Learning from each other for governance: Transatlantic, transdisciplinary knowledge exchange for governance innovation

Petra Wlasak and Jean-Sébastien Blais

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Abstract

If traditionally citizens' influence in the design of strategic goals and policies was limited by the right to vote, the last few decades witnessed the emergence of a normative discourse and the implementation of different initiatives, challenging the representative democracy to offer a structure capable of enabling the dialogue between those elected and voters. By proposing a number of participatory alternatives empowering citizens, some of the democracies using those concepts are committed towards a culture of participatory governance.

The two authors of this paper argue that learning and experimenting are crucial elements to find new forms and methods for participatory governance in order to strengthen democratic cultures, enhance the resonance capability to react to current societal challenges and to be able to jointly work on creating a sustainable future for today's and tomorrow's generations.

The aim of this paper is to explore how different innovative experiments with participatory governance in different regional contexts, can learn and benefit from each other in a transdisciplinary setting.

To do so, two case studies from Canada and Austria are presented, compared and analyzed: On the one hand, the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly in Canada as an initiative designed to develop collaborations between governments and citizens regardless of their age, sex, ethnicity, cultural background or social statues and on the other hand the project "URB@Exp: Towards new forms of urban governance and city development: learning from urban experiments with living labs & city labs" in Leoben, Austria.

The paper will analyze and compare the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of these two case studies and put the results of this comparison within a transdisciplinary, transatlantic framework. In this specific setting the practical perspective based on the Canadian case study meets the scientific perspective based on the Austrian case study, whereby a unique opportunity is created to be involved in a mutual scientific-societal learning process and develop new knowledge for innovative governance. The paper will present key findings of this learning process and reflect on how they can be used to generate democratic participation, assist public policy development, improve governance performance and strengthen society-science collaborations in order to initiate sustainable development processes.

Key words

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Table of contents

Table of illustrations

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Introduction

In February 2015 the authors of this paper participated at the EURAC Winter School on Federalism and Governance with the focus on "Federalism and Democratic participation", a joint project of the Institute for Studies on Federalism and Regionalism of the European Academy Bolzano/Bozen (EURAC) and the Faculty of Law and the School of Political Science and Sociology of the University of Innsbruck. This knowledge exchange created a unique opportunity to acquire deep insights into current regional and local democratic developments. The participants shared their local experience and knowledge and discussed them in the framework of a global connection.

The two authors decided to continue their knowledge exchange by exploring further dimensions of innovations in participatory governance through transdisciplinary knowledge-exchange. They come from two very different regions of the world: Yukon - the westernmost and smallest of Canada's three federal territories with a population density of 0.07/km^2 and Styria – a southern federal state of Austria in the heart of Europe bordering Slovenia with a population density of 74/km^2.[1][2] Despite the grand differences in demographic, geographical, political, social and historical contexts, both countries are currently undertaking different steps on a local and regional level to test and implement new forms of innovative governance to improve the quality of democracy[3]. The aim is to build capacities and resilience to deal with complex challenges of the future, such as economic tensions which lead to growing inequalities and social polarization, rise of immigration and cultural diversity, minority protection, environmental pollution, democratic participation, energy shortages, degradation of housing or the need for care work in ageing populations.[4]

[1] Statistics Canada, *Population and Dwelling Count Highlight Tables*, Census 2011 (Ottawa, 2012) at http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/hlt-fst/pd-pl/Table-Tableau.cfm?LANG=Eng&T=302&SR=1&S=51&O=A&RPP=9999&CMA=0&PR=60

[2] Landesstatistik Steiermark, *Geografische Übersichten und administrative Einteilungen* (Graz, 2015), at http://www.statistik.steiermark.at/cms/beitrag/11679864/103034889/.

[3] Barnes, Andre, James R. Robertson (2009): "Electoral Reform Initiatives" (Library of Parliament, Ottawa, 2009), 20, at http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/prb0417-e.htm.

[4] European Union, *Cities of tomorrow. Challenges, visions, ways forward* (European Commission, Directorate General for Regional Policy, Brussels, 2011), at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/citiesoftomorrow/citiesoftomorrow_final.pdf; Cohen, Michael, Ruble, Blair A., Tulchin, Joseph S. and Garland, Allison (eds.), *Preparing for the Urban Future. Global Pressures and Local Forces* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, Washington D.C., 2010).

The authors, working also in two different professions - civil service and university research - and having two different perspectives on governance issues, will explore in this paper how scientific and societal actors can learn from each other from their experiments of developing and implementing democratic participation innovation and how these can be adapted in different settings and regional contexts.

Based on a transdisciplinary approach by Jahn[5] the authors argue that from the perspectives of sustainable development, experiments are crucial to implement democratic participation innovations and strengthen democratic cultures in public policies through experimental governance forms. The questions that arise here are:

- Why are innovative experiments in governance crucial for the improvement of democracy and sustainable development?

- How can such experiments be designed and what are the practical and scientific challenges when implemented?

- How can these experiments learn and benefit from each other's scientific and practical experiences despite different regional contexts?

- By doing that, how can the concept of transdisciplinary research be applied for this transatlantic experiment and knowledge exchange?

These questions are explored on the basis of two case studies from Canada and Austria. The first case study is the European project "URB@Exp: Towards new forms of urban governance and city development: learning from urban experiments with living labs & city labs"[6], which is currently implemented in the Austrian city of Leoben. The second case study is the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly in Canada, an initiative implemented in 2004 to develop collaborations between the provincial government and a body of randomly selected citizens with regards to the reform of the electoral system. The aim is to analyse the benefits and challenges of these innovative participatory concepts used to generate democratic participation, assist public policy development and improve governance performance and to then apply a transdisciplinary approach to acquire scientific and practical know-how through a transatlantic knowledge exchange.

To do so, the first part of this paper focuses on the concept of transdisciplinarity, how it encourages science-society cooperation in order to foster knowledge exchange and mutual learning and how it holds the potential for innovation.

The second part of the paper deals with the concept of governance, how it is linked to the normative concept of sustainable development and why new

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[5]   Jahn, Thomas, Bergmann, Matthias, and Keil, Florian, "Transdisciplinarity: Between mainstreaming and marginalization", 79 *Ecological Economics* (2012), 1-10.

[6]   The project is funded by the Joint Programming Initiative Urban Europe coordinated by Maastricht University, with project partners being the City of Maastricht, University of Lund, University of Malmö, City of Malmö, University of Graz, City of Graz, City of Leoben, City of Antwerp, Pantopicon Antwerp. Find out more about the project on http://www.urbanexp.eu/.

developments of interactive, participatory forms of governance are needed to empower people, initiate learning processes and strengthen democracy.

The third part of the paper first presents the two case studies from Yukon/Canada and Styria/Austria, gives information on their regional, social-economic, cultural and political background as well as current social and economic challenges and describes how these challenges are dealt with through new forms and experiments of participatory governance. The two case studies are then analyzed through a SWOT analysis, which summarizes and compares the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of each case study and compares them. Based on the different perspectives of the two authors of the papers, the URB@Exp project is analyzed from a scientific point of view, whereas the British Columbia Citizen Assembly is analyzed from a practical point of view.

The final part of the paper aims to bring together the gained scientific and practical insights and SWOT analysis results by working out lessons learned and key aspects of developing and testing innovative forms of governance. Through such engagement, additional knowledge on democratic participation is created for practical as well as scientific implications.

1. Transdisciplinarity as a pre-requisite for knowledge-exchange and science-society collaboration

To understand the concept of transdisciplinarity it is first crucial to highlight that it is referred to as a research approach and not as a theory or a methodology. The core idea of transdisciplinarity is different academic disciplines working jointly with practitioners to find solutions for current societal challenges.[7] By initiating these kinds of joint working settings, processes of mutual learning between science and society should be enabled, which produce new forms of knowledge.[8] These new forms of knowledge serve to tackle defined social challenge. The concept of transdisciplinarity does not stand in contradiction to the concept of multi- or interdisciplinarity; rather it supplements disciplinary and interdisciplinary research. It therefore asks for cooperation, knowledge exchange and knowledge integration between different scientific and societal actors. The research approach of transdisciplinary emerged in the 1970's in the context of environmental education. It developed from the articulated need to overcome the "mismatch between knowledge production in academia, on the one hand, and knowledge requests for solving societal problems, on the other".[9] As Scholz and Marks summarize, in the literature it is also described as a paradigm shift from research

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[7] Scholz, Roland W. and Marks, David, "Learning about Transdisciplinarity: Where are we? Where have we been? Where should we go?", in Thompson Klein, Julie, Grossenbacher-Mansuy, Walter, Häberli, Rudolf, Bill, Alain, Scholz, Roland W. and Welti, Myrtha (eds.), *Transdisciplinarity: Joint Problem Solving among Science, Technology, and Society* (Birkhäuser Verlag, Basel, Boston, Berlin, 2001), 236-252.

[8] Jahn, Bergmann and Keil, "Transdisciplinarity: Between mainstreaming and marginalization", …

[9] Hirsch Hadorn, Gertrude, Biber-Klemm, Susette, Grossenbacher-Mansuy, Walter, Hoffmann-Riem, Holger, Joye, Dominique, Pohl, Christian, Wiesmann Urs and Zemp Elisabeth, "The Emergence of Transdisciplinarity as a Form of Research", in Hirsch Hadorn, Gertrude, Hoffmann-Riem, Holger, Biber-Klemm, Susette, Grossenbacher-Mansuy, Walter, Joye, Dominique, Pohl, Christian, Wiesmann, Urs and Zemp Elisabeth (eds.), *Handbook of Transdisciplinary Research* (Springer, Bern, 2007), 19-43, at 4.

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on people, towards research for and with people.[10] Also Zimmermann underlines the importance of the "mutual exchange of knowledge between university education and research, their practical implications and further applications in a real world context".[11] The argument is that by bringing different societal and scientific actors together who are sharing their experiences and their knowledge, the relevant complexities of a problem can be grasped and the diversity of real-life problems as well as scientific perceptions of problems can be taken into account.[12]

By linking abstract and case-specific knowledge, complex issues can be not only be identified, structured and analyzed but also commonly tackled.[13] "Through scientists entering into dialogue and mutual learning with societal stakeholders, science becomes part of societal processes, contributing explicit and negotiable values and norms in society and science, and attributing meaning to knowledge for societal problem-solving".[14] Characteristics of transdisciplinary research are summarized by Burger and Kamber by "cognitive and social cooperation across disciplinary boundaries", "an intention towards the direct application of scientific knowledge in both political decision making and societal problem-solving" and the "participation of non-scientific stakeholders within research processes".[15]

As highlighted the aim of transdisciplinary settings is to produce new forms of knowledge. The types of knowledge, which can be created according to Scholz et al. are system knowledge, target knowledge and transformation knowledge.[16] System knowledge deals with the interpretation of real-life problems, target knowledge is about the need for change, desired goals and better ways of acting and transformation knowledge means the technical, social, legal, cultural knowledge and other means of redirecting the existing behavior.[17]

To produce such types of knowledge throughout transdisciplinary scientific-societal settings, Jahn highlights a critical and self-reflexive research approach throughout the learning process. Continuous iterative loopbacks between scientific and societal actors integrate different insights. By doing this, new knowledge can be produced with the aim of contributing to both societal and scientific progress. Such integrative and iterative processes are decisive elements of transdisciplinary research. Based on these elements the transdisciplinary research process is

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[10] Scholz and Marks, "Learning about Transdisciplinarity: Where are we? Where have we been? Where should we go?"….

