

Governance in Nottingham and Stuttgart:
a comparative case study of power,
inequality and sustainability

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Abstract

Various environmental, economic and social practices in democratic capitalist countries like Germany and the UK cannot be sustained long-term without undermining their own foundations. Understanding what may facilitate more sustainable ways of living together is therefore paramount. The case study at hand makes an original contribution to this aim by comparing urban governance in Nottingham (UK) and Stuttgart (Germany) as two exemplars of capitalist variation – with different consequences for how capitalism’s unsustainabilities play out.

While both cities are situated in similar capitalist systems, their configurations and relating values, conventions and power relations diverge markedly. I explore how these aspects of social order interact – i.e., are co-produced (Jasanoff, 2004a) – with local policies and their knowledge claims. This is done by interpretively examining how policy approaches, their negotiation and political and economic interdependencies in the two cities relate to sustainability – defined as social and intergenerational justice –, in terms of meanings and in terms of being unsustainable. Weberian ideal types of urban governance regimes outline initial expectations: those of a traditional Weberian bureaucracy in Stuttgart and those of New Public Management in Nottingham, where neoliberalisation has further progressed. The cases are further conceptualised as embedded in conservative-corporatist or liberal welfare state types (Esping-Andersen, 1990) and in coordinated or liberal market economies (Hall & Soskice, 2001). To understand local policies and their relation with social order, the research draws on 78 interviews with key informants in Nottingham and Stuttgart, on 83 policy documents and on desktop research.

Policies, their negotiation, the roles of civil society and of the local economy differ significantly between the two governance regimes. Divergence can partly be explained by distinct ways of co-producing policies and social order. Policy approaches in Nottingham are more behavioural, individual-focused and measurable, while they are more developmental and collective in Stuttgart. These differences co-emerge with higher inequalities in Nottingham than Stuttgart; and with distinct policy-relevant

knowledges, i.e. a more 'collectivist' civic epistemology in Stuttgart vs. a more 'individualising' civic epistemology in Nottingham.

Considering how policies aiming for social and intergenerational justice are devised, local power dynamics diverge. Whereas such policies in Nottingham often originate from its city council, dominated since 1991 by the progressive and electorally successful Labour Party, Stuttgart's diverse municipal council with 11 groups has in some significant instances been driven by civil society. The varying power positions of civil society interact with differently pronounced inequalities between the public and policy developers in both cities: in terms of realising basic social and economic rights, access to economic and educational resources, experiential worlds, hierarchies and understandings of citizenship. Besides, higher interregional inequalities and a stronger ideological polarisation between central and local government in Nottingham contribute to – less sustainable – friction losses between governance levels and to the city's structural disadvantage. Conversely, less spatial inequality, more local autonomy and more cooperative relations between governance levels in Stuttgart – relating to proportional representation instead of majority voting systems – appear more conducive to socio-economic sustainability.

Finally, Stuttgart's economy seems more locally embedded than Nottingham's. This concerns communication and cooperation with the public sector, mutual obligations and levels of trust. Thereby, the high economic weight of Stuttgart's car industry cluster and corporatist links with policy-makers appear to counter more environmentally progressive policies. On the contrary in Nottingham, some significant measures are implemented despite business opposition. Also, the city is a pioneer in environmentally sustainable policies – though its high deprivation may be an enabling factor herein.

Altogether, the comparative case study points out different routes, their implications, struggles and turnarounds in relation to neoliberalisation and rising inequalities in two governance regimes approximating 'centre' (Stuttgart) and 'periphery' (Nottingham) as poles of contemporary capitalism. It thereby provides

insights into how varying factors play out in relation to power, inequality and sustainability and offers according routes for future research.

Keywords: local governance, local government, welfare state regimes, market economy types, sustainability, intergenerational justice, social justice, power, inequality, comparative case study, Nottingham/UK, Stuttgart/Germany

*I dedicate this thesis to Alex and Katja, with love
and in anticipation of our future.*

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Acronyms

Brexit	The UK leaving the European Union
CCT	Compulsory Competitive Tendering
CDU	Christian Democratic Union (Germany)
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
FDP	Free Democratic Party (Germany)
GDP	Gross domestic product
GVA	Gross value added
IHK	Chamber of Industry and Commerce (Ger.: Industrie- und Handelskammer)
ILO	International Labour Organization
KGSt	Municipal Association for Administration Management (Ger.: Kommunale Gemeinschaftsstelle für Verwaltungsmanagement)
Landtag	German state parliament
LSOA	Lower Layer Super Output Areas
NHS	National Health Service (UK)
NPM	New Public Management
NSM	New Steering Model (Ger.: Neues Steuerungsmodell)
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
Ofsted	British Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
ONS	Office for National Statistics
Quango	Quasi non-governmental organisation
RQ	Research question
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SPD	Social Democratic Party (Germany)
STS	Science and technology studies
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America

1 Introduction

This thesis begins with an illustration of its practical, personal and research rationales: in terms of inequalities and related knowledges (Section 1.1.1), urban sustainability challenges (Section 1.1.2) and the neoliberalisation thesis (Section 1.1.3). Based on these angles, I outline the study, its research aim and questions (Section 1.2). Section 1.3 presents its structure.

1.1 Rationales for the study

1.1.1 Knowing inequalities

Debates around Philip Alston's – UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights – UK report illustrate themes and the relevance of this thesis. Alston summarises (United Nations, 2019, p. 1):

“Although the United Kingdom is the world's fifth largest economy, one fifth of its population (14 million people) live in poverty, and 1.5 million of them experienced destitution in 2017. Policies of austerity introduced in 2010 continue largely unabated, despite the tragic social consequences. Close to 40 per cent of children are predicted to be living in poverty by 2021. Food banks have proliferated; homelessness and rough sleeping have increased greatly; [...] life expectancy is falling for certain groups; and the legal aid system has been decimated. The social safety net has been badly damaged by drastic cuts to local authorities' budgets, which have eliminated many social services, reduced policing services, closed libraries in record numbers, shrunk community and youth centres and sold off public spaces and buildings. The bottom line is that much of the glue that has held British society together since the Second World War has been deliberately removed and replaced with a harsh and uncaring ethos. A booming economy, high employment and a budget surplus have not reversed austerity, a policy pursued more as an ideological than an economic agenda.”

Alston argues for a change of direction: “All that is needed is a vision to make all Britons, not just the wealthy, better off, and to commit to minimum levels of social justice for all” (Alston, 2019).

Reactions on this report by some government members were dismissive. Then Prime Minister Theresa May's spokesman said: "We strongly disagree with the analysis" (P. Walker, 2018). Then Chancellor Philip Hammond said that he did not

"accept the UN rapporteur's report at all. I think that's a nonsense. Look around you, that's not what we see in this country."

"I reject the idea that there are vast numbers of people facing dire poverty in this country."

"Of course there are people struggling with the cost of living. [...] But the point being is that we are addressing these things through getting to the root causes."

Hammond further said that the government should be ensuring the market was "delivering in the way that the textbooks tell us it will work. [...] To the extent that it's not working, we have got to evolve the system" (BBC News, 2019).

Contrarily, Alston stated: "What is most puzzling to me is why the government is so defensive. Starting in 2010, it pursued a radical re-engineering of the welfare state, making poverty and its related outcomes foreseeable" (Alston, 2019). He viewed the government's response as three strategies: denial, distraction and attacking the messenger. Alston describes the way to his findings in the UK as "meeting with people in poverty, prominent researchers, and frontline staff at foodbanks and advice centres, many of whom said they wished the government would do the same" (Alston, 2019).

This juxtaposition exemplifies three interconnected aspects of this study, as explained subsequently: the substantive problem of rising inequalities and social injustice; societal disconnects; and epistemological divisions.

First, Alston's report makes inequality and related social injustices tangible. Economic inequality has been rising in most OECD-countries (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) during the last three decades (OECD, 2011; Piketty & Goldhammer, 2014). For instance, by 2010 income inequality in the UK reached levels it had last seen in the 1940s (Cassidy, 2014; Piketty & Goldhammer, 2014). This thesis echoes Alston's findings, with its Nottingham case being one of the UK's most deprived places (Nottingham City Council, 2017d). In comparison, there has

not been a Country visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights to Germany (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2020). Being accustomed to comparatively stronger societal solidarities from continental Europe (lastly Stuttgart), I never ceased to be appalled and morally outraged by the high inequalities and injustices I encountered there in particular. I came to regard the devaluation of ‘the poor’ as increasingly regressive, but also partly unnoticed – which I wanted to understand. This all matters to the thesis, as I cannot take myself out of it. Coming to the research with an interest in inequalities, a major relating research puzzle and point of departure was:

Why is there not more resistance against widening inequalities, particularly in places where they are more pronounced, despite their negative consequences for many?

Although majorities in many industrialised countries – including Germany and the UK – consider social or economic inequality as too large (Mau & Heuer, 2016; Orton & Rowlingson, 2007, p. 10), there is no clear link between income inequality and public discontent (e.g. Larsen, 2016, p. 94). This equally applies to variation in inequality over time (McCall & Kenworthy, 2009). Also, although the majority of citizens would profit economically from redistributive measures (Meltzer & Richard, 1981), significantly more people consider income inequality as too large than would support more redistribution (e.g. Orton & Rowlingson, 2007, p. ix). This thesis’ focus subsequently widens, but inequalities as a major societal concern (cf. also the following Section) remain central to it.

Second, the disagreements between Alston and some government members about poverty in the UK exemplifies disconnects between some policy-makers and citizens, between national and local politicians and more widely between citizens and places in relation to inequalities. A further illustration of these disjunctions is the partly unexpected ‘Brexit’ referendum result (with Nottingham voting to leave the European

Union (EU) by 50.8%; Nottingham City Council, 2016c).¹ An argument I encountered in Nottingham for Brexit was the sole wish to counteract the government's expectations. I explore and compare these significant discrepancies throughout the thesis.

Third, when Hammond does not "accept" Alston's report, calls it a "nonsense" and "rejects" the "idea" of many in dire poverty, this illustrates an increasing contestation of what does or does not constitute authoritative knowledge. Since this is policy-relevant knowledge, understanding the context, workings, legitimisation and implications of civic epistemologies (cf. Section 2.3.1 b)) is of high societal relevance – and a purpose of this study. While this example is drawn from the Nottingham case, it is through the comparison with Stuttgart that I could further interpret both cases.

All three aspects also arise in the current crisis around Covid-19 – which reinforces this study's relevance as a governance and welfare regime comparison. Varying inequalities and systems in Germany and the UK cope differently with the pandemic; disconnects between populations and politicians deciding on courses of action occur to varying degrees; and civic epistemologies are paramount in relation to acting upon the outbreak. I reflect on implications of Covid-19 in the light of this study in Section 8.9.

These rising inequalities and disjunctions are situated amongst other sustainability challenges in the following and connected to the urban level.

1.1.2 Sustainability and the urban

Subsequently, I argue that sustainability challenges are particularly pressing in cities – rendering the urban a highly relevant context to study them. Sustainability in this thesis is defined in terms of social and intergenerational justice (cf. Section 2.2.3):

Aiming at not restricting the leeway of future generations to pursue their conceptions of the good beyond today's restrictions. As a necessary condition, this

¹ References relating to the European Union predate the withdrawal of the UK from it on 31 January 2020.

implies aiming at preserving the natural environment and enhancing human well-being equitably in the present.

Increasing population shares living in cities worldwide exacerbate existing problems of sustainability (66% projected by 2050; United Nations, 2014). In Europe – the study's context – urbanisation has already resulted in more than two-thirds of the EU's population living in urban areas (European Commission, n.d.-b). Moreover, cities attract socio-economically more diverse populations than surrounding towns and rural areas (Glaeser et al., 2009) and therefore more likely exhibit societal polarisation which poses social justice challenges.

Considering the main problems which cities face in the future as viewed by researchers and international organisations demonstrates the wider relevance of issues arising in this study. Adopting a global perspective, Sevilla-Buitrago (2013) surveyed key scholars and professionals in fields relating to urban processes and planning about what they saw as most pressing conflicts for contemporary cities. In the responses, social inequality is mentioned the most often. Further important conflicts, named by at least two respondents, are global warming and the exhaustion of natural resources; the impact of new economic forms on the city and the maladjustments that they cause; forms of social revolts and antagonisms; the dynamics of commodification of public space, gentrification and other attacks on socio-spatial justice; lacking affordable housing, inefficiency and limitations in our models of urban development and deregulation of the urbanisation process (Sevilla-Buitrago, 2013, p. 467).

The EU regards cities as key to a sustainable development of the Union. However, it considers the European model of sustainable urban development under threat through demographic change, a non-continuous economic growth and the weakening link between economic growth, employment and social progress; through growing income disparities and poor people getting poorer; growing social polarisation, segregation and 'society dropouts'; through urban sprawl and the urban ecosystem being under pressure (European Union, 2011).

Overall, cities are particularly affected by current sustainability challenges. Many of them occur in Nottingham and Stuttgart – partly in uneven ways –, which makes them significant cases to study.

1.1.3 Neoliberalisation and the urban

Many of the outlined sustainability problems occur in democratic capitalist systems – the context of both Nottingham and Stuttgart. Single issues often relate to wider unsustainable tendencies in capitalism across the differing versions in which it exists. These tendencies include environmental degradation and climate change, a relatively low consideration of future generations' interests in democratic processes, rising economic inequality, a declining rate of economic growth and rising public and private debt (cf. Section 2.2.2). These trends are often reinforced under neoliberalisation (cf. Section 2.2.2 b)). I therefore relate my study to this pervasive, yet contested (cf. below) interpretive path. Neoliberalism is understood in this thesis in the sense used by Pinson & Journal (2016, p. 137):

“the set of intellectual streams, policy orientations and regulatory arrangements that strive to extend market mechanisms, relations, discipline and ethos to an ever-expanding spectrum of spheres of social activities, and all this through relying on strong State intervention”.

Pinson & Journal (2016, p. 139) summarise the thesis of urban neoliberalisation, as discussed in social sciences and urban studies, in terms of four key ideas. First, material and regulatory changes since the 1970s not only result from economic processes, but are part of a wider shift of – inter alia – regulatory arrangements. The changes are therefore also and primarily a process of “political nature implying the destruction of previous institutions and the creation of new ones” (Pinson & Journal, 2016, p. 139). Second, neoliberalisation involves the reengineering of the state “as an agent imposing the diffusion of market ethos and discipline in an increasing number of social spheres” and did not imply the hollowing out of the state (Pinson & Journal, 2016, p. 139). Third, the “neoliberalisation of urbanism” is central in the process of neoliberalisation, i.e. in tendency the reorganisation of local institutional arrangements according to market rule in contrast to earlier orientations,

e.g. bureaucratic, distributionist or managerial ones. Fourth, the “urbanisation of neoliberalism” through the financialisation of the economy and assets, such as infrastructures and the built environment, becomes increasingly important in current capitalism (Pinson & Journal, 2016, p. 139). They (2016, p. 139) conclude that “[...] cities are basically crucial cradles of neoliberalization, provide fundamental material bases for this process, but also for its contestation”.

Cities can therefore help us to understand neoliberalisation, its pressures, processes, negotiations and contradictions, more widely. Nottingham and Stuttgart suit this purpose particularly well in their capacities as successful commercialiser (Nottingham), early and essential privatiser (Stuttgart), and significant contesters (both) of neoliberal trends. This significance of cities for understanding neoliberalism through its varieties substantiates the study’s urban focus. Herein, I “engage with both ‘global discourses’ [around neoliberalisation] and contextually specific experiences” (Blanco et al., 2014, p. 3141).

Behind this backdrop, an underlying puzzle of neoliberalisation in relation to sustainability is:

Why is neoliberalisation often still advancing, despite its many unsustainable tendencies?

Addressing few critiques of the neoliberalisation thesis, I do not rely on the loosely defined concept of neoliberalisation (Pinson & Journal, 2016, p. 141) as a key explanatory factor, but besides inductive theorising employ more concrete urban governance ideal types, concepts of welfare states and market economies (cf. below). Since these account for diverging institutional and cultural traditions, my proceeding obviates another difficulty of the neoliberalisation thesis: its “many traces of academic Anglo ethnocentrism”, being visible in “a propensity to infer the generality of processes – the reduction of local autonomy, fiscal stress, the downgrading of social expenditures etc. [...] that are likely to be very specific to the US and UK” (Pinson & Journal, 2016, p. 144). I thereby refrain from reifying neoliberalisation as “the sole hegemonic project able to change the world” (Pinson & Journal, 2016, p. 148) – a

further criticism – but aim to understand conditions of amelioration in terms of social and intergenerational justice beyond this reference point. The study's further theoretical and conceptual reach substantiates its according relevance.

1.2 Overview of the study, research aim and questions

This research emanates from the mentioned tendencies in Western societies which counter social and intergenerational justice. Despite similar trends across polities, their configurations differ – as does their relation with sustainability. Literatures on urban governance types and 'varieties of capitalism' conceptualise such differences. With this comparative case study of urban governance in Nottingham (UK) and Stuttgart (Germany), I aim to understand how constellations of factors in two diverging democratic capitalist systems relate to sustainability; evincing lessons which can be of interest for understanding further cases. For this, I examine and compare policy approaches, negotiation processes and interdependencies between public and economic sectors. These themes came up as relevant during the empirical comparison and in previous governance research. Accordingly, the research aim and questions are:

Research aim:

To compare and explain how governance in Nottingham and Stuttgart relates to sustainability.

Research questions (RQs):

- 1. How do policy approaches relate to sustainability?*
- 2. How does the negotiation of policies relate to sustainability?*
- 3. How do political and economic interdependencies relate to sustainability?*
- 4. How far can a co-production of policies and social order explain divergence?*

The case study cities are conceptualised through Weberian ideal types, justifying their selection and guiding the empirical examination. Broadly, the urban governance literature suggests a shift from a hierarchic (Weberian), old public administration to the business- and market-oriented New Public Management (NPM)

and to a more networked governance. While the old public administration steers and controls public services with clear demarcations between politics and administration, state and society, these lines become blurred in the latter forms (Kjær, 2009, p. 137). Based on initial explorations and literature, Stuttgart is assumed as a traditional Weberian bureaucracy, embedded in a conservative-corporatist welfare state and a coordinated market economy. Nottingham is supposed to represent NPM, embedded in a liberal welfare state and a liberal market economy (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Hall & Soskice, 2001). Nottingham and Stuttgart therefore represent high variation cases with regards to assumed regime types. The same applies to average socio-economic living conditions, public budgets, local autonomy, levels of inequality and states of industrialisation – and qualifies the cases as significant exemplars to better understand these factors. Linking governance to sustainability, NPM relates to the spread of neoliberalism which is associated with shorter-term policies (Rowden, 2013). While the ideal types serve as starting points to the comparison, this study empirically expands on the regimes' understanding – also by drawing on further research to help interpreting findings.

The employed interpretive lens of a co-production of policies and social order as developed in science and technology studies (STS) expresses the view that making knowledge about the world, e.g. through science or policies, means at the same time and reciprocally making social order (Jasanoff, 2004a). By 'policies', I refer to content-related aspects of policy-making and associated reason. I define 'social order' as the "ways in which societies remain sufficiently stable to enable co-ordinated productive and cultural activity" (Harvey, 2012). This includes facets of power, politics, culture, values, morality and subjectivity. Particularly questions of power become central in the cases' comparison. The thesis examines how social order influences policies and their knowledge claims; and how the latter alter, reinforce and override social order. Both thereby influence each other in an ongoing process, they are 'produced together' (co-produced). With the above conceptualisations, Nottingham's and Stuttgart's governance regimes are theorised as different ways of co-producing policies and social order. These ways often help explaining divergence. The study contributes to research gaps through its integrated approach to examining sustainability dimensions; by

exploring the co-production of policies and social order with respect to sustainability in two governance regimes – and not only regarding single issues; by connecting comparative regime literatures with the co-productionist STS strand; and by strengthening the relatively rare comparative perspective within the latter.

To address the research aim and questions, the study draws on interviews with key informants in Nottingham and Stuttgart (2018; n = 78), on policy documents (2004 – 2018; n = 83) and on further research. The data provide manifold insights into local meanings, problems and the dealing with sustainability issues in urban policy-making. Specifically, I explore how Nottingham's seemingly difficult external conditions of governance and an advanced marketisation play out locally; and how Stuttgart's more bureaucratic and purportedly favourable setting of high prosperity backed by, but partly dependent on a strong industrial base, relates to sustainability. Often triangulating between sources and actors, I compare and interpret how various factors in the regimes are viewed and play out in relation to sustainability. With this focus, the comparison enables normativity and learning from examples. By examining two configurations of capitalism, this study originally contributes to our understanding of how we might live together more sustainably in such polities.

1.3 Thesis structure

This Introduction is followed by the study's conceptual foundations. Chapter 2 discusses approaches to researching sustainability, its challenges in democratic capitalism and the sustainability conceptualisation I employ. It then introduces the idiom of co-production, relates previous co-productionist research to this thesis and outlines my use of the conceptual frame. In the light of identified research gaps, I delineate main contributions of the study.

In Chapter 3, I discuss conceptualisations of and developments in capitalist welfare states, market economies and urban governance. Nottingham and Stuttgart are situated in terms of national contexts and hypothesised urban governance ideal types. The case study cities are then characterised with respect to their population, local government and finance, economy, social situation and inequalities.

The methodology – Chapter 4 – transposes the conceptual framework into research design. It depicts and justifies the study's qualitative/case-based comparative approach, the case selection and ideal type conceptualisation. Furthermore, it outlines research methods, data collection and analysis.

Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 constitute the thesis' empirical part and address RQs 1-4, respectively. This is done for RQ 1-3 by examining policy approaches, negotiations and political and economic interdependencies; and by exploring and interpreting their relation to sustainability. Herein, I follow the cases for tendencies and exemplars appearing significant to me in these regards. In Chapters 5-7, I first consider Nottingham, then Stuttgart in thematically analogous sections; and compare findings in the light of previous theorisation. Accordingly, Chapter 5 explores urban policy approaches; and how policies relate to social justice and to future generations.

Chapter 6 considers the negotiation of policies in the urban realm and with other levels of governance, i.e. central/federal government, regional/state levels and the European Union. I then focus on the role of the public as fundamental to understand the cities' social order, its role in policy-making – and interrelations of both.

Chapter 7 examines relations between local economies and the cities. It explores companies' connections to place, communication and cooperation with local administration and politics – as well as according power dynamics and conflicts. Subsequently, I consider local economies' relation with the public; and views about economic growth and intergenerational justice.

Chapter 8 compares the co-production of policies and social order in both places. For this, it interprets the empirical urban governance regimes, welfare states and market economies in relation to the hypothesised ideal types and concepts. The chapter then compares, theorises and explains selected aspects of policy approaches, negotiations, political and economic interdependencies in both cities (RQ 4). It closes by discussing limitations as well as research and practical implications of this study.

Throughout this thesis, I have translated German interview and documentary data into English. I report translations in quotation marks.

2 Sustainability and a co-production framework

2.1 Introduction

While the preceding opens up the thesis thematically, this conceptual chapter lays its foundations to comparatively interpret policies and their developing in relation to sustainability. Section 2.2 conceptualises sustainability as intergenerational justice. It establishes how this study moved from a focus on social sustainability to considering sustainability in an integrated way (Section 2.2.1). It then sets out how tendencies in current systems of democratic capitalism – in which the cases are situated – restrict future generations' leeway, i.e. are unsustainable (Section 2.2.2). On these grounds, I specify 'sustainability' for the study at hand (Section 2.2.3).

Section 2.3 explains the interpretive stance of a co-production of policies and social order. I introduce the approach (Section 2.3.1) and review its previous applications in relation to governance (Section 2.3.2). Section 2.3.3 outlines how I employ the co-production lens and the study's main contributions. Section 2.3.4 clarifies ontological and epistemological foundations. Finally, Section 2.4 summarises conceptual and contentual arguments made in this chapter.

2.2 Researching sustainability as intergenerational justice

2.2.1 Conceptualising sustainability: an integrated approach

This PhD is funded through a wider research project on urban sustainability (cf. Acknowledgements). It was initially conceived as part of a 'social' theme – alongside 'economic', 'environmental', 'policy', 'data' and 'modelling' themes. However, after reviewing (social) sustainability literature, I concluded that restricting this sociological study to 'social sustainability' would constrain its potential and by design reproduce the structures which it seeks to understand. I subsequently explain this by sketching the 'pillar' approach to sustainability, integrated approaches and argue for the latter.

a) The ‘pillar’ approach to sustainability

Customarily, sustainability is approached via a ‘three pillar’ structure of environmental, economic and social sustainability. This however lacks a solid theoretical foundation (Purvis et al., 2019) and often aligns with disciplinary boundaries (Boström, 2012, p. 3). Hereby, the environmental dimension receives most attention and is best defined in the literature (McKenzie, 2004). It includes the maintenance of the ecosystem and climate integrity, the conservation of species, the maintenance of abiotic natural resources, and a genetic stock that would guarantee resilience in case of external impacts. Ecological sustainability thus conforms to the conservation of nature which is external to humans (Foladori, 2005, pp. 502–503). There is less consensus in defining economic sustainability, often used synonymously for economic growth and productive efficiency.

Finally, social sustainability is a contested concept. Its numerous definitions include: the fulfilment of basic needs, inter- and intragenerational justice, equal rights, employment, social capital and cohesion, security, health, sense of place, well-being and participation (Boström, 2012). The ‘social pillar’ has been neglected for a long time, compared to the research and policy attention which the economic and environmental dimensions received (Vallance et al., 2011). Since around 30 years, social aspects of sustainability are increasingly recognised as important and research and policy activity have accelerated (Boström, 2012).

b) Researching sustainability in an integrated way

Besides these ‘pillar’ approaches, researchers have widely argued for more integrated conceptions of sustainability to prevent compartmentalisation. For instance, Boyer et al. (2016, pp. 12–13) conclude that sustainability is “ultimately a holistic and systemic concern”, while “‘one-pillar’ approaches to sustainability fail to acknowledge complexity and multifaceted problems represented by the convergence of a large number of competing needs”. Departing from an interest in social sustainability, Boyer et al. (2016) highlight the advantages of studying sustainability in a fully integrated, locally-rooted, and process-oriented way, so as to integrate values

and entities that have historically been separated into disciplines, like economics, physics or sociology. It “understands economic, environmental and social imperatives as overlapping in local experience” (Boyer et al., 2016, p. 10). “This idea undermines the dominance of one-size-fits-all perspectives in sustainability pursuits and highlights the need to recognize diverse visions *for* and perspectives *about* local environments” (Boyer et al., 2016, p. 11; emphases in original).

Correspondingly, Saha and Paterson (2008, p. 26) claim in their study of local governments’ sustainability efforts: “[...] [s]ustainable development implies the recognition of the inter-dependence and inter-connection of environmental, economic, and equity concerns”. Regarding disciplines, Partridge (2005, p. 13) expresses a view shared by several authors:

“[...] sustainability requires the integration of different and traditionally separate fields of knowledge. I suggest that this represents the central challenge but also the great potential of sustainability. Its usefulness as a concept lies in its integrating capability” (Partridge, 2005, p. 13).

Moreover, aligning research with ‘three pillars’ is “[...] an inherently political act” (Boyer et al., 2016, p. 3): “[...] the three-pillar model serves to reinforce disciplinary divisions, leading to a similar set of judgments about their relative worth” (Boyer et al., 2016, p. 11). By contrast, a simultaneous and empirically-grounded consideration of various sustainability dimensions does not similarly reinforce certain – value laden – compartmentalising norms over practices.

Countering the previous neglect of social aspects of sustainability, I argue that these are indeed – along with environmental aspects – central to sustainability: “sustainability [...] refers to the viability of socially shaped relationships between society and nature over long periods of time” (E. Becker, 1999, p. 4; as cited in Partridge, 2005, p. 7). I regard an ‘economic’ dimension as embedded in society (cf. Section 2.2.3). Partridge (2005, p. 12) coincidentally concludes:

“It is perhaps an indication of how pervasive the economic-centred paradigm has become that sustainability was ever able to be conceived as a relationship between

‘environment and economy’ in the first place, as if ‘economy’ is not absolutely a social creation.”

c) Establishing an integrated approach

An advantage of an integrated approach to sustainability is its openness to how sustainability is prioritised locally and to how structures and practices relate to it. This includes how far sustainability dimensions may interact, coincide or conflict. Focusing on one sustainability dimension would foreclose on such cognitions (Saha & Paterson, 2008, p. 23). I therefore employ an integrated approach pragmatically in terms of recognising different sustainability dimensions – perhaps more than some cited above –, but studying them simultaneously. The environmental and the socio-economic dimensions which I then distinguish (cf. Section 2.2.3) are not derived from ‘pillars’ nor disciplines, but turned out useful during the empirical exploration and correspond to my substantive reflections. However, all of these interrelate and the integration of sustainability dimensions empirically has its limits.

2.2.2 Sustainability and democratic capitalism

Emanating from an integrated understanding of sustainability, dynamics in Western democratic capitalist societies tend to restrict the leeway of future generations beyond current conditions in specific ways. Those dynamics are climate change and environmental degradation, a limited consideration of future generations’ interests in democratic processes, rising economic inequality, declining rates of economic growth and rising public and private debt since the last decades (Streeck, 2016, pp. 47–72). These issues are briefly sketched subsequently to contextualise the study.

Firstly, there is substantial agreement that current practices of resource use, pollution and emissions cannot be sustained without compromising life chances on

the planet. This is inter alia due to resource depletion² and human-caused global warming (Cook et al., 2016). Expansionist practices mostly intensified in the history of capitalism and relate to the requirement of economic growth (cf. Section 2.2.2 a)). However, while richer countries often contribute more to these developments, they also often suffer less from environmental problems and are better able to mitigate their consequences than poorer countries – making it a problem of global injustice.

Secondly, following generations' interests tend to be relatively marginalised in democratic processes since they often cannot participate in them and due to a declining electoral impact of younger generations in ageing populations.

Thirdly, economic inequalities in most OECD-countries have grown during the last three decades (OECD, 2011; Piketty & Goldhammer, 2014), in which market intervention often decreased. This and related adverse effects, e.g. in terms of health inequalities, crime or political engagement, receive increasing attention (e.g. Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010). Growing inequalities deteriorate life chances for more and more people – and often their descendants – in less favourable positions.

Connecting increasing inequality with – fourthly – stagnating economic growth and – fifthly – rising public and private debt, Streeck (2016, pp. 47–72) relates these tendencies to a growing mismatch between disposable public resources generated through taxes and a higher public demand for welfare and social justice in contemporary democratic capitalism. Both trends likely decrease future generations' scope of action. While the 'trente glorieuses', i.e. the circa 30 years of expanding prosperity after World War II, may be its highly exceptional condition (Streeck, 2016, p. 73), economic growth rates have – with in-between ups and downs – decreased persistently since the 1970s ('secular stagnation'). Simultaneously, overall indebtedness in many capitalist countries has risen. This applies to states, private households and non-financial corporations alike (Streeck, 2016, pp. 117–118). Streeck

² For instance, the 'Earth Overshoot Day' expresses this. It marks the "date when humanity's demand for ecological resources and services in a given year exceeds what Earth can regenerate in that year" (Global Footprint Network, 2020). In 2018, this happened on 1 August (Watts, 2018).

(2016, pp. 54; 115–116) however attributes the crisis of state finances more to a decreasing taxability, especially of middle classes and businesses, than to increasing welfare entitlements. In this climate, the growing use of credit within a financialising economy enabled states' spending on welfare and infrastructure, as demanded by citizens and companies. Attempts to contain their growing debt from the 1990s, also to maintain their creditworthiness, led to spending cuts and fiscal reform in many OECD-countries. In parallel, possibilities for and the utilisation of private credit increased, thus compensating for cuts in public provision. In this way, previously public goods and services increasingly shifted to the private sector (Streeck, 2016, pp. 116–119). With some of these developments culminating in the financial crisis of 2007/2008, fiscal consolidation partly continued through austerity and not higher taxes for the wealthier (Streeck, 2016, p. 69) in the 'European consolidation state' (Streeck, 2016, pp. 113–142).

a) The role of economic growth

In the outlined context, economic growth is sometimes seen as necessary to ensure intergenerational justice.³ This is despite simultaneously rising inequality and poverty. For instance, though employment levels in Nottingham (full-time equivalents) in 2012 again reach their 2004 levels after Britain's severe economic recession since 2008 (Townsend & Champion, 2014, p. 44), Lee and Sissons (2016) find little evidence that economic growth in British cities between 2000 and 2008 has reduced poverty. This is because growth was associated with wage increases at the top of the income distribution, but not below the median, and it was not related to the low skilled employment rate.

Moreover, while the need for economic growth is at the heart of capitalism, steady and limitless growth logically contradicts the finite nature of the planet and its resources. Relating to this problem, a correction of productive processes without

³ For example, growth is argued to "unleash[] enterprise that will bring benefits for generations to come" in Nottingham's Growth Plan (Nottingham City Council, 2012, p. 5).

fundamentally questioning the growth paradigm is sometimes promoted as an alternative. This might involve 'green' technologies and conservation measures, replacing non-renewable resources with renewable ones and diminishing the negative imprint caused by economic growth, such as pollution (Foladori, 2005, p. 503). Specifically in relation to climate change and ecological breakdown, 'green growth' became the dominant policy approach. Green growth theory asserts that steady economic expansion in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) is or can become compatible with the earth's ecology (Hickel & Kallis, 2019, p. 1).

Beyond that, the continuous pursuit of economic growth is challenged more fundamentally. For instance, Jackson (2011) argues for a 'post-growth' economy, implying a transformation of current modes of exchange, inter alia of the nature of enterprise, work or money supply to achieve ecological and financial stability and to secure employment and reduce inequality. These debates manifest in governments examining (e.g. Deutscher Bundestag, 17. Wahlperiode, 2013) and using (e.g. Shrikanth, 2019) alternative measures for a nation's prosperity than GDP.

What is more, notions of 'inclusive growth' evolve. For example, the OECD launched an "Inclusive Growth in Cities Campaign" to increase the awareness of rising inequalities and its problematic effects. The aim is to establish growth and equity as mutually reinforcing goals, instead of the conventional focus on economic growth only (OECD, 2016b).

Empirically, green growth has not been achieved so far. Examining relevant research on historical trends and model-based projections on resource use and carbon emissions, Hickel & Kallis (2019) find no empirical evidence that an absolute decoupling of economic growth from resource use can be achieved at a global level. Moreover, they found absolute decoupling of economic growth from carbon emissions highly unlikely to be achieved rapidly enough to prevent over 1.5°C or 2°C of global warming. Similarly, economic growth as a remedy against social and intergenerational inequalities became partly empirically refuted, as in relation to trickle-down economics (Dabla-Norris et al., 2015, p. 4). Furthermore, Kuznets coined the idea that income inequality would rise in the early stages of economic

development due to industrialisation and decline in later stages. This has been questioned to the point that the reverse causation, i.e. that economic inequality can hinder economic growth (OECD, 2014), seems to have become a consensus (Guidetti & Rehbein, 2014, p. 2).

The outlined conflict between the need for economic growth in capitalist systems and the ways in which growth partly not only ceases to improve future generations' living conditions, but also undermines their natural bases of life, sets the scene for how claims around economic growth are made in Nottingham and Stuttgart as two variations of this system. How actors negotiate inherent tensions gives insights into the local weight of an economic growth logic, of (political) sustainability considerations and the nature of political and economic interdependencies (RQ 3).

b) Neoliberalism and sustainability

The following relates the general tendencies in which democratic capitalism develops unsustainably (cf. Section 2.2.2) to neoliberalism (cf. also Section 1.1.3). With neoliberalism being widely discussed (e.g. Pinson & Journal, 2016), its concept and definition contested, it is here understood as

“the set of intellectual streams, policy orientations and regulatory arrangements that strive to extend market mechanisms, relations, discipline and ethos to an ever-expanding spectrum of spheres of social activities, and all this through relying on strong State intervention” (Pinson & Journal, 2016, p. 137).

In the last third of the twentieth century, in which laissez-faire capitalism again became the leading Western model, neo-liberal economics had a significant impact and challenged mixed economy and welfare states (Berend, 2015, pp. 94; 97); which welfare state types incorporate differently, cf. Section 3.2. Fiscal consolidation in industrialised countries since the 1980s has primarily been strived for by reducing public expenditures. Therefore, infrastructures, public services and benefits have not been maintained at previously achieved levels. This happened in the spirit of a neoliberal transformation to increase competition and efficiency (Streeck, 2016, p. 68). It importantly involves ever shorter planning horizons for public expenditures.

Shorter-term policies, fixes and accounting mechanisms then tend to prevail and additionally obstruct the maintenance of services and infrastructures. However, their insufficient maintenance implies a transfer of current costs of welfare into the future – unless a degradation in welfare is intended –, and thereby restricts future generations' leeway.

The appeal of these moves partly lies in directly available revenues in times of strained budgets. Examples are the (partial) privatisation, sale or leasing of public infrastructures and services such as gas, water, electricity or public transport. The same applies to private debt which younger generations are partly increasingly expected to take on, as is the case with tuition fees in the UK.

Altogether, neoliberalisation likely relates to less sustainable governance arrangements. I specify this initial theoretical expectation for the cases Nottingham and Stuttgart forth following.

2.2.3 Concept specification: sustainability

The previous section sketches problems of intergenerational justice in current democratic capitalism. They are the reason why intergenerational justice is at the centre of this study's sustainability conception. This 'future focus' of sustainability distinguishes it from mere social justice (Partridge, 2005, p. 8), i.e. it includes not only intragenerational justice, but also intergenerational justice. I define sustainability as:

Aiming at not restricting the leeway of future generations to pursue their conceptions of the good beyond today's restrictions. As necessary conditions, this implies aiming at preserving the natural environment and enhancing human well-being equitably in the present.

Future generations' leeway can e.g. be restricted through climate change and environmental degradation, through debts or infrastructures and social systems which are run down, lacking or not publicly accessible. To specify, enhancing human well-being "equitably" is understood in terms of the principle of fair equality of opportunities – one of two principles of Rawls' theory of justice. It states that inequalities in wealth and social positions ought to maximally benefit the least

advantaged citizens (Freeman, 1998). Intergenerational justice requires intragenerational justice, because current injustices restrict the future leeway of disadvantaged groups.

This definition can be positioned among many others. First, it understands sustainability as a societal question and is therefore anthropocentric. Second, its integral dimensions are a natural and a societal one. I do not consider a separate 'economic' dimension, as it could be a means for sustainability, not its end (Henderson, 2011) (cf. Section 2.2.1 b)). Instead, socio-economic sustainability expresses the mutual embeddedness of social and economic issues – in fact being two perspectives on the same matter. I therefore integrate sustainability dimensions by jointly examining socio-economic and environmental sustainability. These dimensions serve as heuristic devices, i.e. for analytical clarity.

The definition's purpose is to enable the empirical exploration. It is normative in its focus on justice and involves interpretational leeway – corresponding to the study's interpretational approach. With "aiming at not restricting", expressed intentions and policies' directions are in the foreground, since policies' outcomes are not easily discernible.

This study's interest in knowledge is how urban governance in Nottingham and Stuttgart – and the ways in which it is co-produced with social order – relates to sustainability. I explore this inductively in terms of how local political priorities and problems are defined and which meanings are attached to them on the one hand. On the other hand, I examine and interpret ways in which both systems appear unsustainable (cf. Section 2.2.2), and what (comparative) lessons may be learned from this. One underlying expectation is that in Nottingham, policy approaches, negotiations and political and economic interdependencies appear less sustainable with a more progressed neoliberalisation than in Stuttgart (RQ 1-3) (cf. Section 3.3.5). Finally, I reflect about how far a co-production of policies and social order explains divergence (RQ 4).

2.3 Conceptual framework: the co-production of policies and social order

2.3.1 The conceptual approach of co-production

a) Meanings of co-production

Co-production serves as an interpretive frame to this study. However, there exist two meanings of co-production which partly intermingle (Nerlich, 2015): a ‘science and technology studies’ (STS) meaning and a ‘public policy’ meaning, as explained subsequently. This thesis employs the STS meaning and by ‘co-production’ only refers to it. While the public policy meaning has contact points with this research, I refer to it differently.

Co-production, importantly coined by Jasanoff, describes the view that making knowledge about the world, e.g. through science or regulation, means at the same time and reciprocally making social order. Knowledge and social order are in that sense co-produced in a single process (Jasanoff, 2004a). This implies that scientific innovation and all kinds of knowledge claims always relate in some way to societal power relations, politics and values. Simultaneously, these latter build on and emerge in response to the development of knowledge. In Jasanoff’s words, co-production is

“the proposition that the ways in which we know and represent the world (both nature and society) are inseparable from the ways in which we choose to live in it. [...] [S]ociety cannot function without knowledge any more than knowledge can exist without appropriate social supports” (Jasanoff, 2004b, pp. 2–3).

Therefore, “solutions to the problem of knowledge are also solutions to the problem of social order” (Shapin & Schaffer, 1985, p. 332). The perspective of co-production enhances explanatory possibilities about how knowledge is made legitimate and meaningful (Jasanoff, 2004b). It thereby implies a social-constructivist perspective (cf. Section 2.3.4). I expound the concept’s use not only in relation to knowledge, but also to governance in Section 2.3.2.

The public policy meaning of co-production describes processes in which public services, policies or knowledge are established together by the public sector and by

publics in the sense of ‘making something together’. Nerlich (2015) interrelates both meanings: “While the public policy meaning of co-production focuses on participatory governance or co-governance, the STS concept of co-production is used to subject such processes to critical scrutiny”. Coined by Ostrom (1996), this co-governance assumes that state-society synergies are enabled by the local state, e.g. in that it guarantees basic rights, provides a framework for participation and encourages it (Kjær, 2009).

b) Theoretical outlooks and civic epistemologies

Jasanoff (2004a) distinguishes two theoretical outlooks in studies of co-production: constitutive and interactional co-production. Constitutive co-production examines the emergence of new socio-technical formations and their key ontological distinctions, e.g. the boundaries between the human and the non-human (Hilgartner et al., 2015, p. 5). Interactional co-production is more interested in epistemology, i.e. in conflicts that arise as new knowledge interacts with existing institutions and practices as well as cultural, economic and political formations. The approach therefore focuses on “histories of change through deliberation, competition and conflict, investigating the social processes through which knowledge and order change in specific societies” (Hilgartner et al., 2015, p. 5). This study examines some of these processes – though not only with regards to knowledge – in Nottingham and Stuttgart, which locates it in the interactional co-production strand.

Civic epistemologies form an important idea within this interactional approach: “the concept refers to regularities in the styles of reasoning, modes of argumentation, standards of evidence and norms of expertise used in public deliberation and by political institutions” (Hilgartner et al., 2015, p. 7; for further discussion cf. Miller, 2008, p. 1898). Civic epistemologies are useful to conceptualise according divergence in Nottingham and Stuttgart (cf. Section 8.3.2). This research thereby contributes to exploring an almost ‘blind spot’, given its practical consequences:

“[...] surprisingly, sociologists and political scientists know relatively little about how knowledge gets made in political communities, nor how the making of

knowledge is tied to other key aspects of political life, such as identity, authority, legitimacy, and accountability” (Miller, 2008, p. 1896).

