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Journal Copyeditor

Bertie Dockerill, Department of Geography and Planning, University of Liverpool.

For All Correspondence

transactionsaesop@gmail.com

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EDITORIAL

It is with great pleasure and excitement that we introduce this inaugural issue of *Transactions of the Association of European Schools of Planning*. The journal is a new venture of AESOP and aims to provide a platform for the planning community to share research, innovative practices, and provocative thoughts among peers. It expands the already rich opportunities for networking and scholarly dialogue that AESOP offers via annual congresses, Thematic Group activities, specialist meetings such as the Heads of Schools workshops, and summer schools.

Transactions seeks to incorporate the spirit that guided AESOP from its beginning – to be inclusive, open-minded, and to embrace the diversity of national cultures and milieus of planning and planners represented in Europe and beyond.

The journal follows a genuine open access publishing model: it is free of charge to submit a paper for a double-blind peer review, and accepted papers are accessible online, to everyone, for free. AESOP covers the relevant editorial and publishing costs.

This inaugural issue contains an essay from Rachelle Alterman, as well as five contributions on a wide range of topics. All the papers published in this issue had initially been nominated for the Best Congress Paper award by the AESOP Congress track chairs in 2014 and 2015. We would like to offer our sincere thanks to Professor Alterman for her introductory essay, to Professor Anna Geppert, the President of AESOP, for her Introduction, and the authors who contributed a paper to this issue for their willingness to participate in this endeavour and for their patience as the initiative has taken shape.

Our plan is that future issues will contain a mixture of contributions comprising Best AESOP Congress Paper nominees, AESOP Thematic Group workshop and seminar papers, submissions by anyone who wishes to publish their research, and other invited contributions from eminent planning scholars or urban thinkers in the broader sense.

AESOP has always been open to experiments and new ideas. Therefore, the character of this journal will develop over the coming months and years in dialogue and collaboration with you – the readers and producers of its content. We are confident it will become as recognisable and distinctive a feature of AESOP as its congresses and other activities.

Finally, just before this issue went to press in June 2017, we learned the sad news that John Friedmann had passed away. We would like to pay tribute here to the fundamental and transformative contributions he made to planning scholarship during his long and active career. We hope that *Transactions*, in seeking to foster inclusivity, open-mindedness and the cultural diversity of planning and planners in Europe and beyond, may serve as a forum for continued discussions around the vision of planning and the planning profession, which he always upheld.

We are looking forward to your contributions and feedback, and we hope you enjoy reading this inaugural issue.

Kind regards

Ela Babalik-Sutcliffe, Andrea Frank, Nikos Karadimitriou, and Olivier Sykes

INTRODUCTION

Anna Geppert^a

I am very pleased to introduce a new journal, *Transactions of the Association of European Schools of Planning*. A first question may arise to the reader: is there a need for another planning journal? Indeed, although the planning discipline developed in the twentieth century, it remains rather young, and today there is a number of very good journals. However, after vivid discussions, AESOP has come to the conclusion that the project of *Transactions*, developed with a remarkable dedication by Ela Babalik-Sutcliffe, Andrea Frank, Nikos Karadimitriou and Olivier Sykes, is to provide our community with something complementary to existing journals: unique and precious.

First, *Transactions* is really AESOP's journal. Its editorial line incorporates papers derived from our most valued activities, papers distinguished in our annual congresses by the Best Congress Paper Prize, offshoots of our Thematic Working Groups and seminars, invited contributions of prominent AESOP figures... Putting our "bests" at the core of the new journal means much more than showing off. During its 30-year existence, AESOP has developed a vision of planning and of planning values – in other words, a discourse that *Transactions* shares with our community and with a wide audience, fostering scholarly debate. And, because openness is one of AESOP's values, the journal is open to all submissions.

Secondly, such an endeavour makes sense only if it meets the highest academic standards. To ensure this, the editors have organised a thorough, double-blind, peer review process, to which all papers are submitted.

Thirdly, *Transactions* offers our community a truly independent publication channel. In recent years, the world of scientific publications has been deeply affected by several changes. Publishing companies experience consolidations and concentrations. The development of open access journals gave birth to economic models requiring financial contributions from authors. In planning, as well as in other disciplines, we are concerned by issues of access to publication for researchers from universities that do not provide financial support for publishing, or possible biases induced by the dominance of papers addressing issues related to the agenda of those institutions financing large research programmes such as Horizon 2020, etc.

In this changing environment, it was AESOP's duty to provide the community with an open access journal clearly built on a non-profit model, where the quality of the paper will always be the sole condition for being published. In this model, AESOP has first acquired experience with its journal *Planning Education*, focusing on didactic issues. With the birth of *Transactions*, we are broadening our scope to the diversity of planning research. The first issue, which we have in hand, is promising, with its opening essay by Rachelle Alterman and its diverse, critical, and stimulating five papers.

I would like to express our gratitude to the editors and to the authors, as well as to the colleagues who have accepted the call to contribute to the demanding task of reviewing. Long live *Transactions*!

a President of AESOP. Town and Regional Planning, Sorbonne University, 191, Rue Saint Jacques, 75005 Paris, France.
E-mail: anna.geppert@paris-sorbonne.fr

FROM A MINOR TO A MAJOR PROFESSION: CAN PLANNING AND PLANNING THEORY MEET THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBALISATION?

Rachelle Alterman^a

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I am deeply honoured by the invitation to share with you some thoughts on a double occasion: AESOP's 30th anniversary, and the launching of its open-access e-journal. Both these occasions represent important milestones towards the future of the planning profession globally. To reveal why this is not an exaggeration, I will take the readers on a journey across time and continents, to encounter the story of the evolution of planning as a discipline and a profession. The journey will also expose challenges facing planning theory.

a Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa 3200003, Israel.
E-mail: alterman@technion.ac.il

1. Can Planning Become the Lead Profession to Meet the Global Urban Challenges?

The years 2016–2017 have opened up a dream-world set of opportunities for the planning profession. To what extent are planning education and the global planning profession intrinsically ready to take up these opportunities, and are there prices to be paid?

1.1. Urban Issues Come to the Global Forefront

In October 2016, Habitat III held hundreds of meetings, conferences and events. It became a never-before celebration of the importance of urbanity – the hubs of the world's economies, social dynamics, cultural and scientific innovations. At this event, 167 nations from around the world signed the United Nations New Urban Agenda document (demonstrating at least a symbolic commitment, as it should be noted that although the Agenda is under the umbrella of the United Nations, it is not legally binding). In 2017, the details of the Agenda are being elaborated. The hundreds of fora devoted to the many aspects of urban life also laid bare the enormous challenges facing decision makers, professionals, and civil-society activists in attempting to steer the world's cities away from their seemingly intractable problems, such as vast numbers of people living in slums and deprivation; huge infrastructure deficiencies; and unhealthy environments – all intensifying daily. Can a more just and flourishing future be achieved?

To fulfil the goals of the New Urban Agenda even partially, there will be a need for many more urban professionals around the world. Which one of the several professions relevant to urban policy will take the lead in meeting these challenges? Does planning – as a discipline and a profession – have the momentum for the task? Where there are not enough planners, or where planning has not yet matured as a profession, architects or civil engineers might make a “comeback”, and be viewed again as the prime urban experts, thus resuming their past role before the emergence of planning education. This would be an unfortunate reversion to the days of failed physical determinism in city-making. Will other disciplines with only sectoral knowledge of urban affairs, such as geography, economics, or policy analysis, take the lead?

In order to meet the global urban challenges, both in quantity and quality, planning needs to meet two conditions: first, planning should fortify its professional core. Secondly, planning must become more global in its reach and body of knowledge. After all, urban issues today are not only local, but also global. Planning must evolve from a historically locally-grounded profession, to one that is capable of synthesising local knowledge with global transferability. The term “glocal”, coined by Roland Robinson (1992), fits this challenge well.

1.2. Can Planning Meet the Professional Challenge?

Will planning succeed in becoming *the* urban profession? Does the planning discipline and profession have the internal makeup for this mission.

On the positive side, no other single profession is a better fit in meeting John Friedmann's call – “from knowledge to action” (Friedmann, 1974; 1987). Planners are the custodians of the most comprehensive and integrative knowledge about the various facets of how cities work. No other profession is more qualified to understand the complex interrelationships that cities embody – between societies, cultures, economies, politics, the physical and biological world, and technologies, all at once. Planners understand these interrelationships – not just in abstract theory or philosophy, but literally – “on the ground”. Our interest in urban issues is unbounded. Like medical doctors, and unlike architects, for example, we are fascinated by every part of the body and physiology of cities, not only their healthy and beautiful parts. Planners are eager to cure or at least improve lives in areas of decline or endemic poverty.

We have a profession which uniquely stands on two quite different pillars: substantive knowledge about cities and spatial relations; and expert knowledge about public policymaking, how it works, and how to design policies that governments are likely to adopt. We are the only profession created in order to bridge these two very different pillars of knowledge. So, on its face, in a world where the majority of humanity is already living in

cities, planning should be the profession to lead public policymakers in meeting the urban challenges. But, in order to become the major urban profession, planning will need to strengthen its professional identity, which is currently replete with ambivalence. Planning theorists should address these difficult conceptual challenges. I will end this paper with a few thoughts in this direction.

I turn now to asking, what makes a profession? Next, the paper will survey the internationalisation of planning education and the profession. I will point out the deep distinction between the steep increase in the number of planning schools across the world, and the challenge of true globalisation and glocalisation of knowledge. Here, AESOP's essential role will become apparent.

2. What Makes a Profession?

2.1. Major and Minor Professions

Donald Schön, the eminent American scholar of organisational learning and a planning educator, classified planning as one of the "minor professions" (Schön, 1984; see also Glazer, 1974). He distinguished planning from the older, well-established "major professions", such as medicine, architecture, engineering, or law. By the term "minor", Schön meant that planning, like some other emerging professions, exhibits only some of the characteristics of the major professions, or that some of these traits are still in an embryonic stage. As a person trained in a "major profession" (law) in addition to planning, I can keenly sense the differences.

To what extent does Schön's classification of planning as a minor profession still hold today? The answer differs across countries or regions. In most, planning is still far from achieving the status of a major profession. In order to be at the lead of global urban policy, the professional planning organisations, along with planning educators and scholars, should consider whether it is feasible for planning to become a major profession and, if so, whether there are prizes to be paid.

There is a large academic body of knowledge about the sociology of professions: a basic text is Abbott (1988); an example of recent controversies is the edited volume by Young and Muller (2014). Rather than delving into the various debates, I will draw on my own experience in helping to build a country's planning profession "from scratch" in Israel, and on my observation of the evolution of planning education and the planning profession in some other countries. This observation is possible due to the relatively young age of planning education and the profession and its initially limited global spread. So, in a single life's academic career (mine is by no means over), it has been possible to become a participant-observer of major global milestones.

2.2. Criteria for Becoming a Profession

Based on my experience, I distinguish professions from other types of work-related endeavours along two dimensions: from purely technical or administrative vocations on the one hand; and from purely academic research disciplines on the other.

To become a profession, five criteria should be met – at least in part. A sixth is optional. The differences between minor and major professions are a matter of degree and evolution.

- There should be an academic degree offered in the field, concomitant with forward-looking research. The major professions work towards basic standardisation of curricula within a given country. Some professions (but not law) may also seek to standardise curricula across countries.
- Professionals would be expected to exercise a significant degree of judgement and discretion, rather than simply apply an almost "automatic" set of rules.
- There must be a market for the profession's service and skills, not only in research and teaching, but also – and mostly – in society and the economy. In the case of a minor profession, there may still be blurred distinctions in the practice arena between that profession and others, especially professions that had previously fulfilled a similar role to some extent.

- There should be an organised professional body of members, with the mission of promoting awareness of the profession among the general public and clarifying its boundaries. The professional body, often self-organised, should promote knowledge about who may be regarded as a professional, and what types of functions the practitioner is trained to take on. The professional body should also promote shared professional norms and a code of ethics. The major professions often do have a code of ethics – whether initiated by them or legally mandated – but these differ greatly in content and in capacity for enforcement.
- To ensure that the education is relevant to the practice arena, there should be organisational links between the academic bodies and the professional institutions. For example, there may be advisory curriculum boards, joint accreditation procedures, and jointly designed life-long learning programmes.
- *Optional: legal recognition.* Some professions have legal recognition – but the degree and contents vary greatly. Strong legal status, encompassing the right to practise as well as sanctions upon others outside the profession if they practise, is typical of most major professions. However, legal recognition is not a prerequisite for the existence of a profession. The legally recognised professions are usually of two types: those that legislators view as endangering life or safety, such as medicine and some types of engineering or architecture, and those regarded as the long arm of the state, such as law, chartered accountancy, and sometimes also land appraisal (valuers). Many of the minor professions have no legal standing at all, or only a weak form. There may even be major professions, such as types of engineering, that have only weak legal standing because they are perceived as neither life-endangering nor as the trustees of the state.

I invite each reader to apply at least five of these criteria to planning in her or his own country. There will be significant differences among all the criteria: for example, in the number of fully fledged academic planning degrees relative to population size or similar indicators; the academic status of these degrees; the age of the professional organisation and its numeric and political strength; and the degree to which the profession faces legal or political impediments fostered by competing, stronghold professions.

Among the major professions, the five obligatory criteria are clearly met, as well as the sixth optional one. But among the minor professions, such as planning, the lines demarcating a profession from other activities are blurred. If planning is to evolve in the direction of a major profession, it may be necessary to achieve better articulation of the profession's unique assets and its distinction from other professions.

High quality planning education and strong professional organisations are both necessary for the profession to flourish. They are the first and the fourth criteria on my “professionalism” list, and ostensibly the easiest to gauge. In recent years, there has been a growing international scholarly discussion about planning education, and even a UN report featuring a major chapter on the topic where the global state is surveyed in depth (Stiftel et al., 2009). However, I do not know of published research about the robustness of the planning profession. I shall attempt to close this gap to some extent, based on my own observations over time. Perhaps because the major part of my academic home has been in a tiny country (Israel), far away from agglomerations of other planning schools, I became a passionate participant-observer of the evolution of planning education and the planning profession in other parts of the world and have visited many planning schools. My international comparative research on planning law has equipped me with an additional (though partial) prism on planning practices in some countries. I will thus hazard to provide a rough picture of the state of planning education and the profession based on my own observations, fortified by others' research, and covering selected parts of the world. How well are planning education and the profession doing around the world today?

3. The Evolution of Planning Education

How well is the first criterion fulfilled: the existence of a distinct academic degree for educating professional planners? An attempt to answer this question must begin by noting that there are still many differences across countries in the definition of what constitutes appropriate planning education, the institutional affiliation within universities, contents of the curricula, relationships with other disciplines or professions, and titles and standing of the degrees awarded. This is true not only globally, but also across Europe – as meticulously analysed by Andrea Frank and a group of colleagues from several major European traditions (Frank et al., 2014;

see also Bertolini et al., 2012). Yet, despite the locally driven behaviour of the academic realm, the supra-national institutions of planning education that emerged since the 1980s have managed to do the almost-impossible: to establish shared criteria for what constitutes planning education. Today it is these institutions that are the key engines propelling planning towards professionalisation and globalisation. This important momentum did not occur stochastically; it was and still is directed by the efforts of leaders in planning education in various parts of the world that are helping to build these supra-national institutions. As an avid follower of the process, I can recount, first-hand, stories about the key milestones in this process.

3.1. A Transatlantic Picture of Planning Education

In 1981 I participated in the first conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP), held in Washington DC independently from the professional body, the American Planners' Association. Established in 1969, ACSP was at first a small group of American academics interested in coordinating and promoting planning education. This was probably the first continental association of planning schools in the world (ACSP, n.d.). Interestingly, the A in ACSP does not stand for American, as many might have assumed. Perhaps this was because no one at the time thought that equivalent planning-school associations would be established elsewhere in the world. (A similar assumption may have led the founders of the world's first professional planning association – the Royal Town Planning Institute, or RTPI – to omit its national affiliation from its name.) I was the only non-North American participating at that conference (there was a few Canadians). In retrospect, this event proved to be a milestone, not only in the evolution of planning academia in the United States, but also internationally.

Six years later, in 1987, a group of leading European academics in planning convened in Amsterdam to found the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP). Once again, I was the only outsider participating. I regard this event as even more cardinal to the global evolution of planning education and thus the profession. To understand why AESOP's role was so unique, it is first necessary to follow the international expansion of planning education.

It so happens that, in 1992, I decided to write a paper in order to celebrate AESOP's fifth anniversary and the first joint trans-Atlantic conference of planning schools convened jointly with ACSP. The paper was titled 'A transatlantic view of planning education and professional practice', published in the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, ACSP's official academic journal (Alterman, 1992). I analysed the different modes of planning in the United States and the United Kingdom, and compared these to the then-young planning education in various parts of Europe. Using that paper as a benchmark, and supplementing it with recent research by others, one can assess the great progress made in spreading planning education and professionalism to all parts of Europe (see Frank et al., 2014; Stiffler et al., 2009).

At the time when AESOP was established, there was still a glaring gap in planning education between English-speaking countries and the rest of the world. The world's first academic degree verging on planning was established in the United Kingdom at the University of Liverpool in 1909 (University of Liverpool, n.d.). Although called Civic Design, that degree was (and still is) distinct from architecture or civil engineering. The first buds of planning education and professional organisation arrived in the United States and Canada much later – in the 1940s and 1950s. The number of schools there was much smaller relative to population size than in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, the North American schools still preceded the first group of European planning schools by approximately two decades.

Thus, upon AESOP's founding in 1987, the majority of the schools eligible for membership were from the British Isles. There was only a handful of European planning schools that granted academic planning degrees distinct from architecture, landscape architecture, surveying or engineering, and only a single planning school in all of the former Socialist Bloc countries (Kunzmann, 1991; Shaw et al., 1991). The number of member schools in AESOP at the time was much smaller than in the United States.

Today, the transatlantic profile of planning education is perhaps the reverse of this. There are more members of AESOP than of ACSP. The increase in the number of planning schools across Europe has been remarkable, and

includes several Eastern European states where planning has taken hold strongly in a short time. AESOP's web site reports over 150 member schools, including many from former Socialist Bloc countries (AESOP, 2017). Frank et al. (2014, p.44) counts 214 programmes offering planning education. However, there is a blatantly uneven distribution of planning programmes relative to population size. Mostly glaringly, Spain and several Eastern European countries are far behind, and other professionals carry out planning work. So, both the United States and Europe still have a long way to go.

More important than the numeric distribution of planning schools, however, is the globalisation of planning education in the deepest sense, to which I shall return, after shifting the focus to the special case of planning education in China.

3.2. Planning Education in China and its Global Implications

An even more optimistic picture of planning's global future comes from another part of the world. This is important because Europe and the United States are no longer undergoing major urbanisation, while many other parts of the world are. A major leap in planning education and the planning profession is currently occurring in Asia (Kunzmann, 2015), and most spectacularly in China.

3.2.1. The Chinese Explosion in Planning Education

Needless to say, China's urbanisation challenges are unprecedented. This is part of the explanation for the steep rise of planning education and the planning profession (Tian, 2016; Huang, 2012). Some other countries have also experienced dramatic urbanisation, yet the emergence of the planning profession has not been as accelerated as in China. Interestingly, in China, there were modest beginnings to established planning degrees as early as the 1950s – nine in total, with Soviet-style content (Tian, 2016). This process came to a halt during China's Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), when most development projects went into stagnation. Architects and engineers too were not in demand and many, like other professionals, were sent off for rural work. Universities were closed, and the few planning programmes were dismantled (Tian, 2016).

When the Cultural Revolution ended, and the economic reforms commenced in 1978, the Chinese government adopted policies seeking to create profound changes in the economy, society, and the physical environment. This provided a unique window of opportunity for precisely the kinds of skills that planning offers: skills in tackling multi-faceted problems and synthesising areas of knowledge. There was an increasing demand for professional skills (Huang, 2012; Tian, 2016).

However, need alone does not create a profession. In China, planning education and the profession were unlikely to evolve in a "bottom up" manner. Government would have to lead, and higher education has to obtain state approval. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, it took some years for university education to resume fully, and for the old planning schools to be re-established. In effect, the boost in planning schools began only in 1989. Since then, the annual rate of increase of planning programmes is (probably) unprecedented anywhere.

In 2017 there were probably some 300 schools offering planning degrees in China.¹ If this number does not seem so impressive compared with population size, one should note that only about half of China's 1.4 billion people are already urbanised. My conjecture is that the number of planners per population size in rural areas is considerably lower than in urban areas. As the national programme of controlled urbanisation proceeds, more schools are likely to emerge.

¹ In my inquiries about the number of planning schools in China, I received several different numbers and estimates, probably reflecting differing definitions of what constitutes a planning degree (Tian, 2016). A meeting (June 2017) with Professor Leng Hong of the Harbin Institute of Technology, who is a member of the National Steering Committee of Urban and Rural Planning Education in China, confirmed that the number in 2017 has risen to about 300. I would also like to thank colleagues in the International China Planning Association and Qingyun Shen of the University of Michigan for their assistance.

3.2.2. The Deeper Implications of the Chinese Model

The quantitative increase in urban dwellers and workers and the well-known shift to a market-led development process are the well-recognised generators of demand for planners in China. In addition, there is a slower but consistent qualitative change among decision makers and the general public, with raised awareness of the need to take environmental and social factors into account in creating liveable urban agglomerations. In my frequent lectures in Chinese planning programmes, I sense the quick pulse of knowledge creation by researchers and students and the thirst for learning more. In meetings with senior Chinese central and local government officials, I experience a determination to learn seriously from other (Western) countries, to an intensity that I have not encountered elsewhere.

There may be an additional, under-recognised aspect of China that may have given planning a special boost. I am referring to the country's City Planning Act 1990 and further legislation and regulations adopted later. As an observer of planning law internationally, I can testify how exceptional in comparative terms this legislation is. Most other Communist countries did not adopt functioning planning laws (see, for example, Renaud and Bertaud, 1997; Gdesz, 2010). China was a pioneer not only in comparison to socialist countries (most of which were European) but also in comparison to other developing countries, where planning legislation tends to be antiquated or dysfunctional (Alterman, 2013).

By enacting planning law, the Chinese government (officially the parliament) was handcuffing its own hands (Balme, 2013). The City Planning Act made rules regarding decisions more multi-scalar and multi-faceted, limiting the authority of top-down decisions and moving away from mainly project-driven decisions. Since then, the role of the market in China has greatly amplified, and many urban and rural development initiatives are market driven. The preparation of planning documents in this institutionally more complex context, in accordance with legal procedures, needs many more trained professionals in both the public and private sectors. The introduction of planning law was probably an additional factor in the awareness of the usefulness of the planning discipline and profession.

In China, higher education has taken the lead in propelling the planning profession. Although there are two nationwide associations of planning professionals, Huang (2012, pp.98-99) notes that they have not had much influence in forming the profession. There are rigorous national tests to become a registered planner. At the all-important local government level, where much of urban development policy is determined, planners hold important positions, whether in the government or the market sector. I myself have witnessed an impressive example: I was invited to give a presentation before several hundred planning practitioners in a major city, and was told that these represented only a fraction of the total number of planners employed by the city – amounting to all the planners in entire countries twice the size of that city.

3.2.3. China as a Laboratory for Globalisation

I have devoted special attention to China because of its potential importance far beyond its borders. A close look at the China phenomenon unlocks insights about the prospects of globalisation. Due to China's unique political history (especially the Cultural Revolution), the emergence of planning education there may have experienced less of a "turf war" with entrenched older professions compared with some other countries. It has therefore been possible to observe planning's role and net merits relatively quickly. This achievement does not mean that there has not been any inter-professional conflict, especially with architects. Huang (2012) notes that the government accreditation board has so far given some priority to planning degrees in departments affiliated with schools of architecture. However, this should not diminish the importance of the fact that planning in China today is recognised as an independent academic field, and that a degree in architecture is not a prerequisite.

Thus, China may be the world's best laboratory for testing how planning can evolve into a discipline and profession relatively quickly, and how it can gain appreciation by decision makers and the public at large. In many ways, China is a leader among developing and transition countries. There are today additional transition-economy countries in Asia and beyond that seek to emulate China. Extrapolation of China's rate of planning

education indicates an optimistic growth curve for planning education in developing countries. Additionally, like many other aspects of globalisation today, perhaps this trend will also send waves back to Europe and North America. This is good news for the global future of the planning profession.

I now turn to a discussion of the evolution of the planning profession. In view of the dearth of international research on the topic, this discussion provides only preliminary thoughts.

4. The Planning Profession and its Competitors

Which comes first: the education chicken or the professional egg? The sequential relationship between planning education and formation of a professional organisation varies across countries.

4.1. The Evolution of Professional Associations

In some countries, a rudimentary professional organisation preceded the launching of academic education, but in others, this was the other way around. The world's oldest planners' professional organisation was formed in the United Kingdom in 1914, and was at first composed of practitioners from a variety of professions who realised that there was need for a new trans-disciplinary professional group, subsequently named the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI, n.d.).² Later, other national institutes emerged in English-speaking countries. Today, professional planning associations exist far beyond the English-speaking world. From my experience, I would guess that, where there are academic degrees in planning, there will usually also be some form of planners' association – even if nascent and small.

However, in many countries, the identity of what constitutes planning as a profession is still hazy. There may even be different official names for the planning profession within a single country, as across Canada's provinces (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2011). Architecture, landscape architecture, engineering or surveying may still be regarded as the sole, or major, entry door for urban practitioners. In some countries, the monopoly of these professions is anchored in legislation. The primacy of architecture still holds true in Latin America, some South and East European countries, and parts of the Middle East. In some countries, such as Spain, there are in fact two or more associations with words denoting "planning" or "urbanism" in their titles, but the larger organisation caters only to holders of architecture degrees (Frank et al., 2014).

An extreme example of the reluctance of the architecture profession to recognise the existence of an independent planning profession comes from my own country. The Israeli Architects' Association has obstinately refused to recognise planning as a profession independent from architecture. This anachronism is at odds with the fact that Israel's first academic planning degree in planning was established back in 1970 – rather early compared to many Continental European schools. The Architects' Association, in coalition with the more numerous engineers, has used any opportunity to lobby the legislature and other bodies to block the eligibility of holders of planning degrees from assuming some key statutory planning positions (unless the candidates happen to be architects as well). Despite these hurdles, and based on their qualification and high level of professional commitment, Israeli planning graduates have successfully competed for planning positions (those that are not explicitly blocked legally) and have made significant positive impacts on the function of planning and on society in general (Alterman, 2017).

Beyond architecture and engineering, in some countries there may be other competing professions as well. As urban issues gain more visibility and prestige, such competition is likely to rise even more. These other fields tend to be minor professions too (or just academic disciplines). An example is geography, which in some countries is regarded as the planners' mother discipline (Frank, 2012).

2 Although the RTPI was formed after the establishment of the first British planning-related academic programme in Liverpool, in a large country this nascent programme was probably too small to count as the trigger for the planning profession.

Sometimes, competitors arise and then disappear. An example is public policy analysis (or science), which seemed to be a growing competitor for planning in United States in the 1980s and 1990s. I was on sabbatical at the time, teaching at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Planning educators in some American schools found the new field attractive and greatly expanded the share of courses devoted to generic public policy – planning’s second pillar – at the expense of the first pillar – substantive knowledge about the spatial dimensions of cities and regions. Being concerned about the implications of this shift for the future of the planning profession, I initiated a collaborative paper with a leading academic in policy analysis. We delved into the deeper differences between the two professions in terms of their origins, mission, subject matter, clientele, ethics and more (Alterman and MacRae, 1983). I am told that the American Planning Accreditation Board, which assesses planning schools in the United States, found this analysis useful. Today, the threat that generic policy analysis could displace planning education’s substantive focus on cities and regions has largely dissipated.

4.2. Coordination Between Academic Institutions and Professional Associations

A few words about the fifth criterion for the existence of a profession: institutionalised cooperation between academia and the professional organisation. This criterion is important to avoid the danger that a professional education would become disconnected from practice and market demand and might then shed its professional aspects and evolve into an academic discipline alone. To avoid this, major professions often institutionalise some form of linkage between academia and the professional organisation.

A model for well-institutionalised cooperation is the American Planning Accreditation Board (2017). Joint teams of professional planners appointed by the APA and academics appointed by the ACSP conduct periodic assessment of planning schools and evaluate new candidate programmes. This is a joint initiative, and in the US context, does not require permission from government. AESOP has not progressed as far as ACSP in forging links with Europe-wide planners’ associations, such as the ECTP-CEU (European Council of Spatial Planners-Conseil européen des urbanistes).³ There are probably many variations around the world, but I hazard a guess that, in general, this criterion is as yet weakly fulfilled.

In China, too, institutional linkages between academia and the profession are still rudimentary. However, unlike the ACSP or AESOP, joint accreditation would have to be conducted under government authority. Although there are two professional associations of planners, Huang (2012) notes that neither association has been granted any status by government in the formal accreditation of planning programmes. This task is under the direct authority of the relevant government ministry, through the Advisory Committee on Urban Planning Accreditation.

4.3. Legal Recognition of the Planning Profession

The sixth criterion – legal recognition – deserves some attention even though it is optional for the existence of a profession. I am not aware of cross-national research on this point, but to the best of my knowledge, in many countries, planning as a profession lacks legal status and protection, placing it alongside some other minor professions. There are some initiatives for partial recognition. In Saskatchewan, Canada, for example, provincial legislation obliges the government to hire only “registered planners” for a set of specified positions, and only they may sign certain planning-related documents specified by law. Non-planners may still undertake the unregulated types of planning work as long as they do not call themselves professional planners.

In some other countries, planners have adopted a different strategy for legal recognition. Instead of seeking independent legal recognition, they become members of architecture, engineering, or surveyors’ associations, thus gaining a form of legal status, presumably after negotiating with the older and better established professions about defining what would constitute a planner’s professional turf. There are probably significant differences across countries in this mode as well.

³ In 2002, the ECTP-CEU replaced the word “Town” in its charter title (European Council of Town Planners-Conseil européen des urbanistes) with the word “Spatial”. This reflects part of the “language war” now raging in planning globally, which I follow with curiosity.

But, for planners in many countries, overcoming the objections of contending professions and achieving recognition by the legislators is not a realistic hope (or perhaps it is not desired). In several countries, planning associations have relied on self-registration and certification of practitioners by the professional association itself. This is an important model for a minor profession in its evolution. This strategy has been adopted by the American Planning Association, which offers holders of planning degrees the opportunity to take exams and become “certified planners”. This type of strategy could serve as a substitute for legal recognition once the marketplace learns to assign value to self-certification.

There may be many sub-models of self-registration. One American state, New Jersey, has developed an interesting hybrid model which takes an extra step on the path of legal recognition. In order to become a “certified licensed professional planner” in New Jersey, one must pass state exams in planning-related laws in addition to attaining self-certification by the American Planning Association.

The topic of legal recognition deserves greater attention by planning professional institutions, planning educators, and planning theorists. Is legal recognition desirable? If so, what type and what degree? These are important questions if the planning profession seeks to evolve towards becoming a major profession.

5. The Globalisation Challenge

For true globalisation to occur, it is not enough to be satisfied with the growing geographic distribution of planning schools. There is also a need for deep-rooted change that would enable knowledge calibration and transfer. This is the challenge of globalisation, crucial if planning is to progress from a minor towards a major profession.

5.1. Beyond Internationalisation: Global Knowledge Transfer

The international presence of a given profession is not the same as the globalisation of knowledge in the deeper sense, which would lead to greater convergence. The legal profession illustrates this distinction best. Law is one of the major professions and one of the oldest, existing in almost every society, yet it is largely a locally-grounded profession. Every country – even within the European Union – has a different set of laws. A lawyer trained in the United States would not find much common ground with a lawyer trained in France, apart from rudimentary notions of the role of law and some basic classifications. Basic doctrines in law in general, and in planning law in particular, may differ even among neighbouring countries, as I have demonstrated in a large-scale research project about how 13 countries – all members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – tackle a specific topic in planning-law quite differently (Alterman, 2010). Over time, court rulings further distance one country’s law from another. This holds not only for common law countries but, to a more modest extent, for civil law countries as well. My comparative research has demonstrated this in planning law (Alterman, 2010).

By contrast, urban dynamics, unlike law, do portray many shared traits, even if the specifics differ. To become a leading profession to meet the challenges of global urbanism, it will not be enough for the local equivalences of the planning profession to spread internationally. There must also be a stronger, globally-shared body of knowledge – what has been called a “one world” approach (Stiftel et al., 2009, p.188). Planning educators and practitioners will need to move beyond the “comfort zone” of their familiar national contexts (or those of similar countries). We will have to learn how to transfer knowledge across national and continental borders in a manner that would fit local needs. In this way, “best practices” will not remain on their original shelves, but could be harnessed and duly modified for transfer to other cities or countries around the globe. This is global knowledge married with local understanding. This is the “glocalisation” of planning. And in this task, AESOP has played a crucial role.

5.2. The AESOP Experiment and its Role in Promoting Globalisation

In an earlier part of this paper, I recounted how AESOP's establishment was an important milestone in the internationalisation of planning education. In retrospect, AESOP's role is even more significant.

When AESOP was inaugurated in 1987, it may have seemed to be just a European mirror of North America. Klaus Kunzmann, AESOP's first president, recounts how he and Patsy Healey – AESOP's founding mother – raised the idea of forming a European equivalent to ACSP (Kunzmann, 2012). But the idea of forming AESOP had, from the very beginning, the potential of creating a deep transformation of the field, far beyond promoting the geographic extension of planning education onto an additional continent. The seeds of transformation were embedded in AESOP's multicultural, multilingual and divided political structure which reflects Europe's built-in diversity and rather hectic history. The goal was to enable exchanges of knowledge about urban and regional issues, while overcoming differing languages, geographic-demographic contexts, legal-institutional frameworks, and political vicissitudes. English was just a bridging language.

