Chapter 42
Governance and Sustainability of Cultural Megaprojects. Case Studies from Spain

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Abstract Cultural megaprojects are complexes of a number of buildings with cultural functions that have required considerable investments from public administrations. They are intended to renew the image of a city through their avant-garde architecture and to constitute a new motor for economic and tourist development. Their governance models differ, but their management structures are usually made up mostly of representatives of the public sector that has financed the mega project. In this paper, there is an analysis of three cases from Spain whose future sustainability is under political and social discussion.

Keywords Cultural megaprojects · Cultural tourism · Urban tourism · Governance · Sustainability · Spain

JEL Classification Z32 · Z33

1 Introduction

Cities are human ecosystems *par excellence*. They enshrine within their streets and neighbourhoods direct evidence for local and global history, and pass on in the daily life of the urban area the fundamental features of their local community. In their processes of change they evince desire to survive over time and to anticipate the future. They are ideal destinations for twenty-first-century tourists, just as they once were for young noblemen undertaking the Grand Tour in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Contemporary society demands culture in all its forms and expressions, and from their very beginning cities have been places where culture and innovation are concentrated.

The process of urban renewal in Bilbao, with the inauguration in 1997 of the Guggenheim Museum by Frank Gehry as a key element, represented a model of

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success. Many other cities have wished to follow this example, giving culture a fundamental role in the objective and subjective renovation of their urban image. In a country such as Spain, the processes of urban renewal over the last couple of decades have always had among their objectives the promotion of tourism. Moreover, this model has been repeated everywhere. There is no city of any size in Spain that in recent years has not inaugurated a new cultural building of avant-garde architectural design, with the hope that this building would become a motor driving regeneration for the entire city. Among these examples of urban renewal through large cultural projects, the cases of Valencia, Santiago de Compostela and Avilés stand out by reason of their size and impact. Valencia has a project by the architect Santiago Calatrava, Santiago by Peter Eisenman and Avilés by Óscar Niemeyer. These will be studied on the basis of the governance models in their organization and of their future sustainability.

2 Literature Review

In numerous cities, urban renewal projects have been carried out since the late twentieth century, working on obsolete sectors inherited from the past. These have included riverside docks, old canals, derelict industrial areas, and transport installations no longer in use. These projects fall within the dynamics of neo-capitalism and aim to generate new capital gains on the basis of models of urban governance in which economic power is associated with political power (Harvey 1989, Brenner and Theodore 2012). On the other hand, such urban regeneration projects have also been used by the authorities to increase the creative capacity of cities and their local populations (Florida 2004), in an attempt to turn them into cultural capitals (Johnson 2009) thanks to the creation of new buildings designed by world-renowned architects (Voase 1997; Ponzini 2014). These new cultural edifices, including museums, exhibition centres, auditoria, convention halls, and libraries, also constitute new brand images for twenty-first-century cities, the idea giving strength to urban marketing, "selling the city" with not just economic, but also social and political implications (Ashworth and Voogd 1990; Paddison 1993).

Cultural development has a direct involvement with increased tourist activity in cities (Somoza 2013). The synergies between the creation of new cultural buildings and the arrival of new tourists are evident, even if tourism is not the main reason justifying these actions for urban renewal (Law 1992; OECD 2009; González 2011). The society of today differs in the motivations of its tourists from that of a few decades ago, particularly with regard to its demands for culture and creativity (Urry 2002; Richards 2014). The tourist experience is more enriching when needs for leisure are rounded out by the acquisition of knowledge within the ever-changing consumer society of the present day (Bauman 2007). In such a context, it is of interest to analyse the models of governance set up in tourist destinations to manage what is on offer in terms of culture (Amore and Hall 2017; Queiroz 2015).

In Spain, it was the city of Bilbao that first undertook a process of neo-liberal renewal of an urban sector in decline, the former industrial areas along the banks of the River Nervión. This included a new cultural building designed by a star architect, providing a new image of the city for the twenty-first century. The Guggenheim effect has been well studied by various authors (Juaristi 1999; Plaza 2000; Vicario and Martínez 2003; González 2004; Franklin 2016). These analyses range from the virtues of an economic, political and social phenomenon to criticisms of the emphasis on the spectacular in neo-liberal culture and urban renewal. In Spain, the Guggenheim model from Bilbao has been repeated in many other places (Moix 2010; Somoza 2016), with a proliferation of new cultural buildings in cities of all sizes.

