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Partnerships Contributing to Sustainable Urban Tourism

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Partnerships Contributing to Sustainable Urban Tourism

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Abstract

In the last 20 years ‘public-private partnership’ has become a catchword and was presented as a remedy against sub-efficient policy co-ordination. The core question of the proposed paper refers to the key factors determining forms of partnership collaboration in the field of sustainable urban tourism.

In the first section of the paper we trace back the advent of the discussion on governance and new forms of collaboration between the public and the private sector and embed the discourse into a wider politico-economic development context. By presenting a detailed literature review on political-economic research in urban studies we illuminate the academic contribution to the debate on governance. In the following section different types of partnership collaboration in the field of sustainable urban tourism, based on empirical evidence explored by the ‘SUT-Governance’ EU research project, are developed. The paper is concluded by some final remarks on the opportunities and drawbacks of the governance-boom and its consequences.

1. Introduction

This paper is based on the Deliverable n° 4 (Gindl, Paskaleva-Shapira, Stuppäck, Schubert, Wukovitsch, 2002) of the SUT-Governance project¹ funded by the European Commission under the Fifth Framework Programme. The project was conducted between May 2000 to June 2003. Further information can be found on the project homepage at <http://sut.itas.fzk.de/>.

In the project it is strongly argued for partnerships as innovative form and instrument of local governance. Therefore the project presents an effort to work with public-private partnerships and urban governments in Europe to develop, validate, and deploy a 'general framework for urban sustainable tourism partnerships' that is applicable in a variety of urban municipal and development contexts. The overall goal of the project is to elaborate and promote innovative forms and instruments of local governance to improve urban tourism development involving the principles of sustainability and participatory decision-making.

A wealth of literature (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2000) focuses on partnership cooperation. In the last 20 years 'public-private partnership' has become a catchword and was presented as a remedy against sub-efficient policy coordination. (Lowndes, Skelcher 1998). In this line, the main goal of this paper is to enhance the understanding of the complexity characterising the forms of cooperations in the area of sustainable urban tourism and to contribute to the classification and definition of, as will be shown, still vaguely defined concept. The core question of the proposed paper refers to the key factors determining forms of partnership collaboration in the field of sustainable urban tourism.

In the first section of the paper we trace back the advent of the discussion on governance and new forms of collaboration between the public and the private sector and embed the discourse into a wider politico-economic development context. By presenting a detailed literature review on politico-economic research in urban studies we illuminate the academic contribution to the debate on governance. In the following section differ-

¹ 'Sustainable Urban Tourism. Involving Local Agents and Partnerships for New Forms of Governance' (SUT-Governance). Research project of Key Action 4: 'City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage' of the 'Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development' Program within the 'Fifth Framework Program' of the European Union. The project extends from May 2000-June 2003. Further information can be found on the homepage of the project: <http://sut.itas.fzk.de/>.

ent types of partnership collaboration in the field of sustainable urban tourism, based on empirical evidence, are developed. The paper is concluded by some final remarks on the opportunities and drawbacks of the governance-boom and its consequences.

The document has been drafted by Michaela Gindl and Florian Wukovitsch from the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, Austria. The valuable considerations and critical comments of the entire SUT-Governance project team (see partners description at the project homepage) are specifically acknowledged and taken into account in all respects in this document. We are grateful for comments and critical requests. Any requests regarding the paper may be directed to Michaela Gindl, michaela.gindl@wu-wien.ac.at or Florian Wukovitsch, florian.wukovitsch@wu-wien.ac.at.

2. Literature Review

For more than a decade a vast literature on the process of politico-economic restructuring, i.e. a shift of sectoral contributions to macro-economic output and global division of production due to factors as the remarkable increase in productivity, liberalized markets for goods, services and capital as well as the rise of the ‘information age’ has developed. On the side of political sciences and economic geography many scholars have engaged in analyzing the impact of the transformation of the international economic regime on politics. They dealt with questions of the decay of the Fordist welfare state in industrialized countries, rescaling state authorities and the search to get hold of volatile economic processes via innovative vertical as well as horizontal collaborations of actors from several territorial levels and sectors of the economy. Therefore, concepts contributing to the understanding of political and social transformation that has been going on in societies world-wide boomed in the academic debate. Among the most inspiring terms are the ‘hollowing out of the nation state’ with its counterpart of ‘glocalisation’ (indicating the lost power of the nation state as opposed to increasing regulation effort on supra-/international and local level to find ‘post-national’ solutions) and processes of cultural, economic and political ‘globalisation’. (Altvater 1993, Amin 1992, Castells 1998, Friedman 1986, Lipietz 1992, Swyngedouw 1992) Jessop (2002) developed the

concepts of the 'Schumpeterian workfare postnational regime', following the 'Keynesian welfare national state'.