2.3.2 Co-production and governance

While the co-production idiom is predominantly being applied to science and technology, its interpretive potential extends to all areas of society and knowledge. Recently, a growing number of contributions employs co-productionist perspectives to study public sense-making, legitimation and democratic engagement. Authors examine how these latter are shaped by and shape technoscientific, political and social orders (Chilvers & Kearnes, 2015, p. 15). Likewise, this study explores how “societies legitimate claims to both political and epistemic authority” (Chilvers & Kearnes, 2015, p. 24) in their urban governance practices.

In order to locate my research, I have – non-exhaustively – reviewed co-productionist literature of governance regimes, public policy and participation as well as foundational literature. Based on this, I discuss some insights of the co-production perspective subsequently. I then identify research gaps and substantiate them with examples relating to this study.

a) Perspectives

A key concern of the co-production perspective is to question a view where current situations are interpreted as determinisms (cf. also Section 2.3.3 a)). To give an example, Jasanoff (2016) studies imaginaries of global governance: world trade, climate change, and generic drugs. She shows how all three “employed economic logics to redefine political subjectivity in terms that diminished agency. Each case also demonstrates how creative legal and political action can force a rethinking of seemingly intractable ontologies and classifications, opening up spaces for a more expansive politics” (Jasanoff, 2016, p. 361).

Besides, by studying public participation processes, co-productionist research led to criticising their often implicit normative and realist assumptions (Chilvers & Kearnes, 2015, pp. 29–33). This includes accounts of a democratisation of science,

often deriving from normative theories of deliberative democracy (Habermas, 1996); or contributions comparing public participation practices against theoretically pre-defined procedural standards (Chilvers & Kearnes, 2015, p. 29). They exhibit “a commitment to pre-given normative models of democratic politics. ‘The democratic’ is [...] ready-made and external to the situated, material performances of democracy and participation (Marres, 2012)” (Chilvers & Kearnes, 2015, p. 30). However, these realist assumptions do not account for empirical findings showing that supposedly democratic politics and consensual deliberative practices “might be reconceived as the outcome of political struggle and power” (Chilvers & Kearnes, 2015, p. 30). For instance, Flyvbjerg (1998) demonstrates how power – in local politics and administration – dominates over and leads to its own rationality in a local planning project. This challenges contrary beliefs in modernity about the workings of local democracy and faith in rationality. STS more generally questions – and debunks – the “modernist paradigm of scientific rationalization and control” (Jasanoff, 2005, p. 41).

In response to the shortcomings of normative and realist perspectives, Chilvers & Kearnes (2015, pp. 33–38) argue for an understanding of policy-making and public participation as co-produced, relational and emergent. This implies no pre-given categories external to the practices studied, but their continual construction, revision and re-construction in open-ended processes. These practices then shape and are being shaped by social and political orders. A ‘public opinion’ could therefore not be a set external reality, nor could the structure of local power be normatively presupposed. Concurring with the governance concept (cf. Section 3.3.1), this study adopts these perspectives – while in a second step, though explicitly, interpreting findings normatively in relation to sustainability.

b) Research gaps

Behind this foundational background, the following carves out three gaps in the co-productionist governance research and substantiates them with examples.

First, research has not focused on the co-production of governance regimes with social order. Units of analysis in the co-production literature are typically specific

issues, measures or projects, rather than regimes as a whole – neither at urban nor at national levels. Examples are Mahony’s (2013) study about the Copenhagen international climate change negotiations 2009; or Chilvers and Longhurst (2016) comparatively examining public engagement in four cases of UK low carbon energy transitions. However, some co-productionist research tends towards a regime perspective. Being relevant to this study, I subsequently consider national and urban governance levels.

Regarding national levels, Miller (2015a, p. 283) identifies a literature strand considering how the concept of the welfare state, “its particular knowledge engines – statistically represented populations and their problems” and its imaginations of policy areas emerged together. For instance, Skocpol & Rueschemeyer’s (1996) edited volume comparatively examines the reciprocal influences of social policies and academic research. Herein, Wittrock and Wagner (1996) in effect take a co-production perspective to the emergence of social knowledge and the origins of social policies – comparing the building of early Anglo-American and European welfare states and the emergence of the research-oriented university, as a ‘double transformation’. They state that “[e]ach of these two transformations, that is, in the relations between state institutions and society and in the academically legitimated discourses on society, had a major impact on the other” (Wittrock & Wagner, 1996, p. 90). The authors find divergence between an Anglo-American and a European path of development in terms of “deep-seated institutional and intellectual differences which tend to set the stage for substantially different outcomes in terms of policy and social structure” (Wittrock & Wagner, 1996, p. 107). This concurs with my findings (cf. Section 8.2). Furthermore, Scott (1999), in trying to understand why well-intentioned, large-scale authoritarian plans to improve living conditions failed in many cases, contributes to a co-productionist understanding of state activity and the role of civil society. He identifies four conditions common to these failures: administrative ordering of nature and society by the state; a prostrate civil society unable to effectively resist such plans (cf. Section 6.6); a ‘high-modernist ideology’ placing confidence in science to improve human life in every aspect; and a willingness to use authoritarian state power for large-scale interventions, often inflicting violence on complex interdependencies that

cannot be fully understood (Scott, 1999). However, STS research on state activity is relatively limited. I agree with Goldstein & Tyfield (2018, p. 75), who call for greater according attention – and contribute to it:

“Science and technology studies (STS)-informed analysis allows, and compels, asking how socio-technological innovation and their constitutive power relations are crucially interrelated, making the reshaping of the state – still the primary institution and system of social relations of collective governance – a core but neglected political, technological and ecological project of our time, with a key role for STS”.

Co-productionist research about urban governance and sustainability partially adopts normative stances and develops according analytical frameworks. For instance, Muñoz-Erickson et al. (2017) propose a knowledge systems analysis framework to examine practices in relation to knowledge and their interplay “with the visions, values, social relations, and power dynamics embedded in the governance of building sustainable cities” (Muñoz-Erickson et al., 2017, p. 203). The focus is on how cities “can co-produce new knowledge with meaningful sustainability and resilience actions and transformations” (ibid.). Wyborn (2015) develops a framework for adaptive governance in employing co-production as an analytical lens as well as a normative goal to achieve. She operationalises co-production in terms of the context, knowledge, process and vision of governance. Contrary to these approaches, I do not commit to pre-defined categories or analytical frameworks. Neither do I employ co-production as a normative goal, meaning that I do not strive for certain ways in which policies and social order should interact – but only as an interpretational lens. As such, I aim to understand the normative implications for sustainability of varying co-production modes. Where Muñoz-Erickson (2014, p. 190) states that “[t]he co-production literature, however, lacks empirical studies in urban contexts”, this study contributes to this.

As a second research gap, there has been relatively limited co-productionist engagement with policy areas other than science, technology and environment. This corresponds to STS’ ‘traditional’ foci on scientific innovation, emerging technologies and the natural sciences. Examples are stem cell patenting (Hoeyer et al., 2009),

climate change (Mahony, 2013) or the governance of pharmacogenomics in Europe and the United States (Hogarth, 2012). Where co-productionist research examines sustainability issues, they are primarily understood in environmental terms, rather than in integrated ways (e.g. Baya-Laffite, 2016).

Other areas such as economic and social policy or welfare state activity more broadly receive less attention. However, an example is St Clair's (2006) study of the World Bank as a site of co-production of knowledge and social order. Through this lens, the author exemplifies how power plays out in relation to global poverty eradication. She concludes that institutional mechanisms should be established that can "deconstruct hegemonic visions and methods, choices and policy decisions and then reconstruct and renegotiate in a participatory, equitable and fair way with all parties" – the alternative being "the recognition that global problems may have to be left to sheer power relations" (St Clair, 2006, p. 73). This relates to my findings in Section 8.3.1.

Besides, Straßheim & Korinek (2016) examine 'nudging', i.e. behavioural governance, in the UK – where it became most influential. They define behavioural governance as "every mode of governing informed, designed or implemented by focusing on psychological as well as cognitive mechanisms of behaviour in both individuals and collectives" (Straßheim & Korinek, 2015, p. 154, as cited in 2016, p. 109). Understanding its rise as an empirical puzzle, the authors see behavioural governance "as unfolded and stabilised not by the simple diffusion of ideas or the provision of new insights about human rationality", but as "the result of a complex interlinkage between expert authority and sociotechnical imaginaries about future state-citizen relationships" (Straßheim & Korinek, 2016, p. 121). Where they call for future research "to show how behavioural expertise is justified, legitimized, and culturally embedded across countries" (Straßheim & Korinek, 2016, p. 122), Nottingham and Stuttgart constitute according exemplars (cf. Sections 5.2.2 a) and 8.3.2).

The third research gap is a relative scarcity of comparative co-productionist governance studies. Though the number of comparisons is growing, single case studies

are still prevailing. While being valuable, through a single case it may be harder to see how policies and social order *could* or *should* be co-produced differently than by comparing existing variants. This is because all research is culturally, politically and temporally embedded. Conversely, comparisons can demonstrate these contingencies by discerning differences in their ‘natural environments’. While they may open up alternatives, transfers may not easily be possible (cf. Section 2.3.3). Altogether, the rare use of comparisons limits the scope of co-productionist governance research. Having outlined its gaps, Section 2.3.3 discusses this study’s relating contributions.

2.3.3 Employing co-production as an interpretive lens

The following explains how this research draws on the concept of co-production and contributes to it.

Co-production in this study describes how policies and related reason, i.e. knowledge, cannot be separated from values, morality, subjectivity, culture, politics and power (adapted from Filipe et al., 2017). I subsume the latter under ‘social order’, and the former under ‘policies’. Social order therefore influences and forms policies; and policies in turn alter, reinforce and override social order. Both thereby influence each other in an ongoing process, they are ‘produced together’ (co-produced). Governance as an umbrella concept (cf. Section 3.3.1) enables examining these interactions between policies and social order.

The value of co-production to this study lies in its “way of thinking about power” (Jasanoff, 2004b, p. 4). This means seeing governance elements, e.g. policies, not as neutral or deterministic, but as enacted for specific reasons, involving unequal influence of actors and views, compromise and relating conventions (Jasanoff, 2005, p. 13); examining these elements and their epistemic claims; and thereby opening them up for debate. In Jasanoff’s words (2004a, p. 36), co-production

“[...] provides [...] the possibility of seeing certain ‘hegemonic’ forces not as given but as the (co-)products of contingent interactions and practices. These insights

may, in turn, open up new opportunities for explanation, critique and social action.”

Co-production thereby “performs a neglected critical function [...] [and] enables normative analysis by following power into places where current social theory seldom thinks to look for it [...]” (Jasanoff, 2004a, p. 42) – such as in processes intended and partly taken-for-granted in certain ways (e.g. democratically or participatory). Other approaches equally assume such a “neglected critical function”, though from different angles. For instance, post-structuralist discourse theory focuses on ‘repressions’ by aiming to

“reactivate those options that were excluded and foreclosed during the emergence and institution of a practice, that is, the forces and elements which are repressed or defeated in the constitution of an identity [...]”, thereby “revealing the non-necessary character of existing social formations and enabling us to explore the consequences and political effects of such ‘repressions’” (Howarth et al., 2016, p. 103).

a) A sensitising concept

Co-production as an interpretive frame can open up ways to examine phenomena, but its “[...] aim is not to provide deterministic causal explanations [...]” (Jasanoff, 2004a, p. 38). Co-production is not a

“fully fledged theory, claiming lawlike consistency and predictive power. It is far more an idiom – a way of interpreting and accounting for complex phenomena so as to avoid the strategic deletions and omissions of most other approaches in social sciences” (Jasanoff, 2004b, p. 3).

Employing co-production in this way is an anti-foundational approach – I accordingly do not restrict the research to pre-defined theoretical categories. Co-production thereby serves as a ‘sensitising concept’ which Blumer (1954) distinguishes from definitive theoretical concepts:

“[a] sensitizing concept lacks such specification of attributes or benchmarks [of definitive theoretical concepts] and consequently, it does not enable the user to move directly to the instance and its relevant content. Instead, it gives the user a

general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances. Whereas definitive concepts provide prescriptions of that to see, sensitizing concepts merely suggest directions along which to look” (Blumer, 1954, p. 7).

b) Exploring with co-production

In this study, I examine and compare how local policy approaches, their negotiation and political and economic interdependencies in Nottingham and Stuttgart relate to sustainability (RQ 1-3). I attempt to explain divergence by understanding how policies and social order are co-produced in both governance regimes (RQ 4). This should be comprehended through the viewpoints of actors involved or concerned via interviews. Besides, policy-making involves materiality in the form of documents codifying objectives and views. Finally, participation processes and surveys construct and give voice to groups, e.g. citizens or businesses, in specific ways. These are the essential data sources on which I draw to answer the research questions (further described in Section 4.4).

To open up this research, guiding questions illustrate how I employ the co-productionist lens. However, they are exemplary, non-exhaustive and not all followed through in the study. This flexibility, especially in a comparative context, is a strength of the approach. The aim is to comparatively explore some tendencies in relation to them:

- Who holds formal and informal power in the cities?
- Which political priorities are being pursued locally – which are not? Why?
- Which knowledge is called on to formulate policies?
- How long/short are planning horizons?
- How are policies negotiated?
- Who has or is given a voice – who is not?
- How are actors being viewed?
- How do actors and sectors interrelate?
- Who benefits in what way from local policies?

- What are critical or paradigmatic cases in these regards and what do they show?
- Which values, moralities and conventions underpin these practices?
- How did policies and social order emerge out of earlier situations?

Based on the hypothesised ideal types and the cases' high variation (cf. Chapter 3), I expect that they diverge in many respects, also in relation to sustainability. Accordingly, I theorise the two governance regimes as differently co-producing policies and social order.

c) Main contributions

This study makes some main contributions in relation to previous research and its gaps.

First, it argues for and contributes to an integrated approach to researching sustainability in terms of intergenerational justice. Thereby it aims to avoid the established 'silo'-thinking with regards to the future, but also as a wider conception in modernity. The integrated approach facilitates making connections between political, social, economic and environmental (sustainability) issues.

Second, it examines and compares how policies and social order are co-produced in two empirical instances of welfare states and urban regimes (cf. Chapter 3) and how these modes relate to sustainability. This angle is relatively novel, but more so relevant in the face of sustainability problems in current democratic capitalism. Also, the co-production perspective expands beyond more conventional analyses of urban and welfare state governance by explicitly focusing on the co-construction of policies and social order. Therein, urban governance regimes as units of analysis widen the research scope beyond the established co-productionist focus on single policy problems or instruments for an inductive exploration of varying and overarching questions. Relatedly, Chilvers & Kearnes (2015, p. 15) emphasise the relevance of analytically surpassing single participation instances (e.g. consultations or instruments) towards

*“the level of **political culture and constitutional relations** between citizens, science and the state, within which certain participatory collective practices and knowledge-ways become seen as authoritative and are endowed with legitimacy and meaning (Jasanoff, 2005, 2011; emphasis in original).”*

Regarding the case study cities, urban governance research often focuses on large cities (e.g.: Blanco, 2015; Lachmund, 2013) and less so on mid-sized ones – making the study contribute to this void.

Third, this research brings together comparative literatures on urban and welfare state regimes with the co-productionist STS perspective. This means using the latter’s insights to more closely examine how these regimes and their epistemic foundations are co-constituted with power, values and normativity – which is a substantively underexposed angle. Otherwise, the dynamically expanding field of STS can profit from developing a stake in the lasting discussions around welfare state regimes and urban governance. This might help to re-integrate relating literatures of STS, sociology, political science and political economy.

Fourth, the comparative perspective establishes a contentual and methodological contribution to the co-production literature which predominantly relies on single-case studies. It enables a normative discussion about how both regimes as configurations of capitalism account for the future. This question is of fundamental public interest and a major substantive contribution. Jasanoff (2005, p. 14) accordingly states: “[c]omparison may even help us decide which courses of action we wish to follow, as individuals or as political communities.” Notwithstanding, given the cultural embeddedness of governance, “there are reasons to be sceptical of unproblematic learning from others’ experiences” and of “prescribing decontextualized best practices” (Jasanoff, 2005, p. 15) – cf. also Section 8.9.

2.3.4 Ontological and epistemological foundations

Regarding assumptions about the nature of social existence, becoming and reality, this study broadly comes from a social constructivist stance which coheres with

its co-productionist conceptual framework (Chilvers & Kearnes, 2015). Constructivism assumes

“that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors. It implies that social phenomena and categories are not only produced through social interaction but that they are in a constant state of revision” (Bryman, 2004, p. 17).

It suits the empirically emergent character of urban governance, where policies and their meanings are established, revised and renewed; and where power is relational. Meanings may materialise in statements, documents, objectives, employed evidence or surveys ordering the social world; and these representations in turn give reference to emerging perceptions. Stuttgart’s introduction of the ‘New Steering Model’ and its partial reversal illustrates these shifting meanings and their real consequences (cf. Section 6.4.1).

Corresponding to the social constructivist view, this study employs an interpretive epistemological approach. Interpretivism emphasises the need to grasp subjective meanings of the social world and behaviours, assuming that people and natural sciences’ objects differ in this regard (Bryman, 2004, pp. 11–13). The interpretive view implies multiple realities and situated knowledges. Governance is therefore understood as culturally, politically, historically and socially bound within the urban and national regimes. The cases therefore need to be comprehended in their contexts (cf. Section 4.2.2).

2.4 Summary

The following table provides an overview of key conceptual elements and arguments of this study in relation to sustainability and co-production, as justified within this chapter.

Table 1: Conceptual framework in relation to sustainability and co-production

Sustainability	
Conceptualisation	From 'pillars' (environmental, social, economic) to an integrated approach: socio-economic and environmental dimensions
Problems of sustainability in democratic capitalism – accelerating in neoliberalism	Environmental degradation and climate change Neglect of future generations' interests in democratic processes Rising economic inequality Declining rates of economic growth Rising public and private debt
Definition of sustainability	Aiming at not restricting the leeway of future generations to pursue their conceptions of the good beyond today's restrictions. As necessary conditions, this implies aiming at preserving the natural environment and enhancing human well-being equitably in the present.
Co-production of policies and social order	
Understanding of co-production	Intermingling and simultaneity of making policies and making social order (Jasanoff, 2004a)
Use of co-production	Sensitising concept (Blumer, 1954) Guiding questions – expecting convergence
Main contributions	Promoting an integrated approach to sustainability Whole governance regime-perspective in relation to sustainability Connecting co-productionist approach with research on urban governance and welfare states Adding a comparison to co-production research
Ontology and epistemology	Constructivism – interpretivism

Source: own research.

3 Welfare states, urban governance and case introductions

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews welfare state and urban governance concepts in relation to the case study cities Nottingham and Stuttgart – and introduces the concepts as heuristic devices. While it is a shortcoming of the community power debate (cf. Section 3.3.2) to assume “that cities could be treated as self-contained and independent entities” (Harding, 2009, p. 32), I include national and international, state and regional contexts. I also consider broader structural conditions in which places and actors are embedded, encompassing institutional, socio-economic and historical factors.

The chapter starts from the general and proceeds to the specific. It first draws on conceptualisations of welfare states and market economies and in these respects situates Germany and the UK (Section 3.2). Second, I locate the research in the urban governance literature, describe the cases’ ideal-typical conceptualisation and relate according developments to the cases (Section 3.3). Third, I describe Nottingham and Stuttgart (Section 3.4). Concludingly, Section 3.5 summarises and juxtaposes the cases in their conceptual and empirical capacities.

3.2 Conceptualising the capitalist welfare state

3.2.1 ‘Varieties’ or ‘stages’ of capitalism?

Versions of democratic capitalism, which Nottingham and Stuttgart represent, shape conditions of governance and social order. They are compared in terms of ‘varieties’ and ‘stages’. The former approach synchronically distinguishes varieties of capitalism along selected variables or combinations of factors. Hereto, Esping-Andersen (1990) and Hall & Soskice (2001) contributed significantly and are drawn on subsequently. ‘Stages’ of capitalism, a Marxian concept, takes a diachronic perspective on the changing character of capitalism based on its inherent dynamics and therefore focuses on convergence (Bresser-Pereira, 2012; McDonough, 2015).

In his study “The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism”, Esping-Andersen (1990) carves out three configurations of capitalist welfare states: a liberal, a conservative-corporatist and a social-democratic welfare state type. Countries are classified along six variables mainly based on their forms of de-commodification, which „occurs when a service is rendered as a matter of right, and when a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market” (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 21). Essential criteria distinguishing welfare states then involve the quality of social rights, social stratification and “qualitatively different arrangements between state, market, and the family” (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 26; 29). In the liberal welfare state type, means-tested assistance, mainly catering low-income, working-class citizens, modest universal transfers or modest social-insurance plans predominate. Liberal work-ethic norms imprint the welfare state with strict rules that are often associated with stigma and an encouragement of market-solutions to welfare. The liberal welfare state cluster is therefore the least de-commodifying of the three, effectively containing the scope of social rights and exhibiting a class-political dualism between relatively equally poor state-welfare recipients and majorities disposing of a market-differentiated welfare. The cluster encompasses inter alia the United States, Canada, Australia and the UK (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 26–27). Welfare states of the conservative-corporatist type have not embraced market efficiency and commodification to the extent of the liberal type and “the granting of social rights was hardly ever a seriously contested issue” with the state often displacing the market as a welfare provider and private provision playing a marginal role (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 27). However, rights are attached to class and status, thus preserving status differentials with relatively little redistribution. Besides, the Church shaped corporatist regimes which preserve traditional familyhood through tax, benefit and social insurance arrangements – with the family also being the first instance of care for its members. Examples for the type are Austria, France, Germany and Italy (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 27). Finally, countries of the social-democratic regime-cluster embrace universalism and de-commodification of social rights with social democracy being the driving force for social reform. This involves promoting “equality of the highest standards”, not tolerating a dualism between state and market as well as between working and middle

classes and “guaranteeing workers full participation in the quality of rights enjoyed by the better-off” (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 27).

Criticisms have been raised in relation to Esping-Andersen’s (1990) typology, including a neglect of the gender dimension in social policy or a misspecification of the Mediterranean welfare states as immature Continental ones (Arts & Gelissen, 2002). Other welfare state typologies were therefore developed (cf. Arts & Gelissen, 2002, pp. 143–144), for a discussion regarding Germany and the UK cf. Section 3.2.2. However, Emmenegger, Kvist, Marx & Petersen (2015) show that the ‘Three Worlds’ continues to be the point of reference for comparative welfare state research. In this study, Esping-Andersen’s (1990) typology helps understanding the two configurations of welfare capitalism in which the urban governance regimes are situated.

Besides, market economy conceptualisations capture political and economic interdependencies (RQ 3). Hereby, ‘varieties of capitalism’ (Hall & Soskice, 2001) are particularly relevant, as they regard Germany and the UK as typical for a ‘coordinated market economy’ (CME) and a ‘liberal market economy’ (LME), respectively (cf. Section 3.2.2). The approach

“starts from the premise that countries exhibit distinct, historically determined, national institutional equilibria that tie together a number of building blocks (such as the industrial relations, financial, corporate governance, and vocational training systems) in a coherent fashion that defines particular and differentiated market economies” (Fioretos, 2001, p. 219).

These ‘building blocks’ have combined effects, making their sum greater than just an addition of their parts (Fioretos, 2001, p. 219). In this way, countries can “derive comparative advantages from their institutional structure” (Hall & Soskice, 2001, p. v). The approach contradicts the ‘phases’ models in that it suggests that “economic actors have strong stakes in protecting existing structures”, since transforming one market economy type to another is very costly, long and uncertain, “due to the difficulties of achieving a new and stable institutional equilibrium” (Fioretos, 2001, p. 220).

While the ‘varieties of capitalism’ literature emphasises “the survival of capitalist variation over space in the context of global competition” (Hall & Soskice, 2001), the ‘stages’ theoretic tradition locates spatial variations of capitalism “in national responses to capitalist crises which demand for their resolution the reorganization of the institutional conditions of the capitalist accumulation process” (McDonough, 2015). The author summarises three main criticisms of ‘varieties’ approaches, partly based on Deeg & Jackson (2007, pp. 150; 157) and Bohle & Greskovits (2009, p. 382): that the framework is biased in assuming stability rather than change; that widespread change in institutional structures challenges the coherence of the limited number of typologies; and that the preoccupation with capitalism’s different varieties overlaps recognising its essence, e.g. its expansionary nature, vulnerabilities, destructive tendencies and recurrent crises. In line with this critique, Wolfson & Kotz (2009) propose an alternative conceptualisation to that of Hall and Soskice. It consists of ‘liberal’ and ‘regulated social structures of accumulation’ that temporally follow one another due to crises that each of their very nature leads to.

While ‘varieties’ and ‘stages’ of capitalism are both useful for its understanding, their partial emphasis on variables omits much of cases’ contexts. I employ the insights of Esping-Andersen’s (1990) and Hall & Soskice’s (2001) typologies and relate my cases to them. However, I combine them with an alternative, case-based approach where context matters in ways that are not pre-defined and which is open to case transformation (cf. Section 4.2). This approach is novel in that it connects the constructivist view on how policies and knowledge are co-created with power, values and morality with the comparative welfare state literature – and thereby adds to both strands.

3.2.2 British and German welfare states and market economies

Nearly 30 years on from Esping-Andersen’s (1990) typology, it still provides relevant insights into the German and British welfare states. However, they also evolved significantly. Some according aspects are considered subsequently; as are

characteristics of their market economies, both to ground the case study cities' embeddings.

Germany's 'social market economy' emanates from a social insurance contribution-based 'Bismarck' system which in a pure form does not redistribute between income groups (Bismarck versus Beveridge: A Comparison of Social Insurance Systems in Europe, 2008; Cremer & Pestieau, 2003; Kolmar, 2007). While Esping-Andersen (1990, p. 29) remarks that European conservative regimes have become less corporatist and less authoritarian by incorporating both liberal and social-democratic impulses, Seeleib-Kaiser (2016) empirically confirms those impulses for social policy areas in Germany. He concludes that the comprehensive transformation that social policy underwent since the early 1980s, relating to altered interpretive patterns, no longer affords conceiving of Germany as a conservative welfare state. For pension policies, Seeleib-Kaiser argues that the dualised pension system for future pensioners resembles that of liberal welfare states with pensioners largely depending on complementary occupational or private provision to avoid poverty. Similarly approximating a liberal model, unemployment insurance "no longer guarantees occupational status protection and the achieved standard of living" (Seeleib-Kaiser, 2016, p. 235). This resonates with the radical and controversial labour market reforms – partly seen as a neoliberal incision – which were implemented in Germany between 2002 and 2005, overhauling the social security and labour market activation system in line with a 'work first' strategy (Knuth, 2014, p. 5). By contrast, family policy displays "very similar elements to those found in Scandinavia" (Seeleib-Kaiser, 2016, p. 235).

Despite some common tendencies, the UK as part of the 'leanest' welfare state group developed in a more neoliberal way than Germany (Prasad, 2006). However, the UK's former status of an exemplary welfare state (Wincott, 2006), emanating from its post-war tax-based 'Beveridge' system, redistributing between income groups (Bismarck versus Beveridge: A Comparison of Social Insurance Systems in Europe, 2008; Cremer & Pestieau, 2003; Kolmar, 2007), resonates with a "fourth world of radical welfare capitalism" (Castles & Mitchell, 1992, p. 20). As part of Esping-Andersen's (1990) liberal cluster, the radical type corresponds

“to a particular configuration of political preconditions, consisting of a labor movement unable to obtain a degree of partisan control commensurate with its political support base in the community and also, perhaps, of a historical legacy of radical egalitarianism” (Castles & Mitchell, 1992, p. 20).

In seeming contrast to its progressive past, later literature observes an ‘Americanisation’ of the British welfare state. As “[t]he ‘Thatcher revolution’ and its continuation by New Labour make Britain a kind of master model for the neo-liberalization or Americanization of European welfare states”, Schierup (2006) finds that the development of state managed race relations and multiculturalism went parallel with growing inequality and labour force restructuring according to race, gender, human capital and legal status. Regarding social policy, Holmwood (2000) explains an ‘Americanisation’ with the transformation and demise of the post-Imperial/Commonwealth system in which the British economy was embedded (cf. Section 3.4.1 c)). During today’s “period of historically prolonged austerity and substantial working age welfare reform”, with ‘Brexit’ there is “yet another renegotiation of the social contract” looming (Gingrich & King, 2019, p. 89). Relatedly, Alston (2018, p. 2) states that “[k]ey elements of the post-war Beveridge social contract are being overturned”, accusing government ministers of a “systematic immiseration of a significant part of the British population” (Booth, 2019). He warns that unless austerity was ended, the UK’s poorest people faced lives that are “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” (Booth, 2019).

Based on the ‘varieties of capitalism’ approach, Hoffmann (2003, p. 125) characterises Germany’s and the UK’s institutional economic structures, drawing on Hall & Soskice (2001), Fioretos (2001), Wood (2001), Vitols (2001) and Graham (1997). Accordingly, ownership is central to economic activity in the British ‘liberal market economy’. Companies are merely able to provide quasi ‘public goods’, such as vocational training, research and development, technological diffusion and long-term financing. They therefore mainly refinance themselves at the stock market and thus depend on short-term profit expectations. Membership in business associations is below 50% and unions are organised pluralistically, with collective labour agreements mostly at a company’s level. Altogether, this entails low qualification and wage levels

as well as partly extreme income spreads – alongside a high-tech production sector with highly qualified employees. Larger companies can invest relatively quickly into innovations with risk capital, while qualified labour can be bought externally or developed in protected “intragroup labour markets”.

In contrast, Hoffmann (2003, p. 125) condenses the following properties of Germany’s ‘coordinated market economy’ (based on Fioretos, 2001; Streeck, 1997; Vitols, 2001; Wood, 2001; Hall & Soskice, 2001): an extensive coordination of economic activities between firms via business organisations in which over 95% of them are members. If financed externally, companies mostly depend on long-term bank loans or when they have shareholders, these mostly also see themselves as stakeholders. Businesses can therefore solve problems of collective action through cooperation and supply quasi ‘public goods’. This again leads companies to develop innovation processes incrementally towards a quality-based competition strategy – causing Germany to lag behind in high-tech production, but focusing on ‘medium-tech’ manufacturing. Simultaneously, qualifications and wages are relatively high and, also via unions’ wage policy and welfare state redistribution, income spread is low compared with the UK or US. The resilience of Germany’s labour market through the 2008/2009 economic crisis has been attributed to factors reflecting a return to the traditional ‘coordinated market economy’ “rather than the neoliberal spirit of the labour market reforms [cf. above]” (Knuth, 2014, p. 5).

Concludingly, diverging welfare state regimes and market economies set the scene of varying power relations, social orders and policy environments in Nottingham and Stuttgart.

3.3 Conceptualising urban governance

This section turns to the city level and specifies urban governance and power for this research (Section 3.3.1). I then relate it to community power studies (Section 3.3.2), urban regime and governance theory (Section 3.3.3) and to the shift ‘from government to governance’ (Section 3.3.4). The latter section outlines initially assumed urban governance ideal types, i.e. the Weberian bureaucracy for Stuttgart

and NPM for Nottingham. In this regard, I finally review local governance trajectories in Germany and the UK (Section 3.3.5).

3.3.1 Specifying urban governance and power

In this study, “urban governance refers to the process through which a city is governed without making any prejudgements about the locus of power or the relative significance of political and societal actors in that process [...]” (Pierre, 2011, p. 4). This “offers [...] a more accurate way of discussing power in city politics beyond simply the power to control” (M. Brown, 1999). By surpassing the formal, ‘governance’ stresses the relevance of arrangements between public and private spheres for how urban matters are structured and dealt with (Horan, 1997). The governance process manifests inter alia in policy approaches, in ways in which issues are negotiated and in relative power positions of civil society, political and economic sectors (RQ 1-3).

Power is therefore central to this research. I understand it in relation to the conceptual and theoretical framework. The two distinct settings of urban governance within varieties of welfare capitalism evince high variation in inequalities, average living conditions and (de-)industrialisation. These characteristics are relevant to local power relations between citizens, local politicians, city administration, national government, possibly state government, other authorities, associations, institutions and companies in both cities – and how they might link with (policies’) sustainability. I consider actors’ interests as embedded in and shaped by these structures. Assuming the co-production of policies and social order (cf. Section 2.3.3), the aim is to empirically comprehend where and how power is then situated in both governance regimes (according assumptions cf. Sections 3.3.4 a) and b)); and how this interacts with policy-making.

However, power not only manifests in decision-making, but also in agenda setting and preference shaping – which Lukes (1974) identifies as “three faces of power”. Agenda setting includes preventing issues from becoming subject to formal political decisions. Preference shaping prevents people from having grievances in the first place “by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that

they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they see it as natural and unchangeable [...]" (Lukes, 1974, p. 24).

3.3.2 Community power studies

The community power debate around the 1970s focuses on the nature of local power and first set central according themes of continuing relevance (Dowding, 2011). It centres on formal and informal urban decision-making processes (Harding, 2009, p. 29). The debate sparked off between 'elitists' and 'pluralists', where the former essentially ask 'Who constitutes the power elite?', seeking to identify a 'community power structure' and its interrelations. Conversely, 'pluralists' studied specific decisions and found that leading actors differed across issues (T. N. Clark, 1975, p. 271). On these bases, many case studies were conducted (summarised in Saunders, 1979).

Not committing to either of the positions, two propositions flow from the community power debate on which this research builds. First,

"the way place-shaping decisions are made does not conform to standard textbook descriptions of the policy-making process within liberal democracies, whereby elected politicians ostensibly translate the desires of the majority of citizens into policies and programmes that are then implemented by apolitical executives" (Harding, 2009, p. 32).

Second, "[...] the textbooks are wrong because they underestimate the capacity of business groups and business 'needs' to shape policy agenda and decisions" (Harding, 2009, p. 32). Relatedly, neo-pluralist Lindblom (1977) argues that in market-based democratic societies, businesses' interests are privileged in influencing public policy choices – far more than any civil society groups – because of their 'structural' and 'instrumental' power. Structural power reflects the critical importance of business decisions for providing public welfare – via jobs, tax income and thus standards of living. Instrumental power refers to businesses' ability to mobilise their case effectively and receive attentive hearing, due to their critical influence over public welfare and

their financial and organisational advantages (Harding, 2009, pp. 33–34). This study comparatively examines how far this applies to Nottingham and Stuttgart and discusses resonances with the community power debate in Section 8.5.1.

3.3.3 Urban regime theory and urban governance

Urban regime theory evolved from pluralist antecedents (Elkin, 1987; Harding, 2009). Its appeal is the “ability to explain urban politics by incorporating both political and economic influences, resolving prior debates over elitism, pluralism and economic determinism in urban politics” (Mossberger, 2009, p. 40). The urban regime concept describes formal and informal modes of collaboration between public and private sectors:

“Regimes, or city governments, negotiate between the demands of social movements and electoral politics on the one hand, and the forces of capital on the other. [...] [P]olitics is bounded by the economic relations of the capitalist system, but political concessions may be made to social movements and popular causes” (Mossberger, 2009, p. 42).

Urban regime theory focuses on why and under which conditions local governments pursue developmental (economic) as opposed to redistributive goals (Mossberger, 2009). In a relating public choice-influenced approach based on the American federal structure, Peterson (1981) argues

“that cities effectively ‘die’ if they are deserted by people and firms in big enough numbers. ‘They’ therefore have no choice but to try to capture and retain potentially mobile businesses and residents, and the income they can provide, if they are to survive” (as cited in Harding, 2009, p. 34).

City administrations would therefore compete in devising strategies to improve business and employment location factors, explicitly or implicitly expressed by economic actors (Harding, 2009, p. 34). Meanwhile, “[g]enerous social policies would attract poor people and strain local resources, and repel businesses and affluent residents fleeing high taxes” (Mossberger, 2009, p. 41).

Urban regime theory's claims of local politics being 'economically bounded' in capitalism – with the concept's international transferability being challenged (e.g. Davies, 2003) – is interrogated through both cases in Chapter 7, concluding in Section 8.5.1. With urban regimes being a subconcept of urban governance (Pierre, 2011), I however employ the latter as it is more open and flexible and thereby especially useful for cross-national comparisons (Mossberger, 2009, pp. 47–48). Nonetheless, I do not follow governance theory in its normative claims analytically, as discussed subsequently.

3.3.4 From government to governance

With the term 'governance' emerging during the 1980s (Ives, 2015, p. 3), the urban literature suggests a shift from hierarchic 'government' to a more networked, heterarchic governance (Blanco, 2015; Jessop, 1998). Stoker (1998) defines this move through five propositions. They describe governance as "a set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government"; identifying "the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues" and "the power dependence involved in the relationships between institutions involved in collective action"; governance being "about autonomous self-governing networks of actors" and recognising "the capacity to get things done which does not rest on the power of government to command or use its authority". Finally, Stoker (1998, p. 18) sees government as able to use "new tools and techniques to steer and guide". Governance theory importantly assumes civil societies' active participation in public issues which I examine empirically from Section 6.1 onwards.

New Public Management (NPM) reforms are described "as a forerunner for the emergence of the concept of governance" (Kjær, 2009, p. 138). This administrative reform model shares properties with neoliberalism (defined in Section 1.1.3) as an ideology and policy model (Bleiklie, 2018, p. 1). Equally, the shift to governance and this "governance narrative" (Griggs et al., 2012, p. 1) itself are closely associated with neoliberalism (Geddes, 2005, p. 360), with no clear-cut differentiation of both (Bessant et al., 2015).

With NPM being a local level manifestation of neoliberalism and the traditional Weberian bureaucracy as the model it should replace, these two are employed as ideal types for Nottingham and Stuttgart, respectively (thus escalated and not existing in reality, cf. Section 4.3.1). I outline the types subsequently and thereafter explain their assignments through local governance trajectories in Germany and the UK. Where useful, this study draws on further models of urban governance.

a) The Weberian bureaucracy

Understandings of ‘old public administration’ stem from Max Weber’s theories of the modern bureaucracy (Kjær, 2009, pp. 134; 139). Weber conceives of the ideal type of a classic bureaucratic organisation as legal authority, being one of “three pure types of legitimate domination”, besides traditional and charismatic authority (Weber, 1978, pp. 217–226). It is based on rationality, “resting on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands” (Weber, 1978, p. 215). This ‘Weberian bureaucracy’, as I refer to it, is characterised by a clear separation between private and public spheres. Urban bureaucrats then neutrally implement decisions taken by an elected representative body and are controlled by it. They are recruited based on merit and work within steep internal hierarchies and highly specialised institutional structures with marginal scope of action. Budgeting and resource management are input-oriented and thus costs of local services and ‘products’ not recorded (Kjær, 2009, pp. 138–139; Kuhlmann, 2010, p. 1118; Weber, 1978, pp. 217–226). Table 2 contrasts assumptions of this old public administration type, NPM and governance theory. Power in the Weberian bureaucracy is understood as A being able to get B to do something B would not otherwise have done (Lukes, 1974). “Power is thus identifiable, visible and located in the centre of government, and this renders democratic control possible” (Kjær, 2009, p. 139). Elected bodies identify collective interests which are cast into policies – by which the state provides the overall development direction (Kjær, 2009, p. 139).

Table 2: Assumptions in old public administration, New Public Management and governance theory

Key concepts in governance theory	Assumption in the old public administration	Assumption in the new public management	Assumptions in governance theory
Efficiency	Secured through the bureaucratic hierarchy	Secured through competition	Secured through cooperation and partnerships
Democracy	Secured through elected parliaments. Separation of politics and administration	Aggregation of individual preferences defined by politicians. Separation of politics and management	Secured through participation. No analytical separation of politics and implementation processes
Power	Is visible and located in the centre of government	Is dispersed in the marketplace and therefore unproblematic	Is fragmented and/or shared in consensus building networks
The role of the local state	The state as steering and control mechanism	The state provides an enabling environment for the market	The state facilitates network governance
The role of the urban bureaucrat	Technocrat, driven by prospects of predictable career	Competitive employee, driven by incentives of performance pay	Mediator and networker, driven partly by prospects of self-development in a dynamic working environment

Source: Kjær (2009, p. 140).

b) New Public Management

Theories of NPM stem from public choice theorists and are based on economics, i.e. anthropologically a ‘homo economicus’. They are characterised by a minimal state vision; and the application of market and business principles to the public sector; as well as associated ideas such as competition and individual behaviour as utility-maximisation (Kjær, 2009, p. 140; Kuhlmann, 2010, p. 1116). There is no agreed-upon definition of NPM (Kjær, 2009, p. 138). It represents a “loose set of techniques and ideas” (Dalingwater, 2014, p. 3).

NPM (cf. also Table 2) can be understood through overlapping external and internal dimensions. The external dimension includes the redistribution of tasks between the state and the market, thereby often favouring market-mechanisms which

the state should only enable. This often leads to ‘quasi-markets’ in the public sector, separating the purchaser from the provider, competition, outsourcing, privatisation, an institutional ‘autonomisation’ or agencification of public services and should empower citizens. Internally, NPM suggests a transfer of private sector management principles to the public sector, e.g. hands-off, professional management. It proposes administrative decentralisation, the creation of profit-centres or executive agencies, management by results and value for money (e.g. with output- instead of input-oriented budgeting); controlling systems (with explicit standards, measures of performance and new accounting systems), incentivisation through performance-measurement and related rewarding, human resource management and disaggregation, i.e. a clear separation between politics and administration (D. Clark, 1996; Kjær, 2009, p. 138; Kuhlmann, 2010, p. 1116). The public bureaucrat is driven by performance-related pay and pursues neutral efficiency in serving his/her ‘clients’, often aiming to reduce costs. Power mainly means state intervention in NPM theory. However, power is not in its focus and seen as unproblematic, as long as it is dispersed through the market (Kjær, 2009, pp. 140–141).

3.3.5 Local government trajectories in Germany and the UK

The following grounds shifts from ‘government’ to ‘governance’, as described in Section 3.3.4, for Germany and the UK (for encompassing accounts cf. Barkowsky, 2014; Wollmann, 2008).

Across Europe, these shifts vary considerably and neither simply reflect distinctions between federal and unitary systems nor between Northern, Southern and Anglo local government systems (Denters, 2005, p. 261). However, NPM is differently adopted by Anglo-Saxon countries as “marketizers” and European countries as “modernizers” (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004). In the former, NPM “has a closer affinity to neoliberalism and focuses on introducing market mechanisms in the public sector and/or privatizing public sector services”, while in many continental European countries, “the reforms can best be described as attempts to strengthening the public sector by making institutions more efficient [(Paradeise et al., 2009)]” (Bleiklie, 2018, p. 2).

a) British local government and New Public Management

British local government is highly centralised. Only specific competences are decentralised and thus constitute “a subordinate mechanism” (Wilson & Game, 1998, p. 22; as cited in Gill-McLure, 2014, p. 369) of a government acting by “constitutional convention” with no written constitution (Widdicombe & Britain, 1986, p. 235; as cited in Gill-McLure, 2014, p. 368). Relatedly, civil service in an Anglo-American government cluster is described as “more open to management doctrines” as opposed to e.g. the Germanic civil service (Ferlie et al., 2019, p. 44). Indeed, as part of the “neoliberal heartland” (Geddes, 2005, p. 369), the UK is “one of the earliest and most enthusiastic adopters of NPM-style reforms since the 1980s” (López-Murcia & Hood, 2015). In a Western European comparison, the country was located “at the end of a continuum of governance” (John, 2001, p. 174). Privatisation and marketisation are more extensive in the UK than in other European countries (Whitfield, 2006, p. 3). The tendency may relate to it “having the most liberal market-oriented welfare system in the European Union and the most majoritarian governmental system, capable of rapid and decisive action” (Taylor-Gooby et al., 2004) and being a prime example of a competitive democracy (Vorländer, n.d.).

