BIG REGION BIG BENEFIT?

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The introduction of metropolitan regions in the German spatial planning politics and the reform of the Danish planning system marked a change to growth, innovation and development oriented strategies. According the reorientation in spatial politics the risk of growing polarisation and new spatial disparities arise because the unequal distribution of investments, productivity and employment and leads to the development of winning and losing regions.

Strategic concepts for dealing with the combination of economic competitiveness and territorial cohesion foster the development of urban-rural partnerships and of governance structures in large scale regions. These partnerships should combine strategies of regional development with issues of balancing disparities by building up networks and governance structures on regional level including partners from central and peripheral as well as prospering and shrinking areas.

The Metropolitan Region of Hamburg (MRH) and the Oresund Region offers good cases to explore how economic competitiveness and territorial cohesion could be achieved in regional cooperation structures – including urban and rural areas. The two case study areas are both regions where reforms of the governance structures are ongoing and where city regions are becoming larger scale involving more peripheral areas. This has in both places meant involvement of more different partners and interest but also a growing fragmentation of cooperation forms. Differences are in the degree of rescaling of power to the municipal level (which is significant in the Danish case) and in the awareness of Cohesion issues in strategic planning. The comparative analysis explores how stakeholders position themselves within such regional cooperation and discuss to what extent such larger regional cooperation also means stronger cohesion.

Keywords: Territorial Cohesion, metropolitan regions, cross-border cooperation

1 Introduction

Metropolitan regions like Oresund Region and the metropolitan region of Hamburg became focal points of development policies on national and European level. The ESDP (1999) already mentioned the role of the city-regions as basis for territorial Cohesion by a more polycentric development. And national guidelines for spatial development (like BMVBS, BBR 2006; Danish concept 2007) followed this trend of putting dynamic city regions or metropolitan region in the foreground of spatial development debates.

Although the debate follows the tradition city regions the characteristics of these metropolitan regions have changed during the last decades. Metropolitan regions symbolize a new type of regions which will be called metropolitan region 2.0 in this article.
In the beginning the discussions about growth orientation and international competitiveness of regions in times of globalization were central while in the recent debate the issue of territorial Cohesion becomes more prominent. Not only the German debate about “Verantwortungsgemeinschaften” (Aring 2006; Leber 2006; Sinz 2007; (BBR) 2008) and supranational partnerships (BBR, BMVBS 2007) but also the discussions about place based development strategies (Barca Report, 2009) for territorial Cohesion foster the thinking about the role of regions for a balanced development.

This article will focus on territorial cohesion strategies of metropolitan regions (by the examples of Oresund Region and metropolitan region of Hamburg). After a short characterization of metropolitan regions 2.0 and the place-based development concept, strategies of these regions to foster Cohesions should be analyzed and evaluated regarding its potentials and restrictions for a stronger territorial Cohesion. It should be argued that the metropolitan regions are very much in line with the concept of place-based development but the concept reflects more a ‘State of the Art’ of cross-border cooperation than a target corridor.

2 Place-based development strategies for territorial Cohesion

Objective of territorial cohesion policies is, to improve development opportunities and standards of life in the regions within the EU and to approximate the qualities of areas lagging behind to the standards of the prospering regions (EU 2007: Viii). The way of enhancing territorial Cohesion is under intensive discussion1 in the European Union although the funding still grounds on instruments of structural policies (introduced in the 1960ies),2 which is oriented to foster territorial cohesion by supporting investment in infrastructure and education in lagging regions. But (beside the infrastructure investments) the discussions about Cohesion point out the importance of fostering integration by building networks on one side and a symbolic inclusion (and acceptance of differences) on the other.

Territorial Cohesion in an definition which combines growth and compensation oriented understandings of territorial cohesion requires the following aspects (Faludi 2006; Commission 2008:5):

- Overall objective is to **enhance a more balanced and homogenous development**.
- Lowering spatial disparities by **stimulating endogenous potentials**: public policies should help to make the best use of the territorial assets and fostering regional diversity.
- Fostering competitiveness by **connecting territories and ensuring access to infrastructure** and services In accordance to existing functional spaces of flows (of goods, services and capital) (Commission 2008:3)
- **Develop territorial governance**: A shared understanding of spatial relevant issues and the improving the governance should support cohesion policy by allowing more flexible forms which are capable of adapting to the most appropriate territorial scale and more responsive to

