

WELCOME

Dear readers and friends,

We are very pleased to send you the second issue of the Newsletter from the Catalan Observatory at the London School of Economics.

The Catalan Observatory is a research centre within the London School of Economics, forming part of the LSE European Institute. The centre was created as the result of an agreement signed in June 2009 by the Patronat Catalunya Món and the London School of Economics, which was subsequently complemented by a series of bilateral agreements between the School and other bodies which include Mediaproducció SL, Abertis Infraestructuras SA, the Foment del Treball Nacional, the Mancomunitat de Municipis de Barcelona, the Societat Econòmica Barcelonesa d'Amics del País and l'Obra Social La Caixa.

The Observatory at the London School of Economics is a recently created project, which has begun its operations during 2010. The individuals and bodies involved in the scheme have set the highest ambitions for it, conscious as they are that to invest their efforts in the international projection of Catalonia and the promotion of academic studies that link it to the European context is a task that is not only useful and interesting, but also profoundly necessary.

In this second issue of the newsletter you will find on the one hand a summary of the different activities that the Observatory has organized, and also current information on our academic priorities and the themes that we have chosen to highlight for this edition.

We wish to invite you then to consult the reports on the most recent events organized by the Observatory:

- Conference-Seminar of the CO at the LSE on 'Sport, Socialization and Economic Development

- Conference-Seminar of the CO at the LSE on 'Historical Memory: Policy and Practice'

The greater part of the newsletter is given to these current concerns where Catalonia offer a rich expertise as a well as a leading position in the framework of the external affairs.

-Theme 1: Sport as a motor of economic growth, urban development and social cohesion

-Theme 2: The commitment to the economic internationalization of Catalonia and the 'Barcelona' brand

Besides, we invite you in particular to consult our website, www.lse.ac.uk/catalanobservatory, where you can download all the different working documents regarding the seminars that we have organized this year on health issues, sport and economic growth and finally historical and democratic memory.

It only remains for us to hope that you find a read of this newsletter rewarding, and to wish you the best possible academic year,

Paul Preston

Chair of the Catalan Observatory at LSE

Joan Costa i Font

Director of the Catalan Observatory at LSE

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September: Publication of working documents relating to the seminars from the first semester of 2010 on www.lse.ac.uk/catalanobservatory

October: Publication of socioeconomic indicators for 2010 by the Catalan Observatory on the Observatory website www.lse.ac.uk/catalanobservatory

Sports, Socialization and Economic Development



Back row (from left to right): Dr. Joan Costa i Font, Adam Austerfield, Josep Manuel Barberà, Rafael Niubó. Front row (from left to right): Prof. Paul Preston, Dr. Borja García, Anna Pruna, Charles Wijeratna, Jordi Alcover.



Prof. Paul Preston and Anna Pruna



Mr. Charles Wijeratna during his intervention

On 8 June 2010 the Catalan Observatory at the LSE held a conference on 'Sports, Socialization and Economic Development'.

The main public session of the conference in the New Academic Building was addressed by Anna Pruna, Secretary-General for Sports in the government of the Generalitat of Catalonia, and Charles Wijeratna, Director of Commercial Negotiations for the London Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games 2012. The event was chaired by Professor Paul Preston, President of the Catalan Observatory, and began with a brief introduction and words of welcome by Rafael Niubó, Secretary-General of the Vice-President's Department of the Generalitat of Catalonia.

