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**Institutions, Leadership and Influence.  
A Comparative Study of the Influence of Mayors and  
Appointed CEOs under Different Forms of Government**

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## The problem

The question about the influence over public policy of elected and appointed officials – politicians and bureaucrats - has been examined only sporadically in previous studies. Exploration of the contributions of appointed administrators in local government has been preoccupied with the nature of the role and research has focused on whether and to what extent top administrators are engaged in policy making. Relatively, little attention has been given to the impact these officials have on the governmental process, although it has been assumed to be substantial (Banfield and Wilson, 1963; Downs, 1967; Niskanen, 1971.) Some expectations about influence are obvious. On the one hand, the expertise, organizational resources, and professional values of CEOs should contribute to all top administrators having a considerable amount of influence (Gruber, 1987; Stillman, 1977; Yates, 1982, chap. 2.). On the other hand, it is expected that influence will vary with the structure of governmental authority or form of government. For example, Lineberry and Sharkansky (1978, p. 164) argue that "municipal bureaucracies have more power and autonomy in reformed systems, and elected decision makers have corresponding smaller bases of power." If this relationship holds then the stronger political leaders are in formal terms, the more influence they will exert and the less influence the appointed officials will have and vice versa.

In view of the substantial interaction between elected officials and administrators, CEOs are likely to be able to affect the content of decisions of others and make some policy decisions themselves. Despite the importance of administrative influence to democratic theory and an understanding of the urban political process, the existing literature has not systematically measured this phenomenon. This paper seeks to answer the question how much influence do top administrators and other officials including the mayor, members of the council, and committee chairs have?

The relationship between top administrators and elected officials and administrators occurs within a context that shapes the attitudes and behaviors of both sets of officials. The municipal CEOs in the various countries covered by the study have one thing in common: They are the highest ranking non-elected administrative official in local government. Still, they operate in quite different political and organizational contexts. A focus on the details of these contexts is likely to lead to the conclusion that the CEOs from the fourteen countries are operating in fourteen different political and organizational settings. Concentrating on the details, however, stands in the way of discovering the broad and important commonalities of local governmental systems in the various countries. A search for few important aspects of the context in which CEOs interact with their political masters yields four dimensions. First, we look at how political authority is constituted. We distinguish four *forms of government*, which hypothetically will have a major effect on the relations between political and administrative actors. Form of government is used as the major explanatory variable in the analyses which follows in later chapters.

Second, we focus on the question how political leadership is exercised. Here we deal with the *nature of mayoral leadership*. There are three separate indicators that are used to measure leadership.

- Are mayors visionary persons with excellent relations to the public (public leadership)?
- How do they engage in policy-making and administration (policy leadership)?
- To what extent do mayors promote the interests of their political party (partisan leadership)?

After reviewing the general patterns of influence among all official actors, in depth analysis of the mayor and the CEO will be conducted. The inquiry will search for explanations of the differing levels of influence among mayors and CEOs.

## Description of the Study

The paper is based on the unique Comparative Research Project on Chief Executives in Local Government developed and coordinated by Poul Erik Mouritzen at Odense University in Denmark. This study, developed in cooperation with the Association of the European Local Government Chief Executives (U.Di.T.E.<sup>1</sup>) and supported by the International City Management Association based in the United States and the Australian Institute for Municipal Management, provides the first critical examination of the top appointed administrative official in local government in Europe, Australia, and the United States. A common survey, developed by an international team of researchers, was completed by over 4,000 CEOs in fourteen countries: Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States. With the exceptions of Luxembourg, Austria, Greece and Germany, all member countries of the European Union at the time the study was conducted are contained in the data set used for analysis. Also as part of the study intensive interviews with CEOs were conducted in nine countries and job postings from seven countries were collected and coded.<sup>2</sup>

Four books have been planned from the U.Di.T.E. project. The paper highlights some of the findings from one of these, *The Nexus of Leadership* by Mouritzen and Svava (forthcoming).<sup>3</sup>

The official surveyed was the highest appointed administrator. For simplicity, we refer to these officials as CEOs, although exact titles vary. There are differences in the amount of executive authority these officials have and in the extent to which executive authority is shared between the administrator and elected officials. Still, all the officials exercise at least a substantial part of the executive authority in their jurisdiction and occupy a central position in which they interact directly with the top elected official and some or all council members.

## How Political Authority is Constituted: Form of Government

The form of government found in the fourteen countries share two important traits and almost share a third. First, the supreme political body of the municipality, the council, is constituted through general elections. These government are representative democracies. Second, as a criterion for inclusion in the study, there is an appointed chief administrator. Third, there is a recognized political leader in all but one of the countries. Within the framework of council, political leader, and CEO, dissimilarities immediately come to the surface. In their specific provisions, the political governing structure is different from country to country. Some countries have strong, some weak mayors and a few countries don't even have a position as mayor. Some mayors are elected directly by voters, some indirectly by and from among the members of the council or they may be appointed by central government. The size of the city councils vary considerably from an average of seven in Spain to 45 in Sweden. In some countries there are strong executive committees in the city council; some countries have no executive committee at all. In some countries standing committees have decision-making powers, in some countries they play an advisory role only, and in others standing committees are not necessarily used.

### Three organizing principles

Despite the specific peculiarities found in each country, there are common features that reflect the shared traits and four clusters of characteristics that structure how political power is obtained, maintained and exercised in municipal government. Municipal government in any specific country may be perceived as a balance or compromise between three organizing principles: layman rule, political leadership, and professionalism.

*The layman rule* implies that citizens elected for political office should be involved effectively and intensively in the making of decisions. Representative democracy by definition implies layman government. Once elected the actual involvement of councillors may, however, be constrained or promoted in scope and intensity by the specific governmental structures established. Among the fourteen countries studied Ireland is at one extreme: council meetings are rare and tend to focus on general policies; there is neither an executive committee nor empowered standing committees. At the other end of the continuum, Sweden has a council with an executive committee that works closely with the CEO and standing committees that are heavily engaged in the day-to-day execution of policies.

The role of politicians in government has been described as that of promoting value choices and feeding energy and passion into the policy system (Aberbach et. all, 1981, 9ff). Politicians make a distinctive contribution by raising controversial issues, proposing innovative plans and projects, setting direction, generating resources, making compromises, mobilizing citizens, in short making things move. This is what *political leadership* is about. In addition to potentially setting direction, politicians also serve as a link between citizens and government and often serve as informal “ombudsmen” to improve the responsiveness of staff to individual citizens. Given their direct accountability to voters, politicians seek to respond to the demands and preferences of constituents.

Political leadership is organized and emphasized quite differently among the fourteen countries. In French local politics the mayor is the central figure who effectively controls the political body, the council, as well as the administrative organization. In Finland it is not obvious who is actually the political leader. In some municipalities, the chairman of the city council is the key political leader; in others, it is the chairman of the executive committee. In many American localities, mayors do not have executive powers but they are recognized as the central figure by citizens and if they are effective chairpersons of the council who promote cohesiveness and direction, they can provide facilitative leadership to council members and the city manager and staff (Svara et al., 1994.) In Ireland where the mayor also lacks executive power, on the other hand, the “powerlessness” of the mayor has been described as “an embarrassment” in certain situations (Asquith & O’Halpin, 1998, 69).

Politicians could be effective political leaders of municipalities that use their resources badly or active representatives who promote responsiveness to specific problems but ignore general, long problems which lack an active constituency. Politicians--including most full-time experienced mayors--are laymen. The local government system may also be organized also with an eye to rationality--in the sense of goal-directed activity--and efficiency. The policy system may need energy and passion, but it also needs an infusion of problem analysis and strategic thinking, well-framed proposals that draw on the experiences of other municipalities, consistency and fairness in service delivery, continuity and sustained commitment, and productive use of resources. To be focused and efficient, governments need *professionals* who bring a distinct perspective and background to government. As

politicians respond to demands, professionals respond to and seek to address needs (Svara, 1990).

Although some small municipalities have no expert administration at all but rather rely on the efforts of elected officials and citizen board members, most cities of any size provide for some combination of political leadership and administrative expertise. The administrative expert may be the choice of the political leader, as in France and some U.S. cities, and contribute to the work of the government through channelling ideas to the mayor and carrying out assignments from the mayor. Alternatively, the expert may be a city manager selected by the council as a whole and given broad responsibility to not only direct the administrative organization but also to serve as a professional leader who identifies problems and offers recommendations for policies to the council. Such is the case in council-manager type governments in Australia, Ireland, and the U.S. Still others, depending on the nature of political leadership have a more complex set of interrelationships among a mayor, executive committee, and CEO. There are also countries with administrators appointed from outside the city.