In the field of urban studies a lot of research has been done on the analysis of the impacts of globalization on social dynamics, economic restructuring and new formulation of politics in cities, the hypothesis being that in the new global economic regime cities take a crucial role as centers of innovation and concentrated global power but also as focal points of the new global challenges in terms of increasing social polarization and environmental problems. On a macro perspective, 'global city research' and issues of 'competitive cities' can be found on the agenda. (Brotchie 1995, Sassen 1991, 1994, 2001, Taylor 1995) On the micro level, much effort has been channeled to 'post-Fordist city politics' (Mayer 1995), important questions being how economic prosperity, social equity and sustained ecological balance could be promoted on a local basis. Research has been particularly focused on institutional efficacy, power-struggles, democracy and the new shared responsibility between public and private actors. (Borja and Castells 1997, Eischenschitz and Gough 1998, Ekins and Newby 1998, Hall 1995)

The new catchword to deal with the rupture of government's sovereignty and transformation of policy making and implementation on local, national, supranational and international scale has been referred to as 'governance'. Originally deriving from the field of development and foreign-aid politics, particularly after the breakdown of actually existing socialism the term 'good governance' rapidly turned into a key concept in several policy fields of inter- and supranational institutions (Fürst 2001, Raffer and Singer 2001). But also in urban development an obvious transformation from physical planning to new forms of flexible regulation could be observed, the idea being that pre-set objectives of the functionalist approach to urban planning have lacked adequate problem-solutions in times of growing unemployment and urban segregation. Enhanced awareness for processes of social polarization, environmental problems as well the need to compete with locations around the world for the 'global dollar' called for new institutional settings to deal with these issues. (Andersen, van Kempen 2003, Mayer 1995) Jessop (2002) illustrates the last point, stating that

a shift [...] occurs from government to market forces and partnership-based forms of governance, reflecting the neoliberal belief in the probability, if not inevitability, of

state failure and/or the need to involve relevant stakeholders in supply-side policies.
(Jessop 2002: 454)

From this perspective, our research framework and findings are strongly embedded in the context of global dominance of neoliberal thought in economics and economic policy. The search for new forms for organizing economic activity and the respective construction of a 'new world order' reveals the general desire for a new phase of economic stability and growth. (Luke 1994 in Jessop 2002: 467) Environmental policy is a field of politics where the strain of neoliberal thought has significantly gained importance during the 1990s. Particularly with the resolution of the 'Agenda 21' on the 'Earth Summit' in Rio 1992 the promotion of new forms of regulation beyond government command and control has become a key issue.

Theys (2000) traces back the rise of 'governance' in the field of innovative environmental policy. He argues that in the field environmental policies the claim for 'governance' can be explained by three factors:

- Problems of externality, risk management and the use of local resources are, as a matter of fact, 'complex, conflictual and controversial', for which reason the involvement of actors from multiple levels and territories is required.
- The environment is a 'vehicle for democratic values-decentralization' and thus for enhanced participation of the civil society.
- New forms of governance have helped environmental policies to overcome their legitimacy deficit. (Theys 2000: 3)

For all the suggestions given so far, the advent of governance in the academic debate on urban issues in western countries must be analyzed together with urban policy frameworks of (for our case particularly European) supranational organizations. Consequently, issues of 'innovative forms of governing and governance', comprising citizen participation, NGO involvement and co-operation between administrations and business organizations are part of the key concepts of development policies as well as a major topic in the promotion of knowledge generation and transfer by respective research policies. (e.g. ICLEI 1994, European Commission 1999, 'Key Action' 'City of tomorrow' within the 'Fifth Framework Programme' of the EU)