In her lecture **Anna Pruna** insisted on the need to give sport in the 21st century a dimension that was not simply 'sporting' but also social and economic. In this regard she analysed several Catalan projects that are pioneers in Europe, such as the EsportParc Internacional de Catalunya, a centre and business park entirely dedicated to sports science, technology and related services, or the establishment of the Associació de la Indústria de l'Esport (Association of Sports Industries, INDESCAT). The Secretary-General stressed the importance of viability when analysing the returns to be gained from any specific project connected to sport. From the same point of view, she also underlined the need to incorporate first-rank financial actors when developing new infrastructure. **Charles Wijeratna** continued with a similar line of argument, giving priority to a dual process that seems to be the formula for success not just in the sports sector in general but also in the specific case of the organization of an Olympic Games. Mr Wijeratna stressed that the Organizing Committee of London 2012 is pursuing a double objective: on the one hand, to take advantage of the Olympic Games as an 'excuse' for the regeneration of a geographical and urban area that is wholly impoverished and has surprisingly high indices of social problems by comparison with the rest of Greater London (as is the case in the Stratford area), and on the other to achieve a high level of social involvement via the mobilization of the youngest sectors of the population. The second objective seems to be the most problematic, even though projects connected with the London Olympics 2012 are now showing an increase in youth participation. The Olympic logo and mascot, for example, were partly chosen with a view to digital publication, as well as of the possibilities they offered as tools for Internet transmission. At the same time the language and advertising used to promote Olympic participation have been put through an analysis of their sociological impact on young people in Britain. Finally, one of the recurring themes of the conference, which Mr Wijeratna also wished to emphasize, was that of the legacy of the Olympic Games. The success of an international sporting event also lies in achieving a sustainable, practical and profitable future for the chosen geographical and urban area.

Round Tables



Mr. Jordi Alcover and Mr. Josep Manuel Barberà



Mr. Pedro Fontana and Dr. Joan Costa i Font



Prof. Ricky Burdett, Director of LSE Cities

The conference also included the organization of two round-table meetings. The first discussed the role of sport as one of the explanatory factors in the formation of a particular sense of identity or social and political identification. Doctor **Borja Garcia** highlighted the part played by sport in the formation of a territorial identity, and suggested that the lack of a Pan-European team could be behind the weakness of feelings of continental belonging. The second contribution was made by **Jordi Alcover**, who focussed on the relationship between identity, international prestige and socialization in the more specific case of Catalonia. In doing so he reflected on the role that should be played by public institutions when it comes to creating a social base for sport that can maintain and protect certain values such as gender equality, integration and an international outlook.

The second round table focussed on the media, social and economic impact that can come as a result of organizing an Olympic Games. **Pedro Fontana** centred his paper on an analysis of the successes and failures of the Barcelona Olympics of 1992. Standing out among the elements of success were clearly the role of local citizens, the spirit of institutional cooperation between the Spanish central government, the Catalan Generalitat and the Barcelona city council (Ajuntament), and lastly the notable weight that was given to mixed public-private financing in infrastructure and urban development. In this regard the Barcelona Olympic Games have been used as a model by other Organizing Committees in terms of the central principles of transparency in planning, social mobilization and institutional collaboration in the name of 'Olympic Glory'. For his part **Ricky Burdett** pointed out that London is 'imitating' Barcelona in its urban planning. Regarding this he also emphasized that the best Olympic Games are those that use the event as an excuse for substantially improving a part of the city that has fallen into decay, which is disconnected from the rest of the city or even a semi-island of deprivation and marginalization (as in Stratford). The aerial photographs that he presented with his paper demonstrated the situation of Stratford just before renovation began. Its state of abandonment was evident: car cementeries, derelict factories, a complete lack of rail connections, bridges and road links in an area of outer London with marsh and water barriers, and grave public health problems. Hence Olympic planning has as an objective that of re-balancing the territorial inequalities in London, and is thought of as a legacy for the future. Certain differences separate the project described by Fontana from that outlined by Burdett. The most apparent is probably the shortage in the case of London of a spirit of institutional cooperation between central, regional and local government. Lastly, **Guillermo Pérez** dealt with the topic of support for Olympic sportsmen and women as a key element in a country's overall sporting success. In his paper Pérez laid emphasis on the way in which specific projects, such as for example the CAR or Centre d'Alt Rendiment (High Performance Centre) for elite athletes at Sant Cugat in Catalonia, form the basis for success in the long term. Some figures are indicative: currently 33% of all Spanish Olympic sportsmen and women have been trained in Catalonia, and 46% of all medal-winners (from only 16% of the total population of the Spanish state). Pérez graphically demonstrated the unequivocal relationship between planned investment and Olympic medals.

All the working papers and presentations can be consulted on the website of the Catalan Observatory: www.lse.ac.uk/catalanobservatory

Conference on Historical Memory: Policy and Practice 1.