### **Who controls the executive and the legislative branches?**

Of these three elements of government, the starting point for the development of a typology of government forms is political leadership. The key issue is how political power is obtained, maintained, exercised and shared. These aspects of political leadership are assumed to be the decisive for the nature of interactions between the CEO and elected officials. Political power is a function of the degree of control a political actor--a person or a collective body--has in two spheres. First, to what extent is the city council controlled by one or more political actors? The second sphere 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.

Control over the city council is to a large degree a function of the electoral system. In most of the fourteen countries there is one central political figure, the mayor, who is elected by and among the members of the city council. Some electoral systems have been deliberately set up so as to produce effective majorities. This is true for arrangements in which the largest party or party coalition obtains seats in the council in addition to what they are entitled to according to the proportionality principle (France) and it is true for simple majority, ward based systems (Britain for instance). In contrast at-large based elections where council seats are distributed according to the principle of proportionality leads in the absence of one-party dominance to a situation where a coalition of parties have to agree on the distribution of political positions after the election as well as on the daily decision made. In only six of the 14 countries do over half of the cities have a one-party majority. A combination of indirect election (where the mayor is born out of the majority) and one-party dominance is likely to lead to a situation where one political figure is in effective control over the council. In most cities, however, one-party dominance is not present.

The concept of "the executive" is multi-faceted. At the most general level the executive function implies organizational authority: the direction of the municipal bureaucracy and service delivery institutions, the implementation of policies decided by the city council, and horizontal coordination (between departments). It also involves vertical coordination, i.e. acting as a linkage between the political and administrative level. Several more specific indicators have been introduced to cover central aspects of the executive function like control over budget formulation, oversight of budget implementation, hiring of staff, appointment of members of boards and commissions, ex officio membership on boards and committees,

certain veto powers and the right to fill vacancies in elected offices (cf. Svava, 1990). The question to be answered is whether control over the executive is in the hands of one or more political actors. Probably no mayor or other local political actor has total control over all the facets of executive power. Powers are shared by delegation and, more importantly, by constitution. In some cities, even though general executive responsibility may rest with one person--typically labeled the mayor--, some or many specific functions are handled by other persons or political bodies. The city council may be decisive when it comes to the hiring of the highest ranking administrators, budget preparation may rest with an executive committee, or the actual decision-making authority which is necessary to implement policies established by the council may rest with standing committees. Finally, in some cities, the council completely controls the appointment of an administrator as executive. The appointed administrator has constitutional authority to exercise executive power. The council may exercise the option of removing the CEO at any time or, except for serious misconduct, at the end of a fixed-term contract, but it may not take the authority back.

The legal distribution of executive powers may say a lot about who controls the executive; however, it does not tell us anything about the ability to effectively use powers given to a person or a collective body by constitution. Local governments in most countries are dominated by laymen working as part-time politicians. The actual control that laymen can exercise over a large bureaucracy will be a function of the resources available to them, like time, knowledge, experience, and perseverance (as well as the values and behavior of administrators). Categorizing different types of forms will therefore take into account not only formal distribution of powers but also the actual ability of leading politicians to work full-time as political leaders. Is for example the job of mayor considered a full-time position? Is it paid accordingly through salary or other forms of income, allowances and attendance reenumeration, which will allow leading politicians to devote their work life to politics?

#### **Four ideal types**

Based on the various dimensions discussed above the form of government in each of the fourteen countries may be described by their proximity or distance to one of four ideal types:

- *The strong mayor form:* The elected mayor controls the majority of the city council and is legally as well as de-facto in full charge of all executive functions. The CEO serves at the mayors' will and can be hired and fired without the consent of any other politicians or political bodies. The mayor can hire political appointees to help him in any function.
- *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, i.e. standing committees composed of elected politicians.
- *The collective form:* The decision center is one collegiate body, the executive committee which is responsible for all executive functions. The executive committee consists of locally elected politicians and the mayor who is appointed by central government.
- *The council-manager form:* All executive functions are in the hands of a professional administrator, the city-manager. The city council is a relatively small body, headed by a mayor who formally has ceremonial functions only.

None of the fourteen countries can be described precisely by one of the four ideal types. In all cases it is, however, relatively clear which of the four best matches the way local political power is constituted in a country. The 14 countries in the study is categorized as follows:

<p><b>The strong mayor form</b></p> <p><i>France</i></p> <p><i>Spain</i></p> <p><i>Portugal</i></p> <p><i>Italy</i></p> <p><i>The U.S.: Mayor-Council-CAO governments</i></p>	<p><b>Council-manager form</b></p> <p><i>The U.S.: Council-Manager governments</i></p> <p><i>Australia</i></p> <p><i>Ireland</i></p> <p><i>Finland</i></p> <p><i>Norway</i></p>
<p><b>The committee-leader form</b></p> <p><i>Denmark</i></p> <p><i>Sweden</i></p> <p><i>Great Britain</i></p>	<p><b>The collective form</b></p> <p><i>Belgium</i></p> <p><i>The Netherlands</i></p>

## How Political Authority is Exercised:

### The Strength and Nature of Mayoral Leadership

The local governmental systems in fourteen countries have been described by four Weberian ideal types: strong mayor, committee-leader, collective and council-manager. The four ideal types will, as a measure of *form of government*, be used as the major explanatory variable in the subsequent part of the paper. The classification permits replacing country names by a variable—a desirable goal in comparative research (cf. Prezworski and Teune, 1970, ch 1).

Implied in the four ideal types are certain norms for political leadership. It is expected that a "strong mayor" will be exactly what the label implies: a politically powerful leader. He or she will lead the majority group in the council, establish policy guidelines for the administration, and have their hands on the details of the daily administration (if not personally, then through their political appointees). Due to the importance of the electoral process in generating leadership, strong mayors would normally have a strong partisan orientation and seek to promote their party's interest. The strong mayor is the *driving force* in this form of government (Svara, 1990, 82). At the other extreme is the *ribbon cutter* mayor implied by the pure version of the council-manager form of government. Mayors have ceremonial functions only and often the position is shifted among the councillors on a yearly basis.

However, these are stereotypes, which do not allow for strong mayors to be "weak," i.e., ineffective, or the ribbon cutter mayors to be "strong." Any experienced local government CEO knows that mayors differ in their approach to leadership and their effectiveness. As one Norwegian CEO in a government classified as council-manager form stated it: the political climate is "*very much a function of the mayor. Should the previous mayor return to office after the next election we get a politician who will enter my turf. He will control the details and reduce my influence*".

So, the type of leadership provided by mayors may differ drastically within the same form of government. Formal structure defines the overall parameters of the office, but offices are filled in particular ways, in some instances to the extent that the structure seems to be transformed by leadership. Take the case of Denmark, a country characterized by the committee-leader form of government. Here, we have examples of mayors who have been in office since the mid-sixties and have effectively shaped the socio-economic nature of their community and thereby the power structure of local government. These mayors (mostly Socialdemocrats), who have enjoyed an effective one-party majority over decades, are in a position which may be described as similar to that of Mayor Daley in Chicago or Chaban Delmas of Bordeaux. At the other extreme we find lame duck mayors who are elected at the mercy of the dominant parties which ended in a deadlock situation during the government formation negotiations. Such a mayor is – at best – first among equals like some of his Irish colleagues.

Mayors can provide leadership in three areas. They can be *policy leaders* who shape the content of programs and projects. They can be *public leaders* who help determine the direction that citizens want their city to take. And they can be *party leaders* who promote the interests of their political organization. Mayors are likely to vary in the strength of leadership they provide in these three areas depending of a combination of formal structure and individual and community characteristics.

It is plausible to expect that form of government will have the greatest association with the likelihood of being a policy leader, since the structural features of government specify which officials will have the authority to exert executive powers. It would seem likely that public leadership more broadly defined may be enhanced by form but is not primarily a product of form. In addition, party promotion may be related to form because of the importance of creating a majority to secure the top political position in mayor-council and committee-leader cities. Form of government is, however, a structure for governance and management, not necessarily for determining party control.