[11] Zimmermann, Friedrich M., "The Chain of Sustainability", in PSCA International (ed.), *Public Service Review: European Union* (Newcastle under Lyme, UK, 2007), 232-233, at 232.

[12] Hirsch Hadorn, Biber-Klemm, Grossenbacher-Mansuy, Hoffmann-Riem, Joye, Pohl, Wiesmann and Zemp, "The Emergence of Transdisciplinarity as a Form of Research", …

[13] Pohl, Christian and Hirsch Hadorn, Gertrude, *Gestaltungsprinzipien für die transdisziplinäre Forschung* (Campus, München, 2006).

[14] Hirsch Hadorn, Biber-Klemm, Grossenbacher-Mansuy, Hoffmann-Riem, Joye, Pohl, Wiesmann and Zemp, "The Emergence of Transdisciplinarity as a Form of Research",…, at 25.

[15] Burger, Paul and Kamber, Rainer, "Cognitive Integration in Transdisciplinary Science: Knowledge as a Key Notion", 21 *Issues in Integrative Studies* (2003), 43-73, at 44.

[16] Scholz, Roland W., Lang, Daniel J., Wiek, Arnim, Walter Alexander I. and Stauffacher, Michael, "Transdisciplinary case studies as a means of sustainability learning - Historical framework and theory", 7 (3) *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education* (2006), 226-251.

[17] Hirsch Hadorn, Biber-Klemm, Grossenbacher-Mansuy, Hoffmann-Riem, Joye, Pohl, Wiesmann and Zemp, "The Emergence of Transdisciplinarity as a Form of Research", …

structured within three phases: In the first phase a complex, real-life problem as impetus is linked to scientific problems via boundary objects and epistemic objects to create a common research object ("problem transformation"). In the second phase, new, innovative knowledge is produced, resulting from an interplay of specialized work in sub-teams, producing (disciplinary) knowledge and processes of integration of knowledge ("interdisciplinary integration"). In the last phase of the transdisciplinary research process results generated in the second phase are assessed and consolidated to common overall results to provide both results for science and society ("transdisciplinary integration").[18]

The following illustration gives an overview on this process and its three phases:
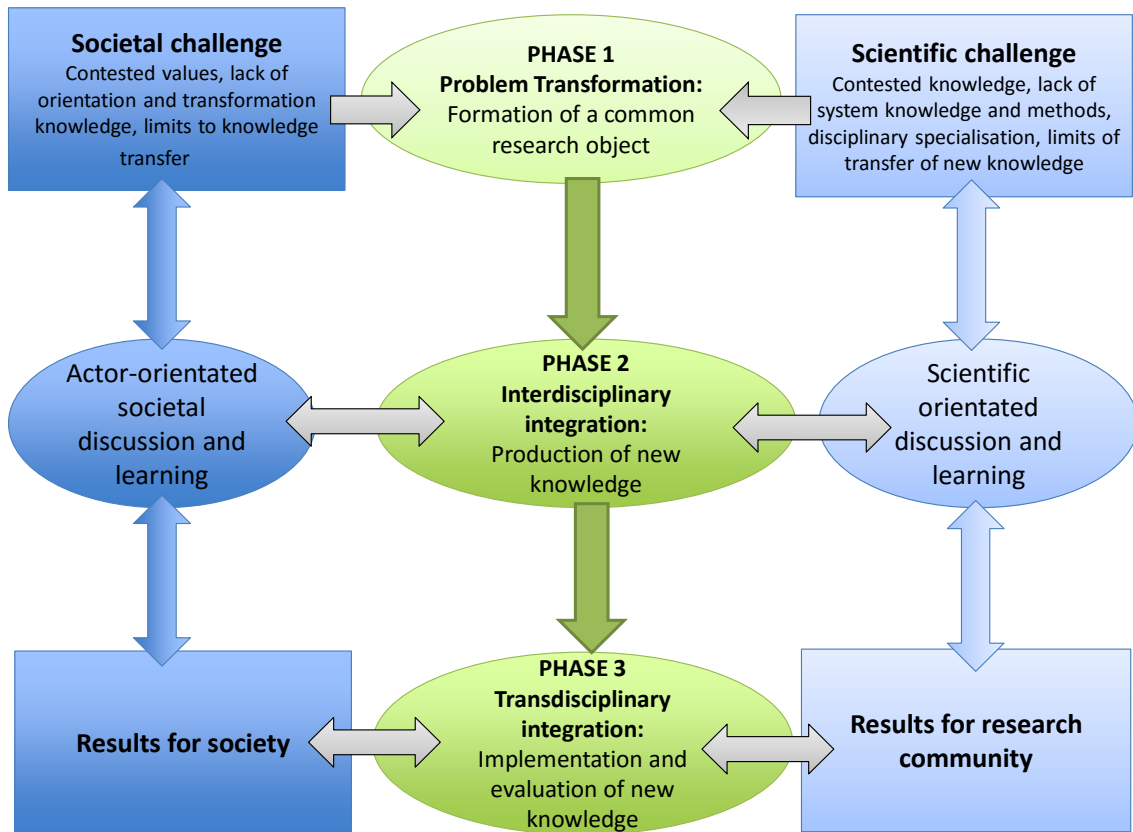
Illustration 1: Transdisciplinary Research process (Source: adapted from Jahn 2008 and Jahn et al. 2012)

Hereby, the transdisciplinary research approach provides a systematic framework, in which different types of knowledge and experiences can be brought together to work out new solutions for specific challenges. Within this paper, the transdisciplinary research approach is used to tackle the challenge of designing and implementing new forms of participatory governance, which serves as the common

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[18]   Jahn, Thomas, "Transdisziplinarität in der Forschungspraxis", in Bergmann, Matthias and Schramm, Engelbert (eds.), *Transdisziplinäre Forschung. Integrative Forschungsprozesse verstehen und bewerten* (Campus, Frankfurt am Main, New York, 2008), 21-37; Jahn, Bergmann and Keil, "Transdisciplinarity: Between mainstreaming and marginalization", ….

research object. From the perspective of society, the challenge is to know more about scientific concepts to foster participation of people and stakeholders in governance (lack of orientation and transformation knowledge). From the perspective of science the challenge is to develop theories of participatory governance according to practical needs and across limits of disciplinary and interdisciplinary specialization. The aim is to produce, as well as use new knowledge on how to design and implement new forms of democratic participation innovation through a transdisciplinary, transatlantic knowledge-exchange. The case study of the British Columbia Citizen Assembly in Canada will be presented and analyzed from a societal, practical point of view whereas the URB@Exp project will be presented and analyzed from a scientific perspective. By combining both experiences and the specific types of knowledge, new scientific results for the design of participatory governance forms and new practical results for the implementation of participatory governance forms will be found. These results can then be used in the regional and professional context of each author.
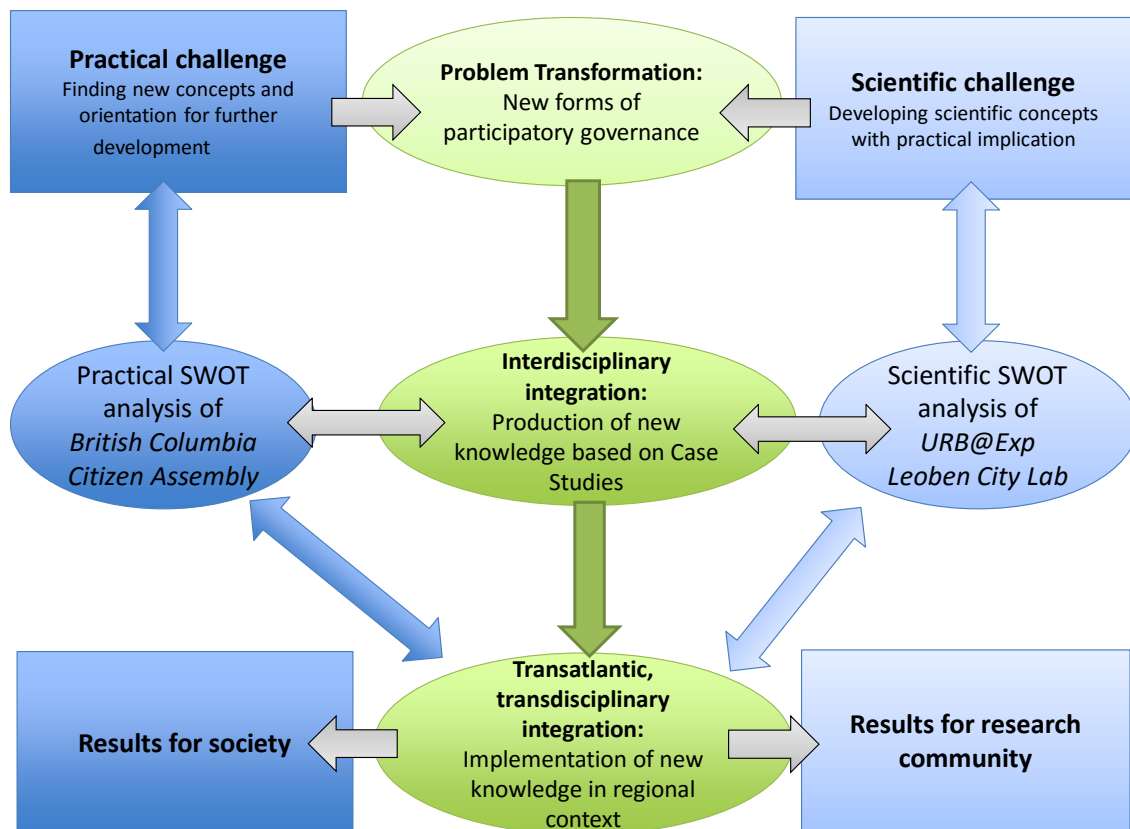
Illustration 2: Transatlantic, transdisciplinary research approach (own illustration based on Jahn 2008 and Jahn et al 2012)

In the second illustration, the concept of the paper is put into the framework of the transdisciplinary research approach. The transdisciplinary learning process is put on a transatlantic level, on which the practical perspective of the Canadian case study meet with the scientific perspective of the Austrian case study. This

unique setting creates the chance for a mutual scientific-societal learning process, whereby new knowledge for governance innovation can be developed.

2. Developing sustainable societies through innovative forms of governance

After having defined the process of mutual-learning regarding new forms of participatory governance in a transdiciplinary, transatlantic setting, this chapter is going to explore the concept of governance, how it is linked to key aspects of developing sustainable societies and why new developments of interactive, participatory forms of governance are needed to empower people and strengthen democracy.