Prof. Miquel Caminal and Prof. Paul Preston



Dr. Jordi Guixé



**Dr. Carme Molinero, Prof. Paul Preston and
Dr. Peter Anderson**

Held on Thursday 1 July, from 4–8pm, and Friday 2 July, from 10am–6.30pm.

On the first and second of July the Catalan Observatory held a major two-day conference titled 'Historical Memory: Policy and Practice', organized jointly with Memorial Democràtic, the body set up by Generalitat de Catalunya to assist in maintaining historical memory in Catalonia, and chaired by **Paul Preston** and **Miquel Caminal**.

The first session centred on an analysis of some of the most prominent projects undertaken in Catalonia in terms of 'Memorials'. The session opened with a broad introduction on the topic of the seminar by Paul Preston, followed by an address by Miquel Caminal, Director of the Memorial Democràtic de Catalunya, on 'The Memorial Democràtic and Public Policies on Historical Memory in Catalonia'.

Jordi Guixé, Head of Projects and Memorial Spaces at the Memorial Democràtic, presented an empirical overview of the work undertaken by the Memorial in Catalonia, with the theme 'Historical Memory: a Common Heritage'. His presentation served to explore a new concept of memory: democratic memory. A diverse sense of memory that does not give a privileged position – as has been the case in France since the end of the Second World War – to memories that are heroic (of resistance) or painful (those of victims, deportees). Jordi Guixé emphasized the point that democratic memory is based on a transmission of the variety of struggles made in favour of democracy, as an element of permanent value in the present and for the future. A work of memory and history that has to go further than paying homage to members of the resistance or to victims. Democratic Memory provides a sense of civic awareness and education that goes beyond the moralizing tone of some memorials to the Second World War. Similarly the speaker also reflected on the extent to which democratic memory should be understood as an area of current public policy that extends beyond the duty of memory and historical commemoration to become a right of citizenship.

Finally, before opening up the session to the rest of the invited historians **Dacia Viejó-Rose** of the University of Cambridge presented a paper on the major academic and historical issues regarding 'Memorials: Memory, Myth and the Right to Remember'. Her argument followed a similar vein to that of Jordi Guixé. Viejó-Rose focussed on giving an answer to the question 'do memorials only exert an authoritarian and coercive injunction (thou shall not forget), or can they have a different, democratic function, and if so what would this look like?' At the same time she analysed the philosophical, historical and academic meanings of the concept of 'memorial'. Viejó-Rose underlined that memorials are closely related to the concept of a 'symbol', in that they are the product of an aspiration to remember in order to preserve the presence of a particular subject or object. The definition of a 'memorial' is also extremely closely connected to the idea of 'loss'. This is an important distinction since it differentiates them from commemorative monuments that may be related to war but are not necessarily about loss.

Conference on Historical Memory: Policy and Practice 2.



Dr. Conxita Mir and Prof. Paul Preston

The second session began at 10am on Friday, and was divided between two round tables. At the first one, **Raul Digón**, head of the Graves Section of the Memorial Democràtic in Barcelona, presented an overview of 'The Application of the Law on Graves in Catalonia and Spain'. **Conxita Mir** of the Universitat de Lleida analysed some projects that have been undertaken in relation to 'The Dignification of the Mass Graves created by Francoist Repression'. Lastly, **Angela Jackson**, of the Cañada Blanch Centre and the No Jubilem la Memòria ('Don't Pension off Memory') association dedicated to preserving historical memory in the Priorat district of Catalonia, presented an initial version of a recent documentary made by No Jubilem la Memòria, titled 'Dead and Buried? Working at the Grass Roots to Recover Spain's Civil War History'.



Final Debate for the Seminar

The second round table was chaired by Paul Preston and focussed on the papers by **Carme Molinero** of the Universitat de Barcelona on 'Francoist Repression and Policies of Democratic Memory', and by **Peter Anderson** of the London School of Economics, who presented the main propositions of his paper 'Living with the Denouncers: Discrimination and Exclusion after the Francoist Military Trials'. All the working papers and presentations can be consulted on the website of the Catalan Observatory: www.lse.ac.uk/catalanobservatory

THEME 1

Sport as a Motor of Economic Growth, Urban Development and Social Cohesion



1) Barcelona and London agree to share experiences on the Olympics and Urban Regeneration

On 17 March a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Districte 22@, Barcelona's special district for knowledge-based activities, and Newham in London to encourage cooperation and identify opportunities for collaboration between Barcelona and London.