As we have already indicated above, the growth of 'governance' into a major issue of analysis in social and political science in recent years produced an overwhelming stock of literature and somehow a 'Babylonian confusion of tongues', veiling an exact definition of the concept. 'Good governance' as advocated by the Worldbank aims at the reduction of corruption and empowerment of local communities in development countries and is thus mainly targeted on government policies, while 'corporate governance' that deals with the steering of large corporations connotes the other extreme of being an exclusive business concept. Therefore, as Theys (2000) admits for the political arena of environmental issues, the debate on 'governance' is generally locked into two contradictory discourses. For some, 'good governance' is the only solution to current environmental problems and its vocation is to replace traditional public policies that are considered inadequate. For others, in contrast, 'governance' is the problem [...] as it does no more than reinforce collective powerlessness in front of challenges which are increasingly ungovernable'. (Theys 2000: 4) But the concept of 'governance' has also been challenged from a theoretical perspective. Fürst (2001) elaborates on the differences between the concepts of 'Regional Governance', the French 'Milieu'-approach and 'Regulation-school', and the US-founded 'regime-concept'. As all those concepts deal with the topic of regional co-operations to foster economic development they self-evidently overlap in one way or another. Nonetheless, each individual concept has its strength in highlighting special aspects of the topic, e.g. 'Regulation school' in structural analysis of capitalist development as opposed to 'governance' that is strongly focusing on interaction.

However, although or even because there are major conceptual difficulties with the concept of governance, empirical data to confirm or modify existing findings and to understand in which concrete forms the reorganization of the state is organized are essential. Hitherto presented considerations gave insight into the larger context of partnership formation but lacked the provision of empirical evidence of models of co-operation in different settings of urban politics and culture. Therefore, before we can discuss our findings about governance models for innovations in urban tourism, the question arises whether there is or even can be one universally valid and applicable definition of 'urban governance'. To give an example from two relatively similar cultural settings, we refer to a comparative analysis of urban regeneration policies in the USA and the UK, dealing with the transferability of certain forms of partnerships from one country to the other.

Davies (2002) discusses the applicability of the US type 'regime government', also referred to as 'governance without government' or 'governance by network', in UK urban regeneration policies. Although during the 1980s there was a strong trend of directly importing US regeneration policies to the UK, his perspective on the transferability of the concept to UK cases is rather sceptical. According to Davies' analysis, UK type regeneration partnerships 'are a distinctive mode of governance which fit neither the old model of governance by government, nor the new model of governance by network'. (Davies 2002: 302) While in the ideal-typical case of US type 'regime governance', voluntary networks between local authority and business elites aim at achieving otherwise unattainable goals under a high degree of autonomy and thus form a highly hegemonic project influencing a whole borough, town or city, co-operation in the UK is as well characterized by hierarchical relationships between local actors and/or between extra-local and local actors and externally (i.e. not locally) determined objectives. Moreover, in many cases interaction between the business and public sector remains to be primarily short-term, instrumental and determined by law and to have no influence on the mechanisms of local policy making at all. (Davies 2002: 306) And finally, contrasting to what the model of 'regime governance' would suggest, instead of increasing autonomy for local institutions, recent transitions of urban regeneration policies in the UK even resulted in growing political centralization.

Those findings are in line with Schneidewind's (1997) application of the concept of 'Public Private Partnerships' for innovative environmental governance. Schneidewind starts with the reflection that 'Public Private Partnerships' once connoted a form of collaboration between public and private partners in the field of huge infrastructure projects for which in times of deregulation and zero-deficit policies the public sector was financially too weak to provide resources exclusively on its own. He claims that this approach has to be contrasted with the concept of environmental governance, where the term always stood for a much wider concept, including round tables and mediation processes with governments, companies and NGOs as well national and international trade or sectoral agreements. Therefore, although Schneidewind's paper focuses on the concept of 'Public Private Partnerships' instead of 'governance', he suggests that a universal model of 'partnership' and thus a clear demarcation line between 'governance' and 'partnership' cannot be identified.