In the cases of Valencia, Santiago de Compostela and Avilés, the new cultural megaprojects are made up of numbers of buildings by the same star architect that have obliged public administrations to make considerable financial commitments, which raises doubts about their sustainability over time. In Valencia, the City of Arts and Sciences by Santiago Calatrava has required investments of more than 1300 million euro and has run up losses in the millions over the last few years of operation (Gaja 2006; Hernández and Gil 2014), even though its impact on tourism in Valencia is very striking (Salom and Pitarch 2017). Santiago de Compostela, one of the most important pilgrimage sites in Europe, started to build Peter Eisenman's project for a City of Culture in 1999. Today, after investing more than 500 million euro the Government of the Autonomous Region of Galicia, responsible for the project, has definitively abandoned the construction of two out of the six buildings envisaged by the original project (Somoza 2007; Vila 2012). Finally, Avilés, an industrial city in Asturias, was the place chosen by the Regional Government for constructing a project for a new cultural centre donated by the architect Óscar Niemeyer after he won the Prince of Asturias Award. This is a new megaproject for urban renewal aimed at reversing the tendency towards decline of this city (Sánchez et al. 2015; Benito 2016).

3 Methodology

In social sciences, the inductive method is usually used, permitting researchers to draw general conclusions from the observation of specific facts. With regard to the governance of tourist destinations and the sustainability of cultural projects, there is no general theoretical corpus, scientifically accepted and validated. All that can be found in the academic literature is case studies in which authors have established partial conclusions based on the particular details they investigated (McLennan et al. 2014; Pulido and Pulido 2014; Muñoz and Velasco 2015; Wan and Bramwell 2015; Zamfir and Razvan 2015; Flores, Jiménez and Porras 2016).

The methodology for case studies is described in various works (Yin 1994; Morra and Friedlander 2001; Noor 2008). These put forward arguments for the value of this method of research in analysing complex situations which are

technically different one from another and involve many variables of interest that should be investigated. Hence, it aims at a comprehensive understanding, an extensive description and an analysis of the situation.

A case study allows partial knowledge to be gained of a given phenomenon, in this instance the governance of cultural tourism destinations. This knowledge is also affected by the subjective approach of the author in choosing the specific facts that will be studied. Within geographical sciences, the most ferocious attack on the knowledge of traditionalist schools, based on regional studies, took place in the mid-twentieth century, when Schaefer (1953) published a paper about exceptionalism in Geography. In his work, Schaefer renounced any exceptional status for Geography and advocated the establishment of general laws, even if the starting-point was knowledge of particular regions (cases), so as to achieve a scientific status similar to that of other sciences, such as mathematics or biology. A case study is a method for scientific analysis, but it should go beyond the mere description of a situation, however complex it may be, and look for conclusions that could be generalized to the remainder of possible similar cases.

This paper puts forward a case study of three examples of large urban renewal projects that have led to a significant increase in the availability of culture. They involved the construction of various cultural buildings of an avant-garde design, within a process attempting to reiterate the so-called Bilbao Guggenheim effect.

The aim of this paper is to describe, explain and analyse the governance models created for exploiting these cultural complexes and to question their sustainability from a financial, environmental and social angle. To this end, previous published works, all the existing public documentation on the management bodies and journalistic information from the local media were all reviewed.

4 Results

The three cases studied were projects promoted by the administrations of the Autonomous Regions of Valencia, of Galicia and of Asturias in the years prior to the crisis of 2008. They suffered multiple vicissitudes while they were being built, giving rise to criticisms and social mobilization against their creation. Moreover, in all three cases, between the first agreements to develop these megaprojects and the present the majorities in the regional assemblies have changed, with elections being won by parties publicly opposing the projects. These changes in government have in all cases brought with them a re-orientation in the strategies for these cultural centres, which by their size have absorbed the lion's share of the budgets of the culture boards of the respective Regional Governments: the Valencian *Generalitat*, the Galician *Xunta* and the Principality of Asturias's *Junta General*.

The results of the research show that although the three cases are similar in origin, the governance formulas used for them differ, as do their development

strategies and the short- and medium-term objectives pursued. In all three cases, the size of the projects has compromised the sustainability of these cultural complexes from the very start.

Valencia. The City Of Arts And Sciences.

