

# **Governance, citizenship, participation and urban planning: exploration of the context for knowledge transfer between Europe and the South**

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## **Introduction**

The focus of this paper is to identify to what extent urban planners and managers in one context can learn from the other concerning participation. Critical of a superficial “best practice” approach, the research emphasises the need for contextual analysis. It argues that only through in-depth understanding of the political, economic, social and cultural context can the forces behind, the mechanisms used in, and the perception of, the outcomes be appreciated, and hence lessons drawn to be applied elsewhere. The paper draws on previously published research across a wide range of countries as well as relevant literature on governance, participation and planning. Essentially exploratory, the conclusions provide an initial assessment of how the different contexts might affect how knowledge can be transferred from one context to another, and the paper has been designed to assist in defining a more detailed research programme on participatory planning in a global context.

There are many changes to urban governance in Europe and the South, with widening scope for partnerships between the state and other parties in the private and voluntary sectors as well as innovation in partnerships between different areas of government. This affects urban planning, with potentially revitalised forms of participation – although often the nature of this is within carefully controlled parameters. Although these trends in wider forms of urban governance are evident in the already urbanised North as well as in many rapidly urbanising countries in the South, there are significant differences in the contextual realpolitik which challenge simplistic forms of knowledge transfer, whether North-South, North-North or South-South and this leads to reflection also on the mechanisms of valid research and knowledge transfer across these contexts.

This paper also comes partly from an interest in the ways that knowledge gets produced and disseminated and concern about the bias to the North in this process. We start from the position that knowledge is socially produced, and that although valid knowledge is produced in the South, the systems of formal production and dissemination of knowledge are dominated by Northern institutions in general – and this is also applicable to research in urban issues. We draw on our experience researching urban issues in Europe and various countries in the South as a basis for our analysis, and while we have chosen to focus on participation in urban planning and the forms of governance this is embedded in as the main theme of the paper, we also examine how and why certain forms of knowledge seem to predominate.

The paper is structured in three sections (other than this introduction). The following section clarifies some key definitions of terms: governance, citizenship, participation and urban planning amongst others. It also outlines the analytical framework we are using – new institutionalism – and our approach to knowledge. The next section reviews – very briefly because of space - what we see as the changing governance contexts in some of the countries we have examined and the nature of participation in planning within these. The final section arrives at some tentative conclusions concerning how knowledge transfer might be more relevant between the North and South in this area, and suggests further research which may assist with this.

## **Analytical terms and frameworks**

**Governance** is essentially the way in which different actors in a specific situation interact to govern – i.e. take and ensure the implementation of decisions (enforcing these as necessary). This is inevitably a wider sphere of action than government itself as it includes a series of actors beyond the government *per se*. The width of this sphere of action is directly related to the nature of government

power. Where governments exercise strong powers (whether consensual or in the face of opposition), the space for governance is narrow, but where the government exercises less strong powers (whether willingly or not) this is wider. Governance thus refers both to the nature of the context for government and the nature of the other actors involved.

**Citizenship** is related fundamentally to rights which are allocated by a specific entity – whether country or other political administrative unit. These are often acquired by birth, but can also be conferred. The rights are usually related to responsibilities of the citizen, although these are often implicit. Whether these rights include participation in decision-making – and if so at what level and when – is actually often a different matter. **Participation** entails forms of engagement of relevant populations in decision-making and action. It varies from passive engagement – mainly being recipients of information on decisions being made or already made, through to significant autonomy on decision-making on certain issues. In between information-giving and autonomous decision-making are different levels of participation such as consultation on decisions and joint decision-making. While some have defined these as “levels” in a hierarchy (e.g. Arnstein’s well-known ‘ladder’ \*\*\*REF), others have argued that different forms of participation are possible and desirable in different circumstances and therefore a more nuanced approach is required. Equally participation can be direct – through the individual’s (or group’s) involvement in some form, or indirect, where the individual or group gets involved through a representative. Representatives can then operate in directly accountable ways (i.e. with specific mandates) or can be indirectly accountable (i.e. through a structure such as a political party or other organisation).

**Urban planning** is a technical and political process of taking decisions about land use in urban areas – which themselves are defined in very different ways (which is not of specific concern of this paper). The process involves technical expertise about how land might be used and previous decisions concerning this at various levels from international to local, as well as legal issues related to this. However, although planners who are trained in these technical skills have often a degree of influence or discretion in such decisions, they are subordinate to different forms of political decision-making concerning land use. As such planning is a potentially very political act, and as such is closely related to government. However as the role of government changes, the nature of the politics involved is changing as this paper investigates.