In order to tap these dimensions of leadership the U.D.I.T.E. Leadership Study made use of a battery of five items:

1. *The Mayor is very much engaged in the details of the daily work of the administration*
2. *The Mayor is a visionary person who constantly initiates new projects and policies in the locality*
3. *The Mayor has excellent relations with the public and knows what concerns the citizens*
4. *The Mayor is primarily a politician engaged in policy making rather than administrative details*
5. *The Mayor emphasizes the promotion of the party program and the interests of his fellow party members*

with response categories "to a very high extent", "to a high extent", "to some extent", "to a little extent" and "not at all". Based on a factor analysis as well as substantive considerations four leadership variables were constructed based on the five items. These variables are:

*Public leadership* measures the extent to which the mayor is considered a visionary person who initiates change in the community and has positive relations with citizens. Three point ordinal scale with values of high, moderate and low.

*Policy leadership* measures the extent to which the mayor is engaged in the detailed work of government and focused on policy-making. Four point nominal scale with values.<sup>4</sup>

- Innovator: Engagement in policy-making as well as administrative details is high (hands-on policy leader)



- Administrator: Engagement in policy-making is low and in administrative details it is high
- Designer: Engagement is high in policy-making and low in administrative details
- Caretaker: Engagement in policy-making as well as administrative details is low

*Partisan leadership* is a measure of the extent to which the mayor promotes the party program and the interests of the party members. Three point ordinal scale with values high, moderate and low.

### Mayors as public leaders

When CEOs identify the traits of the ideal politician, two activities are on the top of their list: Leading politicians should *have a vision of the way in which the municipality will develop in the long run* and they *should be informed about citizens' views*. No role is – in the eyes of the CEOs – more important than the one measured by the items that make up the public leadership dimension. Mayors do not unconditionally live up to these expectations. They come closest to the ideal with respect to knowing what citizens want. Mayors generally have excellent relations with the public. Close to six out of ten CEOs find that their mayor to a very high or high extent has excellent relations with the public and knows what concerns citizens. However, when it comes to having a vision, a little more than 25 percent of the CEOs find that their mayor to a very high or high extent is a visionary person who constantly initiates new projects and policies in the locality. Close to four out of ten mayors characterize their political master as a visionary person to a little extent or not at all.

Table 1. Mayors as Public Leaders by Country and Form of Government (percent)

	High	Moderate	Low	Total (%)
<b>Finland</b>	14	39	47	100
<b>Norway</b>	31	48	21	100
<b>Sweden</b>	28	52	20	100
<b>Britain</b>	30	38	32	100
<b>Ireland</b>	15	59	26	100
<b>Holland</b>	33	39	28	100
<b>Belgium</b>	48	40	12	100
<b>France</b>	23	24	53	100
<b>Italy</b>	63	24	13	100
<b>Spain</b>	26	51	23	100
<b>USA – CM</b>	33	46	20	100
<b>USA - SM</b>	44	45	10	100
<b>Australia</b>	42	42	15	100
<b>Strong mayor</b>	38	34	28	100
<b>Committee-leader</b>	29	46	26	100
<b>Collective</b>	40	40	20	100
<b>Council-manager</b>	26	47	27	100
<b>Overall mean</b>	32	42	26	100

N = 3609. Overall mean based on weighted average

Distribution by form of government based on weighted average (significant at the .00 level (chi-square test)).

The two items are positively related and the factor analysis seems to confirm that they belong to the same underlying dimension. This justifies the construction of a single indicator of public leadership that divides the individual mayors into categories of high, moderate or low

public leaders. Table 1 presents the distribution of the categories across 12 countries (Portugal and Denmark are missing) with the US split-up in the two forms found there.

It is clear that there are great differences in the strength of public leadership across countries. The strongest mayors are found in Italy followed by Belgium and the US strong-mayor cities. Few strong mayors are found in two of the council-manager countries, Finland and Ireland. However, the share of weak mayors ("low" in the table) is by far the largest in a country which comes very close to the strong mayor ideal type--France. These observations seem to indicate a non-existing or at least weak relationship between form of government and strength of public leadership. The relationship is shown in the second part of table 1. Although we find a significant difference across forms of government with stronger mayors in the strong mayor and collective systems, the difference is negligible, particularly when between 20 and 30 percent of mayors are found to be weak under all forms of government. There is large variation across countries within the same form and in almost in all cases one find outliers that account for the differences among the four forms of government. Finland and Ireland pull the share of strong mayors drastically down in the council-manager cities, while the relatively large share of strong mayors in strong mayor cities would be non-existent without the high Italian score. Of particular interest is the difference within the US. There is a significant difference in the expected direction the strong mayor cities producing more strong mayors than the council manager cities.<sup>5</sup> Still, the difference is in no way as dramatic as one would expect from the American literature on strong mayors (cf. Svava, 1990, ch. 4). Obviously, individual characteristics of the incumbent mayors as well as formal position shape the level of public leadership.

### **Mayors as policy leaders**

Mayors in the study governments are generally perceived by their top administrators as policy-makers who are not heavily engaged in the details of the administration. Close to half of the mayors are found to be primarily politicians who are engaged in policy-making to a very high or high extent. If the point of departure is an expectation that policies are established by leading politicians, it is, however, a surprise that one out of four CEOs characterize their political master as being engaged in policy-making only to a little extent or not at all. Obviously, many mayors are not attentive to policy at all. One alternative to a focus on policy is attentiveness to administrative details. Here, there is greater variation in the perceptions of the CEOs. About one out of four mayors are described as engaged in details to a very high or high extent, the same proportion is found to be focused on detail to some extent, while also one out of four is described as engaged in administrative details to a little extent and not at all.

The nature of a mayor's policy leadership can be divided into a four part classification combining the level of involvement in policy-making and in daily administrative details. The distribution of the four types across countries and forms of government is exhibited in table 2.

In the lower part of the table we find a clear relationship between form of government and policy leadership. In the collective and council-manager cities with the least formal resources in the mayor's office, 74% and 91% respectively confine themselves to policy making or are detached "caretakers". Still, even in strong mayor cities, 56% stay out of details as do two-thirds of the committee-leader mayors. Again there is variation among countries within the four forms of government, but the variation seems to be lower than was the case for public leadership. All the strong mayor countries have a score above the overall mean when it comes to concentration on detail (combining innovator and administrator

types); and all the council manager countries have a score below the mean.

*Table 2. Mayors as Policy Leaders by Country and Form of Government (percent)*

	<b>Innovator</b>	<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Designer</b>	<b>Caretaker</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>
<b>Finland</b>	2	7	22	69	100
<b>Norway</b>	0	15	53	32	100
<b>Sweden</b>	5	27	38	30	100
<b>Denmark</b>	21	22	35	21	100
<b>Britain</b>	4	17	48	31	100
<b>Ireland</b>	0	0	55	46	100
<b>Holland</b>	3	9	50	37	100
<b>Belgium</b>	12	27	33	28	100
<b>France</b>	11	23	39	28	100
<b>Italy</b>	19	43	16	22	100
<b>Spain</b>	28	14	34	24	100
<b>USA – CM</b>	8	6	62	25	100
<b>USA – SM</b>	19	12	41	28	100
<b>Australia</b>	3	8	45	45	100
<b>Strong mayor</b>	19	25	31	25	100
<b>Committee-leader</b>	11	22	40	27	100
<b>Collective</b>	8	18	42	32	100
<b>Council-manager</b>	3	7	46	45	100
<b>Overall mean</b>	9	17	40	34	100

N = 3278. Overall mean based on weighted average

Distribution by form of government based on weighted average (significant at the .00 level (chi-square test)).

Looking at particular countries, the Finnish mayors stand out as being skewed toward the caretaker type, while a relatively large share of the Italians are classified as administrators. Designer mayors constitute a majority in three council-manager countries--Norway, Ireland and the USA –CM. Although relatively few mayors are characterized as innovators we find relatively large shares in Spain, Italy, US-SM, and Denmark. Again the difference produced by the two forms of government in the US stands out. The council-manager mayors are the more focused on policy design while the strong mayors are more engaged in administrative details (difference is significant at the .00 level). Thus, form of government makes a difference in the distribution of policy leadership types but it does not tell the whole story.

### **Mayors as partisan leaders**

Relatively few mayors emphasize the promotion of the party program and the interests of the party members in the view of CEOs. One out of five are characterized as strong partisan leaders (high) and one out of four as moderate while 55 % are found to be weak in this aspect of leadership (the "low" category).

Party promotion is the leadership dimension that is most closely related to form of government (cf. table 3.). Seven out of ten council-manager mayors are described as weak partisan leaders by their CEOs. The same is true for only 38 percent of the strong mayors and 29 percent of the mayors from committee-leader cities. Most mayors from strong mayor and committee-leader cities bring a moderate or strong commitment to promoting their political party to the position. Most mayors in collective and council-manager cities do not. The former are likely to be recognized as party leaders whereas the latter are individual leaders not strongly associated with a political party.