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2 The main tool to address issues of territorial Cohesion since the 1960ies is structural policy and its funding instrument (ERDF and ESF). The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions while the ESF is an instrument to foster employment. The structural and Cohesion program contains a third of the EU-budget.
local preferences and needs. Thereby a better coordination of policies and all levels shall be supported by keeping the principle of subsidiarity. (Commission 2008:5)

By this definition territorial cohesion shifts from an understanding of Cohesion policies from compensation issues and approaches of distribution of resources and infrastructure to a design of framework conditions (regarding control and finance) for fostering endogenous development within the regions by mobilizing regional actors and learning processes can be observed (Bundesministerium für Verkehr 2007; Gualini 2007). On the strategic level these objectives (Ulrich Battis 2008:11-12): should be reached by:

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<tr>
<th>Territorial Integration</th>
<th>Territorial Compensation</th>
<th>Territorial Governance</th>
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<tr>
<td>coherence and better coordination of horizontal and vertical territorial policies</td>
<td>lowering regional disparities by structural support and stimulating endogenous development</td>
<td>fostering networks of relevant actors including regional and local level and private sector</td>
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Tab1: Strategies for Territorial Cohesion (Battis, Kerstin 2008:11, modified)

Cohesion policies should be understood as development policies and not as a transfer instrument (Barca 2009). It highlights the “software” side of Cohesion which concentrates on framework settings of coherences in (sectoral, horizontal and vertical) policies as well as the importance of connectivity and linkages in an era of high interdependency of regional development (Bundesministerium für Verkehr 2007; Kawka 2009).

In his report, Barca points out the necessity of a place-based development strategy which reflects the specific development potentials of the individual region. He outlines the importance of regional level and thereby delegates realms of territorial Cohesion to it. A place-based development strategy should ensure and strengthen the identity and diversity of places and asking for solidarity and partnership of cities and region, wealthy and poor, centre and periphery, urban and rural areas (Schön 2008:18).

The place-based development strategy seems to be an addition to formal structural policies by informal instruments of communication, cooperation and construction of networks. It rather addresses deficits and weaknesses of implementation of structural policies than it develops a comprehensive concept for attending the objectives of cohesion and coherence in a new way.

But what kind of regions the place-based development strategies ask for? Especially for challenges of the urban-rural disparities favored regions are the metropolitan regions 2.0 this article assumes. Metropolitan regions as a new form of regions on the intermediate level between national or state level and the local level of counties and municipalities and which are combines issues of growth and cohesion in new forms of governance in soft spaces with fuzzy boundaries.

1 It reflects the growing importance of regional governance and networking structures for the coordination of regional and sectoral stakeholders which is mentioned in theoretical and practical discourses as well as it considers the new awareness of relational spaces and different characteristic development path of regions Läpple, D. (1992). Essay über den Raum. Stadt und Raum. H. Häußermann. Pfaffenweiler, Centaurusverlag: 158-207.


3 Characteristics of Metropolitan Regions 2.0

Since the 1990ties metropolitan governance is back on the agenda by new forms of city-regional cooperation and metropolitan reforms. New are not the realms of urban regions – to meet the competitive conditions of international connectedness, to ensure environmental qualities, prevent spatial inequalities and establish cultural identities under the condition of de-territorialisation. But new seem the dynamics which are increasingly situated outside the administrative territories of cities and regions and the dependency of relational geographies on non-place urban realms (Salet 2007:190).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Characteristics of Metropolitan Region 2.0</th>
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<tr>
<td>physical</td>
<td>soft regions with fuzzy boundaries in variable geometries:</td>
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<tr>
<td>structure</td>
<td>- functional spaces of mutual dependencies regarding housing market and commuting areas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- rescaling to heterogeneous regions with different potentials including urban-rural area, centre–periphery, prospering and distressed regions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Symbolic</td>
<td>Production of images and symbols with focus on international competitiveness, critical mass and connectedness, urban images and symbols by:</td>
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<tr>
<td>dimension</td>
<td>- branding territories</td>
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<td>- festivalisation and mega projects</td>
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<td>- joint marketing</td>
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<td>Normative</td>
<td>- strategic orientation to foster growth, innovation and development</td>
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<tr>
<td>dimension</td>
<td>- pursuit of cooperation: involvement of regional, local and private stakeholders for better coordination between territorial relevant policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actor’s</td>
<td>- multilevel governance arrangements in fragmented administrative structures</td>
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<tr>
<td>dimension</td>
<td>- combination of strategic networking and project orientation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Limited role of linear planning processes and restricted influence of spatial planners</td>
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</tbody>
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Tab. 2: characteristics of metropolitan regions 2.0 (Matern2010)

