TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE, PARTICIPATION, COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP: A MATTER OF NATIONAL CULTURE?

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BRIEF SUMMARY

Cooperation and participation are discussed as essential elements of territorial governance, with emphasis on participation and the effect of national culture. The experience of European countries is presented[1] and placed in a theoretical context. Use is then made of the example of Greece to discuss the effect of socio-political culture on the adoption of participation and cooperation practices and territorial governance strategies[2]. The impact of a national tradition of patronage and client-relations has a negative influence on the prospects of a governance approach.

Key words: Territorial governance, spatial planning, participation, cooperation, partnership, Greece, patronage, client relations, political culture.

I. PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE

1. Territorial governance and participation

Spatial planning and its theoretical foundations are undoubtedly going through a critical and interesting period of transition. The crisis of the comprehensive, rational model (real or alleged is a moot point), has bred an interest in alternative theoretical approaches (Healey, 1997; Sandercock, 1998; Flyvbjerg, 1998; Forester, 2000 etc.) stressing communicative and collaborative action and an acceptance of the existence of several rationalities, which do not emanate from the official state ideology and the authority of the experts (Wassenhoven and Kourliouros, 2007). In this context, broad-based participation, vertical and horizontal cooperation and partnership formation occupy a central position. They are also central in the conception of the theory and practice of territorial governance (ESPON Project 2.3.2, 2006), a term which seemed to be elevated to the status of a substitute new version of spatial planning, before territorial cohesion policy displaced it from literature headlines. *Sic transit gloria mundi* … The official ratification of territorial cohesion as a legitimate Cinderella - sister of economic and social cohesion by the Lisbon Treaty amending the Treaty of the European Union was the decisive step in this direction, although territorial cohesion had been present for some time in official EU documents (Portuguese Presidency, 2007; Faludi, 2005). Territorial governance is nevertheless acknowledged as a key instrument for the achievement of cohesion, with participation, cooperation and partnership being crucial in all governance processes. Public participation in particular is a fundamental theoretical tenet of governance, recognized a one of the five principles of good governance in the White Paper on European Governance, alongside openness, accountability, effectiveness and coherence (Commission of the European Communities, 2001). The interest in participation may be old, but the pursuit of consensus, which can no longer be secured exclusively by the traditional mechanisms of democratic government, has provided a renewed impetus.

The fundamental role which is now attributed to participation and cooperation can only be appreciated by placing it in the broader conception of governance. The latter has acquired a normative character, as a substitute of traditional state-inspired and state-implemented action. Gualini's view (Gualini, 2001), as quoted by Salet, Thornley and Kreukels (2003: 9) endows governance with a new meaning: "Governance is – in general terms – a notion that deals with the reframing of both 'formal' and 'working' relationships between ideal types of social order in realizing governing effects", i.e. state, market, community, firms and associations.

Governance is not conceived by its initial theoretical promoters (from Economics and Entreprise Theory) as a supplement of the conventional state process, but as an alternative to it. Hence, it presupposes a radical departure from established practice and a simultaneous erosion of the welfare state. Fragmentation, introversion and declining capacity to fulfil the obligations of the welfare state are in Stewart's view clear signs of decay of governmental and state institutional structures (Stewart, 2005). We find plenty of examples confirming these observations in the practice of spatial and land use planning, as exercised by official government agencies. There is abundant evidence of criticism levelled against official plan-

ning. At the root of this criticism are the cognitive and practical limitations of planning, but also its disputed legitimacy and effectiveness (Balducci and Calvaresi, 2005).

2. The changing role of the state

In the place of the Marxist position about the "withering" of the state, we now have a neo-liberal verdict that the state is "hollowing out" and that we are witnessing the demise of the welfare state. Such morbid, but largely well-founded predictions, are not shared by all commentators. E.g. Holliday rejects R.A.W. Rhodes' argument that the state in Britain is "hollowing out" and "losing its grip" and that its "core" is breaking up. He admits a certain amount of fragmentation of the core of the state, but he argues that core actors retain control and remain capable of securing the policy outcomes they seek (Holliday, 2000: 175). The recent rescue of an ailing bank by the British government confirms his position. Stewart adds his own argument and stresses that hollowing out is rather a redistribution of functions at different territorial levels and in different organizational forms, with little loss of state control (Stewart, 2005: 150).

Neil Brenner's analysis of state "rescaling" is closely related to the debate about the change of the national state: "The long-entrenched primacy of the national scale of political – economic regulation has been destabilized as new scalar hierarchies of state institutional organization and state regulatory activity have been forged". Both "downscaling" (e.g. to urban regions and through devolution to subnational entities) and "upscaling" (e.g. to international organizations) take place, but "national state *institutions* continue to play key roles in formulating, implementing, coordinating, and supervising urban policy initiatives, even as the primacy of the national *scale* of political – economic life is decentered" (Brenner, 2004: 3). There is a clear similarity between these remarks and Stewart's views. Brenner's intention is to underscore "the continued importance of *spatially reconfigured* national state institutions as major animateurs and mediators of political – economic restructuring at all geographical scales … [T]he notion of state rescaling is intended to characterize the transformed form of (national) statehood under contemporary capitalism, not to imply its erosion, withering or demise" (Brenner, 2004: 4). Keil offers his own supporting conclusions by emphasizing that "the state is not 'withering away' but is being reincarnated in myriad forms on many sociospatial levels. Many traditional functions of national states are now being displaced into lower or superordinate state institutions that are wholly new or else have been fundamentally altered thereby" (Keil, 2003: 278).

II. PARTICIPATION

1. Forms and values

The much publicized crisis of the state, an ideology which to a large extent has metamorphosed a neo-liberal aspiration into an allegedly inescapable truth, has also transformed the role of planning from providing spatial services and regulating land use into enabling independent action. The post-modern approach of collaborative planning and other similar schools has at the same time intensified the trend of bottom-up planning, first advocated in

the 1960s. In the final report of the ESPON 2.3.2 project mentioned earlier the link between the new approach and the existence of levels of participation, indicated in metaphors such as the "ladder" or "wheel" of participation, is acknowledged. It is worth recalling Arnstein's "ladder of public participation", which starts with manipulation and therapy and proceeds, in ascending order, to information, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and, finally, citizen control (Darke, 2000).

Furthermore, in the report, a distinction was made, first between "joiners" and "non-joiners" and secondly between a level of participation, where stakeholders and interests are involved (e.g. in public – private partnership) to implement a governance process, and a more "diffuse" participation level, involving citizens in general. The latter can be questioned as lacking effectiveness and feasibility and for being frequently chaotic. It is worth remembering that "collaborative planning", in the words of Patsy Healey, who is mostly associated with this approach, is about "inclusionary argumentation", which demands a process, "through which participants come together, build understanding and trust among themselves" (Healey, 1997: 249).