Table 3. Mayors as Partisan Leaders by Country and Form of Government (percent)

	High	Moderate	Low	Total (%)
<b>Finland</b>	7	10	84	100
<b>Norway</b>	5	35	60	100
<b>Sweden</b>	26	39	35	100
<b>Britain</b>	46	33	21	100
<b>Ireland</b>	15	37	48	100
<b>Holland</b>	1	2	97	100
<b>Belgium</b>	17	34	48	100
<b>France</b>	44	35	22	100
<b>Italy</b>	29	31	40	100
<b>Spain</b>	24	32	44	100
<b>USA – CM</b>	5	5	90	100
<b>USA - SM</b>	6	19	76	100
<b>Australia</b>	9	10	82	100
<b>Strong mayor</b>	30	31	38	100
<b>Committee-leader</b>	35	36	29	100
<b>Collective</b>	9	18	73	100
<b>Council-manager</b>	8	21	71	100
<b>Overall mean</b>	19	26	55	100

N = 3266. Overall mean based on weighted average

Distribution by form of government based on weighted average (significant at the .00 level (chi-square test)).

Within the different forms of government there are certain variations across countries, most notably there is a large difference in mayoral leadership within the two collective countries-Belgium and the Netherlands. This difference corresponds to divergence in traditions. Although the mayor is formally appointed by the Crown/Central Government in both countries, the position is in actuality always filled with leader of the majority group in Belgium. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, the mayor is considered a professional position. The mayor typically comes from outside the municipality.

The introduction of the council-manager form in the US had the explicit aim of getting rid of politics, in particular party-politics, in favor of professional leadership and was usually accompanied by nonpartisan elections. In American cities with reform government, there are significantly ( $p < .01$ ) less partisan motivated mayors than in the strong mayor cities. The difference, however, is not very large even here. In fact, even in the US strong mayor cities three out of four mayors score low on the partisan leadership dimension, a share only exceeded in Finland and among the US manager-council mayors.

In the following analyses, when form of government is used as a variable, it conveys not only structural characteristics but also a tendency of mayors to differ systematically in attention to specific administrative details and in their strength as party leaders. Public leadership, on the other hand, is more likely to be important as part of the characteristics of specific cities and the individual incumbents (as described by the CEO) rather than as an aspect of the institutional framework.

### The Influence of Local Government Officials

Two kinds of decisions can be examined based on the U.Di.T.E. data: budget and economic development. Virtually all cities make decisions in these two areas, as opposed to other

functions that may not be municipal responsibilities in some countries. Budgetary decisions reflect control over the key organizational resource, and influence over these decisions indicates political power over the allocation of resources for the city. Economic development decisions affect the way a city grows and changes as a center for economic activity. These decisions impact the growth of the community as a whole as well the way that city government contributes to the process. Thus, officials who influence this area of policy have impact on both the amount and kind of economic development activity.

It is expected that the characteristics of influence will differ between the two types of policy. The budgetary process is oriented to the internal operation as well as the public outputs of government. There are also many who argue that administrators are powerful actors capable of protecting their budgetary base and expanding their resources. Considering these factors, it is likely that the influence of the CEO will be higher in budgeting than in economic development. All cities are involved in economic development, but the extent of activity and the division between direct or indirect methods of affecting development produce wide variation in the scope of economic development activity. The influence of elected officials is likely to be relatively greater in this policy area than in budgeting.<sup>6</sup>

The measure of influence is the CEO's ratings of his or her own influence and separate ratings for each of the other actors on a scale that ranges from zero for no influence to 100 for high influence. This approach recognizes that decisions may have a small or large number contributors. It does not presume that the influence of one actor necessarily decreases the influence of another.

An important limitation of this measure is that the assessments of all officials are made by the CEO alone. There is no independent confirmation of actual levels of influence. The choice of this measure, however, was informed by a previous Danish study. Forty CEOs were asked to indicate the influence on the budget of eight different actors or group of actors. The patterns in their responses were identified and used in analysis of budget growth in the following four year period. The study showed that the budget grew at a slower rate in municipalities where the guardians (mayor and executive committee) had been rated as most influential whereas the budget grew at a faster rate in municipalities where advocates (department heads) were influential (Mouritzen, 1991, ch. 11). These results can be interpreted as an external validation of this method of measuring influence. Ratings by the CEO are associated with differing outcomes that reflect the interests and perspectives of the most influential actors.

Another objection to this measure is that responses might be consistently biased, although the direction of bias could vary. On the one hand, top administrators might tend to exaggerate their own influence and downplay that of other officials. This would reflect a human tendency to make oneself seem important. On the other hand, the norm of political control of local government has been so strong that CEOs might be inclined to understate their impact. It is not possible to directly assess the validity of these counter-arguments. It may be that the effects of one tendency would cancel those of the other. We will presume that distortions are common across all countries. Comparisons of influence ratings among countries, therefore, may be more valid than the absolute level of influence.

### **Variations in Influence by Country**

Variation by country is indicated in Table 4. where the responses have been transformed to a 0-100 scale.<sup>7</sup> Regarding the budget, mayoral influence ranges from a low of 42 in Ireland—where the mayor's office is formally very weak—to a high of 96 in Portugal. The influence of the majority group on the city council is lower than the mayor's but varies somewhat less.

The CEO's influence ranges from a low of 52 in Portugal to 92 in council-manager cities in the United States. Regarding economic development, mayoral influence ranges from a low of 47 in Ireland to a high of 87 in France. The CEO's influence ranges from a low of 41 in Spain to 90 in Ireland.

Table 4. Budget and Economic Development Influence by Country (index)

	Budget				Economic Development			
	Mayor	Council	Committee chairs	CEO	Mayor	Council	Committee chairs	CEO
SF	71	73	52	<b>90</b>	64	66	45	<b>86</b>
N	77	<b>87</b>	55	81	51	<b>56</b>	29	51
S	<b>93</b>	85	72	67	<b>83</b>	69	56	62
DK	<b>91</b>	85	73	73	<b>62</b>	59	40	45
GB	83	<b>85</b>	72	73	68	70	56	<b>75</b>
IRL	42	48	30	<b>91</b>	47	45	27	<b>90</b>
NL	<b>62</b>	60	50	57	<b>61</b>	42	35	42
B	<b>87</b>	66	83	65	n.a.			
F	<b>95</b>	69	56	70	<b>87</b>	55	39	55
I	<b>87</b>	60	33	56	n.a.			
E	<b>90</b>	83	51	58	78	63	37	41
P	<b>96</b>	51	76	52	n.a.			
US-cm	63	74	36	<b>92</b>	67	63	34	<b>78</b>
US-mc	75	67	50	<b>88</b>	<b>77</b>	55	43	73
AUS	63	62	46	<b>85</b>	67	55	40	<b>76</b>
Total	79	71	56	72	67	58	40	64

Overall the mayor's influence is highest in both areas of decision making. The CEO is slightly more influential than the majority group on the council. The overall ratings for budgetary decisions are higher than for economic development indicating the officials have more control over the former than the latter. In ten of the countries, mayors have ratings of 75 or higher in budgeting; in five countries, councils are rated at this level; in two of the countries committee chairs are rated at this level; and in six of the countries (counting both forms of government in the United States), CEOs have this amount of influence. The number of countries with influence ratings of 75 or higher for economic development is four for mayors, none for councils or committee chairs, and five for CEOs out of the twelve countries for which data are available.

The mayor's reported influence is substantially higher than that of the council members' in Portugal, Italy, France, and Belgium and in economic development in the Netherlands and the mayor-council cities in the United States. In the ten other countries, the influence of the mayor and council generally varies together. In five countries, the council has more influence than the mayor in budgeting, and this is the case in three countries in economic development. The committee chairs always have less influence than the mayor and generally less than the council, although these officials are more influential in budgeting in Belgium and Portugal. Overall, the mayor is the most influential official in both areas of policy, but there is substantial variation in relative influence of elected officials at the aggregate level for each country.

The relative position of the mayor is measured more precisely when the influence of elected officials is compared in each city. In over one fifth of the cities, either the council as a whole or the committee chairs are more influential than the mayor in budgeting, and this situation is found in 18% of the cities with regard to economic development decisions. Cities are not included in this category if the mayor and the other officials have the same influence rating. Although mayors are usually the leading politician, this is not always the case.