2.1 Inclusive and effective governance as an essential part of sustainable development

In order to understand why governance is an essential part of sustainable development, firstly the concept of sustainable development needs to be explained. The most widely used definition of sustainable development refers to the Brundtlandt report, which was published in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development under guidance of the former Norwegian prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtlandt. "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".[19] Our planet faces economic, social and environmental challenges of growing complexity. In response, sustainable and alternative solutions, which consider the economic, ecological, social as well as the cultural and institutional dimensions of sustainable development, are needed.[20] Sustainable development must always be thought of as a holistic and comprehensive concept, in order to understand and be aware of relationships, complexity and the consequences of one's actions. The holistic concept of sustainable development is therefore always inclusive and diverse.[21]

A basic element of sustainable development is defined to be governance. As the UN General Assembly states: "Democracy, good governance and the rule of law at the national and international levels, as well as enabling environments, are essential for sustainable development including sustained and inclusive economic

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[19]   Hauff, Volker, *Unsere gemeinsame Zukunft. Der Brundtland-Bericht der Weltkommission für Umwelt und Entwicklung* (Greven, Eggenkamp, 1987).

[20]   Michelsen, Gerd and Adomßent, Maik, "Nachhaltige Entwicklung: Hintergründe und Zusammenhänge", in Heinrichs, Harald and Michelsen, Gerd (eds.), *Nachhaltigkeitswissenschaften* (Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg, 2014), 3-59.

[21]   Empacher, Claudia and Wehling, Peter, *Soziale Dimensionen der Nachhaltigkeit. Theoretische Grundlagen und Indikatoren* (Studientexte des Instituts für sozial-ökologische Forschung, Nr.11, Frankfurt, 2002); Sachs, Ignacy, "Social Sustainability and whole development: Exploring the dimensions of sustainable development", in Becker, Egon and Jahn, Thomas (eds.), *Sustainability as a concept for the social sciences. A cross-disciplinary approach to integrating environmental considerations into theoretical reorientation* (University of Chicago Press, London, New York, 1999), 25-36; Zimmermann, Friedrich M., "Nachhaltige Entwicklung und Universitäten", in Posch, Alfred and Steiner Gerald (ed.), *Innovative Forschung und Lehre für nachhaltige Entwicklung* (Shaker, Aachen, 2006) 1-13.

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growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of hunger and poverty"[22]. By implementing open, transparent and participatory processes for common decision-making which are based on the rule of law, it is ensured "that political, social and economic priorities are based on a broad consensus in society and that the voices of the excluded, poorest and most vulnerable are heard. The outcomes of good governance could be peaceful, stable and resilient societies, where services are delivered and reflect the needs of communities (…)".[23]

As we can see transparency, participation and the balance of power are the key elements of governance processes, which focus on bottom-up processes and have the objective to enhance the resonance capability to react to current challenges. Governance in this normative sense has the objective to re-design the interaction between state, economy and civil society in order to be able to work out together dynamic and goal-orientated and hence sustainable developments. Concretely, the concept of governance refers to the self-organization of inter-organizational relations through networks and partnerships.[24]

Also the European Union is officially committed to governance and considers five principles as basic elements for good governance, as it is described in the White Paper for European Governance by the European Commission in 2011.[25] These five principles combined are considered to be the basis of good governance: openness (including transparency and communication) of decision-making, participation (systematic involvement of citizens in drafting and implementing policies), accountability (clear roles of each involved party including responsibility), effectiveness and coherence.[26] The concept of governance can be summarized in a normative sense and therefore *good governance* "has been defined to refer to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation".[27]

Although the concept of governance is applied to many situations in which no formal political system can be found, it still implies the existence of a political process: 'governance' involves building consensus, or obtaining the consent or

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[22] United Nations General Assembly, *The future we want*, Resolution 66/288 (United Nations, New York), at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&nr=1102&type=111&menu=35

[23] United Nations Development Programme, *Governance for Sustainable Development. Integrating Governance in the Post-2015 Development Framework* (United Nations Discussion Paper, New York, 2014) at http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Discussion-Paper--Governance-for-Sustainable-Development.pdf.

[24] Grunwald, Armin and Kopfmüller Jürgen, *Nachhaltigkeit* (Campus Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 2012).

[25] Donna E. Wood offers a comprehensive analysis of the governance model in use in Europe and Canada. For governance model in use in Canada, see: Wood, Donna E., "Could European Governance Ideas Improve Federal-provincial Relations in Canada", 6 *European Diversity and Autonomy Papers (2013)*, 5-48, at 38, at www.eurac.edu/edap.

[26] European Commission, "European Governance - A white paper", C287 (1) *Official Journal of the European Communities* (2001), at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52001DC0428&rid=2

[27] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Concept of Governance* (Paris, 2015), at http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/strengthening-education-systems/quality-framework/technical-notes/concept-of-governance/.

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acquiescence necessary to carry out a programme, in an arena where many different interests are in play".[28] Applied within democratic systems, governance is linked with the expectation that a democracy using a good governance framework, might provide a *space* where policy options can be developed through interactions between elected officials, senior officials and members of the citizenry. Throughout this created space it is also expected that democracy will deliver from the deliberations of the active citizens involved in its institutions the necessary goods. However, "*democracy* as a way of organizing the state has come to be narrowly identified with territorially based competitive elections of political leadership for legislative and executive offices."[29] As the political debates are now under the strong influence of professional political parties, "political representation seems ineffective in accomplishing the central ideals of democratic politics: facilitating active political, involvement of the citizenry, forging political consensus through dialogue, devising and implementing public policies that ground a productive economy and healthy society, and, in more radical egalitarian versions of the democratic ideal, assuring that all citizens benefit from the nation's wealth."[30] The difficulties faced by the citizenry to be part of the political debates, to shape it in order to somehow impact the outcomes of those debates can be linked to the *political indifference* manifested by a large portion of the citizenry observed in democratic regimes.

The democratic malaise expressed by citizens with regards to their participation in formal institutions of representative democracy[31], led scholars and leaders of civil society to propose the use of innovative approaches in the planning and implementation of public projects. As the support to enable citizen's participation into the political and policy debates was growing, the need to develop complementary forms of participation to the electoral participation was seen as a way to strengthen the legitimacy of governments' sponsored projects.

The concept of governance[32] is central to understanding governments' performance in creating sustainable policies and programs.[33] Its use gives governments a framework upon which they can seek "to share the power in community decision-making, and to encourage not only autonomy and

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[28] Cynthia Hewitt de Alcantara (1998): "Uses and abuses of the concept of governance", at http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic845003.files/Session%2016%20-%20Mar%2024/Hewitt_1998_Uses%20and%20Abuses%20of%20Governance.pdf.

[29] Fung, Archlon and Wright, Erik Olin, *Deepening Democracy* (Verso, London, 2003), at 11.

[30] *Ibid*.

[31] Warren, Mark E. and Pearse, Hillary (eds.), *Designing Deliberative Democracy: The British Columbia Citizens' Assembly*, (Cambridge University Press, New York, 2007), 20-49 at 1.

[32] *Ibid*; Bingham, Lisa Blomgren, and Al., "The New Governance: Practises and Processes for Stakeholder and Citizen Participation in the Work of Government", Vol. 65, *Public Administration Review* (2005), 547-558 at 548.

[33] Kooiman, Jan (ed.), *Modern Governance: New Government-Society Interactions* (Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks,1993); Lynn, Laurence E., Jr., Patricia W. Ingraham, (eds.), "Governance and Public Management: A Symposium", 23 (1) *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* (2004), 3-96; March, J. G. and Olsen, J. P., *Democratic Governance* (Free Press, New York, 1995); Peters, B. Guy, *The Future of Governing: Four Emerging Models* (University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1996); Rhodes, R. A. W., *Understanding Governance: Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity, and Accountability* (Open University Press, Buckingham, 1997); Rosenau, James N., and Czempiel, Ernst-Otto. (eds.), *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992).

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independence in local citizens but also to provide the process for developing the common good through civic engagement".[34] Consequently, improving governance gave states the possibility to improve democratic outcomes.

To understand the concept and different approaches of governance, one has to consider the historical background of the development of the governance concept. It can be found in the 1970s and 1980s alongside the economic crisis and the rise of neoliberalism which goes hand in hand with the gradual retreat of the welfare state. Harvey summarizes this background as follows: "the ideology of governance … [is] grounded in ideals of efficiency and rationality of administration, bringing together significant 'stakeholders' (the favored term) to come up with 'optimal' but 'politically neutral' public policies", claiming that "governance effectively masks the class and social relations that are redistributing wealth and income to the affluent through a networked and decentered system of organized political-economic power".[35] "Since the 1980s Bevir summarizes "the word 'governance' has become ubiquitous. […] Governance refers […] to all processes of governing, whether undertaken by a government, market, or network, […] or whether through laws, norms, power or language. Governance differs from government in that it focuses less on the state and its institutions and more on social practices and activities".[36]

Nevertheless, it is interesting to point out that in recent years, many scholars emphasized that neoliberal and market-friendly policies of the last decades caused serious challenges in urban governance, as they control the decision-making powers and foster uncoordinated state interventions, while duties, tasks and developments of the public sector are decentralized or privatized; economic policies are deregulated; and welfare services are substituted by social policies that favor competitive economic development.[37] We can see that the idea of governance is based on neoliberal thinking, which is also followed by the European Commission, which argues that the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in governance processes is needed to make innovative use of social capital and to foster economic growth through social progress and social innovation.[38]

2.2 Horizontal governance to empower people

Although the development of the concept of governance is embedded in a neoliberal discourse, which must be critically reflected, it recognizes "the collaborative nature of modern efforts to meet human needs, the widespread use

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[34] Jun, Jong S., "New Governance and Civil Society changing Responsibility of Public administration", in Jong S. Jun (eds.), *Rethinking Administrative theory: The challenge of the new Century*, (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 289-307 at 291.

[35] Harvey, David, *A brief history of neoliberalism* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 2005), at 71.

[36] Bevir, Mark, *Governance: A very short introduction* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012), at 1.

[37] Eraydin, Ayda, "Resilience Thinking for Planning", in Eraydin, Ayda and Tasan-Kok, Tuna (eds.), *Resilience Thinking in Urban Planning* (Springer, Dordrecht, Heidelberg, London, New York, 2013), 17-37; Peck, Jamie, Theodore, Nik, and Brenner, Neil, "Neoliberal urbanism: Models, moments, mutations", 29 (1) *SAIS Review* (2009), 49-66; Purcell, Mark, "Resisting neoliberalization: Communicative planning or counter-hegemonic movements?", 8 (2) *Planning Theory* (2009), 140-165; Harvey, *A brief history of neoliberalism* ….

