



Grantee: Marta Lackowska

Department of Local Policy and Development
University of Warsaw

COST STSM Reference Number: COST-ONLINE_STSM-IS1207-16773

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

From the COST Short Term Scientific Mission

Host: Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Norbert Kersting, Institut für Politikwissenschaft

Time: 21.04-4.05.2014

Metropolitan marketing in postindustrial regions – German Ruhr Region and Polish Silesia

1. Purpose of the STSM

The main purpose of my STSM at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster was a comparison of metropolitan marketing in two postindustrial regions: German Ruhr Region and Polish Silesia. It corresponded with the interests of the Working Group III 'Territorial/Functional Rescaling' operating under the COST Action IS1207 'Local Public Sector Reforms: An International Comparison'. Metropolitan arrangements and their contribution to the new entrepreneur policies of city-regions are one of the crucial forms of rescaling processes (see: Brenner 2004, van der Heiden 2010).

In the course of the research carried out during my stay in Münster yet another topic appeared as important for the investigated German region, namely intermunicipal cooperation, which also remains within the interests of COST WG III. Municipal cooperation on the submetropolitan level poses an important part of metropolitan puzzle of power constellation, yet it is often left understudied, as the priority is given to the metropolitan-wide organisations.

As a result of my discussions at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster an additional study was considered by prof. Kersting and me, namely international comparative study on neighbourhood governments. This issue draws our attention to the opposite direction of rescaling that the metropolitan aspect: while metropolitan cooperation refers to the upscaling process (Brenner 2004), submunicipal units illustrate downscaling. We discussed possibilities of including a comparative study on urban decentralization in the work done under the COST WG III.

2. Description of the work carried out during the STSM

During the STSM in Münster I carried out following work:

- Lecture delivered for the MA and PhD students of the Institute on the new trends in metropolitan governance in Poland and on the case study – Silesia Region
- Desk research on Ruhr Region: literature review on Ruhr Region (carried out thanks to the resources of the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität library), study of the institutional setting in the Region (main organizations of intermunicipal cooperation, their structure, tasks – i.a. those related to territorial marketing, finances, democratic legitimation) as well as on the activities currently undertaken by metropolitan institutions. In parallel I followed the recent undertakings in Silesia Region.
- Preliminary discussions with the researcher of the Host University and other researchers engaged in the studies of Ruhr Region on the cases, details of the comparative study, and on the tools (interviews scenarios).
- Preparing the interviews with the chosen actors of the Region, appointing the meetings
- Carrying out the interviews with:
 - Former mayor of Dortmund (1999-2009): Dr. G. Langemeyer
 - Representative of Wirtschaftsförderung Dortmund: Dr. S. Röllinghoff
 - Representative of Regionalverband Ruhr (RVR): Bereichsleiter für Planung and a general representative of the Regional Director, M. Tönnies
 - Representative of Landschaftsverband Westfalen-Lippe: Erster Landesrat und Kämmerer, M. Löb
 - Representative of the city hall of Gelsenkirchen: Leiter des Gelsenkirchener Instituts für Stadtgeschichte, Prof. Dr. Stefan Goch
- Analysis of the materials connected to the Ruhr Region collected during the interviews (law proposals, standing points of various institutions, statutory documents, marketing materials, etc.)
- Elaboration of preliminary notes from the interviews
- Discussing the preliminary findings with the colleagues at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, comparing German and Polish region, establishing the work plan for the final studies in Silesia and further joint proceedings (schedule for work on publication)
- Discussions with prof. Kersting on the scheme for comparative study on neighbourhood governments in different countries as well as on the work schedule
- Preliminary comparison of Polish and German data on urban neighbourhood councils
- Discussions with Sylwia Patron, PhD candidate on the implementation of EU Funds in Polish regions (this is yet another topic that raises possibilities of further contacts and cooperation between the universities, as S. Patron is going to apply for a scholarship at the Warsaw University. We discussed options for joint studies on the topic of EU regional policy in various member states).

3. Description of the main results obtained

The study on metropolitan marketing strategy in Ruhr Region has resulted in many interesting findings, especially when compared to the undertakings of Silesia Association. First of all, it seems that at the moment Silesia is in the similar point of transformation, in which the Region of Ruhr was in the 1990's. Numerous activities undertaken in the 1990's in German region to change the image of

the old industrial region into the modern metropolitan area of various amenities are now taking place in Silesia. This is especially visible when marketing actions are compared, like:

- bidding for European Capital of Culture – for Essen as a representative of the whole region in 2010, for Katowice and its region for 2016;
- joint promotion on the international fairs (e.g. Cannes and Munich) – undertaken in Ruhr Region and later in Silesia;
- efforts to present the region as an attractive place to live in – the big project of Emscher Landschaftspark in the 1990's in Ruhr Region and presently discussed strategies in Silesia.