Haugthon and Allmendinger (2010:10-11) defined the new form of regions as “soft planning spaces”4 which can be characterized by top-down functional spaces in relation to housing markets and

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4 The forms are 1) bottom-up functional plans which local authorities prepare to reflect functional spaces outside of formal plans, 2) shadow plans and strategies of authorities to deliver master plans or shadow plans in shorter time scales and regarding different terms and 3) top-down functional spaces in relation to housing markets and commuting regions which were introduced with an economic attitude to foster competitiveness (10-11).
commuting regions and which are introduced with an economic attitude to foster competitiveness. They represent a new type of regions – e.g. regarding its boundaries, legislative conditions and governance mode as well as actors’ constellations and objectives of intervention. To analyze the characteristics of metropolitan region the concept of relational spaces (see Läpple 1992; Sturm 2000; Löw 2008) is addressed in this study. According to the concept the characteristic of a place is apparent in different dimensions: in material resources and physical form, the interactive dimension of stakeholders, their patterns of decision making, motivations and structures of power; the political culture, norms and values as well as leitmotifs and organisational forms and in symbols and meta narration (Läpple 1992:196-197).

The need to deal with territorial Cohesion issues within metropolitan regions like Hamburg and Öresund region are obvious in the physical structures, involving urban and rural areas, central-peripheral areas and prospering regions as well as one lagging behind. But also the other dimensions question the basis for cohesion and regional identity (like tab. 3 shows).

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Tab. 3: challenges of metropolitan regions 2.0 for territorial Cohesion for rural perspective
(Matern2010)

4 Strategies in Metropolitan Regions 2.0 – Reactions on Global and Regional Challenges

In the following part main strategies for economic and territorial Cohesion in Metropolitan regions 2.0 should be analyzed. The concept of place-based development is therefore used as a template for structuring the analysis.

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5 This article bases on a PhD-Theses [at Hafencity University] and comparable study of metropolitan region of Hamburg and Oresund region (in cooperation with Lise Herlund at Copenhagen University, financed by ARL European Young Professional Forum). It represents a work in progress.
4.1 Territorial governance by network organization?

Both metropolitan regions establish an organizational structure for the cooperation in the region. It contains a rather large steering board with political representatives of every member (Regionsrat and Öresund Committee), an executive steering board with representatives from public authorities from state to local level and a management unit (Geschäftsstelle MRH and Secretariat of the Öresund Committee). In the metropolitan region of Hamburg the six working groups complement the steering structure and are supplemented by project groups or special interest groups (like the board for business developers). In the Öresund region a number of projects – initiated and implemented by or with the support of Oresund Committee - have been established in other network organizations with loose ties to the umbrella organization and with financial support by Interreg A. Examples are Medicon Valley Academy, Oresund University, Öresund Statistics (www.oresundkomiteen, Hall 2008).

Tab. 4: organization of the metropolitan region of Hamburg 200 (Löwis, Matern 2010: 6)

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6 See Website of the Oresundcommittee: www.oresundkomiteen.dk, 21.09.2010
The structural mode of the metropolitan region Hamburg and Oresund Region is a networking organization for issues of regional development with concerns-oriented and informal decision making. Consensus is the only way to develop collective acting in such organizations because individual actors can used their exit- or veto option. They bases on equal partnership with same status of every member with representative democratic decision making and an obligation for consensus of all members in strategic decisions (Schimank 2002:9-10).

With the establishing of an organization a corporative actors is created who is formative for the members by offering orientation in the perception of problems and appropriate strategies of acting as well as its explanation.7 Thereby they create reliability of expectations – a) on the members side because they know without extensive negotiation what is supposed and what they can expect mutually and b) for third parties because decisions tend to be more stringent and consistent (Schimank 2002:28).

