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Integrating Communities into Tourism Planning Through Social Innovation

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ABSTRACT *This study proposes a framework that provides a new combined effective strategy for implementation of community participation into tourism planning as a social innovation phenomenon. The underlying idea is creation of innovative and appropriate development strategies to involve local communities as a key agent in the decision-making and planning of tourism destinations in order to ensure positive local attitudes and improvement in communities' quality of life. Utilizing the information gathered from the (ECoC), Guimarães 2012, as the case study, this paper discusses a complex concept that encapsulates the main dimensions of the community tourism development and social innovation in practice. Community-based development initiatives of the city of Guimarães included in the development programme for the ECoC 2012 are evaluated in the context of governance structure, networking and direct participation of local communities. Results not only indicate operational constraints in governance arrangements and flaws in community participation strategies, but also suggest the need for collaborative initiatives and the need for application of a system perspective that includes all elements of sustainable community involvement.*

1. Introduction

The participation of citizens in decision-making and planning processes as a way to increase and improve social work practices can be traced back to the early twentieth century. Since then, active citizen participation, a basic tenet of democratic theory (McLeod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999), has become the focus of attention among those aiming to build strong and mutually beneficial links with stakeholders and local community members. Many public and private agencies have adopted planning frameworks that attempt to build ties with local stakeholders in order to encourage them to become actively involved in changing conditions that affect the quality of their lives.

At the same time, the substantial development of the tourism industry, as the largest and fastest growing industry in the world since the 1990s, has been accompanied by several costs and issues, adversely affecting the lives of hosting communities and possessing a threat to regions' natural and cultural resources. Putting aside tourism businesses economic benefits, natural and socio-cultural environments of many tourism destinations disappeared

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or get strongly damaged due to tourism's unplanned development process (Hall & Lew, 1998; Sautter & Leisen, 1999).

Community participation and conservation activities through sustainable development and planning create appropriate development frameworks and strategies that ensure favourable local attitudes, protection of local resources and, more importantly, the protection and improvement of the quality of life of communities influenced by tourism development (Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Milne & Ewing, 2004; Tosun, 2006; Yoon, Gursoy, & Chen, 2001). According to Sofield (2003), community-based tourism shows a progression, from a development perspective, as it incorporates the ideas of participation, empowerment and the importance of the social, rather than just economic or environmental aspects to development. It is clear that without empowerment, sustainable tourism development by communities is difficult to attain. Although many studies point out the need for empowering local communities through participation in the tourism decision-making and planning process, few practical tools for involving "the larger community in a meaningful way" have been assessed (Reid, Mair, & George, 2004).

During the past decade, a distinctive set of techniques or approaches has been developed, in order to enhance and strengthen citizen participation. These techniques open up opportunities for citizen to demand accountability, transparency and responsiveness from government bodies. The underlying idea behind developing these techniques envisages a future supported by citizen participation where citizens are users and choosers of involvement designed by others (Cornwall & Gaventa, 2000). New perception about participation, like the perspective suggested by Lister (1998), provide citizens with actual involvement rights and defined them as "makers and shapers rather than as users and choosers of involvements". In this point of view, "the right of participation in decision-making in social, economic, cultural and political life should be included in the nexus of basic human rights" (p. 228). Therefore, citizens act as agents and local community can be transformed into a human agency in which participation is an obligation rather than responsiveness (Cornwall & Gaventa, 2001).

Applying the principles of such new thinking about citizen, participation and rights at practical and operational levels in tourism development raises the question of how to create new and innovative methods involving host communities as a critical agency in the decision-making, planning and development of tourism destinations; how to create processes that can generate opportunity for communities to be involved in a way as to enhance responsibility as well as responsiveness.

This paper explores the main components of community participation from a planning perspective with a fresh look into how to integrate communities into tourism planning through social innovation. The paper first presents a review of literature on tourism planning, community participation and social innovation. After examining the relationships between community-oriented planning strategies, elements of social innovation and regional development, emphasis in the paper shifts to presentation of the case study of the Guimarães development programme for the European Capital of Culture (ECoC). At the end, a framework and some implications for developing community-integrated tourism through social innovation are suggested.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Citizen Participation in Tourism Planning

The critical period in the rise of fundamental theoretical construct of community participation was in the beginning of the twentieth century, after the Second World War

(Rifkin, Lewando-Hundt, & Draper, 2000). Western perception of technology gap and the idea that poor people would become more developed by adapting new technologies took over almost all theories of development in the late 1940s and 1950s. These resource-based theories also known as “technocratic models” have been developed to understand how organizations achieve sustainable competitive advantages (Conner, 1991). Technocratic models emphasize deterministic and positive approaches and indicate a passive role for most people in poor countries who would have technological innovations delivered to them or be compelled by government to contribute to the national flows. As a result of this point of view, community development was introduced as an important approach to rural development and was mainly linked to government policies (Catley, 1999). On the other hand, this approach had some serious disadvantages in practice, given that in community development approaches, communities are assumed to be a homogenous group of people who have similar needs, wants and demands, which form pluralist involvement in communities whose diverse interest groups try to influence outcomes in a pluralist arena. While in fact, community participation is a process that involves diverse social and cultural groups in a common issue or project at the community level. This approach combines commitment to “difference” and “unity” in the same community effort. It builds upon familiar steps in the participation process but practices them in multicultural ways (Checkoway & Richards-Schuster, 2003). An additional shortcoming of this approach was the one-way, top-down connection between government and rural populations. Eventually, community participation lost its credibility as a development approach due to its narrow view of participation and ineffectiveness in transforming rural communities (Cohen & Uphoff, 1980). Consequently, tourism literature has called for implementation of an approach that considers more active involvement of locals in development issues, since local residents are seen as a key resource in sustaining the product of tourism destinations particularly in rural areas (Hardy, Beeton, & Pearson, 2002).