The agreement will enable Barcelona to pass on all its Olympic know-how in advance of the celebration of the 2012 Olympic Games, and at the same time assist in the promotion of the Catalan capital as the site of the Winter Games of 2022. Equally, this agreement will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences in the field of urban regeneration.

These two areas have in common a past as traditional industrial districts, which have been reconverted into new, modern metropolitan areas that base their future on the knowledge economy. In addition, Barcelona and London have common Olympic concerns: Barcelona was the location of the 1992 Olympic Games, London will be for the 2012 Games and Barcelona again aspires to welcome the Winter Games in 2022. The two cities are also committed to sustainable mobility and technological development and are spaces in which to live, work and study. In order to share this knowledge and experience, on 17 March the two cities gave formal definition to their desire for cooperation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. Another objective of this type of cooperation is to promote cultural exchanges connected to innovation, as for example in the area of universities and centres for investigation and research.

With regard to Newham, this London Borough is undergoing a profound urban transformation, especially in view of the fact that two-thirds of the events of the Summer Olympic Games of 2012 will take place within its area.

2) Catalonia rewards its most international sportsmen and women

The Government of the Generalitat has given recognition through the ARC Prizes (Premis ARC) to a total of 181 Catalan high-level sportsmen and women and coaches who have achieved international successes in competitions held during the previous year. The prizewinners all achieved podium finishes or were finalists in World Championships held during 2009, always in recognized events, or were among the first three in European Championships in Olympic sports. The General Secretariat for Sports initiated the ARC (High Performance in Sport for Catalonia) programme in 2001 in order to work together with all the Catalan sporting federations on developing means of support for Catalan elite sportsmen and women. The ARC programme defines the criteria and objectives that each Catalan high-level sportsman or woman has to achieve, and provides the technical, economic and material elements necessary to improve their conditions in training and competition.

Premis ARC Prizewinners 2009

http://premsa.gencat.cat/pres_fsvp/docs/2010/06/10/15/50/ae541005-7a10-465b-8d5b-7aad204574d1.pdf

THEME 2

Extending and Encouraging the 'Internationalization' of Catalonia, Placing Special Emphasis on and Prioritizing those Business, Technological and Industrial Sectors in which it has Competitive Advantages



1) Fòrum Catalunya Món

On 3 June a one-day conference was held by the Fòrum Catalunya Món to debate and analyse the process of internationalization in Catalonia from the point of view of economics, knowledge and innovation. Those attending numbered more than 1,300, drawn from the business, political, institutional, academic and cultural worlds.

Addressing the forum the President of the Generalitat of Catalonia José Montilla insisted on the need for collaboration between the public and private sectors, as well as for cooperation between companies to 'consolidate' the internationalization of Catalonia, which has never been 'so vitally necessary as it is today'.

The Vicepresident of the government, Josep-Lluís Carod-Rovira, expressed himself in similar terms, calling on all the economic, social and cultural actors in the country to make an 'effort' to 'build Catalonia outside its borders', so that Catalonia might be 'a country that is known and recognized across the world'. 'For years it was necessary', he went on, 'and it is still necessary, to make an effort to build and structure Catalonia within its borders, and this is what the government has done and is still doing. But now what is needed, still more, is an effort to build up Catalonia beyond its frontiers, and you are all called upon to make this effort'. At the same time, different experts who took part in the meeting agreed that the internationalization of Catalonia has become one of the principal means at its disposal with which to confront the current situation of economic crisis, and must be one of the key factors in the future growth of Catalonia.

The President of Repsol YPF, Antoni Brufau, pointed out that Catalonia possesses the three factors that make an economy successful: it is open, strategically-minded and welcoming to outside influences. In effect, the Catalan economy is one that is already notably open to the outside world: there are 14,000 exporting companies, the level of economic openness is close to 70 per cent, and there are ever more business leaders, scientists, entrepreneurs, cultural creators and different institutions that are developing activities outside the country.