Beside, the organizational assumptions - fixed in communicative, policy and personal structures - ensure that in many situations decisions can be made by standard operating procedures which represent a kind of routine acting and do not ask for the whole process of problem analysis, estimation of alternatives and assessment criteria. In positive meaning, these standard operating procedures reduce complexity. In negative case, it directs to institutionalized decisions – following the “logic of consequentiality” (and stakeholders could invoke that they had no other alternative to act) and organization’s strategies become dominated by emergent strategies of the secretariat or management unit (Hall 2008:428).

So organization building can solve the problem to ensure collective capability to act and provide an instrument to handle interdependencies, create and stabilize collective acting. But only under the condition that members are satisfied and contented by organizational policies and politics. Otherwise they have the options for exit or voice strategies8 which limit the organizational capability. This seems to be a big challenge for metropolitan regions as organizations with heterogeneous stakeholders and interests and consensus-modes reduces the visibility for minorities and the variety of interests and opinions. It becomes an issue in metropolitan Region of Hamburg by a veto against further

7 Organizations offer cognitive (and evaluative) orientation through prospective acting and influence decision making assumptions regarding expected acting of other stakeholders (and impact that individual acting adapt to simplify matters). And they produce compliance with normative guidelines and impact value-rational acting of stakeholders. It helps to explain acting and afford to transfer accountability to the organization.

8 Exit means retirement or inner emigration while voice means oppositional policies within the organization (Schimank 2002: 14).
enlargement applications and members ask for cohesion. A further enlargement would not only the county of Ludwigslust it would also include another state and therefore modes of decision-making and representation in steering groups need to be reformed. One of the interview partners pointed out: “Cohesion or enlargement”.

So metropolitan regions as extended network organizations have to investigate in inner-organizational cohesion – otherwise internal conflicts would weaken the organization’s capacity to act (Schimank 2002:14). This inner organizational coherence is often addressed by performative acting or symbolic integration strategies (following below).

Performative acting often uses external anchors of explanation for the foundation and the legitimization of existence of the organization (Schimank 2002:29) Metropolitan regions refers to discourses about globalization, its framework conditions and the growing competition of regions to motivate organization conform acting of the individual stakeholder and to maintain the organizations structure. And the interviews in both of the metropolitan regions show that the discourses about globalization and the rising competitiveness are omnipresent and many stakeholders underline the importance of economic successful central cities, the focus on strength and innovation for cooperation.9 Strategic documents of the region –like the Internationalization strategy in Metropolitan Region of Hamburg – or external expertise – like the OECD territorial review Öresund (2003) and Copenhagen Region (2009) strengthening this argumentation.

4.2 Cluster strategies for fostering endogenous economic development

Under the umbrella of the metropolitan region of Hamburg (as well as Oresund Region) a number of projects regarding economic development started. The cooperation in MRH is focused on 11 economic branches (harbor and logistics, maritime technologies, media, food industry, chemistry, aviation industry, life Sciences, renewable energies, tourism, mechanical engineering, cultural industries) which are quite similar to the one in Öresund region (IT, logistics, food, materials, environment, life sciences).10

Examples for cluster initiatives are medicon valley, Öresund University or Öresund Science region or Logistic and maritime technology clusters (under the umbrella of MORO Nord) and Süderelbe AG and its cluster initiatives in the metropolitan region of Hamburg.

Impulses for cooperation aim to reduce barriers of regional development. They focus on the missing linkage of cross-border coordination and between existing initiatives and enterprises in the participating counties and states as well as the logic of awareness rising by critical mass. Objectives of cooperation between the different cluster initiatives are:

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9 Such fictions of rationality fix an apparently rational valid pattern for decision making where stakeholders can refer to and cannot be called for account individually Schimank, U. (2002) Organisationen: Akteurskonstellationen - korporative Akteure Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie Volume, 1-40 DOI:


Fictions of rationality exist regarding thematic and organizational orientation of organization. Therefore organizational models and its assumptions which are graded as successful tend to get transferred no matter if the context is different Schimank, U. (2002) Organisationen: Akteurskonstellationen - korporative Akteure Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie Volume, 1-40 DOI:

Modes regarding the organization of networking e.g. focuses in the Öresund Region the triple helix structure combining actors from public administration, businesses and science actors is realized in the remodeling of the regions in Denmark and the Öresund Organization and establishing the planning as service unit to support municipalities. In Germany the Triple Helix starts to become a synonym as well, but of high importance is the concept of variable geometry which opens the cooperation away from territorial to functional principle.