Even though I was not a member of any European school, I made a special trip to Amsterdam to attend the inaugural ceremony. I sensed that AESOP might be a global experimental ground to see whether our field can mature into a global profession. The cross-cultural and cross-national exchange, I hoped, would release planning from the umbilical cord that ties it to its national-local origins.

Real globalisation of our profession could not rely only on journal papers and books. These are pre-screened and evaluated for quality and contents by editors and scholars whose experience is usually with their own domestic modes of planning. Direct interpersonal communication among planning scholars and educators is essential in order to peel away the conceptual and terminological barriers that make it difficult to understand the unique mixture of local and global that characterises our field.

My expectations have been fulfilled: the intellectual sparks that AESOP meetings created among academics and students have stimulated and accelerated research collaboration across borders and continents. Year after year, while attending annual AESOP conferences and joint ones with ACSP or the Global Planning Education Association Network (I have never missed a single one!), I became infatuated with how planning academics, who at first shared little common ground, gradually began to share knowledge. Academic exchange intensified year by year, levelling out the conspicuous discrepancies that had existed during AESOP's initial years.

So, under AESOP's multinational canopy and scholars' special efforts to overcome language barriers, a vibrant community of researchers and educators has emerged. By exchanging knowledge about urban issues, planning institutions, education curricula, and modes of practice, AESOP has become the world's prime experimental ground for transforming the planning profession from local to global, and from global to glocal.

An additional AESOP institution which has contributed to globalisation is the PhD Seminar held annually. I participated four times as part of the mentors' team in four different host countries. The seminars are a distilled version of what globalised planning scholarship is about. The students are selected so as to represent many languages, cultures, and national affiliations. Occasionally, students outside Europe also submit their candidacy. Other associations of planning schools have not managed to establish equivalent fora. Thus, Europe's future planning educators and researchers are implanted with the genes of globalised thinking. Perhaps it is time for AESOP to clone this format into a global model, to be held frequently in various parts of the world.

Following AESOP, additional multinational and multicultural planning associations were established. The Asian Planning Schools Association was founded in 1993. (However, the word "Asian" is in fact a misnomer; the Association in fact accepts membership only from East Asian countries.) More recently, the Association of African Planning Schools was established in 1999. Unlike ACSP and AESOP, these associations cover highly turbulent regions of the world, with occasional military hostilities and humanitarian crises. It would be interesting to research how these organisations cope with such challenges.

The Association of African Planning Schools deserves a closer look because it presents a very different model. Due to the poor financial situation of most of the African schools, they have been unable to pay fees to finance the Association's operations. They therefore sought help from international donor organisations and have officially allied with major pro-poor NGOs to carry out a combination of advocacy, educational and practice-related missions (Watson and Odendaal, 2012; Odendaal, 2012). Thus, the Association of African Planning Schools has become a hybrid organisation, operating as both a supra-national academic association, and as an NGO. While Watson and Odendaal (2012) express strong support for this merger, they also note that more academic functions, such as monitoring and accreditation, have received less attention.

A further milestone in the globalisation of planning education was the establishment of the Global Planning Education Association Network (GPEAN). It was announced during the First World Planning Conference held in Shanghai in 2001, and has since promoted several global conferences of planning schools and coordinates with UN-Habitat. GPEAN has launched a series of books (five so far) with an important mission: to collate selected research papers recommended by each of the member organisations. The prize papers – originally published in various languages – are translated and edited with the aim of promoting the global exchange of knowledge in planning across cultures and languages. This laudable but as yet limited enterprise should serve as a model for more types of initiatives. GPEAN contains the seeds for promoting further globalisation of planning knowledge.

5.3. Open Access and the Need to Stimulate Global e-Communication

As befitting AESOP, the Association is now taking another step toward globalisation. The launching of the open access journal is not just a matter of technical convenience and cost saving. For planning to become more globalised, planning knowledge must reach educators in developing countries, where university budgets for subscription to traditional journals are rather scarce. The new journal could serve as an important additional instrument to globalise knowledge exchange.

And here is another modest observation about electronic media. Surprisingly, to date, there is no global platform for simple and free email communication among faculty members and students in planning schools. The US-based PLANET listserv, which was targeted largely at American faculty members but was open to planning academics from other countries as well, closed down in 2016 after 20 years of voluntary operation. The internal controversies among groups of American academics that led to this closure are explained by Nguyen et al. (2017). The listserv has been replaced by a Facebook group, with the intention that another listserv would be created under ACSP's moderation. The founders of the Facebook group do mention that there have been some objections to Facebook, but they do not mention an issue concerning global access; Facebook is blocked by the Chinese government. Perhaps AESOP will take the lead to establish a free and technologically simple communication platform accessible globally.

Although major strides are being made towards the globalisation of urban knowledge, there are still questions to ask regarding the capacity of transforming planning from a minor to a more globally significant profession. These are questions to be addressed by planning theory.

6. Challenges to Planning Theory

If the planning profession is to lead the global urban challenge, it must strengthen its professional identity and evolve from a minor to a major profession. However, planning, more than some other professions, has a built-in ambivalence about becoming a major profession, and even about professionalism itself. The most controversial of the six criteria for professionalism is probably the fourth – the need to strengthen the boundaries of the profession and distinguish it from other professions and from the lay public. Establishing boundaries is inevitable in the formation of every profession. There are negative aspects in this process – normative, instrumental, or both. Each profession must find its own balance point, and it might change over time.

There are two aspects to the boundaries issue, reflecting planning's two pillars: one has to do with the subject matter of planning – cities, space and society; the other with the roles of planners in the realm of government policy and public decision making.

The first aspect relates to the first pillar – planning's subject matter – where the borderlines are inherently elusive: cities and regions are dynamic, both physically and conceptually. There are new fields of knowledge and practice emerging all the time, with which planners as synthesisers are called to interface (examples of recent newcomers are technology for the "smart city" and public health for the "healthy city"). Some may argue that no single profession can be the synthesiser of all those fields. But this type of challenge is precisely what has led to the emergence of the planning profession in the first place. In the past, planning's boundaries were easier to determine because planners wore spectacles which focused attention on the physical environment. Today, planners wear kaleidoscopes, and planners are uniquely trained at making sense of the more multi-faceted and multi-colour pictures they are able to see. Therefore, the boundaries issue in this first pillar should not be a major concern for planning – although it might concern other professions or disciplines in a "turf war".

The second concern is more difficult to overcome. It is derived from planning's second pillar – its role and mission in shaping public policies for the "public interest" (defined differently from differing perspectives and over time; Campbell and Marshall, 2001). This means that planning has an intimate interface with government institutions, with depositories of power in society, with disempowerment, and with other forces that shape public decisions.

Planning theory is the field of knowledge that tries to provide planners with the concepts, norms and methods for fulfilling their public policy mission. I have called planning theory the "beacon" whose bright light should guide planners and help them overcome, or at least manage, the many dilemmas encountered in their daily interface with power (Alterman, 2017). Planning theory is not one single paradigm. Ever since planning theory emerged as a distinct field of knowledge in the 1960s in the United States and Canada (first collated by Faludi, 1973), it has gone through several phases and debates in the quest for offering planners conceptual frameworks and methods that are both just and "doable". At that time, the scientific method and its reliance on rationality was considered to be the major paradigm that would succeed in convincing policy makers of the merits of a particular plan or policy. This model was later criticised for being ineffective in really convincing decision makers (Innes and Booher, 2015). The rational model was also criticised for its conservative streak and insensitivity to issues of injustice *vis-à-vis* the loci of power (Forester, 1989). Various streams of planning theory emerged.

A major stream in planning theory is communicative planning. It still commands centre place, despite some criticism, to which Innes and Booher (2015) respond. The currency of this paradigm is indicated by Lauria and Wagner's (2006) quantitative analysis of research publications, and by my ongoing observations of the research topics of PhD students and early-career academics at AESOP. The pioneering thinkers in this field – Healey, Forester, and Innes – argue that planners' role is to help to dissipate communication barriers between professionals and citizens (Healey, 1992a, 1992b, 1993, 1997; Innes, 1995, 1998; Forester, 1989, 1998). However, the evolution towards professionalism usually entails the emergence of a unique professional language, or "jargon" – whether this is done intentionally or unintentionally. This process characterises the formation of any profession. In the case of planning, Tamy Stav and I coined the term "Planguage" (Stav, 2004; Stav and Alterman, in progress). The creation of an in-profession language inevitably distances not only other professionals, but also the direct beneficiaries of planning and the general public, as planning theorists have demonstrated (Mandelbaum, 1991, 1996; Tate and Campbell, 2000). Such distancing is anathema to the essence of communicative planning and, indeed, runs counter to basic, long-standing principles in planning theory. From their early days, courses in planning theory have charged planners with the roles of advocacy for the disempowered, promotion of citizen action, and insistence on government transparency (Davidoff, 1965; Forester, 1980).

Beyond attention to language barriers, communicative planning theory also directs planners' awareness to the distribution of power. Planners' mission is to try and reshape power relations and their outcomes towards a more just and fair public policy. Innes and Booher (2015) state the main thesis of communicative planning thus:

The power relationship works through communication, which builds shared meanings of power – of who and what is powerful (p.202).

Communication mediates the way these power relationships are constructed and challenged. Thus the power of the state and communication power are inextricably entangled, shaping and influencing one another (p.203).

These and similar observations are backed by a robust body of empirical studies spanning three decades and by a powerful ideological call to create a more just society.

The way to instil planners with these concepts is through planning education. These topics are indeed a major part in the contents of planning theory courses, where these are being offered. Richard Klosterman (2011) has conducted periodic studies of the contents of planning theory course readings, and these do show some convergence, but he has covered only North American schools. Sadly, the globalisation of planning theory has a very long way to go before it reaches the majority of planning students – the future practitioners. Most of the scholars in planning theory, especially the progressive and critical modes, come from Western cultures and well-established democratic regimes (Sanyal, 1989, 2002).

In most planning schools around the world, there is not yet a course in planning theory (as distinct from urban theories). For example, in all of China's hundreds of schools, there are not yet any courses in planning theory (Tian, 2016). Planners are not encouraged to adopt critical thinking (Huang, 2012). Planning curricula in China stress scientific analysis and quantitative models on the one hand, and design skills on the other (Tian, 2016). Indeed, I too have observed that the skills of Chinese students and academics in these realms are very impressive.

Why is planning theory as we know it absent in so many countries? The issue is not just pedagogy and curriculum-building. Planning theory runs deep into the issue of power distribution itself: in many countries – certainly most of the developing countries – a planning practitioner who overtly criticises government and power, promotes citizen activism unsolicited by government, or demands full transparency of government information, is unlikely to get very far. Planning educators in such regimes probably do not introduce planning theory into the curriculum (if allowed at all) in order to avoid a major dissonance between what the students are taught and what reality permits.

To date, communicative planning theory or related bodies of theory have not given enough attention to the political and legal-governmental regimes in which planners in a given jurisdiction work. As Innes and Booher (2015, p.2016), two leading contributors to communicative planning, admit (or perhaps just note as a fact):

Communicative planning theorists tend not to comment on the power of the state except indirectly. It is a given – the setting for planning. Their focus is on what planners, planning organizations, and other players can do and how, rather than on what constrains them or on what ought to happen.

Perhaps the challenge for planning theorists is to adjust communicative planning or related theories so as to take into account the power realities that planners face in their own workplace. There may be room to develop a more graduated and transferable set of norms and ethics that could guide planners working in differing regimes and cultures and could gradually rise to higher grounds. Instead of a single beacon with one strong shining light, planning theories could offer modulated, smaller beacons sensitive to the realistic capacities of planners in specific governmental and cultural contexts.

7. Unresolved Dilemmas

I am well aware that I have not referred to the current pessimism in Western countries about the future of planning in the wake of Brexit, regime change in the United States and the rise of highly conservative parties in other countries. However, if one takes a long-range view of the evolution of the planning profession over time and geography, as I have tried to do, the conclusion is that planning as a profession is on the rise – and steeply so.

The challenges emerging from Habitat III and the buzzing New Urban Agenda will inevitably create a more prominent profile for our field in the eyes of politicians, students, civil society, entrepreneurs, and the media. At the same time, other professions relevant to urbanism could also benefit from the higher exposure. The global cityscape is fast evolving, and so are the opportunities for our profession's future.

Should planning educators and professional leaders seek to seize the opportunity and help to transform planning into a major profession? Or should planning remain in the cosy status of a minor profession with open-ended, flexible, evolving boundaries that have navigated us safely to this point? The answers to these questions are not easy.

For those who think that planning should evolve towards becoming a major profession, I have tried to point out some of the steps that could be taken. First is globalisation, or more precisely, glocalisation. In order to become a globally strong profession, planners and planning academics need to be able to share areas of knowledge that are transferable, and at the same time, be able to distinguish these from knowledge embedded in the local context. Second is the establishment of stronger professional organisations with a will to define professional boundaries *vis-à-vis* competing professions. Third is strengthening the ties between academic institutions and professional organisations in order to ensure that planning education remains relevant to practice while leading to new horizons. The fourth step is to make efforts to obtain legal status for the profession, at least of "soft" versions. Among the various approaches to legal recognition I presented above, the Saskatchewan model is an interesting midway model.

However, there are reasons for scepticism about whether planning can or should seek to become one of the major professions. Is it realistic for the planning profession to evolve in this direction? The institutions of planning are not usually fortified by strong legal anchors, not even on the national scale, and certainly not on the supra-national scale. The professional turf for planners is fluid. This is part of the open-ended nature of planning and its effervescence. And yet, the speed by which planning education and the profession have evolved in only a few decades indicates that our profession possesses greater internal strengths than its loose format may indicate.

On a normative level, there are significant price tags for the evolution into a major profession. As analysed in the section about planning theory, the planning profession has built-in ambivalences about the measures entailed in building a major profession: fortification from other professions, inevitable distancing from the lay public, or the greater dependence on government that legal recognition entails. This ambivalence is embedded deep in the ethos of our profession.

Most likely, planning in different countries and regions of the world will evolve in different directions, sometimes in response to public policies or needs, sometimes due to other external or internal factors. An important stimulus for the planning profession could come from new planning laws under consideration in some developing countries (a topic beyond the scope of this paper). In any case, planners should never give up our profession's meta-mission of achieving more just societies. It is up to planning educators, scholars in planning theory, and the leaders of our dispersed professional organisations to prepare the planning profession to become a significant actor in meeting the challenges of global urbanism and a better future for all.

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CO-PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH FOR INTEGRATIVE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN PLANNING

David Brian Kaiser^a, Nadin Gaasch^b, Thomas Weith^c

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Abstract

Sustainable land use needs a manageable nexus of knowledge from planning practice, policy makers, the private economy, and civic society, as well as from scientific research. This is mutually dependent on the communicative and collaborative turn in spatial planning as well as by transdisciplinary research approaches. This paper offers an approach how to organise knowledge management and co-production of knowledge in the context of complex land use decisions. Therefore, a prototype of an internet-based knowledge platform is introduced based on a theoretical reflection of concepts for integrated information and knowledge management, as well as on practical experiences derived from a German case study. We conclude that sustainable land use requires Planning Support Systems (PSS) that combine transdisciplinary perspectives in order to co-produce robust knowledge. This also implies a transdisciplinary design of PSS. Challenges of implementation are discussed and further research is specified.

Keywords

Knowledge management, planning support systems, transdisciplinary research, land use change, decision-making capacity.

a (Corresponding author), Leibniz Centre for Agriculture Landscape Research (ZALF), Institute of Land Use Systems, Eberswalder Strasse 84, 15374 Muencheberg, Germany. E-mail: dbkaiser@zalf.de

b Leibniz Centre for Agriculture Landscape Research (ZALF), Institute of Socio-Economics, Muencheberg, Germany. E-mail: gaasch@zalf.de

c Leibniz Centre for Agriculture Landscape Research (ZALF), Institute of Socio-Economics, Muencheberg, Germany. E-mail: thomas.weith@zalf.de

1. Introduction

Spatial planning is integrative and interdisciplinary in nature (Salet, 2014). However, new land use drivers like climate change, the renewable energy supply, international interdependencies of resource markets, and demographic changes increase the complexity of handling the manifold demands on land (Müller and Munroe, 2014). Land use change and different land use demands can evoke a number of land use conflicts (amongst others, von der Dunk et al., 2011; Mann and Jeanneaux, 2009; Goetz, Shortle, and Bergstrom, 2005). Incompatible interests related to certain land-use units can cause negative social (social power imbalances), economic (decrease of agricultural productivity), and environmental impacts (loss of biodiversity due to land fragmentation), delaying the implementation of the normative goal of sustainable development. According to this complex environment for planning processes, spatial planning has to develop strategies dealing with high levels of uncertainty (unpredictable spatial developments), disagreement (conflicting aims), and distributed capacities (multi-stakeholder environments) (Hummelbrunner and Jones, 2013, p.2).

In response to these challenges, manifold demands on spatial planning are defined. For instance, the consideration of functional interdependencies requires a changing perspective from site-specific management to a more integrative perspective on different land use functions. In consequence, spatial planning that meets real-world problems and copes adequately with multi-dimensional questions of sustainable land use should coordinate and integrate spatial, sector-oriented, and temporal aspects (respecting intra- and inter-generational fairness) and cover the debate about norms and visions driving policy-making and decision processes (Cash et al., 2006a). Furthermore, spatial planning should respect functional perspectives of spatial development (Healey, 2004; Allmendinger et al., 2015) and evaluate impacts on and of land use (Faludi, 2000; Davoudi, 2006). Finally, it has to organise transdisciplinary processes, including different academic, and professional domains as well as civil society (Wickson, Carew, and Russell, 2006; Lang et al., 2012; Zscheischler, Rogga, and Weith, 2014). These demands on spatial planning are reflected by the communicative and collaborative turn from technical rationality, for instance (de Roo and Silva, 2010).

Handling land use and particularly land resources in a sustainable way will only be possible if all actors not only develop awareness for the problems involved, but are also prepared to generate, share, and actually put knowledge into practice (Cash et al., 2003; Campbell, 2012). This complexity – seen as a window of opportunity (de Roo and Silva, 2010) – defines new requirements in managing the different knowledge stocks. Cornell et al. (2013) point out the considerable relevance of the quality and validity of knowledge systems in the context of sustainability research. Quality and validity

depend on ensuring plurality, transparency and independence; furthermore, sustainability scientists have a responsibility to collaborate openly in knowledge co-production and its translation to action with other social actors within knowledge systems (Cornell et al., p.61).

Thus, knowledge management forms an essential component for future planning and land management (Davoudi, 2015). During the last decade, an elaborated system of participation and information management in spatial planning has emerged. This is also reflected in planning theories (Friedmann, 1987; Healey, 1996; Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones, 2002; Rydin, 2007) and changes in planning traditions (Ibert, 2003; Vonk, 2006; Laurian and Shaw, 2008). Hence, dealing with communication strategies and knowledge management is compulsory for the daily work of planners. This is represented in a variety of educational books about planning (e.g. Cullingworth et al., 2015 for the UK; Fürst and Scholles, 2008 for Germany).

Spatial planning uses different approaches for generating and organising knowledge – formal as well as non-formal types – such as sectoral and integrated plans, reports and comments, participation procedures, information events, or tools for decision support. However, instruments like these focus mainly on sectoral, short-term questions like planning permission procedures for bypass roads. Often, participatory forms of planning are predominantly discussed in the urban planning context (including Rubenstein-Montano, 2000; Saarloos et al., 2008; te Brömmelstroet, 2012). However, instruments of knowledge management addressing complex questions of sustainable land use and spatial development are rare.

Planning Support Systems (PSS) have proved to be adequate instruments to merge complex stocks of knowledge fostering sustainable spatial developments (Vonk, 2006). They have significantly grown in importance, especially thanks to the enormous progress in computer-related hardware and software that was also eliciting the transformation to knowledge-based society. Properly understood, PSS are aimed at supporting planning processes, managing stocks of knowledge, and generally improving planning regarding its results (te Brömmelstroet, 2013, p.300). Pelzer et al. (2014, p.24) stress that 'communication and collaboration have become critical components in the role of planning support'. However, low implementation rates of PSS in daily planning practice are still evident (te Brömmelstroet, 2012, p.96). In particular, gaps in PSS exist regarding the function of communication and knowledge management (Vonk, 2006).

The lack of knowledge management approaches is not solely a problem in spatial planning but in sustainability science on the whole. Miller et al. (2014, p.244) underline the current lack of knowledge management in sustainability research. Further, Kajikawa, Tacoa, and Yamaguchi (2014, p.438) stress the lack of transdisciplinary sustainability research that still deserves 'design principles'. Thus, current questions in sustainability science focus on the appropriate role of science – and especially of knowledge management – in contributing to action and decision-making for sustainability (Miller et al., 2014, p.244; Cornell et al., 2013).

The aim of the paper is to discuss the meaning of knowledge management in a highly complex planning context such as sustainable land use and land management. To this end, we present a conceptual approach in how to organise knowledge management and co-production of knowledge in the context of complex land use decisions. A concept for the further development of Planning Support Systems (PSS) from an informational to a communicating character will be introduced and discussed against the background of a transdisciplinary perspective and spatial development. Thus, the paper provides conceptual contributions to link knowledge from different sources, rationalities, spatial scales and channels, aiming at strengthening the depth of planning knowledge (Salet, 2014) and contributing to the development of robust¹ policy solutions (Scholz, 2015). As such, the paper combines discourses about knowledge management in the context of spatial planning – and particularly using PSS – as well as sustainability research.

According to these aims, the paper addresses the following research questions:

- Q1: How can knowledge management be established for supporting decision-making capacity?
- Q2: What framework is suitable for the co-production of spatial planning-related knowledge?
- Q3: How can knowledge management be organised in complex planning processes?
- Q4: What is the added value of integrated knowledge management for planning support systems?

First, we define the conceptual framework of knowledge management and PSS in the context of sustainable land management. Second, we present the concept and design of an information and communication technology based (ICT-based) knowledge platform that is already implemented and point out the methodological approach. Third, the approach is discussed with respect to its implementation in planning practice. Finally, we conclude with proposals for the further development of PSS.

2. Key Issues of Knowledge Management in Planning

2.1. Knowledge and Knowledge Management

On the way to a global knowledge society (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 1996; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2005), questions

¹ According to Scholz (2015), a 'socially robust orientation: 1) meets science state of the art scientific knowledge, 2) has the potential to attract consensus, and thus must be understandable by all stakeholder groups, 3) acknowledges the uncertainties and incompleteness inherent in any type of knowledge about processes of the universe, 4) generates processes of knowledge integration of different types of epistemics (e.g. scientific and experiential knowledge, utilizing and relating disciplinary knowledge from the social, natural, and engineering sciences), 5) considers the constraints given by the context both of generating and utilizing knowledge'.

about what knowledge management is and how the knowledge production process can be organised to promote knowledge sharing are becoming increasingly relevant every day. These questions are of major importance in the knowledge-based economy (OECD, 1996; North and Kumta, 2014) as well as in current research on sustainable development (Pohl et al., 2010) and particularly in spatial planning (Rubenstein-Montano, 2000; Vonk, 2006). Many definitions and models of knowledge management exist, representing different contexts, e.g. economic organisations, academic institutions or institutions of policy-making (Anand and Singh, 2011). The authors define knowledge management as the purposeful and strategic influence of activities and processes aiming at an effective transfer of tacit knowledge (embodied knowledge) into explicit knowledge (disembodied knowledge). The chief aim of knowledge management in planning is to provide access to explicit knowledge for participants and, subsequently, the successful utilisation and implementation of knowledge using collaborative learning processes in order to enhance decision-making for managing land use change. Information management (also known as information and data management) differs from this and encompasses the processes for the capture, selection, categorisation, indexing, retention and distribution of information (Kaiser, Köhler, and Weith, 2016).

According to the knowledge ladder by North and Kumta (2014), three action fields of information and knowledge management can be derived (see Figure 1). Information and data management is the basis for knowledge management. Strategic knowledge management traverses the knowledge ladder in a top-down approach to infer the needed knowledge from the requirements for desired knowledge goals. In the scope of operational information and knowledge management, the focus is on the bottom-up perception for answering the question of how embodied (tacit) knowledge can be transferred to disembodied (explicit) knowledge. However, this is a highly complex two-way or multi-way process that does not take place without incentives. Hence, the task of operational knowledge management includes the creation of framework conditions, which provide the motives and inducements for the production, sharing, and usage of knowledge. North (2011, p.37) emphasises that knowledge is 'the process of expedient interconnection of information'. Thus, the provision, storage, and distribution of information are essential items for knowledge production and transfer.

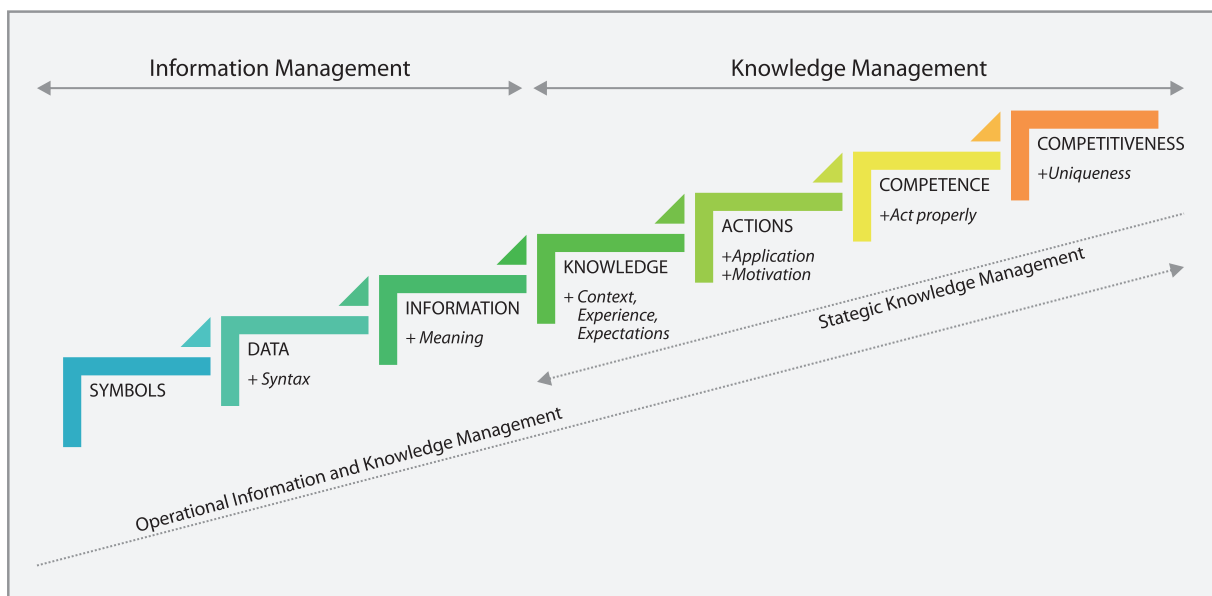


Figure 1: Knowledge Management Ladder
Source: North and Kumta (2014), revised

Inherent in the question of how embodied (tacit) knowledge can be transferred to disembodied (explicit) knowledge are aspects of learning and communication (Hasler Roumois, 2007, p.113). The process of learning can be well described by the SECI model by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995). The SECI model is a dynamic transformation process between explicit and tacit knowledge at different levels: socialisation, externalisation, combination and internalisation. After internalisation, the transformation process restarts from the beginning and the knowledge acquired can be passed back to the socialisation phase, whereby a spiral of knowledge is created. This learning cycle (or learning spiral) can be applied to both individuals and organisations.

The learning cycle model is usually divided into multi-learning levels: single-loop, double-loop, and triple-loop learning. The concepts are mainly based on works by Argyris and Schön (1974). The model can be simplified as outlined below (Pahl-Wostl, 2009): single-loop learning refers to the improvement of actions without changing the guiding values or revisiting the pre-specified strategic objectives of an organisation. Double-loop learning refers to a scrutinising of action goals and organisational guiding values. Argyris (1976) expounded on the concept of double-loop learning in the course of research of decision-making, and proposed the double-loop model as providing feedback and resulting in more effective decision-making. The triple-loop is 'learning to learn', which requires reflecting on single-loop and double-loop learning processes and an analysis of successes and failures. Pahl-Wostl (2009, p.359) outlined that 'the triple-loop learning concept aims at a refinement of the influence of governing variables in terms of governing assumptions and governing values'.

The learning processes must be complemented by actors who manage the processes of learning or knowledge cooperation. This is often a task of moderating (comparable to facilitators and partially mediating actors) (Stuetzer et al., 2013). Moderation implements the 'Cohesion Function' (i.e. to guide group work, to keep the group together, to introduce rules, to oversee, and to harmonise its members) as well as the 'Locomotion Function' (i.e. to set group work in motion and to ensure effective and focused working methods) (Ziegler, 1993). On this basis, the mediating actor fulfils two functions: those of discussion leader and consultant. Another concept of facilitated interaction is that of intermediaries, which is close to the method of moderation. Millar and Choi (2003, p.269) define knowledge intermediaries as organisations that 'facilitate a recipient's measurement of the intangible value of knowledge received'. One function of the knowledge intermediary is to provide firms and/or knowledge producers with a technology and knowledge transfer process in the context of regional innovation systems (Parker and Hine, 2013). The findings about intermediaries provide helpful clues to answer the question about who is responsible for knowledge management.

Regarding the transfer of knowledge, using a unidirectional or one-way transfer from knowledge producers to knowledge consumers (also called 'mode 1') to deal with information and knowledge flows cannot adequately reflect either the challenges of a decision-making process or of a planning support process in a complex, multi-stakeholder environment. This modus of science-policy interaction can be described as the 'science push' and/or the 'demand pull' model (Dilling and Lemos, 2011). The new focus of knowledge transfer activities also considers the communication, translation and mediation of knowledge (Cash et al., 2003). Gibbons et al. (1994) label this focus 'mode 2 knowledge' in the context of transdisciplinary research. The experiences of transdisciplinary research, primarily characterised by the cooperation of scientists and non-academic stakeholders, confirm the barriers and disadvantages of so-called 'mode-1' versus 'mode-2' knowledge production (Hirsch Hadorn et al., 2008). Thus, the assembling of different stakeholders in various groups throughout the whole process of planning is one of the crucial conditions for a sustainable decision-making process and a key pillar of the currently consolidating concept of transdisciplinarity (Gibbons et al., 1994; Pohl, 2011; Opdam et al., 2015). From this point of view, the mutual collaboration of the stakeholders concerned is required in order to support knowledge production, transfer and implementation – this is the idea behind the concept of the co-production of knowledge (Pohl et al., 2010; Enengel et al., 2012). Lemos and Morehouse (2005) argue that an iterative and interactive model for the co-production of science and policy requires interdisciplinarity, stakeholder participation, and the production of usable knowledge, which can be incorporated into all stakeholders' decision-making processes. They also acknowledge in this frame that usable knowledge 'not only must be tailored to fit stakeholders' needs and uses, but must also be made accessible to those users' (Lemos and Morehouse, 2005, p.62).

The concept of 'communities of practice' (CoP) is tailor-made for the complex challenges of integrative information and knowledge management, and gives answers to the question of what an adequate 'space' for organising knowledge management and co-production of knowledge is. CoPs are social structures that focus on knowledge and enable the management of knowledge to be placed in the hands of knowledge adopters (Wenger, 2004). The co-production of knowledge through collaborative learning between knowledge producers and adopters within CoPs is a more suitable approach for the implementation of knowledge systems than mere knowledge transfer (Roux et al., 2006; Rydin, Amjad, and Whitaker, 2007). The self-organising nature and the typically informal character of CoPs contribute to overcoming the lack of mutual engagement in two-way communication and the strategy-of-hope of knowledge transfer in push-pull strategies (Roux et al., 2006). Wenger (2004, p.3) describes the self-organising nature of CoP as being that practitioners 'need to be in dialogue with executives in the organisation, other CoP, and experts outside the organisation'. A web-based CoP can be

described as a suitable modern knowledge management tool, and needs the commitment of intermediaries in order to control or govern the knowledge transfer and transfer channels in a multi-stakeholder environment. This tool-based approach answers research question 1.

2.2. Managing Knowledge – The Meaning of Planning Support Systems (PSS)

PSS represent an instrument for organising different knowledge sources, rationalities, scales and channels. According to Klostermann (1997, p.51), 'PSS ... should be designed to provide interactive, integrative and participatory procedures for dealing with non-routine, poorly structured decisions'. Furthermore, he stresses that PSS 'must also pay particular attention to long-range problems and strategic issues and explicitly facilitate group interaction and discussion' (Klostermann, 1997, p.51). A distinction is thereby made between PSS and Decision Support Systems (DSS) and Spatial Decision Support Systems (SDSS), as the latter 'are generally designed to support shorter-term policy making by isolated individuals and organizations' (Klostermann, 1997, p.51).

Up until now, approaches to PSS which place knowledge as a resource at the focus of their attention are still in their infancy. The significance of knowledge as a resource has been increasing, along with the significance of participation in planning processes since the 1990s (in the sense of planning for citizens in order to plan with citizens). Even if the handling of knowledge has been part of the discussion in spatial sciences for quite a long time (as well as concepts of the knowledge society, knowledge regions, and learning regions), the management of complex stocks of knowledge is still challenging (Klostermann, 1997; Geertman, 2006). In the literature, various possibilities are presented for a system of knowledge management in, or rather for the benefit of, spatial planning.