 It is interesting to note that when participation was beginning to be integrated in the planning process it was regarded by a number of planners as a panacea, an exaggeration which invited scathing comments. An early book on citizen participation, published in the 1970s, starts with a quotation from an article by M. Broady: "The planner's current *nostrum* is 'citizen participation' … but … within a very short time … it will be shown to be what in truth it is: a mere palliative for the ills of the planning profession" (Fagence, 1977: 1). Public participation was however embraced, and quite rightly, as a step forward in an effort to democratize planning, inspite of reservations regarding its real potential in practice: "Part of the difficulty stems from society's idealized value premise concerning citizen participation, coupled with an inability to make it work in policy-making" (Burke, 1968: 287).

Indications that excessive citizen involvement may harm effectiveness, prolong planning processes and produce inertia in decision making are present in the national overviews of the ESPON 2.3.2 project too. These concerns did not prevent some authors to place participation on a pedestal as some kind of universally accepted value, which cannot be challenged or disputed. This is a worthy assertion, but we should remember that an idealized process does not necessarily guarantee a happy outcome: "The way things are done is often as important as the end result. But remember that the aim is implementation. Participation is important but is not an end in itself" (Wates, 2000: 18).

The value of participation, and probably the real reason for its official adoption, is not just ideological, but also practical. The threat of a democratic deficit and of a loss of legitimacy, to the ultimate detriment of effectiveness and implementation time-schedules, is probably the real argument in favour of welcoming participation with open arms. Participation may in the end turn out to be a more effective implementation tool than authoritarian planning. We should not delude ourselves: For some officials participation is a necessary nuisance, which gained importance primarily because of the environmental crisis of the last quarter-century. The emerging linkages between participation and sustainability, which were forged in the 1990s (Davies, 2001: 196), added further weight to participation. There are several instances of mobilization and increased activism not to support but rather to oppose government decisions, e.g. decisions to locate infrastructures or proceed to urban renewal. These are reactions

usually motivated by environmental concerns. Environmental activism however does not appear overnight. An active citizenship takes a long time to mature and the existence of an informed, active and alert civil society is closely linked to past history of individual countries. Activism is no doubt important, but is still far from being the universal power that some of its adherents aspire to.

2. Attitudes

Official attitudes to participation usually limit the latter's role and view it simply as a means for validating the officialdom's perception of reality. The real purpose of participation should be to discover what "real" and "reality" mean to society. Instead it is used as an instrument for discovering whether a plan dealing with "real" problems is acceptable to citizens or to particular pressure groups. Formal planning agencies and power holders usually take "reality" as given, i.e. as a product of their own rationality. The disconcerting truth is, in Flyvbjerg's words, that "power concerns itself with defining reality rather than with discovering what reality 'really' is" (Flyvbjerg, 1998: 227). No doubt, participation in decision making is a sign of a mature civil society. It may be, that practically everywhere spatial planning legislation provides for a stage of participation in the planning process. Nevertheless, there are wide and misleading variations, depending on whether participation is invited at the plan-drafting stage or is simply a formality after the plan has been finalized. In some cases, legislation grudgingly offers to the average citizen an opportunity to object and appeal to the courts. There are of course important and interesting innovations, e.g. initiatives and institutions, which maintain a constant 2-way interaction between public authorities and citizens, or regeneration projects which involve citizens from a very early stage.

As a core ingredient of territorial governance, participation is the most prominent principle practically in all European countries. However, while national legislation usually offers the necessary provisions, actual performance suffers and more often than not the results are poor. As pointed out already, public participation actually ranges from the case of full involvement of citizens in all planning phases to the case of an opportunity given for objection or appeal. Undoubtedly this has to do with diverging perceptions of the meaning of participation. There is in fact a contradiction between claims about the value of participation and frequent criticisms of the situation prevailing at present. In some countries participation is taken as granted or considered as a routine requirement, in others it is still at the level of rhetoric or of a formal obligation, which does not guarantee that it is welcomed in reality. We usually lack evidence regarding the frequency of actually holding a participation exercise or the extent to which the participation procedure is more than a mere formality, with a genuine impact on the choices made in a plan. Since a minimum of participation does take place during land use planning processes in all countries, this serves as an excuse to claim that participation is an accepted principle.

3. Participation in practice

The most common form of participation is that which takes place at some point during the process of preparation of town plans, especially at local level, e.g. that of an urban dis-

trict or neighbourhood. This is the level at which contact with the individual citizen is more immediate and more experience has accumulated in many countries, not least in setting up public – private partnerships. In the words of Krumholz and Forester (1990: 187), "one of the strongest arguments in favor of neighborhood planning is the fact that it has a public and a private side. On the one hand it sensitizes government to the diversity of communities within the city; on the other, it enhances cooperation and investment between neighborhood groups and private investors, developing, in the process, parts of the city that might otherwise have been completely overlooked". The accumulation of learning experience and the construction of relations and networks is the ideal form of a genuine participatory culture. Speaking of what he calls a "deliberative" practice, Forester argues that "in planning and many other kinds of participatory processes, such learning occurs not just through arguments, not just through the reframing of ideas, not just through the critique of expert knowledge, but through transformations of relationships and responsibilities, of networks and competence, of collective memory and memberships" (Forester, 2000: 115).

Discussion *fora* and advisory bodies, on which various social groups are represented, are sometimes considered as a form of "participation", although this is merely a poor substitute of the real thing. Such bodies are often simple advisory committees, offering opinion on various issues or activity sectors. The recognition of the importance of a variety of actors can be an important step, but this is not genuine networking, as meant by Forester in the above quotation. In his perspective, or that of Jean Hillier, the process of planning is more complicated than the official rational model allows. Hillier adopts a distinction between "actor" and "actant" and then argues that "land use planning decision-making processes, with their various opportunities for public participation, are thus a series of nodal points, temporary points of fixation in time, at which actants bring together their different representations" (Hillier, 1999: 225). This is a view in line with a "collaborative" or "communicative" viewpoint, but the practical question remains whether an actor (or "actant" for that matter) possesses the necessary motivation, opportunity and skills, which Bolan (1969) had considered as essential attributes for influencing decisions.