[38] European Union, *Cities of tomorrow. Challenges, visions, ways forward* …

of tools of action, and the resulting need for a different style, emphasizing collaboration and enablement rather than hierarchy and control".[39] Central to the emergence of the concept of governance is the use of the concept of horizontality.[40]

A horizontal approach in governance uses networks of stakeholders for collaborative or cooperative management. Agranoff and McGuire make a distinction between collaborative and cooperative which lies with the additional dimension of helpfulness and the "absence of hostility" present in a cooperative approach.[41] Acknowledging the vital role to be played by public administration in the use of the new governance model, Cooper argued that public administration has an opportunity to capture the public's voice in the policy development cycle (from planning to evaluation) by "establishing and maintaining horizontal relationships of authority with [their] fellow citizens, seeking power with, rather than power over the citizenry".[42]

From the perspective of sustainable development, the use of governance models designed to empower people is still needed as "much of the literature of the past twenty years that views the citizen as client also seems to view the public as passive, existing on the receiving end of services or representations."[43]

The concept of governance has the potential to develop a better understanding of needs, capacities and interests. It gives citizens, including underprivileged or not-heard groups, the chance to participate even though there are limitations due to global hierarchies and power relations.[44] [45] Therefore it holds the potential to transfer affected persons into participants, empower them and promote their right to design the city they live in according to their needs. But this can hardly be achieved under unequal politico-economic and socio-spatial relations. Unequal conditions regarding socio-economic and other power relations between actors lead

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[39] Salamon, Lester (ed.), *The Tools of Government: A Guide to the New Governance* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2002), at vii.

[40] Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, *Governance of Innovative Systems – Volume 1: Synthesis Report* (OECD Publishing, Paris, 2005), at 21.

[41] Bingham and Al.,"The New Governance: Practises and Processes for Stakeholder and Citizen Participation in the Work of Government", …., at 549.

[42] Cooper, Terry L., "Citizenship and Professionalism in Public Administration", 44 (2) *Public Administration Review* (1984), 143-149, at 143.

[43] Bingham and Al.,"The New Governance: Practises and Processes for Stakeholder and Citizen Participation in the Work of Government", …, at 549.

[44] Sauer, Birgit, "Die Internationalisierung von Staatlichkeit. Geschlechterpolitische Perspektiven", 51 (4) *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* (2003), 621-637.

[45] Even though the approach valued by the school of new governance required public administration to use flexible and inclusive forms of governance, it is unclear how public administration should see the public: a network of interest groups (pluralist like Robert Dahl), a group of consumers (public choice), a body of represented voter (legislative), client to serve and citizens. See Frederickson, H. George, "Toward a Theory of the Public for Public Administration", 22 (4) *Administration and Society* (1991), 395– 417.

to unequal levels of participation, empowering some while disempowering others.[46] Young also remarks that suppressed groups need to be empowered actively by institutions and resources, since the citizens per se are not neutral and universal citizen rights are a myth.[47] Therefore one has to be aware of issues such as power relations, hierarchies or the position of marginalized groups in cities which prevent them from fully participating in governance processes, when initiating governance processes and developing new forms of governance.

In a normative sense, governance processes promote the interaction between state, civil society and economy to work out solutions together, which are dynamic, needs and goal-orientated, based on a broad consensus and hence sustainable.[48] By including different relevant actors and stakeholders in decision-making processes, a better understanding of the nature of complex problems as well as a higher commitment in implementing concrete solutions by relevant stakeholders can be reached.[49]

2.3 The potential of governance as a driver of democratic innovation

Governance is therefore a participatory, inclusive process, which promotes "interaction in an increasingly complex, diverse and dynamic national and international environment" and is broader "than the traditional, unilateral, and authoritative forms of government whose governing elites sit on unilateral commanding positions".[50] Levi-Faur also refers to this process with the term *governancing* and describes it as the "decentralization of power and the creation of decentralized, informal, and collaborative systems of governance".[51] This process is characterized by a high level of complexity, since a plurality of social and political actors with "diverging interests interact in order to formulate, promote, and achieve common objectives by means of mobilizing, exchanging, and

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[46] Huisman, Carla, "Displacement through participation", 105, *Tijdschrift voor Econoische en Soziale Geografie* (2014), 164-174; Maloutas, Thomas and Malouta, Maro Pantelidou, "The glass menagerie of urban governance and social cohesion: concepts and stakes/concepts as stakes", 28, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (2004), 449-465; Swyngedouw, Erik "Governance innovation and the citizen. The Janus face of Governance-beyond-the-state", 42 *Urban Studies* (2005), 1991-2006; Garcia, Marisol, "Citizenship practices and urban governance in European Cities", 43, *Urban Studies*, 2006, 745-765; Gerometta, Julia, Haussermann, Hartmut and Longo, Guilia, "Social innovation and civil society in urban governance: strategies for an inclusive city", 42 *Urban Studies* (2005), 2007-2021.

[47] Young, Iris Marion, "Das politische Gemeinwesen und die Gruppendifferenz. Eine Kritik am Ideal des universalen Staatsbürgerstatus", in Nagl-Docekal, Herta and Pauer-Studer, Herlinde (eds.), *Jenseits der Geschlechtermoral. Beiträge zur feministischen Ethik.* (Fischer, Frankfurt am Main, 1993), 267-304; Young, Iris Marion, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1990).

[48] Grunwald and Kopfmüller, *Nachhaltigkeit ...*; United Nations Development Programme, *Governance for Sustainable Development ...*, at http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Discussion-Paper--Governance-for-Sustainable-Development.pdf

[49] Sørensen, Eva, "Governance and Innovation in the Public Sector", in: Levi-Faur, David (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Governance* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2012), 215-227, at 217.

[50] Farazmand, Ali (ed.), *Sound Governance. Policy and Administrative Innovations* (Praeger Publishers, Westport, 2004), at 11.

[51] Levi-Faur, David, "From "Big Government" to "Big Governance"?", in *Ibid.* (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*, 3-18, at 9.

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deploying a range of ideas, rules, and resources".[52] To cope with this complexity the need occurs to experiment with a range of participatory tools and methods – such as policy consultations, citizen engagement, deliberation processes, think tanks and therefore bottom-up processes[53] – and to foster democratic innovations including citizens' juries, deliberative forums, multi-sector partnerships, and co-production.[54] The shift from an authoritative understanding of government to interactive, participatory governance is therefore always connected to testing and implementing new collaborative forms of governance.[55] These new applied forms of governance are themselves an important driver of innovation. Gathering of different actors, different kinds of knowledge, views, and interests holds the potential "to destabilize sedimented world views, problematize routinized practices, and reevaluate the functionality and relevance of traditional role perceptions and patterns of interaction. As such, collaboration fertilizes the ground for the development of new perspectives, ideas and practices".[56] Also in the context of sustainable programs development, governance is seen as a process, which focuses not so much on structures but more on interactions among structures. Governance is therefore dynamic and includes experimenting with new models of policy consultations, citizen engagement, deliberation processes and think tanks. All these methods hold the potential to arrive at innovative, jointly supported solutions. Learning is one key element of the interactive governance process which helps to create such solutions. This includes reflexivity, deliberation and collective learning processes as well as processes of co-creation and transition experiments with explicitly strategic learning goals. [57] As we can see, the concept of governance provides a framework for learning processes.

In summary, the concept of governance corresponds to the process character of negotiating different interests of different stakeholders aiming for the result to jointly create and implement policies. Openness towards a variety of stakeholders with a focus on empowering and including minorities are key elements of an inclusive and participatory governance process. The interaction and communication among stakeholders is preferably organized in a transparent, horizontal structure, enabling bottom up initiatives to participate. In order to be able to correspond to current societal challenges, to deal with different thematic policies and to include and respect different stakeholders' needs and interests, it is necessary to experiment with a variety of methods within governance processes. Hereby, the aim remains to see governance processes as learning processes, in which new ideas and solutions can be jointly developed and tested on a cooperative basis.

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[52] Torfing, Jacob, Peters, Guy B., Pieere, J. and Sørensen, Eva, *Interactive Governance. Advancing the Paradigm* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012), at 2.

[53] Pierre, Jon and Peters, B. Guys, "Different ways to think about governance", in Pierre, Jon and Peters B. Guys (eds.), *Governance, Politics and the State* (St. Martings Press, New York, 2000), 14-27.

[54] Lynn, Laurence E. Jr., "The Many Faces of Governance: Adaption? Transformation? Both? Neither?", in Levi-Faur, *The Oxford Handbook of Governance* …, 49-64.

[55] Rhodes, Roderick A.W, "The new governance: governing without government", 44, *Political Studies* (1996), 652-667.

[56] Sørensen, "Governance and Innovation in the Public Sector", …, at 221.

[57] Gilardi, Fabrizio and Radaelli, Claudio M., "Governance and Learning", in Levi-Faur, *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*, …, 155-168.

Although certain aspects, such as blending out and reproducing unequal power relations or focusing on economic cooperation rather than on social innovations remain critical within governance processes, *governancing* as such has the potential to empower marginalized groups and form new learning settings, in which participatory cooperation and learning can be explored and tested. Therefore, democratic innovation and new forms of participatory governance can develop to contribute to more inclusive and sustainable societies.

3. Case-Study analysis from Austria and Canada

This chapter presents two cases in which new forms of participatory governance are developed and tested. First, a short overview on the regional, social-economic, cultural and political background as well as current social and economic challenges of each case is given. This is followed by a detailed description of the concept of each case including financial, organizational, political and practical background information. After that, a SWOT analysis is provided which summarizes and compares the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of each case study and compares them, on the one hand from a scientific perspective in the Austrian case and on the other hand from a practical perspective in the case of Canada.

3.1 URB@Exp in Leoben:
Towards new forms of urban governance and city development

We are now going to take a look at the URB@Exp project in Leoben, which is located in the Austrian province of Styria.

3.1.1 Overview on Styria and Leoben

Styria has approximately 1.2 million inhabitants, who mostly live in and around the provincial capital Graz, Styria's cultural and economic center.[58] In the Northern parts of Styria, Leoben, the second largest city of Styria with about 28.000 inhabitants, located in the upper North[59] Historically developed as a steel city, Leoben was a prospering city due to the wealth originating from the steel industry.[60] In the 1980's, the city and its region underwent dramatic economic and social changes due to the break-down of the steel industry, the core of the region's identity. The city of Leoben reacted to those negative trends by working out new visions on the future development of the city through participation processes. A strategic planning document, the so-called "Leitbild", worked out with citizens, defining visions for the city including concrete projects on how to realize those visions. This process, starting in 2002 and lasting until 2007, called "Designing the Future" (Zukunft Gestalten), was accompanied by a research team of the Institute

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[58] Landesstatistik Steiermark, *Kleine Steiermark Datei* (Graz, 2015), at http://www.statistik.steiermark.at/cms/dokumente/11679676_103033740/d2faf4b7/Kleine%20Steiermarkdatei%202015.pdf; Stadt Graz, *Graz in Zahlen 2015* (Graz, 2015), at http://www1.graz.at/statistik/Graz_in_Zahlen/GIZ_2015.pdf.