The **governance** context in any situation (e.g. country, city etc) has an important influence on **urban planning** as a form of decision-making on land use, and largely establishes the parameters for forms of **participation** in this, including those accorded to **citizenship**, although it goes beyond the rights and responsibilities of the citizen. If we approach urban planning from a simplistic technical view, it is conceivable to assume that a planner can take decisions on technical criteria (in itself reflecting an extremely wide range of issues), and as such that this form of planning can be transferable across social and political contexts, with a certain acceptance of political influence or a level of participation by non-politicians and non-planners. However when the essential political nature of planning is accepted, it is clear that the nature of the governance context, as well as that of citizenship, that are established and accepted in a specific political and social context need to be factored in, and this means that the nature of participation that is possible or aspired to itself needs to be established, often through some form of negotiation.

Approaching urban planning from this point of view requires a socio-political analysis before any planning technique can be realistically applied – whether one that is currently part of a social and political practice and culturally accepted as well as economically possible – or one that could be newly introduced. To pick up on a “hard” technique (such as Geographic Information Systems) or a “soft” technique (such as notification of planning intentions) from one context and apply this in another context needs interpretation of the context. The current trend for “best practice” and research which only superficially locates its findings within such contexts can thus be very counterproductive to real change (Jenkins & Smith, 2004). It is this that leads us to examine the nature of knowledge production and dissemination in urban planning around the role of citizens and participation.

This contextual approach to knowledge transfer is rooted in our understanding of knowledge of human affairs being socially based. As such it cannot be theorised in any absolute way, but analytical structures can be used to understand the differences and similarities. A good analogy is

playing games. While some, like chess, are “universally defined”, and as such more like the natural sciences, others such as the African generic game of Mancala, are based on similar structures, but regionally defined in terms of rules. The study of human affairs is like paying such a game, which requires understanding of the context, however it is possible to learn and transfer skills from one context to another when this is undertaken.

The approach we use as an analytical framework for this research is an institutional analysis. This is rooted in “new institutionalism”, which grew from New Institutional Economics and spread in rather different ways in other social sciences. The New Institutional economists accepted that socio-cultural values and organisational structures affected the application of the “laws” of economics, although they mostly aspired to the better understanding of how such laws could still work in these contexts. In other social sciences institutionalism has been applied from the point of view that it is social values that create the context for human action, and thus possible analysis, and hence how “theory” – or “laws” - can be understood through contextual study, not how we can adapt theory to context. The definition of institution as both socio-cultural “traditions” and “meanings” as well as the organisational forms that humans use to act in and through means that this is a useful way to approach a number of aspects of social context.

These approaches to knowledge and analysis are the basis for our research in participation in planning and how this varies in governance contexts across a number of countries, including how we can learn to apply techniques and other attributes from one context to another. We have in various forms undertaken the following research in recent years, which we draw on in the following section<sup>1</sup>:

- i. Research into participation in planning in Scotland, funded by the Scottish Executive as well as various local authorities;
- ii. Research into the international experience in mediation in planning for application to new proposals for participation in planning in England, funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister;
- iii. Research into participation in planning across European countries around the North Sea (Scotland, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden), funded by the European Commission through an InterReg III project NoordXXI;
- iv. Research into innovation in citizen participation in local governance (DEMOS), in eight city councils in seven countries alongside their partner academic institutions across Europe in action research, funded through European Union’s Fifth Framework Programme under the City of Tomorrow programme.
- v. Research into participation in planning and housing in Costa Rica and Brazil (partly British Academy funded);
- vi. Research into participation in planning and housing in South Africa and Mozambique (partly funded through participation in projects of USAID, the World Bank and UNCHS).

## **The nature of participation in planning across Europe and the relevance of changing governance contexts<sup>2</sup>**

### *Governance in Europe*

This section analyses European spatial planning as a necessary context for the investigation of planning practices in European countries. The EU case is interesting because it describes how a supra national organisation has helped support knowledge development and transnational learning in a highly differentiated context, in pursuit of ‘common’ strategic objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> Jenkins was active in i), ii), iii) and vi); Smith was active in i), ii), iii) and v) and Kirk was active in i), ii), iii), and iv).