But if empirical models of governance resemble a large variety of concrete forms of public-private collaboration while at the same time narrow ideal-typical concepts in the literature lack empirical relevance, the only thing one can do is synthesizing the disperse observations and create a highly generalized model of governance, covering all aspects of individual observations. A prominent attempt to clarify the meaning of the concept in this way is made by Jan Kooiman (2000). He defines governance as

all those interactive arrangements in which public as well as private actors participate aimed at solving societal problems, or creating societal opportunities, attending to the institutions within which these governance activities take place, and the stimulation of normative debates on the principles underlying all governance activities. (Kooiman 2000)

Although those generalized definitions are most useful for the academic debate, we still (or even more) it seems relevant to ask for the differences (see also Davies 2002, Fürst 2001). We strongly believe (and research results of our project justify our assumption) that there is a variety of patterns of public-private collaboration, depending on culture, the stage of capitalism and last but not least the sector tackled by intervention. For this reason, in the second part of the paper we shed on aspects of governance in the field of innovative problem-solutions for urban tourism.

3. Empirical Research on Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism

Tourism figures among the industries with major growth in Europe and, as Law (1993:1) argued, 'large cities are arguably the most important type of tourism destinations'. This development involves complex decision making problems for the key stakeholders, among them city officials, planners, (tourism) industry and the public. Involving sustainability considerations and long-term community advancement poses serious challenges for policy makers and tourism developers for tourist functions are very rarely produced for, or consumed by, tourists but a whole range of users (Shaw, Williams 1994: 201).

This research assumes that multi-stakeholder cooperations can be useful means in dealing with the issues raised above. Yet, as aforementioned, a weak point in recent theories is the provision of empirical evidence of models of co-operation in different settings of urban politics and culture. Moreover a cogent basis is lacking in existing theory to treat questions of stakeholder participation in a partnership framework as an operational mechanism in the pursuit of sustainable urban tourism. Therefore an inductive, exploratory approach was chosen to contribute to the understanding of new forms of governance in the field of innovative problem-solutions for urban tourism.

This chapter illustrates the above literature review with results of empirical research on interactive arrangements in which public as well as private actors participate aimed at solving societal problems, or creating societal opportunities, i.e. partnerships for sustainable urban tourism (SUT-partnerships).

3.1. Core Hypotheses

The core hypothesis of this paper maintains that governance models such as of public-private collaboration strongly depend on the national and sectoral context in which they are established. It is assumed that basic characteristics of public-private partnerships for sustainable urban tourism differ in the four study countries of the SUT-Governance research project (Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, and Germany) and that similarities are only to be found at an abstract level of generalisation.

Consequently, the complexity of actual characteristics of SUT-partnerships requires in depth analysis.

Beforehand, it should be mentioned that *partnership*, in the context of the present research, is defined as a process of sustained collaboration, in which distinct organisations come together to define, to resource and to achieve a shared vision.

Talking about *SUT-partnerships* in detail, they are understood as characterised by

- (a) favourable framework conditions, involving
- (b) a viable partnership process and
- (c) a successfully implemented activity, resulting in
- (d) diverse sustainable development benefits.

The interest of this paper is in understanding the nature of partnerships. This entails that the analysis of the process of collaborating as a partnership becomes decisively important. Yet, differences in collaborative capability between organisations can be a crucial barrier in establishing a partnership. Moreover, lacking legitimisation of partners within their organisations of origin can seriously constrain the collaboration in terms of maintaining the partnership process, involving arrangements and procedures durable over time. Here it is hypothesised that those risks can be overcome if the approach used for building up a partnership is opportune in developing a strategic framework jointly between the partnership actors and/or organisations.

3.2. Searching for SUT-Partnership Cases to Study

During autumn of 2001, each of the four national research teams of the SUT-Governance consortium (Austria, Bulgaria, Germany and Greece) conducted and analysed two detailed partnership case studies representing successful examples of multi-stakeholder cooperations in sustainable urban tourism (SUT-partnerships). The partnership cases (eight in total) were selected from the cities of Graz (Austria), Veliko Turnovo (Bulgaria), Heidelberg (Germany) and Thessaloniki (Greece).²

Which cases have been selected and how?

At the beginning, the process of searching for study cases focused on partnerships between public and private actors (SUT-PPPs), the initial hypothesis being that those partnerships are mostly initiated by local/urban administrations seeking collaborative opportunities with other stakeholders, the private sector in particular, to promote urban tourism. Yet, finding eight (comparable) international individual cases of collaborative pursuits towards sustainable tourism in urban environments in four European countries posed some unexpected problems:

- Interactive partnership cooperations have been identified on various spatial levels in the study countries.