[59] Stadtgemeinde Leoben, *Gemeindestatistik* (Leoben, 2015), at http://www.leoben.at/gemeinde/daten-geschichte/gemeinde-statistik/ .

[60] Leitner-Böchzelt, Susanne-Böchzelt, *Leoben. Die Reihe Archivbilder* (Sutton Verlag GmbH, Wiltshire, 2002).

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of Geography of the University of Graz under the lead of Friedrich Zimmermann, whose task was to moderate and guide the city, stakeholders as well as participants through the processes while focusing on and including a wide range of participatory methods, such as citizens' assemblies, regulars' tables, workshops and god parenthood-models of citizens for specific projects. As a result of the process, the City of Leoben invested in research and culture in the region, as well as supported the development of large prestigious projects in the city, such as the realization of a mall in the middle of the old-town of the city of Leoben (2007 - Leoben City Shopping), an Asian health and spa center including a conference and event hotel (2007 - Asia Spa Leoben) and establishing a regional museum which holds international exhibitions each year (Kulturquartier Leoben since 2004). This process can be seen as a success, since the economic, social and cultural situation of Leoben stabilized and developed.[61]

Nevertheless, Leoben faces on-going emigration of local residents and a steady increase in the ageing population. Staying attractive to local, internationally operating key companies with young and middle-aged working populations, providing the elderly with adequate care and leisure services, as well as dealing with growing social disparities and cultural diversity in times of on-going migration movements, have become main challenges for the city.[62] Therefore, new concepts for city development are needed, which include all stakeholders' and citizens' needs and interests. The city of Leoben is committed to action to do so, as it is stated in the current strategic planning document, the reactivation of the Leitbild-process lasting from 2008 until 2017, the so called "Designing the Future II" (Zukunft Gestalten II). Experts who have been involved in "Design Future I" have strengthened the need to focus on innovations in this new process and the importance of introducing new methods to keep citizens and stakeholders engaged and to focus on sustainable development. [63] As we can see, Leoben is both in need and is interested in exploring new forms of participation to be able to react to urban development.

3.1.2 The URB@Exp project and its implementation in Leoben

The "Joint Programming Initiative Urban Europe" (JPIUE), a funding program established by the European Commission in 2008, aims to create "attractive, sustainable and economically viable urban areas, in which European citizens, communities and their surroundings can thrive".[64] The JPIUE is a funding opportunity for the City of Leoben to work together again with the University of Graz and with other research organizations and cities across Europe to learn from

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[61] Zimmermann, Friedrich M. and Bunderla, Michaela, *„Gestalten Sie Zukunft" - Strategischer Planungsprozess für die Stadt Leoben. Enddokument* (Institut für Geographie und Raumforschung, Universität Graz, 2002).

[62] By 2050 a loss of 40.000 inhabitants is expected as well as a rise to 40% of the population aged above 65 years (Source Land Steiermark, *Regionales Wissens- und Kommunikationszentrum* (Graz, 2015), at http://www.raumplanung.steiermark.at/cms/beitrag/12017330/104134878)

[63] Zimmermann, Friedrich M. and Ehetreiber, Johanna, *Leitbilder in der Stadt- und Regionalentwicklung – „Gestalten Sie Zukunft" Strategischer Planungsprozess der Stadt Leobe*n. Stadtleitbild Review 2007-2008 (Institut für Geographie und Raumforschung, Universität Graz, 2008).

[64] Joint Programming Initiative Urban Europe, What is JPI Urban Europe? (The Hague, 2011), at http://jpi-urbaneurope.eu/about/what/

each other and develop and implement new strategies for sustainable urban developments. Together with other partners from Maastricht, Lund, Malmö and Antwerp the project *URB@Exp - Towards new forms of urban governance and city development: learning from urban experiments with living labs & city labs* was submitted and granted. The project runs from 09/2014 - 08/2017 and aims to test, explore and implement new forms of society-science collaborations and governance by focusing on co-creation and joint learning in so-called labs. The labs serve as urban experiments in which platforms for knowledge exchange between science and society are created.

The concept of 'learning labs' traces back to the term living lab, which was primarily used in computer science in the 1980's for emphasizing participatory design in human-computer interaction.[65] In recent years this co-design approach has been applied more and more in social, economic and political sciences as well as on regional studies for fostering open, inclusive and more democratic approaches.[66] Participants of labs are actively engaged in innovation and development processes (e.g. idea generation, prototyping, testing and validation). They are seen as native contributors to creative and evaluative processes rather than being passive addressees. This results in a process of creative collaboration between users, developers and stakeholders.[67]

The goal of the project URB@Exp is to develop in a transdisciplinary setting with scientific and societal partners, evidence-based guidelines for implementing new forms of governance to foster sustainable, inclusive, attractive and economically viable cities. These guideless are supposed to include types of issues for which urban labs are most suited, how such initiatives can best be organized in terms of structure, processes, and participation, and how urban labs can best be combined with formal local governance structures.[68]

The great benefit of the URB@Exp project consortium is its transdisciplinary setting. Researches have direct access to diverse urban experiments. City practitioners can benefit from the theoretical knowledge of the scientific partners. The results of the joint learning process are brought back into the scientific as well as the societal discussion and are the bases for transition. This continuous learning and development process is one of the main aspects of the pursued new forms of urban governance.

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[65] Bødker, Susanne, Ehn, Pelle, Sjögren, Dan and Sundblad, Yngve, *Co-operative Design – perspectives on 20 years with the Scandinavian IT Design Model, Proceedings of the first Nordic conference on Human-computer interaction* (Association for Computing Machinery, Stockholm, 2000).

[66] Mitchell, William J., *E-topica, Urban Life, Jim--But Not As We Know It* (MIT Press, Massachussettes, 2000); Sotarauta, Markku and Srinivas, Smita, "Co-evolutionary Policy Processes: Understanding Innovative Economies and Future Resilience", 38 (4) *Futures* (2006), 312-336; Wallin, Sirkku, "The co-evolvement in local development - From the triple to the quadruple helix model", Conference Paper at Triple Helix VIII Madrid (2010).

[67] Dutilleul, Benoît, Birrer, Frans A. J. and Mensink, Wouter, "Unpacking European Living Labs: Analysing Innovation's Social Dimensions" 4 (1) Central European Journal of Public Policy (2010), 60-85.

[68] ICIS – Maastricht University, *URB@Exp: Learning from urban experiments* (Maastricht, 2015), at http://www.urbanexp.eu/, RCE Graz-Styria – University of Graz, *URB@Exp: Towards new forms of urban governance and city development: learning from urban experiments with living labs & city labs* (Graz, 2014), at http://regional-centre-of-expertise.uni-graz.at/de/forschen/projekte/laufende-projekte/urbexp/ .

The URB@Exp project gives Leoben the opportunity to further develop its strategic planning document "Designing the Future II" by implementing and testing the innovative approach in an urban lab. Also, the city of Leoben sees the URB@Exp project as a chance to learn more about new forms of participatory governance and deepen dialogues with local grassroots initiatives and different stakeholders. To implement an urban lab in Leoben, a concept for the implementation was designed by the University of Graz, based on the outcomes of various workshops and discussions with representatives of the city of Leoben. It was agreed that the urban lab in Leoben should be designed as a concrete venue in which so-called "Future Experiments" (referring to "Designing the Future II") will take place. The urban lab in Leoben is going to be named "Leoben City Lab" and is designed to be an open, low-threshold venue, which functions as a participatory meeting place to create, discuss and negotiate ideas for the future urban development of Leoben. The Leoben City Lab should be understood as an open learning platform and meeting point for politics, administration, citizens and stakeholders coming from different societal spheres such as art, education, economy, social services and research. Individuals and representatives of groups are supposed to work in so-called "Future Experiments" on specific topics of urban development. Different types of knowledge, experiences and needs should be shared, explained and discussed within the settings. In participatory moderated workshops the participants are supposed to develop together new visions of the future of Leoben, based on their knowledge-exchanged. Those visions should then be generated into concrete projects.

The implementation of the Leoben City Lab will start with a first experiment on the strategic planning document "Leitbild" titled "Designing the Future I and II". In an interactive process together with the partners from the university, the internal city administration will reflect on the past achievements of the urban development strategy in order to see the effects and the importance of a commonly understood future development strategy. Those reflections will be visualized within the urban lab through creative design techniques and the preparation of historic data, photos and project reports on a historic timeline. In a second phase, the experiment will be opened to different public stakeholders. School classes, university students and researchers, senior citizens clubs, NGOs and their clients, urban entrepreneurs as well as individual citizens who will be invited to take a closer look at the historic timeline and will be encouraged to add their experiences to it within participatory, moderated workshops. This way, the urban lab will be filled with different experiences. On this basis, needs can be articulated and ideas for the future developed. The new ideas will boost further topic-specific future labs in which concrete projects will be created and discussed with policy makers. The University of Graz will facilitate the process, act as moderator in the learning process and as introducer to new participatory methods, document the activities and give input via action research activities, such as focus groups, interviews and participating observation. The main objective of the Leoben City Lab is to implement a long-term, sustainable, participatory learning setting, which is open

to future experiments on a variety of topics, as decided upon by the participants of the experiments.[69]

3.1.3 SWOT Analysis of URB@Exp in Leoben

Strengths

The experimental, flexible and open character of the City Lab Leoben regarding methods, topics and target groups can be considered one main strength. It has a low-threshold character and is open to anybody in the city who wants to add his or her experiences, knowledge and needs in the development of the future urban development strategy. The setting is flexible and designed to be barrier-free to people with special needs. Furthermore, the lab is open to those whose first language is not German and to provide translation services if needed. It is therefore designed to be as needs-oriented as possible for different target groups.

Although seven key topics are provided by the city to be dealt with in future experiments (the Leitbild "Designing Future I and II"; public space; quality of housing; mobility, support of culture, leisure, sport and culinary art; lifelong learning and further development of education and care institutions; economic growth and creation of jobs), experiments on any other topics can be held as well. This way it is guaranteed that a basic input is provided, but the lab is open to further thematic developments.

Another strength of the Leoben City Lab is that it is committed to the principles of gender mainstreaming and diversity management to guarantee equal access and be as inclusive as possible for different target groups living in the city. The University of Graz team as well as the project team of the city of Leoben both include experts on this topic who deliver critical and constructive input and counselling, as well as monitoring the process closely based on these principles.

Weaknesses

Although the experimental and flexible character can be considered to be a strength of the URB@Exp project in Leoben in order to be as inclusive, open and low-threshold as possible, this concept also holds potential weaknesses. As described in the concept of urban labs, they always hold the potential for failure.[70] Although failure serves as a learning opportunity, it can also have the effect that no concrete practical solutions are developed. This can be considered to be a weakness of the concept of urban labs.

Another weakness is that there is no legal-binding commitment to implement potential outcomes of future experiments. If participants of future experiments develop concrete projects on how visions of the future of Leoben can be achieved, there is no legally binding tool which guarantees the realization of these projects. The City of Leoben commits itself to the project and the concept, but at the end

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[69] Zimmermann, Friedrich M., Wlasak, Petra and Höflehner, Thomas, Internes Konzeptpapier: *Das Stadtlabor Leoben als Ort für innovative, partizipative Zukunftsexperimente* (RCE Graz-Styria, Universität Graz, 2015).

