i.e. situations featuring a collective executive, appointed by the council not using proportional techniques but some variation on the majority principle.
- *Presidentialism*: a separately elected mayor, appointing his/her own cabinet of deputies without consideration of the party-political composition of the council. In this form the *dualistic* and *majoritarian* principles are combined.
- *Semi-presidentialism*: the mayor is surrounded by a council-appointed collective executive. Here *dualism* is combined with *consociationalism* or *majoritarianism* depending on how the collective executive is appointed by the council.

However, the difference between 'monistic' and 'dualistic' systems is not always as clear in practice as it would appear from a legal point of view. This is especially the case when executive functions are fused in various forms of committees (e.g. in Denmark and Sweden; Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 60) or when, in a dual system (as in some of the German Länder), councils can intervene in administrative matters and thereby genuinely exercise executive functions (through 'majoritarian power', whereby a majority in the council formed by one party or a coalition is able to control the administration). Furthermore, it has to be emphasised that majoritarian and consociational forms of decision-making do not only depend on formal (legal) rules laid down in municipal codes and/or the electoral systems. Rather, they rely on a socially determined and locally embedded 'logic of appropriateness' (March and Olsen 1989) or even a pragmatically driven political 'logic of consequentiality', taking certain actual local (power) constellations into account. Acknowledgement of such locally determined patterns of policy-making is precisely the background on which Bäck (2005) has developed the mentioned typology. Moreover, Bäck's typology did not take systematically relationships between the political organisation and administration into account – or more precisely: between politicians and the municipal chief executives (CEOs).

Mouritzen and Svava (2002) offer another typology of local government systems oriented towards horizontal power relations. Their considerations rely on the following hypothesis: 'The structural features of municipal government in any specific country reflect a balance or compromise among [...] three organizing principles: layman rule, political leadership, and professionalism' (Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 50-51). Whereas '*the layman rule* means that citizens elected for political office should be involved effectively and intensively in the making of decisions' (Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 51; Italics by the authors), the notion of *political leadership* implies the concept of politicians 'promoting value choices and feeding energy and passion into policy systems' (Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 52); finally, *professionalism* rests on the crucial distinction that 'As politicians respond to demands, professionals respond to and seek to address needs' (Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 53; referring to Svava 1990).

Although Mouritzen and Svava consider all three elements, 'political leadership is the starting point for the development of a typology of government forms. The key issue is how political power is obtained, maintained, exercised, and shared. [...] Political power is a function of the degree of control a political actor – a person or a collective body – has in two arenas. First, to what extent is the city council controlled by one or more political actors? The second arena is the executive, and the question is to what extent is control over the executive in the hands of one or more political actors. Formal structure is important to answering these questions, but so are informal institutional rules and norms' (Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 53). Based on these considerations Mouritzen and Svava distinguish four ideal types:

- '*The strong mayor form*: The elected mayor controls the majority of the city council and is legally and in actuality in full charge of all executive functions' (Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 55).
- '*The committee-leader form*: One person is clearly "the political leader" of the municipality – with or without the title of mayor. He may or may not control the council. Executive powers are shared. The political leader may have responsibility for some executive functions but others will rest with collegiate bodies, that is, standing committees composed of elected politicians, and with the CEO' (Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 56).
- '*The collective form*: The decision center is one collegiate body, the executive committee that is responsible for all executive functions. The executive committee consists of locally elected politicians and the mayor, who presides' (Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 56).
- '*The council-manager form*: All executive functions are in the hands of a professional administrative – the city manager – who is appointed by the

city council, which has general authority over policy but is restricted from involvement in administrative matters. The council is [...] headed by a mayor who formally has presiding and ceremonial functions only' (Mouritzen and Svava 2002: 56).

Although their typology is based on general country-specific formal institutional settings Mouritzen and Svava (2002: 53) argue that not only formal structures but also 'informal institutional rules and norms' are important in building the four types. Since their approach is oriented to ideal types of national local government systems, they offer general assessments of informal institutional rules and norms characteristic of a certain type and applicable to a particular country.