In light of post-war public administration principles, fiscal crisis and economic stagnation at the end of the 1960s, NPM developed out of the view that a self-inflating, unproductive public sector (Niskanen, 1994) led to over-production; and expanded at the expense of a productive private sector (Bacon & Eltis, 1976; Dalingwater, 2014, p. 2). From 1979 on, the Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher imposed radical NPM reforms in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector (Dalingwater, 2014, p. 2; Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019, p. 5) and to “reduce the traditional strength of local politicians, local government [...] staff to challenge central government policies” (Gill-McLure, 2014, p. 373). The reforms aimed to reduce local government to its ‘core’ functions, including stronger financial control by central government, the break-up of traditional bureaucratic departmental structures, a “purchaser/provider split” and service delivery through competition and outsourcing (Gill-McLure, 2014, p. 373; Kersting et al., 2009, p. 56).

Centralised NPM implementation has specifically in Anglo-Saxon countries been related to a loss of control and coordination; organisational and sectoral fragmentation; and accompanying losses of institutional transparency and political accountability through the establishment of agencies, quangos (quasi non-governmental organisations) etc. besides local government (Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019, p. 7). Thereby in the UK, “autonomy and steering capacity of local authorities has been weakened in a way unparalleled in Europe” (Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019, p. 8). With an “audit explosion” and “proliferation of performance indicators”, NPM reforms have also been described as distorting professional behaviour through unmanageable tensions between efficiency and equity (Hood, 1995; Rouban, 2013; as cited in Gill-McLure, 2014, p. 374), to erode trust and demoralise staff (Gill-McLure, 2014, p. 374).

Also to address coordination problems, New Labour pursued post-NPM reforms as of 1997. They comprised devolution, the set-up of regional assemblies, elected mayors for towns and cities and joined-up government, i.e. bringing together governmental entities with private and voluntary organisations to work on common goals (Bogdanor, 2005; as cited in Kjær, 2009, pp. 143–144). These multi-agency partnerships should share responsibilities, resources, risks and contribute to democratic renewal at the local level (Lowndes & Sullivan, 2004; as cited in Kjær, 2009, p. 144). However, NPM principles continued to dominate this ‘post-NPM’ phase with private sector techniques, a drive for efficiency, responsiveness to and choice for users, performance measurement and outsourcing being prioritised in public service organisation (Dalingwater, 2014, p. 11).

Moreover, in 2010 the coalition government resuscitated NPM ideas with its austerity measures forcing local governments to drastically cut local public services and improve efficiency (Dalingwater, 2014, p. 12). Geddes (2005, pp. 369–370) relatedly concludes that neoliberalism has come to dominate public policy in the Anglo-Saxon cluster in a way that “alternatives are largely seen to be within neoliberalism”. Also, Kuhlmann & Bogumil (2019, p. 9) see the model of an agency-administration in the UK – despite a reduction of their number – still in place.

Considering the history of managerial reform in UK local government, Gill-McLure (2014, p. 381) infers a dialectical movement between local actors aiming to resist central control and central government constantly reasserting it with NPM attacking council autonomy and employees' conditions. With its continuing pervasiveness in UK local government, NPM functions as the hypothesised ideal type for the Nottingham case – as the more neoliberal model being associated with less sustainable governance characteristics than a more traditional Weberian bureaucracy (cf. Section 2.2.2 b)).

b) German local government and the New Steering Model

The 'classical' Continental European administrative model is shaped by the tradition of Roman law, with a written constitution and the 'Rule of Law' principle underlying (Kuhlmann, 2010, p. 1118). Contrasting with the Anglo-Saxon world and others, the international reform agenda towards NPM was adopted relatively late in Germany via the 'New Steering Model' (NSM) during the 1990s (Kuhlmann et al., 2008).

Importantly, "public management reforms in Germany must be understood in terms of a bottom-up movement that has been driven primarily by local 'entrepreneurs'" (Kuhlmann et al., 2008, p. 851) (for Stuttgart cf. Section 6.4.1). Despite a spread of NSM, Kuhlmann et al. (2008) find in their survey of 1,565 German local authorities that 'Weberian' administrative structures and processes still characterise them. While there was an "unquestionable conceptual and discursive predominance of NSM" in German communes (Kuhlmann, 2010, p. 1120), its "rise and fall" (Kuhlmann, 2010, p. 1119) is marked by an implementation gap. Mostly, only selected NSM elements were introduced (Kuhlmann, 2010, p. 1120). However, NSM is "conceptually misleading" in its separation of politics and administration (Kuhlmann et al., 2008, p. 859) which contradicts political decision-making in German local government. Herein, administration and the municipal council's majority groups are closely interwoven and an often competitive urban political arena precludes political actors from setting measurable objectives. Therefore, NSM instruments such as political contracts and benchmarking barely functioned and were mostly abolished. Staff members reported to have become tired of reforms and perceived the

modernisation mainly as downsizing and cutback management (Kuhlmann et al., 2008, pp. 859–860) in times of often strained communal finances. However, another examination of NSM finds that it did not contribute sustainably to budget consolidation (Mauch, 2008). Otherwise, some positive effects have been ascribed to the NSM reforms in Germany. This is in terms of positive mayoral self-assessments, improved citizens' consultancy, 'customers' services and performance (Kuhlmann, 2010, p. 1120).

Altogether, there was no paradigm shift to a managerial NSM in German local government. NSM's emphasis on transparency and bindingness was at odds with its legalist culture, political steering and arising logics of action (Kuhlmann et al., 2008, p. 860). However, NSM clearly imprinted German local government (Kuhlmann et al., 2008, p. 860), i.e. through elements of performance management, benchmarking and cost-benefit-accounting (Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019, p. 4). To conceptualise these developments in combination with the Weberian tradition, Kuhlmann & Bogumil (2019) propose the 'Neo-Weberian State' for the emerging hybrid governance form. A partial reversal of NPM principles also occurred in terms of a re-communalisation, re-regulation, the repurchase and insourcing of local public services and assets, de-agencification, de-quangoisation, and a re-hierarchisation and re-centralisation in the Weberian sense (Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019). These 'NPM reversals' can be interpreted as a learning curve and administrative resilience (Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019, p. 6). With the ongoing significance of the Weberian bureaucracy in German local government, it functions as an assumed ideal type for the Stuttgart case – and as the less neoliberal model is associated with more sustainable governance characteristics than NPM (cf. Section 2.2.2 b)).

Overall, Section 3.3 outlines how this study builds on existing urban governance research and concepts. It adds to these by its constructivist focus on how policies and social order are co-produced in two governance regimes – and how these modes relate to sustainability. Combining the two approaches, the varying urban governance practices may express different civic epistemologies: in the UK one carrying central domination, an embrace of market-logics, measurement and

quantification; and in Germany one functioning in decentralised ways with a statist and relatively preservationist tradition. This may have made NPM more alien to the German context – just as Weberian approaches would possibly be in the UK, were they any ‘modern’. I expound on the two civic epistemologies based on my empirical findings in Section 8.3.2.

3.4 Case introductions: Nottingham and Stuttgart

The following grounds the comparative case study at the cities’ level. I illuminate characteristics of their population, local government and finance, economy, social situation and inequalities. Table 3 comparatively complements and summarises this. Case descriptions are selective, simplifying and oriented towards aspects relevant to the cases and their comparison. I augment them throughout the thesis.

Data can often only approximate conditions in both cities restrictedly, as comparative statistics are not always available at city levels. Regional and national figures are sometimes used instead. I attempt to employ relatively recent data, though partially aiming for 2018, when I conducted the research interviews. However, the aim is not exact comparability of single data points, but to draw a comprehensive comparative picture.

3.4.1 Nottingham

a) Population

The city of Nottingham is located in the East Midlands region of the United Kingdom and within the county of Nottinghamshire. Population size of Nottingham (unitary authority) in 2018 is 329,200 and in Nottinghamshire 823,100 (Nottingham City Council, 2019a). Nottingham is ethnically relatively diverse, with 34.6% of the population (2011 Census) belonging to Black and Minority Ethnic groups, being defined as everyone who is not White British (Kirk, 2019, p. 9). There is a high population turnover, illustrated by 21% of it changing address in the year before the 2011 Census. Nottingham’s population grows since 2001 with its main drivers being international migration (recently from Eastern Europe) and an increase in student

numbers, together with an excess of births over deaths (Nottingham City Council, 2019d). The population is relatively young with 50% aged under 30 (Nottingham City Council, n.d.-c) and full-time students making up one in eight of the population (Nottingham City Council, 2019d).

b) Local government and finance

Government levels in England are central government and locally mostly either a two-tier system (consisting of county councils and district councils) or a one-tier system (unitary authorities) (Sandford, 2018, p. 4). Having seen an “erosion of the autonomy, powers, roles, functions and responsibilities of English local government” (Copus et al., 2017; John, 1990), one of today’s diagnoses is that of a “super-centralisation of the English state” (Hambleton, 2017, p. 3). This is despite initiatives to devolve powers, budgets and responsibilities from central government to new combined authority mayors within regions since mid-2010 (UK Government, 2017). In context, many European countries seek to strengthen local autonomy as “a highly valued feature of good governance” (Ladner et al., 2016, p. 321).

Whole council elections in Nottingham are held every four years via the First-past-the-post voting system (UK Government, n.d.-a, p. 10). Local councillors represent wards, into which English local authorities are divided (Sandford, 2018, p. 7). Nottingham is a Labour Party stronghold and controlled by the party since 1991. Previously, the non-metropolitan district of Nottingham (foundation of the unitary authority in 1997) was controlled by the Conservative Party in 1976-1979 and in 1987-1991. Otherwise, the Labour Party continuously dominated since the first council elections in 1973 (The Elections Centre, n.d.). At the end of the electoral term of 2015-2019, 52 of the city’s 55 councillors belong to the Labour Group and three to the Conservative Group (Nottingham City Council, 2018g). Turnout at the 2019 local elections is 29% (Sandeman, 2019).

Unitary authorities like Nottingham are responsible for all local government functions in a place, among them social care, schools, housing and planning, waste collection and recycling, licensing, Council Tax collections, business support, registrar

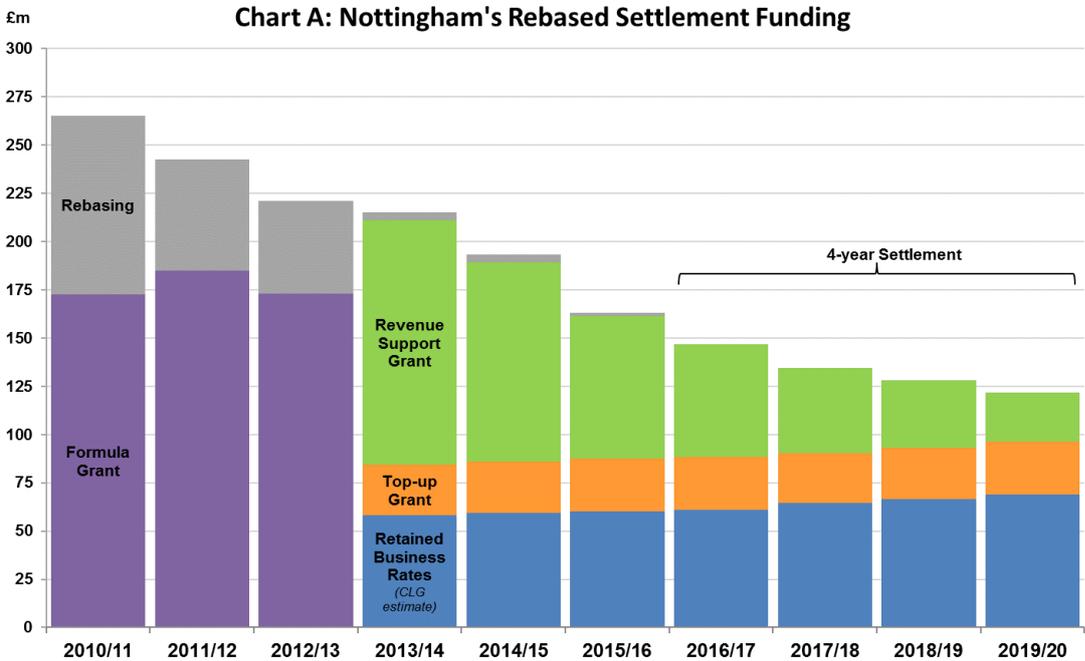
services and pest control (Local Government Association, 2019b; UK Government, n.d.-b).

UK local government finance is “extremely complex” (Sandford, 2018, p. 14) and only sketched subsequently. The largest sources of income for local authorities are Council Tax on domestic properties (fully retained by municipalities) and business rates (one half redistributed between local authorities to support those with lower revenues; the other half used by government for grants to local authorities which are distributed based on varying criteria) (Local Government Association, 2019a; Sandford, 2018, p. 14). Central government has significant control over both operating structures (Local Government Association, 2019a). However, central government has planned that local governments retain 100% of business rates in the future – which could exacerbate spatial inequality (Muldoon-Smith & Greenhalgh, 2015) (cf. Section 5.4.3 b)). Besides, it is expected that the government’s Revenue Support Grant which supports local council’s general revenue expenditure will disappear by 2020/21 (Nottingham City Council, 2018l, pp. 4–5). Further sources of income for local authorities are a range of possible local fees, charges and commercial income they generate (Sandford, 2018, pp. 14–15).

Nottingham City Council’s net expenditure in 2017/18 is £243,759m (Nottingham City Council, n.d.-e, p. 36), i.e. circa £756 per inhabitant with 2017 population data (Population UK, 2019). The city’s budget declined significantly since government’s austerity policies, as Figure 1 illustrates. Nottingham is among the places worst hit through austerity (cf. Section 6.2.2 a)). Government’s Revenue Support Grant plummeted from £127m in 2013 to £25m in 2019 (Nottingham City Council, 2018k). This led to an increasing relative significance of the Retained Business Rates – which also rose –, and recently became the major funding source after Council Tax with £116,101m assumed for 2019/20 (Nottingham City Council, 2018l, p. 5). Councils whose business rates income undercuts their initial baseline funding level, as in Nottingham, receive the balance as a ‘Top-up Grant’ (Nottingham City Council, 2018l, p. 6). Besides, Council Tax in Nottingham is the second highest after Rutland in a comparison of an average Band D household in 2019 (County Councils Network,

2019). In 2019/20, a basic Council Tax increase of 2.99% is assumed in Nottingham. It is part of the tendency to increasingly fund local services through local tax payers and decreasingly by government. Moreover, Council Tax is regressive (Corlett & Gardiner, 2018). Though the council aims “to minimise the impact of service reductions on vulnerable citizens” and “to maximise commercial opportunities that generate income” (Nottingham City Council, 2018I, p. 3), funding cuts and increasing costs for Adult Social Care and children in care “will have a significant impact on the Council’s ability to fund other local services” (Nottingham City Council, 2018I, p. 5).

Figure 1: Nottingham City Council's funding excluding Council Tax and Assumed Collection Fund surplus, 2010/11-2019/20



Source: Nottingham City Council (2018I, p. 5)

c) Economy

With the Industrial Revolution emanating from Britain in the 18th century, Nottingham was one of the places where water and steam power were first used in a factory system, newly employing hundreds of people and imprinting industrial capitalism (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.; White, 2009). During the 19th and 20th century, heavy industry (inter alia gypsum, brick, clay and iron working), coal mining, manufacturing (especially cotton, hosiery and lace) and engineering (inter alia frame

and cycle making) were important and flourishing industries in Nottingham and created considerable wealth. Notwithstanding, through rapid growth and no chance for the city to expand before 1865, living conditions in the city were appalling, marked by overcrowding and a lack of sanitation – being considered the worst of English towns in 1844 (BBC, 2003). In the course of deindustrialisation, many of the firms have closed, removing a large number of the former often relatively well-paid, but low-skilled manufacturing jobs (Mckenzie, 2015, pp. 19–43; Spence & Bishop, n.d.). In 1938 denoted as “the Stately Queen of the Midlands” by Writer Arthur Mee or “the neatest town I have ever seen” by Celia Fiennes (Jenkins, 2006), parts of Nottingham were more recently described as having developed “into a depressed post industrial landscape with all the attendant social problems” (Spence & Bishop, n.d., p. 2). Graham, Hardill & Kofman (2013, p. 228) detail that

“[t]he decline in manufacturing [...] [in the UK] has resulted in levels of high, long-term unemployment in many of these ‘rust pockets’, particularly former coalfields and areas of heavy engineering. This has had its greatest impact on men, but the cycle of decline impacts on the whole community as average incomes and investment decline and poor health, crime, drug abuse, suicide and family breakdown increase – the pathologies of despair”.

Comparative research shows that Britain’s employment structure became polarised. Analysing stratification outcomes in Britain, Germany and Denmark over the 1990s and 2000s, Oesch (2015) finds that while occupational upgrading took place in Denmark and Germany, in Britain high-end and low-end service jobs expanded in a polarised version of upgrading. Relatedly, in Nottingham there is “a strong demand for lower skilled jobs (e.g. Level 2), in retail and health for example” (Rossiter et al., 2011, p. 4); and simultaneously a higher concentration of knowledge intensive jobs in Nottingham than in the surrounding core city area, the East Midlands and England in 2017 (Nottingham City Council, n.d.-d). These increasing labour market inequalities resonate with British government policy and its colonial embedding, pursuing “an apparent competitive advantage provided by lower wage levels” (Holmwood, 2000, p. 470; emphasised in original) after the UK’s entry into the European Economic Community in 1973. It then

“confronted a very different kind of economic order than that of the Commonwealth bloc to which it had traditionally been tied, one characterized by high basic prices and high wages with highly productive and competitive industries” (Holmwood, 2000, pp. 469–470).

Considering some economic structures, there are 9,035 active VAT and/or PAYE registered enterprises in Nottingham in 2018. The city’s economy in 2017 comprises 226,000 employee jobs. Most of them fall into administrative and support service activities (23%), wholesale, retail, trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (14.6%), human health and social work activities (14.6%) as well as education (9.7%) (Nomis, n.d.). The ten largest employers in Nottinghamshire in 2018 are (followed by number of employees; Rossiter, 2018):

1. Nottingham University Hospitals Trust – 13,600
2. Nottingham City Council – 8,928
3. Nottinghamshire County Council – 8,155
4. Nottinghamshire Health Care Trust – 7,500
5. Boots UK Limited – 6,000
6. University of Nottingham – 5,000
7. E.On – 5,000
8. Sherwood Forest Hospitals Trust – 4,558
9. Nottingham Trent University – 3,309
10. Nottinghamshire Police – 3,200

In the UK, there is a productivity gap between London and the South East on the one hand and most other regions on the other. While labour productivity as gross value added per hour worked in 2017 is 100 across the UK, it is 84.8 in the East Midlands (NUTS-1 region, unsmoothed, current prices) and 74.9 in Nottingham (NUTS-3 subregion, smoothed, current prices) (Office for National Statistics, n.d.). McCann (2019, p. 15) sees these “[m]ajor differences in local productivity” as “a challenge to the country’s institutional and governance structures”.

d) Social situation and inequalities

Disposable income per equivalised household is 25,218 US \$ in Nottingham metropolitan area in 2016 (constant prices, constant purchasing power parity, base year 2010; OECD, n.d.). In a national comparison, Nottingham has the lowest household disposable income per head in the UK in 2016 with £12,232 (Collinson, 2018). Nottingham's unemployment rate according to the ILO-concept (International Labour Organization; model-based) is 7.9% between April 2015 and March 2016 (4.4% in the East Midlands and 5.1% in England) (Nomis, n.d.). In 2014, the share of workless households in Nottingham is the highest in the UK with 30.1% (Monaghan, 2014).

With no comparable city level data on economic inequality, the UK ranks as the 8th most unequal of 39 (mostly) OECD-countries in terms of incomes with a Gini-coefficient of 0.36 in 2017 (OECD, 2018a). The UK is also one of the most interregionally unequal out of 30 OECD-countries, with only Slovakia and Ireland being more unequal, drawing on 28 indicators (McCann, 2019).⁴ In comparison, McCann (2019, pp. 14–15) concludes that

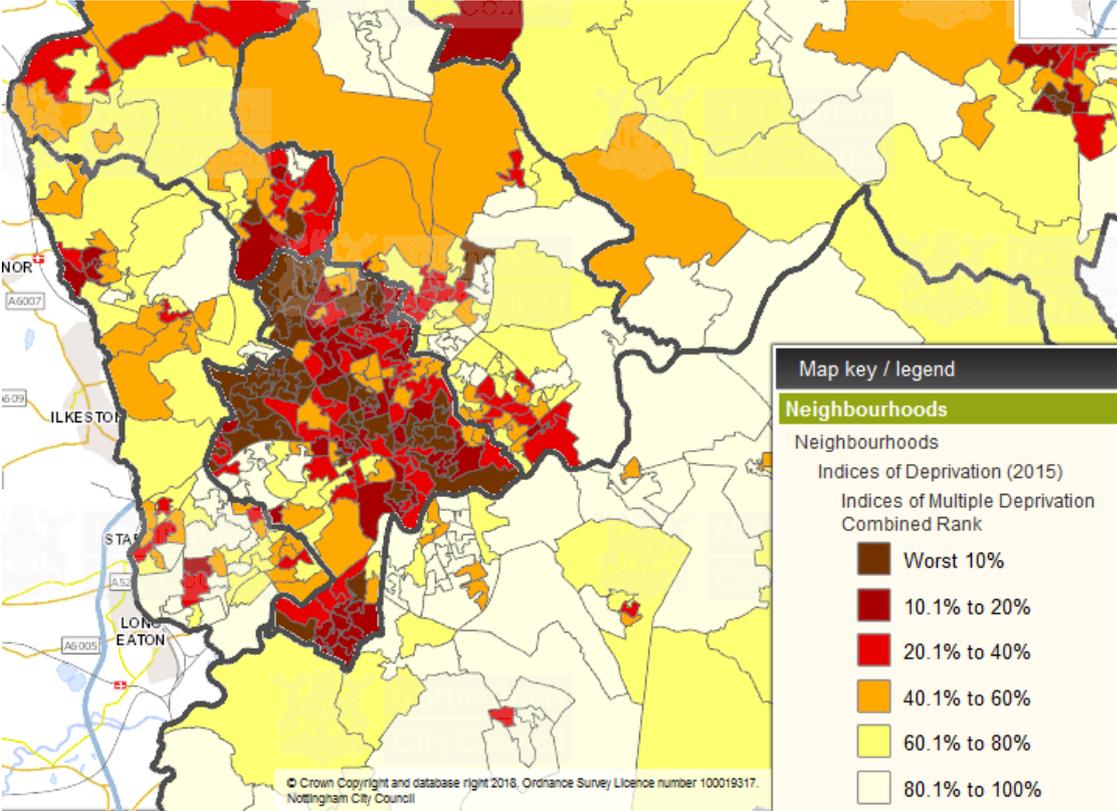
“[i]n the UK it is the combination both of the magnitude and the proximity of the interregional inequalities which is so marked.”

“As such, in many ways the economic geography of the UK is more reminiscent of a much poorer country at an earlier stage of economic development (McCann, 2016).”

Social mobility in the UK is below an OECD-24 average: it would hypothetically take five generations for those born in low-income families (bottom 10%) to approach a mean income (OECD-24: 4.5 generations) (OECD, 2018b).

⁴ Germany was more interregionally unequal than the UK at four measures – which McCann describes “entirely [as] a legacy of the absorption of the former East Germany”, while the UK was more unequal than Germany according to 17 measures (McCann, 2019, pp. 14–15).

Figure 2: Indices of Deprivation for Nottingham (centre) and parts of Nottinghamshire, 2015



Source: Nottingham City Council (2019c)

Nottingham is the 8th most deprived district in the UK. According to the 2015 Indices of Deprivation⁵, 61 of Nottingham’s 182 LSOAs (Lower Layer Super Output Areas) are amongst the 10% most deprived in the UK (Nottingham City Council, 2017d). By contrast, Nottinghamshire County (excluding Nottingham City) ranks only 103rd of the 152 upper tier local authorities in England regarding deprivation, with 1 being the most deprived (McCormick et al., 2017, p. 53). Figure 2 illustrates this strong residential segregation of deprivation. Moreover, child poverty is high in Nottingham

⁵ The English Indices of Deprivation 2015 are based on 37 indicators, organised across seven domains of deprivation which are combined and weighted. The domains (and weights) are:

- Income Deprivation (22.5%)
- Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%) (McCormick et al., 2017, p. 52).

with 64.8% (2015) of children living in families who receive government financial support because nobody in the household works or due to low family incomes (43% in England) (Nottingham City Council, 2015a). Otherwise, the 40 wealthiest people and their families who have connections to Nottinghamshire together own almost £20 billion in 2018 (Bunn, 2019).

As a general tendency, economic inequality correlates with inequalities in health, education, work, housing, leisure, culture and others (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 2013). This resonates with health in Nottingham where life expectancy in 2018 (77 years for men and 81.1 for women) is lower than in England (79.5 years for men and 83.1 for women) (Nottingham City Council, 2019b). Life expectancy within Nottingham differs significantly, e.g. by 11 years between Arboretum and Wollaton West Care Delivery Group areas (Famodile & Keenan, 2018, p. 3f). Despite its young age-structure, Nottingham has a higher share of people with a limiting long-term illness or disability than the national average (Nottingham City Council, 2016b). In terms of education, “the East Midlands are the worst performing region in the country on a range of key indicators”, leading to an according warning by Ofsted (2016). Nottingham also ranks 150th out of 150 local areas on the Youth Opportunity Index (Nottinghamshire: 73rd). It comprises seven variables in relation to attainment of GCSE-level qualifications, Level 3 qualifications, higher education, apprenticeships, employment opportunities, net underemployment and young people not in employment, education or training (Evans & Egglestone, 2018). Professional qualifications are also lower in Nottingham than the UK average (January to December 2018). 31.2% in Nottingham have a level four of National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) and above (UK: 39.3%), 55.7% of NVQ3 and above (UK: 57.8%), 69.9% of NVQ2 and above (UK: 74.9%) and 10.2% have no such qualification (UK: 7.8%) (Nomis, n.d.). As Cauvain (2018, p. 254) discusses, the concentration of low incomes and worklessness in Nottingham partly relates to public housing provision within its boundaries, going back to the city’s legacy as “an exemplar public housing builder”.

The described inequalities coincide with social class which still plays a predominant role in British society and sociology (e.g. Savage, 2015) – more so than in

Germany. Class inequality and injustice hereby intersect with other social divisions and shape perceptions (Warren & Pattison, 2018, p. 243).

3.4.2 Stuttgart

a) Population

Stuttgart, located in the south-west of Germany, is the state capital of Baden-Württemberg. Stuttgart's population (urban district) is 611,213 in January 2018 (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-c) and 2.78 million in Stuttgart Region in 2017 (Verband Region Stuttgart, n.d.). 24.6% of Stuttgart's population in 2015 are foreigners and 43.3% have a migrant background (Statistisches Amt Stuttgart, n.d.-a, n.d.-b; own calculations). Until 2019, the city's population grew constantly since 2010 (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2019, p. 1). This growth is also attributable to an inner-German migration with Stuttgart attracting 25- to 34-year-olds, especially young professionals. According to Simons & Weiden (2015), members of this numerically underrepresented age cohort in Germany increasingly move to 30 'swarm cities' – Stuttgart being one of them – to find their peers and an attractive residential location. Median age in the city is 39.8 years in 2016 (Bertelsmann Stiftung, n.d., p. 4). The number of students at Stuttgart's 13 universities in 2014/2015 equals circa 10% of the city's population (M. Walker, 2016). Foreign students partly make up considerable shares of their student bodies, e.g. 21.2% at the University of Stuttgart (Jacobs, 2016).

b) Local government and finance

The German federal system consists of two tiers, the federal and the state level (Länder). Local government belongs to the state level, including local electoral and tax laws, varying across the country's 16 states. However, fundamental are the guarantee of the general principle of local autonomy or subsidiarity as part of the German Basic Law (Article 28) (Vetter, n.d., p. 1) and the guideline of local self-government. Decentralisation historically has been significant in the territories making up Germany today (Renzsch, 1989) and local autonomy is high in a European comparison (Ladner et al., 2016). Besides, there is a strong cooperation between the federal, state and local levels in Germany with various intertwinings (Vetter, n.d., p. 1).

Stuttgart's local councillors are elected every five years according to the principles of proportional representation (Korte, 2009; Tetzlaff & Cantow, 2013). Votes can be given city-wide to candidates of different parties (Stuttgarter Zeitung, 2019). A mayor presides the local council, has a vote and is controlled by it (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-k; Stuttgarter Zeitung, 2019). He is directly elected by citizens for eight years (Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, n.d.-b). Since 1946, majorities in Stuttgart city council have evolved in three phases. First, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) consistently held majorities of votes from 1946 until 1971. Second, it was superseded by the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) from 1975 until 2004. Third, in 2009 and 2019, Alliance 90/The Greens gained most votes in the city council – being replaced in between by the CDU in 2014 and thus representing a period of faster change. There are a number of politically diverse other groups (Durchdenwald, 2019; Statistisches Amt Stuttgart, n.d.-c). Stuttgart's mayor Fritz Kuhn belongs to Alliance 90/The Greens and took office in 2013 (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-m). At the end of the electoral term of 2014-2019, 17 of Stuttgart's 60 councillors belong to the CDU, 14 to Alliance 90/The Greens and nine to the SPD; three to SÖS ('Stuttgart Ecological Social'), three to The Left (party), one to The Pirates, one to Student's List, with these four latter groups forming the parliamentary group SÖS-LINKE-PluS. Four council members are part of the Free Voters, three of the Free Democratic Party (FDP); and two of BZS23 ('Alliance Future Stuttgart 23'), the legal successor of the former Alternative for Germany group. There is one representative respectively of SchUB ('Schertlen's Independent Citizens'), of the Alternative for Germany and of LKR ('Liberal-Conservative Reformers'). Turnout is 57.5% at the 2019 local elections (Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 2019).

Baden-Württemberg's municipalities fulfil voluntary tasks, compulsory tasks and directives. They decide how far they engage in voluntary tasks such as cultural matters, sports facilities or green areas. Federal or state governments prescribe compulsory tasks which are mainly local elections, sewage disposal, utility facilities, transport facilities, social affairs, fire service, general schooling and urban land-use planning. Finally, the legislator obliges municipalities increasingly to fulfil directives, inter alia parliamentary elections, local police issues, registry, commercial law, partly

construction law or social assistance (Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, n.d.-a).

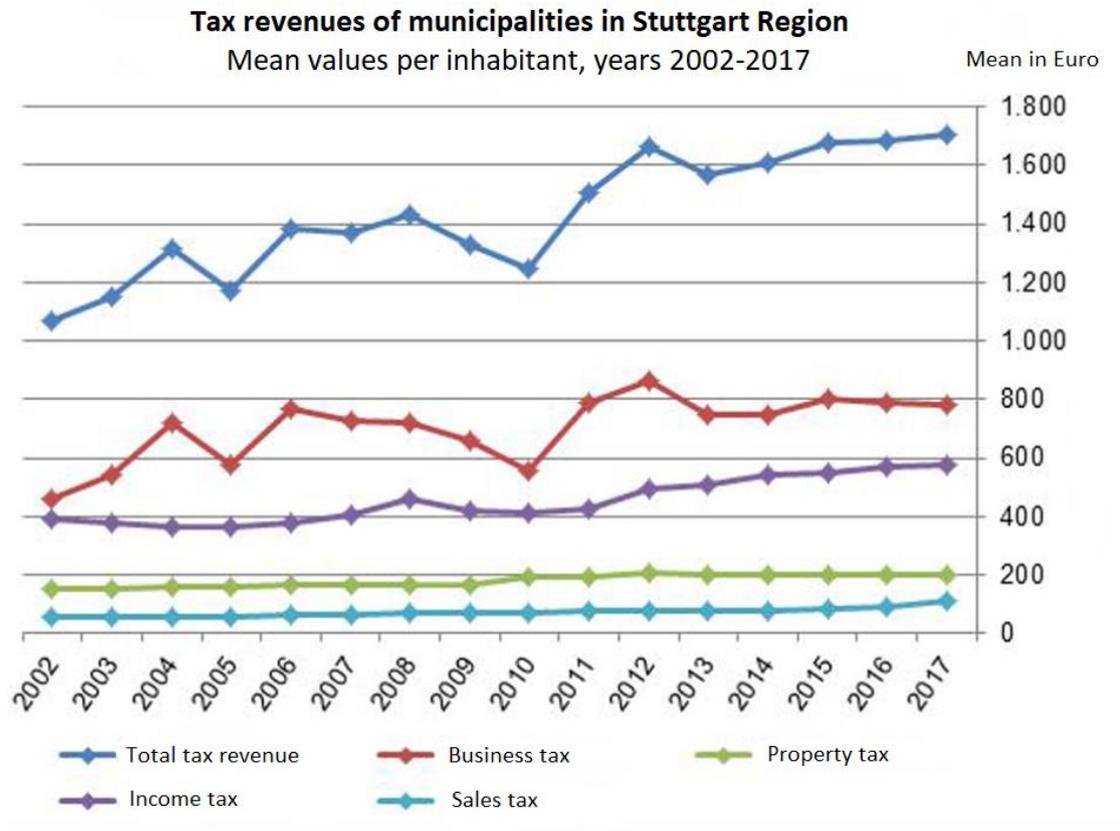
Around 40% of municipal tasks are tax-financed – and thus cyclical. For the rest, communes generate revenue via charges, allocations, rents, leases, fines, interest rates and others (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-h, 2018a, p. 73). Of local authorities' tax income, business tax is most important with 43.5% in 2012, followed by their shares of income tax⁶ (36.2%), property tax (14.4%) and sales tax (4.8%). Of these, municipalities can only set collection rates of the property tax and the business tax. (Vesper, 2015, pp. 8–10). The complex and contested German revenue-sharing schemes are not further discussed here. They *inter alia* aim at reducing communes' dependence upon the cyclically sensitive business tax (Vesper, 2015, pp. 8–9) and at accounting for municipalities' varying financial and spending requirements (mainly in relation to number of inhabitants) (Vesper, 2015, pp. 11–15).

Stuttgart's ordinary and extraordinary expenses ('Ergebnishaushalt') in 2017 are altogether 3,107,646,367.93 € (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2018a, p. 71), i.e. circa 5,097 € per inhabitant with population data for June 2017 (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-b). In 2018, Stuttgart becomes debt-free for the first time since the Second World War, following high budget surpluses due to a good economic situation and related tax income (Nauke, 2018; K. Schwarz, 2018b). Figure 3 depicts local authorities' tax income in Stuttgart Region since 2002 per inhabitant. Overall, it shows a considerable upward trend. This opens up possibilities for an expanding and complementary local state, as this thesis illustrates. Budget surpluses also led the municipal council to lower the property tax collection rate for 2019 (Nauke, 2018; K. Schwarz, 2018b). Stuttgart's according rate for a family in 2018 is ranked 46th of Germany's 100 largest cities, with 1 being the lowest (IW Consult, 2018). Stuttgart's

⁶ The communes' share of income tax (15%) is distributed relative to a state's entire income tax revenue and to a degree levels communal revenue differences within a state (Bundesministerium der Finanzen, 2014; Vesper, 2015, pp. 8–10).

business tax collection rate is among the higher values in Baden-Württemberg in 2018 (Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag, n.d.; own calculation).

Figure 3: Tax revenue of municipalities in Stuttgart Region, 2002-2017



Source: IHK Region Stuttgart (n.d.)

c) Economy

For long into the 19th century, Stuttgart remained a tranquil residence city. Stronger industrial development started relatively late under the unfavourable conditions of lacking raw materials such as coal and ores (Diercke, n.d., p. 48), suboptimal transport links and no access to sufficient water power (Stadtmuseum Stuttgart, n.d., pp. 25; 29). However, the city developed into an industrial centre with railway expansion playing a key role (Maier, 2010, p. 50). During the 19th and 20th centuries, engineering and manufacturing, especially of cars which were developed in Stuttgart, electrical engineering and textiles became important industries. They were often export-oriented and evolved under the given constraints (Diercke, n.d., p. 48).

Stuttgart's population grew rapidly at the time, from 107,273 in 1875 to 286,218 in 1910. Life in the cities was then partly marked by overcrowding, lacking hygiene, spreading diseases and pauperisation (Bergmann, 2018). In the second half of the 20th century, deindustrialisation decimated Stuttgart's textile, leather and clothing industries. Other sectors remained significant with an according demand for industrial goods, also within the European Economic Community (Grotz, & Seibel, n.d.).

Today, Stuttgart forms the centre of one of the main industrial regions in Europe and especially has – and economically depends upon – a successful car industry cluster (Lüken-Klaßen, 2010; The Economist, 2016). Export orientation remained characteristic to the regional industry (Wirtschaftsförderung Region Stuttgart, 2016a). A specificity of Baden-Württemberg's economy is a comparatively high density of medium-sized world market leading companies ('hidden champions'). They significantly contribute to regional prosperity, are important innovators and employers. Their competitiveness has been explained historically in terms of German particularism until the foundation of the German Empire in 1871, requiring cross-border activity of medium-sized enterprises and efficient production to compensate for tariffs (Lochner, 2016).

Considering economic structures, there are 32,143 enterprises in Stuttgart in 2015 according to the company register (preliminary). In 2016, there are 396,516 employees subject to social security deductions in Stuttgart, of which 239,014 are incoming commuters (T. Schwarz & Haarer, 2017, p. 11). Main economic sections in terms of employment in Stuttgart Region are in 2016 engineering (share of employees: 8.8%), car (parts) manufacturing (8.6%), retail (6.3%), healthcare (5.8%) and wholesale (without motor vehicles: 5.7%) (IHK Region Stuttgart, 2018, p. 2). The ten largest employers in Stuttgart in 2016 are (followed by number of employees; T. Schwarz & Haarer, 2017, p. 12):

1. Daimler AG – 39,000 (in Stuttgart Region)
2. State administration Baden-Württemberg – 37,500

3. City administration Stuttgart – 20,100 (including in-house operations, e.g. hospitals)
4. Bosch Group – 12,500
5. Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG – 9,700
6. Universities (Stuttgart and Hohenheim) – 9,200
7. State bank Baden-Württemberg – 7,500
8. MAHLE Group – 4,600
9. Allianz Germany AG – 4,500 (without ca. 600 employees of smaller subsidiaries)
10. EnBW Energy Baden-Württemberg AG – 3,900

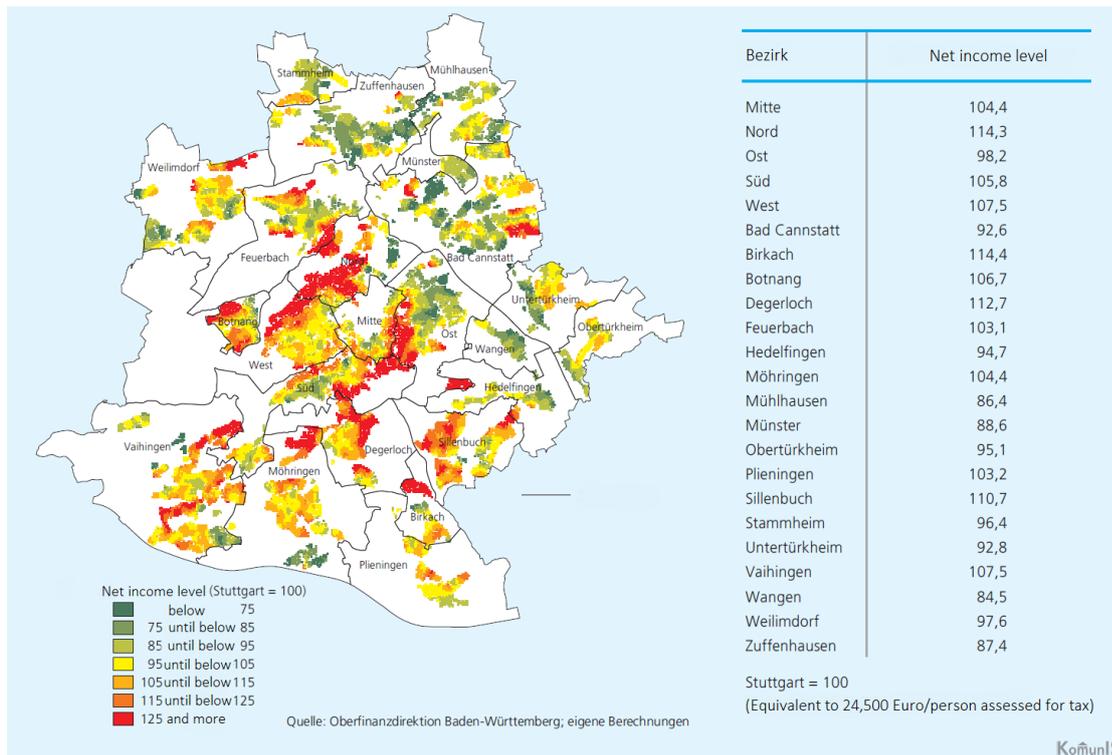
Comparing all large German cities in 2015, productivity in terms of GDP per worker is highest in Stuttgart (Bury, 2017).

d) Social situation and inequalities

Disposable income per equivalised household is 32,623 US \$ in Stuttgart metropolitan area in 2013 (constant prices, constant purchasing power parity, base year 2010; OECD, n.d.). For a national comparison, disposable household income per head in 2016 is 25,012 € in Stuttgart, being the second highest of Germany's 15 largest cities (Baden-Württemberg: 23,947 €; Germany: 21,952 €) (Seils & Baumann, 2019). In 2019, local purchasing power in Stuttgart is estimated as 25.8% higher than in Nottingham (Numbeo, 2019). Unemployment in the NUTS-2 region of Stuttgart is 3.3% in 2015 according to the ILO-definition (Eurostat, 2016).

Income inequality in Germany is 25th highest among 39 (mostly) OECD-countries, i.e. in the lower third, with a Gini-coefficient of 0.29 in 2016 (OECD, 2018a). Regional inequality of disposable incomes in Germany is low in a European comparison. Specifically, it is lower than in all large EU countries, i.e. France, Italy, Spain or Great Britain (Braml & Felbermayr, 2018, p. 48). Social mobility in Germany is low in an OECD-24 comparison and lower than in the UK: it would hypothetically take six generations for those born in low-income families (bottom 10%) to approach a mean income (OECD-24: 4.5 generations) (OECD, 2018b).

Figure 4: Net income per taxable person in Stuttgart, 2009



Source: Stein (2012)

Relative poverty in Stuttgart is 16.1% in 2014 according to the federal income median (15.4% in Germany), i.e. the fourth-lowest rate among 15 German big cities (Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder, 2015). 7.9% of Stuttgart's inhabitants receive unemployment benefits II or benefits according to social security statute book XII in 2013 (Hanke & Pott, 2013, p. 175). Stuttgart's relative child poverty in terms of the state income median (Baden-Württemberg) is 17.9% in 2012 (18.7% in Germany) (Saleth et al., 2015; Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder, 2015). 13.4% of the under 15-year-olds depend on unemployment benefits II in 2014 (15.3% in Germany) (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2016; Statistisches Bundesamt, 2016). At the opposite, Stuttgart ranks fourth of German cities as home to ultra high net worth, i.e. persons owning more than 30 million US \$ in 2013. These are 1,220 persons in Stuttgart and 19,095 in Germany (Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 2014). Figure 4 visualises net incomes

per taxable person in Stuttgart 2009 to approximate spatial income inequalities.⁷ The map shows how higher incomes especially gather around the city centre (desired locations ‘half up the hill’) and lower incomes more towards north-eastern districts.