Lastly, several speakers underlined the importance of infrastructures as a factor in international competitiveness. In this regard, they reiterated the need to move ahead with the Mediterranean Rail Corridor, for greater connectivity between ports and airports, and to consolidate new markets.

For details see the Fòrum Catalunya Món:

<http://www.forumcatalunyamon.cat/>

2) Barcelona and Catalonia are international points of reference, according to the Financial Times

Barcelona appears in fifth place in the ranking of European Cities of the Future, according to the figures presented in the report 'European Cities & Regions of the Future 2010/2011', published by the prestigious *fDi Magazine* of the *Financial Times* group. The Catalan capital was ranked behind only London, Paris, Moscow and Stockholm.

At the same time, Catalonia has been recognized as the region of southern Europe with the best economic prospects, and is the only Spanish autonomous community to have been placed among the 25 top European regions.

The European Regions & Cities of the Future rankings are based on an evaluation made by *fDi Markets*, the specialist publication on foreign investment of the British business newspaper the *Financial Times*.

In preparing the different rankings, a variety of factors were employed such as the economic potential of a region, its human resources, cost-benefit analysis, the quality of life, the business environment, the quality of its infrastructure or policy strategies with regard to attracting investment.

In the ranking of the 25 top regions of the whole of Europe, Catalonia achieved eleventh place, ahead of Baden-Württemberg (Germany), Västsverige (Sweden) or Brussels (Belgium).

For this edition, which covers the period 2010–2011, 233 cities and 142 regions have taken part.

TOP 25 EUROPEAN CITIES: OVERALL

RANK	CITY	COUNTRY
1	London	UK
2	Paris	France
3	Moscow	Russia
4	Stockholm	Sweden
5	Barcelona	Spain
6	Dublin	Ireland
7	Vienna	Austria
8	Frankfurt	Germany
9	Brussels	Belgium
10	Edinburgh	UK
11	Madrid	Spain
12	Amsterdam	Netherlands
13	Copenhagen	Denmark
14	Hamburg	Germany
15	Zurich	Switzerland
16	Berlin	Germany
17	Munich	Germany
18	Bucharest	Romania
19	Oslo	Norway
20	Eindhoven	Netherlands
21	Cambridge	UK
22	Warsaw	Poland
23	Helsinki	Finland
24	Manchester	UK
25	Budapest	Hungary

TOP 25 REGIONS: OVERALL

RANK	REGION	COUNTRY
1	South-east	UK
2	Ile-de-France	France
3	Nordrhein-Westfalen	Germany
4	Bayern	Germany
5	Capital Region	Denmark
6	Centre-est	France
7	Flanders	Belgium
8	Scotland	UK
9	Greater Dublin Region	Ireland
10	Greater Stockholm Region	Sweden
11	Catalonia	Spain
12	Baden-Württemberg	Germany
13	Ouest	France
14	Bassin Parisien	France
15	Noord-Holland	Netherlands
16	Brussels Capital Region	Belgium
17	Zuid-Holland	Netherlands
18	Mediterranee	France
19	Hessia	Germany
20	Yvelines	France
21	North-west	UK
22	Västsverige	Sweden
23	Central Federal District	Russia
24	Yorkshire & Humberside	UK
25	Bucharest-Ilfov	Romania

Report: <http://www.fdimagazine.com/cp/26/European-Cities-and-Regions-of-the-Future-2010-11.pdf>

