

# THE COMPETITIVENESS COMPULSION

Helen Carter  
hflc@plan.aau.dk

Department of Development and Planning, Aalborg University, Denmark

Key words: competitiveness, urban policy and plans, local government, Denmark

## Abstract

'Competitive' is something many cities strive to be today, and for many policy-makers this seems to be a 'natural' priority. A compulsion to compete seems to have been created by an industry of benchmarking, ranking and 'best practices' which surrounds urban governance today, and this influences policy-makers in cities in ways which are often diffuse and indirect. It is often assumed that wider trends, external influences and other levels of governance are pushing a neoliberal competitive discourse upon cities, and whilst this may partly be the case, this paper investigates the mechanisms within local government itself which contribute to reproducing the focus on being competitive. Through a case study of a small city in Denmark, this paper discusses the discourse of competitiveness, the lack of reflection on this discourse which exists amongst policy-makers, and the practices which promote a focus on competitiveness within the local government. In this case, these practices include comparisons and rankings of the city alongside other places in the local region, study tours for inspiration from projects in (often larger) cities, a focus on particular modes of urban development which prioritise 'creative' people and the development of 'experiences', and a general focus within the local government on striving to 'be the best' in a variety of areas. Through a combination of interviews with local policy-makers and document analysis of recent policies and plans, it will be investigated how these practices and more create a diffuse and indirect compulsion to compete, resulting in the institutionalisation of the vision of the 'competitive city'.

## Introduction

In this paper I would like to examine the idea that local governments, particularly in small cities, are 'compelled' to act in a competitive manner through their policies and plans. The aim of this paper is to investigate how this 'compulsion' operates within a city.

Much previous literature on competition has focused on the wider creation of a competitiveness discourse, for example at international and national level, with little focus on how cities themselves are contributing to creating this discourse. This is where literature on neoliberalism, policy mobility and planning is of interest, as this is an area of literature which has put planning and policy-making within the city at centre stage. The contribution of this paper is its focus on neoliberal competition and how it operates within a city, placing focus on the role of local government in promoting competitiveness.

Through this literature, and specifically through a focus on disciplinary practices, such as benchmarking, and the creation of subjectivities through planning, I endeavour to investigate the 'competitive compulsion' within Vejle Municipality. This will illuminate the way in which local actors may be playing a part in the 'compulsion to compete' that is experienced in local government. Through the example of a local government in a small city in Denmark, I will seek to illustrate how this apparent 'competitiveness compulsion' is in part created in the city, rather than simply being imposed from outside.

This paper is structured as follows. Firstly I will present a theoretical framework through different perspectives on how competitiveness is propagated, including specific mechanisms such as benchmarking and the creation of subjectivities in planning. With a point of departure in this theoretical focus, I will draw on several examples from a case study of Vejle Municipality, Denmark, showing ways in the local government of a small city can play a role in creating a competitiveness compulsion in planning and policy-making. This will lead to a conclusion on the importance of the role of local actors in terms of their complicity in creating a neoliberal compulsion to compete, with this not simply imposed on cities by external forces. Even in the case of a small city it is evident how local actors play a role in an unreflective adoption of competitive perspectives in urban policy and planning.

### Neoliberalism, Competition and the City

Inter-urban competitiveness is often mentioned in the context of neoliberal urban development, with competitiveness viewed as a "primary virtue" (Harvey, 2005, p.65) of neoliberalism. Within the critical analyses of Harvey and others, the "coercive laws of competition force individual or collective agents (capitalist firms, financial institutions, cities) into certain configurations of activities which are themselves constitutive of the capitalist dynamic" (Harvey, 1989:15). In a more recent analysis of neoliberal urbanism, Peck & Tickell (2002) refer back Harvey's ideas about the "powerful disciplinary effects of interurban competition" (2002, p.393), discussing the ways in which they conceptualise neoliberalism as reinforcing and normalising inter-urban competition. These include: promotion of a 'growth-first' perspective on urban development; naturalisation of market logics; neoliberal 'lock-in' in terms of an austere public sector and growth-oriented economic development; a narrow range of potential policies; funding provision to cities on the basis of economic potential rather than social need; cities at the forefront of both neoliberal governance and contestation of neoliberalism (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p.47-48). Therefore in these analyses of neoliberal competition, it is an overwhelming external effect, operating through a variety of mechanisms which force cities to make plans and policies in certain ways.