10 www.oresund.org/ /metropolregion.hamburg.de/contentblob/2323740/data/standortbroschuere.pdf
- **Building networks** for a more intensive networking of main stakeholders (e.g. on working group level) for developing innovative projects, joint projects and measures of technology transfer and information platform about events, projects and stakeholders

- **Conducting analysis**: collecting data and comparable statistics for the whole region and initiating projects and studies for special issues

- **Organizing marketing**: in form of a common marketing of locations, joint platforms (website, brochures, journals) for attract new investors, entrepreneurs and tourists, organize exhibitions, events and participation on fairs or other events and all forms of public relations.

In both regions the cluster initiatives involved partners from existing cluster projects of different state as well as ministries for economics, chambers of commerce, entrepreneurs’ associations and private businesses and research institutes or universities. Thereby the regional cluster initiatives (e.g. maritime technology) could support and build on ongoing activities in the metropolitan region like recent analysis or existing network arrangements (BMVBS 2010:5).

Joint cluster initiatives try to use advantages of the economies of scale. They improve the international awareness and competitiveness of the region by bigger size and number of influential stakeholders and thereby promise advantages of synergies, variety and markets as well as knowledge (Sternberg 2001; BMVBS 2010:5). For regional stakeholder – e.g. business developers of counties – the networks offer international visibility of strength or location sites (by joint marketing), access to information and potential project partners. For existing cluster initiatives the size of cooperation opportunities cross-border, e.g. to Oresund region increase with the better awareness of the network via joint marketing. Therefore the cluster initiatives are strong oriented on discourses about challenges of globalization.

With regard on territorial Cohesion issues the ability to use the cluster structures for endogenous development the influences of resources (staff, finances and time) and proximity need to be estimated from an actor’s perspective. In interviews it became clear that the knowledge about option for cooperation and networking and the awareness regarding its strategic options and possible benefit are quite different perceived. Reasons can be the variety of initiatives which do not necessarily fit with the local profile as well as limited resources or trends of independency organizations like Cluster management units tends to develop in their on-going cooperation. So projects - initiated under the umbrella of the regional organization (e.g. the Oresund Committee) - often became independent networks and organizations with management units, partners and projects. Cluster initiatives are often organized as public private partnership (following private law), financed by members, funds (like Förderfond, Interreg) and projects. The ties to the umbrella organization loss their intensity and spatial patterns change. This independency of the new networks can bring up problems of individual interest of the new (profit-oriented) organization, reduce transparency and create a new fragmentation and complexity of governance structures (Salet 2007:191).

They are characterized by variable geometries which means, that functional tasks define boundaries and boundaries tend to be fuzzy and change over years. It seems to be an adequate and efficient way for project implementation and a reaction on changing framework conditions, but “there seem to be no stability of borders in time and space” (Waterhout 2009: 1) and raises the impression of fragmentation in the region. And the new organizations ask for memberships, participation and financing which raise the question of benefit for the individual stakeholder with regard on their limited resources. Especially more peripheral stakeholders from smaller municipalities mentioned in the interviews the restrictions of time, staff and money.
4.3 Shaping regional identity as a strategy for social cohesion?

The discussions about international competitiveness and globalization are not only focused on size, statistics of growth and innovation but also about soft factors of quality of life and the linkage between the global and the local. The coolness and image of a region are important factors as well.\(^{11}\)

The awareness of regional identity as well as assets of global society arise and lead to branding strategies for cities and regions. “Branding territories has become fashionable during the last decade” (Hall 2008:429) Consulting firms\(^{12}\) are hired to develop a branding for the regions with logo (and even the name in the Oresund Case), brand and specific brand book. Additionally networks for branding and marketing activities are established like Oresund identity network\(^{13}\) or board for business developers in the Metropolitan Region of Hamburg and the organization “Hamburg Marketing GmbH”. The regions become a brand and regional identity a marketing strategy which is communicated by media (journals, websites and image brochures) and events of the regions.

In the interviews as well as in presentations of the metropolitan region of Hamburg, it is pointed out that marketing of the whole region in a magazine, on the website and on fairs and through exhibitions, joint event calendars or tourism platforms is a main part of the work of the managing unit of MRH and Hamburg Marketing. The joint marketing of the region through Hamburg Marketing GmbH becomes a discussed issue in regional cooperation. The limited test membership for the 14 counties of the MRH was warmly welcomed in the beginning but becomes criticized by regional stakeholders for the lack of awareness for rural assets while the Marketing activities concentrates on events and brands of the central city (which seem to underline problems of visibility and awareness for the variety of stakeholders, their interests and potentials).