² *Austrian cases* (from the City of Graz): 'Strategy Forum Tourism', 'OeKOPROFIT for Tourist Companies'. *Bulgarian cases* (from the City of Veliko Turnovo): 'Beautiful Veliko Turnovo', 'Council of Tourism'. *German cases* (from the City of Heidelberg): 'Healthy Food in Heidelberg's Restaurants', 'Heidelberg City Card'. *Greek cases* (from the City of Thessaloniki): 'Pilot Project for the Renewal and Development of the Historical and Commercial Centre of Thessaloniki', 'Inter-Municipal Co-operation: Linking Places of Natural Beauty'. For detailed partnership description, visit <http://sut.itas.fzk.de/>.

- Potential study cases represented a wide spectrum of how the sectors are combined into a partnership arrangement ranging from forms where the public sector dominates the collaboration to cooperations between public institutions or between private organisations only.
- Moreover, the multifaceted nature of ‘partnership-content’ in regard to sustainable urban tourism turned out to be largely heterogeneous (e.g. tourism related traffic management; environmental management; tourist information; tourism network development; product promotion; activity and service development; preservation of historical and cultural heritage; enhancement of residents’ life quality; controlling urban development; improvement of urban space; representing tourists’ and tourism industries’ interests towards the local governments).
- Partnership actors were motivated to enter a collaboration for sustainable tourism for a variety of reasons (e.g. enhance tourism development to overcome existing economic problems), partnerships were also formed in reaction to specific pressures and demands of local development (e.g. the need of developing effective tourism practices, preservation of the cultural and historic heritage, etc.).

While the initial focus of the SUT-Governance project was to develop, analyze and validate a generally valid model of public-private-partnerships for sustainable urban tourism (SUT-PPPs), the research consortium soon confronted the problem that narrowly defined PPPs were not represented in all case study locations. Therefore it was decided to widen the definition of partnership and to modify the initial hypothesis: For we have learned that SUT-partnership arrangements can range from (as initially searched but hard to find) ideal-typical PPP-forms to cooperations between public institutions or between private organisations only, the actual analysis focussed on multi-stakeholder partnerships in the field of sustainable tourism, reflecting the constitutive importance of the partners’ motivations instead of the sectoral affiliation.

Nonetheless, to be able to derive results that transcend the particularities of each case, to be comparable and to provide an avenue for generalisations beyond the immediate (Gomm, et. Al. 2000), the domain, i.e. the object of study, for which the case studies were aimed to derive general results, needed to be articulated. (Hamel 1993: 44) The common interest of the research was to elaborate and promote innovative forms and instruments of local governance to improve urban tourism development involving the

principles of sustainability and participatory decision-making. For this purpose, the object of the best practice study cases discussed here is the partnership activity and the process of cooperation with its impacts on urban sustainability.

In order to be able to select the ideal cases to grasp this object of study, choice criteria had to be defined: the cases are (1) successful multi-stakeholder cooperations, (2) dealing with tourism, resulting in (3) positive impacts on urban sustainability, and last but not least showing (4) high readiness to co-operate with the research teams.

The selected cases satisfy those requirements particularly well in practice, as they are multi-stakeholder cooperation in the field of urban tourism with identifiable outcomes for sustainable urban development (the selected cases had to, whether intentionally or not, contribute to at least one dimension of sustainability³ and to cause no change to the worse in the two others).

3.3. Proposed Typology of SUT-Partnerships

Innovative problem-solution for urban tourism affairs is the key impetus for SUT-partnership establishment. More precisely, a 'local shortcoming' in tourism-development (e.g. stagnant tourism development, weaknesses in marketing, lacking attractiveness of the destination, etc.) is identified by touristic and tourism-related actors and in addition some of those driving actors are (explicitly or implicitly) aware of the obligation to pay regard to the principles of sustainable development. This is the common element of all SUT-partnerships investigated; beyond that a large variety of forms and contents was observed.

