
ARTICLES

INTRODUCTION: GOVERNANCE AS METHOD TO FACE BIG NEW TERRITORIAL AND URBAN CHALLENGES

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Governance appears as a new way to governing territories when looking for new and more effective ways of public policies management, foreseen their effects and assessing their territorial impacts. It can be considered as a kind of ‘third way’ to overcome limitations of both traditional bureaucratic methods as well as new entrepreneurial models applied to public management. It is a ‘in between’, ‘bridge’, concept; for this reason is considered as a suspect concept, with diverse components each one of them are developed with different deep intensity not only because ideological reasons but also according with the context, history and opportunity. It tends to trivialization because is an ‘in fashion’ topic, as well as other concepts such ‘sustainability’, ‘polycentrism’ or ‘cohesion’.

Governance is a multi-dimensional concept that becomes broader and more complex if one talks about Territorial Governance. The diverse dimensions of Territorial Governance were established in the ESPON Project 2.3.2 for which we were Lead Partner; in fact this *Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles n.º 46* oriented issue is a direct result of that work. According with the results of that project, Davoudi, Evans, Governa and Santangelo’s paper presents both the main criteria for territorial governance in each of its different dimensions (vertical/multi-level, horizontal —coordination and cooperation between territories, between policies and between actors leading to partnership configuration— and participation); as well as a ‘typification’ of the territorial governance practices (that the authors call ‘*Territorial Governance Actions*’) at each level and the more efficient criteria in each one of them.

Besides offering a comprehensive approach to the concept at European level (see Farinós as well as Davoudi et al.) we also try to focus in some specific questions and scales of Governance. Regarding the questions, the reader will find some contributions focusing, from different points of view, on participation and coordination between actors (partnerships). The Wassenhoven’s article first presents a review of participation, coordination and public partnerships across Europe —exploiting the results of ESPON Project 2.3.2— and closes

with a particular analysis of Greek situation, arguing how territorial culture influence, and in this case limits, new practices for effective territorial governance. Also Masson-Vincent's paper focuses on participation this time in relation with the development of spatial visions, as well as the role geographers can play in. It presents the results of a research project with French and Swiss cities as case studies. Both of the two authors emphasize on participative processes limitations and criticize its usefulness. Two papers more also present case studies on participation; that of Fernández about public involvement in prudent and creative management landscape policy, and that of Seixas about the role of social capital and urban intelligence in order to design territorial development and urban governance strategies in Lisbon city. These two papers present too a critical analysis for participation, mainly because the way it happens as well as its limited final usefulness. Participation is not an objective itself, but it has to be considered as a way to achieve main goals such as territorial sustainable development.

Urban areas, with special attention to metropolitan areas, are the second axis contributions of this oriented issue on territorial governance are organised around. Is the case of Hague, of Prezioso and of Pendall and Puentes papers. In the case of Hagues' article, the scale of reference is the international one. This author argues a review for urban planning methodologies is necessary. This new urban planning has to be more oriented, and adapted, to new global challenges such as climate, demographic and urban changes. The last one is that the World Urban Forum (the next one will be 4th WUF) tries to confront. Instead of partial, segmented, insufficient and non participated individual planning, as is the case until now, a new urban planning from a global point of view is necessary. Also the author argues for new practices in hands of planners, avoiding technocracy and even dogmatism; more oriented to the principles of a new territorial and urban governance. That implies a new training, as well as new contents, to appropriately teach urbanists. It is not enough to promote a new urban and territorial culture along civil society (question Seixas and Wassenhoven tackle in Lisbon and Greece cases respectively), but also through technicians and professionals to train them not only in techniques but also in processes, routines and work styles (a kind of deontological code). In similar way Masson-Vincent refers to the geographers' role not only when making plans but also to qualify citizens and decision makers to design and choose desired spatial visions. Prezioso, on her side, refers to an additional professional field provided by territorial governance (this time metropolitan governance): manager and mediator in controversial relationships between actors (agency) and territories, trying to reconcile or harmonize dissents in order to agree a successful common strategy to faced challenges of current world wide, globalized context; however from very different points of view. First one focuses on economic dimension of metropolitan governance in order to achieve sustainable and competitive development through the interaction between governing practices and public and private services and goods production. Her objective is to determine if a city or territory —with its own features and scale— are able to apply Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategy, by using new governing methods. This last is a question that Farinós' paper introduce as well; however in this case it is about the way to make concrete the way Lisbon objectives are introduced in territorial development strategies adopted by metropolitan areas. Prezioso emphasizes the economic dimension and effects of governance, bringing near the economic approach (where governance concept has its origin —as appropriately

Masson-Vincent explains in her article) and the political one (where governance concept comes after); all that over a concrete territorial basis —the city of XXI century— and over current planning instruments and practices, previously established. The author maintains the well known argument metropolitan areas and urban regions have emerged in Europe as the very best spaces where apply current changes because into them it is possible to better coordinate and administrate key factors for development such as polycentric networks and infrastructures. On the other hand she as well argues new governance practices also can be performed into the framework of methods and processes (a territorial Plan or a Master Plan) planning objectives are established through. In this point Prezioso refers to that she calls fourth generation strategic plans, because they incorporate ex-ante strategic assessment.

