

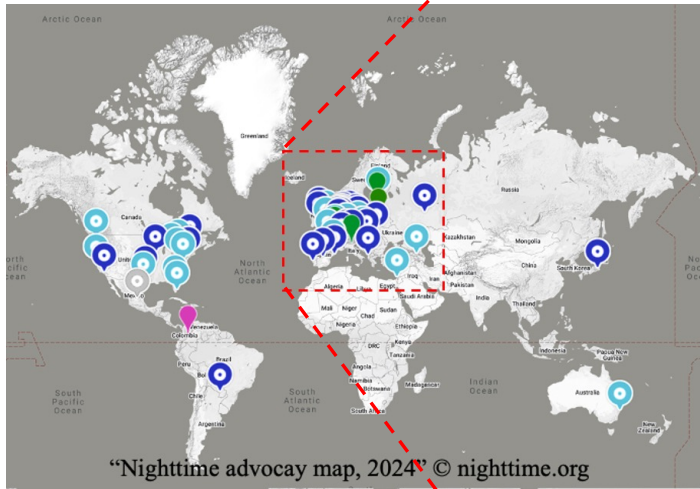
Night Governance Mechanisms: The case of Night Mayors

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The nocturnal city is not limited to nightlife, but a first approach from the standpoint of nightlife is a good basis for understanding the current problems of the nocturnal city in its multiple dimensions.





“Nighttime advocacy map, 2024” © nighttime.org



Origins

LONDON (RE)CALLING...



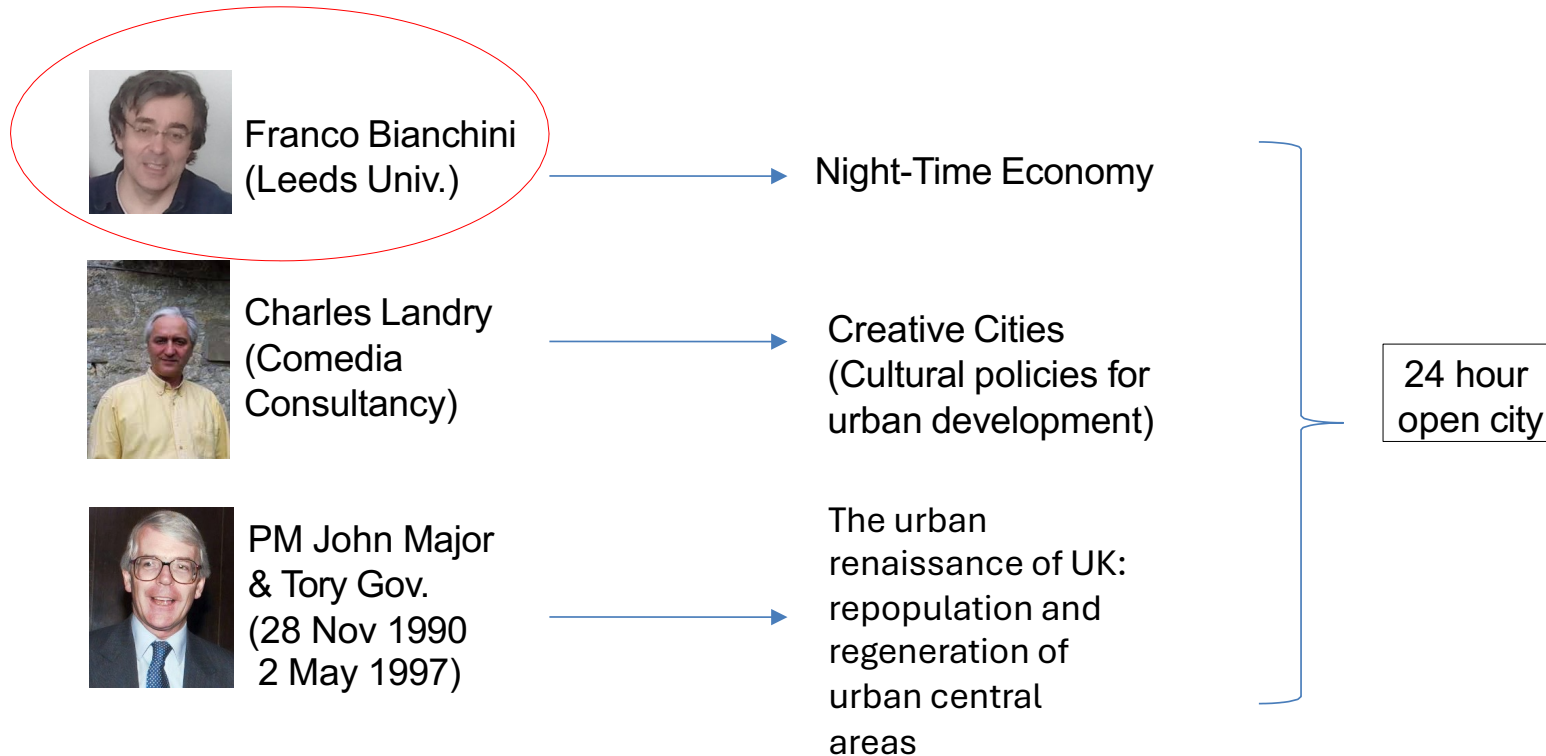
Following intense suburbanization during the second half of the twentieth century, British city centers experienced a rapid depopulation and degradation of both public space and housing stock (Lovatt and O'Connor 1995).



