

Annex IV: Analysis of the relevant Literature

1 Insularity

Islands are now, unwittingly, the objects of what may be the most lavish, global and consistent branding exercise in human history. They find themselves presented as locales of desire, as platforms of paradise, as habitual sites of fascination, emotional offloading or religious pilgrimage. The metaphoric deployment of 'island', with the associated attributes of small physical size and warm water, is possibly *the* central gripping metaphor within Western discourse (Connell 2003; Hay 2006: 26, *emphasis in original*). Tuan (1990: 247) claims that four natural environments have figured prominently in humanity's (including non-Western) enduring and endearing dreams of the ideal world. They are: the forest, the shore, the valley ... and the island.

A layering of mutually reinforcing influences can be proposed to explain this condition. First, there is an enduring western tradition – dating back at least to the Odyssey – which has held islands in high esteem, assigning them a key role in the economic, political, and social dimensions of the Mediterranean and then Atlantic worlds, given the way that myth, icon and narratives of/from islands have functioned for mainland cultures (*e.g.* Gillis 2004). Second, building on the first, but starting at around the European age of discovery, is the construction of islands as outposts of aberrant exoticism, peopled by innocent and exuberant natives (*e.g.* Lowenthal 1972: 14; Gillis and Lowenthal 2007). Third, and still later, is the island as background for the enactment of a male and heroic paeon to colonialism, the subject of Robinsonnades that extend up to the present in the likes of Tom Hanks' movie *Castaway* or the TVB blockbuster series *Lost* (*e.g.* Loxley, 1990). Fourth, is the development of the notion of going on vacation as a regular activity by the world's burgeoning middle classes: whether for relaxation, adventure or self-discovery, islands project themselves as ideal destinations (*e.g.* Butler 1993). Fifth, is the realization by many developing island states and territories that they can 'sell' their sea, sun and sand (and perhaps sex, but more hopefully their salt) to such visitors, by appealing to their constructed modern need for travel, and thus carve out for themselves an easy route to development (*e.g.* Apostolopoulos and Gayle 2002). Other attractive, physical and psychological characteristics can be added to the mix: physical separation, jurisdictional specificity, cultural difference, 'getting away from it all', the possibility of claiming an understanding of the totality of the locale as trophy (Baum 1997: 21; Baum and collaborators 2000).

There have been two main scholarly streams of thought in the literature of recent decades that can help to frame an informed understanding of the challenges of islandness – often represented as insularity.

The first stream, with a largely economic pedigree, is concerned mainly with matters of small size and scale. This is by far the oldest body of relevant literature, going back to the works of Robinson (1960), Jalan (1982), Kaminarides et al. (1989), Streeten (1993) and up to more contemporary work by Briguglio and associates (*e.g.* Briguglio 1995; Briguglio et al. 2006). The basic contentions here are that small markets, small pools of human resources, limited capital, etc., constitute real bottlenecks for effective public administration, good governance and development. This body of scholarship has been mainly addressed at small (often island states), but the analysis can also be applied to other territories (*e.g.* Armstrong and Read 2006, Baker 1992). The main international recognition of the particular circumstances facing small island developing states (SIDS) – (often subsumed under the term ‘vulnerability’) – has been forthcoming from the United Nations, especially at and after the SIDS International Conference held in Barbados in 1994. The European Union is not that closely involved with these arguments since none of its sovereign island jurisdictions are considered to be SIDS: instead, the EU is mainly involved in such matters through its dealings with the ultra-peripheral sub-national regions of the EU (all islands, bar French Guyana); and with third countries, such as the so-called ‘APC countries’ in the context of World Trade Organization negotiations, many of which are SIDS.