The City of Arts and Sciences cultural complex comprises six buildings: the Science Museum, the Oceanography Park or *Oceanogràfic*, the Hemisphereor *Hemisfèric* (holding an IMAX cinema, with the possibility of three-dimensional and astronomical projections), the Agora (a multifunctional space for various events), the Pergola or *Umbracle* (providing a botanical walk and viewing point) and the Arts Building or *Palau de les Arts* (offering theatre, dance, opera, concerts). To manage the running of this complex, in 1991 the Government of Valencia set up a Corporation for the City of Arts and Sciences (*CACSA*), subject to private law and having as its sole shareholder the Autonomous Government itself. In the Articles of Association of this commercial company, its purpose is stated to be to promote, organize and manage all the activities required to prepare, construct and inaugurate the project, and thereafter the promotion, organization and management of running activities and services to be developed, including ticket sales. It is also envisaged that it may provide consultation services and technical assistance to projects similar to those completed by the Corporation (Fig. 1).

The governing bodies of *CACSA* are three in number. First, there is the Shareholders' General Meeting, even though the only shareholder is the Autonomous Government or *Generalitat*. Next, there is a Board of Directors made up of thirteen members, with a five-year term of office (elections are every four years). In this, decisions are taken by simple majority vote and nine of the members are elected politicians from the Regional Government, two from the State universities of Valencia, one from the College of Architects and one from the Valencia

Fig. 1   Valencia. The City of Arts and Sciences (Author: Themil https://pixabay.com/en/city-arts-science-spain-valencia-905237/ Creative Commons CCO)

Tourism Foundation. Finally, there is the Executive Commission, made up of three individuals from the *Generalitat*. The Board of Directors appoints a Managing Director for the enterprise who directs *CACSA* on a day-to-day basis. The share capital with which the Corporation was founded was 319.22 million euro.

Despite the declared aims of *CACSA*, the direct management of the building receiving the largest number of tourists, the Oceanographic Park, was until 2015 in the hands of *Parques Reunidos*, a company operating world-wide in the leisure parks sector. The running losses from this were covered by contributions from the *Generalitat* over a twelve-year period. Shortly before the regional elections, a fresh arrangement was made for running the installations, and *Parques Reunidos* did not even put in a bid to keep its concession, since it did not foresee the investment could be profitable under the new conditions that ruled out direct contributions from the *Generalitat*. The contract to run the Park, and also the Agora, for the next fifteen years was awarded to *Avanqua*, a company led by the concessionaire for the supply of drinking water to the city. The other buildings for which it had been intended that management should be outsourced, the Science Museum and the Hemisphere, were not the subject of any tenders, and so continue to be run by the public administration.

The exploitation of this complex has given rise to accumulated losses of millions of euro since the inauguration of the first building, the Hemisphere, in 1998. The high operating costs of buildings make it impossible to gain any monetary profits through the sale of tickets or the leasing out of spaces for private events. The financial situation is so worrying that the auditors' report for the year 2016 determined that its deficit or negative working capital was 356 million euro. Despite the *Generalitat*'s commitment made in 1999 to finance running costs through current subsidies, the data showed the material uncertainty of any capacity on the part of *CACSA* to continue with its operations.

Santiago de Compostela. The City of Culture.

The City of Culture in Santiago de Compostela was another megaproject to build a large cultural complex, funded by the Galician Regional Government. It was supposed to achieve the Bilbao Guggenheim effect, but was much closer to the model of the Valencia City of Arts and Sciences that was being developed at that time. In this instance, an international architectural competition was held in 1999 to choose the plans for a cultural centre occupying a large area on a hill near the historic city of Santiago. It was close to the city, but completely isolated, being cut off from it by motorways and railways. Whereas in Valencia the cost overruns of the project quadrupled the initial budget, in Galicia they quintupled it, taking into account the fact that one-third of the architect Eisenman's project will never be constructed.

The initial project comprised six large buildings that were intended to create a new acropolis on Mount Gaiás, with a museum, an international art centre, a library, an archive, a theatre and an administrative building. After a change of government in 2005, the project was reconsidered and it was decided to cease all work on the two buildings not yet constructed, the theatre and the art centre, although deep excavations for the foundations of the first of these had already been completed.

A further change of government, together with continuous social criticism of the project led to the two buildings pending construction literally being buried, as they were replaced with new green areas, an outdoor auditorium and an artificial lake, set up in the foundations of what would have been the largest and most expensive building in the entire Project.