*Regional branding is often focused on assets of a global society and communicates assets*

In regional branding and marketing in image brochures and the built environment the metropolitan regions concentrates on the assets of the creative class (Florida 2006)\(^{11}\), metropolitan functions as well as size and critical mass (Petrin 2009). In the Oresund regions a number of websites, initiatives and networks refers to attributes of connectiveness and critical mass like the example of Oresund.org illustrates: “With its unique strengths that spans from uniting two countries, world class universities, a highly educated population, market-leading technology, six science parks, 2000 companies and some 12,000 researchers the Øresund Region hosts endless opportunities.” (www.oresund.org/about-us, 31.05.2010)

On the other side festivalisation policies and a number of big symbolic projects in both metropolitan regions represent the trend of shaping metropolitan identity:

- Projects regarding *accessibility*: Big infrastructure projects represent the international access and symbolize centrality. Within both cases study regions the public transportation system became extended – by metro construction in Copenhagen (metro, ringroad #3), a new metro line in Hamburg and S-train expansion – and the upgrading of the airports. The production of images and signs of competitiveness and creativity in image brochures and

\(^{11}\) Like mentioned by the concept of Creative Cities Florida, R. (2006). Cities and the creative class. London, New York. images of a tolerant society, creative milieu and high quality of life become typical assets of regional branding and marketing besides the innovation, cluster and technology attribute which are traditionally transported by marketing activities.

\(^{12}\) In Oresund Case the British consulting firm Wolff Olins and in Hamburg the Brandmeyer Markenberatung are mandated to develop the regional brand.

\(^{13}\) www.oresundnetwork.com
branding are complemented by strategies of festivalization, e.g. applications for Olympic Games (like Hamburg for 2012), Expo and world championships (Hamburg 2006), and big architectural projects, like Orestad and Hafencity or Opera building (Petrin, Knieling 2009).

- Projects regarding function of innovation and competitiveness: Marketing of cluster projects represent innovativeness as well as architectural projects. The Black diamond, the strand Amalgar, the opera building in Copenhagen and Hafencity, Elbphilharmony in Hamburg can be interrelated to image production for innovation and competitiveness – and so the hosting of big international sport events does, like the America’s Cup in Malmö (Hall 2008:429) or the application for Olympic Games of Hamburg (2008).

The projects are initiated by central decision and related to discourses about globalisation and the demands of the competitiveness of regions in the global competition of places. In Denmark a lot of infrastructure projects (like Orestad, Metro, opera, ringroad #3) are the outcome of a committee -established 1989 by the prime minister – which developed strategies to stimulate growth in the decreasing capital region. In Metropolitan Region of Hamburg the guideline “Hamburg – Wachsende Stadt (2003) claimed new focus for international competitiveness in demographic and economic development.

Hall (2008: 429) mentioned “regional identity belongs to the world of ‘consumerism’ (...) which is also indicated by the obvious ‘placelessness’ of various pamphlets that represent the region.” Problematic seems the point, that branding and selling territories demand a unitary, non-negotiable product for the market but democratic structures and metropolitan regions found on differences and re-negotiation of orders (Hall 2008:430). And at the same time it is questioned if an identity shaped by a management firm is an appropriate way for democratic structures. Hall (2008:430) see as well a tendency that citizens of the regions become individualized and reduced to a consumers role while political debates and conflicts do not taking place because problems (like differences in taxation, mobility or education) were handled as technical ones. Instead of a demand to gain more ‘popular support’ in the form of information campaigns on the output side (while production of regional identity is made by decision makers and managerial firms) Hall sees a need for more democracy. And his theses seem to be proofed right by recent networks like “Recht auf Stadt” or “Not in our Name” in Hamburg where citizens criticize the marketing of the city and foster a very critical debate about symbolic projects.

“Aus der Region für die Region” – a strategy to foster regional integration and placemaking

An example for another kind of cohesion strategy project represents the project ‘From the region for the region’. It deals with the approach to develop regional economic circuits in agriculture and food production. The project initiated in the Hamburg state ministry for economy and labor started with a regional survey of first activities, existing networks of producers and sellers and involved or interested stakeholder. In a first workshop in March 2009 main stakeholders in the fields of agriculture, retail, gastronomy and large-scale consumption met and defined potentials, interests and challenges. As a result following working fields were defined:

• building a network of producers, intermediary, logistics and retailer of regional products and collecting information and options of cooperation with food retailers (e.g. to install sales counters for regional products),
• develop a network to establish regional products in gastronomy and
• introduce regional products in school lunches.  