These political economy analyses focus on competition as a 'force', in particular in a neoliberal capitalist system, which both leads to and is constitutive of a wider system of entrepreneurial urbanism. The danger with this analysis can be its overarching nature. Larner (2003), for example, has expressed some concern that the term 'neoliberalism' is problematic in this respect, providing little explanatory power due to its all-encompassing manner. This type of critique has led to more recent focus on local forms, hybrids and peculiarities of neoliberalism at different sites and scales, as

a supplement to more overall analyses (e.g. Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Peck, 2004). As Robinson states, urban policies are “highly contingent, dependent on local circumstances, and that their specific form is the result of the range of influences and connections at work in any given instance” (Robinson, 2011, p.29).

Robinson carries on this critique by pointing out that with the “broad academic consensus that there has been a neoliberal turn in urban policy internationally comes a temptation to assess localized urban policy developments as conforming to international trends” (2011, p.28), which can bring with it assumptions about power in terms of the weakness of local governments in the face of “external and more powerful actors” (Robinson, 2011, p.28). Therefore although these wide analyses of a global neoliberal system have their uses, it is important not to view the city exclusively in the light of these homogenising ideas. By examining the city more closely, it is possible both to focus on contextual specificities of neoliberalism, as well as view local actors in a more productive manner, instead of as powerless actors responding to powerful external forces and actors.

### The Discipline of Benchmarking and Best Practices

A more detailed analysis of some of the mechanisms which reinforce neoliberal urban governance is evident in terms of discussions about ‘best practices’ and ranking and benchmarking. Sum (2009) has examined competitiveness as a “hegemonic ‘knowledge brand’” (Sum, 2009, p.184), and in particular has investigated how “knowledge apparatuses” (Sum, 2009, p.185) such as benchmarking and indicators functions in the spread of the competitiveness discourse. Through examination of international benchmarking reports such as the *World Competitiveness Report* produced by the Institute for Management Development, Sum (2009) discusses how comparisons of different indicators and ‘best practices’ form a type of disciplinary power over countries, for example, the ranking of countries “operates as a disciplinary tool (or paper panopticon) with surveillance capacities over them” (Sum, 2009, p.193), with annual revisions of these rankings institutionalising a “continuous gaze through numbers” (Sum, 2009, p.194). Therefore in Sum’s analysis, these forms of benchmarking and ranking are an important mechanism in the “treadmill of competitiveness” (Sum, 2009, p.194), and they are often used by various actors to support arguments, to express the need for certain projects, and to create fear over lost possibilities.

This is an idea which is also resonant at the city scale, and some of the recent policy mobility literature discusses similar concerns, whilst highlighting the importance of local government as an actor. McCann (2004) has underlined the importance of mass media in propagating the idea of ‘best places’, through his study of a number of cities and rankings in selected US mass media publications. These rankings, which he refers to as a “persuasive, widely accepted and powerful simplification of the world” (McCann, 2004, p.1914), create a great interest amongst policy-makers and local politicians. McCann investigates how these rankings inspire cities to focus on certain practices in order to move up this apparently desirable hierarchy, which he describes as being tied up with the “hegemonic, normative discourse of interurban competition that sustains and encourages relative ideological conformity over large

parts of the developed world” (McCann, 2004, p.1912). More recent discussions have placed focus on the manner in which various ‘models’ of urban development move between cities, highlighting the similarities between urban development in different cities under neoliberalism.