As a management body, the Public Foundation for the City of Culture (FCdC) was created in 1999. Its original Articles of Association established a Board consisting of thirteen members, plus an honorary president (a position assigned *ex officio* to the First Minister of the Regional Government). Nine members of the board were appointed by this Regional Government, the *Xunta*; the others were the Mayor of Santiago *ex officio*, plus representatives of two regional financial bodies and of a Galician energy company. Decisions had to be taken by absolute majority. The objectives of the Board were the setting up, running and promotion of areas or centres for conservation, exhibitions and cultural, communicational and technological activities. Sixteen years later, the Articles were amended, among other reasons, to allow for the purposes of the FCdC potentially to be carried out indirectly via other bodies and organizations. The composition of the Board of Trustees was barely altered, though the functions of the Manager as well as the activities that the FCdC must undertake in order to achieve its goals were described with greater precision. On these lines, a re-orientation of the original project was highlighted by the emphasis on the promotion of entrepreneurial actions and of new cultural activities, along with improvements in new technologies, physical access to the complex for the general public with leisure, nature and sports activities, and the pursuit of sustainability. The new Articles lay down as the principal goals to be pursued those activities contributing to turn the City of Culture into an economically sustainable and socially profitable project, incorporating new strategic partners, both public and private, and diversifying its sources of financing, so as to achieve sustainability for the project regardless of the economic cycle.

Despite this desire expressed by the Xunta in the new statutes, year after year, the FCdC shows a negative exploitation result. As reflected in the audits carried out, almost all of the income comes from public subsidies, around ten million a year, once the premature end of the construction works has been decreed, and the expenditure exceeds fourteen million. The complex has been underutilized since its inauguration and its offer has not yet been integrated with the rest of the cultural activities offered by the city.

Avilés. Óscar Niemeyer International Cultural Centre.

The International Cultural Centre in Avilés is the smallest in size and in budget of the three examples studied. However, its characteristics make this instance much closer to Bilbao and its Guggenheim museum, although on a smaller scale. Avilés, like Bilbao, was an industrial city that in the 1970s and 1980s underwent a deep crisis requiring reconversion, with the falling obsolescent of large urban industrial areas, especially in the environs of the estuary on which the town stands (Benito 1992).

Asturias is the headquarters of the Princess of Asturias Foundation, which since 1980 has been awarding the most prestigious prizes available in Spain. In 1989 the

architect Óscar Niemeyer was awarded the prize for the Arts. In 2006, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of these awards, he made a gift to the Foundation of a project for a cultural centre, which initially was intended to be given over to the work of all the various prize-winners. The Autonomous Government accepted this donation and chose to locate a new Museum of the Awards in Avilés, where it owned enough public land to develop the project, which would also serve as a motor driving recovery along the estuary. This choice of location was opposed by the Mayor of Gijón, the most populous city in Asturias, by the Mayor of Oviedo, the capital of the Principality of Asturias, and by the Princess of Asturias Foundation itself, based in Oviedo. This forced the first change in the project, which abandoned any link to the Awards and was renamed the Oscar Niemeyer International Cultural Centre.

The initial budget for the project was 24 million euro. It incorporated a large public square with four linked buildings: an auditorium, a viewing tower, a dome (which was to act as a museum convertible into an exhibition hall) and a multi-purpose building for cultural and tourist services. Construction began in April 2008 and the complex was inaugurated in March 2011, at a final cost of 44 million euro. However, this cost overrun was not the main problem for the Niemeyer.

In 2006, the Oscar Niemeyer International Centre Foundation was set up as a private Foundation. In it the main management body, the Board, was initially made up of four representatives from the Regional Government, two from the City Council and two from the Port Authority (dependent on the Spanish central government). At the time it was established, all three of these coincided in being controlled by the same political party, the Socialists or *PSOE*. It was possible to add further members to the Board on motions carried by simple majority. At the end of 2006, the Government of Asturias agreed to a temporary transfer of the management of the Centre's buildings to the Foundation for a period of five years ending on 14 December 2011, just nine months after the inauguration of the complex. The regional elections of May 2011 brought about a change in the composition of the Asturian assembly, with the coming into office of party, the Citizens' Forum or *FAC*, which had spoken out against the expenses that the Niemeyer Centre was imposing on the population of Asturias. In addition, the political composition of the Board in 2011 involved three different parties, *FAC*, *PSOE* and the conservative People's Party or *PP*. The number of members had been expanded at the suggestion of the Director General to include representatives of local companies and individuals related to the world of culture. In this way, it proved possible to approve successive changes in the Articles of the Foundation, expanding local control while considerably reducing the influence of the Regional Government, whose four representatives were reduced to one. An attempt was made by this Government to extend to a fifty-year term the links of the Foundation to the running of the Centre, but the new executive was unwilling to accept that arrangement and in December 2011 closed the Centre down, making a public statement that management by the Foundation had involved fraud, bringing a suit in the law courts, which a few months later caused the Foundation to file for bankruptcy. The programme for 2012 was cancelled and management temporarily passed into the hands of a regional public body.