The study in Ruhr Region itself has attracted my attention to the following aspects:

- The structural change in Ruhr Region has not been accomplished yet. The process (for which also Silesia has to be prepared) lasts long and takes on a very different overtone in each single city (interviews in Dortmund, Essen, Gelsenkirchen).
- Cooperation in the metropolitan region is not free of problems. My preliminary proposition was that under specific conditions of a big challenge of image change metropolitan cooperation has much stronger stimulation than in case of not post-industrial metropolises. It occurred not to be true – various sub-regions in Ruhr Region have different interests and problems and so the cooperation is limited (at least when the budget and opinions of the local actors are concerned). Moreover, I expected polycentric region also to be more prone to cooperative behaviour – according to the theories of cooperation, the more similar partners (their potentials, needs, problems), the easier the cooperation. Yet, from the interviews it is clear that similar cities (e.g. in terms of size) have also similar ambitions and self-consciousness (or “the need to be distinct”, specific) and so are not that willing to act as a homogenic metropolitan region. This is an important observation for the studies on present organization and rescaling processes in urban-regions, which often develop from monocentric to polycentric areas.
- Institutional thickness in Ruhr Region is huge, not comparable to the structures in Poland. A number of boundaries crossing the metropolitan area is immense. The fact that these divisions are visible also in mentality of habitants makes Ruhr Region similar to Polish Silesia.
- A very interesting phenomenon is the obligatory intermunicipal cooperation in Landschaftsverband Westfalen-Lippe (LWL), which also corresponds to the debates within the WG III on intermunicipal cooperation. It is also yet another sign of the above mentioned institutional fragmentation of the region, where collective institutions help construct new scales going beyond local boundaries.
- Problems of the Ruhr Region with a new image often were a core aspect of the interviews, drawing attention to the problems of territorial marketing in general. Structural change of the old industrial region seems to have no clear point of arrival. It is especially important with regard to the popular trends of learning from best practices. Polish Silesia cooperates with the RVR and looks up to its solutions (there was a conference in April 2014 in Katowice with the presentations of the achievements of RVR). Yet, one should remember, that “there is no such thing as best practice” (Hambleton 2008) – localities and regions can learn from one's experience, as long as they see the contextual differences and take them into account while adopting one's solutions to own problems.
- During my stay in Munster, a current issue discussed in the Ruhr Region was a proposal of legal change of RVR. During the interviews I carried out interesting discussion with RVR and

LWL representatives who expressed different points of view on strengthening intermunicipal association.

All in all, I treat my short stay in Münster as a very fruitful and inspiring period. All of the topics were closely related to the works of the COST WCG III on rescaling and functions and I do hope to use my experience in the Group for its common benefits.

Among the organizational and cooperative results of my short stay in Münster, I would name especially: (1) starting cooperation with prof. Kersting on the comparative study on submunicipal units to be carried out within the COST WG III; (2) clarification of other fields of possible cooperation between University of Warsaw and the Host University (EU regional policy, metropolitan areas, territorial marketing)

4. Future collaboration with the host institution (if applicable)

Three lines of further cooperation have emerged as a result of my STSM in Münster:

- 1) Cooperation on the topic of the metropolitan governance in Ruhr Region and in Silesia – here the collaboration will be continued not only with the host University, as well as with prof. Karsten Zimmermann (University of Dortmund).
- 2) Cooperation on the topic of downscaling with prof. Norbert Kersting – we plan to suggest a wide international comparison of urban neighbourhood councils in the COST WG III.
- 3) Cooperation with Sylwia Patron on the topic of the EU funds usage in Poland – Patron plans longer scientific stay at the Warsaw University. Our Faculty team has done a lot of research on implementation of the EU finds in Poland, so there are good perspectives for joint studies.

4) Foreseen publications/articles resulting from the STSM (if applicable)

I am going to finish work on the material collected during the STSM in Münster and write an article presenting comparative study of Ruhr Region and Silesia. I would like to present the result to the WG III on one of the meeting at the end of this year and discuss the possibilities of further comparison and cooperation with other colleagues.

Together with prof. Kersting we are going to propose to the members of the COST WG III a comparative research (resulting in a set of articles) on urban neighbourhood councils.

5) Confirmation by the host institution of the successful execution of the STSM (in the separate file)