Variations of influence that participating stakeholders have (or should have) over decisions are typical of different perceptions of participation, but they are not the only ones. They can also extend to the way the views of participating actors are assimilated, which depends on the predisposition of the planner or decision maker to simply "hear" the views of others or really "listen" to them, a distinction Forester insists on: "As an expression of concern for serious conversation and dialogue, the listening that planners do may make trusting relationships possible. By offering reciprocity, their listening can work to create a sense of mutuality in place of the suspicions of a vociferous collection of individuals" (Forester, 1989: 111).

4. Experience in participation

In the ESPON 2.3.2 project (Annex B, ch. 2, section 8), national overview authors were asked to report on existing experience with participation processes and to indicate on a table each country's position in a category of either "limited" or "extensive" experience. Interestingly, the answers were almost equally divided (15 and 14 respectively). The same thing was done with respect to experience in partnership formation. Unfortunately, in several cases, the

response received with regard to participation was limited to filling the table, which points to a need for further research.

Former socialist countries, but also South European ones, have limited experience in public participation processes. The same remark holds true with respect to partnership structures, although this is not always the case with large countries of the European South. Obviously, experience is affected by past, but still recent, political regimes. It should be added that while in some countries the formal provisions for such processes are in place, actual participation is absent or nominal. The effect of recent reforms of modernization should not be underestimated, even if, for the time being, they are reforms "on paper". They are important in the sense that they create the preconditions of popular mobilization and enable citizen associations to resort to the courts. However, even in countries with a recent past of authoritarian government we can observe a tradition of activism which acts as a positive precedent and can be attributed to these countries' cultural and political history. It can be assumed that participation is more historically determined, than partnership formation. Historical factors, often recent, e.g. struggles for democratization, may explain familiarization with participation, even though there is no practice of formal partnerships. Special attention should be given to the fact that countries with extensive experience in public participation are also experienced in partnership building and vice versa. Exceptions are some countries from the Mediterranean group, namely Spain and Italy. The autonomy of the regions of these countries, which is still being expanded, has stimulated the accumulation of experience in partnership building between central state and autonomous communities.

Experience in participation and partnership formation is not correlated with the constitutional character of European countries. Centralized, but democratic, political structures do not necessarily imply lack of susceptibility to governance practices and of openness to innovative forms of cooperation and policy-making. Government centralization is not a necessary handicap. Particularly interesting are participation processes embedded in forms of cooperation, beyond the conventional practice of land use planning, e.g. in contractual forms of cooperation. Permanent structures facilitating participation are essential because they make participation a more regular feature of daily governance. This explains the widespread acceptance in the literature of the value of the partnership model, especially for urban development, as a means for encouraging participation. E.g., Jacobs and Dutton see partnerships as "the organizational vehicles of community regeneration and empowerment" (Jacobs and Dutton, 2000: 115). The proliferation of cooperation structures, typical of some countries with a deep culture of dialogue and consensus, multiplies the opportunities for the average citizen to have access to participation processes. This betrays a far more advanced stage, than the mere consultation of organized public agencies, which is usually the maximum that some countries have attained. A successful partnership record is usually linked to the existence of cooperation among government agencies, in a vertical or horizontal sense. In other words, public – public cooperation aiming at the attainment of shared objectives creates a favourable climate for the extension of cooperation in a more inclusive direction, through partnership with the private sector and civil society.

The issue of participation was central not only in the national overviews, but also in several of the case studies produced in the context of the ESPON 2.3.2 project. Examples of public participation were classified under territorial dimensions: Trans-national and cross-

border, national, regional, Fuctional Urban Regions and metropolitan regions, urban-rural and intra-city. The conclusions drawn from the case studies confirm those derived from the national overviews. The first general conclusion reached at the end of the synthesis of case studies (ESPON 2.3.2 project, Annex C) is that "based on the information from the case studies, it is clear that the issue of public participation overall is still fairly limited although there are progressive examples". The conclusions appearing in the project's final report start with the assumption that "the legitimacy, quality and effectiveness of policies depend on ensuring wide participation throughout the policy chain – from conception to implementation". Improved participation is likely to create more confidence in the end result and in the institutions which deliver policies". However, "participation is often not very actively promoted. Neither is it the case that more innovative (in the sense of new) forms of governance are necessarily more inclusive or better at supporting and promoting participation. In fact, in some cases the opposite seems to be the case... It is clear that the most common type of public participation regards *organised actors* and often on the *public side* such as agencies, and in most cases through processes of consultation … Very rarely are individual non-organised citizens involved...". It is amply clear that, both through the analysis of national overviews and that of case studies, similar, and rather disappointing, conclusions were arrived at. Public participation is recognized as vital, but is still a goal to be attained. Naturally, enormous variations exist across the E.U. territory.

III. COOPERATION AND PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS

1. National culture and practice

Cooperation in public administration is often claimed to be an established practice but is frequently a mere bureaucratic procedure, without genuine undertaking of joint action. Citizen participation is in itself a form of cooperation, but the concept of cooperation encompasses other forms as well. Cooperation forms range form systematic, regular and institutionalized cooperation between territorial units, which produces tangible projects, to cooperation between public agencies, limited to the participation of their representatives in government councils and committees. Or, from contractual agreements -linking national, regional and local authorities in integrated policy packages- to simple cooperation of municipalities in the production of joint routine planning studies. It is however clear that cooperation in everyday administration tasks is not a substitute for genuine and substantial forms of cooperation between levels and units of government, let alone with the private sector or social organizations.

Not unexpectedly, a greater variety of, and experience in, cooperation arrangements at all territorial levels, can be found in countries with long traditions of government and urban development and administration. As with participation, these arrangements are not correlated with national constitutional forms. Governance is not the monopoly of a particular form of government. Certain particularities are of course associated with specific government systems. E.g. arrangements exist in the particular conditions of federalism to overcome limitations of co-ordination or in the case of cooperation between municipalities, which are typical of Nordic countries, without being exclusive to them. A similar comment can be made about

the use of contractual methods, as in France, which presuppose a familiarity grounded in history. Countries with systems based on consensus principles, e.g. the Netherlands, can show examples of cooperation in virtually every category.

Countries which tend to use only conventional planning instruments do not as a rule produce innovative cooperation arrangements. In such cases the examples tend sometimes to have an *ad hoc* character, e.g. they are related to extraordinary events, such as the organization of sports events, or to possess a conventional character, e.g. simple construction agreements. There are however arrangements, which do have an innovative character even if they do not produce spectacular results. They may not be original in an international comparative perspective, but are still important and pioneering in their national context. Examples are municipal development companies, public – private partnerships for land development or quality agreements in certain economic sectors.