Pendall and Puentes analyze the way in which land use is planned (or not) and managed in the fifty most important metropolitan areas in U.S.A. Despite clear differences as the cross-border nature of some of these U.S.A. metropolitan areas, a feature that is so far away from practices in a Composite State as Spain is but very common in a country as U.S.A. with deep federal roots, paper offers many interesting reasons for comparison with the current Spanish situation. For instance regarding diversity of land use models (usually are competence of local authorities —mainly cities and municipalities— and sometimes of supra-local levels) and their impacts. Effects one can observe in final territorial models as well as problems: polycentric, concentrated, diffuse, unavoidable mobility, with central areas down the city degraded or not, and urban peripheries middle/highly revenue level with a compact model or clearly dominated by sprawl instead. Effects also in land and housing prices, and whether there is or not correlation between strong land uses regulation and higher housing prices; or, better, between lower housing prices without regulation (argument strongly defended by the Spanish central government in last years 1990s and first 2000s). Effects, too, on social housing policy for unprivileged groups. In short, a text reflecting an apparently very different reality from which is possible extracting interesting (even not expected ‘a priori’) conclusions through comparison. In the U.S.A. case it seems are coming reforms in the way to plan and manage land use, breaking the mould and opening new possibilities. In fact, no so different from those are arising in the European space —as is the case of the so called ‘smart growth’ in Maryland, very similar to the new policy of spaces of concentration for public investments on infrastructure and equipments in the Netherlands.

Instead a strategic approach more oriented to governance for competitiveness, as in the case of Prezioso’s paper, that of Pendall and Puentes focuses on physical planning, in a similar way for instance the recent Territorial Metropolitan Plan of Barcelona does; in turn with a different style of the previous first and second strategic plans of Barcelona, as well as the strategic metropolitan plan of Barcelona that follows these two previous ones.

Even though the reader can’t find any paper specifically oriented to present the Spanish situation (despite some particular cases as the Fernández’s paper on Madrid autonomous region, and that of Farinós the last heading of which synthetically presents an assessment of the current state of territorial governance in Spain –qualified not as ‘allegro’ but obstruction ‘ma non troppo’), one can extract interesting conclusions by comparison or transfer from other analysed spaces. It is the case, for instance, of Lisbon city in Seixas’ paper, or Greece in Wassenhoven’s one. It will be not inconsistent with Spanish situation Seixas’ argument that society, politics and elites in Lisbon have not effectively developed collective projects,

structured on the basis of collective relationships and conducted in a strategic way in order to achieve city's interest. The reason is the lack of suitable institutions, too much oriented orientated to their own working, that would explain social and political apathy “... *in view of Strategic Plan of Lisbon 1992 evanescence, because excessive populist leadership, few years after its approval. Death of this important political tool is mainly due to the fragile socio-cultural support present at the city, more than to politics in Lisbon municipal government, political parties and particular interests and strategies of some political actors*”.

In Wassenhoven's article one can find a clear criticism to the argument governance and wide participation were a panacea 'per se'. He shares viewpoint with Masson-Vincent, for who participatory processes show strong limitations (in Fernández's paper it is assumed a limited role for participation, understood as consultation). Usually participation is conceived as final aim (to legitimize and to wipe out democratic deficit despite its effectiveness is not always clear) instead a tool. Besides, Wassenhoven's article proposes —and deeply analyses in the Greek case one of the crucial parameters to a satisfactory progress of new ways of governance in any society (also the Spanish one —see Farinós' text): political system maturity and existing political culture (highly dependent on relationships of patronage in the case of Greece and scantily informed in the case of Lisbon city). In order to elucidate the situation, with evident parallelisms in other spaces as the Spanish one, author writes: “*Nowhere in all ... are these problems better seen, than in the field of 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 has largely failed to cope with the problems of rapid urbanization and social change. The valorization of private land interests is 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. Extensive unauthorized building construction and violation of land use regulations is widespread*”.

Editors hope papers in their entirety provide a better approach to territorial governance concept, the way to understand it but also, mainly, to put it into practice, by case studies analysis as well as (and this is only a reader option) through their comparison. The fact contributions were bilingual, in English and Spanish, can help to an adequate diffusion of its contents at international level, in a reputable international journal as *Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles* is, as well as to offer a compromise between collectives that are distant from a geographical, cultural and linguistic point of view, but really close when sharing interests, perspectives of analysis and objectives.