There was a strong institutional (local and national) concern about how to reinvigorate the central neighborhoods of British cities.

Origins

Origins of the term “24 hour Open City”



Origins

The Out of Hours project became the starting point for the socio-economic revitalization of the central areas of British cities (and subsequently of Europe and beyond) that would be based on the promotion, among other initiatives, of implementing a “strategy of cultural animation, supported by a strategy of regeneration of public space” (Bianchini, 1990, p.7).

'Out of Hours: Improving Public Social Life during and After Working Hours', Comedia Consultancy & Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

The Crisis of Urban Public Social Life in Britain: Origins of the Problem and Possible Responses

by Franco Bianchini

Franco Bianchini (1990) The crisis of urban public social life in Britain: Origins of the problem and possible responses, *Planning Practice & Research*, 5(3), 4-8,

Table 1. Fear of crime: summary of surveys.

Location	Date	Finding
England and Wales	1984	31% felt 'fairly unsafe' or 'very unsafe' walking alone after dark
London	1984-5	58% of women felt 'very unsafe' or 'not very safe' walking along at night; 22% never travelled after dark
Islington	1985	73% of women and 27% of men felt worried about going out alone at night
Croydon	1986	'Almost two thirds' of respondents did not feel safe walking along after dark
Southampton	1986	59% of women felt unsafe walking after dark; over 90 locations were identified as unsafe by respondents.
Wellingborough	1986	58% felt they would be victims of violent street robbery; 54% feared they would be assaulted in the street, 60% of women thought they would be sexually attacked.
Manchester	1987	63% of women never walked home alone at night
Birmingham	1987	69% of both sexes were deterred from visiting the city centre at night
Great Britain	1987	40% of respondents feared going out at night; 59% of these were retired people, and 64% women

Source: Atkins, 1989, page 8

Atkins S T, 1989, *Critical Paths: Designing for Secure Travel*, Transport and Road Research Laboratory (TRRL)

Conclusions

Having discussed possible arguments for investing in the revitalisation of public social life, I will not—for reasons of space—specify the policy initiatives to which resources could be devoted. All I can do at this stage is simply to list in the form of headings the main policy recommendations which emerged from the “Out of Hours” Liverpool pilot study. We highlighted the need to adopt the following strategies:

- (i) a cultural animation strategy, supported by a public space strategy;
- (ii) the introduction of town card schemes and the launch of a “what’s on in town” information strategy;
- (iii) an urban design and traffic circulation review, with an emphasis on the need of pedestrians, rather than motorists;
- (iv) a review of the provision of street lighting;
- (v) an evening transportation strategy;
- (vi) a city centre image campaign and integrated management strategy;
- (vii) the re-establishment of sizeable, non-ghettoised residential communities in the city centre;
- (viii) the development of a waterfront-based evening economy, and of a city centre-based black enterprise development strategy.

It is clear that, in order to coordinate such a multifarious programme of interventions, the discipline of urban planning itself will have to become more holistic, and more rooted in a cultural understanding of how cities are lived.

Such need for a reform of urban planning is encapsulated in the notion of ‘cultural planning’ (see Bianchini, 1989b), which should be refined through further research and hopefully also through discussion in future issues of *Planning Practice and Research*.

Nightlife as a synonym for:
Urban Regeneration; Socioeconomic Revitalization; Safety in public nightlife spaces.