2. Cooperation: Trends and examples

Cooperation among regions, with intense or limited national involvement, is a frequent example of cooperation. It may have a basic urban development dimension, and thus overlap with cases of cooperation between or within cities, or may have a rural development emphasis. The aim is usually economic development, combined very often with technological innovation. Sectoral coordination certainly figures prominently in these initiatives. The exact form of cooperation, e.g. between regional authorities or through inter-municipal arrangements, depends on the particular administrative structures of each country. The technology development component is present not only in these more ambitious and inclusive cooperation partnerships, but also in more modest efforts linking government departments, universities, research centres and technology parks.

The use of contracts binding together national government and regional and / or local authorities is established practice in certain countries, but in other countries too, where it is fairly recent, there is evidence of the "contract culture" spreading rapidly, even in the simple form of programmatic agreements. The essential difference is of course between countries where the contract system emanates from a national integrated policy addressed to lower level authorities and those countries where a cooperation instrument exists in law but is used randomly, when the need arises.

Cities provide the scenery for the largest number of cooperation examples, and perhaps for the most interesting. These examples often exhibit experimental, innovative arrangements, at neighbourhood, city or urban region level. They can take a variety of forms, i.e. cooperation between national states, regions and cities, between regions and cities, between city authorities and / or between intra-city municipalities. They include agreements, contracts or simpler cooperation processes, usually aiming at economic development and urban regeneration. They are described by different terms, making categorization difficult, but the city is their focus. In some countries we have a large number of such initiatives, while in others they have been introduced experimentally only in a handful of cases and remain on the whole rare.

Not only the prevalence of cooperation and partnership, but also the progress made in the recent past and the direction it takes is of great interest. Cooperation can take the direc-

tion of vertical or horizontal cooperation, or both, or it can evolve towards specific forms of horizontal cooperation. The trend, it would seem, is one of increasing use of contractual schemes, partnership working, regional cooperation, central state – regional coordination and inter-municipal alliance formation. The pace of reform naturally varies, but the trend is clear. Although progress may be occasionally exaggerated in official national sources, there is no doubt that the ideology of "joining hands", horizontally and vertically, is gaining ground.

3. Vertical and horizontal cooperation

An established form of cooperation is national – regional and inter – regional, although specific institutional forms and instruments employed vary. There are cases where this is a deeply entrenched practice in both economic and territorial development, in federal as well as unitary states. Here again, constitutional structures are not a crucial differentiating parameter. We have federal cases in Europe where national – regional (state) cooperation is limited, almost non-existent. We have also several "unitary" examples where national – regional cooperation is limited to simple and / or externally induced tasks. Examples are hierarchical plan production, legislative reforms still to be tested, or procedures required by E.U. Structural Fund regulations.

There is a variety of intra-regional forms of cooperation in European countries, even when there is little experience of national – regional or regional – regional cooperation. Intra – regional forms take frequently the shape of inter-municipal alliances and consortia. In some Central and East European countries they appear in a "micro-region" arrangement. The institutional arrangements and the terminology used vary (micro-regions, conferences, partnerships, alliances etc). Horizontal cooperation and partnerships occur chiefly at the local level. Lots of unions and alliances are created by local governments and neighbouring municipalities. Small and weak municipalities have an increased need to cooperate to overcome their problems and strengthen their position. The scope of cooperation may be limited to routine tasks (e.g. water supply), a common traditional municipal activity, but in more innovative examples it can extend to more complex initiatives, such as social services. The stimuli and motivations include the expansion of administrative competence, the construction of locally needed infrastructure, the emancipation from higher level political control, the bid for funds etc. Cooperation may be found in isolated examples, but also in cases integrated in a broader national policy context, which encourages urban networking.

Large urban regions are a case apart. Important examples exist in Europe of inter-municipal cooperation of a more ambitious character through the creation of Functional Urban Regions, where a variety of partnerships flourishes. National policies often encourage such arrangements and urban networks. The existence of an encompassing urban policy, formulated as a framework at state level, is a feature which differentiates such advanced efforts from random cooperation with a narrow range of objectives, which simply makes use of the existence of particular instruments in law. The legal possibility is not a substitute of policy, a principle which is not always appreciated. It is however a useful tool, once a policy framework is embraced and pursued.

Horizontal cooperation at the national level is supposed to be a necessary feature of good and effective government, but it usually takes the form of a cabinet of Ministers, inter-min-

isterial committees / boards or inter-ministerial working groups, which is not really a step towards governance. But there are also more complex arrangements, with long established agencies like the French DATAR[3] playing a crucial role. Innovative tools and progressive processes of vertical cooperation mechanisms are to be found in federalized or regionalized countries, where regions enjoy a high degree of autonomy, but as we pointed out this is not a universal rule. There are examples of federal countries on the verge of breaking up. Former socialist countries seem to experiment with new and originally informal horizontal partnership configurations.

Partnership working has become a routine matter in more advanced countries, but it can be found in a wide spectrum of administrative sophistication, varying intensity and depth of application. The most frequent, in some countries the only one, pattern of horizontal partnership is "public-public" partnership between regions, cities, local authorities, various government agencies etc. There are countries where national guidance on partnerships is still awaited or where legislation on public – private partnerships (PPPs) is imminent or has just been enacted. Public-private cooperation is invited mostly for infrastructure and construction projects and, in more advanced situations, for urban regeneration plans and local development. Other forms of cooperation include schemes involving governments, NGOs, universities and research centres, especially related to environmental issues, sometimes conducive to technological innovation, which adds greater interest when viewed from governance perspective.

4. Parameters affecting cooperation: maturity of the political system and political culture as crucial aspects.

What makes cooperation work? Are there conditions which favour or impede cooperation? There is plenty of evidence that both barriers and catalysts exist, identified in the context of the ESPON 2.3.2 project. Barriers can indeed frustrate partnership formation and cooperation and, equally, catalysts can encourage and accelerate them. It is very difficult to collect empirical evidence concerning the existence of barriers and catalysts as they are often related to elusive cultural parameters. In some cases of new E.U. member – states it probably is too early to speak of specific factors, even of the E.U. effect. However, the question of barriers to partnership formation and cooperation or of favourable factors is of great importance for the formulation of future policies.

Where there is a long tradition of parliamentary government, grassroots democracy and cooperation with civil society, the obstacles now faced by less fortunate countries have been dealt with and largely overcome, although commentators from the "lucky" nations express reservations and warn that cooperation is not always easy and successful. The most common barriers, particularly in new member – states and some south European countries, are associated with legal complexities, administrative rigidity, persistence of authoritarian structures and bureaucratic procedures. A tradition of departmental autonomy and administrative reluctance to change are universally present. Legislation favouring cooperation and open

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3   Now DIACT (http://www.diact.gouv.fr/).

government may exist, but there are still unequal responses by individual authorities. Even in countries with long cooperation traditions the central government often tries to keep the initiative for large projects, and for good reasons. The objective of reducing decision making time, in the name of efficiency, no doubt a laudable intention, often works against participatory approaches, on the pretext that the latter are time-consuming. These cases serve as reminders that pro-governance goals must not be excessive and should be tempered with realism.