Robinson (2011), whose interests lie particularly on the relationships between so-called ‘developing world’ cities and ‘developed world’ cities, raises an interesting point in terms of assumptions of “creativity and mimicry as the preserve of wealthier contexts” (Robinson, 2011, p.22). This highlights the importance of assumed power relations in these debates, with the idea that some cities or actors are more ‘powerful’ to implement certain policies than others. Robinson (2011) instead calls for greater focus on the local actors in these seemingly global circuits of knowledge, highlighting the “potential for local agency to appropriate and creatively use (even mandate) opportunities for citywide strategic planning”, which has “arguably been understated, especially in discussing the circulation of neoliberal policy” (Robinson, 2011, p.35). This harks back to the wider point being made about neoliberalism, that is, the importance of examining contextual hybrids, rather than focusing on a homogeneous model of neoliberal urban development.

These areas of research, into mechanisms which promote competitiveness at a global scale, as well as the processes by which models of neoliberal urban development are transferred between cities, and the role of practices such as benchmarking and best practices, all demonstrate the potential of investigating neoliberal urban governance within the city. Although there is undoubtedly a wider system within which these practices are perpetuated, there is a growing research focus on the specificities of particular places, rather than a constant focus on a universal nature of urban neoliberalism. This focus on the local and the individual city is one which is particularly resonant and evident in planning research, where case studies of particular cities and regions add some further perspectives to this conceptualisation of competitiveness as a locally-specific discourse, promoted through a variety of mechanisms.

### Creating Subjectivities through Planning

Recent work on planning and neoliberalism has placed focus on the contradictions between these two ‘objects’, the most fundamental being the neoliberal ideological desire for less state control, but the simultaneous need for planning to regulate land use (Tasan-Kok, 2011). This ‘contradiction’ is mirrored in broader discussions of neoliberalism, which have recently distinguished between ‘actually-existing neoliberalism’ (Brenner & Theodore, 2002) as being distinct from ‘pure’ neoliberal ideology. Despite these apparent fundamental contradictions, the neoliberalisation of planning seems to be a reality. Baeten highlights how urban citizens have “become self-governing atomised entrepreneurs who have the obligation to pursue their own betterment and fulfillment [...] in the city of endless choice and resource” (Baeten, 2011, p.207), a very particular kind of subject. This is a discourse which is difficult to contest, and creates an “impeccable logic of urban neoliberal subjectivity” within which it is “perfectly normal that cities in the first place dress up to seduce wandering neoliberal minds seeking that flawless urban landscape where they can capitalise best on their talents” (Baeten, 2011, p.207).

Peck (2010) discusses similar tendencies, placing more explicit focus on the 'creative class' thesis of Richard Florida (2002), which in recent years has been "hugely seductive" (Peck, 2010, p.192) for local policy-makers and politicians in many parts of the world. Peck (2010) highlights how the creativity trend in urban policy creates a "new generation of entrepreneurializing subjects" (Peck, 2010, p.223), with particular ideas about these subjects' work, free time, and perhaps above all, patterns of consumption.

Both Baeten (2011) and Peck (2010) underline the creation of specific kinds of neoliberal 'subjects' in cities today. Jensen & Richardson (2007), in a slightly different context, have discussed this issue in greater detail, investigating the "imagined mobile subjects" (Jensen & Richardson, 2007, p.137) created in a project around a trans-national corridor. This study adds a more detailed perspective to the general idea of the creative, entrepreneurial subject in the neoliberal city, in that it highlights the specific role of planning and policy-making in creating 'imagined' subjects, and in turn how these subjects are used "to make thinkable, and normal, proposed interventions such as new high-speed transport or communication infrastructures" (Jensen & Richardson, 2007, p.140). Therefore particular subjectivities, such as those Baeten (2011) and Peck (2010) are critical of, have consequences for what is normalised in planning and policy-making, that is, "when particular subjects are imagined in particular ways, this will play a more or less visible part in the formation of policies and plans" (Jensen & Richardson, 2007, p.140).