In order to assess the influence of the CEO, it is useful to examine it in both absolute and relative terms. Overall, the CEO has the second highest level of influence among officials in both areas of policy, but this finding masks substantial variation. The CEO is less influential in budgeting than any of the elected officials in two countries, than two of the sets of elected officials in six countries, and than one set of officials in two countries. The CEO is the most influential official in budgeting in five countries. In economic development, the CEO has somewhat greater clout in comparison to the council and committee chairs and is the most influential official in five countries. The range of variation is highlighted by subtracting the influence score for the CEO from that of the most influential elected official or set of officials. The results are displayed in Figure 1.

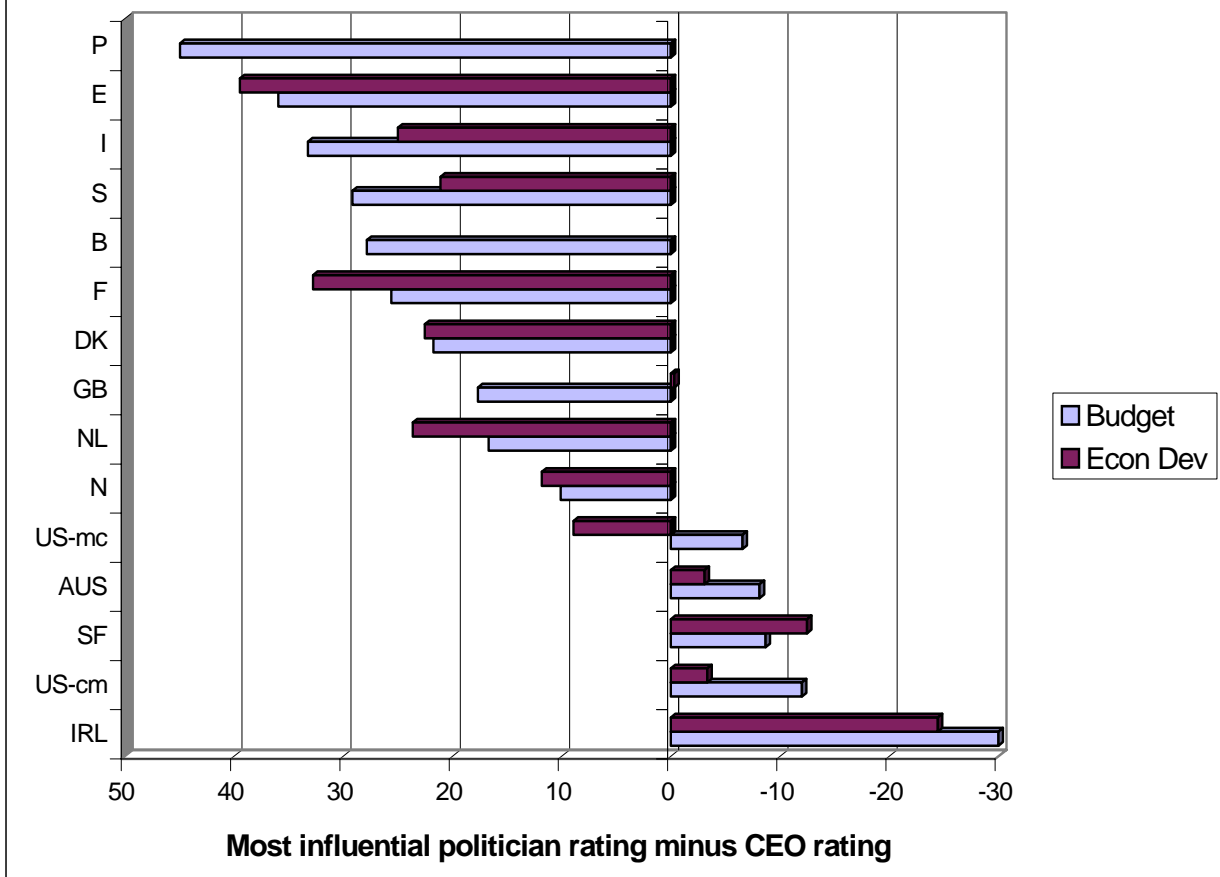
Elected officials have the greatest influence advantage over the CEO in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Belgium, and France, and more modest but still substantial influence differences are found in Denmark and the Netherlands. The difference is even more modest in Norway but elected officials are somewhat more influential than administrators in both areas of policy. In Great Britain and the U.S. mayor-council cities, there is a split result. The CEO is more influential than the most influential elected official in economic development in Great Britain and in budgeting in the United States. In the remaining countries—Finland, Australia, Ireland, and U.S. council-manager cities—, the CEO has higher influence than either set of elected officials in both areas of decision making, and the advantage is substantial in Ireland.

In addition to the key groups of officials just discussed, CEOs also rated influence of department heads. In four countries, the department heads have slightly higher ratings than the CEO in budgeting—Sweden, Netherlands, Italy, and Portugal. In economic development decisions, the CEO always has higher influence ratings than the department heads. Budgetary influence may be decentralized among departments, but the CEO has more impact over the activity of promoting economic development.

In sum, mayors tend to be the most influential political figure in city government followed by the majority group on the council. Among elected officials, in five countries the council is more influential than the mayor in budgeting, and in three countries has greater influence in economic development. In only two cases are committee chairs more influential than the council—both in budgetary decision making—and in no countries are the chairs more influential than the mayor. CEOs also have an important impact on decisions. Even at the lowest level, CEOs are more than moderately influential in budgeting and somewhat influential in economic development. In four countries, they are the most influential actors in both spheres of policy and in two additional countries the CEO is the most influential in one but not the other area of policy. Thus, not only are CEOs highly involved in policy

innovation and active advisers of politicians, as we have seen in previous chapters, they also have considerable influence in policy making.

**Figure 1.**  
**Relative Influence of Most Influential Elected Officials and CEO**



**Variations in Influence by Form of Government**

The difference among countries can be explained in part by the use of different forms of government. There are important differences and also similarities across cities divided by structure of political authority. The average levels of influence for each set of officials in budget and economic development decisions combined are presented in Table 5.

*Table 5. Influence of Officials by Form of Government in Budget and Economic Development Decisions Combined (index)*

	Mayor	Majority on Council	Committee Chairs	CEO	Department Heads
Strong mayor	87	62	46	56	42
Committee-leader	80	75	62	66	61
Collective	68	53	51	52	50
Council Manager	61	63	40	82	64
Total	73	64	48	68	56

The distribution of influence generally corresponds, as one would expect, to the assignment of authority to officials in each form. In the strong mayor cities, the mayor overshadows the council and the CEO who are in turn more influential than council committee chairs and department heads, respectively. In the committee-leader cities, on the other hand, committee chairs are intermediaries between the council and the operating departments of city



government. They have considerable separate influence. Likewise, the department heads have almost as much influence as the CEO. In the collective cities, the mayor is not as influential as the powerful political leaders in the board of alderman (not included in table). Still, the mayor has a higher rating than the remaining officials all of whom have approximately the same amount of influence.<sup>8</sup> In the council-manager cities, the CEO has more influence than the elected officials, and the council is slightly more influential than the mayor. The department heads are substantially less influential than the CEO, although their rating is higher than in other types of cities.

Within individual cities, three patterns of influence among officials can be identified using cluster analysis. In both budgetary and economic development decisions, one pattern is high influence by all officials with the mayor displaying the highest influence. In the second, the mayor and to a lesser extent the council are the most influential, although the mayor has a very high level of influence only in budgeting. In the third, administrators—both CEOs and department heads—have more influence than elected officials. The rank order and average influence scores in each cluster are indicated as follows. The most common combination is relatively high influence exerted by all officials found in half of the cities in budgetary decisions and in 45% in economic development. The mayor-centered pattern is more common in economic development decision making (35%) than in budgeting (23%), although it should be noted that in the former no official has very high influence. The mayor has the highest influence in economic development in this cluster, but it is only moderately high. The reverse is found regarding the administrator-led pattern: it is more common in budgeting (27%) than economic development (20%).

Table 6 presents the distribution of these patterns across the forms of government. The pattern with all officials having high influence is very common in committee-leader cities, especially in budgetary decisions. Four fifths of these cities have widely dispersed, high level influence among all officials.