Regarding health, average life expectancy at birth in 2015/17 in Stuttgart is 79.7 years for boys and 84.3 years for girls (78.4/83.2 years in Germany) (Brachat-Schwarz, 2018). Education levels in Stuttgart are above the German average according to the 2011 Census. With 45% of the over 15-year-olds possessing a general or subject-related higher education entrance qualification and almost a quarter of them a secondary school certificate or equivalent, Stuttgart herein ranks third of German large cities after Munich and Frankfurt. Stuttgart is also within the upper third of larger cities for professional qualifications with 15% of the population having a university degree. However, Stuttgart in the same comparison has an above-average proportion of persons without school-leaving qualification (7.2%) and of people without professional qualification (29.1%) (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2015).

3.5 Comparison and summary

This chapter has conceptually located the case study cities Nottingham and Stuttgart as varieties of capitalism and as initial urban governance ideal types. It has introduced relating debates and specified concepts which the study employs. I have described Nottingham and Stuttgart to ground the comparative case study, focusing on aspects which become narratively important.

Altogether, the chapter has shown how both cases are relatively extreme urban exemplars of contemporary democratic capitalism: with high variation in local power structures, governance embeddings and local autonomy; public budgets, states of industrialisation and prosperity; socio-economic living conditions and inequalities. The case selection builds on this, as I discuss in Section 4.3. The following table summarises

⁷ This excludes persons receiving benefits. Also, incomes above 200,000 € and below -200,000 € are capped at these levels (Stein, 2012).

and complements aspects in comparison. Hereby, exact comparability is often limited due to data availability and different institutional set-ups.

Table 3: Comparison of initial governance types and case descriptions

Characteristic	Spatial scale	Nottingham/UK	Stuttgart/Germany
National governance			
Welfare capitalism type (Esping-Andersen, 1990)	Country	Liberal	Conservative-corporatist
Market economy type (Hall & Soskice, 2001)	Country	Liberal market economy	Coordinated market economy
Urban governance			
Urban governance ideal type	City	New Public Management	Weberian bureaucracy
Adoption of NPM	Country	Government-imposed	Locally-driven
Population			
Inhabitants (2018)	City	329,200	611,213
Local government and finance			
Local Autonomy Index 2014 (Ladner et al., 2016)	Country	Relatively low (UK: 9 th lowest among 39 European countries)	High (Germany: 5 th highest herein)
Voting system	City	First-past-the-post	Proportional representation
Electoral majority	City	Labour Party (since 1991)	CDU (1975-2008; 2014-2019) Green Party (2009-2013; 2019-)
Voter turnout (2019)	City	29%	57.5%
Local budget per inhabitant ⁸	City	£756 (2017/2018)	5,097 € (2017)
Local budget development	City/ Region	Austerity; significantly decreasing since 2010	Tax revenue in tendency rising since 2002 in Stuttgart Region

⁸ Due to diverging responsibilities, both values are not comparable. While Stuttgart's city council altogether provides more comprehensive services than Nottingham's, e.g. including additional welfare benefits or childcare, Nottingham City Council's provision however includes Adult Social Care – which in Germany is financed or subsidised by federal states.

Economy			
(De-)Industrialisation	City	Largely deindustrialised	Still significantly industrialised
Employment structure development: 1990s and 2000s (Oesch, 2015)	Country	Polarisation through expansion of high- and low-end service jobs (UK)	Occupational upgrading (Germany)
10 largest employers	City	8 rather public, 2 private	6 private, 4 rather public
GDP per capita (2015) ⁹	Metropolitan area	30,550 US \$	60,022 US \$
Labour productivity (GDP per worker; (2015) ⁹	Metropolitan area	64,394 US \$	101,789 US \$
Social situation and inequalities			
Disposable income per equivalised household ¹⁰	Metropolitan area	25,218 US \$ (2016)	32,623 US \$ (2013)
Unemployment rate (ILO-concept; 2015/16)	City/Region	7.9%	3.3% (NUTS-2 region)
Income inequality among 39 OECD-countries (Gini)	Country	0.36 (UK, 8 th highest; 2017)	0.29 (Germany, 25 th highest; 2016)
Interregional inequality	Country	UK: 3 rd most interregionally unequal of 30 OECD-countries	Germany: low regional inequality of disposable incomes in European comparison
Poverty/deprivation	City	High (8 th most deprived district in UK) Child poverty: 64.8% (2015)	Low in German big cities' comparison: relative poverty of 16.1% (2014; federal median) Child poverty: 17.9% (2012; state median)
Life expectancy	City	77 years for men/81.1 years for women (2018)	79.7 years for men/84.3 years for women (2015/17)
Education	City	Lowest in Youth Opportunity Index	Mostly above German average

⁹ Constant prices and purchasing power parity, base year 2010 (OECD, n.d.).

¹⁰ Data not available for same years.

Professional qualifications	City	Below British average	Above German average
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Sources: own research and as given in Chapter 3.

4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Preceding chapters locate this research with regards to sustainability, urban governance and comparative welfare regimes, set out the conceptual co-production framework and describe the cases. This chapter takes the approach into methodology, aiming for a comparative case study at a high level (Yin, 2015). That presupposes choosing, explaining and justifying the research practice which I do successively regarding the comparative case study method (Section 4.2), the case selection (Section 4.3), research methods (Section 4.4) and data analysis (Section 4.5). Section 4.6 summarises the research design's main elements.

Altogether, my methodological choice of a comparative case study is not only backed by, but also extends beyond previous research in the fields I address. On the one hand, single and multiple-case studies are an established method to examine urban governance and welfare state regimes. Co-productionist research on the other hand predominantly relies on single case studies (cf. Section 2.3.2 b)). This scarcity of comparisons limits its interpretational scope. It is this gap where my study makes a relevant contribution through its comparative cases' setup.

4.2 Comparative case study method

4.2.1 The comparative method

To set out the foundations and logic of the qualitative/case-based design of this comparison, I discuss approaches to the comparative method subsequently.

Comparison is an integral part of thinking and “[v]irtually all empirical social research involves comparison of some sort” (Ragin, 1989, p. 1). Comparisons facilitate the interpretation and categorisation of empirical instances, the evaluation of their regularity and significance by drawing on context, other instances and derived theoretical criteria (Ragin, 1989, p. 1). Comparative methods to facilitate explanation in the social sciences have long been split into qualitative and quantitative approaches

(Ragin, 1989, p. 2). This is reinforced by qualitative research tending to be case-based and associated with Weberian studies, whereas quantitative research is mostly variable-based and associated with the Durkheimian tradition (Ragin & Zaret, 1983, p. 732). Case-based and variable-based approaches are two fundamentally different strategies in social science research that draw on distinct epistemologies, conceptions of causality, units and methods of analysis (Ragin & Zaret, 1983).

a) Qualitative/case-based comparisons

Qualitative/case-based approaches focus on cases as wholes and their comparison. In this logic, cases are viewed as evolving configurations, i.e. causes are combinations of temporally discrete factors and cases are being compared with respect to these combinations. Max Weber accordingly conceives of sociology as a science of historical reality, employing qualitative-historical methods concerning concrete cases (Ragin & Zaret, 1983, pp. 743–744). His strategy “uses ideal types to enable limited generalization about historical *divergence*” (Ragin & Zaret, 1983, p. 731, emphasis in original), aiming to understand its causes and consequences (cf. Section 4.3.1 for the use of ideal types). This approach by no means renounces explanation and generalisation, but “it leads to a different type of explanation and different degrees of generalization” (Ragin & Zaret, 1983, p. 741). Qualitative/case-based comparisons often employ “genetic explanations” which, according to Ernest Nagel, demonstrate “why it is that a given subject of study has certain characteristics, by describing how the subject has evolved out of some earlier one”. Genetic explanations include “singular statements about past events” and “those events which are mentioned are selected on the basis of assumptions (frequently tacit ones) as to what sorts of events are causally relevant” (Nagel, 1961, p. 25). Criteria for assumptions about explanatory relevance are objective possibility (“relationships which our imagination accepts as plausibly motivated”) and logical consistence (Weber, 1949, p. 92). Variation across cases then does not need to be associated with different underlying factors, but might also relate to similar factors playing out differently within cases (Abbott, 1988).

b) Quantitative/variable-based comparisons

By contrast, in variable-based or analytic approaches cases are being treated as carriers of specific variables only (Ragin, 1989, p. 3), thus blanking out large parts of their context. Durkheim's associated comparative strategy consists of emulating laboratory experiments in the natural sciences (Ragin & Zaret, 1983, p. 732). In this, he advocates "social species", i.e. discrete types of societies, as intermediaries "between the confused multitude of historical societies and the unique, although ideal, concept of humanity" (Durkheim, 1982, p. 109). Importantly, Durkheim sees social species' attributes as permanent over time which corresponds to regarding a variety of social species as given rather than "historical phases" (Ragin & Zaret, 1983, p. 734). Evidence of a permanent cause then is concomitant variation of effects or variables. Quantitative-statistical studies of cross-societal data predominantly stem from Durkheim's comparative strategy, though using different units of analysis (Ragin & Zaret, 1983, pp. 736–737).

c) Contrasting case-based and variable-based approaches to comparison

Andrew Abbott (1992) trenchantly concludes how both comparative strategies, which he describes as case/narrative and population/analytic, differ – thereby carving out the formers' benefits. First, the population/analytic approach requires clearly delimitable cases and assigns them properties with trans-case meanings while the case/narrative approach "assumes cases will have fuzzy boundaries, takes all properties to have case-specific meanings, analyses by simplifying presumably complex cases, and allows, even focuses on, case transformation" (Abbott, 1992, p. 64). Second, where the case/narrative approach ignores variables where they are not narratively important, population/analytic approaches must consider all included variables. In this way, the case/narrative explanation is led by what should be explained, instead of taking universal or constant relevance of factors as a basis. Third, "[t]his selective attention goes along with an emphasis on contingency. Things happen because of constellations of factors, not because of a few fundamental effects acting independently" (Abbott, 1992, p. 68). Fourth, there is no need in the case/narrative approach to assume that all causes lie

on a same analytical level as is the case in standard sociological models, but small factors (e.g. an assassination) can potentially have crucial effects (Abbott, 1992, p. 68; this relates to path dependency: Mahoney, 2000). Having set out the logic of the qualitative/case-based comparison, the following takes it into practice.

4.2.2 A comparative case study design

a) Establishing the comparative case study method

This study makes use of the virtues of the comparative method in a qualitative case study design, as justified and illustrated in the following. The comparative case study method suits the aim of this research as it facilitates a normative discussion about how both regimes account for sustainability – potentially having policy implications. A single case study on the one hand would not open up comparative possibilities. A quantitative, variable-based comparison on the other would impede to “focus[] on understanding the dynamics present within single settings” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 534) as an objective of this study. This is because variable-based approaches ignore much of cases’ contexts, so that “comparativists [...] are often unfamiliar with the populations constituting their data bases” (Ragin & Zaret, 1983, p. 740). By contrast, Abbott (1992, p. 65) describes the case-based method as a way “to seeing cases as engaged in a perpetual dialogue with their environment, a dialogue of action and constraint that we call plot”. Equally stressing the relevance of context, Yin defines a case study as “[a]n empirical inquiry that closely examines a contemporary phenomenon (the *case*) within its *real-world context*” (Yin, 2015, p. 194; emphasis in original). Context essentially matters to this research in terms of institutional frameworks and multi-level governance, social, economic and historical embeddings as well as interacting conventional understandings and moralities. These are understood as reflected in different combinations of factors in the two settings. Also, an a priori separation into variables would not resonate with the interpretive co-production frame which requires openness and induction to unfold, as well as the possibility to take evolution over time into account (Abbott, 1992, p. 53). In sum, the qualitative, case-oriented approach fits this study with its sensitivity to complexity and suitability to examine empirical historical outcomes in their contexts, often forming

the basis to develop new conceptual schemes (Ragin, 1989, p. ix). Having justified the comparative case study method, I discuss its application, credibility and generalisability subsequently.

b) Applying the comparative case study method

As main aims of comparative research, Charles Ragin (1994, pp. 108–112) distills: to explore diversity, to interpret cultural or historical significance and to advance theory. As an explanatory undertaking, this study attempts to contribute in relation to all these three objectives. The first two are embedded through the case selection (cf. Section 4.3) and pursued in relation to the conceptual framework, the approach to the latter is discussed forth following.

This study primarily employs analytic induction, i.e. “the systematic examination of similarities within and across cases to develop concepts, ideas, or theories” (Pascale, 2011, p. 53). This inductive approach means that preconceptions about the subject matter are limited and that the researcher “will rather let the empirical world decide which questions are worth seeking an answer to” (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 224). According to a conventional view in the social sciences, case studies are methodologically inferior to large-n studies and cannot be of value unless they are linked to hypotheses and follow the hypothetico-deductive model of explanation (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 220). However, this emphasis on generalisation should be put into perspective as only one way of creating knowledge since “[p]redictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 224). The purpose of this case study lies in providing concrete and context-dependent knowledge and in interpreting it comparatively. Restricting it only to a priori defined hypotheses would limit its scope, as the understanding evolves in the course of research.

In practice, the ideal-typical inductive, deductive and abductive modes of analysis are not neatly separated. Their flexible combination better suits “the unpredictable conversational world of human beings” (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 225). This study therefore also pragmatically makes deductive and abductive moves

by drawing on previous concepts and theorisation, inter alia in relation to urban and welfare state regimes. The research process then is iterative and flexible, moving back and forth between analysis and interpretation of the collected data and consideration of previous research and theory.

Corresponding to the social constructivist underpinnings of this study (cf. Section 2.3.4), understanding the co-production of urban policies and social order in two regimes involves interpreting case-specific meanings. It implies multiple realities, meanings and situated knowledge of the interviewees and the researcher. These multiple meanings must be reflected by the knowledge claims that the research makes. Accordingly, I do not assume any 'true' meaning, but an "interrelational conception in which meanings are constructed and reconstructed through conversational interactions" (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 246).

Finally, this study flexibly and creatively uses research methods in order to answer the research questions (cf. Section 1.2). The underlying belief is that "good social science is problem driven and not methodology driven" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, pp. 242–243). It corresponds to the pragmatist understanding of sociological theory that "[w]here problems lie and how they are to be solved do not derive from a single correct strategy" (Holmwood, 2011, p. 25). Techniques of analysis are non-formal and not pre-determined, but are chosen in the light of how the study unfolds and guided by what should be explained (cf. Section 4.5.3).

c) Credibility

With methods of qualitative/case-based research being less codified than of quantitative/variable-based research, there are little methodological guarantees. This opens up possibilities for problem-focused and creative social inquiry (Holmwood, 2014, p. 14). However, disposing of little quantifiable and comparable standards also challenges case study research, deriving from caveats about its credibility and reliability. This may have contributed to a strong scepticism about case studies and their findings in general (Yin, 2015, p. 196). These challenges are being addressed by strengthening credibility through "show[ing] explicitly how [the case study] has

collected and presented its evidence, both completely and fairly”, which involves applying certain methodological procedures (Yin, 2015, p. 197). As three ways to do so, I address “creating an aura of *trustworthiness*, dealing with concerns over *validity*, and striving for *reliability*” (Yin, 2015, p. 197; emphasis in original), in the remainder of this section.

Trustworthiness. The interpretivist approach of this research renders trustworthiness an important requirement (Yin, 2015, p. 197). While acknowledging the constructed nature of this representation (Eisenhart, 2006, p. 573), a case study should demonstrate that the data and interpretations are accurate from some point of view, which also involves reporting about the reflexivity or two-way interplay between the researcher and the research participants (Eisenhart, 2006, pp. 575–579; Yin, 2015, p. 197); attending to complexity and ambiguity. Different procedures should build the trustworthiness of this research. First, I logged deliberations, decisions and my proceeding throughout the study. Second, I kept a research diary to reflect on the research process, including my perceptions, expectations and what may have contradicted or changed them (for reflexivity cf. Section 4.4.4). Aspects of the first entered the thesis and both practices imprinted on it. Third, I included how this research developed and shifted in the process.

Validity. The validity concept largely stems from a realist epistemology. However, validity is a particular strength of the interpretivist approach which this study adopts. For instance, where quantitative/variable-based research often assumes content validity through a seemingly apparent face validity without any further validation (Bortz & Döring, 2006, p. 200) – which ultimately remains uncertain –, I examine via interviews whether issues of interest have been understood in similar ways by researcher and interviewees. Validity also matters to this study in terms of its explanatory aspiration: “[i]n setting forth its main explanation, a case study needs to amass credible data in support of these claimed relationships” (Yin, 2015, p. 197). Accordingly, I substantiated interpretive claims by evidence derived from the analyses and linked them to relevant research, aiming for consistency and coherence.

Reliability: transparency and triangulation. In terms of reliability,

“[t]he case study needs to convince readers that data have been collected and analysed consistently and fairly and that the case study descriptions represent the claimed reality or the perspective of field informants – but not the analyst’s imagination” (Yin, 2015, p. 198).

Putting this into practice, I aim for a transparent approach throughout, including robust data collection techniques and documenting the research procedure (Bowen, 2009, p. 29). Notwithstanding, exact replicability is not an objective that can or should be achieved in all steps, also because it depends upon previous knowledge and theorisation by the researcher (cf. also Section 4.4.4).

Triangulation, which “occurs when the evidence from several different sources converges on the same finding” (Yin, 2015, p. 198), helps increasing a study’s reliability. Since case studies provide the according conditions, “the fieldwork should deliberately seek to corroborate key findings by searching for multiple sources of evidence” (Yin, 2015, p. 199). I therefore draw on various documentary sources, i.e. strategies, plans, websites and instruments of consultation and engagement, interviews and numerous secondary sources. This enables triangulation by source and by method which can reduce systematic biases.

d) Generalisability

Yin (2015, p. 199) describes the ‘how’ of generalisation in case studies as follows:

“The generalizing procedure involves extracting a more abstract level of ideas from a case study’s findings and asserting, mainly through careful argument than any numeric or statistical calculation, how these ideas might pertain to newer situations other than those in the original study”.

The claimed impossibility to generalise from one or a few cases is a major objection against the case study method. Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 228; italicised in original) effectively challenges this widespread belief by concluding that

“[o]ne can often generalize on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalisation as supplement or

alternative to other methods. But formal generalisation is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas ‘the force of example’ is underestimated.”

He puts formal generalisation – the increasingly significant paradigm in many social sciences – into perspective by identifying it as “only one of many ways by which people gain and accumulate knowledge” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, pp. 226–227).

Being familiar with both sides of the argument, I support Flyvbjerg’s view since it allows drawing normative cognitions from social research and employing it in ways which matter to societies. After all, significant policy instances have been adopted by learning from others. I realise this perspective through practical implications which generalise based on the comparative case study (cf. Section 8.9). Subsequently, I consider the scope of this study in conjunction with its case selection.

4.3 Case selection

Choosing cases for comparison in a theoretically useful way requires establishing according selection criteria. Though their relevance might change during a study, transparency about initial considerations is important in terms of trustworthiness; as is openness and flexibility to how cases might move differently while conducting the case study. Since this PhD research has been developed as part of the Leverhulme Programme Grant “Sustaining Urban Habitats: An Interdisciplinary Approach”, its empirical cases have broadly been determined from the outset with Nottingham and Stuttgart. Consequently, this multiple-case study needs to be designed in a way that the empirical instances can function as useful exemplars (Flyvbjerg, 2006) in relation to the broad topic of sustainability, British and German urban contexts. Weberian ideal types as preliminary constructs and high variation in conditions relevant to co-production justify the case selection subsequently.

4.3.1 Governance regimes as ideal types

a) Uses of ideal types

The concept of ideal types has been introduced by Max Weber who describes them as follows:

“An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct. In its conceptual purity, this mental construct cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality” (Weber, 1949, p. 90).

Ideal types serve several related functions: as an aid to conceptualise research subjects – the approach I take –, to help identifying and assessing adequate causes, and to provide a basis for explanations of historical diversity (Ragin & Zaret, 1983, p. 741). In the latter two senses, ideal types are employed in deductive-analytical ways (Clarke, 2015, p. 519). As analytical categories, they are claimed to enable the identification and separation of underlying causal factors which are concealed by a complex interplay of causes. Simplification via abstraction and the identification of useful ideal types are in this way aimed to serve explanatory generalisations (Clarke, 2015, p. 518):

“For whatever content the ideal type is given ... its only value ... for empirical investigations lies in its purpose: to ‘compare’ empirical reality with it, so as to ascertain ... the distance or degree of approximation between [reality and the type], and thus to be able to describe and causally to explain [reality] in terms of clearly understandable concepts” (Weber, 1922, pp. 534–536; as cited in Ringer, 2002, p. 174).

However, as ideal types do not exist in reality, generalisations based on them are actually not suitable for explanation or prediction, “since the things they would allow us to explain or predict never happen”, thus making them unfalsifiable (Papineau, 1976, pp. 137; 139).

A different interpretation of ideal types from that conceived by Weber is to employ them inductively as preliminary concepts open to empirical exploration, as suggested by David Papineau (1976). I employ this approach. As auxiliary structures, ideal types in this sense serve to select and justify starting points for an analysis which subsequently provides in-depth insight into one or several cases from the angle provided by the previously described ideal types. An aim can then be to develop

frameworks of generalisations based on the empirical investigation, rather than only filling such existing frameworks empirically. Frameworks of generalisations might be developed by means of “partially articulated suggestions” of the following kind:

“suggestions about the limits within which situations approximating to the ideal type situation will approximately satisfy the consequent term of the ideal type generalisation; suggestions about the dimensions along which such approximations can fruitfully be differentiated; suggestions about the kinds of generalisations that might relate specific approximations thus differentiated; etc.”
(Papineau, 1976, p. 145; emphasis in original).

In this way, ideal types can be essential in the production of systematic frameworks of comparison (Papineau, 1976, p. 146). The according case selection can be grounded in how cases or their broader categories have been conceived by previous research. Corresponding justifications are then not based on showing that a case fits into a certain – “otiose” – position in a framework of generalisations, “but, if at all, by the possibility that it might lead to the elaboration of such a framework” (Papineau, 1976, p. 146). The following section takes this ideal type approach into practice.

b) Employing ideal types as preliminary constructs

Corresponding to the predominantly inductive design of this study, ideal types derived from previous research serve as preliminary constructs to justify the case selection and to guide the empirical analysis. As outlined in Section 3.3.4, the urban governance literature suggests a shift from more hierarchical types of an older, ‘Weberian’ bureaucracy towards ‘New Public Management’ (NPM) and a more networked governance. Considering the two current city strategies (cf. Section 4.4.2), Stuttgart resembles the Weberian bureaucracy in many respects. In contrast, Nottingham significantly approximates NPM principles. Accordingly, I adopt these two ideal types, as described in Sections 3.3.4 a) and b), preliminarily for the empirical exploration of their governance regimes. Being bound into two different configurations of capitalism, the regimes are at the same time exemplars for the liberal (UK) and the conservative-corporatist (Germany) welfare state types (Esping-

Andersen, 1990) as well as for liberal (UK) and coordinated market economies (Hall & Soskice, 2001) (cf. Section 3.2). Units of analysis are therefore the urban governance regimes in context.

Relating to the conceptual framework, I am theorising the regime types as two different ways of co-producing policies and social order. With the ideal types as starting and guiding points of the comparison, the objective is to enrich them empirically and to better understand the regimes' nature and phenomena they evince. This implies that the initial ideal types as heuristic devices are open for investigation and that the empirical regimes are likely hybrids of different governance concepts – as interpreted in Section 8.2. Findings throughout the thesis can help understanding governance beyond the two cases.

4.3.2 Areas of homogeneity and diversity

Besides governance regimes as ideal types, areas of homogeneity and diversity render Nottingham and Stuttgart interesting cases for comparison following an information-oriented case selection (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 230). For this, cases first need to parallel each other sufficiently – thus defining boundaries for the case selection – and then be comparable along certain specified dimensions (Berg-Schlosser, 2015, p. 441). According areas of homogeneity are systems of democratic capitalism in mid-size¹¹ European cities in the early 21st century.

“A second consideration concerns the extent of diversity within the selected universe. In this regard, a maximum of heterogeneity for a minimum number of cases should be achieved” (Berg-Schlosser, 2015, p. 441). Indeed, Nottingham and Stuttgart diverge significantly regarding average socio-economic living conditions, public budgets and levels of local autonomy, inequalities and states of (de-)industrialisation (cf. Section 3.4) – conditions of relevance for social order and how it is co-produced

¹¹ Although the cities' administrative boundaries are not directly comparable (cf. Section 4.3.3), a limitation is that Nottingham (unitary authority) with 329,200 inhabitants in 2018 (Nottingham City Council, 2019a) is smaller than Stuttgart (urban district) with 611,213 inhabitants in January 2018 (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-c).

with local policies. Consequently, Nottingham and Stuttgart fit the criterion of ‘maximum variation cases’, having the purpose “[t]o obtain information about the significance of various circumstances for case process and outcome” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 230). In these properties, the cases form two relatively extreme settings which help understanding more general connections relevant to other cases.

4.3.3 Situating the cases temporally and spatially

Delimiting cases temporally and spatially can be challenging given the messiness of the social world (Yin, 2015, p. 195). Indeed, this study’s case/narrative approach assumes fuzzy boundaries. Corresponding to limited time resources, this case study’s design is primarily cross-sectional, comparing two contemporary governance regimes. Due to the creation dates of some documents (cf. Section 4.4.2) and interview data collection (cf. Section 4.4.3), the time frame of selected data items for the comparative case study is September 2004 until June 2018 with an emphasis on more recent items since ca. 2010. Notwithstanding, case introductions and the explanatory undertaking require further sources beyond the – therefore fuzzy – cases’ delimitations.

For practical reasons, spatial boundaries comply with the local authorities’ territories, i.e. Nottingham unitary authority and the urban district of Stuttgart. It could be argued that these demarcations lack comparability in terms of social and economic structures with Nottingham’s boundaries being drawn around an urban core which excludes directly adjacent areas such as Rushcliffe, Gedling or Broxtowe¹², but Stuttgart’s seemingly stretching out further. Though comparability of the employed city boundaries would be desirable (and hard to establish), fit with local policy

¹² There is the argument that Nottingham’s boundaries lead to a socio-economically unbalanced picture, as deprived areas concentrate within the unitary authority and considerably more affluent ones lie beyond its territory (Nottingham City Council, 2012, p. 10), as visualised with Figure 2. However, strong segregation and concentrated deprivation are characteristics both of the Nottingham case and the UK’s high inequalities, as condensed in major conurbations (Nottingham City Council, 2012, p. 10). Indeed, equally tight boundaries around Stuttgart would provide a very different, partly even opposed picture, since over-average incomes concentrate in inner-city districts (cf. Figure 4) and national income inequality is lower (OECD, 2018a).

approaches and processes is more important. The spatial boundaries of the case study cities are fuzzy since their embedding matters, so that I take regional, state and national contexts into account. Having justified the case selection, I subsequently describe the study's research methods.

4.4 Research methods and data collection

This research combines policy documents and semi-structured interviews in a multistage approach to compare and explain how governance in Nottingham and Stuttgart relates to sustainability. Results of each phase inform foci and methodological choices of the following stage. The successive phases and related data sets are:

1. Analysis of the two current city strategies
2. Extended document analysis of selected sectoral strategies and consultation instruments
3. Semi-structured interviews with informants, including key stakeholders

The aim of this study poses the challenge of how to select and analyse relevant data, since these are abundant (e.g. consultation minutes, position papers, news reports, web and social media contents). I aim at an effective, rigorous and comprehensible approach. Given the time constraints of the project, I attempt to select particularly purposive and informative data sources in relation to the research questions. Besides, I follow the cases and research issues relevant to them through various sources – in this way processing within-cases and triangulating by sources. Therefore, I draw on newspaper reports and websites since they often provide local information which academic sources or official figures do not. I also make connections to structural conditions in both places which partly requires approximation via regional or national level data due to a lack of cross-nationally comparable urban level data. In relation to this strategy, I argue that social science is more meaningful when it not only resorts to questions where completely robust (mostly quantitative) data are available, as this leads to a sort of confinement in a 'cage of data availability', which is

itself characterised by the very conditions social sciences seek to understand and question. Instead, creatively approaching questions by also drawing on indications that appear relevant (and are of course up for discussion), making connections based on objective possibility and logical consistence, allows a more holistic and critical engagement with the social world – as in this study. The following sections explain the selection of within-case data, the familiarisation with the cases, data collection and address reflexivity and research ethics.

4.4.1 Familiarisation with the cases

Before and during this PhD research, I familiarised myself with the two case study cities. I got to know both of them as a resident and followed public life – in Stuttgart for two and a half years and in Nottingham for over three years. I attended diverse public events and discussions, e.g. about social housing in Nottingham or refugee issues in Stuttgart and co-organised talks about financial citizenship and fuel poverty in Nottingham. In Stuttgart, I was a member of the District Advisory Council ('Bezirksbeirat', a formal instrument of citizen participation) of Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt for the party Alliance 90/The Greens for more than a year. Besides, desktop research inter alia encompasses legal and institutional frameworks, levels of governance, political life and debate, socio-economic data and previous research about both cities.

4.4.2 Policy documents

Selected policy documents¹³ have been analysed to (a) answer the research questions as far as possible, i.e. to compile and interpret policies across both cities, (b) to provide sufficient insight into both co-production regimes in order to specify whom and how to interview and (c) to further develop my knowledge and understanding of the two cases. The document analysis thus supports triangulation and theory building (Bowen, 2009, p. 35).

¹³ 'Policy documents' and 'documents' are used interchangeably for this data source.

I conducted a first exploratory document analysis using the two city strategies 'City of Nottingham Sustainable Community Strategy 2020. Family, Neighbourhood, City: Raising Aspirations' (One Nottingham, 2009) and 'Stadtentwicklungskonzept Strategie 2006' (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2006).¹⁴ The rationale for this data set as a starting point was that these documents were still the current overall city strategies at the time of analysis (January 2017), thus setting the envisaged directions of development for both cities and spanning many policy fields. This initial analysis provides insights about governance, imagined futures, prevailing issues and policies in both regimes for justifying the case selection in terms of ideal types (cf. Section 4.3.1). Coinciding with the theoretical expectation, they diverge significantly in many respects.

Based on this, an extended and refined analysis of documents, mostly sectoral strategies and plans, was a useful next step. Reasons to construct this data set were (a) to include more current policies and debates and (b) thereby to broaden the scope of policy areas for the comparison. The aim here was not to collect detailed knowledge about one policy field or issue, but a broad brush overview. This critical engagement with policy documents (c) elicited significant information in relation to the research questions and the co-production regimes in terms of related reason, conventions and morality. Finally, (d) modes of developing policies, e.g. with stakeholders, become apparent in some documents. After all, the policy documents are rich sources of data for the case studies, as they are often products of various meetings and consultations.

The rationale for selecting further documents was to include publicly and online available strategies, plans and websites which detail policies and objectives in many policy areas. I attempted to only include the most actual available strategy or plan, respectively. Due to time restrictions, not all policy areas could be covered. I limit the selection to areas which appear relatively fundamental (e.g. economic policy), significant to the regimes or in their comparison (e.g. public health) and/or relevant to

¹⁴ I refer to these two as 'current city strategies'.

research questions and theorisation. Furthermore, I aimed to include the main instruments of consultation and engagement as evidence of according involvement and citizens' views. Hereby, a selection criterion was that websites and documents repeatedly referred to these instruments. Although I researched carefully and repeatedly, I might have missed certain relevant strategies or their most actual version; and not all relevant strategies might be available online.

The time frame of the case studies (cf. Section 4.3.3) also depends on the creation dates of the selected documents. These lie between September 2004 and August 2017, until when I chose documents to analyse. The starting date equals the publication date of the first document of Stuttgart's current city strategy, 'Stadtentwicklungskonzept Entwurf 2004' (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2004). Considered documents in both cities therefore date back maximum until September 2004 to set comparable time frames, also in relation to external developments such as the financial crisis of 2007/2008.

A scoping exercise of the webpages and available documents of both cities preceded their selection. For Nottingham, I selected 38 data items for analysis (cf. Appendix B) Analysed policy documents). Hereto, the 15 of 16¹⁵ strategies and plans which the database 'Nottingham Insight' listed as "Nottingham key strategies" (Nottingham City Council, 2017f) have been included.¹⁶ I then searched "strategy plan" on Nottingham Insight (Nottingham City Council, 2017g), considered the 100 "Document results" and selected further 18 strategies and plans according to the above rationale. Some of these are summaries of strategies. Finally, I included five instruments of consultation and engagement by the city council from the website 'Engage Nottingham Hub' (Nottingham City Council, 2017c) and from the Nottingham Insight Document Library 'Local Engagement and Consultation' (Nottingham City Council, 2017b). For Stuttgart, I selected 45 documents and websites for analysis (cf.

¹⁵ Excepted here is the 'Nottingham Growth plan - annual review 2014'.

¹⁶ One Nottingham's '20 year Vision for 2030' is mentioned in a number of documents and might be considered a key strategy. However, I could not obtain it online nor through enquiries at One Nottingham and Nottingham City Council.

Appendix B) Analysed policy documents). The three documents which form part of and lead up to the current city strategy have been included as key strategies along with a document about the development of a new strategy 'Stuttgart 2030'. As there was no encompassing online document database for Stuttgart, I comprehensively researched the city administration's webpages for further strategies and plans. Since deliberate strategies have not been formulated in many policy areas, I partly included websites and documents summarising policy approaches, programmes and directives, amounting to 36 further strategies, plans and outlines. Finally, I selected five instruments of consultation and engagement based on the online research.

Across Nottingham and Stuttgart, 83 documents form part of the analysis, mostly published by the local administrations and partnerships. The documents' length lays between one and 290 pages. Their formats are text documents, websites and illustrated brochures. As an effective approach, I only analysed a fraction of most documents (cf. Section 4.5.1). All of them have been downloaded from the websites and transferred into PDF format if they had another format. Webpages have been saved in PDF format. I then uploaded all files into the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 11.

4.4.3 Interviews

Building on the findings of the document analyses, I have conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews with informants¹⁷, aiming to include key stakeholders in both cities.¹⁸ Where the former provided broad overviews in relation to the research questions, the latter enhanced my understanding of debates, knowledge and power constellations in the two regimes through various actors' perceptions. Relating to the research aim and questions, the interviews (cf. Appendix D) Interview guideline) addressed inter alia views about (formal and informal) urban policy negotiations; about which actors are considered important in them and informants' potential

¹⁷ 'Informant' and 'interviewee' are used interchangeably.

¹⁸ I understand stakeholders as persons who can considerably affect local policies or issues or have a particular interest in them.

involvement; about how urban policies and objectives relate to social justice and account for future generations; about interviewees' priorities for the cities; about the cities' future and the role of economic growth in it; and about the interdependence of political and economic spheres. Through the interviews, I attempted to comprehend interests and meaning from participants' viewpoints. In relation to the constructionist approach, they are understood as "locally produced in and through the social practice of interviewing" (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 172). I strived for rich descriptions to facilitate later interpretation and theoretical reading (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, pp. 269; 274) – and to understand the co-creation of policy-making with values, power and rationalisations in both governance regimes. Thereby, subjective views matter because they influence actions, as expressed by the 'Thomas theorem': "if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (W. I. Thomas & Thomas, 1928, p. 572; as cited in Merton, 1995, p. 380).

I aimed to interview informants from the sectors local politics and administration, business and civil society in each city, particularly those who appeared formally or informally most relevant to shaping the cities' policies and development.¹⁹ Besides, I endeavoured to include a diversity of views in order to provide good potential for comparison (Barbour, 2014, p. 68). My sampling strategy was therefore not randomised, but purposive. The aim was not a representative sample, but to include key informants. Participants have been identified through the familiarisation with the cases, the document analyses, focused searches and 'snowball sampling' during the interviews. I incrementally contacted 199 potential interviewees or their institutions, possibly through their professional affiliations. 109 of them referred to Nottingham: 45 were politicians or public sector employees, 35 business representatives and 29 civil society representatives. 90 pertained to Stuttgart: 30 were

¹⁹ In tendency, I therefore focus on more powerful people – thereby contributing to understanding an under-researched group in sociology compared to the less powerful (Neal & Mclaughlin, 2009, pp. 689–690).

politicians or public sector employees, 37 business representatives and 23 civil society representatives.

The realised sample consists of 78 interviews with 81 informants – sometimes two interviewees took part in a conversation. 45 of the interviews (with 47 interviewees) relate to Nottingham, whereby 11 informants were politicians, 18 were public sector employees, eight were business representatives and 10 were civil society representatives. 33 interviews (with 34 informants) relate to Stuttgart. Nine of those interviewees were politicians, five were public sector employees, nine were business representatives and 11 were civil society representatives. Where this does not disclose interviewees' identity, informants were inter alia elected politicians, representatives of the city administrations and other public institutions, of business associations, small to large companies, of civil society groups, pressure groups, faith groups, unions, charities, foundations, social services associations and other institutions focusing on civil society issues. The sample comprises of a number of key informants in both places. I aimed to include comparable functions across both regimes, but depended on actors' willingness to participate. This latter, interviewees' openness and the insights I gained through the interviews frequently exceeded my expectations, so that I conducted more interviews than initially intended up to a point where I felt a certain saturation in terms of issues and interpretations that came up. This happened later in Nottingham – the context with which I was still less familiar – than in Stuttgart, partly explaining diverging interview numbers. I further describe interviewees' characteristics in Sections 5.3 and 5.6.

In practice, the interview guideline functioned as an orientation only. Aiming for a conversational interview style, I left out some questions and added others, e.g. critical interpretive questions (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 245). I partly expanded on issues that the interviewees brought up or which appeared critical to a case; and adapted questions in relation to sectors and informants. To refine my interview questions prior to fieldwork, I carried out a pilot interview with a native English speaker and academic stakeholder in Nottingham.

I only conducted interviews after participants took note of the participant information sheet and gave their consent by signing the according form (cf. Appendix C) Consent form), both of which I sent them in advance. Interviews took place between December 2017 and June 2018 and have all been audio-recorded, often lasting for ca. 1 to 1,5 hours. Besides, I took notes. All of the Stuttgart interviews and 37 of the 45 Nottingham interviews have been transcribed (few only partially), using funds of the Leverhulme Programme Grant “Sustaining Urban Habitats: An Interdisciplinary Approach”. Weighing up effort and costs, I refrained from transcriptions for some interviews where informants did not really open up and/or which I would unlikely cite.

4.4.4 Reflexivity

Since preconceptions with which I have conducted this research are significant, I aimed to check and question these in a (self-)critical and adaptive approach – partly through a research diary (cf. Section 4.2.2 c)). Besides, I tried to avoid an account that presents itself as superior to the views of actors in the field (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 246; Holmwood, 2014). Hereto, the interviews allowed me to enquire about actors’ interpretations and to compare and challenge my own interpretations on these grounds. This relates to many interviewees’ in-depth local knowledge and understanding. I aim to include and compare these views in order to improve the coherence of explanations. At the same time, my research possibly interacts with actors’ interpretations, e.g. through the exchange during the interview, and could thereby equally influence its object of study (Chilvers & Kearnes, 2015, p. 24).

Furthermore, Kaufmann (2013, p. 13) rightly emphasises

“national idiosyncrasies in [...] comparative welfare state research, and [how] the conceptualizations as well as the normative criteria of the comparison take their cues from the peculiarities of welfare state arrangements in the scientist’s own society. [...] With this, however, every international comparison becomes

prejudiced, and a perspective that looks at the differences of national peculiarities without bias is rendered impossible.”

Correspondingly and particularly with the intensifying ‘Brexit’ crisis, I felt increasingly estranged by political, societal and economic developments in the UK. I also became more conscious of my cultural rooting, inter alia within a more continental welfare state conception. My views and values necessarily underlie and shape this work to some extent, carrying (more) prejudice in relation to the Nottingham case. I addressed this by attempting to interact with and interview diverse persons, draw on many and diverse sources of information and re-check my interpretations with data and interviewees. This also caused the higher number of Nottingham interviews.

In both cities, I perceived my access to interviewees as relatively privileged, which might to some extent relate to partly similar backgrounds and experiences. These are relatively often being white, from affluent Global North countries, middle-class, university-educated, civically or politically involved and working or having worked in the public sector. These are privileged traits in many respects – and likely impact on our views and prejudices. Having moved away from Stuttgart, my active Green Party engagement rested during my time in Nottingham. In relation to it, I aimed to encounter informants and data in open and unbiased ways from the point of view of a researcher. I conducted one interview with a civil society representative whom I knew personally through my political engagement. Otherwise, party affiliation did not seem to impact markedly on my realised sample – e.g. did Stuttgart’s Green Party mayor refuse an interview.

4.4.5 Research ethics

Considering ethical issues in relation to social research is an integral part of it. Prior to the collection of any data which were not freely accessible in the public domain, this research received ethical approval from the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Nottingham. I ensured informed consent by clearly informing interviewees about all aspects of the study which may be relevant for their

decision to take part through a participant information sheet and by offering further discussion beforehand (The University of Nottingham, 2016, p. 20). This has been documented by signing a consent form (cf. Appendix C) Consent form).

Confidentiality and anonymity are particular challenges for this study. Conventions of both are not static and their application can be complex (Lancaster, 2017, p. 100):

“As such researchers [...] must resolve a dilemma: (a) they can disclose accurately and faithfully their findings, potentially exposing respondents’ identities and placing them at risk of harm; or (b) they can withhold certain information (or alter it in some way), thus raising some questions about the accuracy of their studies”
(Baez, 2002, pp. 35–36).

Relating hereto, Lancaster (2017, p. 101) points out that “[r]especting participants’ concerns about the use of particular data, or choosing not to report sensitive issues, can maintain and perpetuate the very power relationships participants may fear or seek to uphold”. Since participants for this study have been selected because of their (professional) roles, specific statements could in principle disclose their identity (similarly: Lancaster, 2017, p. 100). I therefore ensure participant confidentiality and anonymity as far as possible, but cannot guarantee them entirely. I have excluded identifiable personal data from the stage of data storage onwards insofar as they appeared irrelevant from the perspective of theory and research questions. Interviewees have not been named, unless they agreed to be non-anonymously quoted and I found this added to the study. Where I was aware that participants could be readily identified, such identifying information was discarded to preserve their anonymity (Lancaster, 2017, p. 101). I offered participants to send them a copy of their interview transcript in order to review in terms of accuracy and providing clarifications – which some did. Moreover, participants had the opportunity to approve any anonymous and (if agreed to) direct quotes in draft copies of publications.

4.5 Data analysis

Useful ways to answer the research questions were the familiarisation with the data, coding, meaning condensation and interpretation, qualitative thematic analysis, bricolage practices and theoretical reading. I applied these procedures of predominantly qualitative data analysis flexibly across data sets in relation to the stage of research and my understanding, as discussed subsequently.