In this paper I will bring together these seemingly disparate areas of literature. Through examples from Vejle Municipality, I will show how systems of ranking and particular subjectivities are created within planning and policy-making. This contributes to the institutionalisation of competitiveness, and a lack of reflection from local government actors, as these mechanisms then make not just possible, but logical and necessary, certain types of urban development which are reflected in the materialities of the city.

### The Case of Vejle Municipality, Denmark

Vejle Municipality is located in the east of the Jutland peninsula, west of Copenhagen and south of Aarhus, Denmark's second city. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the city developed a number of industries, including textiles, metals, timber, paper and foodstuffs, also related to its harbour on Vejle Fjord. The majority of these industries have declined since the 1970s, and in recent years new industries, such as IT, service businesses and administration, including the headquarters of Region Southern Denmark, have taken their place (Becker-Christensen *et al*, 1996). Since a nationwide municipal reform in 2007 which increased the size and administrative duties of Danish municipalities, Vejle Municipality has been composed of the city of Vejle itself, and a number of smaller towns, villages and rural areas. Today the municipality has around 107000 inhabitants, with the city of Vejle itself having around 51000 people (Danmarks Statistik, 2012). There has long been an interest in urban development in Vejle Municipality, as seen for example in the creation of an architecture policy and annual architecture prize in the 1970s, and the

implementation of a permanent pedestrian area in the city centre in the 1980s (Brønfeld *et al*, 1998). In this article, the examples of some contemporary planning and policy-making practices in Vejle Municipality are intended to illustrate the local face of a 'competitiveness compulsion'. The practices are not viewed as unusual, at least in the Danish context today, and in that way Vejle serves mainly as a real-life example of a more widespread tendency for local governments to play a role in creating a competitiveness compulsion. The evidence used in this paper is taken from a wider case study of planning, policy-making and the competitiveness discourse in Vejle Municipality. This paper specifically draws on a number of interviews with civil servants and politicians, as well as a document study of municipal publications. Further more comprehensive research into these mechanisms is expected.

### Best Practices and Rankings

Within Vejle, as in many cities large and small, there are various local practices which feed into the global trend for 'best practices', ranking and benchmarking. Local government officials and politicians in Vejle take regular 'study tours' to other cities and to see particular projects, both within Europe and further afield. The 'Technical Committee' in Vejle Municipality is the political committee most directly engaged with planning and architecture, and they usually take an annual tour to a larger European City. In recent years, these cities have included Barcelona and Valencia (2008), Oslo (2009) and Milan (2010). These tours are viewed as important in providing inspiration for developments in Vejle, and it is stated by a civil servant in the municipality that they have an important function in terms of showing politicians the possibilities there are in urban development. These tours are however not just about looking outward, or tapping into best practice in well-known cities, they are also about bringing projects and ideas back to Vejle. A politician on the Technical Committee refers to these tours as inspiring, but that there is also a need for Vejle itself to create such inspiring projects - "one has to get out and see what others have done to get some ideas to take further oneself" (interview, politician, 2010). This underlines the way in which the city is seen as a place which can potentially participate in these practices proactively, rather than simply being a 'receiver' of best practice or big city ideas. This is more generally evident in the focus throughout the municipality on Vejle being 'known', both in Denmark and further afield, for its projects and practices.