“The nightlife strategy”: Values & Impacts



Pink Street, Lisbon’s former red-light district, Set. 2017.
Source: Aquí Mora Gente & J. Nofre.



Impacts

At spatial, social, economic, cultural, environmental, heritage, public health, and governance levels



“The diurnalization of the night”

(Straw & Gwiazdzinski, 2018)

“Every weekend in Europe, thousands go out to dinner, to meet their friends, to dance; thousands more work at night in back-office and logistics centers, supply centers, essential services and health institutions; many use public transport at night, ride-sharing or even take their own vehicle to get across town. Meanwhile, many informal workers (domestic workers, street vendors, sex workers, and petty dealers) carry out their activities at night, some of them taking advantage of the liminal anonymity of darkness”

Nofre, J. & Garcia-Ruiz (Eds). (2023). Special Issue “Nocturnal Cities: Past, Present, and Future”. *Forum Sociologico*, 43. Available at: <https://journals.openedition.org/sociologico/11343>



The question of governing the nocturnal city considering its multiple and complex dimensions is still minor at a global level.



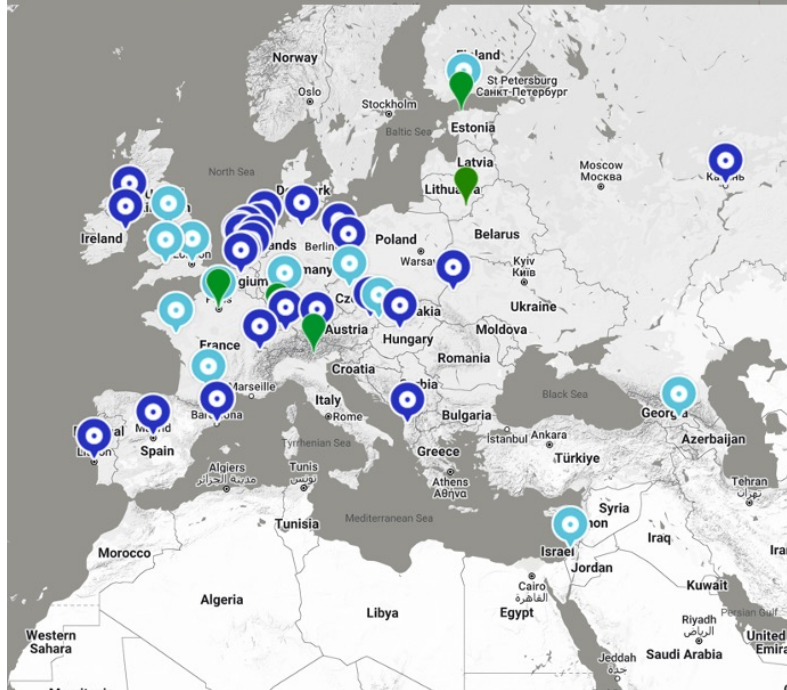
- **1970, Rotterdam:** Jules Deelder, Rotterdam writer, poet and jazz musician, proposes the creation of a *nachtburgemeester* (night mayor) as the main cultural promoter/activist of the night in the center of Rotterdam.
- **2003, Amsterdam (nightlife industry actors + cultural activists):** First *nachtburgemeester* of the city → promotion of the city’s cultural life at evening and nighttime hours.
- **2015 - present:** Expansion of the current institutional-community-cultural profile of the *nachtburgemeester* in Europe, America, Oceania and Asia.

TWO DIFFERENT MODELS:

London/Paris/Bordeaux model (public action): *London Night-Time Commission* (2016-2019): transport, nightlife, cultural economy, neighborhood livability. *London Night Czar*: 2017-2024, very focused on developing community-oriented actions in relation also to safety, transport and public space; *24-h London* (2022 - present): promotion of the night economy throughout the city //

Conseil de la Nuit, (2014 / 2018 - present): **institutional action for the participatory governance of the night** in areas such as leisure, culture, economy, home care, transport and mobility, public services, safety, the right to rest....

Berlin-Amsterdam-Montreal model (private action; the dominant model): boosting the nightlife industry: “MTL 24/24 is a non-profit organization that aims to promote the development of nightlife in Montreal” (MTL24/24, 2024). “Berlin Clubcommission lays the foundation for the preservation, development and future of the Berlin clubbing scene” (BCK, 2024). “N8BM A'DAM is an independent, non-profit foundation dedicated to a lively, diverse and inclusive nightlife.”(2024).