*Table 6. Clusters of Influence among Officials by Form of Government*

**Budget (percent)**

	Mayor centered: High influence	All officials highly influential	Administrator centered	Total
Strong mayor	46	39	15	100
Committee-leader	15	79	6	100
Collective	35	42	23	100
Council Manager	4	45	51	100
<i>Total</i>	23	50	27	100

### Economic Development (percent)

	Mayor centered: Moderate influence	All officials highly influential	Administrator centered	Total
Strong mayor	47	48	5	100
Committee- leader	30	62	8	100
Collective	61	29	10	100
Council Manager	26	37	37	100
<i>Total</i>	35	45	20	100

The mayor-centered pattern is most common for economic development decisions in collective cities and for budgetary decisions in strong mayor cities. The administrator-centered pattern is most often found in budgetary decisions in council-manager cities. Thus, there is a tendency for the mayor to play a leading role in strong mayor cities and for the CEO to do so in council-manager cities but deviations from this rule are common. Decision-making reflects the combined impacts of a wide array of actors. There is extensive sharing of influence among elected officials and administrators. Indeed, the pattern in which all officials are influential is the most common overall. It is found in 39-79% of cities of different forms with regard to budgeting and in 29-62% of cities with regard to economic development. Although the form of government has the effect of tilting the strong-mayor cities toward the mayor-centered pattern (and collective cities in economic development) and the council-manager cities toward the administrator-centered pattern, wide sharing of influence is commonly found in all forms of government.

Without diminishing the importance of other actors, it is important to examine more closely the variations in influence of the two key officials in the nexus of leadership—the mayor and the CEO.

### **Leadership, Form of Government and Mayor’s Influence**

Mayors can provide leadership in three areas, as noted previously. They can be public leaders who help determine the direction that citizens want their city to take. They can be policy innovators who shape the content of programs and projects. Finally, they can be party leaders who promote the interests of their political organization. One would expect that these types of leadership would be related to the mayor’s influence, although the relationship is presumably constrained by the advantages that form of government gives to some mayors over others. In addition, the longer the mayor remains in office, the more influential the mayor is likely to be. There are other factors including the attitudes and behavior of the CEO and certain characteristics of the political environment that affect the mayor’s influence, but the exploration of the impact of the political leader will begin with the strength of the leadership itself.

The mayor’s strength as a public leader, who is visionary and have has positive relations with the public, increases influence. The public leader is effective at developing proposals for the future of the city that are based on awareness of citizen preferences. Presumably, these are the mayors who can bring the public together around shared aspirations for change. It was previously noted that there is only a weak relationship between public leadership and form of government. The formal resources built into the mayor’s office are not necessarily translated into a high level of effectiveness at mobilizing public support. Table 7 displays the influence ratings of mayors at differing levels of public leadership. The

results indicate another aspect of how public leadership varies across cities with different structures.

*Table 7. Mayor's Influence by Strength as Public Leader*

<b>Budget</b>				
	Strong mayor	Committee-leader	Collective	Council Manager
High	91	93	83	71
Moderate	89	90	73	63
Low	89	80	59	56
(N)	(874)	(532)	(564)	(1270)
F score	0.9	21.1**	36.6**	22.3**

<b>Economic Development</b>				
	Strong mayor	Committee-leader	Collective	Council Manager
High	85	82	73	69
Moderate	82	77	61	58
Low	80	68	46	48
(N)	605	(527)	(283)	(1253)
F score	3.0*	15.2**	25.9**	49.3**

p < .05; \*\* p < .01

Just as we observed earlier that form does not determine the strength of leadership, the forms differ as a setting for translating public leadership into influence. The strong mayors have a uniformly high level of influence in budgeting regardless of their public leadership. For these mayors, form is associated with a high level of influence in a function for which they have at least some formal authority independently of the mayor's leadership. In economic development, however, the extent of emphasis by city government and the tasks to be performed are less clear cut in the formal structure. There is also modest variation in the mayor's influence in this policy area associated with leadership strength. The pattern of results is similar in the committee-leader cities. There is modest variation in influence related to leadership in budgeting and a greater spread in influence between high and low levels of leadership in economic development. Thus, there is fairly uniform influence in a function supported by formal resources, but low public leadership is associated with less albeit very substantial influence in the less "structured" decisions regarding economic development.

In the collective and council-manager cities, the relationship between leadership and influence is pronounced. High public leadership partially offsets limited formal resources for the mayor in both budgeting and economic development, although the most effective leaders in collective and council-manager cities still rate below or only slightly above the least effective leaders in strong mayor and committee-leader cities in their level of influence. Looking at the bottom end of the leadership ratings, it is apparent that low public leadership magnifies the structural weakness of the position. If the mayor does not bring a high level of creativity and interaction with the public to the office, he or she is a marginal player in policy making.

The nature of policy leadership provided by the mayor is also related to the level of influence. This measure has two aspects--involvement in the details of the daily work of administration and attention to broad policy matters rather than a focus on specifics. Being

highly involved in both aspects approximates the innovator type of leadership that has been identified in American studies of mayoral leadership. The mayors who focus on detail and ignore policy are filling the role of administrators. Those who are concerned with policy to the exclusion of details are policy designers. The mayors who ignore both aspects of policy are detached. The innovator mayors have the highest influence in budgeting in committee-leader and collective form cities and in the collective and council-manager cities in economic development decisions, as indicated in Table 8.

*Table 8. Mayor's Influence by Policy Leader Type (index)*

<b>Budget</b>				
	Strong mayor	Committee-Leader	Collective	Council-Manager
Innovator	93	98	88	75
Administrator	93	90	82	75
Designer	90	91	73	62
Detached	84	83	68	61
(N)	897	(826)	(574)	(1276)
F score	11.3**	17.4**	10.8**	8.4**

<b>Economic Development</b>				
	Strong mayor	Committee-Leader	Collective	Council-Manager
Innovator	85	70	75	75
Administrator	88	75	52	63
Designer	80	73	68	60
Detached	80	67	53	55
(N)	(623)	(809)	(287)	(1257)
F score	4.0**	4.0**	8.4**	7.7**

In the strong mayor cities, being either an innovator or administrator type is associated with the high influence in budgeting and the administrator mayors have the highest influence in economic development. In the council-manager cities, on the other hand, it is the hands-on engagement in day-to-day tasks whether combined with broad policy leadership or not that is generally more strongly linked with higher influence in budgeting although the innovator is more influential in economic development. When council-manager mayors defy the norms of their form of government and get involved in the details of their government, their influence level is higher although they may need to combine this involvement in details with broad attention to policy. In cities with all forms of government the mayors who get low ratings on both aspects of policy leadership have lower influence than their peers in the same form. Mayors who are detached from policy concerns have less capacity to have impact on policy outcomes in their cities.

To summarize the somewhat mixed results, in six of the eight situations, i.e., four forms of government and two areas of policy, the innovators are at least tied for the most influential in six of the eight. The administrators also have more influence than the designers in six of the eight situations, although the differences are not always great. Finally, the detached mayors always have the lowest influence. Mayors who lose track of the specifics of their job and the city's work are generally less influential than those who have a narrow focus, but those who can maintain the broad and the narrow focus are generally the most influential of all.

Being a party promoter has an inconsistent impact on influence depending on the form of government. In cities with all forms of government except council-manager, influence is slightly higher in budgeting when mayors stress party leadership.<sup>9</sup> In council-manager cities, on the other hand, strong party leadership by the mayor is associated with the lowest influence (a rating of 48). When there is a medium level of party promotion, the rating is 57. Finally, mayors in council-manger cities who give little or no attention to party promotion receive an influence rating of 66 ( $p < .00$ ,  $N=1248$ ). In these cities, party promotion may be viewed as “putting the party ahead of the city,” and the influence of the mayor who adopts this approach is reduced. In this case--unlike the higher influence that goes with involvement in details of administration--, violating the norms of the form is associated with less influence.

Still, being the recognized party leader in a council controlled by one party enhances the mayor’s influence in those types of cities in which the mayor’s formal position is weakest. In Belgium (there are no “party leader” mayors in the Netherlands), the mean influence rating in budgeting is 90 for mayors who head party majorities versus 71 for the other mayors in collective leadership cities ( $p < .00$ ,  $N=581$ ).<sup>10</sup> In council-manager cities, such mayors are very rare (less than five percent) but those who are party leaders receive an influence rating in budgeting of 80 compared to 62 for other mayors in these cities ( $p < .00$ ;  $N=1074$ ), and also have somewhat higher influence in economic development decisions. In strong mayor and committee-leader cities, there are no differences between the party dominant mayors and the rest in either kind of decision. A strong party position offsets to some extent a constitutionally weak office but makes no difference when the mayor has a strong position.