Te Brömmelstroet and Bertolini (2008) have developed an approach to establishing a constructive and structured dialogue between modelling from the field of traffic planning on the one hand, and from spatial planning on the other, in order to make integrated planning possible at an early stage in the form of Mediated Planning Support. They highlight essential differences between the two groups of actors and emphasise the necessity of mutual learning processes, particularly with a view to the handling of tacit knowledge. Evers and Hofmeister (2010) have presented a participatory Planning Support System (pPSS) in the context of local site management. They define pPSS as a system to include local and narrative knowledge (Evers and Hofmeister, 2010, p.43). In contrast to information systems, a pPSS integrates exchanges, online discussions and online decision-making (Evers and Hofmeister, 2010, p.43). Rubenstein-Montano (2000, p.163) presents a methodical approach towards integrating Urban Information Systems more strongly into urban knowledge management: 'knowledge management encompasses much more than technologies for facilitating knowledge sharing' and emphasises the inclusion of cultural aspects and of tacit knowledge. Rinner, Keßler and Andrulis (2008, p.36) 'present an online map-based discussion forum that enables internet users to submit place-based comments and respond to contributions from other participants'. The internet is thereby regarded as an efficient tool for two-way communication in order both to support the discussion of spatial decision-making processes, and to participate in the shaping of the decision itself.

The approaches outlined here show the significance of knowledge and its management, but each embeds it in a rather narrow context of specific spatial challenges. As such, a pPSS inserts stakeholders into a specific time slot and confronts them with a specific question in order to receive additional information and positions during a particular planning step. This can accelerate the acceptance of planning decisions. The planning and decision process remains the responsibility of the operational institution. In contrast to that selective participation, the transdisciplinary approach integrates stakeholders throughout the entire planning process – from problem definition, through the development of solutions, and up to their implementation. This ensures the co-production of knowledge throughout all phases of the process. Nevertheless, current systems of pPSS constitute important aspects for transdisciplinary planning and decision processes.

At the same time, Vonk (2006, p.38) points out the fact that 'the ability of PSS to support communication between citizens, professional stakeholders and planners remains largely underused'. Up to now, PSS have dominated planning practice, especially as tools in project management and spatially-related information

systems (geographical information systems, GIS). GIS, in turn, is an essential component of PSS (Geertman and Stillwell, 2004, p.293) and are often, in cooperation with scientific facilities, complemented and validated by models (simulations, scenarios, etc.) (Celino and Concilio, 2010). Thus, the comprehensive PSS described above are not fully implemented in practice as yet (Vonk, Geertman and Schot, 2005; Geertman, 2006; te Brömmelstroet, 2013). This is attributed to various obstacles. Vonk, Geertman and Schot (2005, p.916) have come to the conclusion that the deployment of PSS in planning practice is first and foremost dependent upon previous experience in planning practice, the user-friendliness of the systems and the user's awareness of the potential of PSS. They further emphasise that both the quality of the data and its availability are important influential factors in planning practice that decisively determine the effective deployment of PSS. Geertman (2006, p.865) summarises the major obstacles as follows: PSS are

too generic, complex, inflexible, incompatible with the wicked nature of most planning tasks oriented towards technology rather than problems, incompatible with the less formal and unstructured information needs and too focused on strict rationality.

Te Brömmelstroet (2013, p.306) also points to the fact that only a few PSS have been evaluated. The satisfaction of those actors who had been involved in the development of the PSS or were intended to use the PSS is also largely under-evaluated (te Brömmelstroet, 2013, p.304; also Laurian and Shaw, 2008; Faehnle and Tyrväinen, 2013).

To conclude, spatial planning, as an intermediary, needs feasible structures for managing different knowledge stocks and, thus, complexity in land use. PSS constitute one suitable instrument to cope with uncertainties, multi-actor-environments and conflicting land use demands by offering planners and decision makers opportunities to test scenarios on spatial development and discuss potential interventions. At this point, hardware and software of PSS have been sufficiently developed to meet even the requirements of participative approaches. Nevertheless, resilient responses to real-world problems are rare (te Brömmelstroet, 2012). In particular, gaps in PSS exist regarding the function of communication and knowledge management (Vonk, 2006). In consequence, further developments are desirable from both a scientific and user-oriented point of view, handling complex knowledge bases in order to address comprehensive questions of sustainable land use and spatial development.

3. A Prototype for Knowledge Platforms: An ICT-based Approach

Taking into account Davoudi's (2015) concept, 'planning as practice of knowing', grasping the knowledge-action relationship, this section describes the development of a framework and the implementation of a knowledge platform that is labelled as a 'knowledge library'. The platform provides users with opportunities for efficient information and knowledge brokering, sharing, and transfer within a transdisciplinary environment for the linking of knowledge with action.

The findings about knowledge management frameworks in the context of land use and spatial planning in Section 2 serve as a guideline for a conceptual design of an integrated knowledge management system considering aspects of transdisciplinarity. Figure 2 shows a simplified framework for a knowledge management system organised within a CoP.

The conceptual design elaborated below includes knowledge suppliers and adopters, the three modes of science-policy interaction (henceforth referred to as modes of transfer), and the mutual learning process. The first mode of transfer is analogous to the 'loading dock' approach by Cash, Borck and Patt (2006b), where knowledge suppliers set the knowledge agenda often without regard for users' needs (science-push strategy). In the second mode of transfer, new knowledge is set by those making decisions outside the scientific community (demand-pull strategy; Dilling and Lemos, 2011). In contrast, in the third transfer modus (co-production of knowledge), both parties adopt the understandings of producer and user, and link knowledge. Intermediaries take up the function of governing or co-governing, as well as facilitating knowledge flows, and they help to bridge the knowledge-action gap between producers and users (Millar and Choi, 2003). Therefore,

the fusion of the three modes of transfer and the multi-level organisational learning cycle inside the CoP is desirable. This is a sequential approach where the intermediaries:

- link the knowledge of suppliers and adopters,
- analyse their appropriate knowledge transfer strategy in the context of their disciplines (push and pull strategy), and
- adjust the organisational learning cycles for the agreement of common action goals.

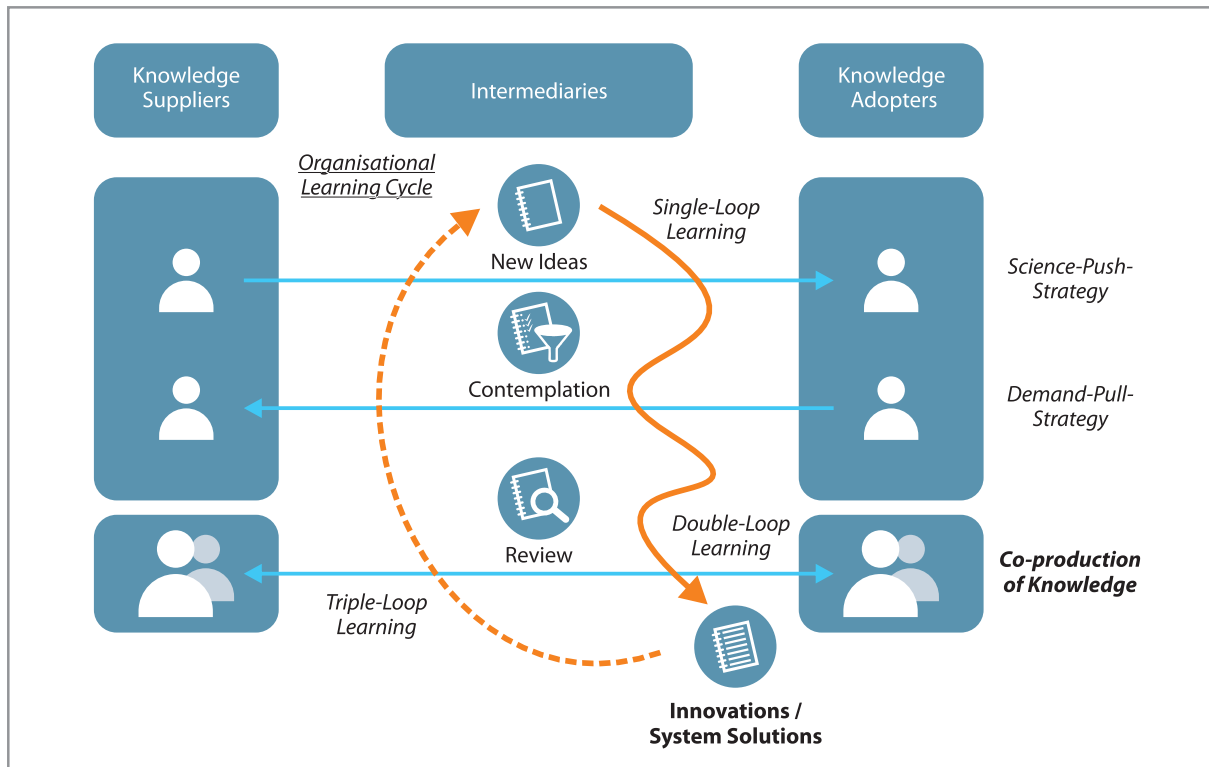


Figure 2: Knowledge Management Framework for a Community of Practice (CoP).
Source: the authors.

At the first stage, the task of single-loop learning is to bring stakeholders together on a common level by analysing the supply and demand of innovations or system solutions. On this basis, new ideas are developed or already existing ideas are reframed. The contemplation of mutually developed (new) ideas proceeds to a comprehensive review of common action goals at the third stage. This is a double-loop process and requires the mutual co-production that a CoP provides. A triple-loop approach is necessary if unsatisfactory agreements on common action goals arise. This conceptual framework answers research question 2.

Table 1 gives a summary of the sequential approach of knowledge management for enhancing decision-making capacity in a spatial planning context.

This section illustrates the practical implementation of the concept outlined above. Integrated information and knowledge management driven by a CoP is the basic idea for the implementation of this internet-based platform. The knowledge platform is deliberately titled the 'knowledge library' so that the users already associate the platform with information and knowledge storage. A special feature of the knowledge library is its bilingual design – in German and English. Here, the knowledge library functions as the data, information and knowledge broker for sustainable land management. The disembodied, explicit knowledge is the major type of knowledge for brokering through the knowledge platform. However, a conversation about selected knowledge library contents within a CoP can facilitate the transfer of tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge, particularly by using the integrated online discussion board called the Forum. The Forum is an interactive user interface (Web 2.0 tool) that offers knowledge suppliers and adopters in transdisciplinary research projects the opportunity to perform the indexing of knowledge products jointly in order to increase visibility for the target group and to strengthen transfer and implementation. This is the chief added value of a knowledge library in handling complex multi-stakeholder communities.

Table 1: Sequential Approach of Knowledge Management for Enhancing Decision-making Capacity in a Spatial Planning Context

Approach	Modes of transfer	Knowledge pathway ¹	The key role of intermediaries	Knowledge transfer
Single-loop-learning	Science-push-strategy	$S \Rightarrow I \Rightarrow A$	Facilitating of learning process and group interaction	Transfer of (new) spatial planning frames from scientists to planners and decision makers; ² based on data and information
Single-loop-learning	Demand-pull-strategy	$A \Rightarrow I \Rightarrow S$	Facilitating of learning process and group interaction	Transfer of (new) spatial planning concepts from decision makers and planners to scientists; ² based on data and information
Double-loop-learning	Co-production of knowledge	$S \Leftrightarrow I \Leftrightarrow A$	Arrangement of mutual planning action aims	Collaborative knowledge production by contemplating planning action aims and problem framing - first outcomes are possible; ² applied (new) co-produced knowledge in frame of planning action goals by further development of competence
Additional approach for complexity processes in a planning community:				
Triple-loop-learning	Co-production of knowledge	$S \Leftrightarrow I \Leftrightarrow A$	Collaborative reframing of the structural system by an iterative approach (paradigm shift)	Readjustment of the regional system of spatial planning aims (e.g. change in spatial planning's regulatory frameworks); ² development of competitiveness
Organisational learning cycle	Co-production of knowledge	$A \Leftrightarrow (I) \Leftrightarrow S$	Establishing of self-organising structures	Qualify the CoP in mutual co-production of tacit to explicit knowledge for improved outcomes related to spatial planning aims; ² establishing knowledge-based competitiveness

Source: the authors

¹ S = Knowledge suppliers | I = Intermediaries | A = Knowledge adopters² Relationship to the knowledge management concept in Figure 1

User access to the information and knowledge stocks runs via five category-based paths. These paths are categorised by five main groups: products, audience, subjects, regions, and projects. Figure 3 is a screenshot showing the landing page for the knowledge library. On the left side, everyday navigation of the website is represented. In the middle field, the heading is at the top and a customised full-text search engine to the entire database of the knowledge library is provided at the bottom. Above the heading, a category-based search engine especially developed for the library enables more focused access to the collected data. In between, a short introduction manual describing the function and the applications of the knowledge library is displayed.

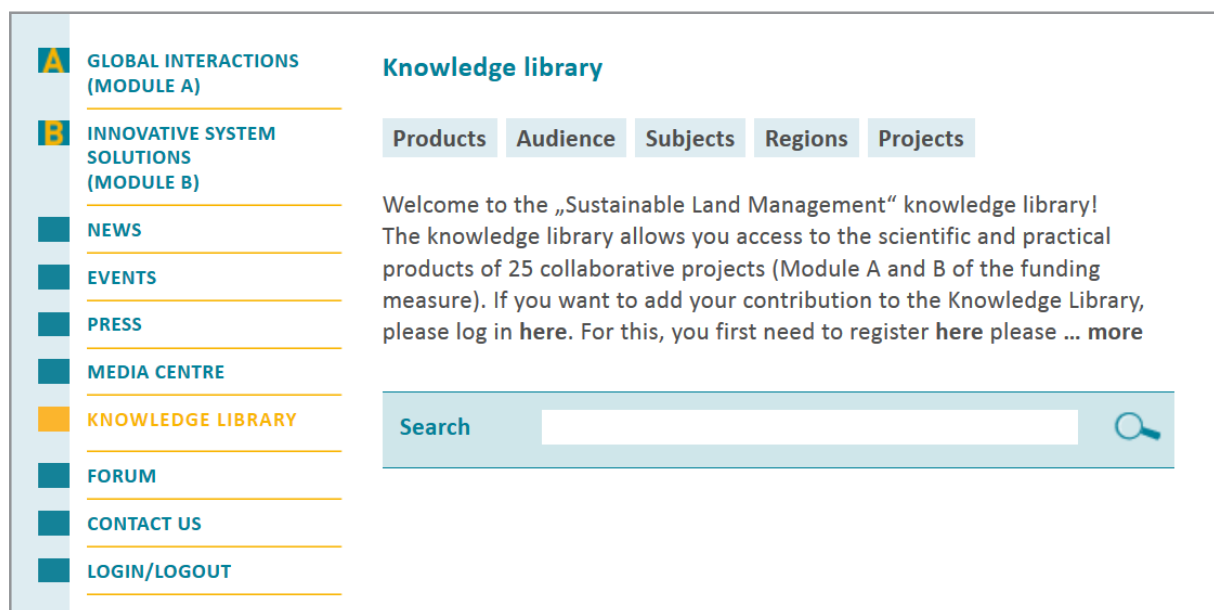


Figure 3: The Knowledge Library of 'Sustainable Land Management'

Source: the authors (available on: <http://nachhaltiges-landmanagement.de/en/library/documents/>)

One of the key challenges in dealing with internet-based knowledge platforms concerns the visibility of information and knowledge stocks. In order to optimise this process, a category-based approach was chosen, supplemental to the conventional search mechanism. In addition, each category is specified by category-specific keywords. In the best case, the indexing of each dissemination product (i.e. an article, video, image, or hyperlink) is made by the knowledge suppliers themselves. However, with a multi-stakeholder community, ambiguousness of terms often leads to multiple mentions of keywords. Therefore, the role of intermediaries is crucial in the mutual indexing process.

To increase the acceptance of both categories and keywords, we employed a 'social tagging' method, in which 'priority users' select the categories and keywords themselves. Priority users were those who participated in research projects (scientists and practitioners) involved in the funding programme 'Sustainable Land Management'. Social tagging is a method of indexing documents with content descriptive data that enables suppliers to index their documents themselves, which is also called folksonomy. Folksonomies have become a new type of knowledge organisation system (Weller, 2010, p.70). In the case of the knowledge library, the method of social tagging was applied in an adapted form by creating categories with corresponding keywords (the indexing process). Utilising selected participants of research projects and the intermediaries of the funding programme (Weith et al., 2010) helps the mutual indexing process by facilitating the accessibility of knowledge demands and revealing users' tangential interests. The process of social tagging promotes a strategy of linking knowledge with action by overcoming the lack of mutual understanding of synonymously used content-descriptive data. Folksonomies, or specifically the social tagging method, partly answered research question 3.

Usage of the knowledge library is explicitly not reserved to registered users only. However, only registered users are authorised to upload dissemination products to the knowledge library (i.e. articles, videos, images, or hyperlinks) in order to show their results. As members upload their dissemination product, the system asks them to tag their uploaded product with default tags. This means users' access to the knowledge library will be crucially supported by categorised keywords (tags).

Table 2 summarises suitable and applied problem-solving approaches for the explicit challenges of PSS. In the left column, the main challenges of PSS are shown, whereas the right column contains options about how to cope with current challenges of PSS. For enhanced decision-making capacity, these problem-solving approaches meet current demands in planning research, as 'the collaborative process should contribute to interrelate concerns of different actors and nurture their capacity to mobilize specific networks to contribute to sustainability' (Faehnle and Tyrväinen, 2013).

Table 2: Applied ICT-Based Problem-Solving Approaches for Enhanced PSS

Challenges of PSS	Applied Problem-Solving Approaches
... should be designed to provide interactive, integrative and participatory procedures for dealing with non-routine, poorly structured decisions (Klostermann, 1997)	The Co-production of Knowledge via the Knowledge Platform (Knowledge Library and Forum)
... must also pay particular attention to long-range problems and strategic issues and explicitly facilitate group interaction and discussion (Clarke, 1990; cited in Geertman and Stillwell, 2004)	The Community of Practice (CoP) within the Knowledge Platform
... are generally designed to support shorter-term policy-making by isolated individuals and organisations (Clarke, 1990; cited in Geertman and Stillwell, 2004)	Open Access to the Knowledge Library and the Forum
... transfer embodied tacit knowledge into disembodied explicit knowledge	The Organisational Learning Cycle (double- and/or triple-loop learning) within the CoP of the Knowledge Library and the Forum
... manage and facilitate the process of mutual learning and knowledge cooperation	The Intermediaries of the Knowledge Platform

Source: the authors

4. Rating the Prototype: Strengths and Options for Further Development

The concept of the ICT-based knowledge platform meets the need for integrated information and knowledge management as well as the challenges of PSS. In particular, the platform includes problem-solving approaches that have already been applied (see Table 2). This is the strength of the platform. In detail, the knowledge platform contributes to:

- mutual planning agenda-setting in complex multi-stakeholder environments (see Table 1),
- bridging the knowledge-action gap between science and practice,
- the initiation of learning cycles for facilitated transferring of embodied into disembodied knowledge (transdisciplinary approach and grasp) and for improving consensus,
- the contemplation of and reflection on existing knowledge as well as the reframing of normative or pre-normative values,
- purposeful and effective dialogue processes,
- adequate stakeholder participation, and
- potential utilisation of metadata by intermediaries and users themselves.

In addition, the knowledge platform concept seems to be an appropriate model for a co-produced PPGIS (Public Participation Geographic Information Systems; Sieber, 2006). According to generally accepted definitions of PSS which call for GIS components, the platform might be not promoted as a PSS in the conventional sense. However, in a broader understanding, the platform can be seen as a reframed PSS, providing not only information but knowledge. The experiences of developing and implementing the platform are especially worthwhile for further developments of PSS, in particular to fill the gaps regarding communication and knowledge management functions. The platform provides basic structures for mutual learning, enhances decision support capacity and, finally, strengthens robust decisions that will gain considerable acceptance in politics and society. Notably, it contributes to dealing with the complexities and irrationalities of social reality (Salet, 2014, p.295) by allowing uncertainties to be discussed in the Forum.

Salet (2014, p.298) defines five dimensions to verify the provision of 'authentic' spatial planning knowledge. We use them for a preliminary assessment of the developed platform. Salet refers to the 'normative sense of spatial direction', 'normative dimension of knowledge', 'dimension of action', 'dimension of existing practices', and 'dimension of emergent practices'. Taking these five dimensions as benchmarks helps to understand and evaluate the platform against the requirements of planning practices, taking the current development status of the platform into account. The platform addresses the first and second dimension by integrating the different products and positions of all actors that are interested in the topic. The Forum offers the possibility not only to foster scientific knowledge exchange, but also exchange between practitioners, and between scientists and practitioners. In this way, multi-knowledge management is stimulated. By tagging the products and using the category-based search engine, normative ideas about space-specific developments can be found and users can exchange these ideas via the Forum. The other dimensions reveal the limitations of the platform. This is caused by the fact that the platform has indeed been implemented, but experiences about user behaviour in the long run are missing at this point. Nevertheless, the platform is designed as a tool to manage knowledge that is relevant for upcoming action. However, the organisation of future activities is not the main objective of the platform (although it can be further developed and used in this way). Currently, we actively promote the platform in a multi-stakeholder environment to raise awareness about the possibilities of the knowledge platform and to motivate users to cooperate during the process.

In the future, we anticipate further challenges regarding the evaluation of (real-world) outcomes supported by the knowledge platform. The evaluation process is not a single task for knowledge adopters or intermediaries, but rather a mutual process in a frame of references analogous to the triple-loop approach. Moreover, one weakness of the platform might be the facilitation of long-term continuation of dialogue processes and stakeholder participation, which is strongly linked with the funding period (lack of personnel and financial resources).

Finally, from our point of view, the platform as it has been designed and implemented provides theoretical and practical solutions how to cope with the challenge to interlink PSS and knowledge management much better. The co-production of knowledge fostered by a CoP fills the communication gaps by paying more attention to the dimensions of novelty and cohesion (te Brömmelstroet, 2013, p.305). Further, the implementation of the knowledge library within a CoP meets the demand of Geertman (2015, p.329), who calls for integrated communities of PSS research and practice 'in which the instrumental development and planning application of PSS will be driven by developers and potential users in an interactive, incremental and iterative process'. Moreover, the management approach tackles the lack of systematic approaches and improves planning processes, especially regarding the challenges of visibility (by the open access characteristic) and consensus (by the organisational learning cycle). The integrated character of a CoP is an added value for PSS and contributes

to answering research question 4. However, more empirical results about user behaviour and user demand are necessary to assess practical use.

5. Lessons Learnt: Conclusion and Outlook

The usefulness of PSS is given by improving the effectiveness and efficiency of planning processes and planning outcomes. Scientific studies nonetheless reveal that, despite well-engineered hardware and software, there are still many obstacles in implementing PSS in planning practice. In the current practice of sustainable land management, DSS or GIS are primarily used in order to analyse sectoral questions and to provide information for planning practice. The development of learning systems and the differentiated management of knowledge have only played a minor role so far. Above all, this can be traced back to the fact that knowledge is often simplistically equated with information and communication to third parties realised by one-way implementation and transfer. Despite the claim of transdisciplinary research, the theoretical-conceptual confrontation with (tacit and explicit) knowledge and the management thereof is often poor.

In consequence, the concept for an integrated ICT-based knowledge platform presented above reflects the possibilities for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of planning processes and planning outcomes in combination with a PSS. Thus, the paper merges discourses about sustainability research and knowledge management, developing more robust solutions for sustainable land use.

The chief function of the knowledge platform ('knowledge library'), which is already developed and in use, is to bridge communication gaps in planning practices, taking a multi-stakeholder environment into consideration. This occurs by supporting knowledge co-production within a CoP. The overall goal is linking knowledge with action to co-produce robust solutions for promoting sustainable land use and reducing land use conflicts by:

- bringing together scientists, practitioners and public stakeholders, working on real-world problems,
- addressing core activities in knowledge management,
- dealing with complexity,
- initiating learning cycles, and
- co-governing (public) participation processes.

In Germany, spatial planning authorities at regional level might be appropriate intermediary units for using such a platform to coordinate different knowledge stocks and to co-produce knowledge for robust land use solutions – this in respect to communicative and collaborative planning. Moreover, we illustrate options for the further development of PSS in order to advance its implementation. Although the knowledge platform presented in this paper has been implemented, long-term experiences with its application are still inconclusive. Due to the prototypical character of the platform the results are not yet exhaustive.

The platform we have developed constitutes an approach that particularly meets the complex requirements of sustainable land management, going beyond existing approaches to spatial planning and its competences. The platform offers a methodical framework of how to handle complexity in an environment of trans-sectoral target settings. Thus, it serves as a blueprint for collecting, bundling, explaining, and providing knowledge that is sometimes extremely heterogeneous. It also proves to be an adequate tool to enhance learning processes. Spatial planning, or those institutions entrusted with spatial development, could take up a moderation function to balance various land use demands, using the platform as an intermediary instrument. Beyond that, it also might be a promising approach for innovative landscape conflict management, negotiating the demands of various stakeholders. Nevertheless, the methodological improvements of knowledge management tools require reliable evaluations of the tools themselves regarding the applicability as well as the outputs and outcomes. This is a task for the future, as it is for all other improvements in PSS systems.

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LIMITS OF LOCALISM: FOUR DIMENSIONS OF POWER

Ali Madanipour^a

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Abstract

A trend in the planning discourse tends to portray the local in a positive light. This paper critically examines localism and regionalism, from a theoretical point of view, to find out whether this positive outlook may be maintained. First the ontology of the local is examined, with its substantive, relational and experiential aspects. As a complex, multi-dimensional process, localism is then analysed at the intersection of four dimensions of power: territorial, representational, institutional, and functional. Boundaries are drawn, representations created, relations within and beyond the locality arranged, and functions allocated. The analysis shows a tendency to essentialise the local as a finished, circumscribed, commodified product, at odds with its multiplicity, diversity, inequality, porous boundaries and relational reality. There is also a gap between the definitions and functions allocated to the local in a hierarchical division of labour, relations with intra- and extra-local political and economic forces, and the mythological narratives of autonomy.

Keywords

Localism, power, multiplicity, decentralisation, reductionism.

a School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU, UK.
E-mail: ali.madani@newcastle.ac.uk

1. Introduction

Localism is on the agenda of planners and policy makers in many countries and in different guises, which share an emphasis on place, community, locality, and region as the locus of policy and practice (Department for Communities and Local Government [DCLG], 2011; Royal Town Planning Institute [RTPI], 2015; Stead, 2014; Hadjimichalis and Hudson, 2014). These variations are exemplified by place-making, place-based regeneration, community-based planning and development (RTPI, 2015; Hambleton, 2015; Gleye, 2015; Hildreth and Bailey, 2014; Turok, 2013), by the drive towards regionalism in Europe and elsewhere (Everingham, 2009; Browski, 2014; Keating and Wilson, 2014), and by the recent policy of localism and neighbourhood planning in the United Kingdom (DCLG, 2011; RTPI, 2016). The continued emphasis on place, locality, community and region, therefore, has led to a positive image of localism and regionalism, which is advocated as a progressive aim, ensuring that a locality's future is shaped by the locals, rather than imposed on them by higher-level decision makers, with implications for democracy, self-determination, ecological sustainability, and cultural authenticity (Featherstone et al., 2012; Williams et al., 2014; Davoudi and Madanipour, 2015). In this paper, I aim to undertake a critical examination of localism to find out whether it reflects the conditions of, and the different attitudes towards, localities. Rather than an analysis of the current policies of austerity localism in the United Kingdom (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012; Sturzaker and Shaw, 2015; Tait and Inch, 2016), the aim here is to develop a theoretical examination of the concept of localism in a broader context, and whether the positive expectations associated with localism in planning may be maintained.

To undertake this examination, I have adopted two basic but interrelated conceptual methods: analytical, to break down the concept of the local and localism into smaller parts and their relationships; and perspectival, to look at localism from different perspectives and see whether it has the same meaning for different parties. Localism is about the local, so the first step in the inquiry would be investigating the ontology of the local, which shows what its elements are, how they are related to one another, and how they are experienced. This investigation dissects the local into its constituent parts and processes, which guards against essentialism and becomes a basis for analysing localism as a complex, multi-dimensional attitude to the local. Four such dimensions are identified, which are powerful forces with overlapping features. First, localism finds a territorial dimension, drawing boundaries around a locality, finding a clear material manifestation and target of attention. Second, localism constructs the representations of the local, so as to communicate a particular image of the local and render it distinguishable from other localities. Third, localism asserts institutional distinctiveness, which is expressed in the relations of power and the idea of local autonomy. Fourth, localism assigns particular functions and roles to localities within a hierarchy of power, as expressed in containment and decentralisation.

These four dimensions of localism, territorial, representational, institutional, and functional are forms of power at work in the processes of localism, constructing particularity for a locality. They are the power to delineate, to represent, to control, and to allocate, forming a nexus through which localism can be critically analysed; a critique of power at an important juncture.

2. The Ontology of the Local: Enduring Essence?

The term 'local' appears in many European languages, with applications in a variety of fields, from mathematics and grammar to law, medicine and theology. These various definitions, nevertheless, all seem to share a core meaning, derived from classical Latin *localis*, which means relating to locus, which in turn is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as 'the place in which something is situated or occurs'. Local, therefore, means relating to place: 'Of, relating to, inhabiting, or existing in a particular place or region'.

The terms place, region and local appear very regularly in the urban and regional planning discourse. The 'place' is seen as the desired outcome of a 'making' process, as seen in the widespread use of the term place-making (RTPI, 2015; Ng, 2016; Shaw and Montana, 2016). On the one hand, the place is branded to have a distinctive identity in the marketplace (Kavartzis et al., 2015). On the other hand, its distinctiveness is thought of as the opposite of the open-ended space, rootless capitalism, heightened mobility, and alienating globalisation (Castells, 1997; Stevenson and Blanche, 2015). Place and region are used as indications of scale, in which geographical space and governance institutions are organised in a hierarchy of levels and roles, elements

around which the governance of diverse urban areas is built (Poppe and Young, 2015; Hum, 2010). The change of jurisdictional scales is critically assessed to be a manifestation of neoliberal globalisation, but the change of natural scales is seen to have potentially positive implications for ecological processes (Hobson et al., 2016; Cohen and McCarthy, 2015).

While it has long been argued that places are not fixed or homogeneous (Massey, 1994), the notion that places can be made, branded, rescaled, and protected seems to hint at the ontological fixity of a 'thing' that can be clearly defined, shaped and controlled. In practice, however, places are continually in flux, made of multiplicity, diversity and change, rather than an enduring essence that can be made and maintained. The local is not an instant creation, nor a fixed and permanent entity; it has a history and an association to a geographical location and material environment, but it is also subject to continual change.

The definition of the local would partly depend on what it is assumed to be made of, and on the nature of the relationship between its constituent elements. Is it made of individuals, households, groups, tribes, and social classes (Hollis, 2002)? Is it a homogenous entity made of similar parts or a heterogeneous collection of different elements, as it has long been recognised (Aristotle, 1992)? Are the relationships between these parts and elements harmonious and interdependent, or are they divergent or conflictual (Durkheim, 1972; Hill and McCarthy, 1999)? Rather than being merely harmonious, recurring and continuous (Durkheim, 1972; Parsons, 1952), these relations may equally be discordant, conflictual, and unstable (Foucault, 2002). Is it made only of social agents, such as individuals and firms, or is it also made of social relations and institutions, which are the changing and recurring patterns of relationship between these social agents (Lefebvre, 1991; Bourdieu, 2000)? Is it limited to the human world, or does it also include the material environment of which they are a part (Lefebvre, 1991; Arendt, 1958)? Is the local made of only the local agents and relations, or does it also include the extra-local within it (Hobsbawm, 1990; Anderson, 1991; Massey, 1994)? Is the local a stable thing or a set of changing relationships (Heidegger, 1978; Norberg-Schultz, 1980)? In a rapidly changing world, can it be imagined as a stable and unchanging object or a historical phenomenon always going through change (Briggs, 1968; Tönnies, 1957; Halbwachs, 1992; Rossi, 1982)? Can the local be perceived from a single perspective or experienced from the variety and diversity that make up the social world, its memories and practices (Halbwachs, 1992; Moghaddam, 1998)?

The debates that follow these questions pose serious challenges to the understanding of the local as a fixity, with significant normative implications for the way localism is projected. The answers, which will be explored in the following sections, show that the ontology of the local may be analysed through its substantive, relational and experiential dimensions. This means that, within continually changing circumstances, the multiplicity and diversity of people, objects and relationships are interlinked in various ways, and experienced from a variety of perspectives. The local is not a fixed thing, but a multiplicity made of different elements in relationship with each other; it is a series of processes that unfold in time, embodied in a material context, and always exposed to the impact of external and internal forces. The ontology of the local shows multiplicity, diversity, relationality, historicity, materiality, and change, albeit with different paces and extents. The ontology of the local is simultaneously substantive, relational and experiential, simultaneously spatial and temporal, which reflects, and is reflected in, the way the local is represented and delineated, and subsequently on the meaning and character of localism.

3. Localism as Favouring the Local: Whose Local?

Localism is defined in both descriptive and normative ways. As a descriptive term, it refers to some characteristics that are associated with a particular place. Therefore, the cultural habits or expressions of an area may be called its localisms, such as linguistic or architectural localisms. It is, however, the normative use of the word that predominates in the planning and policy literature. In a normative definition, localism involves a value judgement, an emotional attachment, and a policy orientation, all displaying the inclination to favour the local. Localism's definition by the Oxford English Dictionary refers to a 'preference for a particular place or region, esp. that in which one lives' and, more broadly, the 'tendency to favour what is local'. Both in its descriptive and normative meanings, localism is closely linked with regionalism as a parallel concept: a description of regional features, and an attitude of favouring the region or regional forms of politics and culture.