A problem faced in immature administrations is the lack of administrative skills, appropriate for a new style of planning. Resource availability is another problem, especially at the lower levels of government. Governance processes are occasionally perceived as too complex. The issue of resources and the reluctance of central state administrations to relinquish their control is fundamental. Control of funds is a hallmark of authority and it should not come as a surprise that it is jealously maintained. The pretext is often that lower level authorities do not behave responsibly, which is sometimes true, but such behaviour is not necessarily present at the central level either. The absence of transparency and administrative openness can be the reason at all levels of government. In the national overviews of the ESPON 2.3.2 project there were discreet references to lack of transparency, even of "misappropriation" of resources. The issue of corruption is not usually openly mentioned, yet this is no doubt a key concern in several countries. Even if there are no suspicions of illegality, especially in connection with planning control, funding procedures may suffer from serious bottlenecks, one more reason for streamlining and transparency.

The lack of tradition of partnership formation and participation is undoubtedly to be deplored, but there are good reasons for it, which have to do with past history. This is a conclusion, which has to be seriously studied in depth. The problem requires a response with a long time-horizon and a great deal of perseverance. National, regional and local political cultures and deeply antagonistic state – citizen relations, marked by mutual suspicion, can be a major barrier to governance, perhaps the most difficult to fathom and to tackle. Dominant competitive and antagonistic values in society, bred by a past of resource scarcity and insecurity can prove hard to eradicate. This is no doubt a sign of immaturity in civil society, which can be perpetuated in a climate of confrontation and political polarization. Tense political situations and even hostilities among communities are however not limited to countries at lower levels of economic development and prosperity. The same observation holds true with regard to conservatism and populist attitudes. Such attitudes may re-emerge in conditions of prosperity, when issues such as unemployment and racial tensions dominate the political agenda. This is one more reason for pursuing governance policies with synergies which extend far beyond the territorial dimension. In conditions of polarization, demands for openness and participation are sometimes confronted with suspicion or open hostility. We have indications that increased activism on the side of NGOs can well lead to a backlash and the imposition of limitations on participation. Resistance to reforms can take an ideological character, when there are fears that important values may be threatened, if their traditional champion, a caring state, is weakened. Such values may be social, environmental or cultural.

Factors which favour governance and act as catalysts of reform are mostly to be found in mature political systems, but their influence is no doubt accelerated by national and regional policies and legislation, even if these originate in a central government which takes a pro-

gressive lead. Such initiatives usually take the form of decentralization policies and of new regional bodies. The encouragement to work in partnership may also come from higher levels of government. In some countries there are plenty of partnership precedents and this makes the extension of this practice more natural and acceptable. In others, the introduction of councils, committees and boards with representative membership is the nearest to a genuine effort towards real partnerships. Although this may seem a poor performance, it should not be scorned at, because it familiarizes the administration with a new mode of action.

A new mentality, especially in the field of partnerships, is also transmitted by European Union policies. But the reason why the E.U. has had such overwhelming influence is not purely ideological. Partnerships and joint planning initiatives are perceived as, indeed they are, a precondition of access to Structural Funds. Therefore, E.U. policies, sometimes criticized as rigid, bureaucratic, elitist or as discouraging worthwhile efforts, can nevertheless become an inducement or prerequisite for partnership formation. The fact remains that the E.U.-effect is a reality in virtually all present member – states and in candidate countries. Besides, the motivation of securing funding is not limited to E.U. programmes, but extends to national ones. The irony is that cooperation, especially among lower level authorities and NGOs or social movements, often takes place in order to resist government action. Whether it is justified or not, it does promote joint action.

IV. GREECE AS A CASE STUDY: SOCIAL CULTURE, PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE

1. The transition from the rural past of the country

We emphasized earlier that a crucial barrier to genuine progress towards greater participation, cooperation and partnership working is the national political and social culture of a country. We shall illustrate this problem with the example of a South European nation. Greece was a fundamentally rural country until the 1970s. In the late 60s the GDP share of agriculture was still over 20% and the rural population in the early 70s exceeded 35% of the total, with an additional 12% being classified as semi-urban, which was in effect rather rural in character. Rural population was just below 50% in the early 50s, with 15% semi-urban. In the 60s and 70s however, urbanization took place at a very fast rate, and started slowing down in the 80s, when the population of rural areas began stabilizing. The urban population in 2001 was slightly over 60%. In the 20-year period 1984 – 2004 employment in the primary sector fell from 29% to 16% and the GDP share of agriculture in 2000 was down to 8.5%.

Internal migration to the cities was intensive as recently as the 60s and 70s, which is an indication that urban citizens are still attached to the rural areas of their origin. Their political affiliations and their relation with the state and its administrative apparatus are still deeply influenced by their bonds with the rural world of the country. Their affiliations and political behaviour, which still carries the patterns of the past, affect also their associative habits, or lack of them, in the cities. Relations with state and government continue to exhibit the marks of a model dominated by political patronage and clientelistic connections. This works against the development of a genuine and mature civil society.

2. Political culture and the tradition of patronage

The subject of political client relations and patronage received special attention in the sociological and historical literature on Greece in the 1960 and 70s. The emphasis was usually on the traditions established in the 19th and early 20th centuries, even after World War II, and on the political culture prevailing in rural Greece. Rural – urban relations were interpreted by some writers as a facet of the country's "deformed capitalism" (Vergopoulos, 1975: 295). A number of contributions dwelled on village culture and politics and on the role of the extended family, what Wassenhoven labelled the "village-centred" approach (Wassenhoven, 1980: 272). "The essential institution in this context is the family and the important values are those held by its members, not so much as individuals but as members of their extended kinship group … The picture is one of personal relations, very intense within family clusters, very loose within corporate formations, and strong within linear alliances with more or less distant relatives, patrons and clients, protectors and *protégés*" (*ibid*.: 273). Historical circumstances made out of the family the key to social relations and the determinant of crucial values, such as honour (*timi*) and love or sense of honour (*philotimo*), which were the root of personal behaviour (Campbell and Sherrard, 1968: 44-45; Campbell, 1964: 263-320).