4.5.1 Familiarisation with the data and identification of parts for analysis

To start the analysis, I read both current city strategies and familiarised myself with the other policy documents. On these bases, I decided which sections to analyse since time constraints demanded a selective and pragmatic proceeding.²⁰ The rationale was that I considered them of particular interest in relation to research questions and conceptualisation. Having conducted the interviews, I was more familiar with their data and used my extensive notes and the transcripts to select sections for analysis.

4.5.2 Coding

Coding served to collate findings of the policy documents and to enable further analyses. It “involves attaching one or more keywords to a text segment in order to

²⁰ Contrarily, Yin argues that

“[i]n pursuing [...] transparency, a particular ethical challenge arises in assuring readers that your case study has reported and fairly analysed all the collected data. Such a challenge also exists with other research methods, as in doing experiments, where a constant temptation is to find some procedural excuse to exclude data that might in fact have been contrary to initial expectations” (Yin, 2015, p. 197; emphasis in original).

I argue against Yin’s generic rule that all collected data need to be analysed. In relation to this study, it would equal a straightjacket precluding the broad overview that the extended document analysis provides and the encompassing insights arising from interviewing a multitude of actors – and would thus unnecessarily curtail the possibilities of social research. Unlike Yin suspects, I was not tempted to exclude data that may contradict my expectations, but conversely sought these instances also beyond my data because I tried to represent the cases as fairly and accurately as I could. Since the described manipulations are possible at many stages of qualitative and quantitative research, fixed procedures cannot fully obviate them – and all research rests on a degree of trust and trustworthiness.

permit later identification of a statement” (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 226). To provide an overview and to facilitate comparisons, I employed concept-driven and data-driven coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 89; S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, pp. 227–229). Aspects of the former were derived from research questions, assumed ideal types, urban governance and welfare state concepts and the co-production lens. Besides, I inductively coded for further regime instances appearing relevant. Using the software NVivo 11, codes have been developed, revised, grouped into categories and re-grouped in the process without a fixed scheme.

4.5.3 Methods of analysis

This research aims to flexibly and creatively use methods of analysis to answer the research questions. In practice, this implies moving beyond the common convention in the social sciences of choosing and applying a specific method. Brinkmann and Kvale (2014, p. 267) outline relatedly:

“Many analyses of interviews are conducted without following any specific analytic technique. Some go beyond reliance on a single mode of analysis to include a free mixture of methods and techniques. Other interview analysts do not apply specific analytical procedures but rest on a general reading of the interview texts with theoretically informed interpretations, following from different philosophical paradigms.”

Accordingly, I do not identify with a specific methodological paradigm prescribing theoretical requirements or practical proceedings. Instead, the study builds on a general reading of selected parts of the data and employs adaptable methods. These are not tied to certain theoretical underpinnings, are primarily concerned with content and meaning and only secondarily with language (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 81; S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014). They therefore suit the research questions, the constructionist epistemological stance and the co-productionist conceptualisation. The following sections discuss their use and the proceeding.

a) Qualitative thematic analysis

“Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes [a] data set in (rich) detail” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79).

The data-driven form of thematic analysis aims to elicit predominant themes of an entire data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 83–84). As expounded by Braun & Clarke (2006, pp. 86–94 for a detailed explanation), I used it initially with the two current city strategies in order to identify relevant themes and policy areas in both cities, especially in relation to sustainability and economic inequality, i.e. the early research focus. This resulted in two thematic maps (cf. Appendix A) Thematic maps of the two current city strategies).

b) Bricolage

Bricolage is an eclectic form of meaning generation “through a multiplicity of ad hoc methods and conceptual approaches” (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 267). “The bricolage interpreter adapts mixed technical discourses, moving freely between analytic techniques and concepts” (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 267). I inter alia used the following bricolage techniques (cf. Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 245–246 for further explanation):

- Noting patterns and themes
- Seeing plausibility
- Counting
- Making contrasts and comparisons
- Subsuming particulars under the general
- Building a logical chain of evidence
- Establishing conceptual/theoretical coherence

c) Theoretical reading

Theoretical reading refers to a theoretically informed reading of data items (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 269). “This may [...] suggest that recourse to specific

analytic tools becomes less important with a theoretical knowledge of the subject matter of an investigation and with a theoretically informed interview questioning” (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 270). Employing theoretical reading, this was exactly the case in relation to my growing knowledge of both regimes.

d) Meaning interpretation

Meanings in the data have been interpreted in order to illuminate actors’ views and to enhance my understanding in relation to the study’s conceptualisation and research questions (S. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 236). Brinkmann and Kvale (2014, p. 235) describe this process as follows:

“The interpretation of meaning of interview texts goes beyond a structuring of the manifest meanings of what is said to deeper and more critical interpretations of the text [...] [in order] to work out structures and relations of meanings not immediately apparent [...]. [I]nterpretation recontextualizes the statements within broader frames of reference.”

Collating data accompanied their interpretation in terms of two comparative tables. The first was based on the policy documents and their coding. It comprised the addressed policy areas and subordinate policy issues to understand priorities. The second table was organised around policies and policy objectives which came up during the case study (e.g. air pollution, infrastructure provision, teenager pregnancies, fuel poverty). I then researched respective policies, objectives or states of an issue for the other city and comparatively interpreted on these grounds how policies or objectives relate to sustainability (RQ 1). This often involved ambiguity and trade-offs which I attempted to understand. Cognitions and parts of both tables entered the thesis’ arguments and helped addressing the other research questions. Finally, I considered factors of the governance regimes and interpreted them in their combinations (RQ 4). Attempts at explanation originated from seeking tendencies and patterns, e.g. convergence or divergence, within the two cases (e.g. across policy issues) and between them. This process involved reflection based on the gained knowledge about both regimes, previous literature and theorisation as well as further inquiry and refinement based on these in an iterative process.

Practically, my understanding of governance in both regimes grew with each interview and I developed, tested, noted and revised interpretations while doing the research (as described in H. S. Becker, 1998). Based on these interpretations and the – equally evolving – research questions, I drafted the comparative thesis structure and then the chapters in a back and forth between data analysis and developing my arguments (H. S. Becker & Richards, 2007). Hereby, I mostly analysed data in a more focused way than initially, e.g. a specific question across transcripts – thus moving to a more concept-driven approach. While much more can be drawn from my data, I attempt to represent diverse tendencies and to select conceptually and comparatively significant instances for this thesis. Given my leeway in the process, I try to do justice to the cases by weighing and questioning my interpretations via exploring counter-arguments and adjusting mine if appropriate.

4.6 Summary

This chapter has explained and justified the comparative case study method, the case selection, the research methods and the practice of data analysis. Table 4 summarises key elements of the research design.

Table 4: Key elements of the research design

Research design	Qualitative/case-based comparison
	Interpretive approach: aiming at understanding predominantly inductive non-formal emerging, techniques of analysis not pre-determined multiple realities and meanings, situated knowledge
Strengthening credibility	Building trustworthiness, inter alia via reflexivity
	Validity: interpretive claims substantiated by evidence
	Aiming for reliability through transparency and triangulation
Case selection	Weberian ideal types as preliminary constructs: Nottingham – New Public Management Stuttgart – Weberian bureaucracy
	High variation cases:

	socio-economic living conditions public budgets local autonomy levels of inequality states of (de-)industrialisation
Case boundaries	September 2004 – June 2018 for my data sets
	Nottingham unitary authority; Stuttgart urban district – fuzzy
Data sources	Document analysis of the two current city strategies
	Extended document analysis of selected strategies and consultation instruments
	Semi-structured interviews with informants
Data analysis	Coding
	Meaning condensation
	Qualitative thematic analysis
	Meaning interpretation
	Bricolage
	Theoretical reading

Source: own research.

5 Policy approaches

5.1 Introduction

This chapter takes the preceding methodology into practice. It examines RQ 1: *How do policy approaches relate to sustainability?*

With cities having become central sites in an “uneven, crisis-laden advance of neoliberal restructuring projects”, which are interconnected translocally, they “provide an important reference point for understanding some of the limits, contradictions and mutations of the neoliberal project since the 1990s” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 49) (cf. Sections 1.1.3 and 2.2.2 b)). This chapter explores Nottingham’s and Stuttgart’s positions and experiences in this neoliberal advance. Both are significant exemplars to understand these developments in their capacities of high variation cases in relevant respects (cf. Sections 3.5 and 4.3).

In a parallel structure for both cases starting with Nottingham, the chapter explores policy approaches (Sections 5.2 and 5.5), reports and interprets views on their relation to social justice (Sections 5.3 and 5.6) and future generations (Sections 5.4 and 5.7). I draw conclusions in Section 5.8.

5.2 Nottingham: exploring policy approaches

5.2.1 Describing policy approaches

This section examines which issues are tackled politically in Nottingham. This is to enable exploring diversity across the cases as one aim of comparative research (cf. Section 4.2.2 b)). Therefore, I created an overview of all 38 Nottingham policy documents (cf. Appendix B) Analysed policy documents) by collating them into a table according to what I understood to be their main – or one main – policy issue and policy area. Examples are given in Table 5, including main policy objectives. To reduce

complexity, I subsumed policy issues under broader policy areas.²¹ Categories have thus been derived from the data. Emerging policy areas are (number of documents in brackets):

- Health (7)
- Crime and drugs (4)
- Overarching (4)
- Children/young people (2)
- City administration (2)
- Economic/location development (2)
- Environment (2)
- Homelessness (2)
- Neighbourhoods (2)
- Transport (2)
- Education (1)
- Energy (1)
- Family support (1)
- Housing (1)
- Planning (1)

While it could have been arranged differently, this coarse overview gives insights into where efforts and funds are being invested – at the very least in drafting a document.²² Policy issues within the three most frequent policy areas illustrate this. First, health matters appear highly relevant with documents regarding autism, breastfeeding, health and wellbeing, healthcare, mental health and wellbeing, healthy weight and suicide prevention. Second, the four documents in the area of crime and drugs concern these two in general as well as smoking and alcohol. Third, the category

²¹ I assigned documents to one policy area and to one policy issue only. Summary documents have not been listed if the relating comprehensive document was part of the document analysis.

²² Policy documents were to some extent produced because of statutory duties set by central government. However, a good number of them go back to local initiatives and are therefore significant to the Nottingham case.

“Overarching” comprises the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Council Plan, citizens’ survey and citizens’ panel.

In conclusion, amongst policy areas taken up there is a high relevance of health issues and social problems. Due to the frequency of these themes in policy documents, I interpret instances of them subsequently.

Table 5: Examples of policy objectives in Nottingham

Nottingham			
Policy area	Policy issue	Document	Policy objective(s)
Health	Weight	Healthy Weight Strategy for Nottingham City 2011-2020	<p>“AIM</p> <p>To increase the number and proportion of children and adults who are a healthy weight in Nottingham”</p> <p>“NOTTINGHAM PLAN TARGETS</p> <p>Halt the rise and then reduce the prevalence of child obesity in Nottingham to 18% in children by 2020. Baseline 2006/07: 20%</p> <p>Reduce the proportion of overweight and obese adults in Nottingham to 60% by 2020. Baseline 2006/07: 69%”</p> <p>(NHS Nottingham City et al., n.d., p. 2; emphases in original)</p>
Children/ young people	Teenage pregnancies	Nottingham City Teenage Pregnancy Plan 2014-16	<p>“WHAT WE WILL DO IN 2014-16</p> <p>Our plan to reduce and sustain the number of unplanned teenage conceptions and support teenage parents is based on national evidence, local knowledge and consultation with the wider Teenage Pregnancy Network.”</p> <p>(Nottingham Children’s Partnership, n.d., p. 10; emphases in original)</p>

Sources: own research and as indicated.

5.2.2 Interpreting policy approaches

As an aim of comparative research, this section interprets cultural or historical significance for the Nottingham case. Given the amount of data, I can only carve out

few tendencies – which is around the themes changing individual behaviours and the use of data as knowledge. These are significant and repeatedly present in documents of the more frequent policy areas identified in the above overview. They therefore serve as examples for how the domains of policy and reason are intertwined and simultaneously produced – co-produced – with those of culture, values, subjectivity and politics (Filipe et al., 2017).

a) Changing individual behaviours

Policy documents for Nottingham partly converge in aiming at changing individual behaviours.²³ They then typically analyse according data for Nottingham and contrast them with national, regional or core cities'²⁴ figures. With Nottingham often coming off unfavourably in these comparisons, objectives for improvement are formulated. These in many cases also require citizens to change their behaviours (cf. also Section 7.4.2). Objectives then partly take the form of measurable target values with defined time horizons and responsibilities.

Example: teenage pregnancies. I illustrate this pattern through the “Nottingham City Teenage Pregnancy Plan 2014-16” (Nottingham Children’s Partnership, n.d.). Data on teenage pregnancies evidence how Nottingham’s rate still lies above the England average:

Extract 1

“[...] [T]he number of pregnant teenagers, in the 15-17 year old age group, continued to fall with 62 fewer young women conceiving in 2012 (181) as compared to 2011 (243). Continued investment and dedication over the last 15

²³ This relates to the wider rise of behavioural governance (‘nudge’) in the UK as analysed by Straßheim & Korinek (2016) (cf. Section 2.3.2 b) and which materialises liberal paternalism. The authors conclude that “behavioural experts have cultivated politico-epistemic authority by claiming the role of ‘choice architects’” and that “the political vision of Big Society was put forward that constitutes a powerful diagnosis of the UK’s social and economic problems as well as a frame of an alternative, progressive future” (Straßheim & Korinek, 2016, p. 121). This latter imagines “a much smaller, but smarter state that empowers citizens in terms of making better choices for their individual and collective good”, thus turning “societies into highly individualized states of mind” (Straßheim & Korinek, 2016, pp. 121–122).

²⁴ The core cities group in the UK comprises of Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield (Core Cities Group, n.d.).

years has reduced the teenage pregnancy rate significantly but [...] our rate in Nottingham is still above the England average, although the gap is narrowing” (Nottingham Children’s Partnership, n.d., p. 2).

The plan then aims “to reduce and sustain the number of unplanned teenage conceptions and support teenage parents”. This mainly requires teenagers to change their behaviour and avoid unplanned pregnancies. The time horizon to deliver the plan is defined as 2014-2016. Five “overall success measures” are in place, inter alia: “[c]ontinue to reduce the rate of conceptions under 18 years of age” and “[i]ncrease the attendance, and attainment, of teenage parents in education, training and employment”. Finally, responsibilities are allocated as the plan “will be delivered through the Teenage Pregnancy Network and performance managed by the Teenage Pregnancy Taskforce” (Nottingham Children’s Partnership, n.d., p. 10). Substantiating the interpretation, this described pattern also applies to the documents “Breastfeeding: A Framework for Action. Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City 2015 – 2020”, “Healthy Weight Strategy for Nottingham City 2011-2020”, “Safe.Responsible.Healthy: Nottingham’s approach to alcohol”, “Nottingham City Tobacco Control Strategy 2015-2020. Inspiring Nottingham’s smokefree generation”, “Wellness in Mind. Nottingham City Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017” and “Nottingham Crime & Drugs Partnership. Partnership Plan 2015 to 2020”.

Defining policy problems. Where reasons to tackle certain issues given in documents and interviews often involve high problem pressures in Nottingham, the comparison with Stuttgart shows that these only explain parts of the variance in addressed policy issues. This is the case where issues are being addressed in Nottingham but not in Stuttgart, although factual problem pressures (e.g. alcohol consumption) partly appear similar and local action would be possible (cf. Section 8.3.1). Other factors accounting for the different outcomes may lie in power relations and values such as individual responsibility and progressiveness. Similar external impacts (measured problem pressures) therefore do not need to have same consequences in both cases (as suggested by Abbott, 1988) with different modes of co-producing policies and social order. It is therefore of interest who formulates policy problems in what way, as addressed subsequently.

Policies which focus on changing citizens' behaviours exhibit power relations where such requests by those in the positions to do so appear broadly acceptable, i.e. an according power gap. An advice on Christmas spending makes this tangible:

Extract 2

“Avoid a debt hangover this Christmas: Fix your budget. List what you expect to spend on Christmas – from presents and decorations to food, socialising and transport. Be mindful that you’ll have to keep some cash to pay the mid-January bills, and keep a detailed list of your expenses so you don’t blow your budget”
(Nottingham City Council, 2017a, p. 17).

The power gap here seems to exist in terms of money, the chance to plan ahead and/or financial education – altogether indicating very different living conditions of the involved groups (cf. Section 6.3.3). It also occurs through higher expectations towards the disadvantaged group (H. S. Becker, 1998). Nottingham's focus on changing individual behaviours was also referred to as a “nanny state” approach during an interview and was defended in another by politician 2:

Extract 3

“Yes, we have done that. I’m [...] not sorry about that because... It is [...] a bit nanny state, but the alternative is not having a nanny, right [...]. And I would much sooner have a nanny than not a nanny [...]. [...] And there is a bit of dependency as well and a bit of expectation and I know that is a slight downside of it. [...] We do try and make people stand up on their own feet a bit, but in the end we will provide the safety blanket. [...] and I think the alternative of leaving people to themselves [...] can often be quite dangerous. [...] I would also say to you [...] it’s politically quite successful [...]. So it must appeal to somebody.”

Taking up the metaphor of the nanny is indicative of a state-society relationship where the citizen is compared to a child and “leaving people to themselves” seen as dangerous. This is also indicative of liberal paternalism. However, in Nottingham's social order where living conditions are partly very difficult, e.g. many living below the breadline (cf. Section 6.3.1), and thus lacking basic social and economic rights, expecting an active and self-reliant civil society may be misplaced. Altogether, aiming for individual behaviour change tends to reduce attention to the structural conditions

in which social problems arise ('deficit model'), as further illustrated subsequently and in Section 7.4.2.

b) Data as knowledge

The following demonstrates how the production of data as a form of knowledge is shaped by social order and data are in turn invoked as evidence to formulate specific policies (and not others), always purporting a certain representation of the world. First, Nottingham's policy documents often call on geographically fine-grained data about their issues. This reflects how there is a view that these behaviours should be recorded and be geographically traceable to residents exhibiting them, e.g. regarding breastfeeding:

Extract 4

"Underlying the overall breastfeeding rate, there is considerable variability between different groups and geographic areas. The geographic distribution of 6-8 week breastfeeding prevalence varies between 21.5% in Clifton North and 67.7% in Dunkirk and Lenton" (Nottinghamshire County Council & Nottingham City Council, 2015, p. 6).

Second, this use of data is linked to focusing on the individual, as shown for teenage pregnancies:

Extract 5

"The empirical evidence tells us that the provision of high quality, comprehensive sex and relationships education along with easy access to contraception has the greatest impact on teenage pregnancy rates. The provision should be universal for all along with more intensive support for young people at risk. There is no solid evidence that alternative approaches eg promoting abstinence or benefit sanctions reduce teenage pregnancy rates" (Nottingham Children's Partnership, n.d., p. 7).

Here, causes are again mainly seen at an individual level, thus portraying teenage pregnancies as a relatively isolated and fixable problem, especially depending on knowledge about and access to contraception. The invoked alternative approaches maintain a focus on the individual. This therefore exemplifies how the choice of

evidence underlying the formulation of policies carries values stressing individual responsibility. Only considering data raised in relation to a specific issue may then impede seeing how connections could be different. For instance, McKenzie (2015, pp. 91–94) shows in her ethnographic study of St. Ann’s neighbourhood in Nottingham how – also early – motherhood provides a way towards social recognition where other routes, such as the labour market, appear hopeless. However, these structural conditions are not represented in the above evidence. Any policy formulated on its basis therefore likely also tackles individual behaviours, given and not questioning their structural circumstances.

5.3 Nottingham: policies and social justice

In the following two sections, I discuss how policies in Nottingham are seen to account for social justice and for future generations, thus approaching RQ 1 (cf. Section 5.1). My interviewees were not often aware of policy objectives, therefore the research broadened to also include invoked policies. Some informants were in a position of notable power in that they often made or influenced public decisions in the city. They may thus have had an interest to see them represented as socially just which I considered in the interpretation. Furthermore, most interviewees were university-educated, relatively high-earning²⁵, middle-aged, and more than two thirds were male. Some of these aspects can make a difference in views on social justice and economic inequality (e.g. Sachweh, 2014).

²⁵ As a rough orientation regarding public sector employees, an average gross salary for council jobs is estimated at £32,500 (Totaljobs Group, 2018). Regarding politicians, mean payments to councillors of Nottingham City Council in 2017-18 whom I interviewed are £30,737 (Nottingham City Council, 2018f; own calculation) – which could be complemented through other professional activities. As a comparison, the average household income per head in Nottingham in 2016 is £12,232 once taxes and benefits are taken into account (Collinson, 2018). Business representatives were often in more senior roles with higher earnings to be expected, whereas two of the ten civil society representatives held their roles as unpaid volunteers.

5.3.1 Policies accounting for social justice?

When asked, more than half of the informants found that policy objectives or policies in Nottingham accounted for social justice, relating to their understanding of it (interview questions cf. Appendix D) Interview guideline). Five did not feel they could comment on the matter, e.g. due to a lack of knowledge. Views then included seeing policies strongly accounting for social justice, finding that the council tried very hard, that councillors understood social issues well and did what they could. No interviewee expressed that policies did not account for social justice.

Measures that were seen to account for social justice included (often mentioned several times): early intervention, jobs and skills support, Nottingham's social housing stock, increasing council houses' energy efficiency, building new affordable homes, the Selective Licensing Scheme²⁶, homelessness support, a good public transport system, the Workplace Parking Levy (cf. Section 7.3), regeneration projects, a fuel poverty strategy and the foundation of Robin Hood Energy.²⁷ Besides,

²⁶ The Selective Licensing Scheme has been introduced on 1 August 2018 in order to raise standards in Nottingham's private rented housing sector (Nottingham City Council, 2018c, p. 1), where it has been "estimated that 21% of [...] properties are likely to have 'Category 1 hazards.' Examples of this type of hazard include exposed wiring, a dangerous boiler, cold bedrooms, a leaking roof, mould on walls or ceilings and vermin infestation" (Nottingham City Council, 2018d, p. 3). The Scheme was enforced against landlords' resistance (Jarram, 2018b).

²⁷ In 2015, Robin Hood Energy was founded by Nottingham City Council as the first not for profit energy company owned by a local authority in the UK – later being followed by further local authorities (N. Thomas, 2017). "We were set up to tackle fuel poverty and to help give people a cheaper, more helpful alternative to the Big Six [largest electric and gas suppliers in the UK]" (Robin Hood Energy, n.d.). "Within months of [Robin Hood Energy's] launch, the East Midlands became the cheapest region in the country for dual fuel tariffs and prompted competitors to realign tariffs [...]" (Nottingham City Council, 2018d, p. 9). However, in September 2020, Robin Hood Energy collapsed (BBC News, 2020). The company became financially unviable and was propped up with £9,5m of local public resources in 2019. Factors for the developments are seen in the environment of austerity policies since 2010 and the encouragement of entrepreneurial approaches in local authorities which implied big risks in industries where they did not have enough experience or skill to succeed in (Pete Murphy); as well as "complex and hard" (Ellen Fraser) conditions in the energy industry (Pittam, 2020). Besides, the Public Interest Report on the case inter alia finds that some aspects of Robin Hood Energy, "particularly its focus on low tariffs and poorer customers" further increased its risks within these competitive markets (Grant Thornton, 2020, p. 2). "There was an insufficient appreciation within the Council (as a corporate body) of the huge risks involved in ownership of, and investment in, RHE", as well as of the companies' financial position (Grant Thornton, 2020, p. 2). The report concludes that

tendencies seen to promote social justice in Nottingham were keeping services and infrastructures in public ownership, the city council paying a living wage and equalities assessment of policies. Finally, Nottingham's policies were seen as progressive in strengthening disadvantaged groups, such as by classifying misogyny as a hate crime by Nottinghamshire police as the first police force in Britain (Finnigan, 2016).

I now summarise some of the further qualifications made, aiming to represent diverse views. At least three times interviewees mentioned that the council was well-meaning, but powerless due to a lack of resources through continuous budget cuts. For instance, it was felt that the economy has been left out of social justice considerations:

Extract 6

"[...] I think there's a massive focus on social justice in everything until it comes to the economy. [...] I just think that underpinning – so thinking about inclusive growth, thinking about good jobs, thinking about anything that fundamentally tackles structure of the economy and work, [is] not there, at all" (public sector employee 14).

Two to three saw the council acting in a patronising way, e.g. "very much dictating from the top rather than necessarily listening to the residents from the bottom" (politician 3). Finally, few policies were seen as stigmatising, inter alia referring to anti-begging posters which have been banned by the Advertising Standards Authority for "reinforcing negative stereotypes" (BBC News, 2016).

"[o]verall, the governance arrangements were overshadowed by the Council's determination that the Company should be a success, and this led to institutional blindness within the Council as whole to the escalating risks involved, which were ultimately very significant risks to public money. Where concerns were raised by some individuals, these concerns were downplayed and the resulting actions insufficient" (Grant Thornton, 2020, p. 3).

The failure of the company aggravated Nottingham City Council's difficult financial situation, also being due to increased spending during the crisis around Covid-19. Beyond Nottingham, Catherine Waddams sees this also as the end, for the time being, of councils trying to get involved in the energy market (Pittam, 2020).

A pattern across policies in Nottingham is an effort to improve living conditions especially for less well-off residents (cf. most measures above) and beyond that to redistribute to them, e.g. through the Workplace Parking Levy. Politician 9 outlined that

Extract 7

"[...] a lot of those commuters come from outside the city, so it's a way of them subsidising transport improvements for Nottingham citizens."

Relating to this, another interviewee described that Nottingham increasingly attracted less well-off citizens from southern parts of the UK due to its good public infrastructure and lower living costs. Thus perpetuating its low tax base, this in a way made it a victim of its own success.

Regarding social justice, policies driven by the Nottingham Labour Party reflect views of the UK Labour Party. Its "[...] historic links with trade unions have led it to promote an active role for the state in the creation of economic prosperity and in the provision of social services" (Webb, 2018). The Labour Party's manifesto dedicates a chapter on "A more equal society", self-describing:

"The Labour Party is the party of equality [...]. "Labour brought in the Equal Pay Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Equality Act, the Minimum Wage and introduced Sure Start. Every progressive piece of equality legislation has been delivered by Labour" (Labour Party, 2017, p. 108).

Relatedly, Nottingham Labour Party's manifesto associates the party with fairness: "we need a Labour government, as well as a Labour council, to bring funding, investment and fairness to our city" (Nottingham Labour Party, 2015, p. 3) – however, in its 19 pages not literally referring to "just*" in the sense of justice, "equal*" or "generation".

5.3.2 Rebalancing national policies

Informants repeatedly described policies in Nottingham as rebalancing national policies in working towards social justice. Nottingham's approach has partly

been characterised as more coordinated by creating and sustaining publicly owned local infrastructures and services (with examples in the preceding section). Central government policies by contrast were seen as marked by a decreasing role of the state and the adoption of free-market-approaches. This antagonism between urban and national governance regimes (cf. also Section 6.2.2 a)) – occurring all over the interviews – is exemplified in the following:

Extract 8

“[...] The whole point of it [Nottingham Labour Party’s manifesto] really from our perspective is to make life better for the poorer parts of society [...]. So yeah, we have a very strong commitment to social justice and to fight for the rights of our citizens [...]. [...] So there’s a strong presence of trying to rebalance what is happening nationally on behalf of our citizens. [...] Nationally, [...] always the elements of support are being reduced. Investment in health, education, housing, are all facing threats, [...]. [...] [P]rivatisation of everything has led soon all our institutions more or less being gradually privatized [...]” (politician 9).

Informants found this opposition of national and local approaches dysfunctional, requiring local actors to work around central government frameworks in order to account for social justice, e.g.:

Extract 9

“[T]he enhanced partnership scheme in Nottingham for our bus network [...] i[]s basically a way of us partially regulating the deregulated bus market [...]. [...] Because obviously you get issues of congestion, increased air pollution, [...] you are basically not running a good bus network, the deregulated bus operators will just compete on routes that they see they can make the most money out of rather than taking a more holistic view of the network [...]. [...] we [the city council] are sort of plugging gaps in the commercial bus network [...]. [...] [Y]ou literally do need a PhD sometimes to work it out what ticket, what fare [...]. [...] [W]hen you go to European cities generally it’s a lot more straightforward than what you will find anywhere in the UK, which is absolutely ridiculous, everyone knows it as well [...].

[...] The bus industry know it but they won't really admit to it [...]. [...] [A]s I say that's what deregulation brings, dysfunction really" (public sector employee 12).

5.3.3 Inequality and social justice

Asked whether they saw economic inequality as a justice issue in Nottingham, more than half of the interviewees affirmed this, partly strongly. Examples are: “[...] within Nottingham, there are [...] people who are living below [...] the breadline. That can't be right in a civilized, twenty-first-century city” (business representative 3).

Extract 10

“[...] [I]t's so grossly unequal that it distorts the political process to the extent that some people almost ignore the political process. But it impacts on health, it impacts on access to services, it impacts on everything across the board. [...] [W]e have a level of ignorance of how critical structures work. How this country works. A level of ignorance of the impacts of inequality. It's frightening, it's corrosive” (civil society representative 6).

Four informants said that they did not have a view on this or e.g. that this was “more a philosophical point” (politician 3). Some understandings were that inequalities were widening, unjust and had gone too far. Interviewees lined out that there was a lot of inequality, deprivation and poverty in Nottingham. They referred to many related issues, inter alia fuel poverty, health inequalities, disparities in life expectancy, in-work poverty and student debts.

A number of inequalities recurred during the interviews, of which the city's tight boundaries are discussed as an exemplar. They have been connected to economic inequality with those having a choice often leaving Nottingham to find more attractive surroundings and better schools outside of it. Consequently, predominantly poorer citizens remain within it, seen as impeding social justice:

Extract 11

“[...] [O]ur poverty is not good for us [...]. [...] [I]f you're building [...] an ideal city, you'd need a city that has a bit of a range in incomes so that you can be redistributive with your policies, the problem with Nottingham, but for a couple of

pockets which are relatively small [...] [t]o have extreme poverty and then just quite poor, and there's nothing more than that. So, trying to redistribute between the very poor and the quite poor is a [...] bit of a mug's game. So [...] that economic injustice to the national average means that it's a very limiting factor on pursuing social justice" (politician 5).

The city's boundaries were thus viewed as reinforcing inequalities between Nottingham and surrounding areas (for relating politics cf. Section 6.2.2 c)). From a co-production perspective, the city's tight boundaries may be afforded by a societally shared habituation to and maintenance of high inequalities. Then again, moral disapproval with these large inequalities enabled policies attempting to counter it, as in the case of the Workplace Parking Levy or the foundation of Robin Hood Energy – which eventually collapsed (cf. Section 5.3.1).

Further inequalities were seen in terms of work, its pay and conditions as well as the ability to plan ahead (and thus save, e.g. in public transport). Described was also a tendency of talent, understood as university graduates, leaving Nottingham. Political divides came up between the Labour Party and the Conservative Party as well as between Labour-led Nottingham City Council and Conservatives-led Nottinghamshire County Council and Conservatives-led central government. Also, a divide was seen between London and the rest of the UK, inter alia in terms of investment and attractiveness. Altogether, Nottingham's and the UK's society were found to be too unequal and divided in various respects. Growing economic inequalities along with a regulatory framework reinforcing these at different levels (cf. also Section 5.4.3) then brought forth a view of citizens being more or less desirable residents according to their socio-economic status.

5.4 Nottingham: policies and future generations

5.4.1 Policies accounting for future generations?

Half of the informants found that policies in Nottingham accounted for future generations with views ranging from strong approval to seeing actors aiming for it. Most other interviewees did not voice a tendency and a few said local policies did not

account for future generations. Answers did not differ consistently between the sectors public, civic or economic.

Several areas were seen as characterised by a long-term perspective in Nottingham. Over a quarter of informants here referred to Nottingham's public transport system, the tram, benefits of the planned HS2 connection between Nottingham (Toton) and London, efforts towards low carbon/emissions or the local bus company Nottingham City Transport. Almost a quarter of informants saw a sustainable perspective in early intervention efforts, early years education, the Dolly Parton Imagination Library supporting free books for young children, the early intervention programme 'Small Steps, Big Changes' or children's well-being generally. Eight informants mentioned the areas of schools, education, skills, apprenticeships, school leavers, or helping young people into work. Seven interviewees named housing as accounting for future generations, partly relating to Nottingham City Homes, an arms' length management organisation (ALMO) of Nottingham City Council or its efforts towards home insulation. Three informants respectively mentioned the regeneration of the Broadmarsh area in Nottingham, the Workplace Parking Levy (cf. Section 7.3) and two (public) health. Measures named once included the Nottingham Castle regeneration, financial investment, land use, the Selective Licensing Scheme for private housing (cf. Footnote 26), homelessness, fuel poverty, energy and Robin Hood Energy (cf. Footnote 27), air quality, environmental sustainability and accounting for poorer communities. These favourable views of city policies reflect the interests of (the well-represented) informants involved in them. However, the spread of positive appraisals exceeds that circle.

Conversely, informants described some issues in Nottingham as unsustainable, predominantly civil society representatives. Two interviewees respectively mentioned the education system or schools and the council's constrained funding. Issues mentioned once were rising child-poverty, parts of the city being unsafe, tuition fees, little possibilities to care for children and elder persons through the need to work in several jobs, a lacking plan to keep the youth in Nottingham, local housing standards, homelessness, the Nottingham Incineration Plant and, more broadly, the economy: "I

don't think there's a future focus on what the hell we're doing with the economy, at all" (public sector employee 14). On the whole, there was a predominantly positive view of local efforts in Nottingham to act sustainably.

However, a number of informants were concerned about justice between generations in the UK generally, with critical views on national policies. They described how following generations had worse life chances than they did, referring to high debts through tuition fees (when they themselves studied for free), worse prospects in terms of jobs, earnings, pensions and to buy a property, e.g.:

Extract 12

"I grew up in the '70s when the government used to give me money to go to the university. Now it's the very opposite. It is mad, absolutely madness. [...] There is a very important psychological impact of this and a social and cultural impact, which is that it's taking kindness away from us really. It's making us transactional and brutal, hard-hearted, because we don't care about people's needs" (civil society representative 8).

Extract 13

"[...] [O]ur national government chooses to absolve itself of responsibility. For setting a vision for what we need to achieve to give future generations even a fighting chance of having a future as comfortable as currently ours is. [...] The biggest thing is will we actually have a society that hasn't basically broken down by the end of this century? Always on the point of collapse because of the pressures" (civil society representative 6).

Building on this overview, the following sections discuss recurring factors seen as contributing or inhibiting a long-term orientation of policies in Nottingham and suggest interpretations.

5.4.2 Long-term orientation through political stability

Interviewees mentioned political stability in Nottingham as a main factor contributing to more sustainable policies – besides the inclusion of young people into policy processes. As advantages of the long-standing Labour Party-leadership of the city council (since 1991 the non-metropolitan district, since 1997 the unitary authority;

The Elections Centre, n.d.), informants stressed that infrastructures, skills and knowledge were kept in-house. Some also attributed sustainable policies to a strong, ambitious and little risk-averse council leadership, e.g.:

Extract 14

“So, I think on the positive side, because there’s coherent political control and they don’t expect it to change, it can be a real future focus. On the flip side, it just means there’s going to be more of the same” (public sector employee 14).

Downsides of this political stability were seen in a lack of innovation, control and opposition – partly being attributed to the voting system (cf. Section 5.4.3 d)).

5.4.3 Factors seen as impeding a long-term orientation

a) Centralisation and competition between regions

Some informants expressed that the local authority did not have enough power to decide locally but was too tied to central government regulation. This was partly found to restrict a long-term orientation. Besides, interviewees anticipated that Nottingham would in the future fall (further) behind other core cities and regions who reached a devolution deal (ten until June 2018; Local Government Association, 2018) – like Greater Manchester or the West Midlands – when Nottingham did not.²⁸ Since the devolution deals mean passing down powers, budgets and responsibilities from central government to new combined authority mayors within regions (UK Government, 2017), Nottingham was seen as less able to compete with them.

Relatedly, informants perceived an increasing competition between cities and regions for investment, businesses as well as highly-qualified and high-earning people. This points towards a growing significance of market principles, a greater

²⁸ In 2016, some Conservatives-led districts have pulled out of a proposed North Midlands Combined Authority, justifying this with a lack of detail, thus hampering Derbyshire’s and Nottinghamshire’s devolution deal plans (Paine, 2016). In 2018, council leaders in the East Midlands agreed to explore a strategic alliance “to create a ‘unified voice’ for the region” in order to work towards a devolution deal. (J. Robinson, 2018).

differentiation and thus inequality between cities, regions (budget-wise substantiated for both by Gray & Barford, 2018) and its residents.

b) Decreasing local funding

Informants by and large saw Nottingham's decreasing funding as a – mostly the – central limitation to account for future generations. Central government has cut Nottingham's grant funding since 2013 by two-thirds (Nottingham City Council, 2018j), from £126 million in 2013-14 to £35 million in 2019 (Sandeman, 2018a) (cf. Section 3.4.1 b)). Some council employees and local politicians stressed that they were trying to act long-term, but found that their according leeway was very restricted by the cuts; that with ongoing austerity, short-term action would become more prevalent in the future and the council limited to its statutory duties. The cuts were seen to lead to difficult decisions regarding social justice with the strongest voices not being the most vulnerable ones. Views on the budget cuts included relatively often opposing them and blaming central government for them; being frustrated with having to implement them; and seeing them as an externally given and not alterable condition.

Beyond that, further cuts to local funding should follow:

“In October 2015 the Government committed that local government should retain 100% of taxes raised locally by the end of the Parliament. These reforms will help move local authorities away from dependency on central government grant and towards self-sufficiency” (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2017).

Local authorities could apply for piloting this in 2018 to 2019. Muldoon-Smith & Greenhalgh (2015, p. 609) conclude that it could “further polarise uneven development” in England where “areas most in need of investment, that exhibit some kind of market failure and geographical disadvantage, could be less able to generate new development in order to fund the Business Rate Retention Scheme” than a minority of ‘premium locations’ with beneficial property market characteristics. While potentially shifting power relations between businesses and the local authority and aggravating tendencies of short-termism, this repeats the theme of strengthening self-

reliance. Where a city should become financially independent from central government, citizens should take on more responsibility and e.g. not become reliant on food banks, but “need to stand on their own two feet a bit” (Civil society representative 5) – repeating the pattern of emphasising individual responsibility in unfavourable conditions (cf. Section 5.2.2 a)).

Regarding future budgets, informants partly expressed concern and insecurity. This also applied to the UK leaving the EU and its effects on Nottingham. Related concerns were employers, i.e. Boots, leaving the city due to tariff barriers (cf. Section 7.2), difficulties of companies to recruit qualified employees and insecurity over an actual replacement of EU funding (cf. Section 6.2.2 d)). The latter was viewed as benefitting Nottingham and alleviating inequalities on an individual and on a regional level, e.g. by politician 4:

Extract 15

“[M]uch of our employment and skills support services [...], almost all of that activity is European funded [...]. [...] [W]ithout that funding we will have much bigger inequality problems.”

Here again, a parallel can be drawn from the city to the individual level. Where insecurity over the future is an important deprivation of people living in poverty (e.g. Tirado, 2014), Nottingham as a poor city is equally less and less able to plan ahead.

c) Marketisation of local government

With Government aiming for local authorities to become self-sufficient as discussed above, several informants raised how the city council had to commercialise for maintaining its infrastructures and services – making it more similar to a private actor. Strengthening market principles also applies to the increasing need to bid for funding. The created competition between local authorities was viewed as precluding more sustainable action and dysfunctional in terms of demanding the council’s scarce time resources:

Extract 16

“[...] [T]he problem is there’s less money coming to us in what we call block allocations which is money which is free for us to spend and now everything is coming through competitions [...], bids to government. [...] You can waste a lot of time putting together bids and then not being successful. [...] [A]nd it’s very difficult to plan for the long-term with competitions because [...] the competitions keep changing. [...] What we would prefer is more certainty [...] (public sector employee 5).

However, Nottingham fared well in the competition with other local authorities, both in terms of bidding and commercialisation:

“Well, we are probably the most entrepreneurial council in the country. So we are selling our services to other councils. We are putting up solar panels for East Midlands Airport and for local businesses. We are managing the business waste budget for two, three other councils in the area. We are selling plants. We couldn’t be doing much more to raise money. But that’s only raising 20 million a year” (Nottingham City Council, 2017e; Cllr Graham Chapman, Deputy Leader, Nottingham City Council).

Reasons for successful commercialisation were found to be the council’s history of keeping expertise (e.g. regarding energy) and infrastructures in communal ownership.²⁹ Altogether, the increased competition between local councils combined with scarcer resources was viewed as leading to greater disparities between places. Irrespective of a frequent disapproval, marketisation was successfully embraced in Nottingham.

d) Election cycles and system

Finally, a few interviewees criticised the First-past-the-post electoral system and short election cycles on local and national levels as leading to less sustainable

²⁹ An opposite model represents Conservatives-run Northampton County Council, which in 2015 reduced itself to a commissioning body of 150 staff from 4,000, buying in all its services from private providers (J. M. Brown, 2015) to be run like a business (P. Butler, 2018). Inter alia under austerity, increasing demand for local services and with expected efficiency savings not materialising (some services having been returned in-house), the council went effectively bankrupt in February 2018 as the first local authority in two decades (P. Butler, 2018).

policies. Here, the cyclical nature of central government with significant shifts in approaches to local government was described as problematic. Also, the local political system with four year terms and an assessment of how set goals have been attained was partly found to encourage short-term action.

Having explored policies, views on social and intergenerational justice in Nottingham, the Stuttgart case follows with the same proceeding to enable comparisons.

5.5 Stuttgart: exploring policy approaches

5.5.1 Describing policy approaches

In the following, I provide an overview of policy areas and issues of the 45 documents and websites analysed for the Stuttgart case (cf. Appendix B) Analysed policy documents). Methodically, it parallels the one for Nottingham, as described in Section 5.2.1. In this way, emerging policy areas are (number of documents in brackets):

- Environment (10)
- Overarching (5)
- Planning (5)
- Social development (3)
- Integration (3)
- International development (3)
- Transport (3)
- Economic/location development (2)
- Energy (2)
- Health (2)
- Housing (1)
- Children/young people (1)
- Citizen participation (1)
- City administration (1)

- Employment (1)

While this coarse overview could have been done differently, it provides impressions into which policy areas received some attention during the last years as illustrated by the three most frequent policy areas.³⁰ First, ten documents treat environmental issues. They deal with air pollution control, environmental protection (climate protection, saving resources and energy), greening (of courtyards, rooftops and facades), urban gardening, soil protection, climate adaptation and noise protection. Second, the five overarching documents are the Urban Development Concept Outline 2004, the Urban Development Concept Dialogue 2005 and the resulting Urban Development Concept Strategy 2006, as well as a documentation of a city council debate on a new urban development concept, ‘Stuttgart 2030’, and the citizens’ survey. Third, the five documents around planning concern land use planning, sustainable management of building areas and inner development. Table 6 displays examples of the underlying overview with main policy objectives. Altogether, documents suggest a high relevance of the environment in which the city exists, both built and natural, followed by matters of social development and integration. Because of the frequency of these themes in policy documents, I interpret such examples subsequently.