Long story short, the concept of community participation has been introduced in the tourism development process from the western world, as a means to reject unfair decision-making, attain more equal distribution of the benefits and satisfy the local community in better ways (Brohman, 1996). The reasons behind emerging community participation in the tourism development process have been well discussed and rehearsed in the tourism literature. For example, Cole (2006) clarified that tourism as a service-based industry is extremely dependent on the support and co-operation of host communities. Dogra and Gupta (2012) also believe that in the tourism development context, community participation acts like a backbone of a destination. Accordingly, Murphy (1985) and D’Amore (1983) illustrated that service is the key to the hospitality atmosphere and community participation can result in an increased social carrying capacity. Tosun and Timothy (2003) further argue that community participation can add potential values to the democratization process and has the ability to increase awareness, concern and interest in local and regional issues, because the local community is more likely to know what will work and what will not within local conditions.

Meanwhile, it is notable that among the supporters of participatory planning in tourism development, Murphy (1985) is the favourite point of intersection with the literature. Murphy’s (1985) argument is concerned with the notion that authorities and experts cannot determine the host community’s interests, opinions and priorities. He also believed that the potential social benefits of tourism development can be simply overcome by involving communities in the consultation and planning process of tourism destinations. Therefore, in order to reduce tourism planning flaws, more focus should be put on the inhabitants of a destination.

This article adds further support to the necessity of participatory planning in tourism, arguing that although citizen participation is an indispensable instrument in social, political, economic and administrative affairs, it is especially important for tourism, taking into account the industry and its distinguished characteristics. Community participation is a vital element in the implementation of tourism plans and strategies first of all because tourism is fragmented; it is made up of various sectors and sub-industries and since no business or governmental establishment can operate in isolation (Gunn, 1988, p. 272), development of collaboration and coordination mechanisms among government organizations, between the public and the private sectors, and with local community is essential for the highly fragmented tourism industry (Inskeep, 1991). Second, planning for physical tourism development and for the use and conservation of natural resources increases the potential for community conflict and a participatory method can eliminate constraints and barriers to growth and to provide a better problem-solving and implementation process by properly including community perspectives (McDonough, Russell, Nancarrow, & Burban, 2002; Thompson, Elmendorf, McDonough, & Burban, 2005). The socio-economic dynamic of tourism is another important distinguished characteristic of this industry, which has proven to be one of the most effective means to drive job creation and economic development in local communities (World Tourism Organisation, 2011).

The community-oriented approach is a widely accepted theory (Gunn, 1994; Inskeep, 1994) that facilitates the implementation of principles of sustainable development by distributing local control of development, consensus-based decision-making and fair flow of benefits to all those affected (Tosun, 2006). Frameworks have been also developed to extend the approach of community participation in tourism development, which can be used to assist to decide on appropriate plan for enhancing community involvement (Okazaki, 2008). Besides, attempts were also made by various scholars (Franklin & Ebdon, 2004; Glaser & Denhardt, 1999; Gurwitt, 1992; Saltzstein, 2003, Simonsen & Robbins, 2000) to illustrate how the community approach might be achieved in practice. In this regard, various academics and practitioners acknowledge that community participation can be viewed from at least two perspectives: participation in the decision-making process and participation in tourism benefits sharing (Höckert, 2009; Michael, 2009; Wang & Wall, 2006). However, the relationships between these two perspectives are far from clear (Okazaki, 2008; Tosun, 2006). According to Timothy (1999), participation in the decision-making process generally refers to balancing power in decision-making, which means empowering local residents to decide their expectations and concerns for tourism. On the other hand, participation in tourism benefits sharing is related to spreading the benefits of tourism development projects such as increasing incomes, employment and education of locals (Brohman, 1996). Yet, it is worth mentioning that participation in decision-making does not guarantee benefits (Blackstock, 2005; Li, 2006). Besides, a community can receive fair and satisfactory benefits from tourism even with no active participation in decision-making (Li, 2006; Wang & Wall, 2005).

A glance through the literature has described a variety of potential challenges faced by the concept of community-based tourism. To cope with such challenges, scholars have proposed a range of alternative frameworks. The Community Benefit Tourism Initiative developed by Simpson (2008), for example, is a framework that focuses on the transformation of benefits to a community regardless of size, location, wealth level, participation, involvement, ownership or control (Iorio & Wall, 2012). Another effort was also made by the European Commission through the development of a European Tourism Indicators System for sustainable management at destination level, which is a set of indicators, a toolkit and a data set designed to be used by tourism destinations as an instrument to monitor, manage and enhance their sustainability performances. By following an action-based approach and a

participatory process, the system tries to improve quality of life for locals and positive relations between residents and tourists and also to support long-term well-being of residents by informing policy and management decisions (European Commission, 2013). Other frameworks, however, went in totally different ways and reveal that the achievement of tourism benefits could be an antecedent and catalyst of participation. For example, according to Li (2006), not all communities like to be involved and to participate in tourism decision-making. Wall and Mathieson (2006) further explain that eventually communities may reject tourism as a development option. Nevertheless, as Iorio and Wall (2012) pointed out, participation both in decision-making and in benefits sharing is not the only type of participation and community participation may take many forms.