Family loyalty occupies a dominant place, in comparison to loyalty to corporate or cooperative formations. To a large extent, in addition to poor social insurance and to economic uncertainty, this explains the importance of land ownership, e.g. for providing a dowry to a family's daughters or as security for old age and in case of illness. As the future of family fortunes was becoming gradually dependent on urban power structures and economic opportunities, personal self-images acquired an "increasing urbanity" (*ibid*.: 342). External "alliances through marriage or patronage with persons of influence in the provincial town" grew in importance (*ibid*.). Influential politicians were, and still are, very much sought after to act as best men in marriages or godfathers in baptisms, and become *koumbaros* of the family, which carries with it a moral obligation. The importance of the resulting relationship (or *koumbaria*) has not in any way diminished, as any observer of political activity in Greece must have noticed by reading press reports on political scandals in the last months of 2006[4]. External alliances produce "dyadic contracts", a term coined for Latin American rural societies, and borrowed by Friedl with respect to Greece to describe "paired relationships" (Friedl, 1965: 73-74). Having access to the friendship of a powerful person, especially of a relative or *koumbaros*, increases one's field of influence to accommodate his kinsmen, e.g. in a good, usually government, job (Vatikiotis 1974: 17) or to secure a public contract.

The "village-centred' approach attributes the tradition of patronage to the reaction of rural Greeks to the interference of a remote system of administration and of authoritarian and corrupt government officials in the 19th century (Campbell and Sherrard, 1968: 84-85; Carey and Carey, 1968: 85, 103), often idealizing the old democratic, village communities (Sanders, 1962: 221). Rural Greeks were trying, through patronage networks, to bridge the "gulf between the village and the city" (*ibid*.: 237-240). Family and the clientage system are

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4   See reports on the case involving the role of the independent authority for the protection of free competition and the monopolistic practices of the milk industry.

used by Legg to explain the failure of modern structures to emerge in Greece (Legg, 1969: 98-106). In his view, "clientage relationships played a predominant role in nineteenth century Greece and continue today, particularly in the rural areas but also among some parts of the urban population" (*ibid*.: 34).

3. The structure of Greek society

This approach tended to ignore class structures that were slowly but clearly emerging in Greece. "But by taking a patronage-patterned structure of society as virtually an independent variable, or at best as a dominant characteristic, closely linked with some normative values like honour, individualism etc., and reinforced by external historical circumstance …, one can build a model independent of the class structure of Greek society. The 'patronage' model tends to be composed of psychological characteristics of the rural Greek (e.g. *philotimo*), actions of individual actors [e.g. politicians], real or alleged initial historical conditions (e.g. democratic, self-governed community), and a string of historical events … or natural conditions, like the poverty of the Greek territory in physical resources … The actual interaction between social groups … is left out. Not only society … remains absent, but political and economic events appear in this way as mere accidents" (Wassenhoven, 1980: 282). There are crude versions of this approach (e.g. Carey and Carey, 1968), but even more sophisticated analyses of the 1960s (e.g. Legg, 1969) "do not ultimately escape from the temptation to put undue emphasis on the complex of variables and parameters of the patronage model, which suffers from relative neglect of the class formation of Greek society" (Wassenhoven, 1980: 283).

Patronage and clientelism were later viewed in a totally different perspective, namely in the writings of Greek historians and sociologists (Dertilis, 1977; Tsoucalas, 1977; Mouzelis, 1977a and 1977b). Dertilis analyzed the emergence in the 19th century of a political oligarchy which was later consolidated by the support of a class coalition of landowners and merchants, of foreign powers, and Greeks of the diaspora, but was also perpetuated by the relative weakness of the local bourgeoisie. The new contributions to the debate shifted the interest to the formation of the state and "the state machinery, created from zero in the 19th century" and "soon bursting with thousands of useless employees … The growth of a parasitic civil service, as Tsoucalas remarks, became a self-perpetuating process, resulting in what can be called a 'state bourgeois class'[5]. It is only in the context of this situation "… that patronage relations can be understood" (Wassenhoven, 1980: 286). The struggle for a share of government-controlled resources reinforced curiously both the hostility towards the state and its adoration, as a general provider. The result was that "attitudes to the common good were distorted and the distinction between public and private interest was blurred" (*ibid*.). The political system, or rather the system of party – politics as it functioned in Greece, is intimately linked with the role of the state. According to Tsoucalas (1977: 100), "closely linked to the social role of political representation … is a series of ideological qualities of modern Greek society, which survive in their broad outline to this day". Mouzelis places the

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5   Tsoucalas 1977: 95.

phenomenon of clientelism in the context of "the relative autonomy of the Greek State in relation to the class structure". This is because "clientelism not only kept the peasantry, as a class, outside the sphere of active and autonomous politics, it also slowed down, or actually prevented, the political organisation and the ideological coherence of the economically dominant classes" (Mouzelis, 1977a: 17). In his view, what is really needed is to examine the complex, dialectical relations between "class / horizontal" and "clientelist / vertical" political organizations in the process of capitalist development (Mouzelis, 1977b: 123). Where the capitalist mode of production is dominant and reaches the whole of the economy, political confrontation tends to assume a more direct class character. On the other hand, where it has not imposed its domination or where its domination tends to be "imprisoned" in an enclave, as in most Mediterranean societies, conditions for a shift from patronage to class politics are less favourable (*ibid*.: 125-126).

4. The continuing influence of clientelism

The nature and weight of patronage and clientelism, as social practices and as explanatory variables, have naturally changed over the years. Compared to the 19th century, national and international economic factors played a much more substantial role in the middle years of the 20th, roughly after World War I and up to the end of the 1967 – 74 dictatorship. But as Mouzelis remarked: "This does not mean of course that clientelism ceased to play an important role in Greek politics, or that political parties lost entirely their personalistic character and started operating like their Western counterparts" (Mouzelis, 1977a: 27). Patronage networks had naturally changed. "With increasing urbanisation and industrialisation, clientelism underwent fundamental changes (such as a shift from the 'monopolistic' patronage of the local oligarchs to a more flexible, open-ended 'party-oriented' clientelism), but it also became weakened as a mode of political integration", without however leading to "the type of political development experienced by Western capitalist societies", but rather to "an uneasy coexistence of vertical and horizontal political organisations" (*ibid*.: 209). In an article of the mid-1990s, Mouzelis makes the point that a system of party-patronage has partly taken the place of personal, political patronage (Mouzelis, 2002: 34-35). This is true, as the personal experience of every Greek would confirm, but it must be added that personal patronage still survives, virtually intact in provincial areas and much less so in metropolitan conurbations.

