



STUTTGART



“Governing in Partnership – The EU Governance Model”

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Summary

In the era of globalization the traditional national states in Europe are less and less able to fulfil their tasks in a stand alone position. As the world is becoming more and more interdependent and competitive, the national states in Europe are facing new challenges. They have to find new ways of policy making: from the global to the local in the major fields of policy, e. g. the economic and social development, science and research, demographic change, migration and integration, environmental and climate protection, stability of law, national security and foreign policy. To implement a strategy and realise an action plan in Europe, all political levels of policy making as well as the private sector have to be involved. Therefore a specific model of governance in the EU is needed: Governing in partnership.

Governing in partnership is a major way

1. to promote the essential goals and measures in Europe by a multi-level networked governance of the European, national, regional and local level coordinated and reliable by jointly decided rules, regulations and contracts.
2. to combine the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality with power sharing, partnership und participation on all political levels all over Europe.
3. to develop flexible but binding organisations in an increasingly interdependent and network orientated world as well as to activate citizens for common goals and measures, which are essential for all Europeans, and to strengthen their identification with the European Union.

I. General context

The concept of nation states in Europe, which mainly emerged in the 19th century, is based on the idea of one nation of people in one state with sovereignty rights. These sovereignty rights include homeland and national security, foreign policy, tax privileges, services for the public, most of all social security, nourishment, energy and water supplies, environmental protection, labour market policy, own taxes, own currency and economic policy.

In the era of globalization it is becoming more and more difficult for the individual nation states in Europe – and these are not just the smaller states such as Malta, Luxembourg, Slovenia – to competently administer these tasks alone.

The traditional nation state is also contested by the change in the nations' citizens, since the idea of “one nation – one state” is with the increasing internationalisation of the population no longer reality. The deliberate promotion of mobility of our citizens, the right of optional professional domicile and residence, the cultural and information exchange, the economic and scientific cooperation etc. and the communal voting rights in Europe, as well as globalisation - all this leads to an increasing Europeanisation and internationalisation of the respective nation state.

In consequence we experience a transformation of the traditional nation state idea on two levels: in favour of an inter-national and a supra-national cooperation in the European Union. This cooperation concept makes it first of all possible and easier for the member states to grow together – regardless of their size, population, economic strength, but still observing their national cultures, languages, religions and also regional and local characteristics.

The voluntary and necessary transfer of rights of sovereignty to the European institutions does not lead automatically to a “Confederation” or to a “Federal State” in terms of traditional state law. The union of states and its sub-national levels agreed by contract, do not constitute a new supra-national state.

Therefore, the European Union is not comparable with the United States of America – neither from the historical development nor from the current and future concept of the Union. To call the European Union the “United States of Europe” is therefore not appropriate.

The EU Governance Model is more an evolving, federally structured multi-level governance system in the EU that is based on the long-term, contractual devolution of national sovereignty rights to the European institutions.

Facing new challenges the world is becoming more and more interdependent and competitive. To implement a successful strategy we need a multi level governance system combining all levels of policy making: from the global to the local and the different levels of the public and the private sector. Therefore we do not need more centralism or splitting competences, we need more sharing competences to achieve major political objectives of the European Union.

II. The principles of the European Governance Model: power-sharing, partnership, participation

1. Power-sharing

The Treaty of Lisbon promotes the task-related cooperation in the various statutory forms in Europe. It really calls for such cooperation to achieve the essential aims of the EU. The European Governance Model therefore

envisages a binding power-sharing of the tasks important for shaping Europe's future in line with the respective competences of the individual member states, regions and cities: the economic and social development, education, science and research, the demographic development, migration and integration, environment and climate protection, stability of law, homeland and national security and foreign policy.

Since all fundamental challenges for the sustainable development of Europe cannot be accomplished at one political level alone, the EU, the member states, their regions and municipalities have to work together as partners to realise these tasks. To avoid centralism amongst the EU Institutions the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality are basic. The European level can therefore only operate to such an extent as the respective targets and measures of the member states cannot be realised at a national, regional or local level. At the same time the Union must prove that these targets and measures can be better realised within the Union. Insofar as the EU is responsible, the Union measures must be relative, i.e. the impact – also financial expenses – should be kept as low as possible and in a reasonable proportion to the target envisaged. The consequence of this governance system is that all essential tasks for the sustainability of Europe can only be achieved by sharing competences in a coordinated cooperation of various political levels.

2. Partnership

Except the few exclusive Union jurisdictions (customs union, codes of competition, monetary policies, fishery and trade policy), the EU Governance Model is not a hierarchic model ruling with top-down regulations, but a partnership model. All levels, be it the European, national,

regional or local, apply their competences in their own statutory and political responsibility, contributing to the fulfilment of the aims and realisation of the measures from the local level throughout the European Union.

An essential instrument to achieve these targets in a transparent, efficient and responsible way are organised and contractually binding networks - horizontal as well as vertical networks. This networked cooperation based on partnership also includes regions, cities, communities as well as civic initiatives, private companies, research institutes etc.