In the so-called developed world, community-based tourism goes side by side with modern planning development regardless of the particular form of planning that is promoted. According to Wall (2007), public participation and planning have become so completely linked that it is almost impossible to consider them apart. Therefore, in any form of tourism development, academics and practitioners emphasize on the consideration of the preferences of stakeholders, in particular local residents.

2.2. Social Innovation, Regional Development and Territorial Transformation

Innovation is the generation, acceptance and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services. Acceptance and implementation are central to this definition, since they involve the ability to respond, change and adapt to external and/or internal changes (Hull & Hage, 1982; Kanter, 1995). However, innovation has always acquired real importance in technical and economic studies and has traditionally presented just from a scientific point of view. The social and institutional aspects of innovation began to be considered only from the second half of the 1990s, with the introduction of the systems theories (Lundvall, 1996), but over the years, the concept of social innovation has emerged as an important area in the social and economic research.

Nilsson (2003) defines social innovation as a significant, creative and sustainable shift in the way a given society dealt with a profound and previously intractable social problem such as poverty, disease, violence or environmental deterioration. Social innovation is now a significant concept in scientific research and has been used in ideological and academic disputes about the nature and role of innovation in modern society, as a conceptual extension of the innovative character of socio-economic development (Hillier, Moullaert, & Nussbaumer, 2004). According to Hochgerner (2009), social innovation starts from a general innovative idea, as any novelty that happens in the society extends across the social fabric and is, more or less gradually, recognized by the society. Social innovation stands for new approaches or practices launched in order to improve economic and social performance of public and private organizations, to resolve crisis for the social player, to fill in where there is a lack of guideline and regulations and, finally, in the social and community coordination to satisfy new goals or needs (Purpura & Vázquez, 2009). Maccallum, Moulaert, Hillier, and An Vicari Haddock (2009) further stated that social innovation is a bridge between emancipating collective arts initiatives and the transformation of social relations in human communities. The majority of recent discussions concerning social innovation emphasize on the “process” dimension of social innovation such as the transparency, governance and capacity building (empowerment) dynamics of social movements and initiatives (Moulaert, Martinelli, Swyngedouw, & Gonzalez 2005). The central point of such process-based innovation theories focuses on the importance of scattering and transferring ideas, qualifications, knowledge and information among institutions via a learning process.

Social innovation also was developed in connection with the fields of social policies and regional planning. During the past 20 years, social innovation has become increasingly important in the analysis of society, its development and governance at various spatial levels. More recently, social innovation analysis and practice have devoted particular attention to formulation of development strategies for socio-economically disintegrated regions and localities. From a territorial perspective, social innovation involves spatially exchanged identities and cultures, and is quiet often locally/regionally specific and spatially negotiated between agents and institutions that have a strong territorial affiliation (Moulaert, 2009, p. 12). The territorial innovation model is a type of process innovation driven by social demand in a particular area in which local institutional dynamics and social actors play a significant role (Rosa & Figueiredo, 2012).

Social innovation in regional development context can be considered as a set of processes and methodologies that allows improvement of quality of life of the local and regional communities and reduces inequities among them, and in this way contributes to the sustainability of the community and country (Farfus & Rocha, 2007). As a result, Integrated Area Development considers social innovation since it represents innovative forms of planning practices in two ways. As explained by Moulaert (2009), Integrated Area Development first requires factors of innovation in social relation between individuals within and among groups. García (2006) further states that governance affairs are also a part of the social relations and without change and transformation of organizations and governance practices, it is almost impossible to overcome the fractures caused by different disintegration factors within communities and their local territories (LeGalès, 2002). Second, Integrated Area Development needs a new methodology of social work to meet the fundamental needs of groups of disadvantaged citizens. Therefore, the combination of these two requirements of social innovation and Integrated Area Development emphasizes on the importance of working with the people and not for the people. The understanding of the multiple benefits of network collaboration leads us to the conclusion that only through the application of a “bottom-up” approach as the first and the crucial step in the planning and decision-making process can we create the right conditions for social innovation to occur.

3. Methodology

As there has not been much explicit treatment of public participation and social innovation particularly within the tourism context, the nature of this research is explanatory and qualitative method considers being appropriate. This research presents a case study of the city of Guimarães development programme for the ECoC 2012 which is a city designated by the European Union, for one year, during which public and cultural events are held to showcase the city or region’s identity and cultural dynamics. The justification for using a case study as a basis for the development of the “more structured” tools for the preliminary, exploratory research (Rowley, 2002) is well documented in literature. For example, Eisenhardt (1989) believes that case studies are particularly well suited to new research areas when a fresh perspective is needed.

The methods applied in this study include content analysis of the strategic plan and policy documents as well as of evaluation and monitoring reports, commissioned by the European Council with the attempts to outline the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the ECoC 2012’s long-term city and community actions. Regarding the right technique of conducting content analysis, various scholars (Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 2002) believe that there is no right or wrong technique of undertaking content analysis and that quantitative and qualitative versions of this method can be applied depending on the purpose of the research study (Neuman,

2003). This research, therefore, adopts the qualitative content analysis definition as suggested by Patton (2002, p. 453) as: “Any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings.”