The governance of the nocturnal city: Major topics



Bridging research, policy & community

Nofre, J., Garcia-Ruiz, M. & Mercado, A. (2023). Nocturnal futures: a necessary reflection in times of uncertainty. *Fórum Sociológico*, 43. <https://doi.org/10.4000/sociologico.11953>

Environment	'Greener' nightlife industry
	Street lighting in public spaces
	Acoustic, light and atmospheric pollution
	Energy supply efficiency in nightlife settings
	Waste reduction in nightlife settings
	Water consumption reduction in nightlife settings
	Nocturnal urban heat islands
	Dark Sky Research
Transportation	Public transport at night
	Private transport (cars, bikes, e-scooters)
	Ridesharing transport services
Urban Planning & Development	Sustainable cities and nighttime and nighttime leisure
	City's night-time cultural planning
	Nighttime public services planning
	Spatial change & urban revitalization
	Gentrification, tourism-gentrification



			Violence against women and girls in nightlife settings and/or public spaces at night
			Violence against LGBTQI+ individuals in nightlife settings and/or public spaces at night
Tourism & Mobilities	Party tourism	Personal Safety & Public Security	Racism and xenophobia in nightlife settings and/or public spaces at night
	Nighttime events and festivals tourism		Organized crime - extortion of nighttime venues, control of night districts, local authorities' corruption.
	Alcotourism		Violence and crime in nightlife settings and/or public spaces at night
	Stag tourism		Surveillance and policing in public spaces at night
	Pubcrawls		Protocols and best practices about safety, surveillance and policing at night
	Erasmus students' nights		New surveillance technologies in public spaces at night
	Party cruisers		
	Leisure sailing at night		
Public Health Management	Alcohol and drug use, smoking and high-risk sexual behavior	Governance	Legislation & licensing
	Community intervention projects for harm reduction		Institutional tools, strategies, actions on: culture, economy, tourism, security, safety, transport, public health, risk reduction,
	Drug-use and self-help strategies		Lobbying & Governance: Nighttime Industry Associations, Bars & Club Commissions,
	Nighttime traffic accidents		Participative Governance: Night Mayors, Night Ambassadors, Night Czars & nightlife-related cultural associations



Nocturnal Informal Work & Economies	Informal Domestic Work	Nighttime Cultural and Leisure (Formal & Informal)	Museums exhibitions at night
	Street vendors		Light festivals
	Riders		Live music events at night
	Street dealers		Music festivals at night
	Sexual workers		Evening / Late night theater & cinema shows
	Street Artists & Performers		Other forms of culture at night (ballet, opera, etc)
	Informal teleworking		Nightlife industry
	Other informal workers		Clubbing scenes
Nocturnal Formal Work	Supply market workers		Free-parties, Temporary autonomous zones & Raves
	Retail shift workers		Outdoor drinking
	Truckload carriers	Exclusion/segregation in nighttime leisure activities	
	Night workers in factories and logistic plants (including airports & ports)	Social & Cultural Heritage	History of the night
	Call centers & Backoffice workers		History of venues
	Municipal service workers		History of clubbing scenes
	Infrastructure improvement and construction workers		Memories (both individual and collective)
	Health care & essential services' workers	The Intangible Dimension of the Night	Affectivities
	Formal teleworking		Emotions
	Other formal workers		Atmospheres
	Social and cultural values		
	Religious events at night		



Challenges (in the case of Spain) ^(1/2)

1. **Urban public policies have only been designed and are designed for the daytime city, but not for the nocturnal city.** Their systematic application to solve problems that are inherent to the nocturnal city usually leads to undesired effects, or even to complete failure.
2. In the largest Spanish cities, the urban dynamics associated with the nocturnal city are often interrelated with metropolitan scales. In these cases, **the governance of the nocturnal city at the municipal level should be accompanied by a coordination mechanism at the metropolitan level.**
3. There are often misgivings and mistrust between the different institutional (local governments) and formal actors (employers, unions, neighborhood associations, cultural, LGTBQI+ rights, etc.) about the governance of the nocturnal city. This panorama has its roots in the **low (and really ineffective) citizen participation over the last decades in the design of sectoral and/or intersectoral public policies.**



Challenges (in the case of Spain) (2/2)

4. There is **little tradition of multilateral and multi-stakeholder cooperation at the municipal and regional level** when debating new governance strategies for cities and territories: in the case of the debate on the nocturnal city, this relationship has been and is currently lacking.
5. There is very **little specific training of municipal staff** on the different sectoral and intersectoral spheres of the nocturnal city.
6. The **lack of reliable, rigorous and regular statistical data** makes impossible:
 - The elaboration of complete picture of the different realities of the nocturnal city;
 - The creation of indicators and the subsequent monitoring of the evolution of the multiple dimensions of the nocturnal city; and
 - The establishment of a solid starting point for further strategic thinking on how our nocturnal cities should be in the present and in the future.