The decision to participate in a network is taken by a democratic elected body, e.g. the city council, the regional parliament. They have the democratic control how to govern their tasks in their own legal competence in the frame of a multi-level network. This sharing of tasks, burdens and responsibilities opens chances for higher efficiency, better comparison and more participation in and beyond their own borders

3. Participation

Representative democracy, our form of government on a European, national, regional and local level, essentially lives from the social commitment of its citizens. These citizens expect to play an active role in shaping their societies and have the right of initiatives at all political levels.

The EU Governance Model opens up many opportunities for becoming involved either on a formal or informal basis.

On the one hand the right of initiative vis-à-vis the European Commission, if at least 1 million Union citizens are in favour of this. Extensive rights of hearing and dialogue forums offer regions, cities, experts, lobby groups,

NGO's etc. a multitude of possibilities of becoming involved in the decision-making process within Europe. This applies for processes vis-à-vis the EU Commission, the European Parliament and the national parliaments.

Since European cooperation is above all characterised by networks, whether these are horizontal networks, e.g. among cities, scientific institutes, companies, or vertical networks with cities, regions, national governments and EU institutions, the cities, regions and member states are involved in all important fields.

This local networking is often carried out in connection with twin-town partnerships so that millions of citizens are actively involved in European integration.

Active citizenship is strongest in the municipalities. Here the citizens are involved in fields that are important for the future of the cities as of the European Union: e.g. education, job creation, integration, environmental protection, social issues, social cohesion. By their activities, they are contributing to the major European tasks. This considerable “social capital” must be appreciated as an accomplishment for Europe on the part of the citizens. Their voluntary work on the spot, networking with other municipalities, NGO's and non -profit organisations in various European countries must be recognised as integration work for Europe. After all, the opinion of the European citizens, the European Union should not be defined by regulations, bureaucracy and subsidies, but by the input possibilities all European citizens have in their daily life.

At the same time, the multitude of participatory processes offers a new opportunity for citizens to identify more strongly with a Europe that is characterised by individual freedom, social responsibility and genuine solidarity.

III. How the European Governance Model works, ten examples:

The implementation of the Multi-level Network Governance is promoted within the scope of various EU programmes. This involves above all the specialised networks within Europe, but also development cooperation. The diversity of the tasks is as extensive as the diversity of networks. The following examples illustrate this:

1. Covenant of Mayors for Climate Change

Aims: energy and climate: reduction in CO₂ emissions through cleaner energy production and use and by enhancing energy efficiency

Members: Mayors from EU member states but also from outside the EU for instance Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Christchurch (New Zealand) (lead by the EU Commission).

2. International Lake of Constance Cooperation

Aims: improve water quality and regional cooperation. Today the IBK also funds project for education, research, health, mobility as well as social, cultural, environmental and economic projects.

Members: Ministers of Baden-Württemberg, Bayern; of Austria: of Vorarlberg; of Switzerland: of Schaffhausen, St. Gallen, Thurgau, Zürich, Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Appenzell Innerrhoden; Principality of Liechtenstein.

3. **Baltic Sea Strategy:** cooperation of regions and cities to improve the territorial cohesion

Aims: To identify and address the most pressing challenges of the region: environmental problems, economic factors, social and territorial cohesion, competitiveness, safety and security.

Members: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland

4. **Alpine Space Programme** (INTERREG III B – transnational cooperation)

Aims: to find solution for transport and communication, to safe natural and cultural heritage

Members: Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Slovenia (with Participation of Liechtenstein and Switzerland) as well as regions and cities

5. **Danube Strategy:** based on traditional cohesion of cities and regions along the Danube by common cultural and economic activities

Aims: social development and protection, sustainable economic development, transport and energy infrastructure, environmental protection, culture and education

Members: EU and Non-EU countries: Germany, Austria, the Slovak Republic, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine – six of which are EU Member States, and in a broader territorial context the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Bosnia Herzegovina and Montenegro as well as regions and cities.

6. **Cross-border regions EUREGIO Maas-Rhein**

Aims: to promote economy, tourism, technology, education, qualification, labour market, nature, environment, traffic, youth, culture, euregional identity, health, social, societal issues and security.

Members: Belgium, Germany, Netherlands-Liège, partner regions North Rhine Westphalia, Aachen, Maastrich

7. **Local Integration Policy Network**

Aims: to improve local and national integration policies

Members: 30 cities in 25 nations, five universities and the European Commission

8. **Development cooperation: the Assembly of Regional and Local Authorities of Europe-Mediterranean**

Aims: ARLEM as an important instrument for the development of the Union of the Mediterranean in the fields of energy, security, counter-terrorism, immigration, trade

Members: Members of the Committee of the Regions, representatives of European and international associations engaged in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, regional and local authorities from the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean

9. **EDULINK** higher education cooperation between Africa, Caribbean, Pacific Group of States (ACP) and 15 EU member states

Aims: to promote higher education on three levels: institutional/ administrative, academic, research and technology

Members: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the ACP states

10. **Cooperation of the Networks** such as CEMR, Euro-Cities to improve the understanding of the European integration process and to cooperate with the European Commission and the European Parliament.

Aims: city development, mobility, transport, etc.

Members: over 50 national associations of towns, municipalities and regions from 37 countries. Together these associations represent some 100,000 local and regional authorities.

These few examples show that the EU Governance Model is the right system facing the challenges of the transformation of Europe in the context of more and more competitive globalization in a digital, interdependent, network-orientated, flexible, international and open society in Europe.

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