It was the explicit aim of the research to develop a common model of SUT-partnerships and their success and by doing this to enrich the scope of the typology of partnership collaboration. Although the case studies made general features of multi-stakeholder partnerships apparent, it turned out to be equally important, as Davies suggests, for comparative local studies to place sufficient emphasis on difference. "The fashion for highlighting processes of convergence, which the governance thesis implicitly encourages, could obscure important processes of divergence." (Davies 2002: 318)

Different problems evoke – depending on the local shortcomings and the state structure – different forms and types of partnership cooperation: In Bulgaria, for instance, the investigated partnerships could have not been established without external (international) financial support. In Greece, experience with public-private co-operation and residents' involvement in local decision-making has been limited and only recently becoming of increasing interest. Partnerships among public actors are, however, quite common. Moreover, the domination of the public sector and the wide scope of governmental intervention generally hinders public-private co-operations. In these conditions public-public partnerships are results of European policies, providing opportunities for additional financial support. Only in Austria and Germany or at least in the municipalities of Graz and Heidelberg, citizen involvement and public-private collaboration has been working well for years. In these communities, the public actors have realised that the efficiency of certain public initiatives would be increased, if public and private actors worked on a shared agenda.

Summarising, the modes of partnership formation significantly vary among the four countries analysed in this project. Many possible and reasonable ways of partnership categorisation were discussed during the case-analysis, reaching from a classification derived from country characteristics, sectoral particularities, the partnership roles or partnership content. Instead of developing a generally valid model of *public-private-partnerships* for sustainable urban tourism (SUT-PPPs), as initially intended, we have learned that the form of collaboration depends on the respective national and urban contexts. The formation of a local partnership initiative has to be traced back to various origins: In many cases, the public sector is the coordinator, sometimes the initiator, but not necessarily always the innovator who offers the decisive stimulus. In many cases external agents with scientific and/or development capacities provide the critical kick-off potentials. Local administrations usually provide the organisational frameworks for the partnerships, while other actors design and implement the activities.

Despite the divergences it holds true for the entire variety of partnership models identified that the specific form of partnership is defined in the early stage of first partner-contact and is based on the motivations for partnership formation and the supporting

³ Economic, Ecological and Social Dimension, see Brundtland-Report, 1987 and the International Conference of the United Nations in Rio de Janeiro, 1992.

conditions. Considering the above perspectives, the initially suggested classification according to the involved sectors and their roles was revised in favour of a partnership typology based on the actors' motivations and objectives for partnership formation resulting in a jointly developed strategic partnership framework.

3.3.1. Development Partnerships

One pattern of the analysed partnership cases was characterised by the public sector stimulating and supporting (mainly financially) the implementation of co-operative initiatives for sustainable development of urban tourism. The general idea in this model is to promote an (economic) win-win situation for the community and the participating private actors (mainly companies, enterprises). The public sector either aims the solution of long community problems (like unemployment) or to find new approaches and alternatives to typical public agendas, like environmental or townscape improvement. These are long-term development goals; but the duration of the partnership or, at least, the timeframe of public sector participation has a date of expiry from the start. In most cases, once the private partners 'adopted the desired behaviour' or the investment programmes are completed, the public sector withdraws from the partnership or becomes solely a subsidiser of the private initiatives. More precisely, the relations between public and the private actors can be characterized as 'Mentor/Financier/Principal' as opposed to 'Learner/ Beneficiary/Target-Group'.

Generally speaking, the public sector behaves as the principal player attempting to motivate the private sector to improve performance and adopt innovative practices by involving new know-how, establishing networks with other businesses or increasing the number of jobs via subsidized investments. That is to say, the public partner invests or co-finances the build-up of stocks, ranging from utilisation of know-how to improving infrastructures and buildings or recreational areas. Since the public sector typically lacks crucial know-how and skills for these tasks, in most cases in-between mediators are involved to facilitate partnership implementation,.

Summarising, *development partnerships* are based on the public sector's aim to stimulate and support the implementation of co-operative initiatives. The general idea is to promote an (economic) win-win situation for the community and the participating private actors (like environmental or townscape improvement), but the duration of the partnership or, at least, the timeframe of public sector participation is limited right from

the start. Once the private partners ‘adopted the desired behaviour’, the public sector withdraws completely or to the residual role of a financial contributor.