Night Governance Mechanisms:
Success Factors
(and a proposal for the Barcelona Night Office)



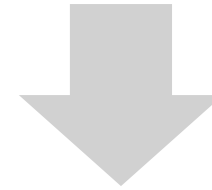


The only real success factor for an efficient governance of the nocturnal city is to open a public debate to all citizens, involve them in the process of designing new policies, respect the results derived from these participatory processes and implement them as they have been designed through community participation (which is not the case at present).

This public debate would have a single point of discussion, which is the following question:




How should they be / how do we want our nocturnal cities to be in the present and in the future?



What policy instruments, strategies, best practices and joint actions can be developed to provide a more effective engagement and empowerment of the different social actors of the nocturnal city for the achievement of more socially inclusive and just, violence-free, resilient and environmentally sustainable nocturnal cities?

Nofre, J. (2024). The need to design the nocturnal 15-minute city. *Urban Geography*. Epub ahead of print. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2024.2383522>.



The great question is thus:
Who makes the first move?



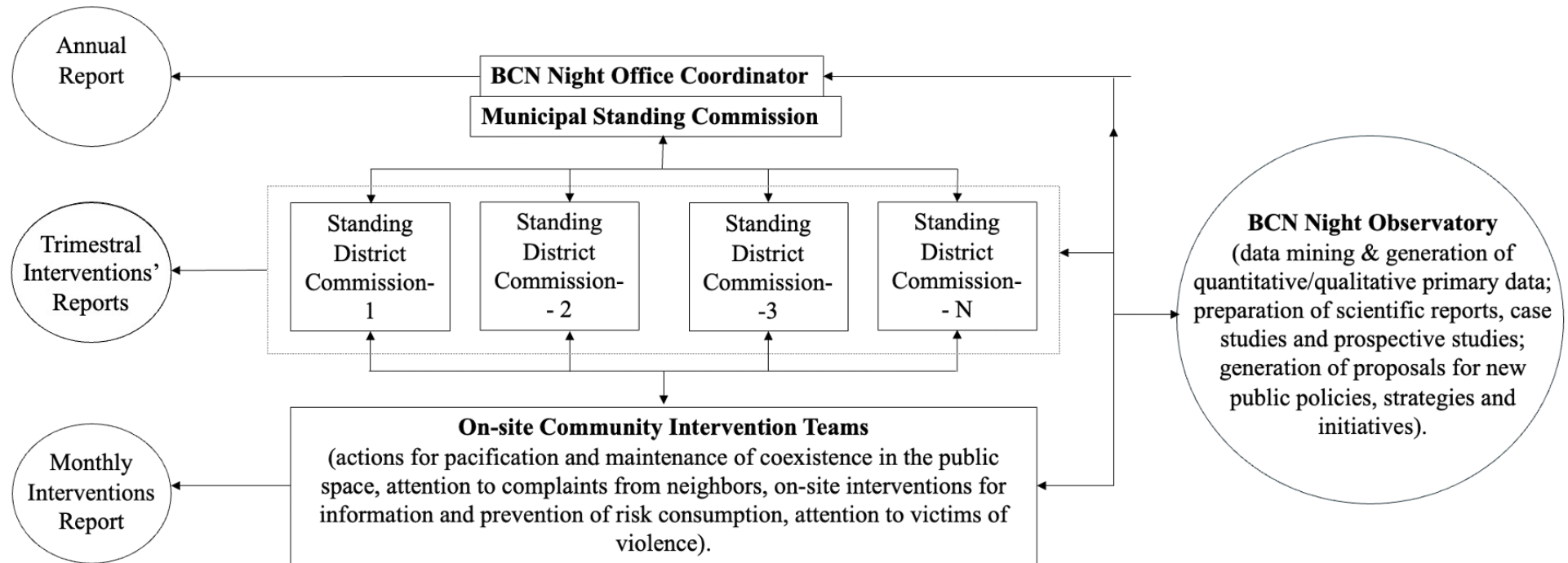