[70] Dutilleul, Birrer and Mensink, "Unpacking European Living Labs: ….".

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of the day, the outcomes of the urban experiments could only be treated as suggestions by the local authorities. This of course has the potential to weaken the engagement and motivation of participants on planning their future vision of Leoben.

Opportunities

The URB@Exp project is for Leoben an opportunity to recognize and include bottom-up initiatives in the city, which work on different economic, ecologic, social and cultural aspects of sustainable urban development. The project includes a mapping of local and lab-like initiatives, provided by the University of Graz. This is done to empower the city of Leoben to invite those initiatives to work within the lab. A concrete space where their ideas are heard and shared is provided in that context. By doing that, the city of Leoben gets in closer contact to those initiatives and can start a dialogue. This way the inclusive character of the lab as well as modern understanding of participatory governance in which bottom-up initiatives are included, is realized.

Another opportunity of the URB@Exp project is its transdisciplinary, transnational setting. Since the project is undertaken in five different European cities and European scholars as well as city practitioners from four European countries are involved, scientific and societal partners can learn from each other on existing and developing urban labs around Europe. Lessons learned, challenges as well as best-practice examples across the European Union can be shared and discussed. This holds a great opportunity of the project team in Leoben to learn and gain knowledge on theories and concrete experiences of the implementation of urban labs across Europe.

Threats

Two main threats that occur for the Leoben City Lab both deal with resources. The first threat concerns the funding of the project: Funding is guaranteed by the European Commission and the Austrian National Funding Agency from 09/2014 until 08/2017. It is still not decided upon if further funding will be provided by the City of Leoben after the end of the project for continuing the operation of the Leoben City Lab. Although there is a political commitment towards it, on-going funding is not guaranteed. The second threatened resource concerns the life span of the urban lab. If no further funding is provided, the urban lab will officially end with the end of the URB@Exp project. In a worst case scenario the urban lab could be closed after the end of the project. Nevertheless, as a best case scenario the urban lab will be further operated by stakeholders and civil society of Leoben itself, by the City of Leoben guaranteeing the by then existing setting. In either case, the most crucial aspect of the whole URB@Exp project is that the learning goals on how to design and implement urban labs as new forms of urban governance and city development, are achieved within the transdisciplinary knowledge exchange on a local as well as a European level.

The following table gives an overview of the results of the SWOT analysis of the URB@Exp project in Leoben.

URB@Exp in Leoben SWOT analysis		
	Positive	Negative
Internal	**Strengths** o Experimental, flexible and open character regarding methods, topics and target groups o Principles of diversity management and gender mainstreaming	**Weaknesses** o Open to failure o Not legally binding
External	**Opportunities** o Mapping local initiatives o Learning from scholars and practitioners from around Europe	**Threats** o Resource funding o Resource time

Illustration 3: URB@Exp in Leoben SWOT analysis (own illustration)

3.2 The case of the British Columbia Citizen Assembly

We are now going to take a look at the British Colombia Citizen Assembly (BCCA) which took place in the Canadian province of British Columbia

3.2.1 Overview of the province of British Columbia

British Columbia is the western most Canadian province. It is the third largest provincial population with 4.6 million (2014) citizens[71] and presents the fifth largest provincial aboriginal population with 232.290 individuals which is equal to 5.4% of its population.[72]

Using the Westminster system, the Legislature of British Columbia is located in Victoria.[73]The Members are elected from provincial electoral districts and all proceedings of the Legislative Assembly are broadcast in the province. The province

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[71] Ministry of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government – BC Stats, "British Columbia Population 1867-2014", *Government of British Columbia*, (2014), at http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx; From the 2011 Census, 86% of Ontario and 81% of Québec population live in urban center. National average shows that up to 81% of Canadians live in cities: Government of Canada (2015) at http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm

[72] Ministry of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government – BC Stats, "2011 Census Fast Fact", Issue 2011-3, September 16, 2013, 1-4, at 4. See Aboriginal Population, 2011 Census National Household Survey at http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/2011Census.aspx

[73] The Westminster system is a democratic, parliamentary system of government modelled after that of the United Kingdom system. See Parliament of Canada, *The Canadian System of Government* (2000), at http://www.parl.gc.ca/marleaumontpetit/DocumentViewer.aspx?Sec=Ch01&Seq=2&Language=E

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uses the first-past-the-post electoral system[74], has fixed election dates and has a mechanism to recall an election and for citizen to initiate legislation.

Since the general election of 1983, the electoral participation declined from 70% in 1983 to 55% in 2013 despite a substantial increase of the number of voters increasing from 2 million to almost 3.5 million.[75] However, a number of promising initiatives have been used to increase citizens' inclusion into the management of public affairs.[76]

3.2.2 The British Columbia Citizens Assembly

The British Columbia Citizen Assembly was a provincial initiative mandated by the Legislative Assembly to recommend a new electoral system for the province.

The initiation of the British Columbia Citizen Assembly lies with the popular victory and electoral defeat of the Liberal Party during the 1996 general election. Despite a higher number of voters having voted for the Liberal Party (661 929 votes) than the New Democratic Party (NDP) (624 395 votes), the NDP was elected with 39 candidates compared to 33 for the Liberals. Following the defeat, the BC Liberal Party leader Gordon Campbell promised to hold a citizens assembly to recommend a new provincial electoral system if the Liberal Party would form the next government. The Citizen Assembly recommendation would be subject to a referendum in order to be implemented. As the Liberals won the general election in 2000, a Citizen Assembly was created to recommend a new electoral system and received a budget of 5 million dollars for its implementation. Taking place from January to December 2004, it recommended that "the electoral system of BC be changed to a form of proportional representation (PR) called the single transferable vote (STV)."[77]

The BCCA mandate was to have a *congress of randomly selected citizens* collaborating together assessing different models for electing members of the Legislative Assembly and recommending whether the current system for provincial

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[74] A first-past-the-post election is one that is won by the candidate receiving more votes than any others, not necessarily a majority of votes. It is feature of electoral systems with single-member legislative districts, and generally results over time in a two-party competition. Generally, that election results will give a disproportionate number of seats to the party having the highest number of votes. United States, United Kingdom and Canada are among the countries using that system.

[75] Election BC, *B.C. Voter Participation: 1983 to 2013* (British Columbia, 2015), at http://www.elections.bc.ca/docs/stats/bc-voter-participation-1983-2013.pdf

[76] In 1876, the Canadian Indian Act dismantled traditional governance systems and imposed regulations on Canadian aboriginal peoples. Despite the damages of the Indian Act over aboriginal people, the Government of Canada currently recognizes that aboriginal people have an inherent, constitutionally protected, right to self-government. To date, 22 self-government agreements have been signed recognizing a wide range of Aboriginal jurisdictions that involve 36 Aboriginal communities across Canada. Modern treaties have to be legally confirmed to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *Fact Sheet: Aboriginal Self-Government* (Ottawa, 2015) at http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016293/1100100016294; Under the British Columbia treaty process, self-government arrangements give authority to First Nations to administered programs and services in sectors such as education, culture, police services, and child welfare. The new governing structure provides a constitution and law-making authority over treaty land and provision of public services. BC Treaty Commission, *Frequently Asked questions* (BC Treaty Commission, 2009) at http://www.bctreaty.net/files/faqs.php.

[77] Warren and Pearse, "Introduction: democratic renewal and deliberative democracy", …., at 7.

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elections should be retained or whether a new model should be adopted.[78] The use of a near-random-selection process[79] presented the advantage to create an unbiased and credible assembly of 160 members. It required a clear degree of involvement from thousands of British Columbians as the selection was only possible with their consent to participate. To implement the BCCA using a unique method instead of creating a subcommittee of the BC Legislature it was justified by the importance of receiving the recommendation from a neutral and trustworthy body. By not being involved in the selection of its members, the governing party guaranteed the people of BC that the recommendation would not play in favour of any political party.

The BCCA was implemented through three phases: a learning phase, a public hearing phase and a final deliberation phase. The design of the method used to conduct the works of the assembly illustrates the importance of offering an unbiased and inclusive initiative to the people of BC.

The learning phase offered the opportunity to build the cohesiveness of the assembly among the members; to ensure their active participation; and to create common understandings on the specificities of numerous electoral systems. The interaction between experts, facilitators and members of the assembly gave the Assembly members the environment to learn and to make up their minds. The public hearing phase was designed to give an *agora* to British Columbians to present their views on which system to recommend. That phase presented a space of dialogue between members of the assembly and the citizenry. The final deliberations phase gave the members of the assembly a specific time period through which the delegates deliberated through several weekends and voted on which electoral system to recommend in the upcoming referendum. "During deliberation, members were prompted to identify the most important values for their electoral system. Fair results, understood as proportionality between votes and seats, local representation, and voter choice emerged as the three most important values. These became the criteria that members would use to judge alternatives."[80]

Finally, the method used by the BCCA provided the appropriate mechanisms to efficiently consult members of the assembly and to educate the people of BC about the different technicalities of each electoral system.

In a May 2005 referendum, the proposal failed to meet the double threshold set by the government for approval: 60% of the province-wide vote and a majority in 60% of the electoral districts. The proposal met the second threshold, passing in

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[78] British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform 2004b. *Making every vote count: The case for electoral reform in British Columbia. The British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform final report*. Vancouver: British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, 3.

[79] It was a near-random selection method, as some portions of the citizenry were not allowed to participate such as those involved in political parties. To know more about the near random selection process used by the BCCA, see Thompson, Dennis F., "Who Should Govern Who Governs?", in Warren and Pearse (eds.), *Designing Deliberative Democracy ...*, 20-49, at 44; Warren, "Citizen Representatives", in Warren and Pearse (eds.), *Designing Deliberative Democracy ...*, 50-69, at 58.

[80] Fung, Archon and Warren, Mark E. (eds.), "British Columbia, Canada: Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform", See http://participedia.net/sites/default/files/case-files/653_303_Case_Study_British_Columbia.pdf, at 8.

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seventy-seven out of seventy-nine districts. But it fell 2.3% short of the first threshold, gaining 57.7% of the vote.[81]

3.2.3 SWOT Analysis of the BCAA

Strengths

By selecting the members of the assembly through a near-random selection method, a methodological effort had been made to make the initiative credible and legitimate.[82] This method took all the necessary measures to create a body of citizens having no bias toward one of the political parties or lobby activity at the provincial level. It provided the people of British Columbia a sense that the citizens selected would be selected without any bias. The model "exemplified a deeply attractive form of popular decision-making which separates the proposing of legislation from its acceptance, for example, by permitting a great deal more specialization and expertise in the proposal stage than in the ratification stage".[83] The Citizen Assembly offers a model that can be used to design public consultation that not only exhibited independence and impartiality but also developed a high level of technical competence with respect to a difficult subject matter."[84] It is a method capable of generating "certain specific political decisions that are otherwise made badly in the ordinary political processes. That is, it provides a model of excluding elected politicians from making certain kinds of decisions". [85] The BCAA remains to date an excellent example on the use of a random-selection method for sample design and public consultation.