More explicit measurements of city 'success' are also of interest with regard to Vejle. There is a great attention to various rankings with the municipality, although this is rather diffuse, with a variety of different indicators seen as important, from national to regional, and in terms of many different sectors, including retail, tourism, and quality of life. Yet as with the idea of being 'known' in terms of urban development, there is also a locally-created expression of the mechanism of benchmarking, illustrating how competitiveness is institutionalised within Vejle, rather than simply being monitored as something occurring 'outside' the city. The 'Growth Barometer' (*Vækstbarometer*) is a short quarterly report which compares Vejle to other cities in the local region in terms of a small number of indicators. These reports, collated in this form since February 2007, bring together data (mostly from Statistics Denmark) in the following areas: population; the local tax base; house prices; building projects; harbour

development; workplaces; business development; unemployment; new firms created; and hotel stays (Vækstbarometer, 2012). The initial reports loosely compared Vejle with nearby cities of Kolding, Fredericia and Horsens, whereas since 2008, a comparison with Aarhus has also been included (Vækstbarometer, 2008). These reports are also quite explicit in their presentation of tables comparing the performance of the five places in terms of the different indicators. Vejle Municipality is here defining certain ways in which it can measure itself through this local interpretation of a worldwide fetish for 'benchmarking', thereby contributing to their own apparent need to compete.

### Imagined Future Residents

The other aspect of the 'compulsion' to compete which I introduced in the beginning of this article was the creation of particular subjectivities, which could then serve as legitimating factors for certain policies and plans. Within Vejle, a focus on 'creative', 'innovative' and often young people is evident in policies and plans from across the municipality. This is particularly in terms of their status as desirable 'future residents', people that need to be attracted to live and work in Vejle. As one interviewee states, this 'attraction' of new residents and businesses is quite important, being "something we very much focus on in Vejle, that is to be attractive, we focus basically on the more people we can get to live and invest here, put money into Vejle" (interview, civil servant, 2009). Yet at this overall level, the aim remains fairly unspecific, and the question of exactly what groups they are trying to attract in Vejle is an interesting one.

It is here that the 'creative class' is quite evident, for example in a publication from the Business Development section of the municipality, this group is referred to as "the ultimate resource for economic growth", and their presence should apparently create "great demand for culture and consumer opportunities and contributes to a series of positive effects in the local area - increase retailing, more restaurant visits and higher property prices" (Vejle Erhvervsudvikling, 2008, p.23). The general interest in Florida's thesis is also more widely evident in Vejle Municipality, including the fact that he himself was invited to speak in the municipality in 2006. This also resonates with a slightly more general focus on well-educated young people as a key group to attract to the municipality. This is mainly in terms of encouraging young people to 'return' after they have completed a higher education elsewhere, as there are limited opportunities for this in Vejle Municipality itself. For two of the interviewees engaged with the field of culture, this is where they conceptualise a focus on youth culture as important, in that giving children and young people a good experience in Vejle Municipality early in their lives would hopefully draw them back later (interview, politician, 2010; interview, civil servant, 2010). Again in a publication from the business development section of the municipality, there is a view that there is already a positive development in the city with regard to this group: "partly because businesses to a greater extent have attracted highly educated people, and partly because a focused effort has made Vejle Municipality especially an attractive place for highly-educated people to live and work" (Vejle Erhvervsudvikling, 2009, p.12).

Specific projects within the municipality are also framed in terms of these subjects, illustrating the connection between these desired future citizens and the materialities of the city. The redevelopment of an old Spinning Mill in the city centre to a mixture of office space for small businesses, space for sports clubs and culture, a museum, a cafe, and other facilities, is one such project, catering to both the work and leisure of the entrepreneurial and innovative creative people whom the municipality would like to attract. A civil servant working with this project states that the general focus on creativity and projects such as this one in particular would hopefully mean that “the business community will be able to attract some knowledge workers, who would not have chosen Vejle, because there was not an environment they could be a part of” (interview, civil servant, 2009). This illustrates the connection which is made in planning and policy-making between the desirable future residents and the types of projects which are then implemented in the city. A certain kind of ideal future citizen is imagined who is out there, waiting to be ‘attracted’, and it is then logical and necessary to create a certain type of city which is attractive to these citizens.