To serve the working fields a study to gather information about producers, retailers, fabricators and networks of regional products in northern Germany were estimated and implementation work is still in progress. The project is a lead project of the metropolitan region as well as it includes areas from Mecklenburg which were involved in the model project of supranational partnerships (MORO Nord 2007-2010). 

The project focuses on improving the regional development and the competitiveness of regional food production by focusing on (SME) - farmers; it refers to regional specialties which point out the regional distinctions and thereby fostering the awareness for a common identity in Northern Germany, its traditions and the value of this identity and its assets. It raises the awareness for the cultivated landscape, the farming and its stakeholders by image building like regional sales counters, campaigns like “nordisch Frisch” in Gastronomy or a brand development and the discussion of quality standards. Target groups for the image production are local inhabitants, consumers as well as visitors.

The project can be categorized as a modern form of place-making, which defines territorial oriented planning strategies and aims to improve local or region quality of life through fostering awareness for the sense of place (along regional actors). It is a rather collective process of developing space by fostering the socio-emotional appropriation of space by local actors and thereby ideally raises the awareness for spatial impacts of strategies and fosters an acceptance of responsibility for the place (Fürst 2006: 13, Schürmann 2006: 22). Thereby, place-making is an instrument for image –oriented production of space. It underlines the symbolic, historical and cultural dimension of place and fosters an exchange about meanings of places which can be a fundament for a common identity and similar sense of place (Healey 2003).

The project “From the Region to the region” thereby can be interpreted as strategy to respond regional challenges of territorial Cohesion and integration of involved parties because it focus on raising awareness for regional products, the processes and conditions as well as actors of the production and tries to combine support for endogenous regional development (in the handcraft section of food production) with emotions of home, affiliation and solidarity and establish regional responsible consumption as lifestyle asset and thereby maybe become a good example for authentic regional identity.

Another way to foster regional identity in large scale regions could be oriented to design and the specifics in building culture and regional styles in architecture and construction. In MRH ideas about routes connecting northern Germany manor architecture and tourism concepts to assess maritime industrial culture16 represent this strategy as well as ideas about connecting designers in Oresund region.

5 Questions as Conclusions

14 See project documentation in an unpublished reportMORO Nord - großräumige Partnerschaft Norddeutschland/ Metropolregion Hamburg. 9.6.2010
15 Besides, cooperation between interested stakeholders within the region and neighboring areas and a project partnership with the metropolitan region of Nuremberg were installed and the project were chosen as one model project (financed by the federal ministry for food) called ‘regional alliances’ which offers a networking and exchange of experiences between similar food networks in Germany (Interview).
16 The maritime architectural culture will be part of the existing model project of the metropolitan region of Hamburg: http://www.maritime-elbe.de/, 21.09.2009
Metropolitan Regions 2.0 do not have a mandate for territorial cohesion but seem to offer characteristics and strategies to support objectives of territorial cohesion in form of a place-based development strategy. At the glance, this place-based territorial Cohesion seems to follow the old model of cities as growth motors spreading positive effects to their hinterlands and thereby the territorial Cohesion focuses on the integration motor “city”. Strategies to foster growth changed to spotlight the importance of functional networks of actors for endogenous development as well as performative acting and symbolic integration by joint branding and place making. It refers to the role of growth, innovation and cluster development as well as the role of images and symbols in the competition of regions for awareness.

Metropolitan regions like Metropolitan region of Hamburg and Oresund region fulfill a bunch of criteria for a place-based Cohesion strategy and therefore it seems worth to analyze the potential of this new territorial cohesion strategies and emphases the stakeholder’s perspectives on territorial cohesion.