The accountability framework and the independence of the process were clear strengths of that initiative. Establishing the initiative through a provincial Act set clear parameters to use to implement successful non-partisan and inclusive consultation and give it the necessary credibility. By having the BCCA be accountable before the Legislative Assembly, it made the initiative be seen by all parties and the general population as highly important for the democratic future of the province. It is also relevant to mention that the broadcasting of the procedures and the work sessions of the Assembly might have increased the accountability of the members of the BCCA before the people of British Columbia.

Finally, the BCCA successfully expressed a high level of trust to the people of British Columbia. It made the case that citizens coming from a broad range of backgrounds can arrive at robust policy-based conclusions. With ongoing dialogue with experts lasting for a few months, the BCCA has showed the benefit of designing consultations as a space to learn from experts and from each other using diverse

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[81]   Warren and Pearse, "Introduction: democratic renewal and deliberative democracy", at 7.

[82]   The random selection method used for the BCCA made possible to limit the control on the Assembly composition. Consequently, the BCCA could not have been accused of having hidden political or financial benefits attached to its recommendation.

[83]   Ferejohn, John, "Conclusion: the Citizens' Assembly model", in Waren and Pearse (eds.), *Designing Deliberative Democracy …*, 192-213, at 210.

[84]   *Ibid.* 213.

[85]   *Ibid.* 212.

methods capable of enabling collaboration, deliberations, and trust.[86] The success reached by the BCCA, to have a group of citizens randomly selected delivering a technical recommendation on a new electoral system to implement, is still very impressive.[87]

The BCCA was a major attempt, both in terms of socio-political impact and financial commitment, to fundamentally reform or redesign political institutions by mandating a citizen-body to assess and redesign the fundamental features of the democratic system. It presented an innovative attempt by a government to directly respond to citizen-discontent. The Assembly is almost a unique case as it received its mandate by an act of government, which legally committed the provincial government to respect its final decision. Through that initiative, the democratic renewal of the BC democracy was undertaken by government through a legitimate, fair, and powerful deliberative process in order to address institutional democratic deficits.

Weaknesses

The Assembly was unable to ensure the selection of a representative percentage of delegates originating from visible minorities. [88] It would have been beneficial to have a percentage of the members of the assembly equal to their demographic weight province wide. As newcomers tend to not vote as often compared to the multi-generational Canadian citizens[89], including more newcomers would have been a statement of the importance of their input for the future of the province. The same attention should have been made to have an equitable percentage of aboriginal delegates. The presence of only one aboriginal delegate in a province where they are close to 5 % seems to be a flaw in the method. Like immigrants, the aboriginals tend to have a low percentage.[90] Having a greater number of delegates from those two groups would have improved the inclusivity of the assembly.

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[86] Lang, Amy, "Agenda-setting in deliberative forums: expert influence and citizen autonomy in the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly", in Warren and Pearse (eds.), *Designing Deliberative Democracy* …, 85-105, at 100.

[87] Although South African and German governments have previously utilized 'citizens assemblies' as a means of collecting citizen feedback, these citizen-based bodies have never been empowered to the level of the British Columbia Citizen Assembly.

[88] Warren, "Citizen Representatives"…, at 59.

[89] Bevelander, Pieter and Ravi Pendakur, "Social capital and voting participation of immigrants and minorities in Canada", 32 (8) *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (2009), 1406-1430, at 1407.

[90] Rabinder James, Michael, "Descriptive representation in the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly", in Warren, and Pearse (eds.), *Designing Deliberative Democracy*…, 106-126, at 125; Ladner, Kiera L. and McCrossan, Michael, "The electoral participation of Aboriginal people", in *Working Paper Series on Electoral Participation and Outreach Practices-Election Canada*, (2007), 1-46, at 15, at http://elections.ca/res/rec/part/paper/aboriginal/aboriginal_e.pdf

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A second weakness of the BCCA is that despite the honorarium[91] of $150 for a day for attending meetings given to each member[92], this process attracted a percentage of the population with higher education and with a natural interest for public affairs higher than the average population.[93] A few factors can explain this situation: Citizens of BC were able to decline participating in the Assembly as participation was voluntary; Interested citizens had to be fluent in English, absenteeism from home and work was required (a barrier especially important for those having to travel as they were coming from rural BC), and the long-term commitment necessitated the need to attend the sessions. All these factors might have been more acceptable to individuals from advantaged groups[94]James observed that "the participants were disproportionately of White Canadian or European background and of a higher education and occupational level".[95] The fact that 56.4% of BCCA members were university educated, as opposed to 23.9% of the provincial population of BCCA who held university qualifications, which illustrates the point that this sector of the community were over represented on the Assembly.[96]

A third weakness is about the lack of effort made by the government to explain and promote the Assembly's recommendation. Considering the amount of resources engaged in the process, it would have been logical for the Legislative Assembly to approve the necessary credits for an "appropriate" promotion of the Single Transferable Vote (STV) electoral system.

Opportunities

The successful implementation of the BCCA gives a track record for other governments to use a random selection of the sample of citizens to consult. The BCCA also took the opportunity to establish a beneficial working relationship between citizens and experts and to empower citizens.

The use of the rule of absolute majority is seen by us as a missed opportunity. Considering positively the consensus-based approach could have brought more inclusion in the process as "some members spoke more than others, with interventions from men outnumbering those of women or minorities. Although the chair encouraged first-time speakers to engage, more formal inclusion rules could have leveled the playing field for all participants."[97] By using the consensus-based method, the Legislative Assembly and the people of BC would have had a clear message from the delegates that the STV was supported by all. It would also have

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[91] Participants would be paid an honorarium of $150 per day; daycare, transportation and accommodation were also provided to make it easier for people with lower incomes and those who lived far from Vancouver to participate. See http://participedia.net/en/cases/british-columbia-citizens-assembly-electoral-reform

[92] The honorarium of 150.00$ a day which was slightly above the BC average for daily earning in 2004 ($129,50). In 2004, The average hourly wage paid in BC was of 17.27. See http://www.strategicthoughts.com/record2004/wages04.htm

[93] Rabinder James, "Descriptive representation in the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly…, at 113.

[94] Warren, "Citizen representatives", …, at 59.

[95] Rabinder, "Descriptive representation in the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly", …, at 113.

[96] *Ibid.* 113.

[97] Fung, Archon, "British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform" (2009), at http://participedia.net/en/cases/british-columbia-citizens-assembly-electoral-reform

opened the possibility to educate the people of BC on the benefit of the use of consensus, to conduct deliberation of a very sensitive issue through the broadcasting of the procedures.

Threats

The BCAA was highly dependent upon the local political context of the time and the political will expressed by the elected officials in place. Its success lies with a favorable political context which gave the BCCA the appropriate financial and human resources for its implementation. Without strong political support for having an innovative initiative, the BCCA could have been similar to any other public consultation. In general, political support, influence or interference can be a high threat to the implementation of innovative methods on how to consult and work with citizens. High political interests can sometimes create political pressure for the body composed of *ordinary citizens* to "incorporate those with immediate stakes in the outcomes".[98]

The following table gives an overview of the results of the SWOT analysis of the BCCA.

British Columbia Citizens Assembly SWOT analysis		
	Positive	Negative
	Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Internal	o Random selection of the members of the assembly o The accountability framework o Independent process o Relationship expert-citizens o Recommendation proposed in a referendum o Trust expressed to the citizens of British Columbia o Human resource capacity o Financial capacity.	o The representation of immigrants and aboriginals o The participation was voluntary o No budget planned for the promotion of the Assembly's recommendation o No evaluation process led by the people of British Columbia.
External	**Opportunities** o Use the random selection method to a large scale initiative o Educated a number of citizens on electoral system	**Threats** o Link to the political climate and context of the time

Illustration 4: British Columbia Citizens Assembly SWOT analysis (own illustration)

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[98] Warren, "Citizen Representatives", …., at 58.

3.3 Comparative SWOT Analysis

When looking at the two case studies and their SWOT analyses, it first seems that the two presented case studies show a wide range of **differences** regarding geographical setting, used methodology and the political system they are embedded in.

Regarding the topics the two case studies are dealing with, the BCCA shows a consultative mechanism designed to address a specific and technical issue. Otherwise, for the Leoben City Lab, the scope of the issues to work on is broad and can be expanded depending on the issues expressed by the participants. That difference in the scope could be linked with the expected outcomes: The BCCA was to make a single recommendation for a specific task compared to the Leoben City Lab which was designed to set a number of recommendations to design future visions for Leoben.

The fact that the BCCA received its mandate from a provincial act is a clear difference to the Leoben City Lab. The BCCA was in a legally binding framework, compared to the Leoben City Lab which is not. By setting the selection process, the timeframe and the expected outcomes, the Act guided the implementation of the Assembly. However, it could be argued that it limits the work of the Assembly as the members were not allowed to explore other factors/issues having an impact on the election outcomes. In that sense, the Leoben City Lab has an advantage to not be legally bound and therefore more flexible.

The participation modalities were somewhat distinct as well: The BCCA had an innovative but strict process on how to select those to make the Assembly. Through the three phases, citizens were able to participate as well as presenting their position during the hearing phase. Also, as the BCCA was a province wide initiative, many interested citizens were not in a position to present on site due to the requirement to do long trips to Vancouver. Those modalities might have been severe barriers to the participation of a number of citizens. The Leoben City Lab on the other hand is open to everyone with an interest for the future of Leoben. The scope of the ideas to be discussed was wide and not necessarily technical which might enable participation throughout the city.

Finally, the BCCA was able to cover some of the expenses made by the participants by offering an honorarium. The Leoben City Lab could not offer the same compensation to the participants.

Although there are differences, there are also a range of **similarities** that can be found. Both initiatives have a clear time framework, the BCAA lasting from 2003 until 2004 and the Leoben City Lab in the context of the URB@Exp project which has an expected duration from 2014-2017, in which specific financial support is provided. This gives a clear framework in which the goals of the initiatives should be achieved.

Regarding the support of the local decision-makers, the provincial government for the BCCA and the municipal government for the Leoben City Lab have been both committed to support their initiatives to a level capable of giving the participants the resources to fulfill their mandates. It is worth mentioning that in both cases, the provincial government and the city of Leoben, despite their status as financial and co-financing supporters of the initiatives, have not steered the projects to their advantage. In the case of the BCCA, politicians were very careful to not interfere

with the work of the assembly as the assembly was seen as arm-length from the government. Also the concept of the Leoben City Lab in Leoben states clearly, that the lab is not a space for established and tradition negation processes of local decision-makers and political parties. Therefore the lab is considered to be an open space for all different stakeholders and interest groups of Leoben who meet, discuss and learn from each other. Therefore it is clearly not designed as a place of interference and discussion for politicians. The freedom given to the participants is in that sense essential as the BCCA and the Leoben City Lab have been exploring innovative approaches to current issues. Designing innovation requires freedom and therefore interferences from political forces have to be avoided. In that regards, the BCCA and the Leoben City Lab are good examples of providing the appropriate environment to their participants. They were designed with the goal to generate dialogues and interaction among the participants and with the experts involved with them in these projects.