Analysis of documents was conducted by the main researcher rigorously following the procedure of content analysis in order to ascertain qualitative reliability (Creswell, 2007). Only materials produced officially by funding and implementing organizations involved in the programme were considered (listed in Table 1). The researchers additionally perused the programme schedule for “Guimarães 2012”, the official website, 40 news and press articles found in websites and related posts in various official blogs. After analysing the initial results, comparisons were made until a consensus was achieved. At the end, the findings were refined and finalized.

In order to broaden the scope of the findings from the content analysis, in-depth interviews were also designed targeting delegations of the 2012 ECoC and the team of the City of Guimarães Foundation (FCG). Although these in-depth interviews provided us with more details on some of their activities and initiatives, it became apparent that, since Guimarães 2012 hosted more than 700 projects with various experts in each programme, most of them know more about the elements they programmed and were not aware of the overall community engagement plan and strategy. This made it almost impossible to arrange multiple interviews, and collect data from different project managers. In addition, when managers from each programme were approached, it was often stated

Table 1. Content analysis materials and sources

Title	Type	Content	Editor
ECoC strategic plan 2010–2012	Organizational policy for Guimarães ECoC 2012	Presents the strategic goals programming, communication and monitoring	Guimarães City Foundation
ECoC change in progress 2012	Guimarães newspaper for the Melina Mercouri Prize, Brussels	Summarized the event concept and the progress in the different areas of programming	João Nunes
Open cities: Crucibles for democratic change 2012	Online report of the open city programme	Explains a project that is part of the Cidade (City) programme for Guimarães, Portugal	Prepared by Gregory Hadfield Commissioned by Watershed
ECoC ex-Post evaluation of 2012	Final report for the European Commission (with Annexes)	Considered the ECoC preparation, designation and development phase to the completion of programme	Ecorys UK Ltd
We are Guimarães 2012	Institutional book	Includes a framework for cultural and artistic events designed by the local voluntary sector	Circle of Art and Recreation
Impacts, economic and social: Executive report—2013	Evaluation report of Guimarães 2012 economic and social impact	Evaluates the impacts of the ECoC	University Of Minho
The Guimarães Conversations—2013	Report on workshops participation and European citizenship	Indicates the dialogue between citizens and politicians	Centro Cultural Vila Flor
ECoC: Success strategies and long-term effects 2013	Culture and education study of ECoC	Comprehensive assessment of the long-term effects of hosting the ECoC programme	Beatriz Garcia & Tamsin Cox Prepared for European Parliament

that their activities were available online. Based on this, it was decided to only approach the programme managers if there is a disagreement item about their programme and since there were only a few items indicating some disagreement in the findings, three in-depth interviews were considered enough and then it was decided not to carry out more interviews.

3.1. *Guimarães Case Study*

Guimarães is a historical city located in the Braga district, northern west part of Portugal, in an urban area of 23.5 square kilometres with a population of 53,000 inhabitants (See [Figure 1](#)). Since Guimarães has a strong history link with the development of the Portuguese national identity, it is one of the country's most important historical and cultural cities and it was also classified World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Guimarães has excellent access routes as well, considering the fully electrified train connection to Porto and the road links to the highway in the north–south axis and the Valença border (the busiest in the country). As for the air and sea connections, the city takes advantage of the closeness of two international airports (Porto and Vigo) and three seaports (Leixões, Viana do Castelo and Vigo). This and the enormous opportunities in cultural tourism made Guimarães the largest tourist centre in the region (OECD, 2008).

At the same time, Guimarães is located in a dynamic commercial region, with a vast industrial and exporting tradition, well known for its textile manufacturing, cutlery, jewellery and clothing (which are losing importance since the early 1990s). To fight the negative effects of the crisis, the municipality of Guimarães developed a series of urban regeneration policies since the 1990s, as a strategic response to deindustrialization. The focus of these policies first was to rehabilitate land and industrial sites for cultural uses. They have also emphasized on regeneration of the historical centre, based on the principles of preserving its medieval morphology and maintaining traditional building techniques. More recently, to increase the investment on the tertiary sector of tourism, hotels, education facilities and a cultural centre have been constructed in the city as well. Over the years, the city local authorities and the municipality have accomplished highly important, comprehensive



Figure 1. Guimarães location map. Adapted from Europe Travel Website, <http://goeurope.about.com/>, 29 November 2013.

cultural and artistic development, focusing on the city historical and cultural identity in the north-western area of the peninsula (Ecorys UK Ltd, 2012).

Since the early 1990s, the city council played a significant role in the promotion of sustainable cultural development. In the last 20 years, efforts of the council have provided the city and municipality with innovative facilities for the promotion and dissemination of the artistic and cultural programmes. Regular artistic events were also organized through partnership between the city council and local associations. In addition, local authorities in collaboration with academia transformed the city into a “science and technology city” with the development of several innovation centres and a Science and Technology Park.¹

As the step for increasing cross-border integration and cooperation with Galicia, which is an independent community in northwest Spain (being bordered by Portugal to the south), Guimarães has a long-term plan to become a Euroregion. Within Portugal, Guimarães has established its position based on industrial, scientific and cultural aspects. With the help of merging strategies of inclusion in European networks of a number of institutions in the region, the city added a dynamic of internationalization to its position as well.