The second stream, inspired much more from regional and economic geography, is sensitive to the challenges of geographical location. This in turn generates a critical interest in the marginalisation (or peripherality), isolation and remoteness of islands, possibly compounded by the fragmentation of archipelagos (*e.g.* Armstrong and Read 2004). In such considerations, some of the policy measures contemplated typically include: information technology (IT) infrastructure and air/sea/land transportation network upgrades, as well as fiscal support to investment capital. The European Union has been largely sympathetic to these challenges – for example, by supporting the construction of fixed links (bridges, tunnels, causeways) which connect islands to mainlands – and recognizes in principle that the infrastructure gaps can constitute checks on development which can be mitigated by suitable regional development and governance strategies (*e.g.* CPMR 2002, Hache 2007, Royle and Scott 1996 on Irish islands).

These two approaches help one appreciate why islandness (as a neutral term) is often construed as insularity (as a negative term).

The geographic location and nature of islands, compounded by smallness and environmental fragility and vulnerability, is seen essentially as a handicap which thwarts the ability of such spaces from reaching the same quality of life standards and from providing the same, or similar, level of services (education, health, recreation, employment) that are offered on contiguous mainlands, and which are often expected by impacted citizens (*e.g.* Royle 2001). As a result, one witnesses an outmigration of island populations, a variant of the more common rural to urban drift, with the result that some islands are faced by the real prospects of depopulation (*e.g.* Royle 2007). Addressing these shortfalls is of course a key platform of the EU's territorial cohesion policy.

The literature has, more recently, taken a decidedly less pessimistic direction. This is largely fuelled by the promises of tourism development for small island regions, especially for those have presented themselves as attractive, affordable and suitable 'sun, sand and sea' destinations. The multiple economic linkages that tourism affords, its ability to diversity its economic benefits to wide segments of local island populations, and its beguiling link with naturally available assets, have all had a tendency of transforming this one industry into a naive panacea for small island development. Such optimism underestimates the economic leakages, social tensions, property price inflation, gentrification and environmental erosion that tourism, especially mass tourism, can bring to small island locations (*e.g.* Clark et al. 2007 on Sweden); but perhaps best typified by many Mediterranean island destinations (*e.g.* Conlin and Baum 1995; De Kadt 1979, Briguglio 1996a, 1996b; Apostolopoulos and Gayle 2002, Lockhart and Drakakis-Smith, 1997). Moreover, even cold water islands can also deploy their own specific sets of characteristics – ice, isolation, military tourism, indigenous people, endemic flora and fauna – to attract a significant, but much more sustainable, tourism presence (*e.g.* Baldacchino 2006a). Long haul island tourism also goes against the common understanding of distance as handicap, but has a significant carbon footprint (*e.g.* Gossling 2003).

In recognition of these diverse trends, three distinct, island specific, development paradigms, each sustainable in its own way, have been proposed, and sustained, in the literature over the past three decades. The oldest is the MIRAB model, which postulates how islands, small islands in particular, thrive by exporting people (**M**igration) who in turn send back **R**emittances; and by attracting bilateral or multilateral **A**id, which in turn allows them to support the employment of their public sector **B**ureaucracy – spelling the acronym MIRAB (Bertram and Watters 1985; Bertram 2006). The second model postulates the emergence of island economies driven significantly by a large tourism sector: these are called **S**mall **I**sland **T**ourism **E**conomies (or the acronym **S**ITEs) (McElroy 2006; Parry

and McElroy 2009; *also* Lockhart et al. 1993). A third model postulates that various islands have done well by using their governance, legislative and regulatory powers (their jurisdiction) to develop a favourable **P**eople (or human resource) strategy, **R**esource management, **O**verseas representation, **F**inance sectors and air/sea **T**ransportation networks (for the acronym PROFIT) (Baldacchino 2006b). These three approaches postulate different forms of attractiveness for islands: shored up by both individual/household and public subsidies and transfers; boosted by tourism revenue; or resulting from exploiting diplomatic skills, citizenship rights and service sector activities by using 'jurisdiction as a resource' (Baldacchino and Milne 2000). All these models depart from a traditional view of islands as mere platforms for the growing of cash crops or raw material production with low local value added, high transport costs and high diseconomies of scale: a model that has been strongly criticized, especially for generating vulnerable mono-crop economies which remain heavily dependent on overseas markets and their prices (*e.g.* Shand 1980, Connell 1988). Bertram and Poirine (2007) postulate that those island jurisdictions with the highest gross national income per capita have a combination of healthy tourism and finance service provision. Hampton (1994), however, is more critical of the principles on which the offshore finance industry is predicated.