Favouring the local requires a clear definition of what that local is. As we have seen, however, the diversity and multiplicity of the local, and its substantive, relational and experiential dimensions are a challenge to identifying whose local is being discussed, problematising the relations of power that are involved. Four dimensions of these power relations may be identified: the power to delineate, the power to represent, the power to control, and the power to allocate.

3.1. The Territories of the Local: Which Boundaries?

Is it enough to draw boundaries around any particular area and call it a place, or should it have specific qualities to be called as such? The core meaning of the terms local and place is their particularity, difference and delineation. These qualities distinguish them from what is general, universal and open, as exemplified in the well-known distinction between place and space. The question, however, is how space is divided into places, and what the basis is for drawing boundaries around an area to call it a place, in the context of multiplicity and diversity, and the difficulties of distinguishing the local from the extra-local. How porous and open is it, or should it be, to outside forces (Massey, 1994)?

To localise primarily means to restrict something to a particular place. It is synonymous with confining, containing, restraining, concentrating, and delimiting, all referring to the act of drawing boundaries around something for determining its limits. The problem becomes how to delineate the local, by whom and to what extent of rigidity. The delineation of the territory lies at the heart of what it means to be local. It is here that the local finds its most concrete form, in its most reductive formula, through the introduction of clear boundaries that would determine who and what is or is not local. It is here that the representations of the locality find material form, legal status, and an institutional apparatus to reinforce it. It is here that the practical considerations for the management of the territory, the development of spatial strategies and plans, and the control of disputes with neighbours and others would also give shape to physical and legal boundaries. As any plan or project can testify, planning processes are centrally involved in the determination of these boundaries as they are necessary frameworks for the collection and analysis of information, division of labour, clarification of responsibilities, and mobilisation of resources (Paasi and Zimmerbauer, 2016). The problem, however, is when these boundaries are reified, fixed as rigid lines of separation, ignoring the complex and interdependent nature of localities.

The process of boundary setting has been discussed widely through the opposition of place to space, a bounded territory with fixed identity and emotional content versus a limitless abstraction with no particular meaning, an opposition that found a clear expression in the battles of postmodernism versus modernism (Harvey, 1989; Logan and Molotch, 1987; Sennet, 1995). In substantive, relational and experiential terms, this delineation can be observed at all levels: delineating a territory, limiting its institutions and social relations, and trying to define and protect its particularities. The process of localisation is based on this delineation. More than anything else, it is the process of delineation that determines the local, which localises a series of elements and designates them as the local. It is here that in and out, us and them, local and extra-local, and other forms of binary distinction are made. Drawing the boundaries is the exertion of power to determine what lies on either side of the divide. It is a process of sorting and designating, which is indeed an exercise of power over the lives of those who happen to be inside or be affected by falling on the outside. The process of delineation is not limited to making spatial distinctions between the local and the rest of the world; it is also about the process of sorting within the spatial boundaries of the local, making internal subdivisions with their inherent power relations (Yang et al., 2015).

Constructing boundaries around a territory, therefore, may be practically necessary in policy processes, but it is equally necessary to maintain a critical outlook on how, by whom, and why these boundaries are made. Are these processes acknowledging the actual porosity of the place, or are they enclosing the locality artificially and ideologically, especially when the local is understood as a series of democratic social relationships rather than mere containers for power (Lefebvre, 1991)?

3.2. The Representations of the Local: Whose Voice?

If the local is made of diverse and multiple elements that are at once substantive, relational and experiential, representing it would be expected to reflect this multidimensionality. However, providing an account of this complexity becomes a serious challenge, as there will be multiple and competing accounts of a multifarious reality. Many accounts would be presented and each account would be told from a different perspective, recounting a different set of circumstances and experiences, and expecting it to lead to different outcomes. The basic question about representing the local is therefore the problem of how to deal with a cacophony of voices that are heard about a locality, both from within and from outside it; as well as the problem of the voices that remain unheard and the stories that are untold.

The concept of public interest, which claimed to represent all of these voices, and therefore claimed legitimacy for planning, has long been questioned (Sorauf, 1957). Simultaneously, planning was accused of representing the views and interests of a social and technical elite, an accusation that continues to this day, even after acknowledging the diversity and inequality of society and the political nature of planning (Gans, 1968; Gunder, 2010). The middle-class professionals were accused of being out of step with the reality of social life, and their claims to knowledge were questioned to be technical and managerial, rather than democratic and inclusive. While some argued for representing the voices of the disadvantaged groups in the planning process, others argued for facilitating the participation of these groups in the process through a dialogue, in the hope of eventually building a harmonious consensus (Davidoff, 1965; Innes and Booher, 2004). Harmony and consensus, however, were beyond reach in an increasingly diverse and unequal society; the dialogue was often held between the public and private sector stakeholders in partnerships for development projects, and the unheard voices remained outside the dialogue (Hum, 2010; Akintoye et al., 2015; Huxley and Yiftachel, 2000; Harvey, 2003).

The representation of the local becomes a contested process in which different parties with differing levels of power and influence produce instrumental, and potentially incompatible, narratives and images. The researchers, policy makers and planners, investors, and activists are all involved in the projection of a narrative that would reflect their perspective. No one is or can be in a purely neutral position to produce an all-encompassing representation, or to produce an account that can capture the potentially vast range of voices that can represent the place. Many representations of the local, therefore, tend to ignore the basic features of diversity and multiplicity; rather than relating to the complex reality on the ground, they may resort to clichés and ready-made images, aiming to project an image of homogeneity of the present, and a single destination for the future. To produce an understandable and persuasive representation of the local which can communicate with others, therefore, reductive narratives are employed to give desirable shapes to fluid and complex circumstances. Reductionism is inherently an exclusionary process in which the image of the local may be constructed in negative terms, justifying wholesale redevelopment, gentrification, or further stigmatisation of an already deprived place (Madanipour, Cars and Allen, 2003). Reductionism and exclusionary effects are also at work when positive images are created through marketing and branding.

Branding turns the local into a commodity in the global marketplace, attaching a positive representation which can be used in marketing and promotion (Kavaratzis et al., 2015; Ashworth, 1990). As competition becomes the dominant form of relationship in neoliberalism (Foucault, 2008), and as cities and regions behave like private firms (Touraine, 1995), the place and the locality as a whole become a commodity and the subject of economic exchange. To stand out in a crowded market, local authorities rely on quality and on product differentiation, hoping to make their locality distinctive through branding and advertising (Simmie, 2003). The economic interpretation of the local privileges the base over the non-base (O'Sullivan, 2012), the so-called creative over the non-creative (Florida, 2002). The reductive forces of the money economy (Simmel, 1978) demand a reductive representation of the local, cutting all the unnecessary elements to the extent that it will ultimately be translatable to numbers. In this process, however, the substantive, relational and experiential dimensions of the local will all be negatively affected, as the focus on the marketable elements denies a level playing field to the inherent capacities and diversities of a locality.

Instrumental and reductive approaches can be seen in all the three aspects of the local. Planning, architectural and engineering surveys and analyses may claim to offer an account of the substantive elements of the local: its

infrastructure of roads and utilities, its buildings and open spaces, its uses of land and its morphological details. These accounts, however, are by nature partial and instrumental, told in expert language and interested in some technical aspects of the local. The relational accounts may compensate for this technical reductionism, placing the substantive in the context of the social and historical relations in which it takes shape and is used. The experiential and expressive form of representing the local may partly revolve around the questions of identity, as a narrative told about a person or a place (Ricoeur, 2007), an essential element of social capital formation and social positioning (Bourdieu, 2000) in the struggle for recognition (Honneth, 1995). This narrative identity demonstrates the relations of similarity and difference (Jenkins, 1996) and therefore expresses the desire for embracing some relationships and avoiding others. In instrumental and reductive forms, however, these social relations and narratives of identity are edited and cleansed, highlighting the marketable and hiding what is thought to be damaging to a polished image.

If the local is substantive, relational and experiential, whereby its elements are embodied in material conditions and embedded in social relations, the representation of the local would have to be sufficiently complex to reflect them. However, like other forms of representing a complex multiplicity, the problem becomes one of selection, as to which elements of the multiplicity can and should form this narrative. In the context of economic competition (Aglietta, 2000), social inequality (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2008; Hamnett, 2003), heightened mobility (Urry, 1995) and the narrow politics of identity (Hobsbawm, 1990; Anderson, 1991), the construction and representation of this narrative becomes ever more problematic. The representation may become a mask that hides an unstable reality behind, or a vehicle of suppressing difference and maintaining the status quo, rather than a fair representation of the local.

3.3. The Institutions of the Local: Whose Autonomy?

Favouring the local is often projected as a view from within a locality, expressing the desire for distinctiveness, self-determination, and resistance against outside forces. It is taken to reflect the conditions and hopes of the localities in their interface with the national and global forces that may overrule them. It demonstrates a search for forms of political power that would enable the local communities to take control of their own affairs, rather than being exposed to powers that are not knowledgeable or sensitive to their needs. Such localism is a desire for territorialisation, maintaining or asserting control over a territory by the people and institutions that reside within it. It is a concept that, in principle, is taken for granted in the contemporary planning and governance discourse to be worth supporting and advocating, as it complies with the ideals of justice and democracy. However, the question of who has autonomy emerges in the shape and legitimacy of the institutions that represent these views and in both extra-local and intra-local tensions.

The historical context of localism lies in the tension between the existing forms of local power and the emerging national institutions in early modern Europe (Potter, 1995; Smith, 1984). In the nation states that were emerging, the tension between the centre and the localities was a defining feature. In the creation of the United States, Thomas Jefferson's ideal condition was a frugal state and a strong locality, to strike a balance between the two sides. This was to be achieved through the 'ward republics' (Jefferson et al., 1999, p.214), whereby the counties were to be divided into 'wards of such size as that every citizen can attend, when called on, and act in person' (Jefferson et al., 1999, p.213). This had already been a successful form of township government in New England, which had 'proved themselves the wisest invention ever devised by the wit of man for the perfect exercise of self-government, and for its preservation' (Jefferson et al., 1999, p.214). The tension between the local and the national, however, was strong, even leading to a civil war in the country. The tension between the locality and the state was paralleled between the tension between the individual and the state, between liberalism and democracy (Bobbio, 1990). The idea of autonomous individuals had evolved over centuries (Coleman, 1996) to become a cornerstone of the modern nation-state (Locke, 1980). Since these early tensions, the relationship between the locality and the nation-state has gone through many variations.

Most significantly, the mid-twentieth century welfare state seemed to have completely won over regional differences and particular conditions; but this was reversed by a period of neoliberal withdrawal of the state, in which the rights of the individual have been reasserted. As a champion of neoliberalism wrote, 'Democracy is essentially a means, a utilitarian device for safeguarding internal peace and individual freedom' (Hayek, 1944, p.52). With the rise of neoliberalism, meanwhile, the tension between localities and the nation-state

has also re-emerged. With globalisation, localism becomes a form of resistance against the global forces that undermine all local cultural specificities and destroy the natural environment (Castells, 1997). The autonomy of both the individual and the local, therefore, has been in direct relationship to the strength, priorities, and reach of the extra-local forces. However, what is assumed to be the autonomy of the individual to make decisions, or the communitarian or civil society groups taking control of their lives (Etzioni, 1995), takes place within an institutional context dominated by the relations of exchange and their associated frameworks.

When seen from within any particular situation, favouring the local may appear to be a natural attitude, which would have always existed. Developing emotional attachments with the family, community and tribe, and with the home, neighbourhood and town, can be found in all human societies. In the modern society, with its mobile and diverse populations, however, the existence of these ties is no longer taken for granted. Stable emotional ties have given way to contractual ties (Tönnies, 1957), and their capacity and usefulness for maintaining social cohesion are questioned (Durkheim, 1972). The changes in the relational and experiential dimensions of the local have transformed the nature of localism from favouring one's community and tribe to favouring one's social relations and institutional connections. The long-established representations of the locality, which were rooted in the ties of blood and kin, are replaced by the contractual construction of binding images in a society of strangers. The meaning of territory, which may have been deeply embedded in historical memories, would be transformed into functional connections to a marketable commodity. While the imagery of localism continues to employ the older concepts of emotional attachment to territory and community, the actual conditions of favouring the local are transformed into contractual and monetary relations set within a global context.

The formal organisations that are set up to support and safeguard local autonomy, therefore, are subject to these pressures from all sides. As part of these formal organisations, urban and regional planning comes specifically under pressure for balancing the competing demands of increasingly unequal forces, from individuals and households, local communities, businesses, nation-states, and increasingly corporate organisations and other global forces. The operations of urban and regional planning are a part of the infrastructure of power in a locality, a part of the wide-ranging governance arrangements within an area (Cowie et al., 2016). Governance is about the distribution of power in a locality (Madanipour, 2012). The implications of localism for governance would imply favouring local stakeholders in the relations of power. However, if the circle of decision-making is not open and inclusive, and if it tends to be primarily revolving around the relationship between the institutions of the state and the market, with token involvement by those who are affected, any arrangement for local autonomy may be exposed to justifiable critique. The institutions that claim to represent the autonomy of the locality would lack the necessary legitimacy, and the problem of autonomy may not be simply reduced to the clashes between intra- and extra-local forces.

3.4. The Functions of the Local: What Role?

Localism and regionalism are largely a form of governance, responding to a political question about the spatial distribution of power. From within the locality, localism tends to be seen as a bid for self-determination, but when viewed from the perspective of a higher level of political power, it can mean at worst unruliness, or at best decentralisation. It becomes a process of localisation in which particular functions are assigned to a locality, maintaining its place in a hierarchy of power.

Decentralisation may be adopted as a method of efficiency, subdividing the tasks into smaller ones within a systematic division of labour. It subdivides the functional and territorial powers and responsibilities, as in the organisation of a large corporation into functional and geographical units, or the subdivision of a large city into districts. This subdivision may be justified on the basis of the efficiency of distributing resources and delegating responsibilities, while safeguarding the effective control of the central power over its subdivisions and branches. In the process of bureaucratisation, complex tasks are split into smaller parts and complex organisations are formed out of a network of lower level agents. It would be a hierarchical and managerial organisation of functions for improved efficiency and smooth operation of complex institutions (Weber, 1948). It draws on the rationalist analytical method of splitting complex phenomena into smaller parts for easier understanding (Descartes, 1968), the division of labour for higher productivity (Smith, 1993), allocating roles and places to individuals and groups, so that their sphere of action is predetermined and controlled, and making society so transparent that no hidden corners are left unseen (Foucault, 1980).

Similar to theoretical tensions between communitarianism and individualism, a tension may be noted between institutional organisation for decentralisation and the rule of the market. When the market is involved, the level of decentralisation is not limited to spatial and functional subdivisions, but to individual decisions in the marketplace. In the tension between bureaucratic and neoliberal forms of state, the former relies on the organisation of roles and functions, while the latter advocates the price mechanism as the best arbiter of tasks and roles. For Hayek, a central authority was unable to address economic problems; what was needed was decentralisation, 'because only thus can we ensure that the knowledge of the particular circumstances of time and place will be promptly used' (Hayek, 1945, p.524). Decentralisation would inevitably lead to a reliance on the market and its price mechanism as the most efficient way of accessing relevant information produced by individual decisions. As Hayek argued, 'the economic problem of society is mainly one of rapid adaptation to changes in the particular circumstances of time and place'; the solution would be 'that the ultimate decisions must be left to the people who are familiar with these circumstances, who know directly of the relevant changes and of the resources immediately available to meet them' (1945, p.524). The hidden problem, however, is that individual decisions are not made freely and are often framed within the institutions of the market, in which the large players dominate.

An example of the shift from strategic decentralisation to a market-based, neoliberal one is the process of localism in the United Kingdom (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012; Sturzaker and Shaw, 2015; Tait and Inch, 2016). When a coalition of Conservative and Liberal-Democrat parties came to power in the United Kingdom in 2010, it abolished the regional tier of government and its associated plans, such as regional spatial and economic plans. A year later, it introduced the Localism Act 2011, which transferred planning competence to parishes and neighbourhoods, albeit subject to checks and balances at the higher level of the local authority. The abolished regional level of governance was made of several local authorities, while the neighbourhoods were micro-units within these authorities. This was a radical change in the structure of territorial governance, produced by a government that is commonly characterised as neoliberal. It opened the field for the market, which is dominated by large firms. Rather than creating a level playing field for local forces to determine their future, it may remove any safeguards that had been provided by the state, exposing these local players to the forces of the market, with its increasingly global dimensions in the scale and reach of its operators. In this change of the level of planning and governance competence, it replaced regionalism with localism, and bureaucratic controls with market ones.

An alternative model of decentralisation, which has roots older than the bureaucratic and neoliberal states, is based on the principle of subsidiarity, which has been used to organise the Catholic Church and is now incorporated into the European Union in its Maastricht Treaty (Cass, 1992). Subsidiarity is seen to have the capacity for opening up space for manoeuvre for the lower levels of authority, whereby 'a larger and higher ranking body should not exercise functions which could be efficiently carried out by a smaller and lesser body' (Melé, 2005, p.293). Subsidiarity paves the way for multi-level governance, whereby different levels of power can work together on a functional basis, each playing a functional role in a hierarchy. The higher levels of authority maintain their overall control, but offer a degree of autonomy to the lower levels. For its supporters, the concept offers an alternative to an authoritarian and bureaucratic mode of organisation in which people are treated as cogs in a machine rather than intelligent actors with the ability to make decisions based on their own judgement. It also offers an alternative to market-based decisions, where monetary considerations are often the only basis for judgement.

Subsidiarity is a form of decentralisation in which that the devolution of power and decision-making are thought to contribute to higher productivity, better working practices and more peaceful political relations. The principle has been used both in functional organisation of multi-national entities such as the European Union, the restructuring of the nation states into a federal or quasi-federal arrangements, and in the development of regional and sub-regional forms of political institutions. It has also been used in restructuring private corporations and changing them from a highly integrated hierarchy to a network of semi-independent units, in which the workers find a degree of control over their working practices (Melé, 2005). In all these forms, from the functional subdivision to decentralised structures, localism is often encouraged from the top, by a centre that continually reshapes the complex organisation and its workings for improved efficiency. It is a technical interpretation of political control, a form of localism as seen from the perspective of a higher level authority. As the history of bureaucracies has shown, however, decentralisation can also generate institutional parochialism, which is why many multi-level organisations are continually in the process of reorganisation.

Subsidiarity engages with the lower level institutions that are part of the hierarchy of power. A further level of decentralisation engages with subsections of these institutions, trying to integrate them in the process of decision-making, as manifested in the idea of public participation. In both public and private sector organisations, the idea of involving citizens or employees in the process of decision-making has been widely advocated as good practice (Perotin and Robinson, 2004; Plummer, 2000; Barnes et al., 2007). Public participation takes place within a clear institutional framework, whereby the control of the issue is not delegated but different degrees of engagement are offered to those that may be affected. An experienced practitioner notes that, 'Public participation applies to administrative decisions – that is, those typically made by agencies (and sometimes by private organisations), not elected officials or judges', with the overall goal of 'better decisions that are supported by the public' (Creighton, 2005, p.7).

While the range and extent of citizen involvement varies significantly (Arnstein, 1969), the benefits of such involvement are widely accepted, to the extent that public participation is now a legal requirement in many countries. Citizens who are affected by government decisions are encouraged to have a say in those decisions and be able to influence them. However, like subsidiarity, it is a technical and procedural solution to a political problem, which does not negotiate for any redistribution of power, but invites some stakeholders to engage with the process. Although it may be a response to democratic demands, participation can be seen as a form of localism that is initiated from a top-down perspective, the view from the higher authorities attempting to engage the affected agents in the process of decision-making while maintaining their own authority to have the final say.

In these perspectives from the top of bureaucracies or from the marketplace, the local is reduced to organisational or exchange relations, while their representations and rationale are limited to efficiency and productivity. Localism becomes a vehicle for the promotion of efficiency through decentralisation. This is, however, not explicitly visible, as the term localism tends to refer, simultaneously, to a preference for historical cohesive communities, contractual relations among atomised individuals, a bid for autonomy, and pressure for decentralisation, each of which could have a completely different meaning. In other words, the steely, top-down pressure for efficiency may be wrapped in the soft clothing of individual freedom of choice, participation, and democratic revival.

4. Conclusion

The paper has argued that the analysis of localism should be placed in the context of a critique of the forms of power that seek to circumscribe the local. The local is ontologically multiple and diverse, with substantive, relational and experiential dimensions. The projected image of the local, and the processes of localism, however, tend to envisage it as static, stable and bounded; these processes engage in drawing rigid boundaries, producing reductive representations, emphasising parochial identities, and assigning limited functional roles in power hierarchies. The meaning of the local is determined at the nexus of these territorial, representational, institutional, and functional dimensions, through the interplay of multiplicity and diversity with instrumental and expressive narratives and the extent of the porosity and flexibility of the boundaries. The meaning of localism takes shape at the juncture of these forms of power and their interaction with each other and with the complexities of the local ontology, which could be ambivalent and regressive, far from an often positively portrayed image.

The defining feature of the various forms of localism is particularism. Localism as resistance and self-determination is shown by individuals, communities, or localities against the power of the state and the forces of globalisation, expressing a desire for self-rule, cultural distinction, and environmental care. However, as this analysis of the constitution of the local shows, the problem lies in acknowledging what it is made of, where to draw the boundaries, how to represent it, how to relate to extra-local and intra-local forces, and what functional roles to expect in a hierarchy of power. Many forms of localism have suffered from the problem of essentialism and reductionism, in which the local has been reduced to a narrow definition, excluding some part of the locality as undesirable or irrelevant, and justifying the continuation of unequal relations of power. Many forms of localism have also suffered from the danger of parochialism, a reminder of the medieval factionalism that was characterised by the spatial subdivision of the church into ecclesiastical parishes, which is now used pejoratively to refer to limited local interests and narrow-mindedness.

The implications for urban and regional planning, with its claim to technical know-how and political legitimacy are far reaching. While boundaries may need to be drawn for managing change in the built and natural environment, they should be acknowledged to be provisional and subject to political debate; the notion that places can be made and that localities can be turned into finished products or commodities for sale are shown to be false aspirations. The gap between a marketable representation and the multiple plurality of the place, or between a stigmatising representation and a rich experience of life, tend to be forgotten in many planning processes. The gap between the nostalgic ideas of the local autonomy, the limited powers of local groups to shape their future, and the domination of the political and economic stage by powerful players may be hidden from view. If localism is taken to be a natural tendency to favour the local, it should be noted that this local cannot be essentialised and managed through exclusionary governance arrangements, nor through relying on a rhetoric that masks the complexity of a context.

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EU GOVERNANCE AND EU COHESION POLICY: REFLEXIVE ADAPTATION OR INCONSISTENT COORDINATION?

Stefan Telle^a

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Abstract

The paper discusses the co-evolution of the EU mode of governance and the objectives of European Union cohesion policy. As EU integration proceeds, collective decision-making in an increasingly diverse political arena has become a central concern for research on EU governance. The literature on experimentalist governance suggests consensus-seeking deliberation and policy-experimentation as two key mechanisms to reduce the trade-off between overall policy responsiveness and democratic legitimacy. However, this paper argues that the inconsistencies which result from making cohesion policy deliver the Lisbon Agenda and EU 2020 objectives growth are a characteristic of meta-governance rather than of reflexive adaptation. These findings emerge from an analysis of the cohesion policy programming periods since 1988 and the parallel developments in European Union governance.

Keywords

Governance, cohesion policy, diversity, production of space.

a Institute of Management, Slovak Technical University, Vazovova 5, 812 43 Bratislava, Slovakia. E-mail: stefantelle@gmail.com

1. European Integration, Governance, and the Production of Space

Since the “Big Bang” of the enlargement of the European Union in 2004, the economic disparities between European Union Member States have become larger than those between states in the United States (Majone, 2005). Thus, with regards to EU cohesion policy (Adams, Alden, and Harris, 2006), the eastern enlargement poses a challenge to the objective of ‘reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions’ (Treaty for the Functioning of the European Union [TFEU], Art. 174). Furthermore, with regard to the local level, it has been argued that socio-spatial polarisation has become a “striking feature” of the settlement system, especially in Central and Eastern Europe (Lang, 2011, 2012). Similarly, the Commission report *Employment and Social Development in Europe* (2013) found that the trend towards decreasing regional disparities has been brought to a halt by the recent financial crisis (cited by Nathigal, 2014, p.14).

This paper investigates the link between European integration, the mode of European Union governance and the production of space. Viewed from the perspective of Stein Rokkan’s (1999) theory of boundary building and political structuring, political systems can be understood as being structured by a membership boundary and a territorial boundary. The relative openness of these boundaries conditions the structuring of the internal political system. Therefore, enlargement of the European Union can be expected to have a discernible structuring effect on its governance.

The paper argues that, in the context of a politically and economically increasingly integrated Europe, the emergence of new modes of governance (Marks et al., 1996; Heritier and Rhodes, 2011) is driven by the need to achieve efficient and legitimate problem-solving among the increasingly politically and socially diverse Member States, and across multiple spatial scales. In other words, the objective is to improve both the input and output legitimacy (Scharpf, 1997) of the European Union or, more modestly, to ‘reduce the trade-off between overall responsiveness and democratic participation’ (de Burca, Keohane, and Sabel, 2014, p.15) of the polity. While some authors (de Burca, Keohane, and Sabel, 2014; Sabel and Zeitlin, 2008, 2010; Zeitlin and Vanhercke, 2014) are optimistic about the potential of new experimentalist forms of governance, others have pointed to the weaknesses of open forms of coordination (Scharpf, 2002; Smismans, 2008) and warned against the implications for the functioning of the traditional representative model of democracy (Bellamy and Kröger, 2011; Bevir, 2010). While these debates touch upon more abstract theoretical issues, the concrete question of this paper is how the mode of governance influences the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991). Empirical evidence on this topic seems inconclusive. While Zeitlin and Vanhercke (2014) argue that experimentalist governance boosts the social component of the EU 2020 strategy, Avdikos and Chardas (2015) have criticised the polarising socio-spatial consequences of making cohesion policy deliver EU 2020 objectives.

Indeed, aspirations of becoming the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world (the Lisbon Agenda) through smart, inclusive and sustainable growth (the EU 2020 strategy) seem to prioritise economic over social objectives, or suggest that the attainment of the latter depends on the success of the former. As structural funds constitute roughly one third of the European Union’s budget, it is not surprising that they have been identified by the Commission as ‘key delivery mechanisms to achieve the priorities of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Member States and regions’ (European Commission, 2010, p.21). Nevertheless, this puts into question what “cohesion” actually means, tilting the balance between redistribution and growth decidedly to the latter (Avdikos and Chardas, 2015).

The paper argues that the alignment of the growth-focused EU 2020 strategy with the redistribution-oriented cohesion policy appears as a rebalancing the “competitive Europe” and the “social Europe” strategies in the aftermath of the Eastern European enlargement. While the causes of this rebalancing can be found in the increasing diversity of Member States’ interests rather than in the inconsistency of the experimentalist meta-governance itself, the emerging mode of governance appears, as of now, incapable of effectively mitigating these fault-lines. This is exemplified by the fact that dissent persists over how to address the urgent task of bringing the implementation of the reformed post-2013 cohesion policy up to speed. Rather than attempting to reach consensus on immediate solutions, the debates tend to displace the issue into the post-2020 programming period, putting their hopes into further major structural reforms.

The paper is divided into two parts. The next section discusses the relation between European integration and the structuring of governance, arguing that EU cohesion policy can be seen as embedded in an increasingly experimentalist form of multi-level meta-governance. In the subsequent section, the development of the spatial selectivity of EU cohesion policy is discussed, suggesting that making cohesion policy a delivery vehicle of the EU 2020 strategy is conducive to prioritising competitiveness and efficiency objectives over cohesion. This is expected to translate into a spatial selectivity, where support of competitive spaces is more important than assisting backward regions. Finally, the paper concludes by indicating some points of interest for future research.

2. New Modes of Governance: Cohesion Policy to Deliver EU 2020?

This section investigates the link between European integration and the emergence of new modes of governance. In view of the available budget and the political objectives of EU cohesion policy, it is remarkable that there seems to exist no agreement on its effectiveness (Molle, 2007, Ch.10; Leonardi, 2005, p.92). However, the paper is not questioning the rationale of creating a policy to alleviate socio-spatial disparities across the European Union. Indeed, it can be argued that the widening of the socio-spatial disparities across the European Union in the aftermath of the repeated enlargements and due to the effects of the recent financial/sovereign debt crises, reinforces the need for a European-wide redistribution mechanism, from an economic (global competitiveness), political (legitimacy), and normative perspective (solidarity, equity). It is, however, argued that the current mode of governance of the European Union is contributing to pushing cohesion policy towards a growth-promoting rationale, which is likely to make it less effective in alleviating socio-spatial inequality.¹

The argument in a nutshell: in the absence of a European demos that would lend democratic legitimacy to European Union policy-making, interest representation at the European level is one of the main legitimising mechanism of European Union integration (Majone, 2005). Due to a multiplication of political and social systems, and hence an increase of national and regional actors and interests, European Union enlargements are likely to aggravate collective action dilemmas under the community method.² This has encouraged the emergence of new – and increasingly experimentalist – modes of governance, which generally either attempt to accommodate plurality, like the open method of coordination (Borrás and Jacobsson, 2004; Smismans, 2008), or restrict the number of players (often to selected elites), as for example in the informal Eurogroup deliberations (Puetter, 2006a). Critics have argued that these attempts to square the circle of overall responsiveness vs democratic participation are premised on logically flawed or overly optimistic assumptions about the relationship between efficiency and inclusiveness (Peters and Pierre, 2004; Scharpf, 2002; Smismans, 2008). Broadly speaking, their contention is that these new governance practices are characteristic of a “post-political” way of consensus-seeking, wherein conflicting interests are seen as a managerial rather than political challenge (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; Metzger, Allmendinger, and Oosterlynck, 2015a; Mouffe, 2005).

2.1. EU Enlargement, Interest Representation and New Modes of Governance

Majone (2005) argues that that overly optimistic expectations about the prospects of European Union integration have led to a pro-integration bias that prioritises institutional interest representation over problem-solving in the institutional architecture of the European Union. The problem is that the essentially open-ended nature of European integration is rendering the emergence of a robust European demos unlikely and, thus, poses a significant challenge to the consolidation of one particular mode of policy-making. Over the last decade, attempts to reach consensus on the future development of European integration under conditions of increased diversity and uncertainty have resulted in a shift towards simultaneously more open, more informal, more experimentalist and more deliberative practices of governance.

1 For the Visegrad countries, Medve-Bálint (2014) argues that cohesion policy exacerbates these inequalities as funds tend to get concentrated in the most developed regions – though for different reasons.

2 However, Veen (2011) found that the 2004 enlargement had no significant effect on the efficiency of decision-making in the Council

However, there seems to be little agreement on the consequences of these practices of governance. On the one hand, these practices can be seen as attempts to accommodate diversity by creating channels of interest representation (Bartolini, 2005; Rokkan, 1999), with the objective of increasing the input legitimacy of European Union policy-making. Accordingly, the European Union's practice of policy coordination and learning through "trial-and-error" strategies and feedback-mechanisms has been seen as evidence of a new experimentalist governance architecture (Sabel and Zeitlin, 2010) that has a positive impact on the social dimension of European Union policy-making (Zeitlin and Vanhercke, 2014). Additionally, other authors observe a trend towards a consensus-seeking deliberative (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003) intergovernmentalism (Bickerton, Hodson, and Puetter, 2014; Puetter, 2012) which may circumvent the inflexibilities of the official European Union institutional architecture by referring to informal governance practices (Puetter, 2006a). On the other hand, critics maintain that while these practices may improve the representation of some interests at the European level, it is not clear whether they contribute to more efficient problem-solving. Peters and Pierre (2004), for example, view the informalisation of governmental functions in multi-level governance arrangements as a Faustian bargain, whereby democratic accountability and political control are traded for seemingly more efficient governance solutions. Indeed, one of the most eminent theoreticians of European governance now seems to be rather wary that the representation of the interests of a continuously growing number of Member States may, in the absence of a European demos, lead to a democratic default (Majone, 2005, 2012, 2014a, 2014b). Moreover, doubt has been cast on the problem-solving capacity of participatory governance (Heinelt et al., 2002; Smismans, 2008).

What emerges from this debate is that the multiplication of interests as a consequence of European Union enlargement seems to have led to a transformation of the political process of European Union policy-making. This development lends renewed salience to the question: "What is politics" (Satori, 1973) and what is "the political" (Metzger, Allmendinger, and Oosterlynck, 2015b, pp.8-10; Mouffe, 2005), especially as blatant disagreement persists over the implications of this transformation. The next section will argue that the alignment of cohesion policy with the EU 2020 strategy is a result of these transformations.

2.2. Towards Post-Political Governance? Aligning EU Cohesion Policy and EU 2020

European Commission increasingly portrays cohesion policy as a delivery mechanism of the EU 2020 strategy:

Cohesion policy and its structural funds, while important in their own right, are key delivery mechanisms to achieve the priorities of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Member States and regions (European Commission, 2010, p.20).