Guimarães’s application process for the ECoC began in October 2006. Since the beginning, the city council considered Guimarães 2012 as an opportunity to overcome the city’s long-term cultural development challenges, and also as a way to promote alternative models of economic development based on creativity and innovation. The programme could also strengthen the competitiveness of the city as a tourism destination and create employment, specifically through cultural and creative industries. The city could also reposition itself as a creative and innovative cultural sector in national and international scales. Guimarães’s application for ECoC 2012 was formally approved in May 2009 and the members of delegations started the planning process by September 2009.²

3.2. Governance

Four of the key existing organizations were selected as the Foundation’s governing entities with the aim of creating an open organization that promotes integrity, transparency, a healthy relationship with stakeholders, high-quality information and open communications at local, national and international levels. As it is shown in Figure 2, the governance structure included a General Council, a Board of Directors, a President and an Audit Committee.

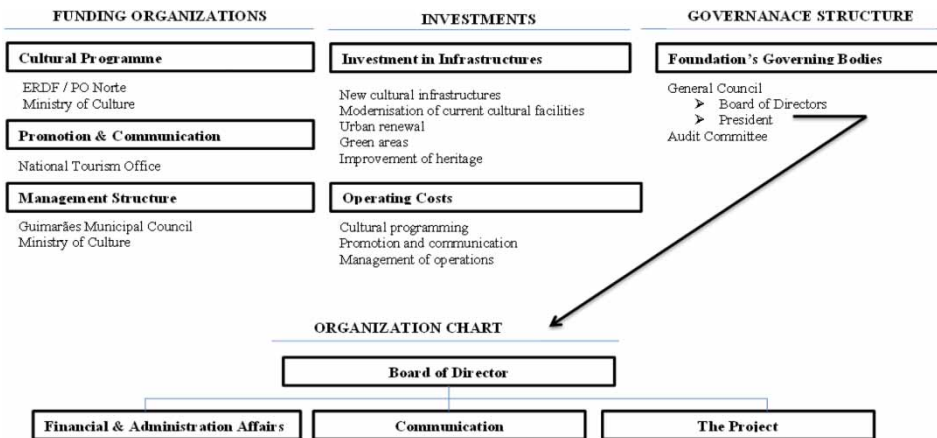


Figure 2. Governance structure of Guimarães ECoC 2012.

Source: Authors.

The remit of the General Council was to set the FCG's general policies. Its members were composed of recognized merit and prestige entities and personalities representing different sensitivities and interests involved in the project. The responsibilities of the Board of Directors were to administer assets and manage the FCG's projects and activities. The President of the FCG was responsible to represent the foundation at national and international levels, supervising its management and services and lastly ensuring that the entire foundation performs well. The Audit Committee was tasked to review the foundation's administrative management.

The governance model was designed to be community-oriented, providing two-way relationships with the community with appropriate planning in close cooperation with local agents and organizations. The governance model relied on a structure that outsources tasks and forms partnerships for activities which would result in designing local community projects not only in terms of cultural agents but also companies, public institutions and the general public. To concentrate on the financial and communication areas, the foundation separated the organization structure into three areas: (1) financial affairs and support activities; (2) communication and (3) the ECoC project. A team of ten people worked full-time on the project for a two-year period that started in 2010, while outsourcing much of the work.

The most crucial challenge of the governance framework in the development of Guimarães ECoC was engaging and empowering all members of the community by encouraging their proactive involvement in planning and organizing the cultural programme. As explained before, integrated community participation requires government approval and support in all the stages of decision-making and planning.

3.3. *Networking*

It is widely accepted that community participation requires participation in the social life of the community through a growing network of personal relationships (Hampton & Wellman 2003; Wellman, 2001) because networks allow different groups of people and organizations to work collectively towards a common goal by organizing strategies and sharing resources (La Due Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998; Stern & Dillman, 2006). In the Guimarães ECoC 2012 planning process, implementation networks focused on stakeholder involvement and collective decision-making and involved a wide range of institutions, organizations and individuals. The programme's networking vision was based on designating a structure that forms and strengthens national and international partnerships, involving creators, the community and economic agents. Using basic principles of an open source governance, the production and consumption models were basically dependent on the notions of *network society*, *creative city* and *collective intelligence*.

Therefore, apart from the governing organizations, various cultural associations based in the city (Círculo de Arte e Recreio, Associação Cultural Recreativa Convívio and Associação de Etnografia e Folclore de Guimarães) were asked to create a consortium and to develop their own programme entitled *Intersecting Times*. These associations were of key importance for the civic participation and social dynamics of the programme, since they provided music and art workshop spaces, and organized a number of cultural events, festivals and music concerts. In addition, for publicity, and promotional purposes specific partnerships were set up with media at all levels.

3.3.1. *Communication strategies.* To publicize the Guimarães ECoC 2012 development process, and to promote the cultural programmes, various communication tools were developed targeting four different groups namely, (1) local community; (2) institutions, partners and sponsors; (3) audiences at events and (4) Europe. The communication strategy intended

to convey an image of sustainability and of a network society and focused on the artistic use of technology, promoting new ways of how communities can interact with each other through social networks (which enervate distances and encourage extensive access to information). The Ministry of Tourism played a significant role for proper implementation of the communication action plan using festivals and educational venues to raise awareness, invest overseas promotion and involve citizens.