### The Competitiveness Compulsion in Vejle

The short examples in this paper show the way in which a competitiveness compulsion can be created within a single small city. Although the practices which I have presented here are by no means unfamiliar from other cities, they also show something of the workings of competitiveness within a city. Rather than ‘submitting’ to overwhelming outside forces, in the form of powerful regulations, actors or the like, Vejle Municipality has been actively creating these forces within the city as well. Study tours are an important annual event, but they serve also as inspiration to how Vejle itself can become such a ‘model’ and create their own ‘best practices’ by which they will be known. Benchmarking and externally produced indicators are of interest, yet the municipality also creates their own indicators, willingly measuring their ‘performance’ against their neighbours and thereby subjecting themselves to their own form of competitiveness treadmill. Imagined future residents are created, in the somewhat predictable form of creative, entrepreneurial, well-educated and mainly young people, and the creation of these imagined future residents leads to an imperative for planning and implementing projects and forming the kind of city which they are expected to want.

Therefore the small city in particular should not be dismissed as a powerless actor in a competitiveness game which is occurring in at the international and national levels, or even in just larger cities. As the Vejle example shows, the local government and actors in a small city can form their own mechanisms which then promote local competitiveness.

In Vejle Municipality, I have looked at two ways in which a compulsion to compete is created within the municipality. Firstly there is the compulsion related to disciplinary mechanisms such as ‘benchmarking’, where the price of property, the tax base of the residents, and other elements are prioritised as ways of ‘measuring’ the municipality’s success. Secondly there is a compulsion related to the creation of a particular type of ‘future citizen’ whom policies and plans are directed towards. These two elements of compelling the municipality to compete contribute to a process of the local government creating its own self-reinforcing ‘compulsion to compete’, in terms of the disciplinary practices they place upon themselves and the

subjects they create to serve in their policies and plans. These practices are highly institutionalised in the municipality, which is particularly evident in terms of the lack of reflection there is on these practices. It is generally seen by actors in the local government as a 'natural' priority to work in this way, and this is part of the self-reinforcing power of the mechanisms I have discussed in this paper. In this case, local government in a relatively small city is by no means a powerless actor in the face of a monolithic 'competitiveness' discourse, being imposed through external mechanisms. They are complicit in creating a compulsion to compete in their own city.

In the examples used, there is evidence of the "disciplinary tool" (Sum, 2009, p.193) of comparing various indicators between cities, as well as a focus on 'best places' (McCann, 2004). Although, as Robinson (2011) has highlighted, the examples also show the importance of not ignoring local agency when investigating such mechanisms. This is what the Vejle example shows most clearly - that although these practices are not unique or created in a vacuum, they are practices which are occurring within Vejle Municipality, showing the power of the local actors in contributing to creating their own "treadmill of competitiveness" (Sum, 2009, p.194).

The local creation of neoliberal subjectivities (Baeten, 2011; Peck, 2010) is also apparent, in terms of the creative, entrepreneurial and young imagined future citizens. As Baeten (2011) indicates, this mode of neoliberal and competitiveness-oriented governance more generally creates an ideal citizen who should be attracted to a city, where they unleash their entrepreneurial potentials and enjoy the consumption-oriented lifestyle expected of them. Following Jensen & Richardson (2007), this creates a logic whereby plans and policies are made "thinkable, and normal" (Jensen & Richardson, 2007, p.141) in terms of the necessity to attract these imagined future citizens. Together, the use of comparative indicators and the imagined future citizens contribute to a self-reinforcing 'necessity' to compete in Vejle. The two examples are also intertwined, in that a focus on particular indicators such as house prices and the new businesses in Vejle are supported by the imagined future citizens whom the municipality would like to attract.

The case of Vejle Municipality shows that local agency can play a role in creating a compulsion to compete for a city, rather than this being something which comes exclusively from external trends and forces. This is particularly interesting in terms of the small size and relative anonymity of Vejle, a type of place which might be assumed to lack this kind of local power. Yet it also shows the problematic nature of this situation, as the self-reinforcing and circular nature of the disciplinary mechanisms and the creation of particular subjectivities does not inspire reflection on these processes, rather they are institutionalised within the municipality. For local actors, their part in creating this compulsion is rather opaque, and the institutionalisation of these practices means that planning and policy-making in this way is viewed as a natural and logical course. Further work on the competitiveness compulsion at the local scale, in terms of more comprehensive study of the internal mechanisms which are at work, as well as greater focus on smaller cities, is necessary.