To explain this alignment, it is useful to introduce some elements of Bob Jessop's strategic-relational approach (1990, 2004, 2007). From this perspective, the political-economy of capitalism is based on two major social relations: the capital relation and the state form. The precarious articulation of these relations determines the *strategic selectivity* of the political system by privileging 'particular social forces, interests, and actors over others' in their choice of specific state strategies and state projects (Jessop, 1990, cited by Brenner, 2004, p.87).

On the one hand, *state projects* are seen as initiatives that endow state institutions with organisational coherence, functional coordination, and operational unity' (Jessop, 1990, cited by Brenner, 2004, p.88). In other words, they produce a "state effect". For the purpose of the present paper, state projects are equivalent to the mode of governance. On the other hand, state strategies are those initiatives which 'mobilize state institutions in order to promote particular forms of socio-economic intervention' (Jessop, 1990, cited by Brenner, 2004, p.88). In other words, they can be seen as "hegemonic projects" or policy paradigms. For the present paper, the Lisbon Agenda and the Europe 2020 strategy are treated as state strategies. Equipped with these conceptual tools, we can begin to explain the alignment of European Union cohesion policy with the EU 2020 strategy.

The paper has argued in Section 2.1 that the new practices of governance in the European Union emerge from attempts to reduce the trade-off between interest representation and efficient problem-solving. Therefore, in an analogy with Jessop's concept of state projects, the search for new practices of governance that aim at resolving this dilemma can be seen as the political project of the European Union. As such, the "key issue" of EU governance is

the manner and extent to which the multiplying levels, arenas and regimes of politics, policy making, and policy implementation can be endowed with a certain apparatus and operational unity horizontally and vertically; and how this affects the overall operation of politics and the legitimacy of the new political arrangements (Jessop, 2004, p.73).

This mode of governance has respectively been coined as multi-level meta-governance (Jessop 2002, 2004) and experimentalist governance (de Burca, Keohane, and Sabel, 2014; Sabel and Zeitlin, 2008, 2010, 2012; Zeitlin, 2015; Zeitlin and Vanhercke, 2014). According to Jessop (2004, p.66), multi-level meta-governance is the management of the complexity, plurality, and tangled hierarchies of existing modes of governance (see also Bache and Flinders, 2004b, p.97). Jessop (2004, p.72) nevertheless cautions that, in the last analysis, it is unrealistic to expect meta-governance not to fail in the face of growing complexity. Hence, an ironic approach – characterised by ‘continuing experimentation, improvisation, and adaptation’ – is proposed as a remedy. Multi-level meta-governance is characterised by an unstable equilibrium of compromise rather than by the systematic application of one method of coordination. While Jessop’s account points out the potential inconsistencies of this mode of governance, the literature on experimentalist governance, maintains that an “iterative circle” (Sabel and Zeitlin, 2012) of learning based on continuous monitoring, feedback, peer review, and framework adaptation mitigates the problem of governance failure.

Table 1: Meta-Governance and Experimentalist Governance

	Meta-Governance	Experimentalist Governance
Premise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexity • Open-ended coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexity • Open-ended coordination
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimentation, improvisation, adaptation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iterative circle (monitoring, feedback, peer review, adaptation)
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstable equilibrium • Inconsistencies across different modes of coordination • Ultimately, policy failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflexive learning • Continuous re-evaluation of objectives and ways of attaining them • Reduced trade-off between responsiveness and participation
Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managerial

Source: Own compilation

Critics have, however, argued that the latter mode of experimentalist governance should be understood as “post-political”, because inconsistencies between policy objectives are discursively erased. According to this perspective, the “political” is an arena in which actors struggle with each other in the pursuit of their (sometimes) *conflictive* interests, while respecting the general rules of the game. In the “post-political” situation interests are made *commensurable* by restructuring the arena and the rules under which interests encounter each other (Mouffe, 2005).

In this context, Erik Swyngedouw (2007) cautioned that post-political concepts and the political strategies they justify, while allegedly offering inclusive and efficient solutions, are in fact based on the logically flawed assumption of commensurable interests. Instead of truly open and deliberate reasoning, participatory modes of governance are often plagued by an ‘elitism’ in which ‘fundamental political questions often curiously appear to have already been determined “somewhere else” on the basis of some “general interest” which no-one in his or her right mind can supposedly disagree with’ (Metzger et al., 2015b, p.7). In turn, this framing of political objectives as unproblematic, according to Allmendinger and Haughton (2015, p.31) is leading to a ‘blurring of institutional responsibilities, accountability and legitimacy’.

Laclau and Mouffe (2001) maintain that people’s interests are rooted in their life worlds. This means that in socially highly stratified pluralist modern societies, a mechanism for temporarily ordering these conflicting interests is necessary in order to enable collective action. Laclau and Mouffe argue that this ordering of incommensurable interests can only occur in the political sphere. Furthermore, this ordering takes place through an antagonistic competition of ideas rather than through cooperation. However, as the convergence of interests is blocked by their rootedness in local experiences, clear rules of the game are necessary periodically to ensure the smooth transition from one set of temporarily hegemonic ideas to the next one. They disagree with proponents of a “Third Way”, who argue that, with the end of communism and the emergence of the network society, antagonisms have disappeared. Specifically, they reject the idea that a ‘politics without frontiers would now be possible – a “win-win politics” where solutions could be found that favoured everybody in society’ because

this would imply 'that politics is no longer structured around social division, and that political problems have become merely technical' (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001, pp.xiv-xv). Laclau and Mouffe claim that the reality of an uneven distribution of power and the "ineradicability of antagonism" foreclose the possibility of a "deliberative democracy" in the sense of Habermas. In their view, there is no final resolution of conflict and/or reconciliation of divided interests through dialogue.

In short, these critics would probably concur with Bob Jessop that open-ended policy coordination is ultimately destined to produce inconsistent outcomes. The reason is that policy problems are rooted in the diverging life experiences of individuals within ever more pluralist modern societies and, therefore, managerial governance techniques are ultimately bound to fail in the attempt to overcome these differences. In Jessop's words, the inconsistencies in *political strategies* 'may be part of an overall self-organizing, self-adjusting practice of meta-governance within a complex division of government and governance powers' (2004, p.71).

The discussion has attempted to show that (in)consistencies between different political strategies are a function of the mode of governance. Hence, this paper maintains that the alignment of the growth- and competitiveness-focused EU 2020 strategy with the redistribution-focused cohesion policy reveals a background conflict over the hegemony of the competitive Europe vis-à-vis the social Europe political strategy (Faludi, 2010; Waterhout, 2008). With regard to the relationship between economic growth and social inclusion, the two strategies are premised on two incommensurable theoretical approaches. While the competitive Europe strategy assumes that in a globalising economy, economic growth (generally based on productivity growth) will eventually trickle down and lead to more social inclusion, the social Europe strategy postulates the inverse relation.³ Significantly, the discursive reframing of the objectives of cohesion policy can be seen as an indirect way to reallocate cohesion policy resources to other political objectives, despite the 'near total absence of discretionary spending' (Moravcsik, 2005, p.32) at the European Union level. This is problematic in as far as it challenges the Treaty objective of economic, social and territorial cohesion (TFEU, Art. 174-178).

In sum, the increasing diversity of interests in the European Union triggered a search for a mode of governance that would reduce the trade-off between overall responsiveness and democratic participation. However, in terms of the prevalent *political strategies* it has been argued that the discursive reframing of conflicting interests as compatible can lead to inconsistent policy mixes. While the meta-governance approach holds that this result is inevitable and should be faced with an ironic attitude, proponents of experimentalist governance argue that the right managerial practices can solve this dilemma. These insights can be summarised in two hypotheses:

- If policy coordination leads to policy mixes which are characterised by *unintentional* negative effects on either one policy, the mode of governance is meta-governance. Meta-governance does not erase the contradictions between different political strategies.

In the context of this paper, meta-governance would imply that the contradictions between the political strategies at the European level are *not* resolved, but managed in a way that displaces them temporally and spatially (Habermas, 1977; Harvey, 1982). Hence, making cohesion policy deliver the Lisbon Agenda and the EU 2020 strategy is expected to lead first, to less balanced growth; secondly, low competitiveness gains; and thirdly, calls for further major reform.

- If policy coordination leads to policy mixes which are characterised by the *desired* outcomes, the mode of governance is experimentalist governance. Experimentalist governance mitigates the contradictions between different political strategies.

In the context of this paper, experimentalist governance would imply that the contradictions between the political strategies at the European level *are* resolved. Hence, making cohesion policy deliver the Lisbon Agenda and the EU 2020 strategy is expected to lead, first, to balanced growth; secondly, competitiveness gains; and thirdly, reflexive learning and incremental improvement within the existing framework.

3 If Council voting is an indicator of the major fault lines between the political strategies, the dividing line of this conflict lies roughly between the net-contributing and the net-receiving Member States (Veen, 2011). In other words, between older and newer Member States, as well as between the North and the South, and, increasingly, the West and the East (Naurin and Wallace, 2008)

3. The Spatial Selectivity of Cohesion Policy

This section looks at how the evolution of European Union political project and political strategies influence the spatial selectivity of cohesion policy. The argument put forth is that the tendency toward post-political consensus formation at the European Union level conceals the reality of socio-spatial polarisation by discursively obscuring the conflict between the competitiveness objectives of the EU 2020 strategy and the equity objectives of cohesion policy. Making cohesion policy a key delivery instrument of the EU 2020 strategy is likely to divert the cohesion policy rationale from redistribution to lagging regions towards an increased spatial concentration of socio-economic activities in spaces that are relevant for the competitiveness of the single market (Avdikos and Chardas, 2015).

3.1. Spatial Selectivity

The above discussion has argued that making cohesion policy deliver EU 2020 objectives entails the alignment of two rather incompatible political strategies – competitive Europe and social Europe. According to Neil Brenner, state space and its development should be understood as the spatial expressions of such political strategies (Brenner, 2004, Ch.3; see also Harrison, 2010; Heley, 2013; Raco, 2009). In an analogy with strategic selectivity, *spatial selectivity* 'refers to the processes of "spatial privileging and articulation" through which state policies are differentiated across territorial space in order to target particular geographical zones and scales' (Jones, 1997, cited by Brenner, 2004, p.89).

Making reference to Harvey (1982), Brenner suggests that, while state institutions may be equipped with a spatial selectivity that helps to displace capitalism's inherent contradictions temporally, this outcome is not pre-given. Instead, he contends that 'insofar as state institutions may also be harnessed in ways that exacerbate uneven spatial development, they may seriously exacerbate, rather than displace, capital's endemic crisis-tendencies and contradictions' (Brenner, 2004, p.96). In other words, the degree of socio-spatial polarisation within a polity is not pre-determined, but a function of the prevailing political strategies.

To conceptualise the evolution of spatial selectivity, Brenner formulates a set of parameters. He develops a two-by-two diagram in which he distinguishes *state spatial project* and *state spatial strategy* along a scalar dimension and a territorial dimension (see Table 2). The four cells, he argues, contain some of the 'core tensions;' as well as the 'scale and area-specific patterns of state territorial organisation and state spatial intervention that may emerge through such struggles' (Brenner, 2004, p.98).

Table 2: State Spatial Projects and State Spatial Strategies

	STATE SPATIAL PROJECTS Geographies of state territorial organisation and administrative differentiation within a given territory	STATE SPATIAL STRATEGIES Geographies of state intervention into socio-economic life within a given territory
SCALAR DIMENSION	(1) Centralisation vs Decentralisation	(3) Singularity vs Multiplicity
TERRITORIAL DIMENSION	(2) Uniformity vs Customisation	(4) Equalisation vs Concentration

Source: Based on Brenner (2004, p.97)

Each cell contains two polar alternatives for the spatial selectivity of the state. Building on this conceptualisation, Brenner subsequently develops a four-dimensional matrix, indicating the likely evolution of the state spatial selectivity (see Figure 1). Importantly, Brenner asserts that, in the period from World War II until the late 1970s, the (1) state spatial projects were oriented toward centralisation and administrative uniformity, while (2) state spatial strategies were oriented toward scalar singularity (the national) and the territorial balancing of socio-economic activities. Following Jessop (1990, 2002), this type of state is characterised as the Keynesian welfare national state.

In Jessop's view, this state form is currently being superseded by a new type of state – the Schumpeterian competition state. This path-dependent process, Brenner (2004, pp.105-106) hypothesises, involves the reorientation of, first, state spatial projects 'toward administrative differentiation and decentralisation'; and, secondly, state spatial strategies 'toward the differentiation of socio-economic activities within a national territory and toward the management of scalar multiplicity'. According to Brenner, this process has resulted in the emergence of 'new state spaces' with urban regions becoming the primary spaces of accumulation within the 'rescaled competition state regime'⁴ (Brenner, 2004, p.295). In Figure 1, these developments constitute the movement of spatial selectivity from the top left to the bottom right corner. This model will be used to study the evolution of the spatial selectivity of cohesion policy from 1988 to the post-2014 reforms.

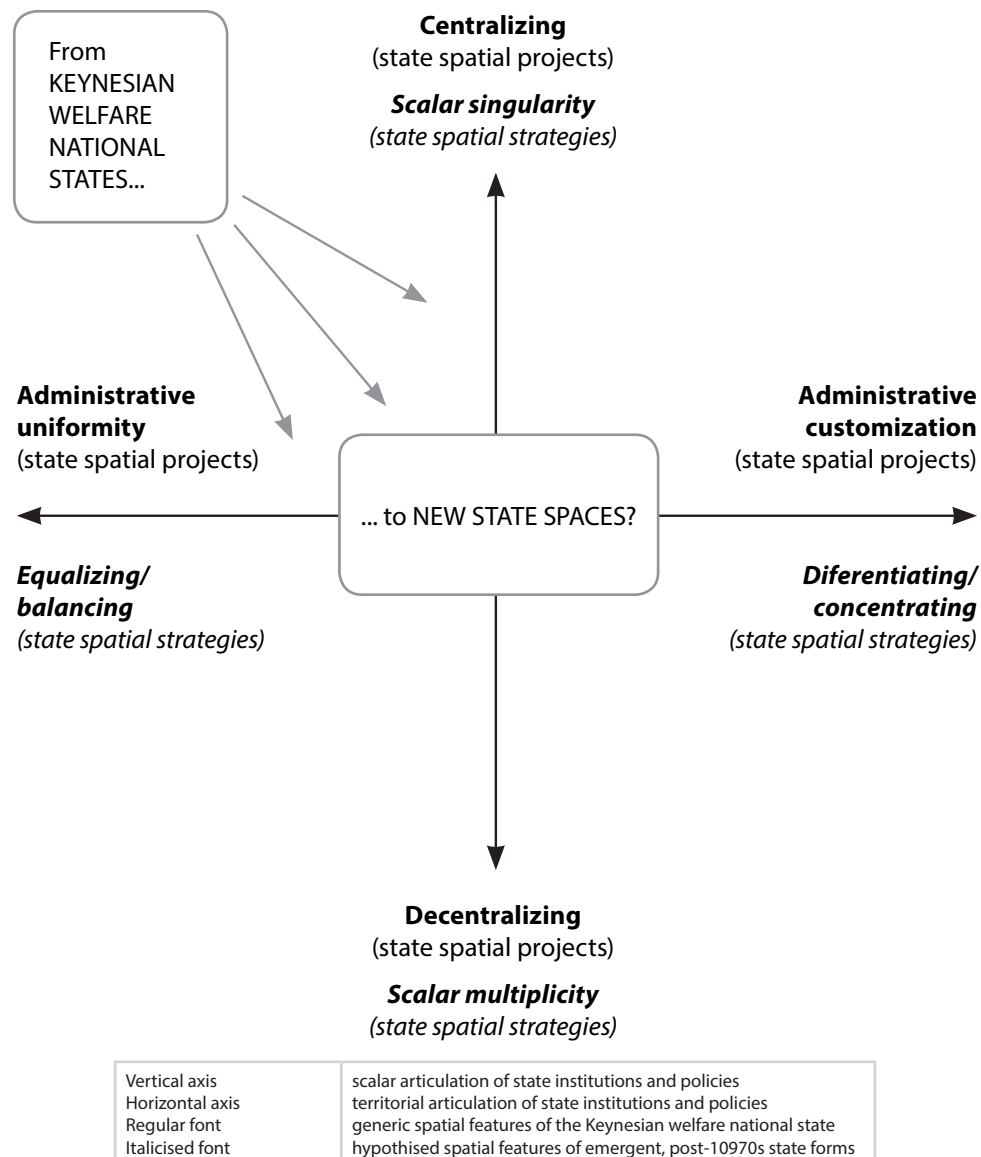


Figure 1: The Evolution of State Spatial Selectivity
Source: Based on Brenner (2004, p.106)

4 Brenner, Peck, and Theodore (2010) have described this transformation as "variegated neoliberalisation", where the logic of the capital relation is seen to have become more dominant relative to the capacity of the state to implement socio-political objectives. In this view, the uneven regulatory development under the neoliberal regime is a constitutive part of neoliberalisation.

3.2. The Development of the Spatial Selectivity of Cohesion Policy

The table below (see Table 3) shows how the objectives and instruments of cohesion policy have evolved between 1988 and 2013. While a continuous growth of the available funds can be observed throughout the entire period, two periods can clearly be identified in terms of the structure and objectives of cohesion policy. The first period (1988-1999) includes two programming periods (1989-1993 and 1994-1999), which are structurally virtually identical. By contrast, in the second period (2000-2013), each of the two programming periods were characterised by reforms in preparation (2000-2006) and in reaction (2007-2013) to the enlargements. Finally, the alignment of cohesion policy with the EU 2020 strategy in the post-2013 period indicate the shifted balance between the competitive Europe and the social Europe political strategies. However, contrary to the expectations of experimentalist governance, the result is an “unstable equilibrium”, rather than the desired outcome of smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth.

Table 3: Development of Cohesion Policy; Evolution of Objectives and Distribution of Funds (billions of euro) by Objective, 1988–2020

1988-93		1994-99	2000-06		2007-13		2014-2020	
Objective	Amount	Amount	Objective	Amount	Objective	Amount	Objective	Amount
Lagging	43	102	Lagging	136	Convergence (and competitiveness)	251	Less Developed	179.1
Restructuring	9	22	Restructuring	23	Regional competitiveness and employment	49	Transition	35.9
Unemployment	8	15	Social (former unemployment and Social)	24			More developed	56.7
Social								
Ultra-peripheral							Outermost and sparsely populated regions	1.6
Other programmes							Cohesion Fund	63.4
Community initiative programmes	5	11	INERREG URBAN EQUAL LEADER Etc.	1 10 1	Territorial cooperation	8	Territorial cooperation	10.1
Adaptation to EMU conditions		10	EMU	18				
							Youth unemployment initiative	3.2
Total resource	65 ECU	159 ECU		€ 213		€ 308		€ 351.8

Source: Based on Molle (2007, p.143) for 1988-2013 and cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu for 2014-2020

The paper suggests that the reasons for this shift lie in the impact of continued European Union enlargements on, first, the relative power and interests of net-contributors and net-receivers and the Commission; secondly, the increased diversity of interests among the Member States, which seek accommodation in a new compromise; and thirdly, the capacity to design a consistent policy in a context of an increased number of veto-positions. In sum, these developments had a structuring effect on the *European Union political project* (mode of governance), the *European Union political strategy* (competitive Europe vs social Europe), and the *European Union spatial strategy* (as expressed in the evolution of cohesion policy).

In other words, the argument is that the greater diversity of interests and reshuffled power relations helped the emergence of a post-political mode of experimentalist/meta-governance, in which the incompatible objectives of the competitive Europe and the social Europe strategies are reframed as mutually supportive. As such, the rationale of cohesion policy has somewhat shifted away from delivering economic, social, and territorial cohesion.

3.2.1. Launch and Relative Stability (1988-1999)

In terms of Brenner's model, the *political project* (mode of governance) during this early period can be described as "integration through regulation" (Majone, 1996), wherein the central position of the community level is ensured by the dominance of the community method of integration (centralisation). Characteristic of this approach to integration is the reliance on general purpose legislation and treaty modification (administrative uniformity). While the Single European Act of 1986 introduced the cooperation procedure and extended qualified majority voting in an attempt to remove barriers to further harmonisation (administrative customisation), to this day these are not applied to cohesion policy. However, as the example of the Mediterranean countries' influence in shaping the single market strategy will indicate, the increasing diversity of the European polity resulted in a modification of the single market *political strategy*.⁵

Indeed, the development of cohesion policy has always been closely connected to the process of European integration and, in particular, to the creation of the single market (Manzella and Mendez, 2009). After a period of relative stagnation in the 1970s and early 1980s, the single market programme (*political strategy*) and the accession of the less competitive Mediterranean countries became important triggers of the 1988 reform, which ushered in a 'new era' for cohesion policy (Manzella and Mendez, 2009, p.13). As a counterweight to balance the negative effects of market integration, the establishment of a supranational redistribution mechanism – this Europeanisation of cohesion policy – has been called a 'revolutionary change' (Leonardi, 2005, p.1). In other words, the *political strategy* of market integration was met by the opposition of the less developed Mediterranean Member States, which were successful in pushing their interest in a supranational redistribution mechanism. Hence, while the competitive Europe strategy appears as dominant, the firm institutionalisation of a redistributive cohesion policy can be seen as a strengthening of the social Europe strategy.

Whether these developments are seen as a political side-payment to the new Member States (to gain their consent to further market integration) or as a social project of solidarity with the least developed regions within the expanding community, they are indicative of the prevalence of the community method as the dominant political project: general regulation rather than administrative customisation. In other words, since it was not perceived as desirable to limit the single market project to the more competitive Member States only, it became necessary to institutionalise a strong counter policy. In sum, administrative uniformity – in the sense of harmonising policies – was still seen as the right way to achieve an efficiently working single market by helping lagging regions to catch-up. In Leonardi's words (2005, p.19), the

challenge posed by the single market allowed the Commission to fully assume the responsibilities transferred to it by the SEA; national governments on the periphery were given access to the financial resources necessary to counter the economic shock that was expected to be produced by the single market; and regions were empowered to become involved in a policy process that allowed them to fulfil their constitutional responsibilities and have a say in determining their response to challenges posed by the realisation of the single market.

Therefore, the *spatial project* of the EU was the establishment of redistributory mechanisms at the community level (centralisation), which was characterised by common, generally applicable regulations (administrative uniformity). Thus, the setup of cohesion policy as a strong supranational redistributive mechanism reflects a relative strengthening of the equalisation or balancing aspect of the *spatial strategy*. Moreover, political responsibility for the implementation of cohesion policy was now increasingly distributed across the regional, national and European scale. According to Leonardi (2005, p.36) the Europeanisation of cohesion policy has 'significantly changed the nature of relations between institutions and has led to the emergence for the first time of sub-national institutions as significant actors' (scalar multiplicity). Hence, it has been argued that cohesion policy was an important driver of the emergence of a European Union multi-level governance system (Hooghe, 1996; Marks and Hooghe, 2004; see also George, 2004). Thus, these developments resulted in a move towards scalar multiplicity of the *spatial strategy*.

⁵ Similarly, the 1992 Maastricht Treaty can be seen as the beginning of a new "era" whereby treaty amendments became less inclusive with the opt-outs from the EMU by the United Kingdom and Denmark.

Crucially, this arrangement was not significantly altered, in terms of objectives and the distribution of funds, by the 1995 accessions of Austria, Finland, and Sweden. This may be explained by the relatively high level of socio-economic development in these countries, which did not significantly alter the conventional allocation patterns (North-South), as all three countries are, since their accession, net contributors to the cohesion policy (Molle, 2007, p.148). Consequently, Manzella and Mendez (2009, pp.15-17; see also Leonardi, 2005, pp.21-22) have characterised the 1993 reforms as efforts in 'fine-tuning, decentralisation and effectiveness'. By contrast, the eastern enlargements, as will be shown, seem to have had a more visible impact of both the objectives and the structure of the funds.

In sum (see Appendix I), while both the political and spatial projects remained rooted in the Keynesian welfare state paradigm of centralisation and administrative uniformity (top left corner), the political strategy of the single market constituted a threat to the political commitment to spatially balanced socio-economic development (top right corner). Because of the belief in the efficiency of harmonising regulation, the institutionalisation of the single market depended on the approval of all Member States. As a result, as compensation for their consent to the single market, the group of Mediterranean Member States could successfully claim that supranational market integration (characterised by scalar singularity but socio-spatial differentiation/concentration) ought to be supplemented by a supranational commitment to balanced growth (characterised by scalar multiplicity and a commitment to the equalisation or balancing of socio-spatial activities) (bottom left corner).

3.2.2. Enlargements, Reforms, and Competitiveness (2000-2013)

The Eastern European enlargements of the 2000s can be seen as a watershed moment that upset the earlier balance struck between supranational market integration and supranational redistribution (1988-1999). In preparation for the eastern enlargements, new instruments for particular issues (pre-accession assistance, urban regions, peripheral regions, cross-border cooperation) were launched in the 2000-2006 programming period, many of which were later mainstreamed. Considering that the 1995 accessions did not have a similar effect, the question is why did these reforms occur?

While 12 Member States signed the Treaty of Maastricht to form the European Union in 1992, a further 16 states joined the European Union over the subsequent two decades. On the one hand, the three states that joined in 1995 were relatively similar to the older 12. On the other hand, the 13 countries which joined the European Union after 2004 came to constitute a new eastern periphery, as their socialist legacy rendered them substantially different in terms of the levels of socio-economic development and the prevalent political-administrative practices.

Hence, in addition to the numerical increase in Member States and interests, the lagging socio-economic conditions in the new Member States made all of them net recipients of European Union funds, resulting in a severe negative impact on the allocation patterns among the older Member States (most of which would become net contributors (Molle, 2007, p.148). In other words, due to the increased number and diversity of Member States, the *political project* of regulatory harmonisation became a less appealing solution to supranational market integration. As discussed in Section 2, new practices of governance, built around the idea of policy coordination (decentralising/administrative customisation) began to supplement and replace regulatory integration, based on policy harmonisation. Since the 1999 reforms gave more discretion to the Member States (decentralisation), a debate about the renationalisation of cohesion policy developed (Bachtler and Mendez, 2007; Faludi, 2010; Faludi, 2009; Manzella and Mendez, 2009; Leonardi, 2005; Bruszt, 2008).

However, the present paper argues that, for cohesion policy, new practices of governance began to play a crucial role only with the 2006 and 2013 reforms (see Section 3.2.3. below). The paper holds that the more important and more immediate reason for the renationalisation of cohesion policy is found in the reaction of the older Member States to the threat of lower cohesion policy allocations, as well as to the uncertainty of the enlargement's impact on the European Union's long-term economic outlook. This is consistent with Moravcsik's argument that applicant countries as well as poorer countries are in a weak bargaining position vis-à-vis the wealthier Member States (Moravcsik, 2005, p.16). From this perspective, reforms in the second period appear as successful attempts of the older and wealthier Member States to redefine the rationale of cohesion policy in order to protect their own interests (preventing budgets cuts and promoting the overall competitiveness of the single market). In Moravcsik's words, 'specific interstate concessions and compromises

tend to reflect the priorities of the European Union's core countries, and disproportionately the most powerful among them' (2005, p.17; see also Schimmelfennig, 2015).

Hence, faced with enlargement, the older (net-contributing) Member States pressed for a re-evaluation of the balance between competitive Europe and social Europe that previously defined the *political strategy* of supranational market integration. The Lisbon Agenda introduced competitiveness as an additional central pillar to the redistributive rationale of balanced growth. In terms of Brenner's model, the emphasis on competitiveness implied that Member States were freer to differentiate growth poles and to concentrate funding and the promotion of socio-economic activities in locations with the highest growth potential and/or potential productivity gains.

Indeed, the 2006 cohesion policy reforms can be seen as a move toward administrative customisation and decentralisation (*spatial project*), as the new planning framework involved the coordination of interests through Community Strategic Guidelines and National Strategic Reference Frameworks (Manzella and Mendez, 2009, p.19). Parallel to the efforts to make the European Union 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' (the Lisbon Agenda), thematic concentration saw the European Social Fund 'increasingly [being] tied to the European employment strategy' (Manzella and Mendez, 2009, p.17). Thus, Manzella and Mendez (2009, p.19) have argued that the programming period 2007-2013 can be characterised as a turn to a more 'strategic approach for targeting EU priorities, centred on the Lisbon strategy'. In consequence, competitiveness considerations increased in importance relative to social and redistribution issues. Therefore, in terms of the *spatial strategy*, a tendency away from equalisation or balancing and toward the delivery of the thematic objectives of the Lisbon Agenda can be detected.

In sum (see Appendix 2), the increased number and diversity of Member States and their expected impact on the allocation patterns, led to a tentative change in the *political project* and the *spatial project* from regulatory toward coordinative integration. This implies a subtle movement from centralisation towards decentralisation, as well as a movement from administrative uniformity towards administrative customisation. The Lisbon Agenda (*political strategy*) reshuffled the relative balance between competitive Europe and social Europe in favour of the former. This also implied that policies ought to target the specific potentials at the national, regional, and local scale. Moreover, cohesion policy began to be linked to the competitiveness objectives of the Lisbon Agenda, shifting its focus away from its equalising or balancing rationale (*spatial strategy*).

3.2.3. Increased Consistency and Efficiency? (2014-2020)

Willem Molle concluded his 2007 analysis of cohesion policy on the note that the present European Union policy coordination mechanisms (*political project*) 'are in need of review and that more adequate mechanisms are to be found to produce lasting and balanced results' (2007, p.287). His argument concerned both the horizontal and the vertical dimension of policy coordination.

To begin with, Molle makes the point that the horizontal coordination of European Union policies is far from ideal for the consistent delivery of socio-spatial cohesion. He argues that the existence of large funds for cohesion policy relative to the size of the funds available for other European Union objectives (notably competitiveness and sustainability) has led to a blurring of objectives, in the sense that cohesion policy funds are increasingly made available to these other objectives (Molle, 2007, pp.285-287). Additionally, Molle argues that while policy coordination increasingly depends on more open forms of coordination, the financial instruments of cohesion policy attach strong conditionalities to the distribution of funds. Hence, he stresses a contradiction in the vertical coordination of cohesion policy, where overarching objectives are subject to change but the implementation mechanisms do not display a similar degree of flexibility.

The last two sections have illustrated the first point (horizontal coordination) by outlining how the relative balance of the competitive Europe and the social Europe strategies shifted in the aftermath of the eastern enlargements, leading to a blurring of cohesion policy objectives and the objectives of the Lisbon Agenda. It was also pointed out that concerns about the expected impact of the eastern enlargements on the allocation

patterns of cohesion policy can explain this alignment. In a European Union characterised by a relatively wealthy West and a relatively poor East (Moravcsik, 2005, p.18), the project of increasing overall competitiveness of the single market in the global economy became more relevant than the more traditional approach of balanced growth. The negative consequences of this zero-sum bargaining approach on policy consistency are likely to have been a trigger for the search for “more adequate mechanisms” of coordination. Accordingly, the paper argues that the period since the 2006 cohesion policy reforms has seen the tentative emergence of more experimentalist/meta-governance practices (vertical coordination).

In terms of horizontal coordination, the blurring of objectives continued in the post-2013 period as cohesion policy has become ‘the principal investment tool for delivering the Europe 2020 goals’ (European Commission, 2010). The EU 2020 strategy (*political strategy*) ‘is about delivering growth’. Hence, in deviation from its initial rationale as a counterweight to the single market, cohesion policy is now firmly established as the primary tool for delivering growth and competitiveness (*spatial strategy*). Thus, while the majority of the funds will still be allocated to the less developed peripheral regions (especially the new Member States and Portugal), the focus on “key growth priorities” tilts the *spatial selectivity* of European Union cohesion policy toward spaces with greater potential to contribute to smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. This may partially explain why European Union cohesion policy was ineffective in preventing socio-spatial polarisation in the new Member States (Darvas, 2014). Indeed, there is a possibility that focusing cohesion policy on the thematic/key growth priorities of EU 2020 prioritises urban over rural regions, which is in accordance with Brenner’s (2004) finding that the urban is becoming the primary spatial unit for capital accumulation and, thus, the driving force in the re-scaling of regulatory landscapes (Brenner, Peck, and Theodore, 2010). The creation of a specific instrument for urban regions (urban innovation actions) and the growing importance of place-based interventions (Barca, 2009) can be seen as evidence for a changing spatial selectivity of European Union cohesion policy (see Appendix 3), where efficiency and equity objectives become increasingly framed as mutually constitutive (Demidov, 2015, pp.45-46).

In terms of vertical coordination, cohesion policy has become more place-based (Barca 2009), more focused on the delivery of a limited set of broad thematic objectives, based on the concentration of funding on fewer priorities and introduced ex-ante conditionalities (European Commission, 2014) (differentiating/concentrating). This arrangement distributes responsibilities across the supranational, national, regional and local scales. Policy coordination between EU 2020 strategy and cohesion policy is achieved through the “European Semester” based on Annual Growth Surveys and Country-specific Recommendations. However, the system appears to be working rather sluggishly. This is exemplified by the fact that dissent persists over how to address the urgent task of bringing the implementation of the reformed post-2013 cohesion policy up to speed. Rather than attempting to reach consensus on immediate solutions, the debates tend to displace the issue into the post-2020 programming period, putting their hopes into further major structural reforms.

