Regional Studies Association

Regional Responses and Global Shifts: Actors, Institutions and Organisations

Conference Information Pack

Monday 24th May-Wednesday 26th May 2010

University of Pécs
Hungary

Gateway A4

IS IT TOO DIFFICULT TO HAVE SYMBOLIC KNOWLEDGE IN TOURISM SECTOR FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT? SOME FIRM LEVEL EMPIRICAL RESULTS FROM ANTALYA REGION

Murat Ali Dulupcu, Süleyman Demirel University, TURKEY
Onur Demirel, Süleyman Demirel University, TURKEY
Onur Sungur, Süleyman Demirel University, TURKEY

While knowledge economy has been decisive on regional development, it is mainly examined through the lenses of technical innovation and analytical knowledge, leaving non-technical innovation relatively unexplored. However non-technical innovation today covers wide range activities of the service sector including the tourism. Due to its dynamic nature, less dependency on technology and intensive human orientation, tourism sector has been targeted by both developed and underdeveloped regions to foster economic development. As a part EC funded Framework Project (EURODITE) this paper explores non-technical innovation processes and the evolution of symbolic knowledge in a particular Mediterranean destination, namely Antalya. In Antalya the massive shift in incoming tourists from European toward CEEC and Russia enforced the firms to take necessary precaution in order adapt to the knowledge needs of which mostly consisted of symbolic knowledge. The responses include vertical and horizontal integrations among the firms and unprecedented labour mobility which have supported adaptation of different business models and strategies, services and on-site-services like language, cuisine, inferior design, entertainment activities. These combinatorial knowledge needs are correlated with the profile of new markets namely, cream de cream, ultra rich class (e.g. customers for thematic hotels), mass tourism (e.g. 4S, but with a Russian modification), cultural tourism. Unlike analytical and synthetic knowledge symbolic knowledge activities necessitate adjustment to local and regional circumstances although most of the knowledge adaptation and transfer seem simple. Nonetheless the market structure of tourism sector in Antalya displays an irony concerning the symbolic knowledge: generally, the domestic tour operators and hotels are bounded to international operators through an asymmetrical relation. Knowledge (about customers, market research) is generated somewhere else but exploited or used locally. Domestic companies do not have the ability to control and direct the market; instead it becomes a must for them to accept the demand which is directed to them. Thus vertical and horizontal integrations become a vehicle for knowledge transfers likewise labour mobility. Due to market dominancy, competition determines the knowledge relations but the variety of tourism activities necessitates cooperation among supplementary services which are subject to knowledge canals at local level unlike the knowledge pipelines at the international level. On the other hand we observe that the scientific and educational organizational activities that support the knowledge transfers are relatively poor, most probably due to combinatorial and composite nature of symbolic knowledge. Finally, the paper also explores the mechanisms which cause anchoring and mobility of knowledge.

Gateway H

RECENT DYNAMICS IN EUROPEAN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION: TOWARDS A NEW PHASE?

Antoni Durà-Guimerà, Universitat Autònoma De Barcelona, SPAIN
Xavier Oliveras Gonzàlez, Universitat Autònoma De Barcelona, SPAIN

The paper wants to show the evolution and development of territorial cooperation at sub-state level, which includes mostly cross-border cooperation, along with interregional and transnational cooperation. After the appearance of the first initiatives in Central Europe (along the boundaries of Germany, Switzerland, France and the Netherlands) during 1950s, hundreds of experiences have appeared across European borders, especially from 1990s. We can say that nowadays virtually all border sub-state authorities participate in cooperative initiatives, under names such as Euroregion, Working Community or Eurodistrict. This phenomenon is part of a broader process appeared in Europe during the 20th century, particularly after the Second World War, linked to different scales, administrative levels and actors. At supranational level it has developed an intergovernmental cooperation that has led to the creation of the European Union and the Council of Europe among others. At local scale twin towns and sister cities have been consolidated. At regional and local level have been developed some forms of association (AEBR, CPMR or AER), in addition to sub-state territorial cooperation. The carried analysis allows detecting three major phases in the development of sub-state territorial cooperation. The first, from its appearance until 1970s, was characterized by a weak development, lack of experience and support, and initiatives concentrated on Central Europe and Scandinavia. The second phase takes place during the 1980s, at