## References

Baeten, G., 2011. Neoliberal Planning: Does It Really Exist? In: Tazan-Kok, T. and Baeten, G. eds. *Contradictions of Neoliberal Planning: Cities, Policies, and Politics*. New York: Springer, pp. 205-211.

Becker-Christensen, H., Hellum, A., Jansen, C.R., Munk, B.E. and Poulsen, P.P., 1996. *Vejles Historie 3: Vejles Industri 1732-1996*. Vejle: Vejle Kommune.

Brenner, N. and Theodore, N., 2002. Cities and Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism'. In: Brenner, N. and Theodore, N., eds. *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 2-32.

Bristow, G., 2010. *Critical Reflections on Regional Competitiveness: Theory, policy, practice*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Brønfeld, P., Hellum, A., Jensen, P.U., Munk, B.E., Poulsen, P.P. And Topholm, J., 1998. *Vejles Historie 2: Moderne Tider 1786-1970*. Vejle: Vejle Kommune.

Harvey, D., 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: OUP.

Harvey, D., 1989. From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The transformation in urban governance in late capitalism. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 71(1), pp. 3-17.

Jensen, A. and Richardson, T., 2007. New Region, New Story: Imagining Mobile Subjects in Transnational Space. *Space and Polity*, 11(2), pp. 137-150.

Larner, W., 2003. Neoliberalism? *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 21, pp. 509-512.

McCann, E., 2004. 'Best Places': Interurban Competition, Quality of Life and Popular Media Discourse. *Urban Studies*, 41(10), pp. 1909-1929.

Peck, J., 2010. *Constructions of Neoliberal Reason*. Oxford: OUP.

Peck, J., 2004. Geography and public policy: constructions of neoliberalism. *Progress in Human Geography*, 28(3), pp. 392-405.

Peck, J. and Tickell, A., 2002. Neoliberalizing Space. In: Brenner, N. and Theodore, N., eds. *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 33-57.

Robinson, J., 2011. The Spaces of Circulating Knowledge: City Strategies and Global Urban Governmentality. In: McCann, E. and Ward, K. eds. *Mobile Urbanism: Cities and Policymaking in a Global Age*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 15-40.

Sum, N-L., 2009. The production of hegemonic policy discourses: 'competitiveness' as a knowledge brand and its (re-)contextualizations. *Critical Policy Studies*, 3(2), pp. 184-203.

Tasan-Kok, T., 2011. Introduction: Contradictions of Neoliberal Urban Planning. In: Tasan-Kok, T. and Baeten, G. eds. *Contradictions of Neoliberal Planning: Cities, Policies, and Politics*. New York: Springer, pp. 1-19.

Vejle Erhvervsudvikling, 2008. *Detail i Vejle - vi vil fremtiden*. Vejle: Vejle Kommune.

Vejle Erhvervsudvikling, 2009. *Erhvervspolitisk Vision for Vejle Kommune*. Vejle: Vejle Kommune.

Danmarks Statistik, 2012. BEF44: Folketal pr 1 januar fordelt på byer. [online] Available at: <Statistikbanken.dk> [Accessed 11 April 2012].

Vækstbarometer, 2008. *Vækstbarometer, Befolkning, erhverv og arbejdsmarked, Maj 2012: Ti indikatorer på udvikling i Vejle, nabokommunerne og Aarhus*. Vejle: Vejle Kommune.

Vækstbarometer, 2012. *Vækstbarometer, Januar 2012: Ti indikatorer på udvikling i Vejle, nabokommunerne og Aarhus*. Vejle: Vejle Kommune.