To conclude the consideration of the mayor’s influence as rated by the CEO, the shaping factor is form of government. The mayor has the most influence in the strong mayor form of government and the least influence in the council-manager form. No other factors are associated with large variations when the effects of form of government and other country characteristics are removed. Highly effective mayors or ones who are attentive to both the broad and detailed aspects of policy in cities where the mayor lacks formal powers do not leapfrog over the ineffective or detached mayors in cities where they do have formal resources to become much more influential. Furthermore, the “behaviorially” strongest mayors in collective leadership (Belgium is an exception) and council-manager cities do not match the behaviorally strong and formally potent mayors in strong mayor and committee leader cities at the top of the influence scale. The modest additional factors that affect influence level are, however, of interest. Within the overall pattern produced by form of government, the mayor’s influence is enhanced by his or her strength as a public leader, involvement in setting policy goals or the daily details of policy implementation or both, and experience in office. At least at the margins, mayors are individual as well as institutional leaders.

### **CEO’s Involvement, Form of Government, and Influence**

Just as the mayor’s influence is shaped by form, so too is that of the CEO. The differing distribution of executive authority among the mayor, council executive committee, and the CEO give the CEO relatively less formal resources for influence in collective and particularly strong mayor cities and relatively more resources in committee-leader and particularly council-manager cities. There are not simple contrasting models in which the mayors are advantaged in one set of cities and disadvantaged in the other with the CEO's formal position being the reverse of the mayor's. Whereas this is the case with the contrasting strong mayor and council-manager cities, the committee-leader form provides structural advantages to the CEO and the mayor. The linkage between structure and influence is also more clearly

evident in budgetary than in economic development decisions. Budgeting is a function that all governments must perform and do so in similar ways. The CEO is involved in the formation of budgets and their execution as an organizational leader in all forms, even though this function may be shared to a greater or lesser extent with other officials depending on the structure.

In policy making regarding economic development, on the other hand, the nature and extent of activities vary widely, and formal duties for officials are less clearly prescribed. Some cities will devote little attention to economic development, and some CEOs may see the function as one that politicians should handle. Thus, greater variation in the level of CEO influence in economic development is expected. Furthermore, because it has more discretionary elements, the personal characteristics of CEOs will have a greater impact on their influence in economic development than budgetary decision making. In other words, we expect that the nature of the office will shape budgetary influence with individual traits having only marginal effects whereas the behavior of the individual CEO will be more important in shaping the level of influence in economic development.

As noted in the previous section, the rank order of the CEO's influence across forms of government is council-manager (highest), committee-leader, strong mayor, and collective (lowest). Within the constraints of formal structure, the activity level of the CEO is associated with differing levels of influence, especially in economic development. The CEO's involvement in a variety of activities has been tapped by a question where the respondents were asked how much emphasis they put on 16 separate tasks (5 point scale from 1 (attach very little or no importance to) to 5 (attach utmost importance to)). Three dimensions can be shown to exist: policy innovation, political advice, and classical management. Along the three dimensions four clusters of activity level were identified. Some CEOs are "underactive"—low in their involvement in all three dimensions. Some emphasize management and policy innovation and some emphasize political advice and innovation. Finally, some CEOs are "highly active" with emphasis on all three areas. It would seem likely that the more active the CEO, the greater their influence would be and that policy innovation and political advice would be more strongly linked to influence than involvement in management. The data presented in Table 9 generally confirm these expectations.

The underactive CEO has the lowest influence rating within each form of government in both budgetary and economic development decision-making. The one exception is budgetary decision making in council-manager cities. The formal authority over budgeting gives even CEOs who are less involved influence that is comparable to their more active peers in other types of cities. Generally with regard to budgeting, the other clusters have very similar ratings although an association between involvement and influence can be observed. A strong relationship, on the other hand, is evident in economic development in all forms of government. CEOs who are involved in policy innovation as found in clusters two through four are more influential than the underactive. CEOs who are comprehensively active at a high level have the highest influence ratings in both functional areas. Active CEOs are influential CEOs across forms of government.

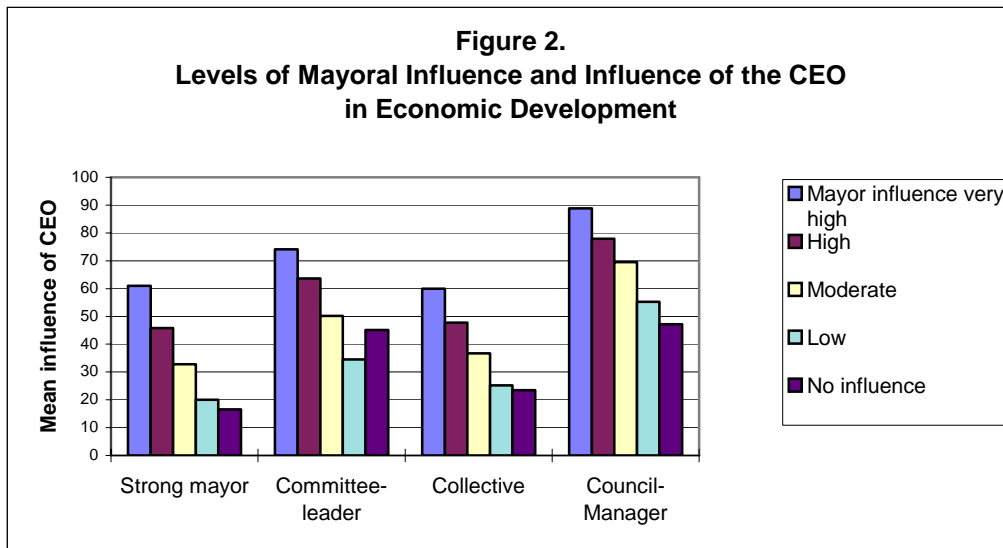
Table 9. CEO Influence Ratings for Clusters of Activity (index)

Form of government	Activity Clusters	Budget	Eco. Dev.
Strong mayor	Underactive	54	40
	Manager-Innovator	61	51
	Adviser-Innovator	71	62
	Highly Active	65	65
	<i>Difference high-low activity cluster</i>	11	25
Committee-leader	Underactive	58	55
	Manager-Innovator	70	61
	Adviser-Innovator	73	61
	Highly Active	74	67
	<i>Difference high-low activity cluster</i>	16	12
Collective	Underactive	59	36
	Manager-Innovator	60	42
	Adviser-Innovator	63	46
	Highly Active	71	53
	<i>Difference high-low activity cluster</i>	12	27
Council Manager	Underactive	87	69
	Manager-Innovator	89	75
	Adviser-Innovator	86	76
	Highly Active	89	81
	<i>Difference high-low activity cluster</i>	2	14
Total	Underactive	66	55
	Manager-Pol Innovator	72	65
	Adviser-Pol Innovator	76	65
	Overactive	77	75

### Mayor's and CEO's Influence

The characteristics of CEOs and the cities in which they work have only a modest impact on their influence in budgeting but a considerable impact on influence in economic development. This was the expectation in undertaking a detailed multivariate analysis the results of which is not presented here. Overall only a small amount of the variation in relative budgetary influence of CEOs could be explained by twelve factors relating to the mayor, the CEO and the community (R-square=.05). In contrast about 1/5 of the variation in the CEO's influence in economic development could be explained by individual and community characteristics (R-square=.22) almost explain over four times more of the variation. Thus, individual and community characteristics are much more important to understanding the impact CEOs have on economic development than on budgetary decisions. Here we focus on one particular factor only in order to discuss the possible relationship between top level politicians' leadership and influence and the influence of the top administrators. The relative level of the mayor's influence is positively related to the CEO's influence. Rather than being competitors with the increase in the influence by the mayor decreasing influence of the CEO, the two officials move together up or down in their impact on decisions. The relationship is very weak with regard to budgeting but in economic development, the relationship is very strong and suggests that the mayor and CEO move in tandem in shaping efforts to promote their cities. The direction and strength of this relationship is almost independent of form of

government, cf. figure 2. Within each form of government, the CEO's influence drops dramatically when the mayor's influence declines. Although the CEOs manifest some influence even when the mayor is rather weak, the CEO's potential to impact development decisions is enhanced by being paired with a more influential mayor. This positive relationship in the influence of the two key officials in city government offers additional evidence of a partnership between the mayor and CEO.