The survival of clientelism is bound with the character and organization of political parties, which still lack credible and cohesive programmes, and with electoral legislation, which makes the election of a member of parliament or of a local authority councilor dependent on receiving a personal vote of preference (through the marking of a cross against his / her name on the ballot paper), hence on building a network of political clients. A quotation from a theoretical article on political intermediation is quite pertinent in this respect: "Parties without credible programs may still attract voters by proposing to them a *direct exchange* in which citizens surrender votes and financial support for parties, while the parties, through their public office holders, compensate these supporters through personal monetary payments, gifts in kind, public sector jobs, housing, favorable regulatory decisions, or government procurement contracts. In direct exchange, only those voters receive rewards who actually supported the

ruling party or parties. Direct exchange creates *clientelist parties* without party programs or with programs that lack credibility" (Kitschelt, 2004: 152. *Italics* in the original).

Of relevance is also a second quotation from the same article, in which Kitschelt mentions that "*institutional theories* argue that the programmatic cohesiveness of parties depends on electoral laws and executive – legislative relations. Where electoral laws personalize relations between voters and individual representatives, such as the first-past-the-post single-member district systems or in multi-member district systems with citizens casting votes for individual candidates, particularly if these votes accrue not to the party list as a whole (non-pooling), clientelist direct exchange between constituencies and politicians is more likely" (Kitschelt, 2004: 153. *Italics* in the original). The relevance of these remarks for Greek politics is more than obvious. To the nature of the electoral system and the lack of party programmes, one can add the weakness, corruption and ineffectiveness of the government (central and local) bureaucracy and the chaotic complexity of legislation.

The analysis of the role of state patronage was resumed by Tsoucalas in much greater detail in his recent work. New social categories, he explains, emerged as a result of state action, not only through the absorption of large masses in government employment, but most importantly through the creation of a class of small commercial and profiteering capitalists, dependent on government grants, loans and licences (Tsoucalas, 2005: 93-94). Thus, the "public space" tends to behave as if it were private and the state functions as an arena for the promotion of private interests. Within its ranks, the state breeds a class of obedient and inefficient civil service (*ibid*.: 115). But in addition, it stabilizes, protects and guarantees private interests, which take shape out of its limits, but also acts as the womb in which new special interests grow (*ibid*.: 59). We must take heed of this remark, because the omnipresence of the state, by deliberate action or by default, may place certain interests, groups or activities in a marginal position, in a virtual exclusion. In a situation like this, particular professional or citizen groups are unable either to operate normally or to make their voice heard.

5. Spatial planning and urbanization

Nowhere in all the range of government activity are these problems better seen, than in the field of spatial, town and regional, planning. Here, patronage affects directly that most sensitive trait of Greek society, i.e. land ownership and use, and the ability of the government to valorize land in accordance with its clientelistic priorities. Spatial planning in Greece[6] has largely failed to cope with the problems generated by the conditions which prevailed in the country after World War II, especially in the period of rapid urbanization[7]. It is not possible here to give an adequate picture of the system of planning, but we can at least quote a remark from the national overview for Greece, written for the needs of the ESPON 2.3.2 project: "A result of the fast rate of urbanization … was the inability of planning authorities to plan

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6   For recent desriptions of the Greek urban and regional planning system see NTUA / LSPUD, 2005; Wassenhoven, Karka and Sapountzaki, 2002; Wassenhoven, 2000; ESTIA, 2000; and Economou, 2000.

7   The reasons of this failure cannot be explained adequately in the present article, but they are related, among others, to the structures of government as they grew in the historical conditions of the country in the 19th and 20th centuries.

ahead of events and provide the necessary urban infrastructure. The inevitable outcome was congestion, environmental deterioration and functional inefficiencies in the large cities (Wassenhoven, Karka and Sapountzaki, 2002). Two simultaneous urbanization processes are now taking place, concentration in an increasingly limited proportion of national space and dispersal in the periphery of urban centres (Anastasiadis and Burgel, 2001). Thus, the Greek spatial system is undergoing three major changes: Increased networking between cities, suburbanization around the main centres and decline of agricultural activities (Angelidis and Karka, 2001). Unauthorized building construction, especially housing, is a major problem for Greek town planning and for political authorities. In theory unauthorized structures are demolished and a fine is imposed on the owners. There have been attempts to deal with the problem … mainly by legalizing existing, unauthorized buildings, and then providing the conditions for legal building activity, but the problem still persists …" (NTUA / LSPUD, 2005). The valorization of private land interests continues to be intimately bound with a complicated land use control system, the provisions of which are often interpreted with a great deal of laxity, leaving ample margins of patronage and favouritism.

6. The introduction of governance

The concept of governance is still practically unknown in Greek administration[8]. A debate has however taken place in the context of academic networks, research projects, professional and civil society groups and NGOs, and specialized conferences. The introduction of governance principles and practices in Greece is strongly influenced by E.U. regulations 'trickling down' from the supranational level onto the national and local levels in the context of an intense and constant Europeanization of procedures, institutions and practices. In many cases the principles of governance (openness, accountability, participation, effectiveness and coherence) are pursued in the context of another E.U. policy, namely sustainability. A direct way for the introduction of new processes is through the implementation of European Initiatives, such as URBAN or LIFE, the Habitat Agenda, etc. An indirect way is through changes in the national legislation, such as the changes regarding decentralization and empowerment of local authorities over a 10-year period, following the direct election of prefects and prefectural councils in 1994, for the first time in Greek history. This is sadly a process which has become entangled in negative rulings of the Council of State, the supreme administrative court.

Regarding spatial planning, although there has not been a direct attempt to incorporate the concept of governance in the statute book, several aspects in recent planning legislation reveal a certain progress towards a philosophy of governance. One aspect is a more holistic and integrated approach followed in national and regional spatial planning documents. Another aspect is the acknowledgement of the need for cooperation and dialogue, which unfortunately is not honoured in practice, in spite of references in the latest regional planning law of 1999.

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8   The following paragraphs on governance are a condensation of a section from NTUA / LSPUD (2005), with certain omissions and explanatory additions. See also Wassenhoven and Sapountzaki, 2007.

E.U. Structural Funds and in particular the process of preparation of Community Support Frameworks (CSFs) have contributed substantially to the creation of a hierarchy of development programmes at the national, regional and sub-regional levels. Structural Fund regulations guarantee the vertical co-ordination of regional development policy. Structuring the CSFs into 13 regional operational programmes[9] and a number of sectoral ones binds all levels of government to a strictly controlled investment programme, which usually suffers from inadequate spatial analysis and narrow sectoral views with a limited global perspective. The current National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-13 is probably addressing some of these deficiencies, but development and territorial policies remain uncoordinated. The process of producing a national spatial plan, expected to be approved in 2008, was poorly coordinated with economic planning and suffered from a total lack of participation and cooperation, which were invited only after a virtually final text had been endorsed by the central government (Wassenhoven 2008). Funds originating in E.U. Initiatives seem to have been more influential in triggering governance practices, because of their relatively more decentralized management.