**OFICINA DE LA NIT
BARCELONA**

Critical issues in relation to the governance of nocturnal Barcelona



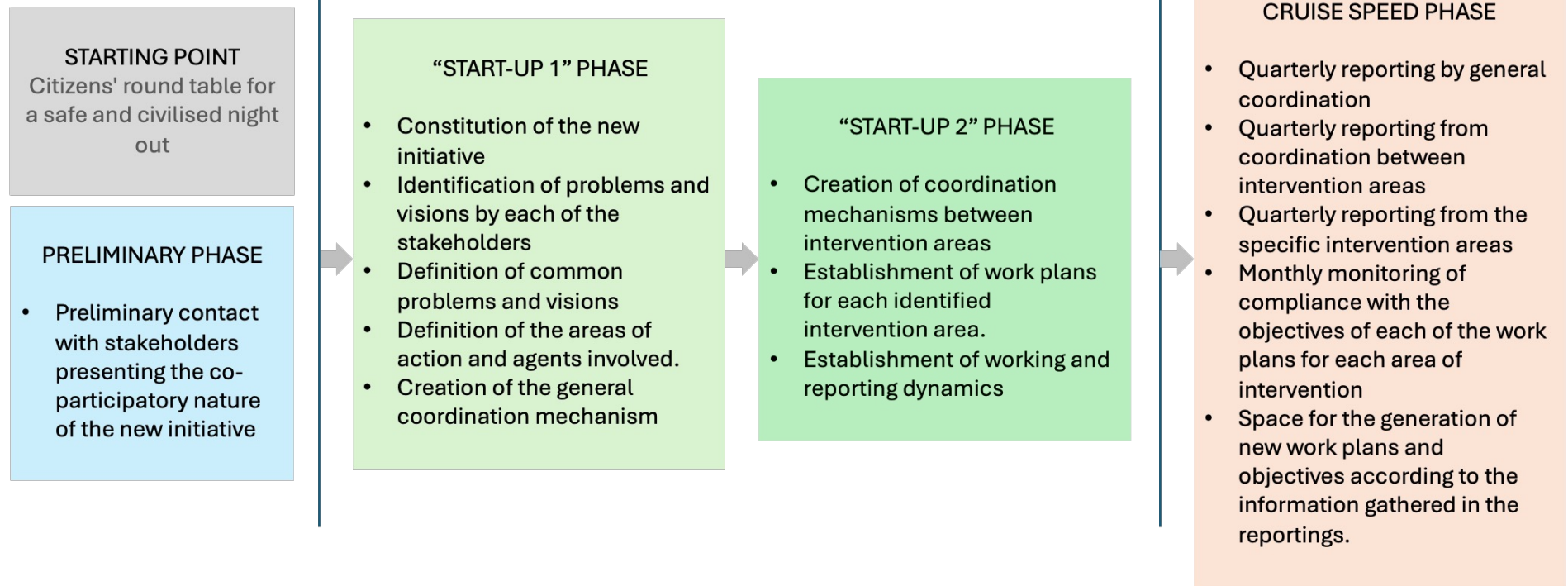


BCN Night Office: Structure proposal





BCN Night Office: Implementation proposal





Barcelona Night Office: Major Working Areas

1. Transportation and mobility at night (urban, metropolitan and regional scale).
2. Safety and coexistence in public space and transportation at night (with special attention to racist, sexist, LGBTQphobic violence, juvenile delinquency and organized criminal groups).
3. Environmental conditions of neighborhoods at night (noise and light pollution; physical and mental health of residents).
4. Diversification of the nightlife offer and new alternative proposals.
5. Live music and nightlife circuit(s) in the neighborhoods.
6. Urban ecological transition in the nocturnal city.
7. Guarantee actions by public authorities for the fulfillment of the right to rest and health*.

* In Spain: Directiva Europea 2002/49/CE sobre Ruido Ambiental, Artículos 43, 45, 47 de la Constitución, Ley 37/2003 del Ruido, & Real Decreto Legislativo 7/2015 sobre la Ley de Suelo y Rehabilitación Urbana.

Thanks so much

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TIME
US & THE
WORLD
WEEK