Various channels of communication were developed, such as regional newspapers, social media and electronic marketing tools. Initially, the programme website was supposed to be the premium channel for communication with the community, but the negative attitude of local community towards planners (which will be further explained in the findings section) forced the planners to diversify the communication channels. Therefore, monthly printed newsletters (which were issued every two weeks) containing step-by-step progress information about the development process of cultural programmes were released and distributed to mailboxes in the city centre and also in public spaces such as cafes and cultural venues. Moreover, community engagement events and debates forums were set up; bringing a wide range of participants that included government officials, national cultural practitioners, local communities and local councillors as well as members of international European organizations, non-governmental organizations and international cultural agents. Finally, to provide the locals with opportunity to have face-to-face interaction with planners, and to receive local stakeholders' feedback, nine meetings were organized, focusing on each of the cultural programming areas. The underlying idea for organizing these meetings was to strengthen the connection between the city and the planning team to promote discussions and to collect the community's input on each topic.

3.4. *Direct Participation*

Since one of the main strategic objectives of the Guimarães ECoC 2012 was full and active participation of the community, the FCG, as the main body for planning, promoted an open meeting only few weeks after its official constitution. In the first phase of the planning process the local community (local residents groups and business owners) was therefore invited for direct participation. The planning team presented its educational programme for the community's involvement, aiming at informing citizens of the management structure strategy and the development guidelines throughout the next few years. The community expected to be engaged during the course of the planning process and during the programme in a number of forms, such as participation in performances, training programmes and workshops, helping with welcome programmes, volunteering and publicizing and promoting the project.

3.4.1. *Workshops and trainings.* In order to comprise initiatives and actions aimed at knowledge sharing and generation of new collaborative platforms, planners included workshops and training sessions, as well as backstage visits and opportunities for dialogue with artists for most of the art-related projects. However, based on the nature of each project, training and workshops were targeting different groups of people. For example, there were workshops and trainings dedicated to young artists as well as workshops for teachers and educators, as they are the ones who directly support enhancing the relationship between the public and the planners. Guimarães ECoC 2012 planners also organized training courses and discussions at schools, which resulted in art performances of school children in many projects and made the access to families and the community as a whole easier. Various other projects in this regard were developed such as the *Dance and Theatre Residency*, which included programmes in the city by companies in residencies and training courses in

close involvement with the local community. The private sector, local businesses and citizens were the main targets of these educational programmes.

3.4.2. *Volunteerism.* To provide multiple opportunities for the community to participate and take leadership roles as well, a volunteer network of educators was made up of cultural and artistic educational agents and teachers, aiming to transfer knowledge and stimulate new cooperative work practices. A total of 300 volunteers helped during the summer of 2012. The volunteer programme involved citizens as promoters or players in the creation and preparation of specific projects. Data collected from volunteers revealed that they considered their experience enriching and unique. However, they would prefer to be able to interact with the audience and the artists instead of just guarding the spaces around the events' venues. At the same time, interviews with volunteers' co-coordinators indicated issues such as limitation in the use of personal and professional skills of the volunteers and lack of coordination in organizing the volunteer work.³

3.4.3. *Contests.* Involvement of the community was more facilitated through competitions and public tenders on various levels that were open to individuals, groups and legal entities. Various projects were developed under a *City Programme* theme and divided into three *Creative* parts (*Landscape, Exchange and Future*) where participants could send innovative proposals and suggest new ways to transform and progress urban features of the city and co-create new possibilities for development. There were also art, music and sport competitions designed specifically for young citizens. FCG claimed that Guimarães 2012 generated 1,000 new creations in the cultural programme.⁴

4. Findings

Tourism has been identified as a priority sector and an important strategy that can lead to community development all over the world. In the last two decades, a growing number of European cities have focused on the diversification of cultural tourism by investing in cultural attractions and infrastructure, to secure a prominent position in the international tourism map, and on the development of a rich and sustainable industry that is in harmony with other strategic sectors of the urban economy (Russo & van der Borg, 2002). Within cultural cities, the heritage structures pass through the middle of living communities and citizens directly interact with these cultural and traditional structures as they go about their everyday lives. Thus communities as a vital part of the culture itself vastly contribute to the liveliness of the area and must be integrated into the planning system (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1990; Murphy, 1985). This study investigated the community-based tourism activities that have been initiated in the city of Guimarães for the development of the ECoC during a period of two years (2010–2012). A number of issues emerged from the analysis of this case study, which illustrate the strengths and shortcomings in the community development of Guimarães ECoC that had started the planning process with great intentions and promises in terms of “solid community involvement”.

4.1. *Proper Understanding of the Policy Process and Adequate Community Resources*

In case of Guimarães ECoC 2012, the management and governance structures operated quite well during the planning process and took advantage of the citizen engagement plan, which was the key success factor for Guimarães 2012 selection as an ECoC. The programme therefore received significant support and active participation from city residents due to the provision of various two-way communication styles including meetings,

workshops and open calls in the fields of arts, design and cinema, on the project website. The team also organized “warm-up year” events, as well as conferences, workshops and community work projects, aiming to work with the people in the planning process. Another main strength of the programme was the city administration’s strong political support. Even though the financial crisis had engulfed Portugal at that time, the funding was guaranteed by the State and the Ministry of Culture. There was also additional investment for infrastructural projects. This was possible because local and regional decision-makers proved the complementarity of ECoC with regional priorities at an early stage to be able to fund the programme from the strategic investment funding in regional development.