In sum (Appendix III), the *political project* of the EU increasingly resembles experimentalist or meta-governance. Responsibilities and competences are increasingly decentralised and custom-tailored to local conditions. What distinguishes this mode of governance from simple multi-level governance is the centrality of integrating the different levels and centres of decision-making in concrete ways that enable the co-creation of the policy. Similarly, the *spatial project* combines features of administrative customisation (i.e. place-based) and administrative uniformity (i.e. ex-ante conditionality). The *spatial strategy* converges upon divergence (Medve-Bálint, 2014) as the promotion of place-based growth becomes the general rationale of cohesion policy. Finally, in terms of the *political strategy*, the EU 2020 strategy is structurally akin to the Lisbon Agenda. In conclusion, it can be said that the emergence of a more experimentalist/meta-governance architecture had neither a major positive impact horizontally on policy consistency, nor vertically on policy efficiency.

4. Conclusion: Inconsistent Meta-Governance or Adaptive Experimentalist Governance?

In conclusion, the paper has attempted to indicate how the process of European integration, under the primacy of interest representation at the European Union level, is leading to a transformation of the political process and the emergence of new modes of governance (*political project*).

The paper has argued that both experimentalist governance and meta-governance are premised on the idea that in a world of complex interdependence and systemic uncertainty, where policy objectives cannot be established from the outset but ought to be discovered in the process of achieving them (de Burca, Keohane, and Sabel, 2013), the open-ended coordination of interests is more efficient and sustainable than any attempt to harmonise interests. In other words, these modes of governance stress that one size does not fit all, as common challenges require context-specific local solutions, utilising local knowledge and skills.

However, there also is a crucial difference between the two approaches. On the one hand, meta-governance is described as an unstable equilibrium of different coordination methods which will inevitably lead to inconsistencies and policy failure. As a remedy, irony and continued experimentation are key to dealing with this prospect. On the other hand, experimentalist governance stresses the links between these different coordination methods and is rather optimistic about rooting out inconsistencies between them by applying the right managerial practices. In other words, while meta-governance admits that all coordination must ultimately fail, experimentalist governance proposes that the right managerial practices can lead to a virtuous cycle of reflexive learning and continuous improvement. Nevertheless, critics have contended that in as far as experimentalist governance frames incommensurable interests as mutually reinforcing, it supports the emergence of a post-political consensus.

Building on this discussion, the paper argued that making cohesion policy deliver the Lisbon Agenda and EU 2020 objectives can be interpreted as an alignment of two *political strategies*. This led to the question of whether the resulting policy mix was characterised by unintentional consequences (hypothesis I) or achieved the desired outcomes (hypothesis II). If the first was the case, this would be taken as evidence that the European Union mode of governance is not (yet) experimentalist, but rather a form of meta-governance.

The paper proceeded to discuss European integration in terms of political and spatial co-evolution through three periods. While the first period (1988-1999) was characterised by relative stability, the second period (2000-2013) was characterised by periodic reform in reaction to the eastern enlargement, as well as the beginning of a shift from the social Europe strategy to the competitive Europe strategy. This development intensified during the third period (2014+), which also saw the emergence of more experimentalist governance practices. Building on Brenner (2004), the discussion has attempted to provide a more nuanced picture of spatial selectivity. For example, it has pointed out that *spatial strategy* and *political strategy*, even though complementary, may diverge significantly, as can be seen in the intention to balance the *political strategy* of the single market with the *spatial strategy* of socio-spatial cohesion. Furthermore, it has been argued that the evolution of the *political project* (mode of governance) is motivated by attempts to reduce the trade-off between responsiveness and participation in an increasingly diverse European Union.

As for the two hypotheses, the evidence suggests that, since the alignment of cohesion policy with the Lisbon Agenda and the EU 2020 strategy,

- Spatial disparities across the European Union broadened, at a time when rationale and spatial selectivity of cohesion policy shifted from balancing or equalising to concentrating or differentiating socio-spatial activities.
- At the same time, it is not evident that making cohesion policy deliver the Lisbon Agenda and EU 2020 objectives had the intended outcome of making the single market more competitive.
- While 2013 reforms put in place or amplified many elements of an experimentalist governance architecture (i.e. place-based approach, broad framework goals, ex-ante conditionalities, more emphasis on monitoring and feedback), implementation in the 2014-2020 programming period is lagging and discussions about the future of cohesion policy focus on major reform, rather than incremental change and reflexive learning.

These findings point to the conclusion that the mode of European Union governance currently resembles a meta-governance configuration, in which open-ended experimentation is an important feature. However, rather than necessarily leading to continuous reflexive learning, the European Union mode of governance is better understood as an “unstable equilibrium” of ultimately inconsistent modes of coordination. The discussion has shown that the emergence of more experimentalist practices of governance should be seen as a reaction to increasingly divergent interests in the aftermath of the eastern enlargements, and not as the

cause for their divergence. Thus, while the current European Union mode of governance does not achieve the experimentalist ideal of making incommensurable interests converge towards a common denominator, the reason might be that the experimentalist architecture has not yet been *institutionalised* to a sufficient degree.

In this context it is interesting to see that while the reforms of the second period can be understood, by and large, from the perspective of intergovernmental bargaining perspective (Moravcsik, 1998), the subsequent “strategic turn” (Manzella and Mendez, 2009) after 2006 and, especially, after 2013, indicate a tendency towards multi-level policy coordination. While unanimous decision-making ensures that the Member States preserve their central position in approving major reforms, the substance of these reforms lies in information pooling and reflexive learning. As such, the supranational as well as the regional and local levels occupy an increasingly central role in, first, the provision of information, and secondly, in acting upon this information in locally appropriate ways. However, while a mature experimentalist governance architecture would successfully link these two functions to “a new kind of centre” (de Burca, Keohane, and Sabel, 2014), enabling reflexive learning and framework adaptation, multi-level meta-governance ultimately fails to do so.

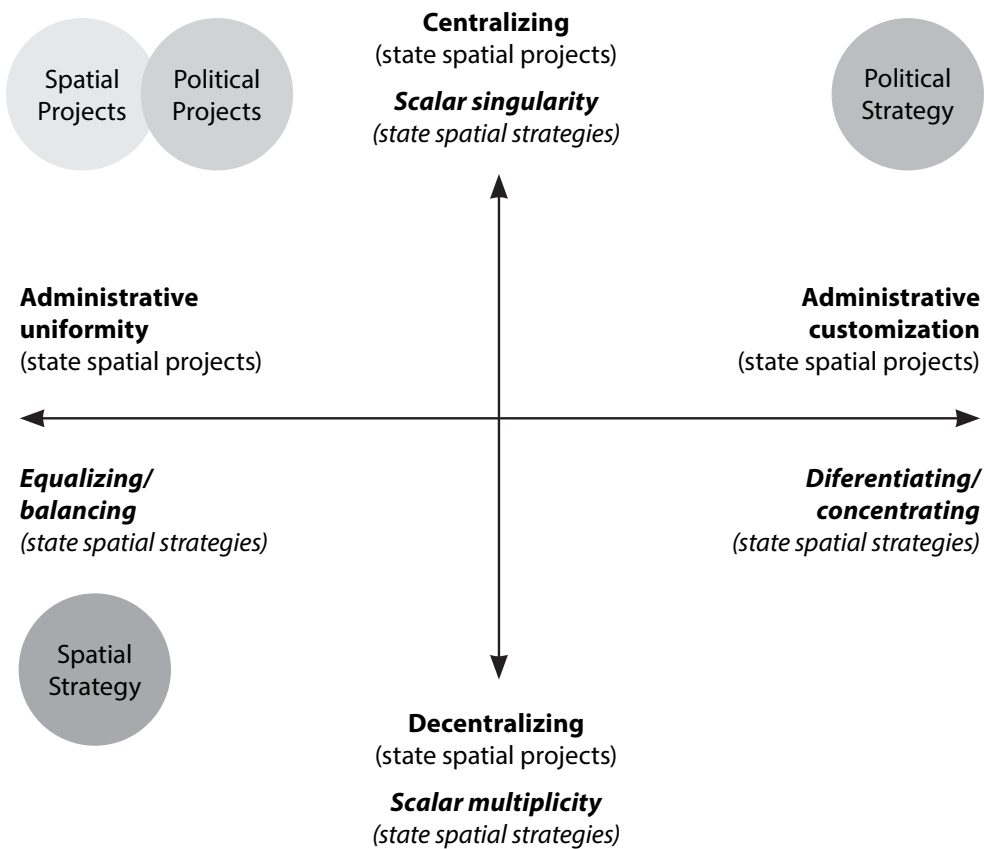
Finally, what might be crucial factors for a transition to proper experimentalist governance? On the one hand, the argument of Laclau and Mouffe, that experimentalist managerial practices cannot reduce individuals’ experiences to a common denominator, should be taken seriously. Their contention would be – against Habermas (1984, 1987) – that it is utopian to assume that, first, experimentalist governance arrangements could approximate an ideal speech situation, while secondly inducing or incentivising actors to follow a communicative rather than instrumental rationality. On the other hand, the institutionalist literature on socialisation (Lewis, 2005; Wiener, 2008) argues that working inside European Union institutions inspires national representatives with a “logic of appropriateness” that is often described as a “culture of compromise”. Furthermore, deliberative intergovernmentalists (Bickerton, Hodson, and Puetter, 2015; Puetter, 2012) argue that compromise-oriented deliberations rather than hard bargaining are characteristic of European Union decision-making today. In any case, the question remains as to what extent these qualities apply to the lower tiers of decision-making.

Acknowledgements

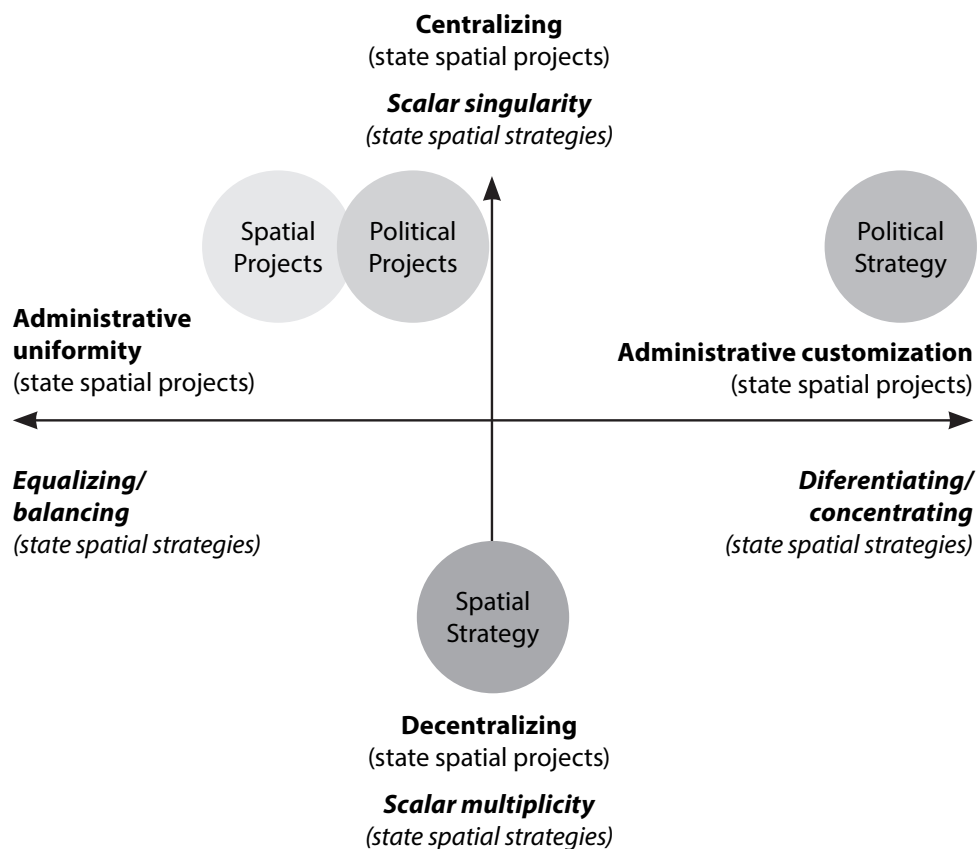
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Annexes

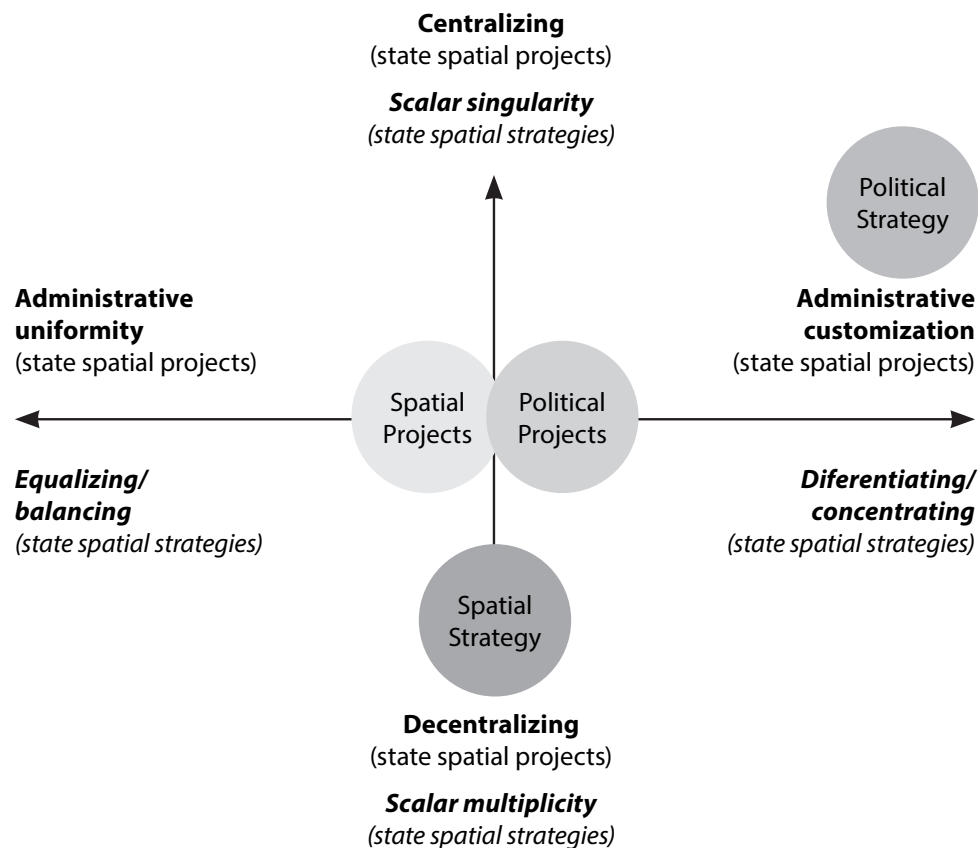
I) Launch and relative stability (1988-1999)



II) Enlargements, reforms, and competitiveness (2000-2013)



III) Increased consistency and efficiency? (2014-2020)



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CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES IN THE PRODUCTION OF CROSS-BORDER TERRITORIAL STRATEGIES: THE EXAMPLE OF THE GREATER REGION

Antoine Decoville^a, Frédéric Durand^b

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Abstract

Cross-border strategies have been flourishing over the last few decades in Europe, mostly in a favourable context where European funding is available and legal instruments are well-developed. However, one may wonder which objectives are really targeted within this very broad and imprecise notion of cross-border strategy. The purpose of this paper is, first, to provide a theoretical framework in order to better understand the different meanings of the notion of cross-border integration and to provide a more critical perspective on its effects. Secondly, it analyses the policy content of the cross-border territorial strategy developed within the Greater Region before, in the final section, pointing out the difficulties faced by policy-makers during its elaboration. This final section is based on the insights brought both by the regional stakeholders interviewed and by our expertise as moderators and scientific advisors within the working group in charge of the realisation of the cross-border territorial strategy. The main finding of our analysis is that the consensus that has been reached by all the stakeholders is the “smallest common denominator”; that is to say, the least constraining.

Keywords

Cross-border territorial strategy, cross-border governance, the Greater Region, obstacles, cross-border cooperation.

a (Corresponding author) Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER), 11 porte des Sciences, Campus Belval, L-4366 Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg. E-mail: antoine.decoville@liser.lu

b Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER), 11 porte des Sciences, Campus Belval, L-4366 Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg. E-mail: frederic.durand@liser.lu

1. Introduction

Several decades of European integration policy have helped to reduce the fragmentation of the European territory (Dominguez and Pires, 2014). The challenge related to the project of creating a multicultural supra-state space of freedom, security, and justice is indeed to reduce the impact of internal borders on movements and to allow cross-border exchanges (Nugent, 2012). Territorially speaking, the European Union objective has always been to diminish the gap in socio-economic development between the European regions, as already pointed out in the Treaty of Rome (1957). Ten years later, in 1967, the Directorate General XVI, the ancestor of European regional policy, was created to implement this goal. The formulations have changed, the strategies as well, but the contemporary territorial cohesion paradigm, as first mentioned in the Treaty of Lisbon (2007), refers back to this objective of reducing regional disparities. The structural funds (called European structural and investment funds since the European funding programme 2014-2020) constitute the financial leverage to implement concrete actions for reducing the differences between the territories, from the local scale to much broader ones.

In this quest for a more unified Europe, which is nowadays threatened by a tendency towards a re-closure of borders in a context of multiple crises (terrorist risks, the refugee crisis), border regions are hotspots that condense most of the challenges that the European construct faces. Borders are the sovereign 'interface' between countries (Henrikson, 2010), and operate as filters to the exchanges taking place between border regions. Their degree of openness, which can evolve over time, allows stock to be taken of the situation with regard to the process of Europeanisation.

In order to improve the articulation of border regions, numerous regional stakeholders have taken the initiative to start a dialogue on cross-border spatial development and to share their views and objectives on a cross-border scale by elaborating territorial strategies in a collective manner. Through the quite ambiguous terminology of "territorial strategy", we mean a document, developed at the cross-border level, which summarises the priorities shared by all the parties concerning territorial development and which should help to formulate policies in the field of spatial planning. However, cross-border territorial strategies cannot be perceived as spatial planning documents *stricto sensu* since there is no cross-border jurisdiction in this field. Spatial planning remains totally embedded in national and regional contexts. Paasi and Zimmerbauer (2015, p.1) summarise very well this contradiction between the need for more "cross-border thinking" and the limits imposed by the regulatory frameworks:

In strategic planning, planners need to think increasingly in terms of open, porous borders despite the fact that in concrete planning activities, politics, and governance, the region continues to exist largely in the form of bounded and territorial political units.

Moreover, the prevailing official discourse, which systematically associates cooperation beyond borders with something positive, tends to hide the fact that a lot of obstacles hamper the development of efficient cross-border territorial strategies.

The aim of this article is therefore to question the ability of cross-border territorial strategies to concretely improve cross-border integration and to bring more cohesion at the cross-border level, as advocated by the European Union authorities, despite the numerous obstacles which remain. Such an ambition requires a clear understanding of the concept of cross-border integration, which appears to be complex and multidimensional. In the spatial planning literature, there is a lack of theoretical references that describe, properly and in a comprehensive manner, how cross-border integration and its regulation impact on actual spaces. This inadequacy of the conceptual tools hinders the production of cross-border territorial strategies that can efficiently articulate border territories and create synergies between them in a way which includes institutional aspects, functional realities, ideational representations, and elements linked to differences in territorial contexts. In order to contribute to answering this need, the first part of this paper will briefly introduce how spatial planning has been addressed so far on a cross-border scale, as well as the limits of the implementation of cross-border strategies. It will also formulate an analytical framework, to better apprehend and investigate cross-border territorial strategies through the prism of cross-border integration. In the second part, we will focus our analysis on the case study of the Greater Region, where a cross-border territorial strategy

is being elaborated. This article relies on the experience that we gained by being involved as moderators and scientific advisors in the elaboration of the economic part of the Territorial Development Scheme of the Greater Region. The analytical framework developed in Part One will be applied to the examination of the documents comprising the cross-border territorial strategy of the Greater Region. After having presented the case study and the approach followed by policy-makers in elaborating their cross-border strategy, the contribution of this cross-border strategy with regards to the cross-border integration process will be addressed. Finally, based on the findings revealed by a series of interviews conducted with regional stakeholders of the Greater Region, the third part will highlight the most important limits and obstacles which hamper the success of this cross-border strategy.

2. An Analytical Framework Derived from the Articulation Between the Fields of Border Studies and Strategic Spatial Planning

Though border studies have come increasingly under the spotlight over the last 20 years, and though numerous papers have been published on cross-border cooperation and its challenges, cross-border spatial planning as such still constitutes quite a restricted section of the literature, probably because its existence in legal terms does not exist (Durand, 2014). Researchers interested in the field of planning in transnational spaces have focused so far mostly on comparisons between national planning policies, thus highlighting the differences in planning cultures and their influence on the organisation and functioning of planning systems (Knieling and Othengrafen, 2009; Newman and Thornley, 1996); on the emergence of a European spatial planning vision and how it influences national planning systems (Dühr et al., 2010; Faludi, 2010); or on the different forms that Europeanisation of planning can take (Korthals Altes, 2014; Faludi, 2014).

With respect to the elaboration of cross-border strategies for spatial development, academic papers have been written on the phases of strategic elaborations (Durand, 2014), and on their limits (Jacobs, 2014), but, to our knowledge, few have been designed around the concrete impacts of cross-border cooperation projects on the dynamics of urban development. For Bufon (2011), cross-border territorial strategies can be summarised as non-constraining documents that are limited to a high degree of generalisation, due, for de Vries (2008), to the fact that there is no clear and recognised hierarchy within cross-border governance. Spatial planning is not a supra-national competence and the action of the European Union is limited to the definition of non-binding strategies, such as the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) (1999), the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (2008), and the Territorial Agenda 2020 (2011). For Terlouw (2012), the logic of strengthening territorial cohesion in the European Union by stimulating territorial development in the border regions, directs the focus of cross-border governance away from the border itself, and in so doing, does not take into account the interests of the local population with regard to the possibilities offered by differences in regulations and prices between national territories. For Jacobs (2014, p.86), who shares the reservations with regards to the potential efficiency of such strategies,

The more strategic the approach will be, attempting to look at cross-border space in a more integrated way, the less will it be possible to embed this in the right contexts, consequently allowing a gap between the strategic plan and whatever will be actually developed. Often, developments will occur despite of any strategic planning, for example because of economic opportunities observed by business organizations. Nonetheless, strategic spatial plans may continue to play a role as monuments of cross-border cooperation, and it will still be possible to refer to them when discussing the potential of a more integrated cross-border region.

Since cross-border areas associate different territorial systems with their own regulatory systems, tools and methods for planning, a common planning vision requires a certain degree of coordination between the different institutional levels of each country involved in cross-border cooperation (Peña, 2007).

However, the lack of theoretical references about what cross-border spatial integration means in terms of spatial planning hampers the elaboration of cross-border territorial strategies that address the diversity of problems related to the articulation and synergy of border territories. In the scientific literature about border studies, cross-border integration has been widely studied and covers different aspects: economic interactions

between border territories (Anderson and Wever, 2003); institutionalisation between local and regional actors across borders (Scott, 1999); or sometimes both (Sohn et al., 2009, Dörny and Walther, 2015). Other works have tried to see whether interactions between two border areas lead to a greater convergence of the development trajectories (in social, economic and urbanistic terms), and therefore to a diminution of their structural differentials (De Boe et al., 1999). The results show that when cross-border interactions are very asymmetrical, they can tend to increase territorial disparities instead of reducing them. This finding seems to disprove the paradigm that greater cross-border interaction always leads to more convergence (Topaloglou et al., 2005; Decoville et al., 2013). Therefore, cross-border integration is not a process which has a single causal effect. It 'results as much from the symmetries and similarities between territories that make up a cross-border region as from the asymmetries and existing differentials on either side of a border' (Durand, 2015, p.314). We propose, in order to overcome the misunderstandings linked to the equivocal meanings of this concept, to approach it through four different entries, or dimensions:

First, the **functional dimension** of cross-border integration is linked to the flows of people on both sides of a border for reasons that can be linked to work, shopping, the use of public amenities and other services. This dimension of the integration process has been largely investigated in the field of border studies and has been defined by Van Houtum as the *flow approach* (2000).

The **institutional dimension** of cross-border integration relates to cross-border cooperation and the building of multi-level governance networks (Perkmann, 1999), that is to say, to the structuring of the decision-making process with respect to cross-border issues. Cross-border institutionalisation can be more or less formalised, and more or less opened to non-public actors.

The **structural dimension** of cross-border integration refers to the evolution and the convergence (or not) of the border territories with respect to socio-economic and spatial characteristics.

Lastly, the **ideational dimension** of cross-border integration consists in the more subjective elements linked to collective representations. Indeed, a process of integration is supposed to lead to more dialogue, exchanges beyond borders, and consequently more shared social values, or more common references. Focusing on the ideational dimension of borders helps to go beyond the top-down perspective on borders and takes into account the individual border narratives and experiences, which reflect 'the ways in which borders impact upon the daily life practices of people living in and around the borderland and transboundary transition zones' (Newman, 2006, p.43). However, this ideal vision of cross-border integration can also be seriously hampered by some of the contradictory effects associated with an increase in cross-border flows, such as anti-cross-border commuters' movements, as in the Canton of Geneva.

These different dimensions of cross-border integration underline the polysemy of the concept, and it should be kept in mind that these dimensions are largely intertwined. The increase in the level of integration in one dimension naturally has effects on other dimensions of cross-border integration, whether in a positive or a negative way. However, the observation of the links between these different dimensions allows questioning of the concept of cross-border integration in a more critical way, such as: does an increase in functional interactions bring more convergence or more divergence between border regions? Does it lead to more social cohesion between the border populations or more tension and rejection? Do the institutional actors that are involved in formal cooperation really play the game of a win-win collaboration, or do they use the arena of cross-border governance to better design their own development strategies, which they consider as being in competition with those of their neighbours? In our perspective, these four dimensions help to go beyond the normative approach of cross-border integration as advocated by the European Union, and to adopt a more critical perspective on the potential impacts of cross-border integration in a context characterised by Euroscepticism and re-bordering.

Based on this multidimensional perspective of cross-border integration as well as on a spatial planning approach, our analytical framework will investigate how these different dimensions of the process are taken into account in the territorial development strategy of the Greater Region.

3. The Attempt to Establish a Territorial Strategy for the Greater Region

In this part, we will see how the territorial strategy of the Greater Region, which is still under construction, is addressing the elements raised in the previously described theoretical framework, but first, it is necessary to describe the spatial features of the Greater Region as well as the approach pursued by institutional policy-makers.

3.1. What is the Greater Region?

This cross-border region has a long history of cooperation. Indeed, one has to remember that it is located at the heart of what became the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, which was the foundation of the subsequent European Economic Community in 1957. Luxembourg, the Lorraine region in France, the Walloon region in Belgium and Saarland in Germany shared the same industrial profile, characterised by the importance of the steel industry. Within this context, favourable to European economic cooperation, regional authorities developed cooperation at a much more local scale, which resulted in the setting-up of a cross-border organisation, Saar-Lor-Lux, in 1980. The idea was to create synergies between these border areas which then faced similar economic challenges with regard to the steel crisis. Today, this Euroregion is a very large cooperation space of 65,000 km², covering the Lorraine Region in France, the Walloon Region in Belgium, the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, and the federated States of Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland in Germany. It encompasses more than 11 million inhabitants.

The Greater Region is characterised by strong socio-economic inequalities between the neighbouring territories, as well as by numerous cross-border flows which are mostly oriented towards the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg. More than 160,000 people cross the border every day to work in Luxembourg (STATEC, 2015). This situation stems from the structural differences which exist between the border regions. Whereas Luxembourg is an attractive working place which offers high wages and good working conditions, the neighbouring regions in Lorraine, Belgium and Germany have developed larger residential areas at much lower prices than in Luxembourg. The combination of these specific advantages favours cross-border commuting, but also huge planning problems, such as traffic congestion and uncontrolled urban development. This process tends to create asymmetries and leads to more unbalanced paths of economic and spatial development, thus contradicting the proclaimed objective of the European Union to foster territorial cohesion. In spite of these problems, which considerably erode the living conditions of the population in Luxembourg as well as in the border regions, it appears obvious that a strategic coordination of spatial development on the cross-border scale is necessary, and this is why policy-makers decided to embark on a strategic and cooperative approach.

3.2. The Approach of the Territorial Development Scheme in the Greater Region

Cross-border interactions which link the different territories and populations within the Greater Region have encouraged regional governments to launch a strategic reflection, called the Territorial Development Scheme of the Greater Region (TDS GR), which aims at better organisation of spatial development in the broad sense of the term. In addition, a second objective can be seen: to foster the development of a cross-border metropolitan polycentric region, as proposed in the frame of the METROBORDER project (European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion [ESPON], 2010), which highlighted the lack of urban critical mass in the Greater Region. The basic idea can be summarised as follows: in the absence of any "big city", demographically speaking, the Greater Region has difficulties in being perceived as an important and attractive region with a notable metropolitan dimension on the European scene. Through a better integration of the different urban centres, the three main objectives are to ensure an integrative and coherent development of the whole Greater Region, to contribute to reinforcing its metropolitan dimension, and to generate economies of scale and to share certain public facilities. The cross-border territorial strategy might tend to constitute a socio-spatial process, driven by the public sector, through which a vision, actions, and means to shape and organise spatial development of the cross-border area are developed. However, this strategy remains very theoretical and the orientations formulated in the METROBORDER report are, of course, not constraining.

The elaboration of the strategy has been entrusted to the Coordination Committee for Territorial Development (CCTD), a working group which gathers different representatives of the spatial planning authorities from the different territories which compose the Greater Region. This process, which was begun in 2011 and is still in progress, has led so far to the production of several documents which are supposed to frame and guide the future actions of public stakeholders from the perspective of building a cross-border polycentric metropolis. These documents consist of different thematic approaches, which have all been computed into different documents. The first one studies the urban framework of the Greater Region in a descriptive manner, with the different levels of the urban centres. The second document focuses on transportation issues and highlights priority projects. The third document provides policy-makers with statistical and qualitative information about the potential synergies that could be created on a cross-border scale. Two other issues (demography, and culture and tourism) are planned and will be addressed in the TDS GR, but have not been realised yet.

This strategy therefore relies on different sectorial issues. In order to see whether this strategy answers or not to the objective of improving cross-border integration in the broad sense of the term, the following section will pay attention to the different constitutive documents of the strategy that have been written so far.

3.3. The Contribution of the Territorial Development Scheme of the Greater Region to the Different Dimensions of Cross-Border Integration

The first document, which is rather compact and analytic, focuses on the metropolitan dimension of the Greater Region. It defines the levels of centrality of the most important cities within the Greater Region, as well as their functional profiles. Three different metropolitan spaces have been identified, all possessing their own logics (Figure 1), but no factual element is provided to underpin scientifically the existence of these three different cross-border metropolitan spaces. The first so-called "cross-border polycentric functional space with a metropolitan dimension" is located in the central part of the Greater Region and includes the functional space around Luxembourg, Metz, Nancy, Saarbrücken, Sarreguemines, Trier, and Kaiserslautern. The second is located along the Rhine axis and incorporates three different German metropolitan regions: Rhine-Ruhr, Rhine-Main and Rhine-Neckar. The last is located on the northern part of the Walloon region, and is composed of cities which are mainly influenced by their proximity to Brussels, as well as by other cross-border metropolitan areas, such as Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai or Aachen-Liège-Maastricht. This document outlines the scope of the cross-border strategy, which aims at creating polycentric urban networks in order to strengthen the position of the Greater Region at the heart of European economic flows. It sheds light on the metropolitan dimension of the urban areas without specifying the analytical method used to draw the different perimeters. Such a document aims to distinguish different metropolitan areas within the Greater Region which could be the subject of specific policy attention. It also emphasises that the priority action space for the Greater Region is the one centred on Luxembourg, since it is the only one that is common to the four countries. However, it does not provide solutions for increasing or regulating the cross-border integration process and remains very general.

The second document, which concerns priority transport networks (Figure 2), highlights the challenge of cross-border mobility in a context which is characterised by a growing number of cross-border workers and, more generally speaking, by an increase of flows across borders. Different spatial scales are addressed in this document. First, the spatial scale of the whole Greater Region and of its insertion within Europe is clearly brought to the fore, through the development of road transport infrastructure as well as the railway network (improvement of the motorway network, construction of a high-speed railway line, and implementation of the Eurocap-Rail project, which aims at better inter-linking of the three different European capitals of Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg). The second scale is more local and linked to daily mobility. The main objective of this document is the enhancement of services which accompany the provision of public transport, such as a single information platform or the pricing strategy. As regards the delicate issue of airports, no strategic discussion has taken place so far, probably because of the importance of the competition between the different territories. Waterway transport has also not been considered a priority. This document puts forward the necessity of improving cross-border mobility within the Greater Region, as well as the connections between the Greater Region and the neighbouring regions. Its ambition is to better serve or accompany the development of flows across the borders in order to enhance the functional dimension of cross-border integration for cross-border workers, as well as for freight. However, this document does not constitute a purely new strategy for the Greater Region, since it also introduces, in a unique document, the most important projects that have already previously been selected bilaterally in order to better coordinate the actions related to transportation planning. For instance, the improvement of road accessibility between France and Luxembourg was developed in 2009 with the SMOT (Scheme for Cross-border Mobility).