Governance, in the positive sense, is still a rather weak concept in the Greek social and political institutions and processes and a lot remains to be done in this respect. Notwithstanding this delay, it would be fair to point out, particularly with regard to territorial and urban issues, that the essence of the new governance approach has been discussed in the context of urban regeneration, metropolitan governance and the environment. Apart from being a subject of political debate, it has also been studied extensively in the context of university research programmes.

The main arguments in favour of the introduction of governance approaches are usually made in relation to the principles of effectiveness, openness and coherence. The processes and the operations of the Greek state are generally considered by the average citizen static, unchangeable, obscure and chaotic. Long and complicated processes and poor coordination are also recognized as the main reasons for the notorious ineffectiveness of Greek spatial planning. In the case of Athens the interference of different levels of government, ministries and public institutions involved in metropolitan administration is creating a complex knot of procedures and competencies that is both necessitating and hampering reform of metropolitan governance.

7. Participation and cultural obstacles

Official concern with participation, apart from routine use in land use planning, has been half hearted and inadequate, in spite of proclamations to the contrary. There have been however efforts to decentralize power to local authorities, so far largely frustrated by legal complications. On one hand there is an obvious need to hand over more responsibilities and competences to the local level. On the other hand, the economic dependence of local government on the state and the frequent misuse of power by mayors reduce the potential to address the democratic deficit and promote community involvement. In this perspective, even though

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9   The number of regional operational programmes has been reduced to 5 in the 2007-13 period.

Europeanization is recognized as a crucial component of change, certain inherent factors related to the character of the Greek state and the Greek political culture are resisting reforms. The political culture of the country, which is emerging as a crucial parameter, is especially apparent in the uneasy relationship between the state and the citizens. It is a relationship of mistrust and mutual suspicion. The feelings of the average Greek for the state in general are not much short of hostile. Greek citizens see the state as oppressive, an attitude which in their eyes justifies all economic activity which escapes the authorities' attention (Vavouras and Petrinioti 1990: 338). As we mentioned earlier, this is partly due to historical reasons and partly due to current weaknesses of the political / administrative system (bureaucracy, ineffectiveness, unreliability, patronage by political parties etc). This uneasy relationship creates an unstable equilibrium and erects obstacles in the way of governance initiatives. Evidence of its obstructive role is provided by unsuccessful horizontal cooperation attempts and consensus building efforts, involving state agencies, local authorities and civil society. Traditional conflicts and mentalities of mutual hostility or suspicion and the secretive attitude of the central administration do not leave room for understanding and agreements. However, the impasse created by such mentalities has in some, but rare, cases activated local authorities and civil society towards networking and partnership in order to strengthen their position and attain emancipation from central government.

Moreover, the Greek culture is suspicious, not to say hostile, to planning and spatial planning in particular. Contemporary Greek culture values more individual lifestyles and land ownership than environmental sustainability and the benefits of spatial planning (Wassenhoven, Karka and Sapountzaki 2002). In this sense individual citizens and local communities are more or less ready to enter partnerships for other purposes, which are of more immediate interest and urgency, than spatial planning and environmental protection. However, notable exceptions, in various communities across the country, do exist and they are a hopeful sign. On the whole, public opinion views environmental problems as the responsibility of the state, or even of the EU, and not as the concern of society and the individual citizen. Therefore, it is hardly probable that a partnership is built to enforce a new, or uphold an existing, spatial planning policy or regulation. It is far more likely that a movement is created, or partnership formed, to resist it. "Opposition" partnerships are more attractive because of the long established practices of lobbying through informal routes to influence planning decisions or resist unwelcome policies.

8. Future prospects

Cooperation arrangements, horizontal or vertical, are rare and usually confined to routine tasks. Development contracts, in the sense of contracts used in a number of West European countries, are not used in Greece. Public – private cooperation takes place mostly in the implementation of public works and in agreements between the state and private construction consortia in the context of large infrastructure projects. This practice has been inaugurated mostly in the context of Olympic infrastructure projects and continued for the development of large projects (Athens International Airport, closed urban highway system of Attica Road, suspended bridge of Rio – Antirrio). This type of contractual arrangement is now being extended to a number of transport infrastructure projects. New legislation on public – private

cooperation projects, enacted in 2005, opens the way for a number of public building projects, including both construction and maintenance.

As indicated earlier, membership of the European Union has had a profound effect on Greek government and culture, even on routine administrative practices, although changes here are slow and not immediately visible. Perhaps, the sector which is the best example here is environmental policy and protection. Although environmental reforms are not always supported for unselfish reasons, they deeply affected both the practice of government and, in particular, social mentalities and awareness. While it is basically the E.U., but not exclusively, which is having an effect on government and government structures, a parallel shift takes place from below. Greek society is still engulfed in a culture of consumption and relative prosperity, at least compared to still living memories, but there is no doubt that there is also a rising consciousness of issues of quality of life and collective values. There is ample evidence of this change in the proliferation of movements particularly around environmental issues and in the rulings of administrative courts. In spite of the fact that grassroots movements are often under the stranglehold of party politics and are still exploited by old style political opportunism, it would be very wrong to dismiss them and ignore their growing emancipation. The coming of age of citizen movements is certainly a shift which brings governance objectives in the centre stage of current dialogue. This is not acknowledged openly and is not associated with an official governance debate, but is nevertheless a reality which allows optimism. The example of citizen mobilization to preserve open spaces in Athens provides an instructive lesson.

The creation of new modes of thought related to the principles of cooperation, participation, transparency and mobilization is dependent on another field, which is probably the most crucial of all, but also a problem in Greek realities, namely education. It would not be a gross exaggeration to claim that any progress will be produced in the long run not by innovations in the content of planning, in the administration and in the system of government, but rather in education, which currently rather stunts the ability to innovate and think creatively. This is an area where one is entitled not to be optimistic. No clear shift is noticeable in this respect in the direction of a new culture. Failure in this matter is likely to undermine progress in the area of governance and to allow processes which on the surface exhibit the trappings of governance to be taken over by narrow political and / or private interests. This would be a blow which should not be allowed to happen.

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10   "Change" (*allaghi*) and "modernization" (*eksynchronismos*) were the slogans of the socialist governments of the 1980s and 1990s respectively.

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