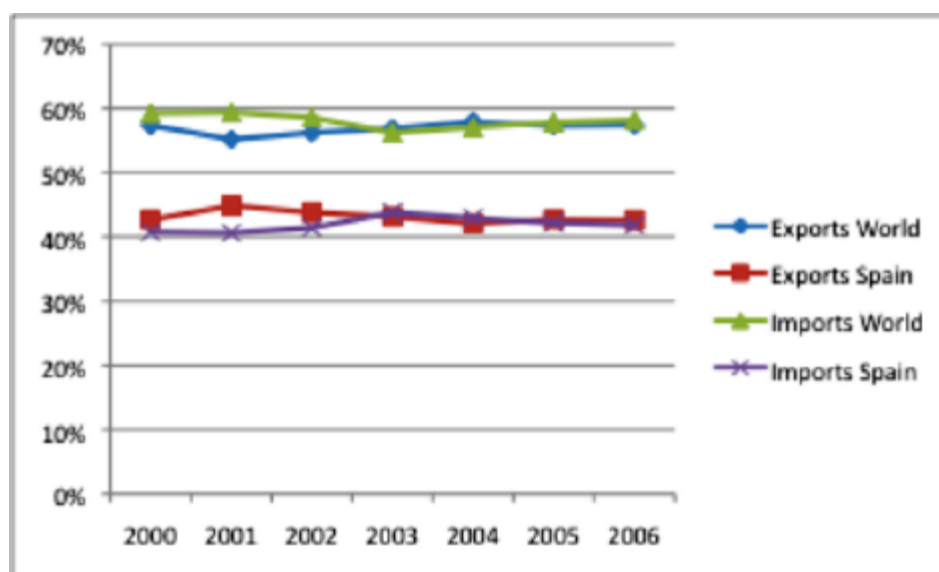
3) Exports take the leading role in indicators of industrial recovery in Catalonia, with 17% growth in the first quarter of 2010

According to the Annual Report on industry in Catalonia, presented on 18 June, Catalan industry seems to be beginning to overcome the crisis.

From the industrial indicators it is clear that during the first months of 2010 all the available indicators revealed better results than for the same period in 2009. Especially outstanding are the most recent figures on output and exports, which could play the leading role in the recovery of Catalan industry. Three points stand out in the Report which characterize the evolution of industry during 2009 and the first part of 2010. The first is that *'2009 was a year of very intense crisis'*; the second, that *even though 2009 was such a bad year overall, 'from the second quarter onwards one could see an upturn in the curve, or a change in the general trend, and the fall in the indicators was moderated'*; and the third, that *'during the months that we have seen so far in 2010, the tendency towards a moderation in the downturn has continued, and some indicators, even, already show signs of positive movement'*.

All the available indicators coincide in indicating that 2009 was probably the worst year ever recorded for Catalan industry, principally as a consequence of the prolonged effects of the international financial and economic crisis and the bursting of the property bubble. Among these indicators, one that stands out is that industrial GDP fell by -12.9% by comparison with 2008. In addition the IPI, industrial investment and export levels also fell by proportions that had not been seen in many years. This decline in activity and investment had a severe effect on industrial employment. All the indicators also coincide in showing that the worst moment in the crisis came during the first and second quarters of 2009. Since then, quarterly indicators such as GDP, the Industrial Production Index (which went from -23% in the second quarter, to -2.4% in the fourth) and exports have moderated their fall, the effects of which have also been felt in employment. Particularly notable in this regard is the role that can be played by exports and their development in improving and strengthening the economy's emergence from the crisis. During the first quarter of 2010, exports experienced a year-on-year increase of 17%. Imports also moved into positive figures during the first quarter of 2010, but to a lesser degree (+4.2%), so that the contribution made to growth by external trade is currently a positive one.

Fig. 1. Percentage of imports and exports with Spain and the World.



The report in full can be consulted on: http://premsa.gencat.cat/pres_fsvp/docs/2010/06/18/13/27/3b839bcf-0856-4721-984c-35dddba227da.pdf



Logo of the 4 motors for Europe

4) Catalonia takes over the Presidency of the 'Four Motors for Europe'

On 15 June Catalonia took over from Lombardy in the Presidency of the Four Motors for Europe. Lombardy, Rhône-Alpes and Baden Württemberg are the three territories that since 1988 have made up, together with Catalonia, this association for inter-regional cooperation, the objective of which is to increase these regions' economic, cultural and social potential, and contribute to the process of European integration.