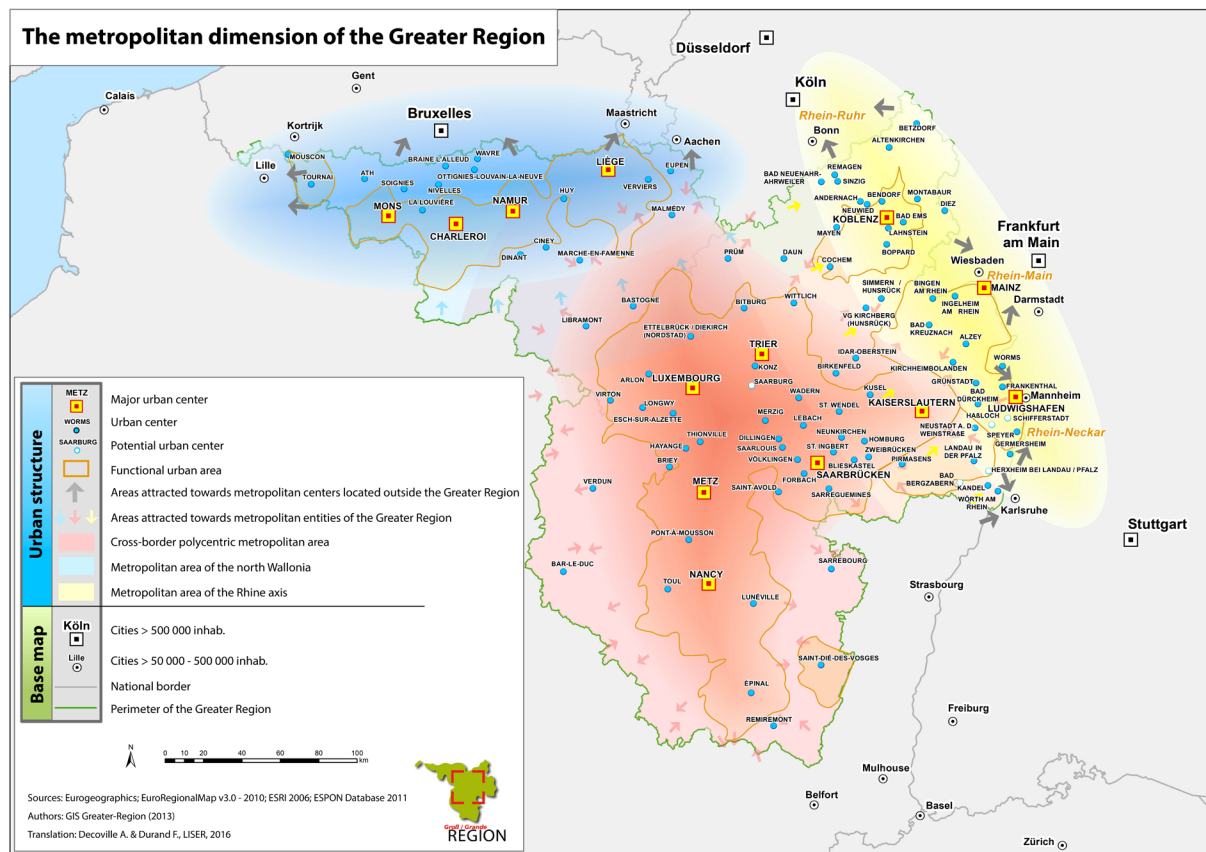


Figure 1. The three metropolitan spaces of the Greater Region
 Source: CCTD 2012 (Schéma de développement territorial de la Grande Région – volet 1: la dimension métropolitaine de la Grande Région)

The last document produced deals with the territorial impact of economic development on a cross-border scale. The choice made by policy-makers is to focus on metropolitan economic activities, that is to say, medium-high-tech manufacturing and knowledge-intensive services, in line with the strategy of fostering a cross-border polycentric metropolitan region. This study consists of a summary of the state of play of the economic situation, which has underscored the strong heterogeneity of the Greater Region in terms of economic specialisation. It has also brought to the fore divergences with respect to economic policy priorities identified in the different territories. As far as Luxembourg is concerned, the strong specialisation of the Grand Duchy in the financial sector has pushed policy-makers to reduce their dependency on this sector and to search for a diversification of its economy, by supporting other kinds of high added-value sectors, such as research and development, information technologies, or highly specialised services. Saarland, which is facing a serious problem of population shrinkage, is trying to foster its attractiveness to French skilled workers in order to keep its industrial sector going, which is dominated by the automotive industry and machine-tool production. The economic development strategies of Rhineland-Palatinate are more directed towards the Rhine Valley on the western side of the region. Trier, which is the only important city in the western part of the *Land*, is a commercial centre for the Greater Region and especially for the Luxembourgers, and this role should be reinforced. For the eastern part of the Walloon region (the “Province du Luxembourg”), which is more rural, the priorities are research and development, especially in the field of the aerospace industry (the European positioning system, Galileo, is intended to be operated from this region). The French Lorraine region, which faces important unemployment problems, has banked on research into new materials. The state of play has also highlighted four spatial patterns associated with the spatial organisation of economic activities (a polycentric spatial pattern dominated by an attractive employment centre; a polycentric spatial pattern dominated by several employment centres; a balanced polycentric spatial pattern; and an “oligocentric” spatial pattern characterised by a limited number of centres which hold the majority of jobs). These four types of spatial patterns directly affect cross-border cooperation potentialities. Dealing with such a differentiated situation and improving cross-border cooperation implies a strong commitment on the part of institutional actors, as well as a concentration of public effort and financial means on specific priorities. In the light of this, a consensus has been reached concerning the elaboration of a joint smart specialisation strategy, and a political

resolution has been taken by the decision-makers of the Greater Region, focusing on two domains of activity: the development of new materials; and the “silver” economy (the economy linked to ageing). Furthermore, the key message of this document is that any economic development across the border has to be driven and framed by institutional actors in order to promote and boost economic cooperation within the Greater Region. Therefore, it has emphasised the significance of the institutional dimension of cross-border integration, since cross-border partnerships and support for initiatives and synergies in the economic field need efficient cross-border governance.

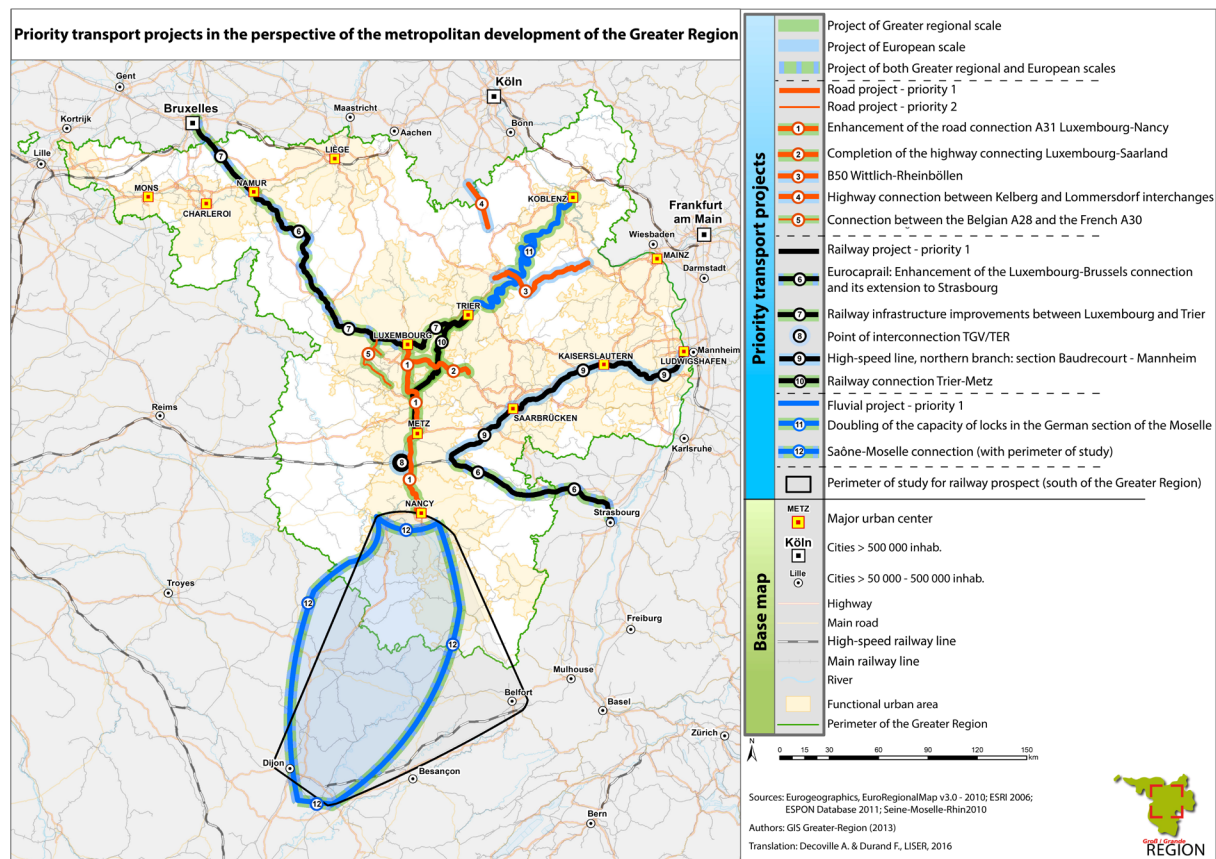


Figure 2. Priority transport projects within the Greater Region

Source: CCTD 2013 (Schéma de développement territorial de la Grande Région – volet 2:

les projets de transport prioritaires dans la perspective du développement métropolitain de la Grande Région)

As we can see, at its actual stage of development, the TDS GR consists more of a descriptive document, to which some quite general objectives have been added or synthesised from previous works. Its focus seems to be to address the growing importance of cross-border interactions (that is to say, to oversee the functional dimension of cross-border integration), rather than developing a proactive approach aimed at bringing greater economic and social convergence (the structural dimension of integration), supporting the emergence of a trans-border identity (the ideational dimension), or strongly reinforcing regulation modes on a cross-border scale (the institutional dimension). This strategy does not appear to have an all-encompassing approach to the cross-border integration process. It pursues more of a utilitarian goal (based on improving cross-border traffic, developing territorial marketing, and attempting to develop partnerships for two identified economic sectors). Most of the work done so far consisted of setting up a general overview of the situation, whereas concrete decisions have been limited in both their scope and ambition. To understand the lack of more concrete results for some of the dimensions of cross-border integration, it is necessary to shed light on the different obstacles that the stakeholders of the Greater Region have to face before adopting concrete resolutions.

4. A Cross-Border Territorial Strategy Constrained by Numerous Obstacles

The elements provided in this fourth section come directly from our involvement as external advisors and debate moderators during the formulation of the report on strategic cooperation with regard to the territorial

impact of economic development within the Greater Region. To do so, we attended numerous meetings of the CCTD throughout 2014, which allowed us to observe the evolution of the decision-making process, with its challenges and obstacles. We also conducted 31 face-to-face interviews with experts from the different territories. These experts were chosen by the CCTD for their knowledge of the economic synergies potentially to be fostered between the different territorial entities of the Greater Region. They represented various types of organisations such as chambers of commerce, agencies for economic development, or public authorities in charge of spatial planning and economic development issues. It has to be said that the list of people interviewed was imposed on us, thus certainly introducing a bias in the collection of points of view. Moreover, there is an imbalance between the number of people interviewed in each region (five in Luxembourg, eight in France, seven in each *Land* in Germany, and three in Belgium) which is due to the fact that some targeted individuals declined our request for an interview. However, the interviews have allowed us to define a typology of obstacles encountered by the actors in the development of the cross-border territorial strategy.

4.1. Institutional Obstacles

Institutional obstacles are usually the ones which are the most often cited by actors in the field of cross-border cooperation, especially because of the absence of supra-national competencies with regard to spatial planning (Knippschild, 2011). In the case of the Greater Region, the situation with respect to this type of problem is very complicated due to the number of countries involved (four countries and five regions), which makes the decision-making process more complex. Indeed, these different territorial systems have their own regulatory systems and their own priorities for spatial development. Institutional structures and state organisations (centralism vs federalism) vary on each side of the border. In addition, the different institutional levels are not systematically represented within cross-border governance (Nelles and Durand, 2014), even if they would theoretically be needed. Luxembourg, of course, has the full competencies of a sovereign country. The *Länder* in Germany benefit from a strong autonomy, as does the Walloon region. The Lorraine region has some competencies with regard to spatial planning, but is forced to work closely with the *Prefecture de la Région Lorraine*, which represents the interests of the central state at the regional level and which has jurisdiction over international affairs. These differences in the prerogatives of the different institutions bring mismatches with respect to the operational capacities of the different stakeholders involved in cross-border governance. In addition, the different institutional levels are not systematically represented in the CCTD (more especially the local level, which elaborates the local development plans, which concretely impact on land use). Figure 3 shows how unbalanced the representation of the different countries is within the CCTD due to differences in territorial organisation. It also shows the different levels of the “institutional pyramid” that are represented in governance. The French actors outnumber the Belgian ones by a factor of seven within the CCTD. The individuals are included in the CCTD because the regional organisations to which they belong are territorially incorporated in the very large cooperation zone of the Greater Region. Some of these territories, however, do not really share a strong interest in cooperating with foreign partners, because they have no territorial contiguity with them, for example. As some scholars have already shown, state actors and national interests still dominate the cross-border governance sphere and largely influence policy choices and the outputs of the debates in the Greater Region, thus confirming previous studies (Dörry and Decoville, 2013; Durand and Lamour, 2014). Of course, such an unequal representation of the different institutional stakeholders largely affects the balance of power in the decision-making sphere, and this is in several ways. Even though the meetings of the CCTD benefit from translations, the common language is French, since the German actors are the only actors who do not have French as an official language in their territory.

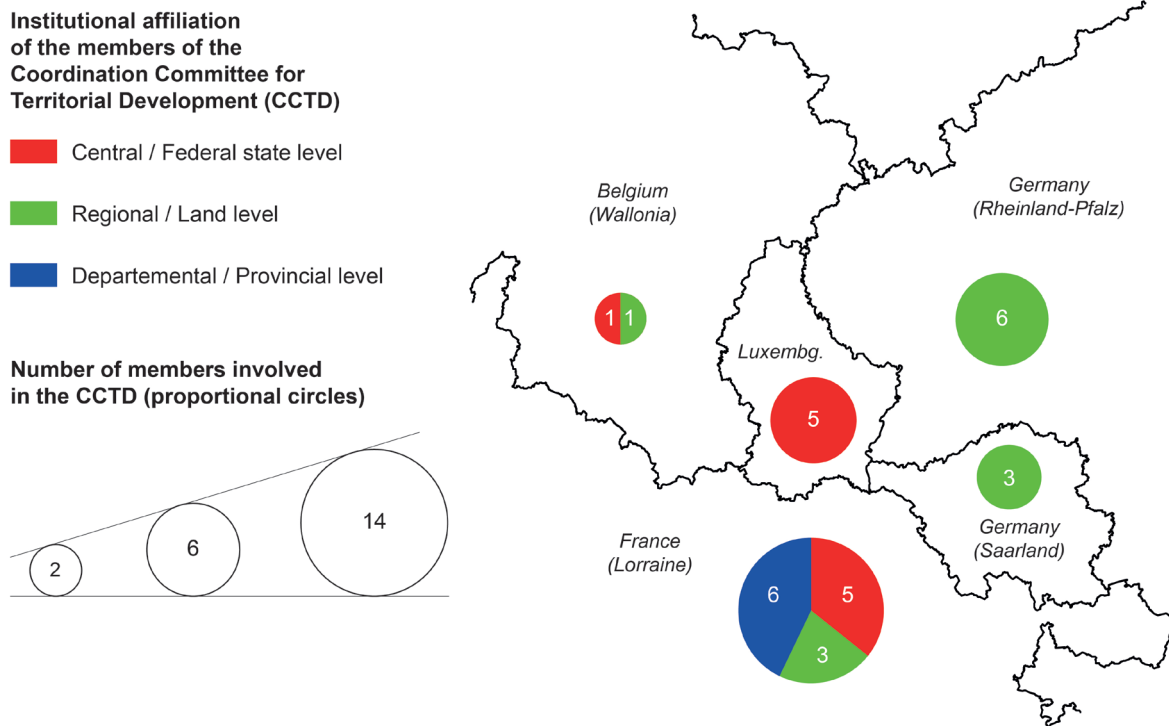


Figure 3: Representation of the different countries within the Coordination Committee for Territorial Development
Source: Official list of the members of the CCTD (June 2014)

4.2. Cultural Obstacles

Beyond these institutional mismatches and the differentiated distribution of competencies according to administrative levels, cultural obstacles emerge. First of all, linguistic differences create communication problems and constitute significant brakes to a better mutual understanding between the institutional actors involved in cross-border cooperation (Cankar et al., 2014). The use of different languages to communicate and debate can generate misunderstandings, conflicts and preconceived ideas (La Cecla, 1997) even if translators are present to ease the communication and dialogue between the stakeholders involved. Within the working group of the CCTD, the presence of four nationalities and the use of two languages (French and German) complicate the discussion and the working sessions between the policy-makers when creating a common strategy (Evrard and Schultz, 2015). Secondly, discrepancies between planning cultures can affect the way the strategy is discussed and elaborated. Newman and Thornley (1996) distinguished between the *regional economic planning approach*, which dominates in Lorraine and in Luxembourg, the *land use management approach*, in the Walloon region, and the *comprehensive integrated approach* in the German *Länder*. If the confrontation between these different planning conceptions does not constitute, at first sight, a strong impediment to cooperation for the elaboration of the TDS GR, which is a flexible and non-constraining process, it clearly appears that the conceptual tools that are used are not always understood in the same manner. The most important one, which is the concept of “polycentrism”, demonstrably reflects this problem of mutual understanding between the different actors. The stakeholders have quite different views on what polycentrism should entail in terms of concrete priorities. French and Belgian stakeholders conceive the polycentric strategy as a way of developing a whole territory, including rural regions, through the reinforcement of a regular network of urban centres which are supposed to steer economic development throughout their respective hinterlands as well. For the Luxembourgish and German actors, polycentrism is considered as a set of actions that should benefit first of all the most important centres. These differences are not just cultural and have far-reaching consequences with regard to the potential outcomes of the strategy.

4.3. Obstacles Linked to the Divergences of Strategic Visions and Priorities

Our position as insiders during one year within the working group of the CCTD gave us the opportunity to point out discrepancies with respect to the strategic visions and political priorities that are supported by the stakeholders within cross-border governance. These divergences have their roots in the structural differences which exist between the border territories (e.g. in terms of average wages, total tax rates on business, total labour cost, or unemployment rates). Indeed, the inequalities in terms of economic development and tax regimes between the different territorial members of the Greater Region are very high and create an uneven situation which does not facilitate territorial cooperation. De facto, these disparities tend to generate a feeling of dependency on “wealthy Luxembourg”. When the skilled workforce from France, Germany, and Belgium crosses the border every day to work in Luxembourg, it is sometimes seen as being at the expense of the capacity of these territories to develop their own economic activities. This uneven situation can potentially affect cross-border cooperation dynamics. Some stakeholders can have defensive postures that are not in favour of a more peaceful and fruitful dialogue, generating other types of obstacles. An example of such a position can be highlighted by one of the representatives of business interests in France, who said that some entrepreneurs in Lorraine are against upgrading the cross-border railway and road networks to Luxembourg because they do not want to encourage the most highly qualified workers in Lorraine to commute and work in the Grand Duchy, which offers advantages in terms of wages. Traffic congestion is perceived as helping to limit the loss of this labour force in favour of Luxembourg.

The strategic visions and priorities that are targeted by the different representatives of the planning authorities within the CCTD are mostly in conformity with the national strategies of their home territory. Whereas the promotion of endogenous economic development is prioritised by French and Belgian actors – who focus their efforts on job creation – stakeholders in Luxembourg concentrate their policy priorities on the issue of cross-border mobility for workers. These divergences concerning the conceptual tools and priorities that are foreseen with regard to economic development strongly reduce the scope of the potential agreements that can be found between all parts, and, as such, the content of the cross-border territorial strategy. Another example is the theme of tax regimes, which generates important disparities between the attractiveness of the different territories for some specific types of activities, goods, and services, and the logic of competition appears quite strongly there. Indeed, the differences in the total amount of taxes that employers have to pay for an employee differ sharply,¹ thus making it complicated for a French or a Belgian entrepreneur to offer competitive wages for an employee who is ready to work in Luxembourg. During the face-to-face interviews, numerous experts clearly mentioned the importance of this issue in their explanation of the strong differences in spatial development dynamics on a cross-border scale, and they suggested it would be useful to conduct a study to highlight the challenges linked to tax differentials in respect of territorial strategies at the cross-border level. This suggestion was widely rejected by the members of the CCTD. Indeed, tax regimes seem to remain a taboo issue, and the stakeholders are not ready to share strategic information in this field.

4.4. Relational Obstacles

Finally, another type of obstacle should be considered, which lies in the formal or informal relations between individuals and which can be called a “relational obstacle”. These obstacles should be differentiated from the others because they are not linked to differences in terms of ideologies, cultures, or policy priorities, but depend on the quality of interpersonal relations within cross-border governance. This type of obstacle is rarely studied *per se*, and it is very difficult to obtain reliable information on such a sensitive issue.

Cross-border governance is an arena in which dialogue emerges between individuals who do not have the same degree of legitimacy, the same experience, or the same leadership. The balance of powers between these individuals is de facto not equal. Observation of the communication and exchanges that occur between the different members of the CCTD allowed us to identify the main causes of relational obstacles. Some actors show an important degree of commitment, leadership quality, or legitimacy, whereas others are less involved since they have been asked by their superiors to participate in CCTD in addition to other priority tasks. Of

1 Some information about the different levels of tax burden in OECD member countries is available at: <http://www.oecd.org/ctp/tax-policy/taxing-wages-tax-burden-trends-latest-year.htm>.

course, the gap in interest and involvement between the different partners of cross-border cooperation brings disillusion and seriously hampers the motivation of the ones who significantly drive cooperation. Trust is another crucial issue. Building a consensual vision of the future spatial development of a cross-border region requires a strong level of trust between the actors, who sometimes have to share precious or strategic information with respect to national or regional strategies. When this level of trust is not realised, and when the different members of cross-border governance withhold information, the outcomes cannot go far. Lastly, legitimacy is necessary to upgrade the level of cooperation, and legitimacy is provided, amongst other things, by the position of the different stakeholders within their own institutional hierarchies. When a territory is not represented by more senior people, it tends to show (or at least, is perceived by the representatives of the other territories) as a sign of disinterest.

Cross-border cooperation thus appears as a fragile network mostly driven by policy-makers and civil servants who show very different levels of involvement. It is not easy to evaluate the impact of these relational obstacles in comparison to the technical or the political obstacles, but one thing is sure: political and cultural problems can be solved, whereas it is much more complicated to recreate trust where it no longer exists.

5. Conclusion

In the light of the analysis made, it appears that the cross-border territorial strategy of the Greater Region does not take into consideration the diversity of the challenges engendered by the cross-border integration process. Its first objective is to facilitate the cross-border commuter flows towards Luxembourg, which needs this workforce for its economy. Therefore, the cross-border strategy developed so far focuses on the functional dimension of cross-border integration (by improving cross-border accessibility and facilitating interactions in targeted economic activities), and not on the other dimensions, in particular the causes and negative externalities of these cross-border flows. To summarise, this cross-border strategy aims so far at coping with the increasing number of flows, but does not reflect a willingness to reduce the structural differences in the framing conditions of economic development, and especially the tax issue. The discussions emerging from the CCTD on the elaboration and implementation of a cross-border territorial strategy stress the need to frame and stimulate cross-border cooperation by means of an efficient cross-border governance and from a perspective of easing the implementation of initiatives and actions across the border. Thus, it emphasises the will to reinforce the institutional dimension of cross-border integration. As regards the ideational dimension, there is no agreement on the fact that the identity of the Greater Region should be taken into account and more recognisably branded. Some other topics will be addressed in the near future to complete the cross-border strategy. However, it seems that this current strategy cannot serve the ambition of promoting a more comprehensive cross-border cooperation covering the different dimensions of integration. As a consequence, this strategy can be qualified as a “smallest common denominator”, that is to say, a joint strategy in which the content and the strategic orientations are the least constraining for all the actors involved. Of course, such a stance is far from being enough to arrive at a more coherent and integrated cross-border area. The policy recommendations formulated in the different parts of the strategy are not precise enough or supported by concrete tools to permit a vision that spatial development will actually be more coordinated in the near future. In addition, some problematic issues are evaded and both human and financial resources remain low given the cross-border challenges.

Some insights from this case study should be cross-checked in other case study areas to draw more general conclusions. However, it seems that institutional obstacles, which are often invoked to interpret the lack of outputs in cross-border strategies, are far from being the most important ones. When we try to look beyond the stage of cross-border governance, by looking at the individuals who drive it, and not at the institutions which are represented, it appears that solving the institutional, cultural and political problems is not a purely technical issue, but more a question of willingness. Studying the importance of notions of trust, leadership, and involvement can be crucial to better understand the “cooperation fatigue” often associated with cross-border governance (Knippschild, 2011), and to be more nuanced with respect to the European Union paradigm, according to which more interactions should lead to more integration. Considering the different dimensions that are covered by the umbrella expression of cross-border integration can help to point out the challenges associated with the opening of borders and a better articulation of different territorial systems and societies,

each having their own cultural heritage, legal framework, and collective identity. A cross-border territorial strategy can hardly address all these different challenges, but it is at least important to consider that actions directed towards a certain target at the cross-border level can have positive or negative feedback loops on other important elements related to cross-border exchanges.

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GLOBAL STUDENT MOBILITIES AND THE MAKING OF PLANNING CULTURES: A CONCEPTUALISATION BASED ON THE CASE OF BANGLADESH

Kirsten Hackenbroch^a

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Abstract

Global student mobilities have led to different perspectives on urbanity and planning culture travelling at high speed around the globe. During experiences of mobility what is conceptualised as 'urban' changes, bringing with it alterations in discourses on planning practices and planning cultures. Such student mobilities and their shaping of local urban imaginations, as well as the effects of returnees entering local job markets, have not specifically been addressed in urban studies. This paper aims to analyse how the mobilities of students – and thus of knowledge – shape persistent or newly emerging urbanisms, planning practices and cultures. Conceptually, the paper elaborates how the production of urban spaces has to be understood in a context of the global mobilities of knowledge and ever-shifting local planning cultures. In the empirical analysis, the paper draws on qualitative interviews conducted with planning professionals in Dhaka on the (global) education and career trajectories of urban planners, and the dynamics of local planning cultures and practices.

Keywords

Planning cultures, mobilities, learning, urban transformation, Bangladesh.

a Institute of Environmental Social Sciences and Geography (Human Geography), University of Freiburg, Schreiberstr. 20, 79085 Freiburg, Germany. E-mail: kirsten.hackenbroch@geographie.uni-freiburg.de

1. Introduction

In December 2012, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) hosted a 'Dialogue on Student Mobility from Bangladesh' in Dhaka. In the presence of the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Mr Md Sirajul Islam, and the Chairman of the University Grants Commission, Prof. Dr Nazrul Islam, the IOM launched a desk review study on Bangladesh student mobility, concluding 'that unlike conventional media reports about "brain drain", legal student mobility is useful for the economy of the foreign country as well as home country, especially when they return' (IOM, n.d.). This perspective positions student mobilities in a context of "brain circulation" (Jöns, 2007) and, beyond an economic focus, hints that experiences of "translocality" – as "situatedness" in multiple settings – are becoming decisive for local transformations.

"Especially when they return" is a key phrase when looking at the discipline of urban and regional planning in Bangladesh. By now, a significant part of the academic and practitioner planning community has settled in Canada, the US and Australia, temporarily or permanently. A large share of graduate Bangladeshi planners has lived abroad for at least the duration of one postgraduate degree. The urban planning departments in Bangladesh universities face serious resource constraints, given that at times more than 50 percent of their faculty is on study leave. My personal experience with student assistants who supported me during the fieldwork of my research in Dhaka between 2008 and 2010 is a case in point. They started working with me at bachelor's graduation, and within two to three years had all applied for postgraduate degrees abroad, subsequently leaving Bangladesh to become part of the globally mobile student community. Keeping in touch with them via Facebook, e-mail, and Skype, and seeing how previous debates on urban space and planning changed, consolidated my idea to critically study the effects of this temporary (at times transforming to permanent) international educational migration.

Accordingly, in this paper, I seek to integrate the themes of globalisation and cities, geographies of education, and planning cultures. I explore how mobilities of students – and thus of knowledge – shape persistent or newly emerging urbanisms, planning practices and cultures. The paper thus elaborates on how the production of urban spaces has to be understood in a context of global mobilities of knowledge and ever-shifting local planning cultures. Hence, I examine the attitudes of planning professionals who experienced mobilities – personally and/or in their job context – and who are emerging as key actors who shape the urban transformation of cities in Bangladesh. In doing so, this paper fleshes out the complex relationship between cities and mobile subjects and thus sketches a new research perspective and agenda.

Global mobilities, including the mobilities of people, policies, and knowledge, constitute a core topic currently intensely debated in urban studies. The new mobilities paradigm (Sheller and Urry, 2006) fosters a re-positioning of cities and localities in global networks and new challenges for spatial practices and in relation to urban transformations. Three entangled themes are particularly relevant for this paper: first, the dynamics of urban transformations and the emergence of mobile urbanisms; secondly, the effects of globalised higher education as knowledge and people mobility; and finally, the implications of these mobilities for (trans)local planning cultures.

First, cities and urban spaces are undergoing transformations, which are not only triggered by local dynamics but equally by global influences. As Ong (2011, p.1) puts it, 'urban dreams and schemes play with accelerating opportunities and accidents that circulate in ever-widening spirals across the planet'. Understanding cities as emerging from mobile urbanisms departs from the logic 'that people, frequently working in institutions, mobilize objects and ideas to serve particular interests and with particular material consequences; (McCann and Ward, 2011, p.xxiv). In their compilation, *Worlding cities*, Roy and Ong (2011) bring together the "spatialising practices" in and of Asian cities and thus seek to reveal diverse pathways of "being global", beyond conceptions of the Global North.

Secondly, geographies of education have been discussed with reference to emerging global spaces of knowledge production, especially concerning the internationalisation of higher education and transnational academic mobility (e.g. Jöns, 2007; Jöns and Hoyler, 2013). Studying abroad entails a critical engagement with the conditions at the place of study and with the conditions at the place of origin – and possibly other places

of individual mobility trajectories. During experiences of mobility what is conceptualised as “urban” changes, bringing with it alterations in discourses on planning practices and planning cultures, both at the transient spaces experienced in mobility and at the place of origin upon return of graduates.

Thirdly, such student mobilities and their shaping of local urban imaginations, as well as the effects of returnees entering local job markets, have not specifically been addressed in urban studies. Linking the experiences of mobile subjects with changes and dynamics in planning cultures extends both the literature on planning cultures (Ernste, 2012; Othengrafen and Reimer, 2013) and the debate on mobile urbanism, travelling knowledge, and students as “mobile subjects”, and thus “agents” of such travelling (Sheller and Urry, 2006; McCann and Ward, 2011; McFarlane, 2011). The emerging conceptualisation can inform both urban policy making and planning education in times of global mobilities.

To integrate the three themes sketched above, this paper takes as its starting point empirical findings of my research in Bangladesh concerning the temporality and materiality of urban transformations and attendant planning cultures, and subsequently embeds these into conceptual debates. Bangladesh, as a case study for this research, was selected as its dynamics in student mobilities are comparable to a variety of countries in Asia and Africa that experience similar modes and challenges of brain circulation. Furthermore, Bangladesh was the starting point for my ethnographic observations that triggered the emergence of this strand of research. The discussion in this paper builds on five expert interviews with representatives of institutions that hire planners, including in academia, the private sector, the government sector, and the non-governmental sector. These interviews were conducted in Dhaka during April 2015. Furthermore, it also draws on my extensive research experience in planning-related themes in the city of Dhaka (regular fieldwork travel since 2007) and additional interviews and informal discussions with planners in Dhaka conducted between 2007 and 2012. All interviews were analysed with regard to experiences with mobilities – personal as well as with those of co-workers and newly hired staff – and with regard to interviewees’ characterisations of current planning practices in Bangladesh.

Section 2 elaborates on the impact that global student mobilities have on the planning profession in Bangladesh, while Section 3 investigates the interrelations between knowledge mobilities and urban transformations. Section 4 engages with the literature on planning cultures to sketch the complex relations between global knowledge mobilities and a contextualised, situated understanding of planning practices. The paper closes with a discussion of the new perspectives offered by thinking about global mobilities and cities, considering educational migrants as mobile subjects who can potentially influence planning cultures; it further outlines an emerging research agenda for urban researchers.

2. Global Student Mobilities and Impacts on the Planning Profession in Bangladesh

Global student mobility has increased tremendously in the last decade, which has in turn triggered academic discussion on the topic (e.g. King and Raghuram, 2013). Figure 1 displays the number of students from Bangladesh studying in other countries; for many countries a stark increase is visible in the period from 2007 to 2012. For globally mobile students from Bangladesh, the main receiving countries have been Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, but also Japan and Malaysia, while Singapore and China are not included in the statistics.

The global search for higher education and accompanying university rankings and university promotion campaigns has resulted in a differentiation of the educational landscape. Old educational hubs in Europe and North America now increasingly compete with emerging knowledge centres in the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region, potentially destabilising the long-time hegemony of the Euro-American academic world (Jöns and Hoyer, 2013). This also has implications for the new mobilities of knowledge and the emergence of urban theory and practices that seek to decentre Western cities (Robinson, 2006).