It is such an analysis that allows one to come up with a somewhat suitable answer to the nagging question posed by Dommen already back in 1980: Islands are:

"... particularly fortunate places, where life is longer and nature is bountiful, even though the menu may be short. Politics are friendlier. Hurricanes are more dangerous than social unrest. The question is, why then do so many people emigrate?" (Dommen 1980: 931)

2. The Attractiveness Concept

Some places are more attractive to live, work or visit than others. The reasons and the driving forces behind such decisions to live in a place or visit it may not always be clear. In the economic and development planning sciences various approaches have been developed on attractiveness for different kinds of economic actors (enterprises, people, infrastructures, services). Literature on attractiveness for enterprises (industry, services, and retailers) proposes a series of factors, namely location in terms of raw materials availability and remoteness from markets, population size of the area, infrastructure availability, human resources availability and quality, and administrative – tax framework (Walker & Chapman 1987; Spilanis 1996; Lambrianidis 2000; Polyzos &

Petrakos 2001; Mazzarol & Choo 2003). Although these approaches differ significantly conceptually and operationally from each other, they all regard attractiveness as a concept that can be estimated through experts' opinions and indicators, leaving people's opinions out of the estimation process. For example, planning for economic and social development in the EU is realized in NUTS II level with the use of common indicators and methods (European Commission 2002). The issue of attractiveness for people and why they choose to live in an area has received less academic attention until recently. Different approaches include diverse topics and methods such as migration studies and population movements (UNHCR 1995), population mobility (Tapeinos 1993; Tsaousi 1997) internal migration (see e.g. Portnov et al. 2000; Stockdale 2002, Fischer et al., 2000; Wikhall, 2002 for more references) and landscape attractiveness (see e.g. Daniel 2001; Palang et al. 2003).

Existing definitions regard attractiveness as the image that population groups have for an area (Maillet 1998). This definition is realized with the use of methodologies that measure and estimate qualities and characteristics of the areas and their populations, such as accessibility, remoteness, dynamism, competitiveness, research and development, human resources, infrastructures, services available and more. For example, the EURISLES (1997, 2002) method measures accessibility and remoteness of areas (European island Regions), as time-distance from a set point in space. Similar is the approach of Cross and Nutley (1999) that measure remoteness and services availability for the small islands of Western Ireland. Copus and Crabtree (1996) employ a services availability and economy approach for remote rural Scotland. Portnov et al (2000) on the other hand, use a method that estimates urban centers attractiveness and is based on a statistical approach (correlating socioeconomic variables and developing an equation). OECD's (1994) approach is more abstract conceptually, as it aims at a variety of areas, countries and situations and thus uses relatively simple population and economic indicators. European Union's and EUROSTAT method (CEC 1987, 1991, 1994, 1999, 2002, 2004) is more elaborate with the use of concepts such as dynamism, competitiveness, research and development, human resources and infrastructures for European Regions (NUTS II), as part of a statistical approach that correlates existing empirical data with theoretical notions of attractiveness and development. The basic assumptions of these methodologies are that: 1) the values of the indicators used are linked to the attractiveness beliefs that societies hold and that people construct these beliefs and choose their place of residence and/or occupation according to a model based on a series of factors, on a more or less rational basis (Portnov et al., 2000), 2) the values of the indicators used reflect the attractiveness 'status' of the areas they refer to. The two assumptions are linked,

as attractiveness is a 'state' of an area, but it is also a 'state of mind' for people. This approach is used in planning procedures at national and international levels, as methodologies of organizations such as EUROSTAT, OECD, EURISLES; national planning procedures (eg. Gilg, 1996; Portnov et al., 2000) and academic methodologies (Maillet, 1998; Cross and Nutley, 1999; Spilanis et al., 2002; Engelen et al., 2002) prove.