Table 6: Examples of policy objectives in Stuttgart

Stuttgart			
Policy area	Policy issue	Document	Policy objective(s)
Environment	Sustainable mobility	Action plan Sustainable mobility in Stuttgart	„2. Goals set out by the action plan

³⁰ Some of the policy documents have been produced as legal requirements from federal government. However, most documents go back to local initiatives and are thus significant to the Stuttgart case.

			 <p>An important aspect in achieving these goals is to reduce the volume of conventionally powered vehicle traffic entering the city basin by 20 per cent.”</p> <p>(Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2016a, p. 2; emphasis in original)</p>
Economic/ location development	General	Strategy for the Economic and Research Location Region Stuttgart	<p>„The aim of the strategy process is to identify fields of action which further develop the competitiveness of the economic region and position the location so well that employment and prosperity in Stuttgart Region can be secured long-term. The identified fields of action should help to bring Stuttgart Region closer to the vision already formulated in the Strategy Paper 2007: the region of Stuttgart will be the most competitive economic area in Europe – a creative region with a high social and educational level, where ideas are quickly implemented into innovative processes, products and services. The actors in Stuttgart Region see themselves as pioneers of technological and economic progress as well as of social and ecological responsibility [...].”</p> <p>(Verband Region Stuttgart, 2013, p. 5f)</p>

Sources: own research and as indicated.

5.5.2 Interpreting policy approaches

a) Tackling (infra-)structures

Across documents for the Stuttgart case, tendencies are to address issues at the level of structures, infrastructures and in the form of public or collective action. To some extent shared imaginations – e.g. in the form of developmental objectives (cf. example of economic/location development in Table 6) and conventional practices appear important, while comparing Stuttgart’s performance in policy issues is less

significant. Policy objectives are relatively often non-measurable, have no defined time-frames nor pre-defined responsibilities attached. I discuss instances of these patterns in the co-production of policies and social order subsequently.

b) Example: urban development

Some of the tendencies find expression in Stuttgart's Urban Development Concept Strategy 2006 (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2006). It formulates "[t]en guiding principles for urban development":

Extract 17

- “2.1 Sustainability as a leading principle [...]*
- 2.2 Strengthening urban qualities [...]*
- 2.3 Expanding cooperation in the region [...]*
- 2.4 Securing and developing green and open spaces [...]*
- 2.5 Promoting social togetherness and integration [...]*
- 2.6 Securing housing and developing forms of urban living [...]*
- 2.7 Expanding economic location factors [...]*
- 2.8 Promoting cultural diversity and high quality educational opportunities [...]*
- 2.9 Developing sports and leisure activities [...]*
- 2.10 Developing mobility in a city-friendly way [...]” (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2006, p. 5)*

These principles only line out the desired direction of development. The strategy then describes the situation in Stuttgart for each of them – mostly without national or inter-city comparisons – and what should be done, e.g. regarding schools:

Extract 18

“In the foreground of schools' development is improving equality of opportunities for children from migrant and deprived backgrounds. The results of the PISA study make clear that mainly children of migrants – but also German children from underprivileged educational backgrounds – have linguistic deficits. Educational

work with non-German-speakers therefore becomes important in education policies.” (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2006, pp. 31–34).

This is one example for a rather developmental objective (i.e. where success is not defined in numbers) with open time horizons and without pre-defined responsibilities. This approach applies to a good number of documents for the Stuttgart case, while there are counterexamples.³¹ Further illustrating the structural and collective approach, measures regarding cultural diversity and education include expanding childcare or a project aiming to promote children’s social and emotional intelligence. Focusing on behaviours of disadvantaged groups is not central to the objectives.

The emphasis on urban planning when imagining Stuttgart’s future is also exemplified by the Urban Development Concept Strategy 2006 encompassing four “leading projects” and eight “impulse project” (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2006, pp. 5; 57–65). The fact that all these projects focus on infrastructures and the built environment epitomises the social-structural approach often taken in Stuttgart.

c) Societal-level approaches and social cohesion

As described, policy documents in Stuttgart partly show a tendency to focus on structures, i.e. living conditions, public provision, procedures (e.g. policy processes or procurement), urban infrastructures or the handling of the natural environment. Though this sometimes includes encouraging individual behaviour change (e.g. in energy use or transport choices), approaches often rather refer to the societal level. The following examples make this vivid, beginning with a collection of ideas for the city council’s new strategy ‘Stuttgart 2030’. It lines out how secure living conditions are seen as a requirement to maintain well-being:

Extract 19

³¹ One instance is the vision of Stuttgart becoming climate-neutral by 2050 under the coordination of a steering group – led by the mayor –, and a central contact in the office for environmental protection (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2016b, pp. 20; 22).

„Stuttgart as a feel-good city

- *Stuttgart is a feel-good city and will remain it.*
- *A feel-good city does not go without a feel-good region. For this we need secure life circumstances in the areas of family, housing, work, leisure and sports”*
(Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2017a, p. 1).

The same document goes on to describe “Stuttgart as a social city”:

Extract 20

- *“Guaranteeing participation in housing, work, education, politics, culture and health.*
- *Arousing interest beyond the own social environment.*
- *Creating meeting places and facilitating encounters – with the objective to have an integrative effect.*
- *Enabling integration and cohesion – for the socially deprived as well as for the very affluent.*
- *A city in which all societal groups and classes make an effort for societal cohesion.*
- *[...]”*

(Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2017a, p. 1f).

This Extract shows how participation should be „guaranteed“ and not primarily be attained by citizens through certain behaviours. Another document more precisely specifies the responsibilities of the collective and of disadvantaged citizens, opting to combine public measures with enabling self-help:

Extract 21

„[...] [T]he internationalisation and polarisation of the city progresses and recognising specific needs of migrants and deprived groups becomes a requirement. [...] [T]here is the mission to protect deprived groups, for which accompanying measures and capacity building have to be developed“
(Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-p).

In Extract 20, there is also an emphasis on sustaining and increasing social integration beyond one’s own social setting, with societal cohesion being an issue of concern for all social groups and classes. Naming the “very affluent” here widens the

focus to include the upper end of the socio-economic spectrum. A project of the city administration relatedly aims to promote social cohesion to contribute to a “solidary city”:

Extract 22

“The people contribute to the way how they want to treat and live with one another in this city. Thus for a vivid, open and solidary city we need a new conversational culture across existing societal and spatial boundaries. The aim of Salt & Soup is to promote this process and to bring the most different people in Stuttgart to a common table” (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-o, p. 1).

Altogether, this exploration of policy documents, debates and related values gives insights into important policy areas in Stuttgart. It shows how approaches are often structural, developmental and focused on urban planning and the environment. Values interacting with public measures are a societal-level orientation with an important role for the public sector and societal cohesion.

5.6 Stuttgart: policies and social justice

In the remainder of this chapter, I summarise and discuss how policies in Stuttgart were seen to account for social justice and for future generations, thus approaching RQ 1 (cf. Section 5.1). Interviewees could often not relate to policy objectives and therefore also referred to urban policies more broadly. The characterisation of interviewees’ relative positions in society and interest in a positive representation of policies in Nottingham (cf. Section 5.3) similarly applies to Stuttgart. The only differences are a higher share of male informants of almost three quarters and a lower average disparity of incomes between informants and Stuttgart’s population.³²

³² As a coarse reference point, a monthly gross salary of 3,320 € is estimated for public sector employees, i.e. ca. 39,840 to 43,160 € per year (Gehalt.de, n.d.). Elected members of Stuttgart’s municipal council receive a blanket allowance of 1,500 € per month, i.e. 18,000 € p.a., inter alia complemented by attendance fees of at least 60 € per session (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2018b, p.

5.6.1 Policies accounting for social justice?

In relation to informants' understandings of social justice, 16 of the 33 Stuttgart interviewees did not express a clear tendency in how they found that policies in Stuttgart accounted for social justice, while in few cases the question has not been asked. 15 of the informants approved that policies in Stuttgart rather, in some areas or up to strongly accounted for social justice and two civil society representatives disapproved this. Two thirds of economic informants did not express a clear tendency regarding the question – otherwise there were no systematic differences between the sectors public/politics, economic and civil society.

Policies and measures which were found to account for social justice included (often mentioned several times): education, childcare and kindergartens, schools and all-day schools, mobility and transport, planning policies, access to green spaces; generally a good and sophisticated social system in Stuttgart and Germany despite problems, the city's support for youth work, foodbanks, provision for homeless persons and a municipal poverty conference. Informants also invoked the Family Card³³, the Bonus Card + Culture³⁴, construction of social housing, the Stuttgart Inner Development Programme³⁵ and the city being seen as a model in refugee-related

1f), compensation for supervisory board activities and often earnings from professional activities. An overview of payments to respective councillors is not available. To compare, disposable income per inhabitant in Stuttgart is 24,517 € in 2015 (Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg, 2018, p. 3). High average earnings can be expected for business informants, most of them being directors, division managers and spokespersons. Four of the civil society representatives exercised their roles as volunteers, mostly unpaid; the others were employed, some as directors and partly well-earning. It is notable that CEO pay in the UK is mostly markedly higher than in Germany, as is the gap between CEO pay and that of other employees (Conyon & Schwalbach, 2000).

³³ The Family Card has been introduced in 2011 as a voluntary social benefit "to enable all children and young people to participate in the many recreational and educational activities in Stuttgart" (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-e). It can be obtained if their parents claim major unemployment, low income or asylum seekers' benefits (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-e).

³⁴ The Bonus Card + Culture is a voluntary social benefit that allows for discounts and subsidies for various cultural, sports and social offerings in Stuttgart as well as for discounted monthly public transport tickets. It can be claimed by those living in Stuttgart and receiving major unemployment, low income or asylum seekers' benefits (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-a).

³⁵ Enacted in 2011, the Stuttgart Inner Development Programme (SIM) should promote a socially balanced urban development and qualified land use. With lacking housing space in Stuttgart for lower and middle income groups, SIM obliges builders to reserve 20% of a created floor space for subsidised housing (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-i).

policies. Tendencies perceived to promote social justice were being a wealthy city, many available funds for civic involvement, NGOs and refugee issues – also instated by companies (cf. Section 7.8.1) –, almost full employment, the Green Party state and city governments, strong political support for social justice across parties, pietism as well as very mixed and no poor-only neighbourhoods.

Forth following, I illustrate views and discuss further tendencies, aiming to represent diversity. The city's social standards were by some interviewees rated as relatively high, e.g.: "The welfare net in Stuttgart is as well-developed as in hardly any comparable large city. [...] In Stuttgart, we actually have everything you could imagine at all" (public sector employee 1). Public sector employee 3 weighted that

Extract 23

„compare[d] to [...] other countries, we are in that sense on the positive side of all possible worlds. Whereas there are of course also strong differences here, very clearly. We certainly have strong social disparities, but they are not as massive as in other cities“.

Also, public sector employee 4 highlighted that "in Stuttgart socially marginalised groups [were] well considered" with no social group except for refugees having no access to 'regular' social security. However, one informant found that the availability of financial means had the downside that the usefulness of usual approaches was not questioned – while at first thinking holistically about underlying concepts would be desirable. Broadly, local approaches appeared to fit with and expand on national policies.

Social justice deficits were by at least seven informants perceived in relation to housing, four of them criticising that the city has done too little for social, affordable or normally priced housing instead of expensive segments (further discussed in the following section). Other measures or phenomena which were found to contradict

social justice include (mostly mentioned once): Stuttgart 21³⁶, child poverty – with children being unaccountable for living in bad conditions –, a missing free provision of learning materials and free swimming pool access for poorer children and not enough available places in public childcare. Mentioned were furthermore particulate matter pollution with a priority of the car industry over citizens' health (cf. Section 7.7), public transport being too expensive, refugees having been preferred in social housing provision compared to others waiting, exclusionary high prices at public festivities, a supposed elite keeping people down and state nannyism. Altogether, civil society representatives were more critical of city policies than other interviewees.

5.6.2 Housing as a justice question

Many informants raised the issue of too expensive and not enough housing as a major problem in Stuttgart. Some interviewees initially expressed how they valued a relatively strong social mixing in Stuttgart's neighbourhoods, without "ghettos" nor no-go-areas – this being politically promoted, e.g. through tolerating then formal misallocations in social housing:

Extract 24

„[...] [T]he neighbourhoods are very mixed. So there are no such problem neighbourhoods where poverty is rampant. Poverty and at least middle classes are very close here which also practically reduces the issue of social inequality“ (civil society representative 9).

Many interviewees shared the view that this mixing was now declining as part of a housing crisis and gentrification in many German cities. It has been preceded by a reversal of the 1980s' tendency of wealthier citizens moving out of the city and commuting to work. Relatedly, housing inequality became seen as a main justice issue:

Extract 25

³⁶ Stuttgart 21 is a contested major traffic and urban development project restructuring Stuttgart's railway station (cf. Section 6.4.1).

„In Stuttgart, social inequality is especially large in the field of housing, I find. So the access to liveable housing space is not distributed very equitably in Stuttgart. Because simply the prices are such that in fact, two thirds of the people cannot afford life in Stuttgart. Per year, Stuttgart lacks 16,000 flats“

– “since 2015, being estimated” [later specified by interviewee] (public sector employee 4).

Civil society representative 11 described the requirements for purchasing a property: „And you can actually only buy a property when you inherited twice or so“, leading many to move out of the city. Then again, housing property was found to sometimes not be used purposefully:

Extract 26

„Many older houses in Stuttgart are simply left empty and the heirs, they mostly do not live in Stuttgart anymore and they just wait until any construction company comes and pays the millions for it, ok? So, that’s also such a thing where I have to say, that’s not exactly social [...]“ (Civil society representative 3).

Pointedly, civil society representative 7 asked:

Extract 27

„[W]ho can actually still afford to live in this city? Is Stuttgart only a city for the rich? And are the rents and housing costs the new walls of our cities?“

Rising economic inequalities have been seen as a problem here, with assets and high incomes enabling expensive rents and properties. Those increasingly led to displacing persons on middle and lower incomes, which ultimately questioned the city’s functioning:

Extract 28

“But the dynamic is there, that [...] we simply have many employees in the area of childcare centres or nursing, these are no highly paid professions and the question is, how do we get educators, how do we get nurses and geriatric nurses here into this city, who take care of people, if they, with the salary which they receive, cannot afford to live here. [...] [W]e need this housing space here [...] for the many, many

professions, who are simply also important that such a city functions, especially in the social sector“ (civil society representative 7).

Also, older persons on small pensions and families with children were seen to increasingly be displaced from the city. More people becoming homeless or living in temporary accommodations were outlined as further consequences.

Some interviewees found that the city administration had done too little to prevent the housing crisis. They criticised the overall decline of the social housing stock, insufficient and – during some years no – social housing building activity, social housing having been sold off to “corporate raiders” and constantly passing out of the stock as well as lacking support for affordable private rented housing. A lack of space due to Stuttgart’s topography in a basin added to the lack of construction space. Overall, informants depicted a growing residential segregation due to economic resources with increasingly influential market dynamics driving out sections of the population – a development often seen as problematic or unjust.

5.6.3 Inequality and social justice

Responding to the question whether they saw economic inequality as a justice issue in Stuttgart, half of the informants to some degree approved this. Of the others, half disapproved it and half did not express a clear tendency or were not asked the question. Approval was most unequally spread between civil society and business representatives – of the former, nine out of 11 affirmed while of the latter, only two in nine did so. The following extracts provide some insight into this diversity of views.

Extract 29

„There certainly is economic inequality, but it is not a justice problem, I would say. It just simply results from the different life situations of the people, from their different life courses“ (politician 4).

Extract 30

“We have to strengthen the mid-sized sector again, that sounds so odd. But the spreading is a problem. If someone, and these are symbols, if someone earns 10 million per year and you can break that down, then the normal worker asks himself

what he is actually doing all day. And these are excesses which are bad for the social fabric. As I said, at the moment that's not an issue because everyone is relatively well. [...]

But of course we have neighbourhoods and corners which don't know anything of the world. Also from which I actually don't know anything, if I am completely honest. And there we have a task, because if they do not feel that they belong to us, at some point they are doing shit, they are doing it already (politician 1)."

Not appraising economic inequality as a problem of justice, politician 4 described it as a consequence of different life courses. This resonates with individualisation as an explanation of economic inequality (cf. Section 7.4.2) in that attention lies primarily on individual level symptoms rather than the nature of social structures in which they arise – thus reducing a critical consciousness towards them. By contrast, politician 1 emphasised structural aspects of economic inequality by interrelating diverging incomes and morally disagreeing with the ensuing low value of a “normal worker’s” activity. He judged this as detrimental for the social fabric and resulting in problematic behaviours of those not feeling to belong. While politician 1 found that these issues were currently mitigated by “everyone being relatively well”, civil society representative 8’s experience contradicts this:

Extract 31

„[...] [A]s it is now with the long-term unemployed, that is indeed dreadful. One can be happy if one does not end up in this and one can get into it very quickly. So you can ask a couple of people here [in a food bank], they would not have thought with 40 years that they would be here with 45 years, [...] and also not have thought that when it was shortly over with the working life, that one does not get back into it. So that is nothing that is owed to one's own activity or so. That goes swiftly and one does not get out of that hole quickly again. [...]

Also the conditions on the first labour market are already made in a way that someone weaker can no longer enter it."

Describing the situation of long-term unemployed people as “dreadful” and hard to get out, the informant stressed how structural conditions were crucial for individual trajectories, i.e. a first labour market being inaccessible for “weaker” persons and again becoming harder and more selective (e.g. with bad employment chances from

about 50 years of age), as the interviewee outlined further on. Working closely with disadvantaged persons, civil society representative 8 came to see social descent as happening easily and quickly to people, not owing to one's own behaviour. By contrast, politician 1 remarked himself that he did not know about disadvantaged neighbourhoods – a difference which can relate to diverging views, e.g. in terms of intergroup contact effectively reducing prejudice (Kteily et al., 2017).

Summarising tendencies across informants, social standards in Stuttgart were repeatedly seen as comparably high (cf. Section 5.6.1), with some valuing how problems they saw relating to inequality not being major issues, i.e. with integration, xenophobia, high residential segregation and violence. This was often attributed to Stuttgart's economic prosperity, growth and high tax incomes, especially in business tax. Sometimes, a related moral view was that such a rich society should ensure a degree of equality. However, informants named a number of inequalities being justice problems: high and rising economic and housing inequalities, income inequalities and pay not reflecting societal value added. Some expressed a view that there was enough work in Stuttgart ("de facto no unemployment", politician 8), if one wanted to find it, but that low pay or social problems (e.g. drug addiction), were the prevailing problems. Further justice issues were child poverty and the withdrawal and invisibility of poverty as well as equal opportunities, educational justice and that effort needed to pay off in society; wrong spending priorities, lacking participation possibilities and prostitution. Altogether, while Stuttgart was sometimes seen as exemplary with regards to social justice and inequalities due to its economic prosperity, informants also expressed discontent in many areas and views were diverse.

5.7 Stuttgart: policies and future generations

5.7.1 Policies accounting for future generations?

More than a third of the interviewees did not express a clear tendency when asked how far they found policies in Stuttgart accounted for future generations. Another third raised approval, from very strong to tentative or concerning specific areas. Most of the rest disapproved and few have not been asked. Approval was

strongest from public sector informants, disapproval most pronounced from civil society representatives, this being reflective of both groups' interests and cleavages (cf. also Section 7.7).³⁷

A number of areas were found to account for future generations in Stuttgart. Almost a quarter of informants respectively mentioned Stuttgart's Youth Council (cf. Section 5.7.2 b)) and investments for children and youth, be it into schools (and their digitalisation), youth social work (also mobile and in schools), local school trips, youth centres, sports clubs or planning. Four interviewees referenced early education and childcare and three supporting the economy and maintaining prosperity, inter alia through the Strategy Dialogue Automotive Industry (Ger.: Strategiedialog Automobilwirtschaft).³⁸ Other measures mentioned once or twice included preparing young people for the labour market, also by cooperating with companies, environmental policies (preservation of nature, bio-diversity and resource use), investment into sustainable or electric mobility, pupils' and citizens' participation; Stuttgart's Child Welfare Officer and the city exemplarily accounting for children, efforts for social mixture and support of less privileged groups, a new poverty conference, new building projects, Stuttgart 21, the city administration being cooperative and rooted within the region, the introduction of the double-entry accounting system ('Doppik')³⁹ and not leaving municipal public debts for future generations.

³⁷ However, interviewees partly understood "accounting for future generations" only in the sense of how far young people were involved in policy processes and not in relation to their results.

³⁸ The Strategy Dialogue Automotive Industry is an institutionalised cooperation aiming at developing projects, measures and concepts to successfully shape the transformation process of the automotive industry in Baden-Württemberg. It involves political and economic actors, researchers, employees' associations, consumer organisations, environmental organisations and civil society (Staatsministerium Baden-Württemberg, n.d.).

³⁹ The double-entry accounting system ('Doppik'), being introduced in German local authorities, applies principles of private sector commercial accounting. It gives an overview of all business transactions on two accounts, as debit and credit. In contrast to the previously employed cameralistics, which only include receipts of and outgoing payments, Doppik also includes liabilities, commodities and receivables. Its aim is to document all transactions promptly and comprehensively with an automatic overview of economic success, assets and liabilities (Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 2013).

Contrarily, other policies and practices in Stuttgart were seen as unsustainable – most of them by civil society representatives: the state of affairs being ecologically unsustainable, that we were living on the costs of next generations and the other half of the world – an inequity which would threaten us. Civil society representative 4 lined out how ecologically unsustainable we lived, but were indifferent about it:

Extract 32

„[...] [W]e believe that the system that we are operating is a long-term system. But that will in all probability not be able to be long-term, because we are using up far too quickly the things which we [...] have as a basis of life. We are contaminating our atmosphere, air pollutants and the like. We are messing up the water as our basis. We are consuming our soils. And we are very, very successful in removing other species [...]. But that does not sound very successful [...]. So as a fallacy, that is an expressedly stupid thing, viewed long-term. Yes. And in that stupid behaviour we feel comfortable. We have many present advantages from it. But it has no aspects of a long-term orientation, which we also don't care about. I very often hear the saying: for me it will still suffice. [...]"

Further issues which informants found unsustainable included housing and social housing, Stuttgart 21, overfull schools, not enough places in old-age and childcare, little pay for educators, traffic not being human-friendly enough (too many cars, too few bikes), the car industry not taking responsibility for air pollution, too little public participation in planning and selling publicly-owned land. On a more fundamental level, interviewees remarked that taking a long-term perspective was limited to accumulating property for a next generation; that current action was polishing only without future-care and criticised a “business as usual” in terms of continued conventional construction activity despite its ecological problems. Altogether, views about the sustainability of local policies were diverse, though with more positive than negative instances being invoked.

5.7.2 Factors seen as promoting a long-term orientation

Besides referring to actual policies and practices, some interviewees described how policies should account for future generations. Most frequently mentioned

aspects are explored subsequently, while others were good education and the relevance of which political party was in power.

a) Prosperity – today and in the future

Informants emphasised Stuttgart's prosperity as a factor enabling sustainability. Maintaining that prosperity was found to secure a long-term perspective, entailing strengthening the economic location, keeping the industries and related jobs. Preferences in this regard were cooperation, preservation and the importance of keeping up with international developments, mainly in the automotive sector which was indeed seen as crucial for the city's future (as explored in Section 7.9.2). For instance, business representative 5 saw jobs and economic prosperity besides environmental protection as crucial for intergenerational justice and implied a trade-off between both:

Extract 33

“So I think that everything that is so to speak being done to facilitate a good education. To enable good economic structures. And that as resource-saving as possible. That this has something to do with intergenerational justice [...]. But also meaning for me that I provide that the economic location, as it is, is simply being strengthened. That one endeavours that the industry and economy remain on site. Because only then the successive generations will still have their workplaces. And I have also already mentioned that I sometimes have the feeling that there is a certain oversaturation. And that what is connected here with the economy is often perceived as a burden and disturbance [...]. And I find that dangerous in tendency. Because such a [...] company can by now very easily [...] relocate. And then the future generation here has maybe no more access to work. But in return they have a nicer, clean air” (Business representative 5).

b) Youth participation

Citizen participation and especially of young people through Stuttgart's Youth Council were mentioned repeatedly as contributing to sustainable policies. The Youth Council is a biennial directly elected interest representation of young people between 14 and 18 years of age at the level of districts and the whole city towards the municipal

council, the mayor, the district advisory councils and the city administration (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-j). Conversely, children and youth not having their own voice in the democratic process and an overageing of politics were found to weaken long-term orientations, e.g.:

Extract 34

„I [...] certainly believe [...], if now more people under 30 years would be in the municipal committees, that the issue of climate protection would play a different role. And similarly this applies of course to the topic of pensions [...]" (civil society representative 9).

5.7.3 Factors seen as impeding a long-term orientation

Besides the aspects discussed below, informants found that the following factors impeded a long-term perspective: social disintegration, also in neighbourhoods, a lack of space for the growing city, a perishing of medium-sized companies and associated loss of apprenticeships, generally a lack of employment and apprenticeships, rising inequality, declining public participation, a tiredness of politics and people being lied to with the examples of the 'Brexit'-vote and Stuttgart 21.

a) The future as unknown

Some informants expressed that not knowing the future and future generations' preferences made it difficult to account for them politically. Interviewees here referred to difficulties in demand planning for public childcare, changing opinion-forming processes or shifting urban planning conventions. Besides, there were feelings of a general acceleration of progress, international economic and labour-market developments, while the security of employment biographies had ended. These tendencies were seen as a challenge for public authorities due to a different logic operating compared to the private sector.

b) Election cycles

Few informants found election cycles of four or five years too short and impeding long-term action. Additionally to that, civil society representative 8 missed any long-term view on desired directions of development:

Extract 35

„I nowhere see any development into any direction. [...] [I] simply miss that long-term view of: where do we head towards and how do we act against this or how do we make it better than before?“

5.7.4 Neoliberal shifts and returns

In the course of the 1990s and 2000s, reforms towards more market-based approaches were also pursued in Stuttgart which have since been largely reversed. Those are an introduction of the ‘New Steering Model’, taking up the NPM agenda in Germany (cf. Section 3.3.5 b) and 6.4.1), a partial privatisation of public infrastructures and cross-border leasing transactions. Also coming up in interviews, I sketch the latter two subsequently.

Stuttgart is the only city in Germany who has privatised its infrastructure for gas, electricity and drinking water with all its associated assets (Loewe, 2007, p. 76). Citizens party opposed this sale in 2002 and organised as the ‘Water Forum’ to reverse it, e.g. stressing that the management of water supply should be municipal, public and controllable, as this was about the bases of life and active participation (Stuttgarter Wasserforum, n.d.). In 2010, the city council joined a related petition, so that the city had to resume public water supply in 2014 (Stuttgarter Wasserforum, n.d.). Also, through lawsuits in 2016 and 2018, it was decided that the private company owning the electricity and gas networks as well as distribution plants in Stuttgart had to give back large parts of it to the municipal operator (K. Schwarz, 2016, 2018a).

A related tendency are cross-border leasing transactions through which local authorities in Europe during the 1990s leased their then public infrastructures, e.g. sewerage networks or trams, in ca. 700 cases from American investors (Messner et al.,

2015c). The transactions are fictitious purchases where US trusts or funds, i.e. offshore companies from tax havens, pretended foreign investments to obtain tax benefits in two countries: buying infrastructures and immediately leasing them out to the local authorities. The municipalities entering such a – confidential and complex – contract got initially paid out a small part of the “profit”, the present-value benefit (Loewe, 2007, p. 84; Nauke, 2017). This happened at a time of often crumbling municipal budgets which could thus be supplemented (Messner et al., 2015a) and the need for a publicly operated water supply was partly viewed as outdated (Loewe, 2007, p. 78). At the end of 2004, cross-border leasing transactions have been forbidden in the US due to associated tax losses at the expense of US citizens (Loewe, 2007, p. 84).⁴⁰ Citizens in Stuttgart partly opposed the transactions with the Water Forum precluding a further cross-border leasing transaction of 27 schools and administrative centres in 2003 through its activities. Municipal councillors then conceded at discussion events that they did not know the ca. 1000 pages long leasing contracts. The basis of the Green Party forced their councillors to rethink and the SPD changed its opinion, thus ending the political majority for cross-border leasing contracts. Civil society representative 1 accordingly described these transactions as unsustainable:

Extract 36

„[...] I think that that, something like that, is also not sustainable. [...] Because, it is about public infrastructure. And the public infrastructure should remain in the public sector and not belong to any investors.”

Sewage treatment plants went back into municipal ownership, leaving Stuttgart with a net profit of 11.8 million Euro (Schulz-Braunschmidt, 2010) – while other local authorities in Baden-Württemberg risked losses worth several times the

⁴⁰ At their core, these transactions are described as a concealed credit default swap, i.e. an investment instrument betting against the creditworthiness of the bank and other contract partners over time. With the contract spanning decades, the banks were seen to be in a better position to win this bet (Messner et al., 2015b).

initial present-value benefit (Messner et al., 2015b).⁴¹ In 2018, Stuttgart's sewage system remained the last cross-border leasing transaction with the city aiming to prematurely dissolve the contract (Nauke, 2017). Civil society representative 1 commented on the process:

Extract 37

„[...] [T]he other thing we meanwhile have recognised, [is] that one should not sell the water network. And all these stories. That, with the cross-border leasing, that this was crap.“

Altogether, while Stuttgart locally relatively strongly adopted moves towards infrastructure privatisation and cross-border leasing transactions in Europe, these were mostly turned back henceforth. These processes involved identifying and deliberating on the nature, implications and risks of the reforms – as the above quote illustrates – with a crucial role of civil society in the shifts of views. Main concerns raised were sustaining public ownership and control over infrastructures across generations – as one aspect of sustainability besides those discussed in the previous sections.

5.8 Discussion – research question 1

This section summarises and compares how policy approaches in Nottingham and Stuttgart are co-produced with social order and relate to sustainability (RQ 1). However, a more holistic comparison of the governance regimes follows in Chapter 8.

Where entrenched and increasing deprivation and inequalities are Nottingham's context, predominantly perceived as unjust by the informants, little and – relating to austerity – shrinking leeway was seen to tackle these socio-economic problems directly. However, local policies aim at more social and intergenerational justice in impressive and pioneering ways. This is through redistributive local

⁴¹ For its sewage system, Stuttgart received a present-value benefit of 22 million Euro. However, solicitors, bankers and consultants received 4% of the transaction volume, i.e. 18 million Euro – thus markedly exceeding the city's net profit (Messner et al., 2015a).

infrastructures and services, thereby partly counteracting central government's more market-based approaches – and exemplifying a capacity for resilience and local agency despite given centre-local relations (Griggs et al., 2017). Herein, Nottingham is a remarkable outlier across UK local authorities in terms of retaining expertise and infrastructures in the public sector – whereas others transferred these into the private sphere. Besides, measures aiming at individual behaviour change across political parties display a co-production regime entailing individual responsibility, social and environmental progressiveness and a very unequal power distribution between those in local political or administrative roles and most residents. Wedged in contradictions between local and central government, sustainability was seen as increasingly constrained by the latter through centralisation and competition between regions, decreasing local funding, the marketisation of local government, short election cycles and the electoral system – but promoted through local political stability. Some informants thus saw future generations left with worse living conditions than at present.

Stuttgart's policies by contrast often focus on structural and infrastructural issues and rarely on individual behaviours – with 'nudge' being less prevalent in Germany than in the UK. Views on social and intergenerational justice were more diverse and informants less ready to take an overall stance than in Nottingham. However, more often than not economic inequality was seen as unjust – most frequently crystallising in the increasingly exclusionary question of housing in Stuttgart. Seen to depend on its economic development, Stuttgart's policies by and large complement national and state approaches⁴² to a relatively high level of (social) support in a German and European comparison. Sustaining economic prosperity was thus perceived necessary to further account for future generations – with the

⁴² For instance, a functional public transport provision in Nottingham was perceived by interviewees as impaired through nationally prescribed deregulation and competition of providers. By contrast, actors in Stuttgart did not take issue with national-level guidelines. Also, Stuttgart Region's transport provision is more passenger-oriented in that a transport association unites providers into an integrated tariff structure without additional costs if these are combined (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-q) – which is not the case in Nottingham.

automotive sector seen as threatened. While youth participation was considered as contributing to sustainability, environmental degradation, the future being unknown and short election cycles were found to counteract it. The same applies to neoliberal shifts in infrastructure provision which have largely been reversed, crucially due to citizens' opposition.

Locating the cases in relation to neoliberalisation, this has been government-led and in full swing in Nottingham: with shrinking budgets, local government marketisation and increasing interregional competition. Consequently, the council's role further approaches its statutory duties only and the city's structural disadvantages exacerbate, making long-term perspectives ever harder to maintain. This approximates what Streeck (2016, pp. 113–142) describes as a 'consolidation regime' (cf. also Section 8.4.4) in terms of postponing costs into the future (e.g. for infrastructure maintenance); but only partially in terms of privatisation due to local political counteraction. It confines social justice in that only wealthier citizens can pay for additional services and excluding all others, leading to significant deprivation and Nottingham's polarised social order. Budget restrictions more often favour shorter-term policies in Nottingham than in Stuttgart – as initially expected. Resisting this trend, significant long-term infrastructure measures were pursued and realised (e.g. a comparatively comprehensive public transport system, the tram or Robin Hood Energy – which however collapsed in 2020, cf. Footnote 27) nonetheless. Also, environmental measures are partly more ambitious and appear more effective than in Stuttgart (cf. Section 8.5.1). Contrary to Nottingham, neoliberal restructuring in Stuttgart since the 1990s was early and comprehensively adopted by local initiative; and was later widely reversed due to local resistance, leaving traces differentiating it from the ideal type of a Weberian bureaucracy. Stable budgets in Stuttgart, being considerably higher than in Nottingham (cf. Section 3.5), enable expanding on the comparatively generous German welfare state.

Social order is very differently co-produced in both cases. I argue that Nottingham's more pronounced inequalities than Stuttgart's find their expression in data and policies focusing more on individual behaviours rather than on the structural

conditions in which they arise. This again shapes social order by morally underpinning these individual-level approaches. Conversely, in Stuttgart with its more collective values, less responsibility is placed on those facing social problems and policies are behaviourally less prescriptive (cf. Sections 8.2.1 a) and 8.3.2). How the regimes relate to sustainability thus depends on policy areas and a trade-off between sustainability dimensions appears likely (cf. Section 7.5.3). Overall, the comparison of both cases' policy approaches exemplifies how the uneven neoliberal advance and relatedly increasing national and European inequalities play out with realities of life, values and morals moving apart.

6 Policy negotiations and the public

6.1 Introduction

Having previously explored policy approaches, this chapter addresses RQ 2: *How does the negotiation of policies relate to sustainability?* For this, Chapter 3 lies theoretical and substantive foundations regarding welfare states, urban governance and the cases. Forth following, I explore findings through claims which governance theory sets out. Besides, Polanyi's (1944) 'double movement' as conceptualised for urban responses to marketisation by Warner & Clifton (2014) helps analysing the roles of local authorities and civil societies. I outline both subsequently.

Governance theory (cf. Section 3.3.3) assumes that democracy is secured through citizens' participation in public tasks, since local communities' contemporary challenges are too complex to be left to markets or to the local state alone. This builds on assumptions that participation and inclusion will overcome citizens' varying abilities to promote their interests and that involvement creates consensus. Community participation can then lead to win-win situations where new ways to meet collective needs are developed and efficiency and effectiveness enhanced. Besides the public, other actors, agencies and institutions can participate in this networked governance which the local state facilitates, encourages and mediates. Underlying beliefs are that civil society can take on this active role and that shared interests, dialogue, trust and reciprocity enable a smooth cooperation. Power would be fragmented and shared across networks, but is not a major concern in governance theory (Kjær, 2009, pp. 140–145). With this optimism for participation and collaboration, networked governance appears promising for enhancing sustainability in local policy-making.

Polanyi's (1944) concept of 'double movement' implies a dialectic of marketisation moves and a following push for social protection, since the market economy is itself socially embedded and requires ongoing public intervention. Warner & Clifton (2014, p. 46) argue that Polanyi's thesis can be used "to explain the

variegated urban response to austerity”. They operationalise these for European and American cities in terms of three main patterns: ‘hollowing out’, i.e. cities engaging in service cut backs, ‘riding the wave’ where cities try to harness the market and ‘push backs’, i.e. cities and citizen movements opposing marketisation in the sense of Polanyian countermovements.

How far these approaches correspond to empirical instances in Nottingham and Stuttgart provides an angle to explore policy negotiations and the roles of the public in this chapter. Both are fundamental components of urban governance. In a parallel structure for both cities, I examine negotiations and relations between urban political actors (Sections 6.2.1 and 6.4.1) and with national, regional, other local, state and European Union levels (Sections 6.2.2 and 6.4.2) through my data. I then focus on the publics in terms of their views and conditions (Sections 6.3.1 and 6.5.1), their role in devising policies aiming for sustainability (Sections 6.3.2 and 6.5.2) and their relation to those developing local policies (Sections 6.3.3 and 6.5.3). Section 6.5.3 concludes on RQ 2 and the outlined conceptual perspectives – while Chapter 8 deepens comparative aspects.

6.2 Nottingham: political power embedded

This section focuses on what case study data evince about the development of policies in Nottingham (Section 6.2.1) and its relation to other levels of governance (Section 6.2.2) by discussing some significant themes.

6.2.1 Urban negotiations

Corresponding to the significant dominance of the Labour Party in Nottingham’s city council since 1991, interviewees partly saw urban policy processes as strongly imprinted by it and its politicians. This was in terms of relatively directed, top-down decision-making and implementation, a strong and ambitious leadership and limited coordination before plans were drafted and decisions made. With the First-past-the-post electoral system, local council majorities are relatively stable and

belonging to one of the two major political parties – Labour or Conservative Party – is more or less a precondition for becoming a local councillor.

Informants' views about the acting of the city council ranged from positive in terms of a determined and effective leadership to critique about lacking negotiation and contestation, e.g.:

Extract 38

"[...] [T]here's no effective opposition. So as long as there's no one who's going to take them [Nottingham's local government] to court, they just do what they want. [...] [T]hey make it quite obvious that they're really not interested what anyone outside their little group thinks or wants (business representative 7).

Jon Collins, leader of the city council until May 2019, shared the view of a largely absent opposition and outlined how political consensus-building instead was a challenge within the Labour Group:

Extract 39

I: [...] How do you see the kind of political opposition in the council?

Collins: I do not see any.

[...]

I mean, the biggest issue is trying to make sure that we maintain and build consensus within the Labour Group [...], making sure that you do the consensus over what is effectively quite a large number of people [52] can be difficult, and that is what we do.

Process-wise, interviewees described the Council Plan as fundamental to formulating policies in Nottingham. It mostly sets specific and measurable political objectives for a legislative period, e.g. "[b]uild 2,500 new homes that Nottingham people can afford to rent or buy" (Nottingham City Council, 2016a, p. 3). The Council Plan is predominantly based on the Nottingham Labour Party's manifesto with equally specific targets. Ideas for the latter are developed by local politicians, administrative officers and in their interchange, as politician 9 described:

Extract 40

“[...] I will talk with my officers about how I’ve got some ideas about what I might like to put in the manifesto. [...] [A]bout what’s a realistic-“

[...]

“So that’s where I get my ideas from really a range of sources I suppose, but also officers will come to me with ideas that they’ve had, that they think we could do [...] something which would be interesting or useful, or we could expand on what we do or we could take a different path.”

This equally illustrates a relatively close communication and cooperation between politicians and administrative officers. The latter generally exhibited positive views of local councillors’ approaches.

Policy processes in Nottingham are partly outlined in strategies or plans, directed by the city council and implemented accordingly, while lengthier disputes with urban opponents and long delays are rather unusual. Instances of this are the introduction of the Workplace Parking Levy (cf. Section 7.3), the creation of the tram and of Robin Hood Energy (cf. Footnote 27) or the development of Nottingham’s cycling infrastructure against resistance e.g. of car drivers. An exception are government’s funding cuts which necessitated changes to plans or sometimes made them obsolete.

Besides the city council, a multitude of actors in Nottingham are involved in negotiating policies, depending on the issue at hand and often in partnerships. They are inter alia public authorities and institutions, such as the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)⁴³, parts of the National Health Service (NHS) or the two universities – the latter often being seen as fundamental to the city (cf. Section 7.3). Involved are furthermore various civil society actors, often charities, business associations and sometimes companies.

⁴³ The D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership for Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire “[...] play[s] a central role in deciding local economic priorities, and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and create local jobs” (D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, n.d.).

The relevance of partnerships in Nottingham, described in many policy documents, coincides with the shift from government to governance (cf. Section 3.3.4) in that responsibilities should become more shared between multiple local actors. With the government's local spending cuts having "hit poor communities and big cities hardest", Nottingham's Labour Party (2015, p. 3) emphasises:

Extract 41

"But in these difficult times we need to change the way we deliver our goals. Now more than ever, partnerships with others in the public, voluntary and private sectors will be key to our city's success. And we will work even more closely with local people so that we can all take on more responsibility: look out for each other, respect the city's environment and take the opportunities that are presented to us".

Taking on more responsibility – of which the withdrawing state could not be the main carrier – expresses rising expectations towards the population, a repeating theme in Nottingham.

However, parts of the population were seen as missing from policy negotiations which is relevant in terms of local power relations. Interviewees referred to disadvantaged, disenfranchised and disintegrated people with whole neighbourhoods not engaging. Further mentioned 'missing' actors were inter alia the Conservative Party, headteachers and schools since their academisation and the black and minority ethnic group being underrepresented in the city councils' workforce. Finally, small and middle-sized enterprises were found to struggle in making their views known, as opposed to big companies.

Regarding RQ 2, political stability in Nottingham was seen as contributing to sustainable policies (cf. Section 5.4.2) – but as unjust when there was little (effective) challenge to political power. Deprivation curtails sustainability from the onset, while a shrinking state increasingly shares tasks through partnerships.

6.2.2 The urban relating to other governance levels

a) Central government

Some local informants described Nottingham's relation with the Conservative Party-led government as difficult. Herein, the last "years of unprecedented funding reductions" (Porter in Eichler, 2018) to local authorities played an important role (cf. Section 3.4.1 b)). A number of politicians and public sector employees criticised them, inter alia as a main central government steering instrument, though with little interest in their local implementation and consequences. This partly implies a one-sided dependency of Nottingham's local from central government. The city council's leader voiced this:

Extract 42

Collins: [With] [...] [g]overnment [...] that is more a take it or leave it relationship.

I: How [is] that?

Collins: So government, they tell you what they are going to do and they give you what they are going to give you and they are not terribly interested in what we may or may not say about things. So not much in the way of dialogue. It is this [...] what you are having, thanks very much or not thanks very much.

He saw government's austerity policies as ideology-driven:

Extract 43

"[...] [W]hen you have a government that knows the cost of everything and the value of nothing, where it is determined to drive down public spending because it has some weird and wonderful notions about what makes a thriving economy, what you end up with is [...] public spending being cut regardless of its impact. So those areas where public spending is productive and can make a difference and could boost the economy, [...] they go as well. [...] [T]hey just cut public spending because it is an ideology" (Jon Collins).

Collins relatedly expressed a preference for a more 'European' governance with greater local control:

Extract 44

Collins: I think that it is with the government that believes in the market. If you believe in the market, then you believe in competition, you believe in fragmentation because you believe in people not cooperating but competing. That creates a certain type of culture and a certain type of society. It is not one I am [...] particularly attracted by. It is a bit like America [...] where anything goes as long as you got the money to pay for it.