4.2. *Operational Constraints in Governance Arrangements*

Nonetheless, during the development phase of the Guimarães ECoC 2012 some difficulties were experienced as well. The strategic plan aimed to work with communities in order to build social capital through different programmes such as volunteerism, (where individuals could participate in preparations and the construction of projects as promoters, players and audiences), to increase the confidence and capacity of individuals and small groups to get involved in activities. However, the planning team that operated during the development phase did not provide adequate time and resources to the volunteers and local residents groups and strived to collaborate collectively with local institutions. This caused lack of confidence and pressure in the team around the development of a cultural programme. Consequently, further confusion arose regarding allocation of roles and responsibilities between the different organizations involved, resulting in an about-turn of negative behaviours towards planners, which was reflected in media just before the start of the ECoC. The planning team eventually managed to grow a stronger working connection with stakeholders and changed its communication approach towards more participatory communication attitudes. There were also few other issues regarding the operation and arrangements in the development phase, which caused problems later during the title year. For example, some cultural events attracted mass tourists and, therefore, the local community decided not to participate to avoid the crowds and possible problems related with transportation, while in some other cases tourists decided not to attend some events because of problems regarding accommodation and crowd as well. In these cases appropriate planning and suitable communication with stakeholders and actors could have minimized such negative impacts.

4.3. *Flaws in Community Participation Strategies*

A report of field work done in Guimaraes 2012 by Koefoed demonstrates that a majority of citizens who did not participate in the programme considered Guimarães ECoC as a programme in which they were not entitled to participate. Since they perceived the programme as something only for the upper-class citizens and tourists, although citizens were actively engaged in some of the initiatives, they claimed that they were not involved in any activity at all. At the same time, the Ex-post Evaluation report of Guimaraes ECoC, submitted to the European Commission in 2013, clearly reveals that a majority of the people involved in the programme (volunteers, collaborators in organizing the event, spectators and participants) were in fact educated, members of high social classes, younger groups and residents living close to the cultural areas. Koefoed’s (2013) study further discloses a lack of transparency in the whole cultural programme in some degree. According to this author, problems arose in terms of level of entry for all parties entering into the ECoC programme and made

partaking difficult for those with desires of contributing to the final output through participation. This absence of support and transparency eventually led to a negative impact on involvement and visibility.

There is also no evidence to suggest that the ECoC programme infrastructure development was implemented through a participatory approach. It seems that citizen involvement was designed exclusively for cultural programmes only. Even in the context of the cultural programmes citizens were not given the opportunity to suggest and submit their ideas. They only got to choose to participate in a set of projects already planned for them by the planners. Except for the nine meetings (focusing only on cultural programming areas), there was no opportunity for citizens to participate in the decision-making and development of the whole programme. Some community art projects were also perceived by locals as more an individual showcase than a real participatory process. Another problem that arose regarding locals' artistic activities was the fact that local artists could not stand up to those invited famous artists. During the programme not much attention was given to them and, therefore, they remained outside most of the time, functioning as participant observers and feeling excluded. Even after the programme, in the Ex-post Evaluation of Guimaraes ECoC report on citizens' involvement, instead of collecting citizens' view of their level of involvement in the preparation and participation of the programme, the evaluation was mainly based on interpretations and views of managing teams, decision-makers and key cultural operators on the engagement of citizens in ECoC. It is not of course surprising that they felt that ECoC created a much improved image of the city amongst local residents since community involvement was the primary objective of the project in the first place. However, how local residents actually evaluated their participation level is still not clear, proving a slightly underdeveloped public participation plan and revealing the unwillingness of the planners to require and evaluate performance outcomes (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010). Therefore, bearing in mind the challenges of planning solidly anchored on citizen participation, the direction of the planning result appears to show the wrong direction of the top-down strategy (Koefoed, 2013) by professionals and experts relying on technical decisions and prioritizing more on strategic and visible events rather than citizens' involvement and their values and satisfaction.

5. Discussion and Implications

The optimal use of innovation towards development of a more comprehensive sustainability programme is gaining growing importance as a result of the world's economic evolution and diminishing capacity of governments to intervene in society (Costa & Brandão, 2011). Innovation is currently perhaps the most powerful instrument to generate and sustain competitive advantage, particularly for the tourism industry, which has been a phenomenon characterized by immense innovativeness (Hjalager, 2010). Throughout history, tourism also emerged as a huge mechanism capable of carrying economic, social and territorial transformations in the life of communities and people and, consequently, became a great agent of economic and social innovations in national and regional development (Purpura & Vázquez, 2009).

In recent years, social innovation was imposed by policy-makers in many political agendas, in order to influence the direction of innovation towards more sustainable solutions (Hekkert & Negro, 2009). Integrated community development as a way of creating, nurturing and maintaining benefit for the community and tourists has been regarded as a critical issue after the 1980s. Since then, regional economists and planners have devoted a considerable amount of time and energy to develop "new" models of regional development for encouraging a broader, more participatory approach to tourism planning. The

benefit of integrated community development plan is that it provides the space to initiate innovative methods that promote integration and sustainability, and link planning closely to implementation. The local level of integrated community development allows for a development process based on an understanding of local needs, conditions, dynamics and potentials, and that includes local residents and stakeholders in a collaborative planning process. In order to actually frame the community participation process as a social innovation, a number of techniques, frameworks and processes have been extracted from the previous literature and from the case study presented in this paper, which provides a new combined effective strategy to implement:

* Considering the discussion earlier presented in the introduction of this paper, in the view of participation as a right and the necessity of working with and not for the people, the first step of the community participation process needs to be taken initially inside the organizations that undertake the process of social innovation. Therefore, in order to move towards capacity building for social innovation and convert ideas into reality, a new governance framework needs to be built. In order to build a strong coordination and performance mechanism, integrated community participation requires government acceptance and support in all the stages of decision-making and planning.