<sup>2</sup> This section draws on research reported in the following: Hague et al (2003); Hague and Jenkins (forthcoming 2004); Jenkins et al (2001); Carley & Kirk, (2002); Carley & Kirk (2004).

The European Union (EU) emerged out of the aftermath of World War 2. Its goal was to ensure peace, prosperity and a new beginning for a continent whose political and economic foundations had been radically altered. The forerunner of the European Union was the European Coal and Steel Community, which was set up in 1952. Its original six members sought to promote greater economic integration by pooling together their coal and steel production. This was the first step in seeking to create a single market. Within this single market goods, services, people and capital could move freely within and between countries. However, the process of creating a single market has been gradual and has spanned a period of over 40 years. More recently, the EU has promoted political and social integration in addition to economic integration. However, this has proved more problematic with member states reluctant to give up sovereignty. Planning has been predominantly a local practice shaped by national legislation. There is no legal competence permitting the European Union to act on planning matters, rather the concept of subsidiarity applies. This means that matters should be devolved to the lowest level of spatial administration where they can be effectively carried out.

One reason why a pan-European perspective has come to the fore in spatial planning is because fashioning a new identity for Europe is integral to the creation of the single European market, and the moves towards political and economic union within the territory. One of the fundamental goals of the EU is economic and social cohesion and balanced development. A number of official studies from the early 1990s onwards recognised that the Single Market and EU policies for sectors such as agriculture, technology and the environment, were likely to have significant territorial impacts. More recently, there has been growing interest at EU, regional and national levels in spatial planning as an integrative European concept. Spatial planning refers to the methods used, largely by the public sector, to influence the future distribution of activities in space. It aims to create a more rational territorial organisation of land uses and linkages between them; to balance demands for development with the need to protect the environment; and to achieve social and economic objectives. Spatial planning seeks to co-ordinate the spatial impact of sector policies and to achieve a more even distribution of economic development between regions than would otherwise be created by market forces. As such, the 'European Enterprise' can be viewed as redistributive, perhaps reflecting the social democratic ideologies of the majority of EU member states, in that it seeks to promote the competitiveness of the EU as a whole, through spreading the benefits of economic success.

The majority of EU member states share a long established system of representative democracy, although there are differences in structures of government and mechanisms for engaging citizens in decision-making. However, the 'health' of representative democracy in most EU states is open to question as the relationship between those who govern and the citizen comes under greater scrutiny. Many studies have noted a long history of non-participation in even the most basic form of political participation - voting. Turnout in elections averaging 40% in the UK suggests that all is not well, prompting commentators to argue that there is a crisis of participation and democratic legitimacy in government (King and Stoker, 1996). The rise of right wing political parties in some EU member states (e.g. France, Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium) has presented worrying challenges to established political parties as public trust in politicians and political processes are at a low ebb.

The issue of the 'democratic deficit' is recognised by national and local governments alike and provided the impetus for the European Commission's recent *White Paper on European Governance* (CEC, 2001). The White Paper states that "there needs to be a stronger interaction with regional and local governments and civil society" and "Member States bear the principal responsibility for achieving this" (p4). This has prompted some critics to argue that representative democracy cannot be fully achieved unless government becomes more representative of the population as a whole and suggest changes to electoral processes. However, others argue that elections by themselves do not necessarily make for effective representative democracy and propose a more active process of representation (Simey, 1994) or that representative democracy needs to be supplemented by more participative forms of democracy.

Therefore, the approach to spatial planning that has emerged within the EU represents uneasy consensus amongst all the member states within the Union. The process is characterised by change and conflict resulting in new compromises that take time to embed. Thus, while there are important political drivers for change in the EU governance context, the concept of subsidiarity ensures that

change is also driven from the 'bottom up' and emerging new institutional arrangements are as much a product of innovative action at the sub regional and local levels as a formal political project. Thus, adopting a 'common' approach to spatial planning across Europe is an ambitious task, given that each member state has their own laws, planning traditions, culture and history.

### *Planning in Europe*

The geography of the Union is characterised by long distances, major physical barriers to surface movement and huge disparities in population densities. Member states also have very different problems and opportunities with member states in the north concerned with rural restructuring and their peripheral position, while those in the highly congested core interested in managing urban growth.