The *FAC* government lasted under a year, because its lack of support made it impossible to gain approval for the Regional budget, so fresh elections were called. In May 2012, a First Minister from the *PSOE* took office, who agreed to transfer the buildings back to the Foundation after the Foundation took on board a Viability Plan for the period 2013 to 2022. The Articles were amended once more, returning to the original composition of the Board, with the addition of a representative from the Ministry of Culture and others from two local companies.

In financial terms, the Niemeyer Centre has generated losses since its inception, its income being limited in large part to subsidies from the Asturian Government and contributions from members of the Board. According to the audit for the 2016 financial year, the Foundation had a deficit of 1.26 million euro, and the profit and loss account showed expenses outweighing income by 853,882 euro. This was 26% worse than the previous year, when in accordance to what was envisaged by the Viability Plan the outcome was supposed to be a small profit of 52,096 euro.

5   Discussion

This paper has analysed three different models for large urban cultural projects which have undergone all sorts of difficulties since their foundation stones were laid. These have included construction-cost overruns, political and partisan controversies, rejection by the local population, and high maintenance and running expenses. This litany of problems casts doubt on their future viability.

Environmental sustainability was a part of the initial arguments in favour of the complexes in Valencia and Avilés, regenerating abandoned areas in the urban structure of the two cities. In the case of Santiago de Compostela, the impact on the landscape and environment caused by the construction of the City of Culture has been enormous and it is only since 2016 that the environmental restoration of the land located between the complex and the city has been addressed. This may serve as a new area for recreation and a connecting zone for the city's inhabitants.

The three megaprojects have generated controversy among their local populations, with complaints about the lack of integration of the centres into the local cultural fabric and their vision of culture as a mass spectacle. On these lines, political changes in the composition of the Autonomous Governments involved have led to changes in the strategies for use and cultural management in the three cases analysed. Valencia has opted for greater transparency, for increasing revenues through the temporary transfer of buildings to other bodies to hold all sorts of events, and for a stronger relationship with the other cultural centres in the city through the Valencia Tourism Foundation (Salom and Pitarch 2017). Avilésis attempting to offer more complete and diversified programming throughout the year, at the cost of giving up projects for cultural creation. Finally, in Santiago a pragmatic view has been adopted, filling the City of Culture with new technological and entrepreneurial contents.

In all three instances, the governance models put in place for management have shown a lack of transparency, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, and a lack of participation, strategic vision, responsiveness or consensus orientation, these being principles of good governance according to the United Nations (UNDP 1997). The bodies in charge of governance have shown no interest in connecting these centres with the local socio-cultural fabric and have not been able to take advantage of synergies with the city as a whole. In Valencia, *CACSA* contracted out the running of the main tourist attractions, the Oceanographic Park, the Agora and the Arts Building. In Avilés, partisan political tensions and personal management by the first General Director brought the Niemeyer Centre Foundation to bankruptcy and into the courts accused of wilful malfeasance and misappropriation of public funds. This has led to spiralling debts hard to resolve. Finally, in the case of Santiago, the excessive weight of the Autonomous Government on the board has impeded any greater linkage with the burgeoning socio-cultural scene in Compostela whose cultural projects in the city take place far away from the buildings designed by the architect Eisenman.

Despite all these difficulties, the creation of these urban cultural megaprojects has succeeded in providing a new image for their cities. They have placed the architectural designs of the three complexes in the world spotlight, even though they have not had the expected Guggenheim effect on the rest of the city.