Both the recognition of informal institutional rules and norms as well as their generalisation in terms of certain types constitute advantages in comparison to Bäck's typology. His distinction between majoritarian and consociational forms of democratic local decision-making allows for locally defined and particularised informal rules of the game (whereas a monistic or dualistic form of local government can be seen as a given formal institutional structure), especially insofar as consociational decision-making is concerned, so that his typology is only partly related to country-specific institutional structures. Far from representing a problem, this is an advantage for *comparative urban case studies* (which – as mentioned above – formed the background to Bäck's considerations), but it is a pronounced disadvantage for a comparative analysis based on country-related survey data.⁴

Although Mouritzen/Svava's typology was published relatively recently (compared to the Page/Goldsmith and Hesse/Sharpe typologies) it does not capture changes effected in the last few years and – more importantly – not all the countries included in our study are considered (even Germany is missing). Therefore, the national teams from the countries not included in Mouritzen/Svava's typology subsumed their countries under the four types of this typology.

The results of the information are summarised in Table 2 and lead to the grouping of

4 Nevertheless, Bäck (2005: 82-83) acknowledge that his 'assembly government' 'is very close to what Mouritzen and Svava term "the committee leader form"' and that 'Mouritzen and Svava probably would classify also the parliamentary system as a "committee leader form."' Furthermore, he stated that 'semi-presidentialism' and the presidential system would be classified as 'strong mayor' forms by Mouritzen and Svava'. What is not covered by Bäck's typology is the 'council-manager form' and the 'collective form' of Mouritzen and Svava. But may be both could be subsumed under 'parliamentarism'. See his classification of individual cities of countries covers by the 'council-manager form' and the 'collective form' in Bäck 2005: 87.

- France, Germany (without the federate state/Land of Hesse), Austria (with six of its nine Länder), Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain and the English cases with a directly elected mayor under the *strong mayor form*.
- Denmark, the English cases of alternative arrangements⁵ and Sweden (as well as the remaining three Austrian Länder) under the *committee leader form*.
- Belgium, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the English leader-cabinet model cases, (as well as the German Land of Hesse) under the *collective form*, and
- Ireland as the only country of the council-manager form of local government systems⁶.

These groupings will be used in the following chapters when the relations between the mayor, the council and the municipal administration are addressed by referring to the Mouritzen and Svava typology.

2.3 Combining the dimensions: The POLLEADER typology

In examining the role of mayors in a particular local government system, it is not only their relations to the council and the municipal administration that must be considered. The vertical distribution of functions and competencies between the local level and upper-levels of government must also be reflected. This is of particular significance for determining whether a mayor is called upon to represent and/or to lead a municipality with a broad or a quite restricted spectrum of competencies and responsibilities (e.g. in the field of service provision) as well as with limited or wider fiscal and financial discretion. Furthermore, considering the task of a mayor together with the task of a municipality as well as the municipal's legal and financial capacity to govern local affairs is of notable importance against the background of the often cited 'shift from government to governance' and the (possible) ensuing challenge for urban leadership in (newly) evolving local governance arrangements (see Borraz and John 2004; Haus et al. 2005; Heinelt et al. 2006).

Therefore, in the following description the vertical and horizontal dimensions that provide crucial insight for the characterization of local government

5 For the move of the English local government system towards the North-Middle European type – along with an encouragement of executive leadership – see Leach and Wilson 2004.

6 One English council also has this form of decision-making. They did not respond to the survey and are not included in this analysis.

systems are combined by considering the Hesse and Sharpe typology (1991) for local-central government relations and that of Mouritzen and Svava (2002) for power relations between the mayor, the council and the municipal administration. The individual countries covered by the present study are placed in different boxes either on the classification of the cited authors or on the information of the project partners from the respective countries.