Spatial planning practice across the EU remains framed within distinctive national legislative codes that operate within distinctive political and economic systems. To understand the context for different forms of innovatory collaboration/participation in planning across the various countries, an understanding of the legal, political and governance context is required. Newman and Thornley (1996) identified four distinct 'legal-institutional families' in Western Europe:

- The British system, based on common law and founded on precedent. In this system there is no national constitution and central government dominates, with local government seen largely as a service providing agency, dependent for power and finance on central government.
- The Napoleonic system, based on abstract legal norms prescribing possible issues in advance through codification (e.g. France, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy, Spain and Portugal). The administrative system is based on the commune at the local level, however, strong central government control is exerted.
- The Germanic system covering Germany, Switzerland and Austria. Here, there are clearly differentiated powers at regional level in a federal constitution with subordinate counties and communes.
- The Scandinavian system characterised through strong regional expression of central government although local level communes remain relatively strong. (e.g. Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland)

These legal-institutional systems are expressed in markedly different administrative systems and in turn impact on planning systems as they currently operates within member states. In broad terms, four categories of spatial planning have been identified in Western Europe:

- The regional economic approach, where spatial planning is closely associated with socio-economic planning and central government plays an important role (e.g. France, Portugal).
- The comprehensive integrated approach, where a systematic formal hierarchy of plans from national to local level acts as a focus for spatial co-ordination (e.g. the Netherlands, Scandinavian countries), associated with extensive planning institutions and public sector investment.
- The land use management approach, where spatial planning is not closely associated with other forms of planning or government activity, and where this is locally managed, albeit under national guidelines (e.g. UK);
- The urbanism tradition, which is more oriented to urban design, and rigid zoning and building control is used to regulate development (e.g. Southern Europe, France).

The legal basis for consultation in planning is generally formalised in statutory procedures in the Northern European countries. However, the nature of public consultation varies considerably between member states and continues to evolve. Socio-cultural aspects are perhaps the hardest to determine but underlying attitudes and values are of fundamental importance for EU governance systems. These are often built up over time and are embedded within society. That said there is growing recognition within EU member states that formal processes are by no means inclusive resulting in growing interest in innovations aimed at involving the broader public in planning. This is in parallel to renewed effort at central and local government level to engage the broader public in governance.

While some view interest in spatial planning as a political project, growing awareness of the 'democratic deficit' has prompted renewed interest in and support for the exchange of transnational learning from the 'bottom up'. EU programmes such as Interreg IIC (which sought to advance transnational co-operation in spatial planning) and its successor Interreg III, (which seeks to expand transnational co-operation to incorporate other sectors and actors whose activities impact on territorial cohesion) are important mechanisms in exploring the transferability of 'best practice'. In an emerging 'Europe of the Regions' where there is a multiplicity of institutional, ideological, cultural, historical, linguistic and professional differences operating at different spatial scales, the importance of context therefore becomes a key concern. As such, EU policies on spatial planning and governance could be viewed as having an enabling role in that their translation into practice is strongly mediated by nation states, their legislative and administrative traditions and the endeavours of local planners, politicians and residents.

### **The nature of participation in planning in Latin America and the relevance of changing governance contexts<sup>3</sup>**

#### *Governance in Costa Rica and Brazil<sup>4</sup>*

Costa Rica and Brazil represent very different historical paths in the development of Latin American countries. They are both representative of the current prevalence of democratic regimes in the region, though Costa Rica has been an established formal democracy for over 50 years, while Brazil has undergone a more recent transition from a dictatorship since the 1980s. Governance structures affecting trends in planning have therefore evolved in different ways in these countries.

Costa Rica was a backwater of the Spanish Empire in Central America, poor in natural mineral resources and not heavily populated when the Spaniards arrived. When it became independent from Spain in 1821, it was a mainly rural enclave of European settlers, with some indigenous population in certain areas. After the 1948 civil war, a system of representative democracy was established by the more urban-based emerging middle class. The two-party system that developed supported the establishment of a limited form of welfare state which contrasted with the lack of state service provision in other countries in the region. Relatively high levels of literacy and health, as well as comparatively low levels of inequality, have been achieved in a region otherwise wracked by war during recent decades. The economy of this middle income country has diversified somewhat, from depending on coffee and banana exports, to developing tourism and industrial processing in Free Trade Zones and *maquiladoras*, and more recently computer chip production. It is still, however, a small economy highly vulnerable to decisions in world-wide markets.