I: How would you like to see it differently?

Collins: Well, I would like local authorities to have the power to act on a range of things. [...] So it would be better if we were better funded, if we ha[d] an independent tax base, if we could be genuinely influential, if we could have proper control of key aspects [...] but that would make us more like other European cities rather than an outpost of the United States. So that is probably not what we are going to have from this government [...].

Beyond this, views on government policies were sometimes marked by relatively strong dismissive reactions, such as moral outrage, sadness or frustration (cf. Extract 12 and Extract 13).

Collins also deprecated the distribution of the cuts: “[...] we [Nottingham] see our funding reduced far faster than more affluent councils representing conservative voting areas in the south and the southeast [...]”. Indeed, examining the geography of local government austerity, Gray & Barford (2018) identify

“[...] substantial variations between authorities in terms of funding, local tax-base, fiscal resources, assets, political control, service-need and demographics. We argue that austerity has actively reshaped the relationship between central and local government in Britain [...]” (p. 541).

“[...] [A]usterity pushed down to the level of local government in the UK has resulted in (i) a shrinking capacity of the local state to address inequality, (ii) increasing inequality between local governments themselves and (iii) intensifying issues of territorial injustice” (p. 543).

Thereby, “cities still dealing with the legacy of industrial decline or sustained levels of poverty” and thus more people relying on local government services “were also among the local areas with higher proportions of their budgets reliant on the grant from central government” (Gray & Barford, 2018, p. 550). Aggravatingly, the largest spending cuts tended to affect cities (Gray & Barford, 2018, p. 553f). But also

national welfare cuts have disproportionately affected more deprived areas (Beatty & Fothergill, 2016). Local and national cuts combined “compound[] the impact of austerity in the worst hit places” (Gray & Barford, 2018, p. 553) – and all these characteristics apply to Nottingham. Also regionally, the East Midlands receive lower shares of public expenditure on services per head and in total than the eight other regions in the country in 2015-16 (EastMidlands Councils, n.d., p. 1). EastMidlands Councils (n.d., p. 4) conclude: “[...] [g]overnment does not invest on the basis of equity”.

Taken together, policy-making in Nottingham is constrained by the centralised organisation of local government in the UK and exacerbated by very severe funding cuts. They play out as structural disadvantage by disproportionately affecting Nottingham and the East Midlands in combination with existing social and economic problems. These spatial injustices were locally perceived as hampering urban sustainability efforts (e.g. to fund infrastructures and support promoting social justice).

b) Regional level and local authorities

In relation to other local authorities, main issues coming up in the data were intensifying mutual cooperation and Nottingham’s contested boundaries (cf. next section). Regionally, the Midlands Engine was sometimes invoked. It self-describes: “Our core purpose is to create a Midlands Engine that powers the UK economy and competes on the world stage” (Midlands Engine, 2017, p. 6). With the productivity gap between the UK and the East Midlands and even more so Nottingham (cf. Section 3.4.1 c)), the Midlands Engine’s “ambition is to close the GVA gap to match or exceed the national average and add £54 billion to the Midlands and UK economies by 2030” (Midlands Engine, 2017, p. 6). However, a critical view on it was: „[...] the Midlands Engine, I don’t even know what that is. It’s just a marketing strategy as far as I can see” (public sector employee 14).

Stronger regional collaboration is set through the Derby-Nottingham Metro Strategy 2030 with “five big ambitions to drive us forward over the next 15 years”, in

terms of economic development, skills and training, connectivity, living spaces and service provision, stating: “[w]e have more to gain from cooperation than competition if we want to unlock the potential of our cities to develop and keep our local talent” (Derby City Council & Nottingham City Council, 2016, p. 2).

c) Contested urban boundaries

Locally, there are politics of Nottingham’s contentious boundaries. Nottingham city is markedly more deprived in various respects than its surrounding areas (cf. Section 3.4.2 d)). This is enhanced by Nottingham, but not Nottinghamshire, being among those hardest hit by the cuts to government spending, also with its higher reliance on it (Beatty & Fothergill, 2016, p. 19). These territorial injustices are co-produced with morality, partially devaluing Nottingham. This is reflected in informants’ views and in debates around revisions to local authority boundaries in Nottinghamshire. For instance,

“Conservative councillor Philip Owen [...] said that it was 'project fear' to suggest that West Bridgford [note of the author: being among the 3% least deprived areas in the UK (McCormick et al., 2017, p. 53)] would join Nottingham City, which he called a 'basket case'. He said the city council has always had its eye on areas like West Bridgford, but it would never happen because people there didn't want it” (Sandeman, 2018b).

By contrast, Nottingham City Council favoured an expansion of Nottingham’s borders to include the wealthier areas West Bridgford, Arnold, Gedling and Broxtowe (Sandeman, 2018c). This dissent parallels the ‘flight’ of many wealthier citizens to residing outside the city – while informants would partly explain themselves if they acted differently, e.g.:

Extract 45

“[...] the boundary is so tight, the people who work in Nottingham don't actually live in Nottingham, surrounding Nottingham some fairly prosperous areas. And some of the people who are a bit eccentric like me who are affluent but believe in

living in the city, living in areas of disadvantage. Most people take flight and go outside and that's a sensible way forward" (politician 11).

Central government's funding regime reinforces the ensuing inequalities and thus facilitates Nottingham's further devaluation. Therefore, I argue that Nottingham's "small official boundaries", denoted by Nottingham City Council to "skew[] the results" of household disposable income data (BBC News, 2018b) – with Nottingham exhibiting the lowest value per head in the UK in 2016 (Collinson, 2018) – are precisely a function and indicator of the local power distribution. Since Nottingham is in a financially weak position already and gets further pushed behind politically, this dynamic equals structural violence.

d) European Union

The EU's structural and cohesion funds have reduced regional disparities within EU countries – as shown for 1995-2006 (Kyriacou & Roca-Sagalés, 2012). Correspondingly, the European Regional Development Fund "aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions" (European Commission, n.d.-a).

There "is no consistent picture of how much each region of the UK receives in funding from the EU", since this depends on a varying number of funding applications per region (Full Fact, 2016). As a rough approximation, the East Midlands receives for the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund together ca. 598 million Euro during 2014-2020.⁴⁴ This sum is the third-lowest out of nine regions in England with the East of England being lowest with 387 million Euro and the South West being highest with 1,495 million Euro (Soubry & Herbert, 2016). However, poorer areas – both at regional and Local Enterprise Partnership area levels – tend to "receive a larger proportion of these funds than richer areas in both per capita and absolute

⁴⁴ This is based on Local Enterprise Partnership areas which partly cross the boundaries of regions.

terms” (Hunt et al., 2016, p. 9). They would therefore “be more vulnerable to any negative economic impacts arising from the loss of structural funding”, should the UK leave the EU without replacing these (Hunt et al., 2016, p. 10). Coincidentally, informants found that EU funding alleviated inequalities in the city and Nottingham City Council (n.d.-a) states that it “helped to regenerate Nottingham since 2000” and supported many projects in the city.

Altogether in relation to other levels of governance, I argue that Nottingham suffers from structural disadvantage and violence in terms of the national funding regime, regional and local inequalities. This interacts with – therefore lower – social recognition towards Nottingham and many of its inhabitants, thus counteracting social and intergenerational justice. Recent developments such as continued austerity and ‘Brexit’ likely exacerbate these inequalities, while alleviating factors such as EU funding, attempts at a devolution deal (unsuccessful until 2018) or the Midlands Engine are threatened or could not reverse the tendency.

6.3 Nottingham: the public

The following focuses on the public’s position and impact on policies in Nottingham. After approximating its situation (Section 6.3.1), I examine how urban policies aiming for sustainability are devised and what role the public has in it (Section 6.3.2). Cognitions are then connected to the relationship between Nottingham’s public and those developing local policies. However, I can only approach both cities’ publics to an extent as they are diverse in many respects.

6.3.1 Views and conditions of the public

Extending beyond more standard socio-economic indicators (cf. Section 3.4), this section seeks to understand views and conditions of Nottingham’s public through its own perceptions as expressed in surveys, interview data and further research.

Nottingham’s annual citizens’ survey gives according insights and displays understandings of the local state-citizen relationship. Respondents in 2017 (n=2,017, cluster-based quota sample; Nottingham City Council, 2018a, 2018b) were often

satisfied with their local area: 40.5% were very satisfied and 44.8% were fairly satisfied. Relatedly, 60.8% would recommend Nottingham a great deal as a place to live and 32.3% to some extent, 4.6% not very much and 2.3% not at all. 54.8% would recommend Nottingham a great deal as a place to work and 35.9% to some extent. 76% of respondents would speak highly about Nottingham. Local area cohesion was rated relatively highly with 50.7% definitely agreeing that people from different backgrounds get on well and 40.2% tending to agree. Also, 57.5% definitely agreed that they could rely on local people (friends, family, neighbours) to provide help, 31.1% tended to agree, while 11.3% in tended to or definitely disagreed. 77% in tendency agreed that they could rely on local people (voluntary, faith groups etc.) to provide help (Nottingham City Council, 2018e).

Concerning austerity and financial hardship, 30.2% of respondents have “noticed a deterioration in council services in the last five years as a result of cuts to the Council’s budget”, while 55.3% have not (Nottingham City Council, 2018e, p. 63). 24% indicated that they struggled to or did not keep up with bills – a third of them in employment (Nottingham City Council, 2018e).

Finally, Nottingham’s mental wellbeing score (52.4 out of 70) was slightly higher than the England average of 50.1 (NHS, 2016). 8.4% of respondents felt lonely all the time or often and 26.1% sometimes (Nottingham City Council, 2018e).

The design of Nottingham’s citizens’ survey as an ordering instrument to some extent exhibits business and behavioural approaches in that there are foci on satisfaction, partly representing the citizen as a customer (e.g. about how the city council handles enquiries, value for money, local events or cleanliness), and individual conduct (smoking, drinking alcohol). The survey thereby also constitutes a tool to create numbers about ‘social problems’ operationalised as individual behaviours; and evidences an observational and rather distanced stance of those designing the survey towards those it aims at. Contrarily, more collective concerns such as main problems or the satisfaction with areas of life in the city do not figure in the survey (Nottingham City Council, 2018e).

While self-reported satisfaction with Nottingham appears relatively high in the citizens' survey, the interviews and other data also evince adverse perspectives. Interviewees particularly lined out how poverty and deprivation significantly impacted on – deteriorating – living conditions in Nottingham, e.g.:

Extract 46

“[D]efinitely, the gap has widened since this austerity [...]. There is definitely huge disparity between the poor and rich. [...] And I think it is not Europe, am I somewhere in a part of Bangladesh? [...]”

[...]

“[...] I think the major issue for me is, [...] the local deprivation and local poverty is not coming up anywhere in the statistics at all. So we will only see the headline, does that link with the crime? I'm sure it does. Does that [...] link with the mental health? I'm sure it does. And also, I think it is important that there was a notion that the family was supporting each other, do the famil[ies have] that capacity to support each other? I don't think anymore. So [...] the less well-off have [...] become more kind of destitute” (civil society representative 7).

Nottingham's 'Your City Your Services' survey 2016 substantiates this view. Therein, 2,034 respondents (self-completion) “indicate[d] their level of concern about [...] issues during the current economic situation” (Hill, 2017 Annexe 6, p.8). Shares of those concerned or very concerned include 94% in relation to cuts to public services; 74% regarding an impact on their health; 68% due to household money problems; 58% relating to changes in benefits; 48% of losing their home and 39% of losing their job (Hill, 2017 Annexe 6, p.8; Appendix A). These existential fears of many partly prove true in a falling healthy life expectancy at birth between 2009-2011 and 2015-2017 in 77 of 150 UK local areas. Of these, women in Nottingham experienced the greatest and statistically significant fall of 6.1 years, to averagely 53.5 years lived in good health (Finch, 2018). Correspondingly, Watkins et al. (2017) estimate that the squeeze on public finances since 2010 is linked to almost 120,000 excess deaths in England.

More specifically, some problems in Nottingham which shaped up during the research are illustrated exemplarily: fuel poverty, underemployment, access to food and crime. First, fuel poverty “affected the lives of 18,980 Nottingham households in

2016/17”, i.e. a share of 14.6% (Nottingham City Council, 2018h, p. 5). “Living in excess cold leads to a higher risk of poor health outcomes, as well as increased morbidity and mortality” (Nottingham City Council, 2018h, p. 7). It is estimated that half of excess winter deaths are caused by fuel poverty, equalling 500 in Nottingham during 2013-2016 (Nottingham City Council, 2018h, p. 6).

Second, while employment does not prevent from financial hardship in the UK (e.g. P. Butler, 2017), many also struggle to find it in Nottingham. For instance, McKenzie (2015, p. 93f) describes that residents of St. Ann’s neighbourhood often could not find work that would sustain a living for them and their families. The tendency also materialises in many applicants for few jobs, such as 1,701 applying for eight positions when a Costa Coffee branch opened in Nottingham (Mapperley) in 2013 with hourly wages between £6.10 and £10 (Lansley & Mack, 2015, p. 90). The authors (2015, p. 92) state that “[h]unting for work in Britain, especially in areas of high unemployment, has become an increasingly demoralising and often demeaning process”. Unemployment figures “understate the scale of the modern jobs crisis”, also through a steady rise in underemployment (Lansley & Mack, 2015, p. 94).

Third, low incomes interact with access to food. Increasing numbers of low-paid workers in Nottingham – with 9% of its workforce earning the lowest legal wage of £4.20 to £7.38 per hour – turned to foodbanks (Bunn, 2018). Relatedly, a food bank employee described how underpaying employers would sometimes volunteer and questioned food bank’s existence:

Extract 47

“[...] [T]he managing director is coming in smiling and having his photograph taken handing out some food, we’re feeding his employees.

[...]

So I think there has to be always a focus on how do we get rid of food banks. [...] I don’t want to live in a society where food banks are just normal” (Nigel Webster, Bestwood & Bulwell Foodbank).

Fourth, crime was mentioned as an issue in Nottingham with rates having risen by 29% during 2017 in Nottinghamshire (Jarram, 2018a). Numbers of knife crime were

highest in 2017 since their publishing started in 2011 (Pittam, 2018). Politician 11 related crime to difficult living conditions in Nottingham:

Extract 48

“[...] 25 percent of all crime in Nottinghamshire, [...] comes from five wards in the city. And what are those five wards? Well the five most disadvantaged wards in the city. And if you're going to make a difference about crime in the long term, you've got to do stuff around early intervention, around early year's education, around decent housing, around jobs and training or skills and about people getting a decent wage.

[...]

I think people who are more affluent [...] are less likely to offend. [...] [I]f we had a fairer, more equal society, life would be better for those who are disadvantaged”.

To summarise, Nottingham's citizens' survey pictures a public relatively satisfied with the city and local cohesion, though around a quarter experienced financial hardship. However, attempting to understand further major problems in Nottingham, large groups of the population face existential threats and fears, often relating to deprivation. The UK's median household total net wealth of £259,400 (July 2014-June 2016; Office for National Statistics, 2018, p. 5) evinces this lack of social justice. Policies underpinning these conditions, such as continued austerity, are fuelled by and enable a highly unequal social order – playing out violently in Nottingham with disadvantaged citizens living shorter under harshening circumstances. United Nations envoy Philip Alston relatedly describes the government's approach: “British compassion for those who are suffering has been replaced by a punitive, mean-spirited and callous approach [...]” (P. Butler & Booth, 2018).

6.3.2 Devising policies aiming for sustainability – and the public

Behind the sketched background, I examine the public's role in the negotiation of policies aiming for sustainability in Nottingham. To understand the public's relative power position, I draw on policies in Nottingham and Stuttgart which were repeatedly mentioned in the data to aim for social and intergenerational justice. I grouped and summarised them in Table 7. Instances marked in italics in the table display a crucial

civil society impact in their development. For Nottingham, this is only the case for ‘socially progressive policies’, as I expound subsequently.

Table 7: Comparison of the public’s role in policy negotiations

How are urban policies aiming for social and intergenerational justice devised?	
Nottingham	Stuttgart
Keeping infrastructures public and at a high level	<i>Privatisation and re-municipalisation of infrastructures</i>
Environmentally progressive policies	<i>Air pollution; traffic organisation</i>
<i>Socially progressive policies</i>	<i>Stuttgart 21</i>
Support of disadvantaged groups	Strong support of disadvantaged groups
Changing individual behaviours	Changing (infra-)structures

Source: own research; in italics = crucial civil society impact.

Keeping infrastructures public and at a high level. Partly working against the governments’ market-oriented approaches, Nottingham’s left-wing local government aims to provide more encompassing public services, justifying it with social justice considerations (cf. Extract 8). This is the case for a high-level public transport, the foundation of a first local authority-owned energy company to tackle fuel poverty and provide cheaper energy (Robin Hood Energy, n.d.), the redistributive Workplace Parking Levy (cf. Section 7.3), a large social housing stock or the Selective Licensing Scheme for minimum housing standards (cf. Footnote 26). Despite noble intentions, some of these projects had contested side-effects (cf. for example Section 7.3). Importantly, Robin Hood Energy collapsed in 2020 as it was not financially viable in the longer term (cf. Footnote 27).

Environmentally progressive policies. Section 7.5.3 discusses some ways in which Nottingham’s local policies stand out in the UK as emphasising environmental sustainability: inter alia in terms of carbon emissions, use of renewable energy, retrofitting social housing or public transport support and cycling promotion. Both the infrastructural and environmentally progressive tendencies are mainly driven by the city council and its deliberate long-term approaches, enabled by in-house expertise (cf. Section 5.4.2).

Socially progressive policies. Local policy approaches partly appear socially progressive with a tendency to more identity-based concepts. This is the case for the city council's and partially public support for discriminated groups based on ethnic background, sexual orientation or gender. An insightful instance here is the recognition of misogyny as a hate crime. This recognition by Nottinghamshire police in 2016 as the first police force in Britain received significant attention (Finnigan, 2016). It followed work since 2014, when Nottingham Citizens⁴⁵ built a hate crime commission with its member organisations. Associated research found that 85% of young women across the UK have been sexually harassed in a public place (Citizens UK, 2018a). This created evidence base has been employed to ask the police to class misogyny as a hate crime – with success. This policy and data making its case have thereby been co-produced with partly intensifying identity-based anti-discrimination efforts and codified the latter. The policy is partially considered as pioneering and progressive, as e.g. shown by a call to extend it nationally (BBC News, 2018c). An aim of civil society actors in the process – whose impact appears crucial to the outcome – was to make the county safer for women (Finnigan, 2016), thus relating to social justice.

Support of disadvantaged groups. Equally established in terms of social justice, some local policies especially aim to support disadvantaged groups such as the city council's commitment to "No Second Night Out" in relation to homelessness (Nottingham City Council, 2018i, p. 2), unemployed persons in terms of jobs and skills support and generally poorer parts of the population (cf. Section 5.3.2).

Changing individual behaviours. The document analysis shows how policy approaches seeking to improve life for those facing social problems relatively often

⁴⁵ "Nottingham Citizens is a non-partisan alliance of 36 civil society institutions comprised of trade unions, faith groups, charities, schools and universities, all working together to make Nottingham a better place to live" (Citizens UK, 2018b).

also aim for change of individuals and not primarily of structures in which these problems arise (cf. Section 5.2.2 a)).

To probe my interpretation and to better understand Nottingham's civil society, I looked for policy instances where it had an important impact. One example was equally organised through Nottingham Citizens: the University of Nottingham agreeing to pay all staff the real Living Wage⁴⁶ after an according protest at the university (Sandeman, 2017b). Participants resorted to moral ideas about distribution and justice, e.g.: "[T]hey [cleaning staff] deserve to be paid enough to live on."; "A university that is so wealthy can afford to pay its staff the living wage" (Sandeman, 2017a). Further instances are lifting wages of over 5,000 employees in the city through the real Living Wage campaign; an investment of £36,000 into the Women's Aid Domestic Violence hotline or the creation of two hate crime officer positions in the city council and the police (Nottingham Citizens, 2018). These examples all originate from activities of Nottingham Citizens. As shown, they are often justified by social justice concerns. Nottingham Citizens similarly self-describes:

"We organise communities to act together for social justice and the common good, developing the leadership capacity of our members so they can hold our cities' decision-makers to account on the issues that matter to them" (Citizens UK, 2018b).

Nottingham's civil society organises in many varied groups and charities, such as Pedals⁴⁷ or Sustrans⁴⁸ for transport and protests take place on a wide range of issues.

⁴⁶ The voluntary 'real' Living Wage aims to represent the cost of living. With £9 per hour in 2018/2019 (£10.55 in London), it is higher than the National Minimum/National Living Wage of £7.83 (for those over 25 years; Living Wage Foundation, n.d.).

⁴⁷ "Pedals was founded in 1979 to encourage more people to use bikes and to campaign for safer and more attractive conditions for cyclists in the Nottingham area" (Pedals, 2018).

⁴⁸ "We are the charity that makes it easier for people to walk and cycle. [...] We are grounded in communities and believe that grassroots support combined with political leadership drives real change, fast" (Sustrans, n.d.).

In summary, civil society influenced various policies in Nottingham, often striving for social justice. However, major policies aiming for sustainability have more often been devised by the city council and civil society therein relatively seldom played a crucial role. The next section refers this to the relation between the public and those developing policies.

6.3.3 Relation of the public and policy developers

To better understand this relation, I compare average conditions of the public and of policy developers⁴⁹ in Nottingham, drawing on indications from my and other data. Table 8 approximates both groups. It illustrates considerable inequalities between them in terms of realising social and economic rights, the allocation of economic and educational resources, a relatively steep hierarchy towards political decision-making and significant distance in various areas of life, e.g. spatially.

Table 8: Nottingham’s public and policy developers

	Public	Policy developers
Local government	Centralised Austerity First-past-the-post voting system 55 councillors (2015-2019): Labour majority (Nottingham City Council, 2018g)	
Social and economic rights/ resources	Average household income per head in Nottingham (2016, taxes and benefits taken into account): £12,232 (Collinson, 2018) Existential problems and fears; basic needs partly unmet	Average gross salary for council jobs: £32,500 (Totaljobs Group, 2018) Mean payments to interviewed councillors (2017-18): £30,737 ⁵⁰ (Nottingham City Council, 2018f; own calculation)
National inequalities	In incomes (Gini coefficient) – UK: 0.36	

⁴⁹ As ‘policy developers’, I denote those typically involved in developing local policies. They could not be clearly delimited, since these actors vary with a policy issue. However, usually I hereby mean and approximate local councillors, administrative officers and other public sector employees. Many interviewees are policy developers, thus giving according indications.

⁵⁰ This could be complemented through other professional activity.

	(7th most unequal of 37 mostly OECD-countries; OECD, 2017) UK one of the most interregionally unequal of 30 OECD-countries (McCann, 2019)	
Education	Low attainment; Nottingham worst in UK for children's prospects (Evans & Egglestone, 2018)	Mostly university-educated
Socio-economic segregation	Significant between Nottingham and Greater Nottingham – social class; interacting with attributed value	

Sources: own research and as indicated.

Nottingham's 2017 citizens' survey also addresses the city council's work. 52.9% of respondents agreed to some extent that the city council treats them fairly and 29.3% to a great deal. 21.2% definitely agreed that the council provides value for money, 41.5% tended to agree, 21.7% neither agreed nor disagreed, while 7.2% tended to disagree and 8.4% definitely disagreed. 19.8% were very satisfied and 51.8% were fairly satisfied with how the council runs things; 18.8% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and the remaining 9.6% were fairly or very dissatisfied. Besides this relative satisfaction, respondents averagely appraised their own impact as limited with more than half in tendency disagreeing with the statement "You can influence decisions affecting your local area" (28% tended to disagree and 25% definitely disagreed; 13.3% definitely agreed and 33.6 % tended to agree; Nottingham City Council, 2018e).

Interviewees also described the relation between policy developers and citizens. Hereby, Extract 3 displays politician 2's view of a relatively caring, but also paternalistic asymmetry between policy-makers and citizens with "a bit of dependency" and "a bit of expectation" of citizens, while it could "often be quite dangerous" to leave "people to themselves". Civil society representative 6 described how disadvantaged citizens were disengaged in public issues: "[...] [I]f you live in more deprived communities you don't have access. You don't know how those systems work. You don't know who to talk to." Public sector employee 9 pictured these groups' distance to some of the city council's efforts in terms of existential problems prevailing:

Extract 49

“How are we going to be able to help them, if their immediate concerns are struggling to sort of get food on the table or get kids to school, or a whole range of other issues that they’re facing, that seems a world away from [...] what we’re trying [...] with bio-city [...]”

Lastly, two interviewees expressed that the tightening limits of what the local authority could do made it reluctant to consult with citizens, e.g.:

Extract 50

“[...] [W]e don’t do enough consultation around that [citizen’s concerns: inter alia cuts in relation to schools, houses’ accessibility for elderly people], but the problem is if you do consultation you raise expectations and if we haven’t got the money it becomes a real problem” (politician 2).

In this way, the local state might become less responsible for citizens’ main concerns – and know them less.

Though Nottingham’s public is very diverse, these sections show how parts of it cannot realise basic social and economic rights. This came up as a hindering factor for active political involvement – and I argue that it diminishes the position of Nottingham’s civil society, which in parts is very active, but in others politically apathetic. Correspondingly, a slight majority of citizens’ survey respondents saw their impact on local matters as limited. Also, large-n longitudinal research supports the connection, showing that poverty decreases political participation (Mood & Jonsson, 2016). While the pronounced power asymmetries between citizens and policy developers contradict social justice, they also afford diverging experiences which potentially hamper understanding constraints and motives of those in different positions – as e.g. expressed by some prescriptive and individualising policy approaches.

6.4 Stuttgart: political power embedded

Moving to the Stuttgart case, I first focus on how informants described the development of policies and actors’ involvement.

6.4.1 Urban negotiations

“Also hold together a bit.”

(Manfred Rommel, mayor of Stuttgart 1974 – 1996; Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 2013)

Informants often described policy-making in Stuttgart as pluralist, marked by discussion and consensus-seeking – being exemplified by the above quote which an interviewee invoked. Pluralism is expressed through the 11 groups present in the city council and shifting majorities in the proportional representation system; through new groups emerging and others dropping out. An example for a new group are ‘Stadtisten’, who entered the council in 2014 via 1.7% of the votes, justifying its foundation as follows:

Extract 51

„I have nowhere really felt at home [politically] and not even in a way that I say, with some spirit of compromise I can think my way into this or that. So at [...] most parties there are still topics, where I say, well that really is a no-go. [...] That [...] is always such a block thinking. That then left against right [...]. And the other side [...] just declares itself in favour of or against something. But not [that] a dialogue happens where one could meet in the middle. To find a solution which is maybe viable for both sides. [...] [T]hat was the core idea of Stadtisten, [...] pluralism. That means, not one or the other is right” (Dr. Ralph Schertlen, then Councillor of STAdTISTEN).

This exemplifies a relatively differentiated representation of political stances in Stuttgart.

With the various groups in the council, practices of exchange, negotiation and consensus-building were seen as necessarily prevailing. Interviewees described how groups would typically try to achieve majorities for motions before they put them to the local council in order to avoid rejections. Though majorities in Stuttgart often form along politically-habituated lines, e.g. agreements between SPD and Green Party or between CDU and FDP, groups also negotiate beyond traditional camps. Similarly, relations between councillors and the administration were mostly characterised as

communicative and coordinating. Political ideas would partly be discussed with administrative officers, adjusted for feasibility or amended by administrations' proposals. Documents in single policy areas are often formulated by according administrative departments. Policy styles were partly viewed as pragmatic, partly as ideological (cf. Extract 51).

Correspondingly, policy processes in Stuttgart sometimes stretch over longer periods. Negotiation then prevails over scheduled and top-down decisions and action, even if these were aimed at. According examples are firstly developing the cycling infrastructure with objectives not being realised until almost a decade after setting them (Baur, 2018) – and a public petition in response (cf. Section 6.5.1). Secondly, the traffic and urban development project Stuttgart 21 is a prime instance. It restructures the city's railway junction and has been presented in 1994 with its architectural design decided upon in 1997. Subsequently, the project came to a halt due to the withdrawal of proponents from their offices and a new federal level coalition (Südwestrundfunk, 2018). It also met increasing and significant public opposition, escalating in the 'Black Thursday' on 30/09/2010, when "enormous protests" (Vetter, n.d., p. 4) against Stuttgart 21 were violently dissolved, leaving people injured – in a police operation later recognised as unlawful (Linsenmann, 2018). A public mediation followed to resolve the conflict, as well as a referendum on the project in 2011 with a 58.8% vote for Stuttgart 21. Throughout the process, costs increased and delays occurred repeatedly (Südwestrundfunk, 2018).

Beyond the city council, informants pictured the institutionalised and/or informal involvement of further actors in policy-making. Depending on the issue, these were inter alia associations and interest groups, e.g. the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the Chamber of Crafts, unions, companies; other governance levels, their political actors and administrative institutions; the major welfare associations, citizens' initiatives, religious representatives, especially the city deacons of the Catholic and the Protestant churches and partly of Muslim communities. However, formal partnerships are not the norm and responsibility for policies often largely rests on the city administration or on set arrangements, such as on welfare associations for

social services. Policy objectives are partly conceived as directions to work towards with no clearly defined actors' responsibilities, outcome measures nor time-frames. Interviewees saw certain actors missing from the policy negotiations. Herein, they inter alia referred to migrants, Muslims, less articulate and/or educated citizens – while the more articulate were partly seen as unjustly and undemocratically dominating urban developments. This was found to make citizen participation non-representative; exchange was sometimes considered as too little or dialogues to exist in pretence.

The New Steering Model in Stuttgart. With NPM reforms in Germany being introduced in relatively decentralised ways and often driven by local actors (cf. Section 3.3.5 b)), it was up for investigation how far its 'German version', the 'New Steering Model' (NSM) has been embraced locally (for British NPM reforms cf. Section 3.3.5 a) – for local countermovements cf. Section 6.3.2). Public sector employee 1 – to whom all views and quotes in this section relate – shared his experience of the NSM introduction in Stuttgart. Being significant to the study's conceptualisation as internal dimension of NPM reforms and as a meaningful within-case, I discuss it forth following.

From 1990 to 1995, when many local authorities aimed at introducing NSM, "Stuttgart this time did not sleep, like many others", but had a mayor who wanted to take it up. After founding a steering group and advertising NSM to the city council as enabling better administrative steering and control, while the council would only set broad lines, it agreed to NSM reforms. At the time, a council majority consisted of CDU, FDP and Independent Voters (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-d). However, there was a "quite clear mistrust" of the council towards the administration, fearing that the latter may steer processes and that the political side might then not be able to act or control. These concerns of disempowerment led to the wish for a neutral project accompaniment. Following an according tender, a large consultancy company received the attractive assignment of 3-5 million Euro starting off with "[g]reat euphoria. It was super". The consultancy's project team presented their NSM plan at a closed meeting where the first of two "cracks" appeared: the plan involved structured goal-setting through a workshop with the city administration's

departments and establishing objectives with the council, led by a steering group consisting of administration and consultancy members. However, the council did not expect to formulate objectives itself and was also not inclined to do so. Instead, the administration should bring forward a proposal. The meeting has then been set aside. Following steps were integrating the ca. 10% of administrative personnel involved in projects apart from any steering into the steering process and adapting the financial system to the latter.

The process was partly met with scepticism and resistance by the administration, partly chances were seen in budgeting. It was nonetheless carried out following the time plan and involved mapping goal dimensions and building up a reporting system – a “gigantic work” with objectives for employees, finances and citizens, involving key figures to be presented to the council. Here, the second “crack” occurred with a following “showdown”: councillors were critical that they could not intervene in processes after objectives had been set. They therefore asked for “very effortful” quarterly – instead of yearly – reports of performance indicators and detailed figures of all departments. In a following meeting where the council should define its objectives, councillors “refused. [...] Entirely”. In essence, groups in the council did not want to share their objectives and achievements since political competitors could copy them. Although these political objectives differed from those in NSM, the latter did not go ahead at this point. However, with the effected investments, the council asked the administration to formulate objectives itself. This was precisely the opposite of the latter’s interest, given the effortful reporting system and since it would make the administration more transparent and attackable, due to detailed data on departments including calculable provision costs or sickness rates. On these bases, departments could be held accountable for set objectives which they did not meet. Public sector employee 1 commented: „So it [...] started [...] relatively well. For the council, not for the administration. The administration has been made to look like a fool. Yes. At this occasion”.

Subsequently, decreasing tax income led to cost pressures. Ideas for saving 30-40 million German mark, mainly in personnel and material costs, were then fetched

from the created reporting system and “rushed through” “in a bad interplay” of finance department, central offices and council. “The steering model was led ad absurdum because everyone said: ‘ok, now the whole turned into budget consolidation’”. This latter and daily operations were then more important than a steering model. In this way, the NSM introduction in Stuttgart ended after two to three years; the consultancy was paid off and there was never a final report nor another effort in the direction of NSM. Traces of the attempted reform remain with the partial reporting system, including performance indicators for each department, separated into product groups, objectives and measures as part of the city’s budget plan and a central project steering. Since then, each new project receives a project order, a framework with objectives, duration, employees’ and financial resources involved. The finance department thereby won information and steering opportunities, i.e. cost and performance accounting options for separate products. By contrast, output steering and contract management have not been retained.

Public sector employee 1 concluded that NSM did not suit Stuttgart’s local setting, as municipal – other than federal or state level – politics steered less through objectives and more by close bilateral links between politicians and administrators. Overall, the city council did not want to lose its power nor commit to time-set objectives, involving responsibility for the process and contestability. Concurrently, it mistrusted the administration and could still seek responsibility for shortcomings with it in order “[t]o look good in front of the citizen”. Conversely, the administration did not want to give up power through high transparency and preferred to steer via budgets, not objectives. The informant concurred that NSM would not have changed much in Stuttgart, as it would have remained a rudimentary steering model, not attaining what KGSt⁵¹ aimed for. This was because the council would have discharged

⁵¹ KGSt, the Municipal Association for Administration Management, develops concepts and advises regarding local authority management in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. It specifically supports processes of administrative modernisation (Kommunale Gemeinschaftsstelle für Verwaltungsmanagement, 2019).

itself from the contract management and the administration would not have tolerated it thus far.

Overall, the incomplete NSM introduction in Stuttgart increased the generation of data ordering political and administrative action according to an economic logic. This involves a codification in terms of recording processes, assigning costs and accountability. Meanwhile, previous budget steering was considered unmodern: “a bit further away from SAP et cetera. Like jumped out of the village”. This development may be contextualised as part of wider societal rationalisation, modernisation and individualisation, where control and accountability partly remove conventions and trust; as does focusing on smaller social entities (e.g. departments, individuals) instead of more collective ones (e.g. whole administration, city society). Paralleling the individual level, I suggest that the new reporting data provide an evidence base to problematise related behaviour – as has been the case in times of budget pressures – and can thus function as instruments of power. The exemplar illustrates how these data were co-produced with power structures, i.e. with the administration in a weaker position than the council, and how power was central to the developments. The NSM case of a move towards a market-oriented approach and its subsequent partial reversal – back to a more ‘Weberian’ one – due to incompatibilities with the prevailing governance logic, resonates with other local authorities’ experiences (cf. Section 3.3.5 b)) and with similar instances in Stuttgart, i.e. infrastructure privatisation and cross-border leasing transactions (cf. Section 5.7.4).

6.4.2 The urban relating to other governance levels

This section moves from inner urban relations to those with other layers of governance. Some interviewees stressed the relevance of Stuttgart’s embedding in the Region of Stuttgart, consisting of six administrative districts. These regional relations were generally seen as cooperative. The following example of a strategy development shows how regional cooperation of numerous different actors was viewed as valuable per se:

Extract 52

„The guideline strategy process showed how important the cooperation of regional actors is thereby. Involved in the process were besides regional institutions like the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the Chamber of Crafts or the unions, districts and municipalities numerous universities, research institutions, companies and interest groups. In doing so, new processes and projects have been initiated and regional collaboration has been strengthened altogether. This process therefore already constitutes a value in itself for regional cooperation and networking“ (Verband Region Stuttgart, 2013, p. 19).

Governance in Stuttgart importantly interacts with the state of Baden-Württemberg, of which the city is the political and administrative centre. For instance, some policy issues spread across governance levels (e.g. air pollution) and political majorities at both are similar with the CDU and the Green Party dominating. Informants referred to this intertwining, such as business representative 7, for whom state and federal actors were premier dialogue partners – more so than urban ones:

Extract 53

„So there are some municipal players [...] via their institution, be it the Chamber of Industry and Commerce for example [...], there are also [...] mayors [...] with whom we do things together [...]. But usually our focus is rather not so much on city politics, but-. My manager is in a discussion group with the state premier, we are in a lively exchange with the economics minister Ms Hoffmeister-Kraut. It is therefore rather the state initiatives which [accompany] us as sparring partners [...]. So [...] this concept [...] of the city, that is [...] not the primary for us. Because [...] questions of education policy, of skills shortage, of families, work time models and so on, [I] find these are actually all things which are of state and federal political natures.“

Possibly interacting with the principle of subsidiarity and thus high local autonomy, political relations with the state and the federal government did not come up as problematic and were barely thematised.

Regarding the EU, Baden-Württemberg receives funding of 507 million Euro during 2014-2020 via the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund together (City Population, 2018; Thormaehlen, 2019; own calculation).

Support through these two funds across Germany differs regionally in relation to economic performance, with higher funding mostly in East German states (Bundesinstitut für Bau-, Stadt- und Raumforschung, n.d.). Stuttgart Region's Economic Development Corporation emphasised benefits through EU funding in terms of knowledge exchange and collaboration:

“Funding from European programmes allows Stuttgart Region to implement innovative project ideas and work together with other European regions in searching for solutions to challenges. In addition, such projects facilitate an exchange of knowledge and experience with other regions [...]”
(Wirtschaftsförderung Region Stuttgart, 2016b).

However, the relation to the EU or its funding did not play a significant role in any of the interviews.

Altogether, relations to other local, regional, state, national and European levels were mostly perceived as cooperative – thus in tendency allowing to combine (sustainability) efforts. Regional collaboration and the interconnectedness with the state-level were particularly relevant, making the urban partly receding into the background.

6.5 Stuttgart: the public

6.5.1 Views and conditions of the public

Connecting the political and administrative to the public, I subsequently seek to understand the public's conditions through its views and further data – partly enabling comparisons with Nottingham.

Stuttgart's biennial citizens' survey gives insights into views of the population and about how the city council constructs the latter. For the 2017 survey, 9,400 citizens have been representatively selected and 44% of them participated (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2017b). Thereby, quality of life in Stuttgart was rated positively, i.e. very good by 15%, good by 65%, medium by 17%, bad by 2% and very bad by 0%. When asked about their satisfaction with 29 areas of life, respondents were

most satisfied with shopping facilities (81% – converted to a scale of 0-100 with 100 being most satisfied), job and income opportunities (79%), cultural institutions/events (76%), waste disposal/collection (76%) and medical care/hospitals (73%) (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2017b, p. 1). They were most dissatisfied with the housing offer/market (28% – values being lowest here since the last 12 citizens' surveys), parking in the inner city (32%), regulation of car traffic (37%), air quality (42%) and parking in the residential area (44%) (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2017b, p. 10).

In relation to biggest problems in Stuttgart, respondents on average named 9.2 out of 33 given issues. “[T]oo much street traffic” was chosen most frequently (by 75%), followed by “too high rents” (73%), “too many construction sites” (67%), an “unsatisfactory housing offer” (65%), “bad air quality” (59%) and “too little parking options” (58%) (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2017b). With the crucial exception of housing, existential socio-economic threats and social problems were seen as lesser priorities compared to these traffic and infrastructure issues. According items were “too many beggars” (stated by 38%), “insecurity on the streets (drugs, robbery, criminal damage)” (28%), “safety and order” (28%), “insecurity in public transport (harassment, robbery, criminal damage)” (27%), “poverty” (15%), “homelessness” (15%) and finally “unemployment” (7%) as the least often mentioned problem (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2017b, p. 10). This corresponds to Stuttgart being among the three most secure German cities in terms of crime (Holowiecki, 2018). Besides, a “tight financial and budget situation of the city” (10%) figured as 6th least important problem and “too high communal taxes/tolls/charges” were named by 27%. More public spending was especially desired for “residential construction” and “improving air quality” (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2017b).

Views about equity are captured by Stuttgart's 2015 citizens' survey for which 9,167 persons were representatively selected and of whom 40% participated (Statistisches Amt Stuttgart, 2018, p. 3). Herein, the justice concepts of

egalitarianism⁵² and ascriptivism⁵³ received high approval of 63% to 67% agreement to according statements. This was less the case for fatalism⁵⁴ (40 – 54% agreement) and individualism⁵⁵ (34 – 42% agreement). Those with lower educational attainment and income saw the distribution of goods and services in more fateful and resignative ways (Statistisches Amt Stuttgart, 2018).

Overall, Stuttgart's citizens' survey as an instrument of governance encompasses a broad range of issues, including satisfaction with living conditions, the city, its administration and infrastructures; main problems, spending priorities, justice, participation in elections, views on politics; activities, mobility and energy use. It reflects main Stuttgart themes coming up in this study, i.e. emphases on the environment, planning, social development and integration and often structural approaches.

So far, a picture emerges where Stuttgart's public is relatively satisfied and mainly struggles with housing, traffic and air quality – issues also interacting with the city's economic expansion. However, some population groups came up as more disadvantaged during the case study which I discuss to represent diversity: those receiving social benefits, homeless persons, sex workers/prostitutes and refugees. These themes shaped up differently for both cases. Besides, comparability with Nottingham is limited due to less available data for Stuttgart, such as for fuel poverty where I have not found data for the city nor Germany or regarding health where "many data from the healthcare sector are not accessible for communal health reporting" (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-g).

⁵² "The state is responsible for the distribution of goods, chances and benefits" (Statistisches Amt Stuttgart, 2018, p. 6).

⁵³ "The distribution is naturally given or determined on the basis of social role and social status" (Statistisches Amt Stuttgart, 2018, p. 6).

⁵⁴ "The distribution is being accepted as fateful and resignatively" (Statistisches Amt Stuttgart, 2018, p. 6).

⁵⁵ "The distribution is based on competition" (Statistisches Amt Stuttgart, 2018, p. 6).

First, in relation to recipients of social benefits, civil society representative 8 interpreted how deprivation and lacking participation in society are connected to a decline in behavioural conventions and scapegoating of specific groups:

Extract 54

“If one has not participated for a very, very long time in everything happening outside and one is not important anymore. [...] [That] [a]lso changes the view I think, so it [...] becomes more and more limited [...]. [...] [I] am [then] actually permanently busy with a lack or a grievance in my personal life and find everything unjust. And that hardens and I become [...] frustrated and angry. [...] Everywhere one [...] has to set out everything for the support one gets from the state. [...] [H]ow that happens or how one feels at it, that does something to the people. And one starts, so out of an inclined position, to also judge the rest of the world. And I think things like xenophobia, racism, these are all also consequences which come to the fore due to this inclined position [...] of people [...]. And one always has the feeling, other people take something away from myself, otherwise I would not feel so bad. That means, I am [...] worth nothing anymore. [...] [T]he inhibition thresholds, I notice it here, the readiness to push someone, to nudge in order to reach something, they in fact sink, [...] the more I am reduced also as a human in my value in society. [...] [I] think that is indeed a serious effect of permanent shortage or of poverty [...].