Finally, the different scales of the cities involved have also played a major part in the viability of, and strategies for, these megaprojects. Valencia, with 2 million inhabitants in its metropolitan area, is a large city undergoing renewal, following in the footsteps of other major European conurbations where public investments of this type have served as a pole of attraction for large private building projects that have remodelled wide urban areas. Santiago de Compostela, a regional capital with 150,000 inhabitants in the metropolitan area, also sees the arrival of 300,000 pilgrims yearly. Residents together with more tourists and pilgrims can come close to the overall population required for viability by a cultural centre of the dimensions of the City of Culture. Finally, Avilés, an Asturian city of 80,000 inhabitants, can only rely on the success of its Niemeyer Centre among the entire population in the central area of Asturias, where there are 850,000 inhabitants between the Avilés, Gijón and Oviedo conurbations, combined with a significant increase in the number of tourists arriving, possibly passengers from the ferries and cruise ships that depart from the British Isles and cross the English Channel and Bay of Biscay to reach the north coast of Spain.

6   Conclusion

The so-called Guggenheim effect sought after in Valencia, Santiago de Compostela and Avilés has not been achieved, even though large sums of public money have been invested in these cultural projects. The construction of imposing buildings is not enough to promote the economic and cultural development of a city, especially

when projects are repetitive to such an extent that they lose any quality of originality. These three projects, initiated in Spain during an expansive phase of economic growth based fundamentally on the building industry, have involved a commitment by their respective Regional Governments to seek synergies between culture and tourism. The hope was that the outcome would be the same as achieved by the Basque government when in 1991 it initiated contacts with the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation of New York. However, in the three cases analysed the consequences for their respective cities have not been as positive.

Nevertheless, there are elements that can compensate for the negative financial effects of cost overruns in construction and high maintenance expenses. The City of Arts and Sciences in Valencia is a considerable tourist attraction. The Oceanographic Park is the attraction with most visitors and it alone sold 1.4 million tickets in 2017. The Science Museum reached almost 700 thousand entries. The media impact of Calatrava's buildings is much more difficult to gauge, but their image travels around the world continuously, as a setting for films, music videos or advertising spots. Another fact that may mitigate the economic impact of this project is the recent transfer of the headquarters of Caixa Bank, the third largest financial institution in Spain, from Barcelona to Valencia, with the opening of a new cultural centre associated with this body within the Agora scheduled for 2020. Furthermore, the pragmatic vision of the Galician Government has led to attempts to give a new orientation to the City of Culture, now based on innovation, technology and new cultural industries, in addition to projecting the whole area as a space for leisure and recreation for residents, tourists and pilgrims. User figures surpassed 700,000 in 2017. Finally, in Avilés, the strategy of promoting cruise tourism seeks to use it as a complement to more varying cultural offerings extending throughout the year that will encourage return visits from people living nearby. In Avilés, 125,000 visitors were recorded in 2017, 36% coming from Asturias itself.

The governance of the three cultural megaprojects presents many shortcomings. As they are complexes financed almost exclusively by the regional administrations, the latter are overrepresented on management bodies, with little or no representation of city councils or local society in general. The boards of *CACSA* and of the Foundations in Santiago and Avilés need to become more pluralist and seek an equilibrium in their decision structures, bringing in other administrations and the local socio-cultural fabric, so as to increase the synergies between culture and tourism, and to improve the relationship between these complexes and the local population. On these lines, the Niemeyer Centre Foundation presents a more balanced structure, although this has not proved a guarantee of better functioning. Transparency in all three of them has increased over recent years, although it is still deficient and formulae should be introduced to promote greater social participation. It is also crucial to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of these facilities, owing to the large budgets they require in a context of social awareness of public spending, just as progress should be made in the processes of accountability. Another aspect that should be improved is the linkage of these complexes with the rest of the city, both from the objective and physical viewpoint of accessibility, and

from the subjective identification of the local population with these places as part of their city. Finally, these cultural megaprojects need to establish medium-term plans in which development strategies are reviewed with a greater ability to overcome possible adverse circumstances.

The environmental, social and economic sustainability of these cultural megaprojects is an open challenge. The financial difficulties of public administrations arising from the economic crisis have forced them to re-orient their strategic plans, compromising the viability of the complexes set up if private funding sources cannot be increased. Hence, different formulae have been used: concessions of buildings to external companies, an increase in the participation by other private entities in their management bodies, short-term handing-over of the complexes for all types of events, or tourist promotion campaigns to increase the flow of new visitors. With regard to environmental sustainability, this represents one of the greatest future risks, owing to the maintenance costs for the green areas and new parks created, especially in the case of Santiago de Compostela and Valencia. These are new areas for leisure and recreation that above all will need to be extensively used. That will be the best indicator of the social sustainability of these complexes, when the local populations and visitors not merely travel to them to visit an exhibition or attend a concert, but also to make habitual use of these places as a living space.

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