The Portuguese colonisation of Brazil was less systematic than that of Spain in the rest of Latin America, had no codified urban planning method comparable to the Spanish "Laws of the Indies", and was initially limited to its coastline, with ports being established since the 1530s. Economic exploitation of Brazil, initially through mining and later through plantations (coffee, sugar, etc.), helped fuel the slave trade from Africa. The country also became a destination for Portuguese emigrants, who settled in greater numbers than was the case for Spaniards in Spanish Latin America, and Portugal's presence continued longer because the Portuguese Crown moved to Rio de Janeiro following the Napoleonic invasion of the metropole. When Brazil was declared a republic, in 1889, it was not divided into smaller countries as the Spanish empire had been, instead becoming a federal republic. The republic's dependence on export crops switched to import substitution and internally orientated industrialisation from the 1930s, following a military takeover. After a democratic period from 1945 to 1964, there was another putsch, which established a military regime in power under a

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<sup>3</sup> This section draws on research reported in the following: Hague et al (2003), Smith (1999, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2004), and also Jenkins & Smith (2001, 2002) and Smith & Valverde (2001)

<sup>4</sup> A useful and concise introduction to recent political economic development in Brazil can be found in Barbara Happe's section on Brazil in Chapter 2 "National Contexts" of Berg-Schlusser & Kersting (2003).

democratic façade, until this in turn ended with the new democratic constitution of 1988, and free presidential elections the following year. During all this time, Brazil developed a highly unequal society, with an externally dependant economy, but with high internal production capacity.

Though both countries share the existence of an established system of representative democracy, the structure of this and citizen engagement are quite different. Since its establishment, Costa Rica's representative democracy has depended on voter loyalty to one of the two main parties rather than on ideologically-based voting, thus producing an alternation in power at central government level between two 'centrist' parties with few ideological differences. Costa Rica is a highly centralised country, where local governments have historically been very weak, and the small geographic and population size contribute to central government being the main channel for citizen engagement with the state. Such engagement tends to take place through community leaders who have clientelistic relations with members of parliament, though an attempt to weaken this nexus was recently initiated with the abolishment of specific grants to communities through their representatives in parliament, and the re-direction of state funds through local authorities. Organised civil society has a long history in Costa Rica, though its relationship with the state has been chequered. During the 1960s and 70s the government set out to control community-based organisations through community development legislation and activities that sought to grant recognition and funding to territorially-based registered CBOs. Grass-roots community activism, however, erupted during the 1980s around the issue of housing, but political parties were quick to respond by establishing nation-wide 'housing fronts' that channelled these housing CBO's claims and eventually co-opting their leaders. After half a century of formal representative democracy on a national level, with clientelistic governance links at the community/government interface, polls show that Costa Ricans are among those most supportive of, and most satisfied with, representative democracy in Latin America.<sup>5</sup>

The contrast in size between Brazil and Costa Rica is reflected in the contrast in administrative structure. Brazil is divided into federal states, which are in turn subdivided into municipalities, each of these types of administrative division having considerable powers. The legislative and executive powers at all three levels of government (federal, state and local) are elected on a four yearly basis. Competition within this system of multi-tiered representative democracy is based on a wide and fragmented range of political parties, of which the Partido Trabalhista (PT) is the only one with strong ideological roots. Most other parties and political representation are linked to individual political leaders, thus continuing a long-established tradition in Brazil of populism and clientelism. Politicians are therefore seen more as representing the ruling elites, rather than party ideologies or programmes, and this probably goes a long way to explain the low level of support for, and satisfaction with, representative democracy in Brazil.<sup>6</sup> In this context, the PT offers a strong alternative to the more populist parties, not only at central level but also at local level. The relative strength of local government has important implications for resource redistribution and planning at the local level, as Brazilian municipalities have some tax-raising powers, though these are limited and in some cases responsibilities have to be delegated back to federal government level.

### *Planning in Costa Rica and Brazil 600*

The differences in governance and political contexts in Brazil and Costa Rica may help explain why some apparently similar participatory planning experiences have had such different results. Physical planning in Costa Rica has been weak mainly due to the lack of power and capacity at the local level, with physical plans having been prepared normally by the poorly resourced National Institute for Planning and Housing (INVU). The preparation of such plans did not stop land invasions

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<sup>5</sup> Figures for the 1999-2000 edition of the Latinobarómetro annual poll show a level of support for democracy in Costa Rica of 83%, and a level of satisfaction with democracy of 61% in this country, surpassed only by Uruguay (<http://www.mori.com/latinobarometro/latinobarometro2000.html>).