*Passenger welcomed – metropolitan regions as stepstones for integration of actor from peripheral areas*

Public administrations of sparsely populated, peripheral areas are often characterized by limited resources in terms of staff and finances. The cooperation within a metropolitan region can offer access to stakeholders, information and knowledge as well as the opportunity for participation in joint studies. The participation includes support from the management unit and the membership in working groups offers typical advantages of networks, e.g. access to people from similar as well as from different areas and interests and different power and an improved coordination of policies between different sectors (e.g. representatives from regional development and spatial planning) as well as vertical between state and local level. This seems to be a precondition for a stronger awareness of spatial issues and impacts of acting and a region specific (re-) production of place which react on external impulses and sanctions but in a regional specific way.

The contact networks can be used to strengthen awareness for specific development challenges (from county planners or economic stakeholders) by smart agenda setting and gaining coalitions before meetings. But this means also networking costs and resources of informal information and agreements. So what are proper or adequate strategies of individual stakeholders to benefit for their own individual regional development? Is there a need for concentration on specific strength or flexible adaption strategies? In what extend metropolitan regions are places of embeddness and supporting networks which offers strategies of integration?

*Regional Governance and Identity: the Region as one network or a club-like exclusive cooperation?*

Metropolitan regions focus their strategies (of territorial Cohesion) to performative and prospective acting. The benefit of cooperation is in the integration and communication of stakeholders. So on one side, metropolitan regions 2.0 integrate various actors, demands and interest into one cooperation form. They include heterogeneous areas, actors and interests and offer different platforms for coordination and negotiation of differences in interests and perception of spatial problems and challenges as well as strategic alternatives for common acting.

On the other metropolitan regions 2.0 are cooperation of public administration regarding spatial planning and regional development. Main stakeholders are public authorities from state to local level and most of the time the technical staff is working together. Sometimes economic interest groups are
includes (chambers) but seldom more than typical organizations. Other interest groups are not included for several reasons, e.g. NGOs, citizen initiatives, ecologic initiatives, labor unions. Thereby not only these actors are missing also their thematic fields are not represented in the metropolitan regions 2.0. It is obvious that social and educational fields as well as preservation of ecological areas are excluded.

So can strategies of performative acting foster social cohesion and shape regional identity or is a stronger participation of broader interest groups and citizens need for becoming a cohesive region?

Besides, the communicative and performative strategy of metropolitan regions fosters self-responsibility of the actors. Main advantages of the cooperation can be opened by the stakeholders who are able to govern discourse, set agendas and design the cooperation closed to their interests. Powerful actors can used the variable geometry for choosing project partners regarding their interests. But the individual responsibility increases the role of individuals, their personal power, resources and institutional embedness. The preconditions of different actors are quite different. So the framework settings gain importance to ensure are transparent and fair participation process. It could be asked if the recent structures rather support the powerful actors.

**Soft spaces for soft integration?**

No matter that metropolitan regions aim to become soft spaces with fuzzy boundaries which can extend boundaries and involve partners in a flexible form of variable geometries, when it comes to the organization the construction of such spaces means also to draw a borderline. And this means in and out for themes, areas and stakeholders. The engagement of stakeholders from rural areas in the metropolitan region of Hamburg to become a member of the region underlines the importance of the membership and perceived inclusion.

And the symbolic inclusion and inclusion in the organization is a necessary condition for cohesion. But the inclusion creates demand and prospects for a further integration. The intensive discussions about intra-regional accessibility in both metropolitan regions emphasize the importance of old issues or hard facts of traditional Cohesion policies. The importance of infrastructure accessibility and the integration into the transport association are on the agenda again. In interviews with stakeholders from peripheral areas the issue of transportation was addressed constantly and its role for Cohesion is illustrated by a common notion: “Who is included in the HVV (Hamburg transport association) is metropolitan region and who has a stop of the S-train is Hamburg”

**But what about territorial compensation?**

Strategies for territorial compensation are not a big issue in the informal organization so far. In Hamburg the financial incentive and (small) compensation instrument – the Förderfonds – are relics from the long tradition of cross-border planning cooperation. Since the 1960ies the money out for state compensation fonds are used to finance project – often ecological, touristic sites in rural areas and the extention of S-trains and Metro line to the suburban areas. The Förderfonds are often criticized of funding small projects somewhere instead of regional relevant issues, but it is often mentioned to be an incentive for membership as well. And the experiences from In Oresund Region – where Interreg funds are available – show, that since the new program period the money should be concentrated on regional and bigger projects – only rather strong stakeholders with expert staff (like Universities) are applying and the projects from rural areas are missing. So it could be questioned if the rules of regional relevance mean better outcome for Cohesion.
Literature


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