With this positive interaction in mind, another feature of mayoral leadership can be considered. Low policy leadership is associated with higher CEO influence. Earlier, we observed that policy leadership was important to the mayor's influence. Here we see that the CEO to a modest extent fills a vacuum with higher influence when the mayor's policy leadership is weak, i.e., the mayor is detached from both the details and the broad framework of policy. Thus, although the CEO's influence increases as the mayor's influence increases, CEOs also expand their influence when the mayor is detached from policy making and implementation.

## Conclusion

There is great variation in the level of influence for each key set of officials as well as differences in their relative influence in budgeting and economic development. In both areas of policy making, mayoral influence is highest over all. Closer examination at the country level shows that the mayor is a dominant figure in some countries, fairly evenly balanced in influence with other elected officials and the CEO in a second group of countries, and surpassed by the CEO in still other countries. When the influence of elected officials is compared in each city, some other elected official is more influential than the mayor in budgeting in 22% of the cities, and this situation is found in 18% of the cities with regard to economic development decisions. Although mayors are usually the leading politician, this is not always the case. Similarly, the CEOs rank second in influence overall among officials in both areas of policy, but their relative position varies greatly. Even in the countries in which the level of influence is lowest, the CEO is moderately influential in budgeting and somewhat influential in economic development. At the highest level, the influence of the CEO exceeds that of any other actor in both areas of policy in four countries.



The differences among countries can be explained in part by the use of different forms of government. In the strong mayor cities, the mayor often overshadows the council and the CEO. There is wide sharing of high level influence in committee-leader cities and moderate level influence in collective leadership cities. In the council-manager cities, the CEO typically has more influence than the elected officials, and the council is slightly more influential than the mayor. A mayor-centered pattern is most common for economic development decisions in collective cities and for budgetary decisions in strong mayor cities. The administrator-centered pattern is most often found in budgetary decisions in council-manager cities. Still, there is extensive sharing of influence among elected officials and administrators in cities of all types. A distribution of influence in which all officials are highly influential in budgeting is found in approximately two fifths of cities with strong mayor, collective leadership, and council-manager forms of government. It is found in almost four of five cities with the committee-leader form of government. The shared influence pattern is somewhat less common--and the mayor-centered pattern more common--in economic development policy making, but the shared leadership pattern is still quite common.

In addition to form of government, the mayor's influence is shaped by his or her strength as a public leader, involvement in setting policy goals or in the daily details of policy implementation or both, party leadership in a council with a one-party majority, and experience in office. These relationships are strongest in collective leadership and council-manager cities. Strong qualities as an individual leader offset to some extent a constitutionally weak office but make less difference when the mayor has a strong formal position. In addition, the presence of highly involved CEOs who are active in communicating with the community enhances the influence of the mayor. In their efforts to shape policy, mayors and CEOs are not fighting over influence but rather appear to expand their influence together.

The CEO's influence is to some extent the reciprocal of the mayor's, but the CEO is stronger and more influential in committee-leader cities where fairly strong mayors are also found. The linkage between structure and influence is also more clearly evident in budgetary than in economic development decisions. In policy making regarding economic development, the nature and extent of activities vary widely, and formal duties for officials are less clearly prescribed. The personal characteristics of CEOs have a greater impact on their influence in economic development than in budgetary decision making. The mayor's influence level is weakly but positively related to the CEO's influence and the type of policy leadership provided by the mayor which is "negatively" related, i.e., CEOs have more influence when paired with detached mayors. In economic development decisions, there is a strong positive relationship between the mayor's influence and the CEO's, and CEOs who are engaged in policy innovation are much more influential.

There are three important issues that are illuminated by these findings—whether structure shapes the influence of officials, whether elected officials and administrators are in competition for influence, and whether administrators' influence is a threat to democratic governance.

Structure is important in three respects, or in causal terms, form of government has a direct, indirect as well as conditional effect on the distribution of influence in city government. The direct effect is evident as the variation in the respective influence of the two key officials depend on form of government. In the forms of government that differ most with regard to the authority of politicians and administrators, the mayor's influence is highest in the strong mayor cities and lowest in the council-manager cities. The CEO's influence, on the other hand, is highest in the council-manager cities and lowest in the collective leadership cities. There is not a simple continuum of respective influence across the four forms. The

second highest influence ratings for the mayor and the CEO are found in the committee-leader cities. The mayors in the collective leader cities rank third and the CEOs in these cities rank fourth in influence. Thus, forms of government empower both politicians and administrators and may do so in various combinations. The indirect effect of structure is evident when we look at mayoral leadership under different forms of government. Mayors' influence is related to their leadership activity; the latter, however, tend to be somehow related to form of government, particularly as mayors differ systematically in attention to specific administrative details and in their strength as party leaders. Finally, form of government acts as a conditional factor when it comes to the relation between mayoral leadership and mayors' influence. Leadership activity is more important under some forms of government than under others.

Second, it is evident that the mayor and the CEO are not engaged in a zero-sum struggle for influence. Higher influence by the mayor is associated with greater involvement by the CEO in policy innovation and more extensive networking by the CEO. Furthermore, there is a modest but positive connection between higher influence by the mayor and greater influence in budgetary decisions by the CEO and a very strong positive relationship between the influence levels of the two officials in economic development decisions. Rather than a contest for control, there is interdependency and reciprocal influence between the mayor and CEO. The average levels of influence are shaped by the form of government, and the specific level of influence of the political and professional leaders moves up and down together. This is true to a modest extent in budgeting and to a substantial extent in economic development.

Thus, there is an apparent contradiction in the findings of the comparative status of mayors and CEOs depending on whether one examines the institutional or community level. Choice of the institutional powers assigned to the mayor has a direct bearing on the CEO's weight in the political process: the more powerful the mayor, the less influential is the CEO. On the community level among cities that use the same form of government, however, the greater the influence of the mayor, the greater the influence of the CEO. The assignment of authority in the design of institutions may be a choice between mayors and CEOs, although the committee leader and collective forms demonstrate that the choice can be to hand out authority more or less evenly. The way that officials actually work together, however, is typically a cooperative approach in which the efforts of one official positively affect the status of the other.

The comparative influence tradeoff is illustrated by the situation in economic development policy making (as shown in Figure 2.) When mayors have very low influence, CEOs usually have greater influence than the mayor and when the mayor has very high influence, the CEO has less influence than the mayor. Still, the CEOs who are relatively weaker when paired with a high influence mayor have substantially more influence than their counterparts who work with less influential mayors in other cities. In this positive sum relationship, when the mayor's influence rises the CEO's influence does as well.

The third issue is the role of the CEO in the democratic process. Given the substantial influence of CEOs revealed by the data—a level that exceeds that of the mayor (or other elected officials who have more influence than the mayor) in some countries and in many individual cities—, is the influence of the CEO a threat to democracy? A general answer is derived from the common distribution of influence in cities. In the vast majority of cities, influence is exerted disproportionately by the mayor or widely shared among many officials. One could argue that in these cities, the CEO exercises influence within the democratic process rather than in contradiction of it. The CEO typically exerts extensive influence as part of an array of other influential actors.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The Union des *Dirigeants Territoriaux de L'Europe* is composed of the national organizations of local government executives in Western Europe as well as individual members. The project is commonly referred to as the U.Di.T.E. Project signifying the close collaboration that has occurred between academic and leading practitioners throughout.

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed description of the study and the different data sets cf. Klausen and Magnier (1998, technical appendix)

<sup>3</sup> Discuss other books and give exact titles etc.

<sup>4</sup> The labels chosen for the three categories have been influenced mostly by the American literature on mayoral leadership, cf. Svara, 1990, ch. 4.

<sup>5</sup> For the full U.S. sample,  $p < .01$ ,  $N = 648$ .

<sup>6</sup> In three of the study countries, the question about influence in economic development was not included in the questionnaire. Thus, there are no data for Belgium, Italy, and Portugal regarding this activity.

<sup>7</sup> Note on 0-100 scale

<sup>8</sup> As indicated in Table 4, the collective cities differ. In Belgium, the mayor is the leading politician in budgeting but the committee chairs are almost as influential. Two factors may account for these differences from Holland. In Belgium the mayor is chosen by the crown following the recommendation of the majority party. The Board of Aldermen was not presented as an option on the questionnaire in Belgium, and it may be that the CEOs had the aldermen in mind when they assigned high scores to the committee chairs.

<sup>9</sup> For budgeting,  $p < .05$  but the difference between the average influence in high and low party promotion is only six points in mayor-council and committee-leader cities and 14 in collective cities.

<sup>10</sup> No data are available on influence over economic development decisions in Belgium.