<sup>6</sup> Figures for the 1999-2000 edition of the Latinobarómetro annual poll show a level of support for democracy in Brazil of 39%, and a level of satisfaction with democracy of 17% in this country (<http://www.mori.com/latinobarometro/latinobarometro2000.html>).

and the formation of informal settlements, and indeed parties in government have ignored plans when responding to clientelistic demands for housing. The weakness in planning capacity is reflected in the fact that the recently prepared national urban development plan, as well as recent plans for urban areas within the Greater Metropolitan Area,<sup>7</sup> have been prepared by an ad-hoc technical office established within the national electricity company. Preparation of the Greater Metropolitan Area plans since 2002 has involved consultation through participatory workshops. Those who engaged most with the process were technical staff and political members of local government, but in the highly centralised context of Costa Rican democracy, these had limited capacity to attract the interest of community, private sector and minority groups, whose participation was very low. A central government initiative that was more successful in engaging participation at local government and community level was the Triangle of Solidarity (1998-2002). This was intended to prepare and implement projects identified and prioritised by communities, with resources for implementation being contributed by all three sectors involved in the 'triangle': central government, local government and communities. It was thus established as a form of redistribution in which civil society was given a greater say, but to which it was also expected to contribute more. In practice, the prevailing reliance of civil society and local government on central government funding also affected this programme, which was closed down in 2002 having accomplished much less than was promised.

Brazil provides examples of highly developed local planning administrations, focused initially on modernist approaches to planning, but recently including more participatory and community-based approaches to tackling massive informal settlements. The most significant participatory initiative affecting planning has however a broader remit: 'participatory budgeting' in local government. This is based on wide citizen participation in decision-making on local government annual budgets, with a particular emphasis on spending priorities for public works projects. This approach has been implemented in PT-dominated local administrations, with a view to becoming a non-party based institutionalised form of participatory democracy, as opposed (or complementary) to representative democracy. Much of the growing literature on this experience makes a positive assessment, though with arguable caveats, such as the dependence of the process on continuation in power of the PT.<sup>8</sup> However, some analysts conclude that, while not necessarily deepening democracy from the period of struggle against dictatorship, the PB process does provide an open and contestable platform for challenging ingrained clientelism in community development in Brazil.

Conversely to their polled attitudes to representative democracy, Costa Rica and Brazil have been respectively characterised as having a low degree and a high degree of 'popular participation' (Lindert & Nijenhuis, 2004). In the former, the high level of centralisation combined with clientelistic practices has to date offered little scope for participatory planning at a more local level, with redistribution being seen as a central government role. In Brazil, on the other hand, a diversity of experiences with participatory budgeting at the local level has on the whole led to increased participation and redistribution at the urban level, though this is clearly currently linked to the success of the PT.

### **The nature of participation in planning in Southern Africa and the relevance of changing governance contexts**<sup>9</sup>

#### *Governance in Mozambique and South Africa*<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> This is Costa Rica's main urban 'agglomeration', centred on the capital city of San José, but also including other nearby cities within the Central Valley.

<sup>8</sup> See e.g. Baiocchi (2003), Nylén (2003), Souza (2001).

<sup>9</sup> This section draws on research reported in the following: Jenkins (1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1999d, 2000a, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2001d, 2003, 2004, 2005 forthcoming), and also Jenkins & Smith (2001, 2002) and Jenkins & Wilkinson (2002)

<sup>10</sup> Two good overviews of general political economic development in South Africa and Mozambique, with a focus on the more recent past are Marais (1998) and Abrahamsson & Nilsson (1995).

Mozambique and South Africa are neighbours but have very different histories and development paths to date. However both are recently emerging from periods of severe internal conflict and relative isolation from both the world economy as well as opening up to more democratic forms of government and this affects the trends in planning and any possible form of participation within this.

South Africa was settled initially by the Dutch, who spawned the Boer culture, and then the English, who took over control of the territory at the time of the division of Sub-Saharan Africa at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Although the country became an Independent republic in this period, there was a limited franchise until the Boer-based political National Party took over government at the time of the second world war when a more extreme form of segregation of different racial groups was instituted than had been practised by the previous colonial power or initial Independent republic. This was only overcome by concerted internal political, social and military activity, in conjunction with external political and economic action, over a long period up to the early 1990s. The country's economy has been for some time the strongest in the Sub-Saharan region, as early agriculture was bolstered by mining and then associated industrial development. This was encouraged both in the world war periods as well as in relative economic isolation of the sanctions applied to the apartheid regime.