Table 2: Political leadership types according to different European local government systems: The POLLEADER typology

		types of local government systems according to (vertical) local-central relations (Hesse and Sharpe 1991)			
		Franco type	Anglo type	North-Middle European type	Central-East European type
forms of local government systems according to horizontal power relations (Mouritzen and Svava 2002)	Strong mayor form	'political mayor' France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain	'executive mayor' England ⁽ⁱ⁾	'executive mayor' Germany, ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Austria ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	'executive mayor' Poland, Hungary
	committee leader form		'collegial leader' England ^(iv)	'collegial leader' Denmark, Sweden, (Austria) ^(v)	
	collective form	'collegial leader' Belgium	'collegial leader', England ^(vi)	'collegial leader' Netherlands, Switzerland, (Germany)	'collegial leader' Czech Rep.
	council-manager form		'ceremonial mayor' Ireland		

- (i) In the cases with a directly elected mayor.
(ii) Without the Bundesland Hesse which is subsumed under the group of 'collegial leaders'.
(iii) In six of its nine Bundesländer.
(iv) In the alternative arrangements cases.
(v) In three of its nine Bundesländer.
(vi) In the cases with a leader-cabinet model.

Figure 1: Figures of Mayors across Europe



The 'strong mayor type' (according to Mouritzen and Svava) is found in countries of the Franco and the North-Middle European (according to Hesse and Sharpe) as well as in the Central-East European type of local government systems. In addition, the following distinctions can be drawn between mayors of these types of local government systems:

- Due to the fact that mayors in the North-Middle and Central-East European types of local government systems are not only formally the heads of municipal administrations which hold responsibility for a broad spectrum of public provision but are also in full charge of their administrations, these mayors will here be called 'executive mayors'. This applies to mayors in Hungary, Poland and Germany (with the exception of the Land Hesse; see below) and most of the Austrian mayors (i.e. the directly elected mayors in Austria).
- Because strong mayors in the Franco type of local government systems lead a municipal administration that is responsible for a relatively limited scope of 'state' functions, but are nevertheless clearly the political representative (and agent) for the local community, they will be called 'political mayors'. France, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain are included in this type.
- Under the Anglo type of local government systems the council-manager type is found in Ireland. In this case mayors exercise a mainly ceremonial function/role, while there is no elected local leader at the head of the municipality and the municipal administration is directed by a professional manager. Therefore, Irish mayors are here termed 'ceremonial mayors'.
- The North-Middle European type of local government systems covers not only the strong mayor and the council-manager form, but also the committee leader and the collective type according to the Mouritzen/Svava typology. In several North- and Middle European countries mayors or elected local leaders of the municipality without the official title of a 'Mayor' (in Sweden, where no 'Mayor' exists, and in England, where most mayors – see below – have restricted ceremonial functions) are required to co-operate collegially with other powerful actors or bodies. Therefore, these institutional settings offer room only for 'collegial leaders'. This type of mayor can be found in Denmark, Sweden and partly in Austria (i.e. in the three Länder where the mayors are not directly elected) as well as in the Netherlands, Switzerland, the Czech Republic and, due to its 'Magistratsverfassung' (unique for Germany) in the German Land Hesse. Although local competencies for service provision in Belgium are different from the above mentioned countries of the North-Middle European type, Belgian

mayors can also be subsumed under the 'collegial leaders' because of the collective form of local government in this country. In England the Local Government Act (Hambleton and Sweeting 2004; Sweeting 2003) offers councils four options:

1. directly elected mayor and cabinet (the 'mayor-cabinet model' adopted by 10 councils);
2. directly elected mayor and council manager (the 'mayor-council manager model' which has been adopted in one case not included in the data set);
3. leader and cabinet (the 'leader-cabinet model' closest to the collective form, 316 councils opted for this model);
4. 'alternative arrangements' (available as an option only for councils with less than 85,000 inhabitants, 59 councils opted for this model, which is closest to the committee leader form).

Because the third option (i.e. the 'leader-cabinet model') is currently the most widespread, 'collegial leaders' are also dominant in England.⁷

2.4 Comparison of the typologies with indicators of the institutionally determined strength of a mayor

All national teams involved in the survey provided current information specifying whether mayors in the different countries

- are directly designated by the citizens (11)⁸,
- have a term of office that does not correspond to the council election term (12), and which can thus be seen as an indicator of an election or appointment of the mayors independently of council elections,
- usually control the council majority (13),
- cannot be recalled by the council (14a) or referendum (14b),
- preside over the council (15),
- at least co-define the council agenda (16),
- appoint the municipal chief executive officer/CEO (17a) and the heads of the administrative departments (17b).