3.3.2. Marketing Partnerships

Like in the pattern described above, the organisations forming the partnerships remain distinct in this model, especially with regard to strategy making, but service delivery is combined and carried out by a jointly owned partnership agency. Hotel and restaurant owners, public events organisers, and local tourism development authorities join efforts to improve service delivery to tourists in their communities. Compared to the former category, the main differences here refer to the level of division of actors’ roles, in this case, the relationships between the public and the private partners are more equal (although the public partners usually bear a larger share of the costs) and the partnership activity is a continuous undertaking. The latter can be regarded as inherent to the nature of this partnership type’s objectives, (i.e. tourism marketing in the study cases) requiring a long-term co-operation using a common cooperative framework.

In contrast to ‘development partnerships’, ‘marketing partnerships’ usually adapt the content of the co-operation and, if one objective is completed, a new one is set up. Therefore, an on-going process of collaboration is necessary, enabling swift adjustments to changing environments. While ‘development partnerships’ achieve sustainability targets by sustained stock enhancement, the ‘marketing partnerships’ achieve sustainability goals by sustaining the partnership process itself and are aimed at long-term community benefits.

Summarising, *marketing partnerships* are founded in order to combine a service delivery which is carried out by a jointly owned partnership agency. The partnership activity is a continuous undertaking as the nature of the set objectives requires a long-term co-operation using a common cooperative framework. The content of the co-operation is frequently adapted and, if one objective is completed, a new one is set up. Therefore, an on-going process of collaboration is necessary, enabling swift adjustments to changing environments.

4. Partnerships as New Form of Governance? – A Critical Conclusion

Generally speaking, the case studies decisively support the assumption that multi-stakeholder partnerships can be effective means for pursuing sustainability targets in urban tourism development. The above drafted classification according to the ‘reasons and objectives for partnership establishment’ in seems most appropriate for the purpose of providing a better understanding the diverse investigated forms of partnership cooperations in the area of sustainable urban tourism.

The conclusions on this paper focus on opportunities and drawbacks of partnership cooperations as new form of local governance. To make a pointed remark, basic impetus to form a partnership (independent of the motivation and objectives determining the type of cooperation) is that the actors are willing to get involved in a partnership because they think they will thereby maximise their benefits individually as well as collectively. Normally, participation in such networks is based on mutual interest, exchange of resources, and commitment, although the relations between the participants do not have to be balanced. (Andersen and van Kempen 2003: 80) Or as Jessop puts it: Partnerships as new form of local governance can be exploited as a “flanking, compensatory mechanism for the inadequacies of market mechanism”. (Jessop 2002: 454f) This involves a range of merits and advantages of partnerships for public policy, community gains and the enhancement of collaborative practices themselves (e.g. enhancement of resource availability, increasing effectiveness and efficiency of individual organizations, integrating sectors, substituting a lack of formal institutional structures, confidence and trust among partners and other stakeholders).

Despite their merits, partnerships also present multiple problems and, as Andersen and van Kempen argues, clear disadvantages, mostly in terms of issues of social exclusion (Andersen and van Kempen 2003: 81):

- Firstly, many partnerships are not accessible to everybody or even completely closed. Only those who can add resources, including political power and/or legitimacy, will normally be let in.

- Secondly, in terms of internal risks, goals may conflict between partners in partnerships. Such contradictions can cause severe difficulties for the partnerships themselves and even more for the project in their hands.
- Thirdly, partnerships as a new form of local governance are only suitable for specific projects or policy fields, not for a holistic view or policy for partnership frameworks easily effect that people are focused on or interested in their own area but ignore effects on other areas.
- Finally, it might be difficult to find a good balance between (new) partnerships (generally aimed at specific tasks and/or areas) and existing governmental bodies like local governments. Even if there is agreement on the existence of a partnership, contradictions and conflicts about responsibility, carrying out the tasks, evaluation etc. might still emerge.

Concluding, having all those drawbacks and open questions in mind, the following venues of further research in the field seem important:

(1) Theoretical replication:

Testing the SUT-partnership typology in different national and/or organisational settings would endorse the models' validity.

(2) Bridging levels of analysis:

The evaluation of SUT-partnerships' development and success should be linked in more detail to the theoretical debate on the governance-boom, its opportunities and drawbacks, and its consequences.

(3) Increasing the sample of SUT-Partnership study cases:

Larger samples of partnerships could greatly facilitate generalisations and increase the broad applicability of the proposed SUT-partnership models.

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