Mozambique on the other hand, despite some Arabian and Indian external contact from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, had limited colonization until the time of the division of Africa, although the Portuguese state substantially controlled trade from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Portugal was a much weaker colonizing power than the British, French or Germans in Sub-Saharan Africa and only managed to rule initially through large concessions to private companies, and thereafter with a relatively limited bureaucracy. The country was developed in a subordinate way to its neighbouring British colonies and remained particularly dependent on South Africa, which developed as the power-house of the region. Mozambique thus depended on providing transport (railway/port), labour and eventually energy services to South Africa as well as certain degree of agricultural produce for Portugal – this latter being used to help modernize the economy in the metropole, in conjunction with an immigration policy. The Portuguese state resisted any form of managed decolonisation, as took place in British and French colonies from the late 1950s, and the Mozambican nation-state only became independent in the mid 1970s when the effects of a liberation war were highly facilitated by the collapse of the Portuguese ruling regime. The post-Independence government opted for a socialist approach to development, which encountered serious difficulties of historic under-development, sabotage from the previous colonial actors and neighbouring countries (backed by Cold War forces) as well as poor management of development and socio-political issues. The result was a form of externally dependent civil war which ended in peace agreements which required a new political and economic dispensation.

While both countries are emerging into a form of representative democratic system based on a full free adult franchise, the level of democratic involvement and engagement is rather different. In Mozambique large proportions of the population have never had any opportunity or exposure to this form of governance, as traditional forms of governance have remained in place in subordinate, and at times clandestine, ways under the fascist colonial and central socialist regimes over the past century. In addition the main political parties are either represented by the post-Independence (previously socialist) party and a party created artificially in the peace process to represent the main military opposition – both of which do not necessarily engender strong popular allegiances, further complicated by regional and ethnic rivalry. There is thus a thin veneer of involvement in the democratic system through voting in national elections, but very limited evidence of any real penetration of concepts such as citizens' rights and organizations to mediate between civil society and the government, such as trade unions, neighbourhood organizations and other interest-based groups. As such governance is quite narrowly defined in practice, although there is a level of rhetoric about wider participation, often promoted by the aid agencies that the country is economically dependent on and which required it to economically restructure quite decisively in the late 1980s and 1990s.

South Africa is rather different in that there was a much deeper engagement of a wider proportion of the population in action against the apartheid regime, with widespread organization

through social movements, trade unions, churches and special interest groups. However, while of great importance in consolidating internal opposition, creating a fertile ground for political mobilisation, this has not been actively fostered by the new post-democratic government. This government has largely reverted to governance based on elite corporate groups, while aspiring to represent the wider forms of popular demand. That this has been the path chosen has been influenced by the nature of the negotiated transition, where assuming control meant jettisoning some of the opposition orientation; the continued strong influence of the international community; and to some extent a deliberate attempt to de-politicise a series of issues previously used as focal points for opposition – at times because of economic pressures as well as political caution. The result is a set of policies highly influenced by a perception of a short term economic “adjustment” path to development (albeit voluntarily applied) which creates growing conflict between economic (and more importantly job) growth and redistribution.

### *Planning in Mozambique and South Africa*

In the above context planning in both countries has different yet similar problems and opportunities. In Mozambique the weak nature of the colonial state led to weak forms of planning – whether economic or physical – prior to Independence, and the overall “laissez faire” attitude to land use outside the closely defined “cement cities” of the colonial elite led to high levels of informal settlement which was always considered illegal by professionals and politicians, albeit legitimate and natural (if not as adequate as desired) by those which created and used these urban spaces. The post-Independence regime took a similar modernizing stance, although had an implicit anti-urban bias, and thus the “illegal” nature of the majority of urban space continued the “rule”, although rapid urban growth mean this was the “norm” and in fact this was legitimized by pragmatic local forms of administration within the state apparatus. The capacity to plan land use and control this in urban and rural areas in Mozambique has always thus been minimal, albeit the authorities aspire to high levels of modernity in state planning. These aspirations only surface in reality when significant new investments are proposed, and these in fact dominate all possible wider decision-making processes. As such the role of the planner is usually to implement the political and economic imperative, with limited capacity to regulate actual land use and development. The country as yet has not only extremely limited planning capacity, it has no relevant legislation or clear urban economic basis. The high levels of urban poverty and widespread informal urban milieu are key aspects of any effective approach to urban planning – whether in definition of the objectives for this, or the possible mechanisms for its implementation.