7 In cases where the council opted for the 'leader-cabinet model' or 'alternative arrangements' the questionnaire was sent to the leaders.

8 Mayors may be designated directly (i) by direct election or (ii) as the official leader of a majority formed by election – like in the cases of France, Spain and Portugal.

By adding the values from these nine variables,⁹ an index of mayoral strength (IS) can be created. According to these variables, mayors in the countries included in the analysis reach the following institutionally defined strength (see Table 3).

Table 3: Institutional settings and mayoral strength

countries	I1	I2	I3	I4a	I4b	I5	I6	I7a	I7b	IS
France	2	0	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	12
Spain	2	0	2	1	0	2	2	1	1	11
Italy	2	0	2	0	1	1	2	1	1	10
Greece	2	0	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	10
Austria (dir. elect.)	2	0	1	1	0	2	2	1	0	9
Germany	2	1.5*	0	0.5	1	1	2	0	1	9
Engl. (mayor & cab.)	2	0.5**	2	1	1	0	2	0	1	8.5
Belgium	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	0	8
Hungary	2	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	0	8
Austria (not dir elect.)	0	0	2	0	1	2	2	0	0	7
Germany (Hesse)	2	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	7
Poland	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	6
Denmark	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	0	0	6
Czech Rep.	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	5.5
Portugal	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	5
Engl. (leader & cab.)	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	5
England (alternative)	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	5
Ireland	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	5
Netherlands	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	5
Switzerland	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	4
Sweden	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	3

* Only in two of the German Länder (North Rhine Westfalia and Lower Saxony) the majors have a term of office that correspond to the council election term.

** Directly elected mayors in England have a four year term. In some cases, the election of councillors co-incides with the election of the mayor, in others it does not. Therefore on this variable the score is 0,5..

⁹ The variables I1, I2, I3, I5 and I6 have got a maximum value of 2, whereas the variables I4a, I4b, I7a and I7b have got a maximum value of 1 because the later address just one aspect together with an other variable, i.e. recall by the council or by referendum and appointment of the municipal CEO or the heads of the administrative departments. In cases where no clear 'scoring' has been possible due to differences in the respective country the value has been split, i.e. a 1 or ½ have been given.

Table 4: Typologies and mayoral strength

Countries*	IS	Mouritzen/Svara typology**			Hesse/Sharpe***			POLLEADER typology****					
		manag.	coll.	comm.	strong	E-Cent	N-Mid	Anglo	Franco	cerem.	colleg.	exec.	polit.
France	12				X				X				X
Spain	11				X			.	X				X
Italy	10				X				X				X
Greece	10				X				X				X
Austria ^{dir. el.}	9				X		X					X	
Germany ^{dir. el.}	9				X		X					X	
England ^{dir. el.}	8.5				X			X				X	
Hungary	8				X		X					X	
Belgium	8		X						X		X		
Germany ^{coll.}	7		X				X				X		
Austria ^{coll.}	7			X			X				X		
Poland	6				X							X	
Denmark	6			X			X				X		
Czech Rep.	5.5		X			X					X		
Portugal	5				X				X				X
England ^{lead. cab.}	5		X					X			X		
England ^{altern.}	5			X				X			X		
Netherlands	5		X				X				X		
Ireland	5		X					X		X			
Switzerland	4		X				X				X		
Sweden	3			X			X						

* Abbreviations in column 1: dir. el. = directly elected, lead. cab. = leader-cabinet model, altern. = the 'alternative' version in England. For the other abbreviations in column 1 see the abbreviations for the Mouritzen/Svara typology.

** Abbreviations for the Mouritzen/Svara typology: strong = strong mayor form, comm. = committee leader form, coll. = collective form, manag. = council-manager form.

*** Abbreviations for the Hesse/Sharpe typology: N-Mid = North-Middle European group, E-Cent = East-Central European group, ceremon. = ceremonial mayors, exec. = executive mayors, colleg. = collegial leaders.

**** Abbreviations for the POLLEADER typology: polit. = political mayors, exec. = executive mayors, colleg. = collegial leaders, ceremon. = ceremonial mayors.

