

Project: City Regions as a Place of Governance

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Questions of governance are becoming increasingly important in political science discussions. So it is highly welcome that the Volkswagen Foundation granted the required funding for a new project which is to start in April 2002.

The guiding question is about the role of city-regions as substate spheres of politics within contemporary globalization processes. While the general mechanisms and dynamics of globalization have been analyzed rather extensively, the study of their effects has mostly been concentrated on the level of states. However, with globalization being uneven in its spread and its impacts, it seems obvious that not only states are being affected differently, but also the political entities within them.

In our comparative research project, we attempt to analyze and clarify the emerging new role of global city-regions in four steps. At first, we will engage in an empirical mapping of the relevant actors and flows that shape city-region politics and integrate them with their national and the global environment. Then, we will study how globalization causes transformations of city-region governance in selected policy fields, namely in economic development, social security and knowledge generation. Is city-region governance becoming more fragmented, and is there an organizational shift from the public to the private sector? As a third step, we will compare and evaluate the results in order to generate more general conclusions. Are global

city-regions increasingly interdependent with other parts of the world and less dependent on „their“ central state? Finally, we will finish our project with a publication of the outcomes in two edited volumes (in English).

We want to explore the above questions for Delhi in India, Johannesburg in South Africa, Moscow in Russia and Sao Paulo in Brazil, where we expect changes in the role and governance of city-regions to be especially manifest. These city-regions show high levels of global linkages. The countries they are situated in share several important attributes that allow for a meaningful comparison of city-regions in a similar „framework“. Still, a focus on these city-regions should be able to find significant variance.

The whole research project will be realized in close cooperation with local partners in the respective city-regions. This will incorporate different social science backgrounds since the questions raised call for a transdisciplinary approach (political science, urban studies, economics, sociology, geography).

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