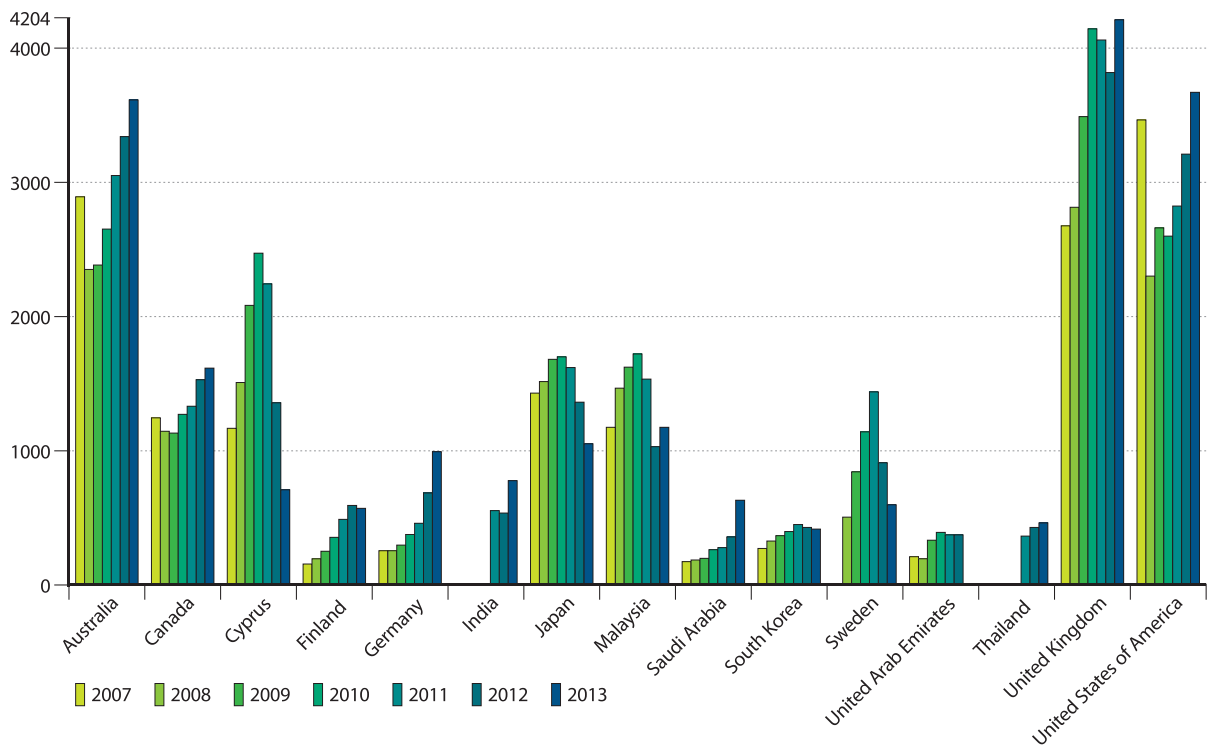


Figure 1: Top receiving countries of international students from Bangladesh, 2007-2013¹
 Source: Website UNESCO Student mobility (<http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=171>)
 Draft: K. Hackenbroch / Layout: B. Gaida

2.1. Brain Circulation Effects for Bangladesh's Planners

Bangladesh has witnessed an enormous increase in outbound student migration. While in 1999 only 7,000 students went abroad for higher education, the year 2012 saw almost 22,000 students leaving the country (United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture [UNESCO], 2015). Students who graduated from urban and regional planning undergraduate courses in Bangladesh frequently move to the European Union Member States, the United States, Canada, and Australia, or to Asian educational hubs, such as various universities in Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong and Bangkok.

The trend in increased international student mobility over the last 15 years has also impacted planning graduates in Bangladesh. One of the interviewees, a university lecturer, observed that within two years, most of the bachelor's graduates from the discipline of Urban and Regional Planning have gone abroad:

I'm surprised that the majority of our students are not in Bangladesh after five years. Very few remain in Bangladesh. And, returning back has not yet been started. So, I mean, we are proud that our quality [of teaching] is good. Otherwise how would so many students get abroad in such short span of time? [...] Within two years [after graduation] they get out, most of the students go abroad for higher study. So, teaching, or academic-wise, we are quite on par with international standard. But in practice... what I would say is that those people who are staying in Bangladesh, most of them... There are two kinds of planners who are now staying in Bangladesh. One, those who are not ambitious enough. They have the quality to go abroad, but they are not ambitious enough to go out. And the other kind, they are ambitious, but they are not good enough (university lecturer in Bangladesh, April 2015).

¹ This figure displays all the countries where more than 250 students from Bangladesh studied abroad at some point between 2007 and 2012. For India and the UAE, the 2007 to 2010 datasets are missing; for Canada the data is from 2012. For China and Singapore, no datasets are available from UNESCO, although it can be assumed that the numbers of Bangladeshi students in both countries must be considerably higher than 250 per year. The high number of Bangladeshi students in Cyprus is surprising, and needs further investigation. However, Cyprus is neither an established location for urban planning education nor the related studies at the heart of this paper.

This excerpt from the interview raises two observations about the situation of the planning educational environment and profession in Bangladesh. First, of the planning graduates who venture abroad, few of them have chosen to return to date; secondly, employers express a lack of confidence in locally trained planners who do not go abroad. The university lecturer associates global mobilities with personal ambition and the acquisition of better planning skills, both of which would contribute to advancing the planning practice in Bangladesh. However, increased opportunities for global student mobilities result in a persistent “brain drain”, rather than in balanced knowledge circulation for planning practice in Bangladesh. Prospects of permanent immigration, for example to Canada and Australia, mean that a large number of Bangladeshi planners do not return to work in the planning profession in Bangladesh after achieving their postgraduate degrees abroad. The immigration policies in both of these destination countries are considered relatively relaxed for highly skilled postgraduate Bangladeshis; moreover, they have existing social networks and communities that they can capitalise on in these countries. At the same time, the prospects of working in the planning profession in Bangladesh are considered less attractive for reasons that will be discussed in the next section. This has also led to a considerable number of returnees venturing out of the planning profession and into the development sector.

2.2. A Professional Environment that Deters Postgraduates from Return

The decision to return to planning practice in Bangladesh is highly influenced by individual and subjective assessments of the situation at home and a comparative abundance of preferable alternatives. The planning environment, encompassing the shared assumptions, values and cognitive frames of the profession, and its general aims and objectives (Othengrafen and Reimer, 2013), deters postgraduates from return. The discussion here focuses on the particular economic, institutional and socio-material conditions – characterised *inter alia* by organisational structures, working conditions and the general valuation placed on planning.

First, the planning environment found “at home” does not motivate returns due to the economic conditions in Bangladesh, which are considered sub-par to opportunities abroad, and the specific working environment for planners in Bangladesh. In addition, the permanently fragile political situation in Bangladesh since the caretaker government in 2007 and 2008 and the subsequent two periods of Awami League government may have had an influence on individuals’ decisions to stay abroad or return (however, for this paper, the opaque and complex political environment and its impact on student mobilities and planners’ career trajectories has not been investigated). Those planners who returned often did so because they had taken temporary leave from government jobs in Bangladesh. The following quote from an interview with a planner in a statutory planning agency illustrates how job security prompts potential return:

For example, it was not necessary for me to come back to Bangladesh from Germany. From there, I could have gone to America. [...] As I was working under a [Bangladesh] government organisation [on leave], there was a sense of security. It was a reason. And I was also motivated to watch the changes in Dhaka city over the past 20 years as previously I had worked with the planning issues of Dhaka city. I wanted to observe the situation and rate of implementation of existing plans, and I also wanted to discover the problems. My wish was to work with these issues. Therefore, I came back. But it is not as easy for others because each person wants to improve their economic condition and to ensure security for the future. In this case, it is really very tough to motivate someone (planner working in a Bangladesh government agency, April 2015, translated from Bengali).

Despite job security being an enticing reason for return migration, planners on temporary leave can also resign from their posts once they reach the maximum leave period. Therefore, the second reason for return highlighted in this quote proves more significant. The interviewee paints the career trajectory chosen as one guided by individual aspirations to observe and participate in the long term changes affecting the planning profession in Bangladesh. Job security, which is available only in government and academic jobs, combined with a strong individual wish to contribute to change, prompts the desire to return. Nonetheless, many interviewees added that low salaries and the absence of social security schemes discourage their return migration.

Secondly, the institutional conditions of the planning environment deter planners from returning. In further reflections on mobilities and the planning profession, the same government official explained how the

professional environment created by the government – to which the planners would return – encourages the globally mobile to remain abroad:

Australia is a heaven for the planners. After completion of a master's, all of them migrate to Australia or New Zealand. [...] The sector [in Bangladesh] is very small and there are no places except [a few]. But, the LGED [Local Government Engineering Department, one of the statutory authorities that is involved in planning] uses consultants rather than planners to do their work (planner working in a Bangladesh government agency, April 2015, translated from Bengali).

The quote specifically hints at the low institutional appreciation of planners in government offices, and hence rare opportunities to take permanent positions in government as planners. Being a relatively young discipline, what prevails in government institutions is the employment of civil engineers or of Bangladesh Civil Service holders with diverse non-planning backgrounds in positions for which urban and regional planners would be highly qualified.

Thirdly, the low institutional appreciation of planners is reflected in the socio-material conditions of the planning environment. One of the interviewees who previously worked in an international consultancy firm (based in Dhaka) described his transition to a government job as a shock. He attributes this to two reasons: first, the lack of knowledge amongst colleagues and seniors towards planning, and secondly, the material conditions of his job:

So, I had a very nice and fancy office [in the international firm] [laughs]. But when I got the job in [the municipality]... it was a huge shock for me, because nobody knew about urban planning, what it is? What is my expertise? What can I do? There was lots of confusion among them. And also from my side... I used to work in a very international environment, very nice and fancy office, logistics, everything is very organised. But there was no sitting place for me [at the municipality], there was no desk for me. So, it was really a huge cultural shock and I thought that I should come back to my previous job. And one week I could not sleep (planner now working for development cooperation, April 2015).

Nonetheless, this planner decided to see his municipal posting as both a time to familiarise the municipal environment with the interdisciplinary thinking of planning and a time for self-development. He continued the interview saying: 'maybe technically I didn't learn anything but I learned the way of work'.

To sum up, today's global student mobilities result in a low rate of return of Bangladeshi planners to planning-related jobs in Bangladesh. This highly unbalanced brain circulation is caused by both the lure of more attractive working conditions outside of Bangladesh and a lacklustre professional environment at home for young planners. As a result, planning practice in Bangladesh is shaped by a small group of non-migrant planners, along with returnees from abroad who are driven by their convictions and biographies to contribute to planning practice in Bangladesh. They in turn engage with a larger group of "non-resident planners", who enter debates at home via social media and social networks comprising of classmates, friends and colleagues.

3. Knowledge Mobilities and Urban Transformations in Bangladesh

Referring to the gaps in research on international student mobilities, King and Raghuram (2013, p.136) argue that there is 'scope for a much richer understanding of the role of international students in producing and spreading knowledge, and of recasting this role in narratives of international student mobility'. In line with this, this paper approaches international students as mobile subjects who engage in the constant assemblage and re-assemblage of places by way of their everyday activities and performances (Sheller and Urry, 2006, p.214). Globally mobile students assume multiple roles and pursue multiple motivations; thus the diversity of professional, educational and personal experiences gathered in times of mobility matters. Those involved are not only education-seekers, but also family members, workers, and perhaps refugees, and their study location choice may be informed by work opportunities and immigration policies (Raghuram, 2013; Findlay, 2011; King and Raghuram, 2013). Accordingly, individual everyday life practices and experiences (Ho and Hatfield, 2011)

and related knowledge mobilities produce and reproduce diverse urban imaginaries and are resources that inform planning practices and attendant urban transformations.

Secondly, beyond the individual level, there is a wider global trend where policy mobilities facilitate the transfer of planning ideas and concepts from one place to other places. To date, urban studies and approaches to urban development in the cities of the Global South have been influenced by the metropolises of Europe and North America. Along with the recognition that for too long urban theory has prioritised “Western models” and neglected the contribution of other cities around the globe, came a reorientation of cities in the Global South towards models that are less “distant”. This has prominently been brought forward by Robinson (2006), who demands the framing of “ordinary cities” to arrive at a postcolonial urban theory. Similarly, Roy (2009) establishes a view on the twenty-first century metropolis which can be found as much in Mumbai as in other places; she argues how looking at informality as a mode of the production of space can enrich a global urban theory. Adding to this, Bunnell et al. (2012) and Roy and Ong (2011) explore how specifically Asian cities are placed in relation to global urban theory. For South Asian cities, other Asian cities such as Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Dubai, Singapore, or Shanghai among others, have become new reference points for urban development (see, for example, Lowry and McCann, 2011; Chua, 2011; Goldman, 2011). Thus, McCann and Ward (2011, p.xix) press for attention to ‘how – through what practices, where, when, and by whom – urban policies are produced in global-relational context, are transferred and reproduced from place to place, and are negotiated politically in various locations’. Both the individual perspective on knowledge mobilities and the larger scale travelling of ideas or concepts will be discussed and conceptualised below.

3.1. Learning and Translations: The Making of Individual Knowledge Mobilities

Knowledge mobility has been discussed in migration research, for example with reference to highly skilled transnational elites (Beaverstock, 2005), and more recently in research on talent migration (Yeoh and Huang, 2011). Over the course of time, there has been a considerable shift away from analysing only the transnational elites through global economic and corporate logics towards seeing highly skilled mobile subjects as ‘embodied bearers of culture, ethnicity, class and gender’ (Yeoh and Huang, 2011, p.681). The authors within the Special Issue of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* edited by Yeoh and Huang (2011) argue that transnational highly skilled knowledge elites are not ‘knowledge nomads’, but become part of the spaces they move through, participating in contesting imaginaries of these spaces and the very ‘politics of place’ (Yeoh and Huang, 2011, p.683). Thus, rather than the assumed placelessness of a global consultant industry and its advisors, it is each person’s embeddedness into everyday life and its places and spaces (Ho and Hatfield, 2011) that make migration and mobilities an experience of learning and knowledge formation.

The mobility of knowledge is therefore deeply embedded into everyday “learning”. In *Learning the city*, McFarlane (2011) establishes learning as always being a process of translation. Such learning takes place outside of the classroom in the spaces of everyday urban encounters, as illustrated in the following quote, where the planner interviewed relates his observation of an excursion conducted as part of a postgraduate studies programme in a German city:

At that time, we saw one gentleman was coming down wearing torn jeans and a T-shirt. [...] He was the manager. He is very powerful in [the city] and pays a huge amount of tax and is very wealthy. But he lives in a small house with trees, nice lawn, there are four to five dogs and a swimming pool. His home is very luxurious but small. Then I asked him ‘In what way are you rich?’ He said ‘I bought nature’. So the definition of the rich is different there. In [city name] Germany, the definition of rich is that they come to the hill-top and live in a natural setting with birds chanting, okay! And the dormitory of the students is prefabricated, catter, catter [mimicking repetitive addition of blocks]. These are actually not bad looking, rather good. [...] It seemed to me ‘I am in a fantastic place’. [...] What I am saying is, the dimension is changing. The issue depends on the mental setup, who wants what where? However, ultimately space is a dominating factor. It is very important to see who has occupied how much space. For example, why is so much space needed in *Bongobhobon* [the government quarter in Dhaka] to accommodate [high ranked government officials]? (planner working in a Bangladesh government agency, December 2012, translated from Bengali).

To this planner, the lifestyle choice of the wealthy German man is translated to a lesson for planning practice in Bangladesh. By positioning translation as a key process, McFarlane (2011, p.16) acknowledges 'the importance of intermediaries in the production of travelling knowledge' and goes on to argue that 'the spaces and actors through which knowledge moves are not simply a supplement to learning, but are constitutive of it'. Globally mobile students become such intermediaries who translate the knowledge from studies abroad, and from everyday life and urban encounters, into lessons that travel and which can bring about change to planning practice in Bangladesh.

Learning and translation experiences not only constitute an individual's personal beliefs, but can also be shared. For example, in Bangladesh there now exists a network of German-trained Bangladeshi planners who collaborate more easily because of their shared training experiences abroad:

It has become easy. Before preparing the plan according to the demand of government, we have to prepare a proposal. Colleague A [anonymised] is involved with the committee under the [specific Government authority] which is working to approve those proposals. While working, we discuss this and then we mitigate because we can communicate in the same language. We understand each other. But our bosses cannot communicate among themselves. It is an advantage for us. [...] So, it is very easy for us to communicate, to keep a dialogue, because we have the same planning background and German orientation. Other planners cannot do this because they do not have that holistic tuning [based on the German curricula of planning studies] (planner working in a Bangladesh government agency, April 2015, translated from Bengali).

Here, global student mobilities centred on an educational destination produce common experiences that can be utilised by a new community of "German-oriented planners" in Bangladesh. However, this is not a simple policy transfer, but a process of translation of individual biographic experiences resulting in circuits of knowledge mobilities. It is not a group of elite transnationals that takes knowledge from elsewhere to a new place and triggers a certain mode of the production of space. Instead, it is mobile intermediaries who establish a translocal planning culture and practice based on individual experiences.

Nevertheless, the view of planners from inside Bangladesh towards the globally mobile planners who return paints a different picture. Two planning consultants interviewed were critical of the benefit of knowledge mobilities, and assessed these benefits as personal gains rather than impacting positively on local planning culture. They see a mismatch between knowledge mobilities and local realities. On the one hand, Bangladesh does not offer what young, globally mobile, and highly educated returnees are looking for, and thus rather than working in the planning profession in Bangladesh, plans for immigration become more relevant. On the other hand, the two consultants spoke of a non-preparedness of planning practice in Bangladesh for ideas from abroad. They expressed how the learning from elsewhere cannot be absorbed at home, where a planning environment persists that is not ready to translate this mobile knowledge to the local urban context. As evident from the same interview, this is also due to competing visions of how planning should be practised, and encompasses societal relations of hierarchies and seniority:

Students who came back [to Bangladesh] share their ideas. They try to implement those. But we never worked at that level. [...] We have to do the basic things first. But these students are sharing their ideas. They are telling us what they have learnt. But we are not capable of accepting this (planner operating a planning consultancy firm in Dhaka, April 2015, translated from Bengali).

Knowledge mobilities thus not only need intermediaries – globally mobile students as individuals with specific biographies, in this case – but they also need structures to make use of their knowledge, be it by absorbing, distancing, or transforming practices. The professional environment's preparedness for change in the field of the current challenges analysed in Section 2.2 and after critical debate is crucial for enabling translations to transform local planning practice.

3.2. Mobile Urbanisms: Transforming Knowledge Mobilities in Bangladesh

Beyond the individual processes of translation, cities in Bangladesh have for a long time been subject to policy transfers and mobilities. As in many other South Asian – or more generally former colonial – cities, planning

in Dhaka started by following ideals from the West. Accordingly, the Scottish biologist and pioneer town planner, Patrick Geddes, developed the 1917 Master Plan for Dhaka as a future Garden City, thus making early references to Ebenezer Howard's concept of the Garden City. Even today, Howard's vision remains a strong mobile urbanism, informing much of what Singapore has established as its brand (Chua, 2011), although it does not have much relevance to Dhaka today. Long-term inhabitants of Dhaka, though, refer to their city as having been the "Venice of the East", before water channels were built over by rapid urbanisation and largely uncontrolled growth. The 1917 Master Plan – to a large extent informed by public health challenges (Baumgart et al., 2011) – was the starting point for a master planning approach to guiding urban development, following British colonial planning laws that still persist today. Subsequent master plans were put forward by the city region's planning agency, RAJUK (*Rajdhani Unnayan Katnipakka* – Capital Development Authority), the last one being the Dhaka Metropolitan Master Plan, with its respective elements gazetted between 1995 and 2010. To date, however, no master plan has proven successful based on its outcome, i.e. in guiding and controlling urban development. Neither has any plan been a success in terms of the plan preparation process. Significant public debate or public participation has not been characteristic of any of the plans. The plans that emerged were bureaucratic-political instruments prepared by contracted private consultancy firms rather than citizen-driven democratic plans (Hackenbroch et al., 2016).

Planning practices in Dhaka have thus been long dominated by a textbook master planning approach – a very widely spread "travelling urbanism". The instrument of the master plan has been questioned due to its rigidity and non-flexibility (Watson, 2009, p.2262), as it is often based predominantly on technical rational evidence (Davoudi, 2015). In its rigid approach it has not been successful in guiding urban development, and by now Dhaka – and other cities in the country – have a history of failed master plans, overtaken by rapid urban development. Knowledge mobilities and mobile urbanisms have for a long time reproduced what was state of the art elsewhere, making Dhaka subject to a typical policy transfer. This was and still is additionally pushed forward by global consultants offering their services, as well as by development cooperation agencies kick-starting the designing of new master plans for municipal corporations. Nonetheless, while there have always been mobile subjects who travel with and translate specific planning practices from elsewhere, a change in engaging with translations can be observed. The planners interviewed spoke of the necessity to "localise" mobile knowledge:

We have to build a best practice. It is at a very preliminary stage because we are not sure that they [local representatives] will accept this. Mayors of the cities are interested in doing this. But, the problem is they already have built their symbol [referring to a prestige project]. The mayor wants to make a new symbol rather than modify the existing one [of his predecessor] because it will not be beneficial for him [laughs]. So, we have to motivate him to modify the old one. Construct a new one but also modify the old one [laughs]. If we totally oppose him he will fire us. So, we are learning. I have learned it from Germany, but I am implementing it here. Before they [employees] do these things, I need to learn. Our background in Bangladesh is complex (planner working in a Bangladesh government agency, April 2015, translated from Bengali).

The quote indicates how this planner seeks to translate knowledge carefully from elsewhere, and how this is, on the one hand, informed by an assessment of the local conditions and, on the other hand, by the degree of transformative capacity of actors at the receiving end, in this case local politicians.

One translation of a mobile urbanism that a globally mobile group of former students brought into urban planning in Bangladesh was a new form of citizen participation. In a disaster management plan for a city likely to be affected by both earthquakes and flooding, the governmental planning agency decided to put particular emphasis on children and mothers as subjects of planning. This triggered a series of children's art competitions, a mobile concept of citizen participation also exercised in other cities. However, what came up in Bangladesh can be regarded as a translation rather than a simple policy transfer. It emerged simultaneously from outside as a concept of citizen participation practised elsewhere and travelling to Bangladesh, and from within, by a circle of previously globally mobile government planners translating the methods locally and adapting their application. Thus this new planning practice denotes a translocal moment, a floating concept that becomes re-territorialised by embedded subjects who make their own choices when implementing it in a specific societal environment:

From day one, we were going to have our target: child and mother. Actually both of them are the real custodians of this plan. [...] But are we telling them how the city is going to be after 20 years? Where will be their place for living? When a mother knows about the location of a playing field, she will prevent the government or private developers who will try to grab that field. Children will also go with their mothers [to prevent/protest]. Then the fathers will automatically come [laughs]. [...] So, we have excluded the fathers [during the citizen participation] [laughs] (planner working in a Bangladesh government agency, April 2015, translated from Bengali).

Perhaps even more important in terms of newly emerging planning cultures was the aim of the government planner in charge to bring about long-term change to planning practice. This was emphasised by building on internal government-appointed planners and aiming at in-house capacity development. This meant simultaneously moving away from the practice of hiring private consultants for planning, while only carrying out the preparatory work in-house:

Previously, consultants were employed for doing this work. Now we are trying to do this on our own. Consultants only do the work and only give us a report and a drawing. And then they leave. Then it is no longer carried on. So, we are trying to carry out most of the work on our own. The main benefit of this is that the fresh young planners, who come from different educational institutions, are gaining practical knowledge as they have learned only theoretical knowledge in their institutes. A person gains his experience from practice. So, they are sent there [to the cities to work as planners]. They make mistakes and then they learn (planner working in a Bangladesh government agency, April 2015, translated from Bengali).

Along with this seemingly local effort, international agencies and international planning consultancies continue to be at work in Bangladesh, and alongside with, or in parallel to, government plans, create and re-create what has been successful elsewhere. This is obvious when looking at how visions for cities are re-created by McKinsey and others (e.g. McCann and Ward, 2011), or how Singapore markets its planning expertise around Asia and beyond and is repeatedly inter-referenced (Chua, 2011; Hoffman, 2011). Similarly, a UN-Habitat publication, *Urban planning for city leaders* (UN-Habitat, 2012), reproduces non-localised standard planning knowledge, and runs the risk of reinforcing standard policy transfers. Thus applied, translations of mobile urbanisms to other local contexts bring with them questions of power relations, as McCann and Ward (2011, p.xxi) warn: 'the insertion of new best practices from elsewhere into specific cities can empower some interests at the expense of others, putting alternative visions of the future outside the bounds of policy discussion'.

4. The Making of Planning Cultures in Times of Global Mobilities

Through everyday life experiences, learning, translation and mobilities, students become intermediaries in a globally mobile urbanism. Globally mobile students as mobile agents engage in a multitude of space-making processes. These manifest in the socialities and materialities of everyday life and contribute to larger processes of learning, where learning triggers the translation of travelling knowledge. They therefore engage in reassembling the urban by entering into discourses and debates, translating travelling models to local contexts and potentially disrupting established compositions of planning cultures.

The debate on planning cultures originally emerged in Europe, when researchers and planning theorists observed how, despite quite similar rules and regulations in planning, outcomes in space were more diverse than a seemingly rational approach to planning would explain. Cultural context and traditions, flexibilities and "unconscious routines" (Othengrafen and Reimer, 2013) seemed to matter more than the technical approach to planning of the 1970s had anticipated and acknowledged. In line with the considerations of the cultural turn, this brought up a thinking of planning as a cultural process, and thus of planning cultures.

The culturalised planning model builds on 'collective modes of thinking and acting of "built environment professionals", stemming in particular from a shared professional ethos but also from more general societal values' (Othengrafen and Reimer, 2013, p.1274). Three analytical dimensions are identified, namely *planning artefacts*, the *planning environment*, and the *societal environment*, building on Schein's model of levels of culture

(2004, quoted in and adapted by Othengrafen and Reimer, 2013). Table 1 illustrates these three dimensions and provides specifications and examples for their understanding (Columns 1-3).

Table 1: Elements of Planning Cultures

Analytical dimension	Definition	Specifications/examples	Impacting factors on the making of planning cultures in Bangladesh
Planning artefacts	Visible planning products; structures and processes	Planning law, planning institutions, master plans, layout plans, participation strategies and instruments, spatial structures of land uses as results of planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master planning • Integrated planning • Children as future users/ participants in planning • ...
Planning environment	Shared assumptions; values and cognitive frames that are taken for granted by members of the planning profession	Institutions (norms, rules), contents of planning, organisational structures, power relations, aims, objectives and principles including Leitbilder, traditions, standards in planning education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigid plan vs user perspective vs reality • Quality of education • Brain circulation (absentees and returnees) • Economic conditions • Socio-material environment • ...
Societal environment	Underlying and unconscious; taken-for-granted beliefs; perceptions; thoughts and feelings which affect planning	Self-conception of planning, people's respect for and acceptance of plans, social efficiency or moral responsibility, fundamental philosophy of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Societal relation principles of seniority, hierarchies • Low appreciation of planners in government administration, belief in engineers and consultants • ...

Source: Othengrafen and Reimer, 2013, p.1275 for Columns 1-3; additions in Column 3 based on Levin-Keitel and Sondermann, 2015 in specifications/examples; Column 4: author's draft

How do mobile subjects then impact on urban spaces, possibly transforming city spaces and shaping discourses within and beyond local spaces? Mobilities of people, ideas, concepts, information, and materials may affect all dimensions of the culturalised planning model and thus can potentially trigger larger transformations. Knowledge mobilities can affect *planning artefacts* in the form of travelling models, such as the ever-travelling Garden City concept or the travelling Singaporean housing policies. Secondly, they can affect the *planning environment* in that the aims and objectives that guide a planning profession change, or in that the biographies and motivations of individual planners are affected. This can also be triggered by travelling models, such as sustainable urban development, which themselves carry certain sets of aims and objectives. Finally, mobilities can affect the deeper layer of the *societal environment*, and change the reception of planning ideas in a society more holistically. Such larger societal changes, however, take much longer than a circuit of international higher education and are empirically difficult to capture (see Table 1, Column 4).

As the discussion with planners from Bangladesh has revealed, knowledge mobilities – emanating from mobile subjects' everyday life experiences and respective processes of learning and translation – impact most directly on the dimension of the *planning environment*. The economic and material conditions experienced by planners in Bangladesh are reflected in the planning environment; returnee “youngsters” exhibit their new ideas and contest older ones; and senior planners may seek to re-establish previously negotiated aims, objectives, and practices of the profession. The networks of the globally mobile materialise as new organisational structures in the *planning environment* that enable or disable, push or hinder, the evolvement of specific *planning artefacts*, i.e. a change of planning outcomes, models of citizen participation and plans. Planning cultures are thus being assembled and reassembled by diverse mobilities, reaching far beyond the territorial dimensions of planning systems inscribed into national laws.

The discussion of planning practices in Bangladesh has indicated that a person's individual biography is central for understanding the influence that s/he exerts on the *planning environment*. An emphasis on subjects can be found in the actor-centred and action-theoretical approach to planning cultures (Ernste, 2012). Ernste (2012, p.89) puts forward the individual and asserts their considerable influence, noting ‘individual persons, their specific biographical background, skills, knowledge, attitudes, talents, motives, and competences [and the influence these] may have in the success and failure of spatial planning’. The knowledge mobilities of globally mobile planning students are a case in point, constructing individual agency beyond larger frames of (local) planning structures. Davoudi (2015) conceptualised planning as a “practice of knowing”. This places the individual (planner) within multiple forms of knowing, interlinked to one another, dynamic and in contestation, eventually building up an individualised understanding of the complex planning environment that enables ‘practical judgement’ (Davoudi, 2015, p.8). It is the situatedness of planners’ “practical judgement” that is increasingly negotiated in circuits of global knowledge mobilities.

I am well aware that planning cultures are more than what planners contribute to them, they are rather a reflection of broader societal relations. Nevertheless, looking through the eyes of planners to see the changes to a profession and the results for urban transformation represents an important starting point to understand larger urban processes. Furthermore, the process of “learning the city” (McFarlane, 2011) not only transforms the places where globally mobile students came from, but similarly triggers re-assemblages of the urban in the places of study – and potentially elsewhere. Mobile subjects’ everyday lives are made-up of translocal practices, where various experiences beyond-the-local shape how city spaces are experienced and produced. Hence, city spaces are characterised by various engagements, both from a distance and on the spot. Returned mobile subjects contribute to debate, as do those who stay in places distant from home but continue to engage with home, especially via social networks, media, and academic channels of communication. The active discussion fora of Bangladeshi urban planners are a case in point; these are platforms where what is happening in Dhaka is discussed from both afar and within.

Given the constant learning and translation of experiences of mobilities, we can no longer speak of local planning cultures, but we need to put emphasis on translocal planning cultures embedded in a global-relational positioning of cities and actors. A translocal and relational lens on planning cultures would acknowledge the interaction and interconnectedness between places, institutions, actors, and concepts across (multiple forms of) borders (Freitag and von Oppen, 2010; Verne, 2012; Brickell and Datta, 2011; Söderström, 2014).

5. A Research Agenda: Mobilities, Planning Cultures and the City

This paper has investigated global student mobilities – one of the dynamic international migration processes within Asia and beyond – and how these knowledge mobilities relate to the condition of the planning profession and urban transformations in Bangladesh. Knowledge mobilities were found to impact most directly on the *planning environment* and thus change shared assumptions, cognitive frames, and the organisational structures of the profession. Further research for an enhanced understanding of planning cultures in times of global mobilities specifically needs to follow up on two perspectives offered in this paper.

First, processes of learning and translation emerge as key to understanding how knowledge mobilities potentially change planning cultures. Here, further research should focus on the how and when of individual and collective learning and translations, and how these become continuously embedded into individual action and agency. Conceptually, following up on the complex interrelations between knowledge and action in planning provides a starting point, focusing planning research on “normative ethics and judgements” (Campbell, 2012) or “practical judgement” (Davoudi, 2015), both oriented at planners’ imaginaries of ‘looking to the possibility of how things might be otherwise’ (Campbell, 2012, p.144). Methodologically, biographic interviews which seek to explore trajectories of global mobilities and everyday (professional) practices and which enable these to be linked to individual circuits of knowing and learning for “practical judgement” could help to consolidate such a framework for planning cultures.

Secondly, knowledge mobilities trigger the emergence of translocal planning cultures. Mobile urbanisms can either come as “alien” to local settings and remain in stark contrast to local realities, or as internalised and contextualised changes in the *planning environment*. Mobile urbanisms and planning practices’ relationality across time and space puts emphasis on how global knowledge mobilities facilitate both processes of territorialisation and de-territorialisation (McCann, Ward, 2011). Again, biographies, individual convictions, and subjective assessments of a context are significant in understanding the ability of local agency to absorb, distance, or transform practices based on knowledge mobilities. Söderström (2014, p.28), in his comparative analysis of Ouagadougou and Hanoi’s trajectories of globalisation and diverse narratives of generating urban change by transnational relations, concludes: ‘when we observe what it is that relations generate, we are inevitably confronted with institutional strategies and human agency that territorialize these relations in often unpredictable ways’. In view of translocal planning cultures, this underlines the importance of individual agency (Ernste, 2012; Davoudi, 2015) and the multidirectionality of knowledge mobilities, learning and translations, enabling for example a conscious “seeing from the south” (Watson, 2009). Further research on the discourses and storylines of specific planning projects would add to understanding of the contestations and transformations of the planning environment and the emergence of a self-conscious and translocal

planning culture. Thus, finally, a (postcolonial) engagement with global student mobilities – or more generally knowledge mobilities – and urban transformations from a global-relational perspective can bring cities of the Global South back on the map of urban theory.

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