The Catalan Presidency of the Four Motors for Europe will work to give greater dynamism to economic cooperation in order to contribute to the recovery of the member regions and of Europe as a whole, by means of inter-regional cooperation. The association provides a good opportunity to strengthen cooperation and seek solutions that enable us to exit from the crisis. In this regard the aim will be to make use of the 'momentum' of the moment, creating further institutional facilities for the promotion of activities that involve the different member regions and encourage economic recovery.

For this to be achieved, the internationalization of the economies of the four territories appears as a matter of vital importance. One project that can be taken as a reference point is the association's joint institutional and economic mission to Egypt, 'one of the economies of greatest potential in the Mediterranean, with a privileged location', and an entry point for trade from Asia, Africa and Europe. This mission will be ongoing throughout 2011, and will include a technical seminar with experts from all the member regions and associates of the Four Motors and Egypt, encounters between business leaders and a plenary conference to be attended by representatives of six European authorities and the Egyptian authorities. In parallel programmes and exchanges will be undertaken in the field of innovation, and collaboration will be promoted between clusters in the different territories. Beyond economics, however, the Catalan Presidency of the Four Motors should also be an opportunity to reinforce cooperation in other sectors as well as those strictly related to the economy, such as the environment, education, information technologies or culture.

These are precisely the main lines of action that are put forward in the Joint Declaration of the Four Motors for Europe, which the representatives of Catalonia, Lombardy, Rhône-Alpes and Baden-Württemberg signed last June. The text expresses a commitment to reinforcing the role of sub-state governments, and the key political role of regions in economic, social and cultural growth and European development in innovation and competitiveness.

Joint Declaration of the Four Motors for Europe:

<http://www.4motors.eu/documents/declaration-CAT.pdf>



5) The 'Barcelona' brand: The European Cities Monitor 2009 points to Barcelona as the city with the highest quality of life and which is making most improvements

The European Cities Monitor 2009 study, undertaken by the consultants Cushman & Wakefield on the basis of interviews carried out with senior executives of 500 companies, has reaffirmed Barcelona's status as a leading city in the ranking, giving it fourth place among cities preferred for doing business.

Points that stand out in the study are:

- Barcelona is the fourth-most-popular city in Europe for doing business. London, Paris and Frankfurt head the ranking.
- For the fifth year running Barcelona is considered the European city that best promotes itself abroad.
- Barcelona continues to be perceived as the major European city that is doing most to improve itself, in the opinion of European executives, and is the third city in Europe in terms of its level of recognition as an international business location, behind London and Paris.

- Barcelona is, for the eighth consecutive year, the city considered to have the best quality of life.

In a more general sense a point to be highlighted from the study is that access to markets and the availability of qualified staff represent the most important factors when it comes to selecting a location for a business. In this respect Barcelona still does not possess a reservoir of highly-qualified staff on the same level as London, Paris or Berlin.

Other significant considerations when companies 'choose' a location for their businesses are the quality-price ratio for office space, the fiscal and political climate, the availability of office space, knowledge of languages, the state of local transport, the quality of life for employees and environmental conditions.

Report: <http://www.europeancitiesmonitor.eu/>

6) The 'Barcelona' brand: Barcelona hosts the First Euro-Mediterranean Congress of Young Entrepreneurs Associations

In June the first Euro-Mediterranean Congress of Young Entrepreneurs Associations was held in Barcelona, which for two days brought together young business leaders from 22 countries around the Mediterranean. The conference, organized by PIMEC, the Catalan association of small and medium enterprises, discussed proposals aimed at assisting businesses created by young people to compete at international level. The main conclusions will subsequently be presented to the European Parliament.

Catalonia has a strong network of small and medium enterprises, which generate 68% of the country's GDP and employ 76% of its work force. **In this respect projects and initiatives are needed that will encourage an environment favourable to the birth and consolidation of new business ventures.** Notable among projects already in progress, for example, are the classes to encourage entrepreneurship in secondary schools or the establishment of specific courses on business creation within technical education, as well as programmes such as the Catalan government's *Avalis Emprèn* grants, which facilitate access to credit for new business projects, or the Inicia plan, an advice and assistance programme for new businesses that seeks to reinforce local public services that support business creation.

In addition Catalonia has also been recognized this year with one of the first European Entrepreneurial Regions Awards.