A similar theoretical approach and scientific field of study, behavioral and environmental geography, examines the reasons and the factors that influence the preference of environments and landscapes. Different approaches include behavioral research (Walmsley and Lewis, 1993), landscape aesthetics and preferences (Appleton, 1996; Lothian, 1999; Parsons and Daniel, 2002) and environmental psychology (Nasar, 1988; Berleant, 1997) among others. Some of these approaches are similar conceptually to attractiveness as developed here, although they more often than not examine aesthetic and symbolic dimensions of preferences, attitudes and decisions towards places and spaces for groups of people, while here we use less aesthetic and symbolic and more economic and social dimensions. Nevertheless, we feel that a complete and thorough examination of attractiveness should attempt to include such fields of analysis.

The approach followed here acknowledges that attractiveness can indeed be estimated with the use of indicators. Yet, the notions, attitudes and beliefs of social groups that are connected with the areas should first be addressed. As many different social approaches have demonstrated, notions, attitudes and beliefs of social groups form attractiveness images (Halfacree, 1995; Hoggart et al., 1995; Jones, 1995; Copus and Crabtree, 1996; Harrington and O' Donogue, 1998; Van Dam et al., 2002; Haartsen et al., 2003). These images influence the decisions that group members make, which involve residence and/or employment. The first issue that this approach brings forward is that attractiveness is a relative term and can only be defined when compared to 'unattractiveness': when an area is attractive, another has to be unattractive and vice versa. Therefore, attractiveness can be used to understand differences between areas as they are expressed through attitudes and beliefs of social groups and measured through indicators that are based on these beliefs.

The second issue of this approach proposes a slightly different definition, which defines attractiveness as the image of a specific place or space that a group of individuals, linked in some way to this space or place, holds at a specific spatio-temporal context. Therefore, before answering the question 'how is attractiveness estimated?' we have to answer the question first 'attractiveness for whom?' that refers to the social construction of attractiveness and

thus to the need to define the social group for which attractiveness is estimated, as different groups hold very different views on attractiveness and how it is constructed. The groups can be distinguished on a wide variety of criteria that refer to age (van Dam et al., 2002), sex (Cloke and Little, 1996), class (Halfacree, 1995), race (Cloke and Little, 1996) etc.

The concept of attractiveness can be used for understanding temporal, spatial and even seasonal changes in population, products and services' flows between places. Its explanatory power lies on that it includes the major driving forces between such flows in its definitions, namely the different attractiveness images different populations or groups of people attach to places. At the same time, it can also describe the results of these driving forces, which are exactly the spatial and temporal changes in these flows. So, attractiveness can link the existing situation within an area (effect) with its level of attractiveness (cause). The case of islands is in many ways typical of the changing beliefs and opinions on attractiveness over time.

Despite the advantages of 'lending an ear' to what people have to say and defining clearly the issues and the methods that this approach presents, it is also laden with some disadvantages. The social construction and relativity of attractiveness 'for population groups' and the fact that people should be asked about their opinions and beliefs, brings forward mobility issues and the question of how to include all or at least many different groups and many different opinions and beliefs into the estimation of a series of attractiveness indexes. This is important especially when policy issues are raised, and many different attractiveness images should be considered in order to satisfy most of the unattractive points. A typical example refers to the people who have already moved from an area due to its low attractiveness. Their opinions and beliefs are important when policy issues of keeping the population are raised, as the unattractive points that have driven them away are strong and are exactly what policies want to address. Such issues call for cautious and complicated research strategies when using attractiveness for policy formulation (an example of the diverse research strategies required is offered by Stockdale, 2002).

Another issue raised here, is that when discussing attractiveness both driving forces and results should be considered. Driving forces are the *causes* of changing attractiveness opinions and beliefs. The *results* of the driving forces are socioeconomic changes in the area examined (e.g. population and economic changes over time).