South Africa on the other hand has had relatively strong state power and planning has long been used by the colonial, republic and apartheid regimes for socio-economic and political ends such as land redistribution, control of labour and urban growth, in close association with state house provision. This planning has been state-dominated and highly political – and while state-domination of these processes was a key focus for the internal opposition against apartheid by social movements, the highly political nature of planning has continued. This however changed radically in focus after the new government took power, when planning again was seen as a key political and socio-economic mechanism of the state, but the state wanted to control this. After a period when urban planning was down-graded in national importance to specific location-based initiatives, it resurfaced more recently quite strongly as a mechanism for local government decentralization, with the instigation of “back-to-back” municipalities all being required to produce Integrated Development Plans, which while mainly economic, have spatial components, and are meant to have explicit participatory strategies for their preparation and monitoring

Although new participatory planning mechanisms are still in their infancy in practice in South Africa, and only talked of in Mozambique, there are differences in the nature of how these seem to be operating, or are planned. The initial evidence suggests that there are tight controls over what can in reality be decided on real resource allocation at local level in urban plans, and that the real decision-making is still firmly embedded at national government level, with even limited devolution of power to Provinces. Thus while local authorities in both South Africa are expected to take more decisions

and involve wider sets of stakeholders in governance, including urban plan making, in effect this does not go much beyond developing shared visions. That however is a step ahead of the situation in Mozambique, where major planning exercises (in a relative sense) have only token participation of any but the key economic and political players, generally at national level.

## **Conclusions**

In our European-based research we have focused on how the changing governance context in Europe is creating opportunities for wider participation, including that of the public in defining “place identities”, but how this is often carefully managed around political (“territorial”) agendas. We have also noted how the changing governance context leaves a lot of key issues to be decided outside of representative fora and this can mean less awareness of diminishing redistribution agendas. Overall this changing governance context is driven by globalization, but mediated strongly by the creation of fortress Europe, within which, although there can be radical changes to the welfare state in view, overall the focus is on protectionism.

In the South our research is less conclusive and different dynamics are taking place. In some contexts (e.g. Costa Rica) what seems to be happening is a smaller scale and lower level change in redistribution, as in Europe, to maintain a relative level of advanced development in the face of globalising pressures. Here it can be argued that participation is seen mainly as a way to offload some state responsibilities to other actors, including the public. In Brazil, after the long dictatorship there is a movement to define citizen’s rights and with these to promote wider and deeper direct participation in parallel with representative participation, as in participatory budgeting. However research is beginning to suggest that while wider forms of redistribution may develop through this trend, these are also closely associated with the balance of power between political parties, and have glass ceilings established by macro-economic context and national decision-making. Nevertheless there are interesting possibilities in this context, albeit not easily transferable to other political economies.

One such is South Africa, and despite the potential on paper to see parallels between here and Brazil, there are many major differences in economic opportunity, political structure and social institutions as well as political culture. In South Africa there seems to be a retreat from wider participation in key decision-making as the impact of self-imposed structural adjustment takes its toll. Hence while participation is formally promoted, it is within closely defined parameters (as in Europe and Costa Rica). Mozambique is even further down the scale of widening governance and the opportunity for participation in planning – and this represents perhaps the norm rather than the exception in Sub-Saharan Africa where governance is still very fragile. The issue here to some extent is not how changes in governance context can bring about greater participation in state dominated activities such as planning, but how activism around key issues such as urban land management and planning can help to challenge elite governance.

In this short review we cannot hope to do justice to the depth of information and knowledge of relevance, however we hope to have highlighted that contextual analysis is important for the sharing of knowledge between North and South as well as South-South (and North-North). In concluding we would like to comment on the fact that the extremely limited resources made available locally in the South for research – including by international and other national entities – and the nature of instrumental emphasis on this means that the tendency for knowledge production and dissemination is biased to the North, including Northern funded development action. This is partly due to the greater resources to invest and greater institutional capacity in the North, through historic investment in research and development. The result is often either a tendency for knowledge to be produced in or by Northern institutions – whether theoretical or empirical, even when this is investigating issues in the South. The outcome is often a “context-lite”, largely prescriptive, analysis, often reflecting current intellectual trends in the North. Not only does this channel North-South transfer of knowledge, but it largely conditions South-North transfers also. As such there is a greater need for not only better contextualised knowledge production in the South, but a great need to stimulate this through

institutions in the South, especially if there is an interest to benefit from this experience in the North. How N-AERUS can become more active in this is an important question.

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