* However, innovation cannot be produced in isolation by relying exclusively on internal resources within the organization. Thus, an awareness of the multiple benefits of network cooperation is necessary. In this case, the environment may be seen as a network of actors in which the interaction between learning organizations constitutes the most important process driving the evolution and reinforcement. In addition, if integrative tourism development is to occur, network cooperation between various planning sectors must exist. If integrative tourism development is the goal, cooperation between government agencies, between different levels of government, between equally autonomous organizations at various administrative levels and between the private and public sectors is necessary.

* Social innovation occurs alongside a strong community awareness of how to deal with problems collectively and proactively. Endorsement of tourism territorial innovation from both economic and social perspectives dramatically changed the way people think. People are now more aware of the restrictions and deficiencies of underdevelopment and, above all, they need to act from a perspective of community and in a spirit of cooperation. So in the new framework of participation development, people must have a say in decisions that will affect them. Additionally, the engines of economic development must come growingly from citizens and investors rather than from government organizations.

* Nevertheless, the key point of achieving integrated community development passing through social innovation is the understanding of the fact that each region must build its innovation generation model in accordance with its own reality. According to Ramos and Santos (2004), each area is capable of promoting specific assets and differentiations based on innovative processes (p. 4). Appropriate creative, involving and learning techniques, such as scenarios, should be utilized as a device to help develop and integrate a community's tourism goals, and should be considered as an introduction to further planning.

Based on the above discussion, the proposed model for this study was developed and is shown in [Figure 3](#). In brief, the underlying premise of the model suggests respecting individual ideas by bringing citizens effectively to the core of decisions and putting them in a more collective context in order to bring new solid voice to the democracy. Moreover, the model suggests significant influence of governance as its focal point. Government agencies as the main organizations that undertake the process of social innovation should create political regulations for the development of new legal systems to actually foster collaboration

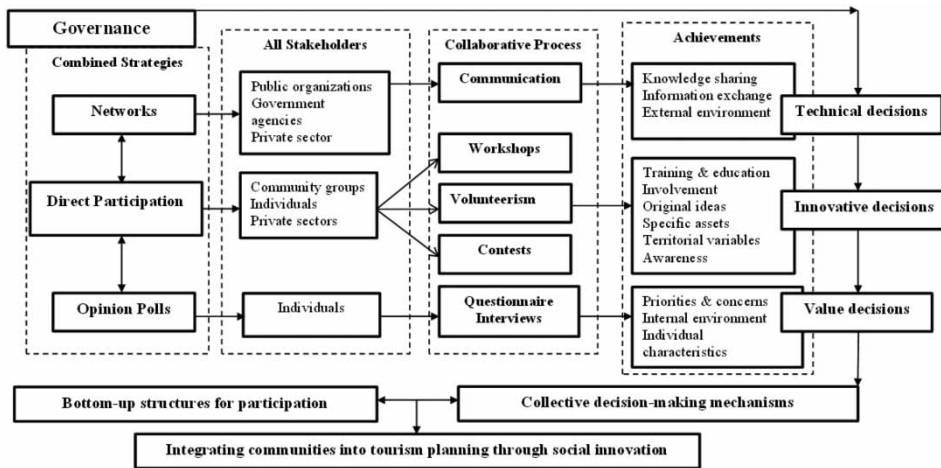


Figure 3. Proposed framework for community-integrated tourism through social innovation.

Source: Authors.

among all stakeholders. The model further suggests that effective networks could be generated via creating and maintaining a good line of communication process that engages stakeholders on multiple levels of decision-making and facilitates the formation and strengthening of relationships among stakeholders for knowledge sharing, information exchange and mutual understanding of external environment.

6. Conclusion

The main contribution of this paper relies on designing a framework of the “planning concerns” for a tourism destination going through community development. It is believed that pursuing a combination of three strategies, namely, networks, direct participation and survey simultaneously will support lateral and creative thinking to solve problems and foster the generation of innovative plans for the development of a new approach for community-integrated tourism through social innovation. This paper clearly explained the inter-relationships between tourism planning, local community and the role that social innovation can play from a strategic perspective in line with destinations’ specific characteristics. In order to include the needs of all stakeholder groups in the planning process, planners and managers need to have a system perspective to analyse, describe and synthesize different points of view from an overall perspective. More importantly, driving forces for collaboration and innovation in community-based tourism domains need to be recognized through the understanding of specific characteristics of each destination independently, to be able to realize the conditions under which participation can be used as a process to advance co-creation and sharing of knowledge. The paper suggests that if the conditions for a “sustainable community-oriented tourism development” are not guaranteed, the enormous investments that destinations are seeking for their social capital in recent decades may be wasted.

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Notes

- 1 University of Minho (2012), Guimarães 2012: European Capital of Culture—Economic and social impacts. Available at: http://www.guimaraes2012-impactos.pt/pdf/guimaraes_2012_RI_maio_2012.pdf
- 2 Information provided at the Municipality of Guimarães website. Available at: http://www.cmguimaraes.pt/PageGen.aspx?WCMC_PaginaId=6342
- 3 Interview conducted by University Of Minho from Ana Bragança and João Aires, Guimarães 2012, Volunteers program Co-coordinators.
- 4 European Capitals of Culture: Success strategies and long-term effects, 2013, study requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education, edited by Tamsin Cox and Beatriz Garcia.

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