

LOCAL AND REGIONAL TIME AGENDA

Topic 4

URBAN
NIGHTTIME
POLICIES

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF NIGHTTIME: A comprehensive overview of nightlife governance, neighbourhood rest, and youth engagement

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Why should cities concern themselves with their nightlife? Nightlife is often considered a **crucial indicator of the urban experience** and – depending on individual participation and interests – of quality of life in a city. An attractive and diverse nightlife is part of the promise of the metropolis, and not just for tourism. It is also a concrete draw for skilled workers and the innovative and creative milieus oft-cited of late. The subject of numerous interchangeable city marketing concepts and labels, local nightlife and the culture that comes with it serve a dual purpose for European cities: first, to fulfil the ubiquitous promises of the modern European metropolis, and second, to act as a differentiator in the competition among cities.

Beyond these marketing aspects, however, the concrete economic potential of the *stadt nach acht*, or city after 8.00pm, and a vibrant nighttime economy –umbrella term for the economic and cultural actors of urban nightlife– is gaining attention and focus in policies of urban development.

And yet, discussion of the spatial, social and cultural implications and potential that nightlife can offer cities –and how cities can harness effective policies to foster more egalitarian, sustainable, better and healthier nightlife environments– remains embryonic. An attractive and sometimes literally pulsating nightlife must find space and place beyond travel guides and Instagram posts; it must find them in the city itself. This comes with its own questions and problems. For many cities, nightlife itself is problematic and requires examination from a policy perspective distinctly concerned with urban development. By now, many cities in Europe have recognized this and are experimenting with various approaches to promoting and regulating nightlife and exploring various forms of night governance. The present chapter will provide an initial overview of these.

But this topic's relevance for urban development extends beyond nocturnal pleasures and their economic potential. Given the working world's increasing temporal and organizational flexibility, and the fusion of urban everyday life that this begets, it must be seen against a backdrop of changing temporal usage frequencies and intensities, fluctuating work environments, and differentiated usage demands on urban spaces and infrastructures. **The topic is intertwined with the challenges inherent to time policies.** First, lifestyles and cultures are increasingly plural and expressed in increasingly heterogeneous everyday practices. Second, the task of managing the spatial, functional and temporal urban conflicts that result from these “asynchronies” (e.g. restful neighbourhoods and noise disturbance) will gain relevance as the urban renaissance continues to sweep Europe.

Through the lens of five key topics –Night Governance, Inclusive Night-Time Leisure, Night Safety, and Respecting Residents' Rest– this chapter sets out to understand, with an eye to developing new ways of thinking about urban nightlife, the dynamics which shape our cities' after-dark landscapes. The particular approach –contemplating our everyday lives while factoring for time, and underscoring aspects which are specific to time policies– can contribute to this effort in new ways. **The right to time must also encompass the right to nightlife.**



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