Both initiatives were designed to work with citizens on a voluntary basis to contribute to democratic reform and new forms of participatory governance. This also leads to the fact that the participants of both initiatives are not likely to represent the general view of the public. Nevertheless, in the case of the Leoben City Lab it is seen as a chance to include specifically marginalized interests and views in the process. This gives them voices in the urban development strategies and fosters empowerment.

4. Lessons learned from transdisciplinary comparison for participatory governance innovation

The two presented cases show great differences regarding the topic, applied methods, target groups as well as the political, legal and geographical framework. The focus of the BCAA is on electoral reform whereas the URB@Exp project in Leoben focuses on urban revitalization. Nevertheless, both cases show forms of deliberative participation and joint decision making. Both cases represent first-time experiments on participatory governance in their region and aim to contribute to the development of local democracy. Therefore both cases can be considered innovative democratic experiments. The focus is in both cases on dialogue and on learning from the experimental experience. The lessons learned contribute to the development of new approaches for participatory governance and for further developments in citizen participation.

The question which now arises is which **lessons** can be **learned** from the practical and scientific SWOT analyses for further development of participatory governance.

The URB@Exp shows a project committed to offering the participants an inclusive and barrier-free space where they will be able to share their expectation for their city. Even though the BCCA was inclusive in the sense that discussions were welcomed and facilitators were guiding the discussion to give everyone the opportunity to be part of the larger discussion, the inclusivity was not to the same level. Being committed to the principles of gender mainstreaming and diversity management is an asset of what the project offers. Offering a barrier-free environment where non-German speaking people and individuals with special needs would be assisted, offered a guarantee that the project would reflect the views of a broad range of citizens.

URB@Exp offers the participants to be part of a project capable of looking at many of the aspects linked to city revitalisation. URB@Exp has a large mandate. On the contrary, the BCCA was only mandated to make one recommendation on the modality of the electoral system. No other parameters such as the electoral financing and the election date were discussed. In that regards, city officials might have a number of recommendations to explore further.

Due to lower costs compared to the BCCA, the method used by URB@Exp can be repeated and adapted to local context. The advantage of a model capable of being easily repeated is that it creates a new way on how to solve issues. Also, because the URB@Exp is designed to be active for the long-term (2017) it can develop a new urban fabric and a renewed sense of ownership for the city.

The Leoben City Lab can take the experience from the BCCA on organizing a random selection of citizens as participants for a specific lab. This innovative method of engaging different citizens could be tested and could lead to new learning experiences, both for the government on implementing participatory governance settings and for the citizens for working with unknown partners. This way, citizens, who are not yet sure if and how they want to participate in certain future experiments' in the lab, could register to be actively selected for their contribution. This would also enhance the credibility of the openness of the lab.

The BCCA could be considered as a best-practice example of political commitment to promises given before elections and setting up legally-binding processes of citizen participation. The citizens participating in the BCCA could trust that the concrete outcome of the process would be considered as an option in the parliamentary debate. This was a key driver for the on-going commitment and efforts made by the participants during the process. The urban lab cannot of date guarantee this legally binding mandate to the citizens of Leoben and should consider learning from this matter from the BCCA.

Five **crucial key aspects** to further develop governance innovation according to the characters of participatory governance can be summarized based on this transdisciplinary comparison.

1) The concept of governance in a normative sense and also regarding its approach for sustainable development always goes hand in hand with empowerment, hearing and including the voices and interests of marginalized groups and being critically aware of unequal conditions regarding socio-economic and other power relations. Therefore, experiments with new forms of participatory governance must include an official commitment towards practises based on **openness, horizontality and inclusiveness**. This includes actively removing participatory barriers, implementing and continually reflecting the process of gender mainstreaming and diversity management, empowering citizens with an attention to underrepresented and marginalized groups to redesign a program, a service or an institution to address a specific local or regional issue. Such an approach has to recognize the contribution made by the citizen body by giving them the appropriate support, a clear mandate, and the time and space to contribute. Experiments for participatory governance supports the development of effective and horizontal democratic initiatives, since they have the potential to break open hierarchical power relations in traditional government structures,

to foster active participation of citizens which leads to commitments and to be viewed as tools to reduce disenchantment with politics and build trust, dialogue and partnerships between citizens and politicians.

2) Working with a broad range of different citizens and representatives from different interest groups and stakeholders, is crucial for **diversity and representation of a wide range of opinions.** Getting a positive reception of the proposed solution by the decision makers is also vital. The use of a near random selection for selecting the citizen body in charge of formulating the expected recommendation is one example of having participants from a wide range of different educational backgrounds, age, class, and income, working toward a common solution. Furthermore, the random selection of participants makes it possible to bring legitimacy and credibility to a consultative initiative as the body cannot be taken under the control of a specific group or lobby.

3) Having said that the random selection is one example for the method to be applied, to successfully implement learning processes within participatory experiments, further **creative and innovative variations of participatory methods** for inviting participants, communicating, moderating, discussing and working in groups must be applied. This is crucial to be able to adapt the participatory method to different needs of different target groups and also experiment with different ways of reaching out to the different target groups. Addressing marginalized groups, the appropriate participatory method should prevent the exclusion of minorities and ensure the implementation of gender mainstreaming to guarantee a gender balance between participants.

4) **Openness towards new topics** within participatory experiments is crucial to explore and discuss together. Being open towards new topics has the potential to strengthen the learning outcomes of the process. Furthermore, local bottom-up-initiatives, which so far have not had a chance to be heard within the political discourse, can be encouraged and empowered to also address their specifics needs or topics, which have not been yet taken into consideration. This contributes furthermore to the aspect of inclusiveness.

5) In order to include the outcomes of such processes in the representative democracy-system, it is essential to have legally binding mechanisms, which guarantee that the outcomes will be presented and voted upon by the representatives in regional parliament. This on the one hand gives the participants of the participatory processes the guarantee that their work will be considered in the political decision making process, and has a chance to be adopted in a legal setting. On the other hand, the guarantee that the outcome will be voted upon in the parliament, assures that at the end voted representatives decide if the proposal is adopted or not and is therefore the new form of participatory governance which is officially included in the representative democracy system. These proceedings protect participants of the process as well as the political system itself from the arbitrary decision, if and how outcomes of participatory governance experiments will be discussed or voted upon. Therefore the rule of law and the balance of power are guaranteed.

The following diagram shows a summary of what can be learned from the two case studies presented in this paper, as an interdisciplinary production of new knowledge based on the case studies:
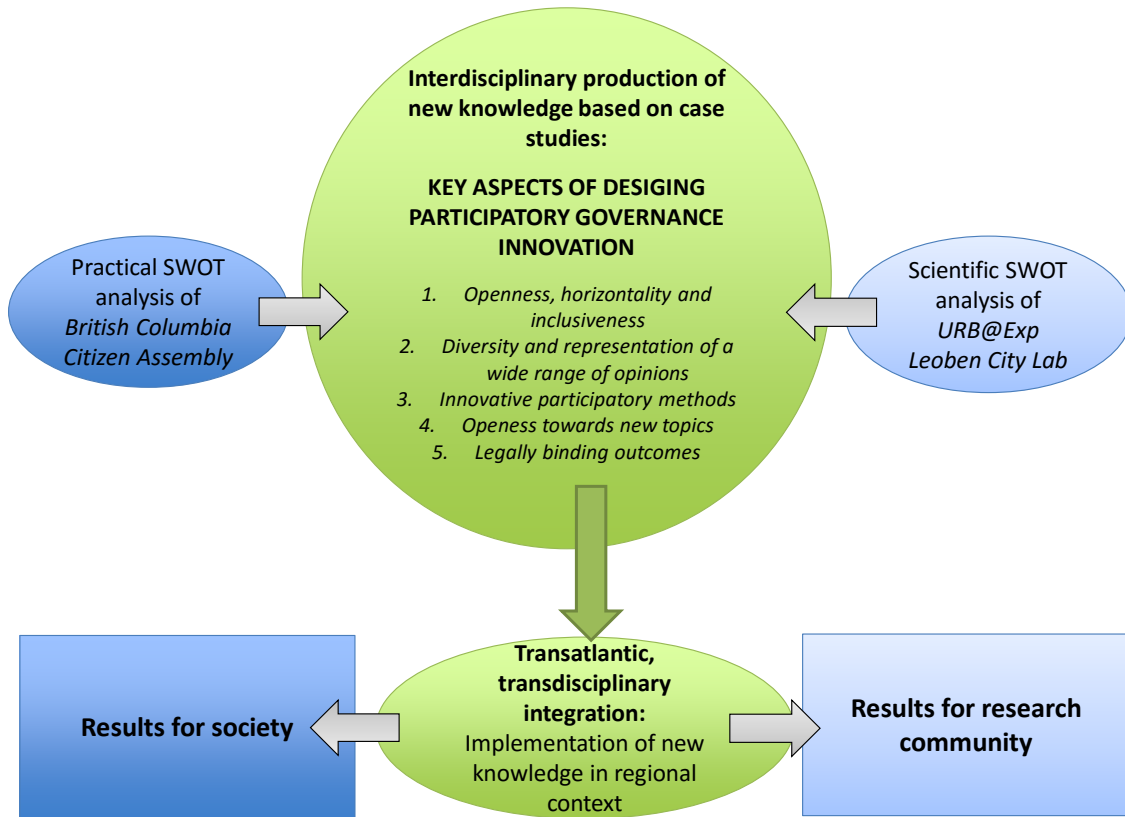

Illustration 5: Overview on outcomes of transatlantic, transdisciplinary research (own illustration based on Jahn 2008 and Jahn et al 2012

To summarize, a fruitful transnational and transdisciplinary knowledge-exchange on new forms of participatory governance and democratic innovation is possible, despite broad geographical differences and different regional settings. Learning from each other's scientific and practical experiences is very much needed to reflect one's approach, gain new perspectives, learn about innovative developments and find out key aspects when implementing new forms of participatory governance.

The challenge which now arises is how we can integrate the results of the transdisciplinary analysis and the five found key aspects of designing governance innovation in the further development of participatory governance in the two regions, as a third phase of the transdisciplinary process called "Implementation of new knowledge in regional context". Each of the authors are now encouraged to communicate the outcomes of this transatlantic, transdisciplinary knowledge exchange within local communities as well as within the specific scientific community and, if possible, apply them in regional settings. The authors expect to present the conclusions of this article through workshops with practitioners in local communities and discuss the findings with local partners and in the scientific

community. Through this process, the authors will see what further challenges and lessons are to be learnt by implementing their findings in local, transdisciplinary learning settings.

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