When comparing the index (IS) with the Mouritzen/Svara as well as with the Hesse/Sharpe typology and the typology developed by the present authors in the previous section (the POLLEADER typology), the following results are obtained (see Table 4).

A glance at the Mouritzen and Svara typology shows that most of the countries with a *strong mayor form* of local government systems are awarded the highest ratings according to our index of mayoral strength. The value for Poland is lower but still higher than for most of the other countries. The results for the other forms of local government systems (and the respective countries subsumed under them) point to a high degree of differences. The *council-manager form* is a special case because it comprises just one country, i.e. Ireland, which is ranked among the countries with the lowest values.

Compared to the Mouritzen and Svara typology, the POLLEADER typology is more consistent in terms of 'mayoral strength' measured by the index developed and shown above. According to the POLLEADER typology, all countries with a *political mayor* (except Portugal) form a group with the highest values. The group of countries with an *executive mayor* are also closely clustered and exhibit higher values than the rest, with the exception of Poland, Belgium, and the forms of local leadership not dominant in Austria and Germany are ranked above Poland. These two cases represent the stronger version of *collegial leaders*. The other countries belonging to the group of collegial leaders (i.e. Denmark, the Czech Republic, England with its cases of the 'leader-cabinet model' and the 'alternative arrangements' as well as the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden) show relatively low values. Ireland – as the only country with a *ceremonial mayor* – is again a special case with a value for mayoral strength, ranking at the lower end of the values attributed to countries with collegial leaders.

POLLEADER typology is obviously also more consistent in terms of 'mayor strength' than the Hesse/Sharpe typology. Just the countries of the Franco group – identical with the 'political mayors' – can be put in a same category achieving 9 or 10 points. Also Belgium – as an other country of the Franco group – is reaching nearly these high values. Portugal deviates totally, but this is also the case in respect to the POLLEADER typology. Furthermore, the Central East European countries show relatively little differences (from 8 to 5.5 points), but especially in the Anglo group and the North Middle European group differences are remarkable high (from 8.5 to 5 points in the first and 9 to 3 points in the second case).

In general, the index of institutionally determined mayoral strength seems to confirm the distinction between different types of mayors (or local political leaders) that has been developed in this study. Such a distinction was obtained

by combining and enhancing the Mouritzen and Svara typology on horizontal power relations with that of Hesse and Sharpe on vertical power relations or the distribution of competencies, responsibilities and financial resources and discretion between different territorial levels of government. Therefore, the POLLEADER typology will be mainly used in the following chapters where an independent variable addressing these issues is needed for empirical analysis.

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3 'From the Few are Chosen the Few...' On the Social Background of European Mayors

Kristof Steyvers and Herwig Reynaert

Even a quick look at the comparative literature on the social background and characteristics of local political elites undermines the 'fata morgana' of a 'descriptive' representation in which public bodies are socio-demographic samples of the society they represent (Pitkin 1967). Despite differences over time and between political systems the disproportional recruitment of certain social groups with distinctive characteristics into the (local) political elite is one of the most replicated and perpetuated findings. Furthermore, at the local level political decision-makers are predominantly male, middle aged, high in professional status and well-educated (Eldersveld et al. 1995: 31-55). This leads us to conclude that the political recruitment process, by which 'from the many are chosen the few' (Prewitt 1969: 169-188), does not operate in a random manner. Since local leadership selection is conceived as a process by which "individuals are screened by political institutions for elective office" (Jacob 1962: 708) a dynamic interaction of supply and demand side factors becomes apparent in which social background characteristics interfere at different stages. The political capital and motivations of aspirant office-holders intermingle with the demands of gatekeepers in the political system. The 'structure of opportunities' of the latter thus biases the nature of the recruitment function (Norris 1997: 209-231).

Leadership selection operates in such a way that it favours the possibility for individuals with certain characteristics to enter and to remain in public office. One of the central questions then becomes: what are these characteristics and how do they influence the selection chances of these specific individuals? Our aim here is to study a number of these questions for our mayoral population. Our intention thereby is to go beyond the mere drawing of a social sample of a specific local political elite. By scrutinising the background of mayors we hope to learn more on the recruitment process as a whole. Through study of the social composition of a selected leadership stratum we seek to link the impact of