Lacking socio-economic security for many in Stuttgart has also been described as a “fight for work” under discriminating and harshening circumstances of a growing low wage sector and a precarisation of jobs (cf. Section 7.8.2)

Second, estimatedly 3,700 homeless persons live in Stuttgart in 2015, i.e. more than in almost every other German large city (Lill, 2016). With ‘only’ 20-60 of them sleeping rough, this has inter alia been attributed to a very good and long-standing according support infrastructure. The latter was described as one of the best nationwide, having created a certain pull effect – as a social welfare office employee stated –, with many coming to Stuttgart to find work and stranding due to a lack of affordable housing. This inter alia concerned incoming EU citizens and refugees who increasingly became homeless (Lill, 2016). Mainly through a rise in the latter two

groups, the number of homeless persons housed in Stuttgart quintupled in the last ten years (Bury, 2018b).

Third, regarding sex workers/prostitutes, Stuttgart's police has registered 1,686 of them in the city in 2017 through legally binding consultations, mainly coming from Romania, Bulgaria and the Dominican Republic (Bury, 2018a). The German legalisation of prostitution in 2002 led to a strong increase in numbers and went with conditions where prostitutes are being made dependent and businesses are partly in the hands of organised crime (Schmoll, 2017).

Finally, around 7,700 refugees live in Stuttgart in the end of 2017 in 125 refugee residences, with many of them having fled from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria and Eritrea (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-f). However, due to shortcomings, the United Nations called on Germany to ensure that asylum seekers enjoyed equal treatment regarding access to non-contributory social security systems, to healthcare and to the labour market; and to establish better living conditions, especially regarding overcrowding, in order to respect the country's commitment to human rights conventions (Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte, 2019a, 2019b).

In summary, large parts of Stuttgart's public appear to enjoy relatively high socio-economic living standards, while environmental, housing and infrastructural problems are perceived as prevailing. Simultaneously, some groups of the population are excluded from these standards, in multiply marginalised positions and often deprived of basic social and economic rights, thus compromising social justice.

6.5.2 Devising policies aiming for sustainability – and the public

Building on the outlined, this section explores the public's role in negotiating local policies pursuing sustainability. I proceed as described in Section 6.3.2. Table 7 represents five significant tendencies for Stuttgart: civil society had a crucial impact on the development of the first three of them. I discuss them forth following.

Privatisation and re-municipalisation of infrastructures. Infrastructure privatisations in Stuttgart have partially been reversed after civil society involvement.

First, cross-border leasing transactions were opposed by citizens and their group Water Forum, who eventually impeded another one and contributed to changing according majorities in the city council. Seeing private ownership of public infrastructure as unsustainable was one of their motives. Second, Water Forum similarly opposed the privatisation of Stuttgart's infrastructures for gas, electricity and drinking water. The group criticised "[a] selling out like in no other city in Germany or in Europe [...] All being property of us citizens, built up over generations" (Stuttgarter Wasserforum, n.d.). With its activities, Water Forum crucially contributed to partial reversals of the privatisations (cf. Section 5.7.4).

Air pollution; traffic organisation. With Stuttgart being sometimes described as a 'car city' due to its significant car industry cluster, matters of air pollution and traffic organisation may concern these local interest structures. I first outline the issue of air pollution. With a number of lawsuits since 2005 against Baden-Württemberg due to fine dust pollution in Stuttgart breaching EU legal limits – which have all been won –, Manfred Niess and/or the Alliance for Climate and Environment Stuttgart have driven state and city in the matter. They forced the authorities to establish and update clean air plans (Buchmeier, 2017; Klima- und Umweltbündnis Stuttgart, n.d.; Leibbrand, 2017). In 2016, this led to Baden-Württemberg obliging itself to limit car traffic on days with exceeding air pollution, followed by a backdown and a driving ban on diesel cars with Euro 4 emission standard and below from 2019 on to reduce nitrogen values (Asendorpf, 2017; Zeit Online, 2018). The activists' legal action was accompanied by protests against traffic-induced air pollution and for driving bans (Götz, 2018). The Alliance for Climate and Environment Stuttgart aims for a policy of sustainability, climate protection and the necessary change in energy policy (Klima- und Umweltbündnis Stuttgart, n.d.). Second, an instance regarding traffic organisation is the 'Cycle-decision Stuttgart' ('Radentscheid'). While the city government aimed to increase the bicycle traffic share to 20% long-term, several citizens perceived its action as too slow and set up the public petition 'Radentscheid Stuttgart' in 2018 (Ayerle, 2018; Baur, 2018). It demands that everyone in Stuttgart should have the option to travel by bike safely, swiftly and without fear, requiring a cycle-friendly transport policy, better cycle paths and safely designed streets and junctions – altogether aiming

to make Stuttgart a more liveable city (Radentscheid Stuttgart, n.d.). Though the petition was declared inadmissible on legal grounds, the mayor wanted to further pursue its objectives, calling it a „warning and motivation at once” (Ayerle, 2019a, 2019b). Subsequently declaring that Stuttgart should become “a real cycle city”, cycling policy objectives became more ambitious, inter alia aiming for a bicycle traffic share of 25% until 2030 (Ayerle, 2019).

Stuttgart 21. As described in Section 6.4.1, protests against the traffic and urban development project Stuttgart 21 led to a public mediation and a referendum on it in 2011 (Südwestrundfunk, 2018). Besides, major shifts in political majorities have partly been attributed to the protests:

Extract 55

„There was at first the CDU-dominated city and state politics and in the course of the confrontations around Stuttgart 21 there was a political direction change [...]. The Green Party has won the elections in 2011, a green state minister for the first time in Germany, and in Stuttgart the CDU mayor has been replaced by a green one. These are results of the extraparliamentary protest on the occasion of Stuttgart 21. Not only, but absolutely crucially” (Dr. Werner Sauerborn, Action group against Stuttgart 21).

The issue can be interpreted as an emancipatory development of citizens in relation to the state and it may have “supported a growing climate of ‘pro-cooperation’, assuming that cooperation is an appropriate way of conflict resolution and a way of strengthening political legitimacy [...]” (Vetter, n.d., pp. 4–5). Regarding his opposition, Werner Sauerborn of the citizens’ initiative ‘Action group against Stuttgart 21’ saw the project as reckless towards future generations:

Extract 56

„[...] [I] find it virtually ruthless towards future generations. [...] [T]he one who breaks down a 16-track train station in favour of an eight-track one, which can never be expanded, simply ruins the future of this city in relation to transport

options. And tied to this are of course many ecological questions“ (Dr. Werner Sauerborn, Action group against Stuttgart 21).

Strong support of disadvantaged groups. I described in Section 5.6.1 how Stuttgart’s exceptionally encompassing social support system expands on national ones, often justified in terms of social justice. This is inter alia the case for homelessness support (cf. also Section 6.5.1), support of drug addicts or efforts for social mixing.

Changing (infra-)structures. The document analysis yields a picture where change for the better, often towards making life in Stuttgart more sustainable, is relatively often aimed for by changing urban structures and infrastructures and more seldomly through individual level changes (cf. Section 5.2.2 c)). This is inter alia the case for environmental protection, the integrated and recently improved public transport system or social provision such as in terms of child care, youth social work, the Youth Council or in supporting the economy to maintain prosperity.

Altogether, it stands out how civil society opposition as organised activities, protests or legal action changed the course of important policy issues aiming for sustainability in Stuttgart; while many other policies stemmed from city council activities. Citizens also often justified their acting with concerns for social and intergenerational justice – arguing that the respective political activities counteracted it. There was partially a sense of civil society ‘being ahead’ of politics.

However, probing this tendency, civil society involvement also followed ‘NIMBY’ motives, i.e. ‘Not in my backyard’, aiming to avoid perceived drawbacks in one’s direct environment. This has also been invoked by interviewees, e.g. in relation to disruptions through the Stuttgart 21 construction site – which would benefit future generations. Other NIMBY instances may be dismissals of wind turbine constructions by adjoining neighbourhoods (e.g., Durchdenwald, 2016; Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 2011); or – thus far unsuccessful – petitions or referenda rejecting local refugee accommodations (Jürgen, 2017). I therefore conclude that citizens’ involvement in Stuttgart has been very impactful in several, but not all instances and partially

contributed to more sustainable policies – though the relation between civil society impact and sustainability remains ambiguous (cf. NIMBY protests).

6.5.3 Relation of the public and policy developers

Focusing on the relation between the public and policy developers, I approach both groups’ conditions subsequently and draw on views about it. Table 9 indicates a rather similar access to economic resources as well as realisation of economic and social rights of the average citizen and policy developers, moderate inequalities and segregation; an above average educated public and more so policy developers; and strong local competencies in a pluralist local political fabric.

Table 9: Stuttgart's public and policy developers

	Public	Policy developers
Local government	Local autonomy, subsidiary principle Stable/expanding budget Proportional representation 60 councillors (2014-2019): 11 different groups (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-k)	
Social and economic rights/ resources	Disposable income per inhabitant: 24,517 € (Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg, 2018, p. 3) Many realising social and economic rights – exceptions housing and disadvantaged groups	Average monthly gross salary in public sector: 39,840 – 43,160 € ⁵⁶ (Gehalt.de, n.d.) Allowance for council members: 18,000 € + possibly other income (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2018b, p. 1f)
National inequalities	In incomes – Germany: 0.29 (25th most unequal of 37 mostly OECD-countries; OECD, 2017) Regional inequality of disposable incomes: Germany in lower area in European comparison (Braml & Felbermayr, 2018)	

⁵⁶ To give a rough orientation, an annual gross income of 41,500 € in tax bracket one amounts to a net income of 25.855 € (Gehaltsrechner, 2019).

Education	STR above German average (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2015)	Mostly university-educated
Socio-economic segregation	Relatively strong social mixing; in decline with housing crisis, displacing those on lower incomes	

Sources: own research and as indicated.

According to Stuttgart's 2017 citizens' survey, satisfaction with "work of the local city offices" was 69% (converted to a scale of 0-100 with 100 being most satisfied) and with "work of the city administration altogether" 62% (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2017b, p. 10).

The sometimes critical role of the public in policy negotiations gives insights into its relationship with policy developers and the according power positions of both. Interviewees correspondingly described Stuttgart's civil society as partly very engaged, confident, strong and fortified, as no "heelers"; articulate and knowledgeable, also regarding functionings of politics and administration. This was found to influence the whole society; and to be enabled by prosperity, e.g.:

Extract 57

"It is significantly easier to get involved or to pass something on when one has something. [...] So people fight stronger for their convictions because they can seek a problem for themselves, for which they become active. Because they do not have to be busy with their existential problems all day" (public sector employee 4).

Further named factors for the powerful civil society were time, the regional pietistic and strong civic legacies:

Extract 58

„So fundamentally, it certainly has to do with the city's wealth, people have time to get involved, that is not an insignificant factor. On the other hand, there is this pietistic state, this obligation to also support others. [...] And the other issue is that in Southern Germany there is also generally this long, big tradition of civil society, historically, I don't know whether one can stretch the large curve to 1848, but so

this really great sense, okay, we are citizens. And we are self-confident citizens and shape our living space" (civil society representative 9).

An informant outlined how the city's political leadership was careful to involve the public early enough in processes, so as to obviate protests like around Stuttgart 21 (cf. Section 6.4.1). Furthermore, Dr. Werner Sauerborn of Action group against Stuttgart 21 found that the respective citizen movement was more knowledgeable about the project than those dealing with it professionally:

Extract 59

„The project is incredibly complex. It requires such a profound expertise, so as to politically assert oneself and be able to interfere, that many, by the way I also believe in journalism, many [...] prefer to just stay away from it. Also in the justice system [...]. We [...] have dozens of trials still pending. [...] There has not yet been a sustainable reappraisal concerning the whole project, also no committees of inquiry. And I believe that this is the fear of involved professions such as justice, journalism, politics, to deal with this complex matter. And at this, we as citizens' movement are a real step ahead I think. So on our end [...], I believe, concerning the whole complex of this project, the expertise is higher than at the actors themselves.“

Politician 1 perceived that citizen participation had sometimes been used as a “combat instrument of obstruction” in policy processes, where groups mainly focused on their particular interests. Besides, developments around Stuttgart 21 had “weakened the backbone”, the strength and decisiveness of some decision-makers, with its critics “being right in all points”. The politician saw the city council as to some extent driven by citizens' initiatives; and explained how he expected citizens' involvement:

Extract 60

„Now we are coming to my understanding of the state. Politics almost always reacts. It only has to weigh up in the end. So from these different initiatives that

are coming. So, I am always saying, folks, do drive politics. We will certainly decide in the end. But I [...] expect of every citizen that they get involved" (politician 1).

In relation to who gets involved, civil society representative 9 stated that „it is all educated middle-class milieu which fulfils itself again somewhere”, but however stressed that engagement was widely spread, though some groups lacked access to the public and media.

Altogether, informants' perceptions evidence limited asymmetries in power, knowledge and resources between parts of civil society and local decision-makers. I argue that the partly strong position of civil society is – inter alia – a function of comparatively favourable living conditions where relatively many can realise basic social and economic rights and inequalities between policy developers and the public are rather moderate. This corresponds to informants' views and is substantiated by the finding that persons in secure income situations in Baden-Württemberg are twice as often volunteering, active in citizens' initiatives, in political parties and local politics than persons at risk of poverty (Saleth et al., 2015, p. 587). By contrast, it appears less likely for disadvantaged groups to get involved in public matters, more so given possibly limited access to according structures. Overall, the possibility and experience of successfully contesting local political power speaks for limited hierarchies in Stuttgart's local state-society relationship.

6.6 Discussion – research question 2

The following concludes on RQ 2, *How does the negotiation of policies relate to sustainability?*, as set out in the chapter's introduction.

In Nottingham, citizens' partly declining living conditions are especially unsustainable, also as they likely weaken their negotiating position. Thereby, government fails what may be a convention of how the population and its problems are being understood and managed by the state, as expressed by Foucault:

"[...] [P]opulation comes to appear above all else as the ultimate end of government. [G]overnment has as its purpose [...] the welfare of the population,

the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc”
(Foucault et al., 1991, p. 100).

Besides, if “[d]evelopment consists of the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency” (Sen, 1999, p. xii), then development in this capitalist organisation reversed for parts of the population. During rising inequalities, the city could be considered as part of a ‘periphery’⁵⁷, constituting an – on average – devalued place in many respects: in terms of living standards and health, educational and employment opportunities, but also immaterially when inhabitants are disrespected. Latter experiences were perceived as highly significant and harmful in Nottingham (Mckenzie, 2015). Besides unfavourable existing conditions, national policies underpin some of the city’s devaluations with the funding regime disadvantaging it, unequal cuts to local authorities, austerity and the fostering of a market-liberal competition between regions, cities and people. As conditions of those losing out under such systems deteriorate, these policies are socially unjust. With this expectable outcome, the welfare of Nottingham’s whole population does not appear as a prime purpose of government. The institutional structure of segregated wealthier and poorer local authorities and relating interests reinforces inequalities – which European Union funding regimes and local politicians aim to counterbalance. Facing little local opposition, Nottingham’s long-standing Labour government realises extraordinary measures in relation to social and intergenerational justice – though within tightening budgetary limits. Governance in Nottingham is co-produced with partly contradicting values of individual responsibility, competition, ambition, the need to select favourable environments (places of residence, schools, etc.), the strengthening of local infrastructures, redistribution and supporting the disadvantaged. Associated with the

⁵⁷ Increasing spatial rifts between ‘centres’ and ‘peripheries’ as poles of contemporary capitalism are being described. On the one hand, a new educational and cognitive class divide emerged, functioning as an up- vs. down-escalator, respectively. On the other hand, this divide coincides with spatial polarisations between ‘centres’ – with rising educational and economic resources, such as Stuttgart –, and ‘peripheries’ – underperforming in these respects, such as Nottingham. These trends interact with the globalisation of markets and rising complexity, requiring more cognitive skills (Collier, 2019). However, their occurrences vary cross-nationally.

First-past-the-post voting system and relatively confrontational negotiating styles, to an extent ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ emerge in these contexts. With the latter meeting considerable hardship, this plays out as structural violence.

Contrarily, Stuttgart is in a position of structural advantage and increasingly valued. Socio-economic capitalist progress on average still materialises in terms of the population’s rising welfare. Advantage in Stuttgart accumulates as relatively well-earning/wealthy people living in the city, favourable living conditions (e.g. an increasing longevity), educational and employment prospects. However, simultaneously growing inequalities and exclusions contradict social and intergenerational justice. With rising segregation, those disadvantaged and average earners increasingly struggle to find housing in the city. Politically, negotiations in the urban realm and with other levels of governance – all with partly proportional voting systems –, are marked by coordination and consensus-seeking. This may relate to lesser interregional inequalities in Germany and a more generous welfare state than in the British case. In comparison, these policies intermingle with more communitarian values and approaches, less competition, the constitutional aim of comparable living conditions and lesser frictions between local and national levels. A greater distribution of power amongst governance levels and citizens thereby seems to correspond to more equal outcomes.

Reflecting on civil society and the context of Polanyian counter-movements to urban marketisation and austerity (Warner & Clifton, 2014), I observe all three patterns in Nottingham. Mainly due to cuts of the government’s Revenue Support Grant (cf. Section 3.4.1 b)), local services are significantly ‘hollowed out’. Besides, the city council ‘rides the wave’, i.e. harnesses the market successfully (cf. Section 5.4.3 c)). It finally opposes marketisation (‘pushes back’) by circumventing government’s market-oriented policies. Citizens’ movements also engage in relating push backs, e.g. in anti-austerity or Living Wage protests – but relatively seldom changed the course of major urban policy instances. In Stuttgart, marketisation occurred from the 1990s onwards when the city rather effectively ‘rode the wave’, i.e. adopted NPM early on and privatised or leased out its infrastructures, partly capitalising on them. Subsequent

'push backs', often led by civil society, ultimately promoted a substantial re-communalisation of infrastructures.

Comparing both cases with regards to how urban policies aiming for sustainability are devised bares contrasting power dynamics (cf. Table 7). The development of crucial according policy issues in Stuttgart has sometimes changed essentially due to civil society engagement. Politics and administration were thus in significant instances driven by civil society; they were partly seen as not doing their jobs and partially became wary of the public, while happenings around Stuttgart 21 became a cautionary tale. In Nottingham, main policies aiming for sustainability were prevailingly initiated and implemented by the city council, i.e. rather top-down and partly in protective, sometimes prescriptive approaches. Within their urban fabrics, Stuttgart's civil society appears more impact- and powerful than Nottingham's.

Besides, the perspective of Polanyian 'push backs' to urban marketisation and austerity discloses according cleavages and power dynamics. In Nottingham, they lie mostly between the government pushing for these concerns and the local council and citizens opposing them. However, with strong central control, this opposition remains less effective than in Stuttgart, where more market-based approaches were pushed for by the city council and driving local actors – and also effectively rejected locally. However, regarding austerity, the cities' national contexts generate disparate initial conditions. The dismantling British welfare state implies an extensive dis-embedding of the market system from society – conditions which Polanyi related to the rise of fascism in the 1930s (Palley, 2018; Polanyi, 1944). The profound political, institutional and economic crisis and polarisation around 'Brexit' exactly arose in the context of a dismantled welfare state – which Palley (2018, p. 1) calls "critical in saving capitalism from itself after World War II" as "a way of embedding the market system so as to produce socially acceptable outcomes that are politically stable". In contrast, "[n]eoliberalism's war promises a body blow against shared prosperity" (Palley, 2018, p. 1), or the breaking of a previous social contract. This might again threaten other conventions in liberal capitalism, e.g. about democracy, civility or public debate. In

Germany, the market system's embedding also decreased during welfare state retrenchments, but it has not been revoked as extensively as in the British case.

I connect the varying political impact of both cities' publics to their differential relations with policy developers. In Stuttgart, both groups are more equal than in Nottingham in terms of realising social and economic rights, access to economic and educational resources, experiential worlds, political and societal hierarchies. This interacts with differing views and experiences of citizenship, i.e. civil societies' capacities, obligations, agency and self-efficacy – averagely appearing more effective and more on an equal footing with policy developers in Stuttgart than in Nottingham. Arguably, Stuttgart's 'middle class' appears larger than Nottingham's. As discussed, these varying power asymmetries manifest in the development of policies aiming for sustainability. Moreover, they are reproduced in the communication between policy developers and the public, likely reinforcing existing disjunctions. The potential of civil society to resist policies therefore seems to be connected to negotiating styles and its relation to policy developers. The public's and the local state's impact relate differently to sustainability, but a stronger civil society adds a layer of scrutiny and justification which sometimes contributed to more sustainable outcomes. Similarly, Scott (1999) identifies a civil society unable to resist well-intentioned, large-scale authoritarian state plans as one of four conditions to their failing. Besides, I argue in Section 8.4.2 that the diverging political systems influence negotiating styles – where a culture marked more by compromise as in Stuttgart may enable a stronger civil society impact.

Regarding governance theory, the above reinforces the critique of it largely disregarding power relations (Kjær, 2009). Mainly, power matters where its uneven distribution interacts with how policies are negotiated. Governance theory's assumptions regarding citizens' involvement then appear overly optimistic especially in Nottingham, with many living in deprived or precarious circumstances and having little access to local power. In a seeming paradox, Nottingham's population is however asked to "take on more responsibility" (Nottingham Labour Party, 2015, p. 3), evincing growing expectations towards an on average disadvantaged group. By contrast, I have not encountered similar public demands on Stuttgart's – though on average much

more privileged – population. I therefore argue that guaranteeing social and economic rights could provide a foundation for civil society participation. Correspondingly, Bua et al. (2018) find in their comparison of five European cities that severe austerity erodes the foundations for strong collaborative governance. Besides, governance theory's presuppositions about trust and consensus-building are questionable, given the discussed disjunctions in both cases. Overall, the theory lays bare an idealistic understanding of more cohesive societies than we are witnessing, e.g. with crises around austerity, 'Brexit' or surges of right-wing populism – in relation to which it appears dated. That it barely addresses problems of concentrating power and hardening according conflicts reduces the theory's explanatory force.

7 Political and economic interdependence

7.1 Introduction

Within the overall research problem of how Nottingham's and Stuttgart's governance regimes relate to the future, this chapter addresses the roles of their local economies. It examines RQ 3: *How do political and economic interdependencies relate to sustainability?* For this, I draw on relating interview and documentary data and further research. While Chapter 3 lies the conceptual and substantive foundations, this chapter addresses RQ 3 empirically and set up against a neoliberal understanding of corporations' purpose and their relation to society which I outline subsequently.

The Friedman Doctrine expresses an ideal-typical view of companies' purpose, prevailing since around 60 years (Mayer, 2018, p. 7):

"In [...] [a free] economy, there is one and only one social responsibility of business – to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud" (Friedman & Friedman, 2002, p. 133).

This neoliberal conception can be related to the neoclassic idea that economic systems converge towards a homogeneous, deregulated and flexible world market (Hoffmann, 2003, p. 124) – which has been challenged by the 'varieties of capitalism' literature (cf. Section 3.2).

In a parallel structure for Nottingham and Stuttgart, this chapter explores how corporations relate to their places' political and social context. Herein, Sections 7.2 and 7.6 focus on communication and cooperation between public and business actors. I then examine according structures, power relations and conflicts (Sections 7.3 and 7.7) and interpret ways in which 'economy' and 'society' interact (Sections 7.4 and 7.8). The chapter finally studies views about the connection of economic growth and intergenerational justice (Sections 7.5 and 7.9) and interprets findings in relation to RQ 3 (Section 7.10).

7.2 Nottingham: relation to place, communication and cooperation

For relations between companies and Nottingham, I initially explore the significant example of Boots, the chemist and pharmacy chain. Further themes are then examined across companies. Boots is meaningful in terms of encountered tendencies and its size, employing 8,000 people and being the company with the highest turnover in Nottinghamshire in 2017 (D. Robinson, 2018). My interview requests to Boots remained unsuccessful. Politician 2 saw this historical Nottingham corporation as relatively detached from its origin:

Extract 61

“If you’ve got shareholding, you then become vulnerable [...] to takeover, [...] - which is why Boots is gone, Boots is a classic case. [...]

Boots used to be locally owned, then obviously it floated. Shares were taken over [...] by a venture capitalist, an Italian, [...]. They then merged with a firm in the States, and so it’s become more and more remotely managed Nottingham, Nottingham’s just an outpost now and therefore [...] the local link it’s been broken. If you want a perfect example of a local link been broken, we hardly ever talk to Boots now. [...]

And their decisions are made- they’re made either in Switzerland or possibly in the States. And that is because of the structure of our capital, our system which is highly dependent on shareholding [...] rather than on [...] ownership”.

The informant thereby related this perceived “broken” local link to attributes of the economic system. Outlining some background, Boots is accused of avoiding an estimated £1.21 billion in tax over six years since going private in 2007, inter alia by relocating its headquarters from Nottinghamshire to the low-tax Swiss canton Zug (Medact, 2017). Campaigners state that tax avoidance and evasion “may be legal, [...] but [are] [...] clearly unethical and wrong”. “By undermining public services, tax abuse harms society and risks public health” (Medact, 2017). Boots’ “approach to tax risk and dealing with tax authorities” includes “[n]ot to enter into transactions purely for the avoidance of tax” (Walgreens Boots Alliance, 2018), i.e. it may be one of several effects. Further concerns (“How Boots went rogue”) were raised by employees in

relation to high pressure exercised by the company to meet certain targets (Chakraborty, 2016).

Fundamentally, Boots was considered important to Nottingham's future and there were fears that it may leave:

Extract 62

I: [...] [H]ow do you think will Nottingham develop and how will it be for the citizens?

Politician 2: [...] I don't know, I think a lot will depend on what happens in Brexit. And a lot will depend on Boots. I'm very worried about Boots post Brexit.

I: Yeah, why is that?

Politician 2: It's based here, right? A lot of its sales go to Europe so, the owner is European, Italian. And if it becomes problematic shifting their goods into Europe from here with tariffs why can't then they[...] relocate?

Nottingham Post enquired about Boots' relation to Nottingham – given that it sold its BCM factory (formerly Boots Contract Manufacturing) to a contract manufacturer, thus ceasing to produce in Nottinghamshire (D. Robinson, 2017):

"Does the loss of BCM undermine Boots' commitment to Nottingham and that of its US owners?

Mr Pessina [executive vice-chairman and CEO of Walgreens Boots Alliance] speaks passionately. 'Nottingham is the home of Boots. How could we move, even if we wanted to, which we don't?

We couldn't take all the people in Beeston, the organisation and move them anywhere else in the world. The commitment is to Nottingham, traditionally the home of Boots. It is so part of Nottingham and Nottingham is part of Boots. It would be impossible to separate them. To move would inflict a big wound on the company.'" (Tresidder, 2018).

These concerns illustrate "a bit of a disconnect" (business representative 5) between political and economic actors and how far Nottingham's welfare is seen to depend upon Boots. Business representative 3 more generally described companies in Nottingham as "very footloose" – while they provide an increasingly important part of the city's tax base (cf. Figure 1). However, local impact on Boots' and other large

companies' decisions was perceived as limited. At the same time, their local ties and commitments were partly found to have weakened, altogether apprehended as insecure socio-economic perspectives for Nottingham. Some informants saw businesses act unsustainably in other ways, inter alia in terms of little engagement in qualifying local people (cf. Section 7.4.2). Otherwise and as above, companies partly emphasised their commitment and obligation to Nottingham, importantly due to their employees who could not easily be replaced and to their historical roots. Most of them stressed that they would not easily relocate. However, the outlined discrepancies in actors' views speak for a certain erosion of trust.

Informants of local companies and the city council expressed lack of communication between both. Some businesses were seen as not actively participating in exchanges with the public sector and according structures were partly perceived as missing. A business representative raised how they felt that the public sector did not sustain cooperations with them; others that they were consulted too late on draft strategies, leaving little time for changes and with the expectation to approve relatively finalised drafts. Furthermore, private and public sector logics were considered contradictory:

Extract 63

"So you can't get the same motivation [in the public sector]. It seems to take a long time to action things I think probably it's a lot of red tape in the public sector. [...] "I think we do work very fast here and I think that's what you get with the private sector. If you don't do the work, you don't get paid, do you? You get kicked out, you lose your job but with the council, they tend to take a lot of time overdoing stuff so you need to get on with it or you'll never get it done" (business representative 5).

Equally, politician 1 saw private companies' understanding of the city council as limited, inter alia due to its diverse and democratic accountabilities:

Extract 64

"[...] [T]he thing about business organisations is it is full of people who are [...] variously good at running businesses, and work on the assumption that the council

is like any other business. Well, it is not true. The council is not a business. It is a public organisation and it is also a democratic organisation and that means that instead of how [...] you do with the business, just working to a bottom-line say you only have one objective which is to make as much money as possible. Everything else is divisible within that. That is not the role of the council. Council has got 101 different things to do. [I]t has got to provide services, it has got to be an enforcer, it has got to make decisions in loco parentis, it has got to do a range of things; some of which are quite hard and difficult and most of which [...] other people have opinions about. Their opinions, because everybody pays for the services, [...] are valid.”

However, a number of interviewees saw the exchange and collaboration between public and private sectors positively. Relatedly, the city council provides business support and advice services, e.g. through D2N2 (cf. Footnote 43), the Creative Quarter Nottingham or in-house, with the aim of making Nottingham a favourable business location.

Altogether, perceived factors which may counteract sustainable socio-economic perspectives are companies’ reliance on shareholding, an increasing emphasis on profits, weakened local commitments and a certain disconnect between public and private sector actors. However, successful cooperation and communication between both and companies’ ongoing presence were found to contribute to Nottingham’s welfare.

7.3 Nottingham: structures, power relations and conflicts

Nottingham’s economic structures relate to its industrial decline. This applies to some large companies which disappeared and ensuing local power relations. Public sector employee 14 described the latter in terms of a low wage economy:

Extract 65

“If you look at the structure of Nottingham’s economy, it’s a low wage, low skill economy and even the professional posts tend to be lower paid than they might be elsewhere. Whereas, if you look at somewhere like Derby, very high skilled, high paid, because they’ve got Rolls Royce, Bombardier. So, Nottingham tends to have service sector, leisure, retail, a lot of care work, public sector employment. So, the

big employers are very influential because the city doesn't want to lose them, and because we have to keep them because our economy without them would just be devastated."

The informant expressed what recurred in other interviews: Nottingham's socio-economic dependence on few larger companies and on public sector employment. The picture that formed for me during the study was one of a certain split of jobs in terms of working conditions, pay and care about local communities. It relates to the polarisation which took place in Britain through an expansion of high- and low-end service jobs (Oesch, 2015) (cf. Section 3.4.1 c)).

On the one side, there are some successful companies or institutions, partly offering attractive, higher skilled, paid and recognised jobs. These were also named by informants and are inter alia Boots, the two universities, Experian (2,000 employees in Nottinghamshire) and Capital One (853) (D. Robinson, 2018; Rossiter, 2018). Many of them operate in financial and information services, research, biotechnology or creative industries. However, they employ markedly less people than Nottingham's 'lost' industries and their jobs often demand different and higher qualifications: "In biotechnology we're doing quite well but is not creating loads of jobs. And a lot of the jobs are [held by] the people who live outside the city [...]" (politician 2).

On the other side, there are numerous organisations relying on low skill, low wage and partly precarious labour (cf. also Section 6.3.1). Examples named in interviews were service jobs, e.g. retail and distribution or food packaging, or the student economy, including night-life, taxi driving, food and drinks. One of them is the retailer Sports Direct in Shirebrook, located in former mining areas north of Nottingham. The company employs 18,280 people (D. Robinson, 2018) and appeared in newspapers in relation to adverse working conditions. Minimum wages were not respected (Pritchard, 2017) and working practices found to be "appalling" by a House of Commons report (2016, p. 29). Businesses operating on a low pay, low skill basis may in fact be attracted to places like Nottingham, where formal qualifications are relatively low, un- and underemployment are considerable – implying a surplus of potential employees.

Inequalities in Nottingham's economic structure parallel its significant societal inequalities (cf. Section 6.3.3) and correspond to values of individual responsibility, performance and recognition of the successful. As least advantaged members of society suffer from these inequalities and values, they conflict with social justice.

Nottingham's two universities were seen as anchor institutions, employing ca. 8,300 people (Rossiter, 2018, p. 20) and importantly supporting the city's economy. However, besides worries about companies' relocation and public sector job cuts through austerity policies since 2010 (BBC News, 2017), student numbers were another concern:

Extract 66

"I'm also worried about foreign students because we do benefit massively from students. They're bringing a lot of money into the economy. So that will become fragile [with Brexit]" (politician 2).

The student economy also met critique. For instance, Labour Councillor Malcolm Wood called the current development rate of – profitable – student flats unsustainable:

"I would like to know whether these properties are convertible should the student market collapse [...], which it inevitably will. Sooner or later we are going to face a major crisis" (Sandeman, 2018d).

The high weight of student's purchasing power is also unsustainable in that its costs are partly postponed into the future through loans. Finally, the student economy exemplifies (class) inequalities. They become obvious in – relatively often middle-class – students' economic weight partially exceeding that of other – more often working-class – Nottingham residents. The latter thereby often cannot access their neighbouring university, especially the Russell Group University of Nottingham. These inequalities for instance played out in terms of the local community being seen as "taken over by students" (Sandeman, 2018d).

With the relevance of public and service sector jobs, the universities and importantly few larger companies, it is of interest how conflicts with the latter are

negotiated. While the Labour-led city council supports and cooperates with businesses, informants referred to instances where it imposed policies against their resistance. These are the establishment of the tram, the Selective Licensing Scheme (cf. Footnote 26) and the Workplace Parking Levy – which I illustrate forth following.

Nottingham's Workplace Parking Levy. Nottingham City Council has been the first and only UK local authority to instate a levy on workplace parking in 2012 (Clayton et al., 2017) – which has since been discussed in Manchester and Glasgow (BBC News, 2018a; Sandeman, 2018e). The levy is also viewed as socially and environmentally pioneering (Clayton et al., 2017; WWF Scotland, 2016), inter alia demonstrating how a local authority can be more influential regarding modes of infrastructure funding (Parkes, 2016). The city council enforced the Workplace Parking Levy against some companies' interests, as I describe subsequently. Companies carry ca. half of its costs – and pass down the rest to their employees (Clayton et al., 2017). Regarding its impact, “research indicates that the levy has significantly contributed to a 33% fall in carbon emissions, and a modal shift which has seen public transport use rise to over 40%” (WWF Scotland, 2016).

The Workplace Parking Levy “is a charge on employers who provide workplace parking” “to tackle problems associated with traffic congestion, by both providing funding for major transport infrastructure initiatives [extension of the tram, redevelopment of Nottingham Railway Station, public transport] and by acting as an incentive for employers to manage their workplace parking provision” (Nottingham City Council, n.d.-f). Besides, the levy should enhance social justice by redistributing from car-commuters to those depending on public transport (cf. Extract 7) and contribute to environmental sustainability (WWF Scotland, 2016). The levy amounts to £387 annually per parking space for employers offering at least 11 spaces in 2017-18 in Nottingham.

Businesses partly criticised the Workplace Parking Levy and threatened to leave Nottingham due to it, as politician 2 recounted:

Extract 67

“And I was told that other firms would move. And I thought ‘no you won’t’, and the reason why they wouldn’t, because the marginal cost of that is disproportionate to the cost of moving, of losing your labour. And nobody, absolutely nobody has moved because of workplace parking, it was all mouth. And we stuck it out and we’re getting 10, 9 million quid a year out of it. And that is why [...] relocating, it’s a very expensive business and it’s a very risky business [...]. Because you need to guarantee that your staff will stay with you because your most valuable asset is not the land you’re on, it’s your staff. [...] And the people that said they were going- I just thought you- either you’re very foolish, or you’re just posturing.”

However, a counter-example is Games Warehouse having relocated to Derby over the levy (BBC News, 2012).

7.4 Nottingham: economy in society

7.4.1 Companies’ societal impact

The following explores companies’ societal impact in Nottingham. While the city was heavily industrialised in the past, from around 1950 it lost its textile industry, other large employers such as Raleigh or John Player’s & Sons and its coal mines. Nottingham simultaneously lost many jobs with implications for related identities, but also employers who partly got involved for their workforce and local communities. For instance, the bike manufacturer Raleigh was understood as an industry “in which employees could take pride” as a symbol of British manufacturing quality (Smart, 2018). “The company rewarded the skills of its workforce by providing for their social and medical needs as well as secure and well-paid jobs” (Smart, 2018). Nottingham Post considers similar engagement as largely lost: “Such things are rarely heard of today. The gap between the big employers and their workers has never been greater, both in pay terms and lifestyle” (Smart, 2018). An interviewee relatedly expressed that companies, e.g. supermarkets, had a responsibility for the local areas of which they profited and should in turn support these communities. Otherwise, business representative 2 outlined how the city and public sector would benefit from a thriving private sector, which should therefore be invested into:

Extract 68

"[...] I think there's a misconception [...] actually [which] is as the private sector thrives, the public sector doesn't. What you find is that [...] if the entrepreneurs and business owners [...] employ people, they invest in their communities, they create opportunity, they create wealth [...] [,] everything around benefits. [...]
They [any entrepreneur] would say: whilst we need to support the NHS and we need to support our public services, invest in private sector, make the private stronger and the other things will start to take care of themselves."

I encountered varied engagement of employers in Nottingham, partly reflecting widened inequalities and an austere state. Some companies exhibited a high local commitment, often wanting to contribute to communities' current and future well-being. Businesses partially "help[ed] to fill a gap" (public sector employee 6) by stepping into what sometimes used to be public authority tasks. Examples are Speedo, the Nottingham-based swimwear maker, supporting seven public leisure centres in partnership with Nottingham City Council (Nottingham City Council, 2015b); or the supermarket chain Co-op giving 1% of spending on certain goods and services "to local projects – from improving community spaces or helping school leavers learn life skills, to simply connecting people" (Co-operative Group, n.d.-a). "Any organisation can apply [for the local community fund] as long as it can prove it's not run for private profit and has a project in mind that benefits their local community" (Co-operative Group, n.d.-b). Furthermore, the consumer credit reporting agency Experian supported young people from a deprived neighbourhood to attend the University of Nottingham. The company also provided financial education for school children:

Extract 69

"Experian have worked with Blue Bell Hill School in St. Ann's to build a resource called Values, Money and Me which is now available free to all teachers, parents and carers nationwide and now carries a PSHE Association Quality Mark."
"It was purely and simply because we recognise the importance of financial capability and it was clear that youngsters were not being taught how to be financially savvy in the classroom. So we got to work with Blue Bell Hill School, combined our financial and teaching expertise, and created a high quality teaching

resource to help teachers tackle this important life skill” (Janet Hemstock, Experian) [later amended by interviewee].

These instances illustrate characteristics of businesses’ local community engagement. It firstly depends on companies’ choices and values which causes or groups they promote and how – e.g. contrasting with public will formation. Secondly, businesses’ engagement supposes their presence or local interest and thus likely varies with the latter. Thirdly, it sometimes depends on local initiatives in terms of starting projects or applying for funding. Combined with a shrinking state, these developments make companies increasingly important societal actors in a place – which Crouch (2011) describes as inherent to neoliberalism. With businesses’ contributions relying on their preferences and local preconditions, they are probably unevenly spread and places with a weaker local infrastructure may fall further behind. Altogether, companies’ societal impact in Nottingham partly reflects a withdrawing state, may enhance sustainability, but could also reinforce spatial inequalities through its organisation.

7.4.2 Expectations and the public

An issue occurring during the interviews was that local employers on the one hand struggled to find qualified employees; and on the other, local people had difficulties finding paying employment. To understand why employers and potential employees did not seem to find together, I enquired about informants’ interpretation. It elicits a misfit between people’s qualifications and employers’ demands; and relating views about structural, educational and labour market inequalities.

Informants expressed that employers in Nottingham partly saw little leeway to qualify people so that they could employ them, but equally that there was not a culture of doing so:

Extract 70

“Employers- are somewhat hypocritical in the sense that they want to have ready-made, finished people given to them. The lack of security of income for them, you know, the tenuous state of many employers as I say makes it difficult for them to

invest in skills and behaviours, and there's not a strong culture in the UK of employers getting involved in education, of employers getting involved in- schools, of employers using their recruitment practices, using their corporate-social responsibilities practices to improve the pipeline of- future candidates, the future workforce. [T]here isn't a culture of doing it" (public sector employee 11).

Politician 1 agreed and described a dysfunctional further education system:

Extract 71

"Provision of skills has been a mess for a very long time. Fundamentally, what it [is] about is that we have had a series of governments that do not believe in [...] economic planning and [...] agree in a market-led approach to training [...]. [...] [T]he providers have too much power in the system. [S]o you get [a] mismatch. [Y]oung people do not understand that if you are a plumber or an electrician or a builder, you can print money because there are shortages. They do not know that bioscience is the biggest growing sector in the city's economy and instead, they queue up to do music technology because it sounds exciting and beauty and hairdressing and journalism for which there is no market at all because these are the things that are attractive [...]. Well, after care for the elderly, training is probably the biggest most disorganized scandal in the country [...]."

Moreover, informants said that there was neither the experience nor the expectation that especially younger people stayed with employers for longer – again lowering the willingness to qualify them. I address interpretations of related labour market inequalities subsequently.

'Raising aspirations': making sense of inequalities. The theme 'raising aspirations', appearing across Nottingham data, provides an example for changing individual behaviours to improve a situation (cf. Section 5.2.2 a)), here in relation to work. It is central to the 'City of Nottingham Sustainable Community Strategy 2020. Family, Neighbourhood, City: Raising Aspirations' (One Nottingham, 2009):

Extract 72

"But we must also connect more people into the benefits of Nottingham's economy. Despite [its] [...] underlying strength [...] and its future prospects, too many people in the City remain disconnected from the jobs, wealth and

opportunities. Poverty persists in many communities, side by side with prosperity. And for some, aspirations are low; too many people do not share in the city's optimism. This leads to wasted talent and is holding the city and its people back"
(One Nottingham, 2009, p. 5).

Measures to tackle these issues stress individual responsibility and changes in attitudes and behaviours, according themes in the strategy being: raising people's aspirations; increasing positive behaviours; rebuild a culture of work; take responsibility of one's own life; limitations of government action; people not fulfilling their potential. While opportunities in Nottingham are emphasised, the problem is described as some people not seizing them:

Extract 73

"There are many opportunities for people in Nottingham, young and old, to advance themselves and many do just that. However, there are some who appear to lack the willingness or ability to do so – who appear to lack the aspiration or motivation to engage with opportunities. We believe that the inter-generational experience of underachievement in some families in Nottingham – often associated with deprivation – has led to a lack of confidence about their personal, educational and employment prospects. In some more extreme cases, it has led to almost full disengagement with the city's wider community, economy and values"
(One Nottingham, 2009, p. 5).

A key for breaking this "cycle of poverty" is thus seen in higher aspirations:

Extract 74

"Our biggest priority for the coming decade is to break the cycle of poverty in this city. We want our children to grow up with higher ambitions and aspirations for the future. We want more of the city's wealth creation to benefit local people"
(One Nottingham, 2009, p. 1).

This is connected to stressing individual responsibility:

Extract 75

“Nottingham will only fulfil its potential as a city when all of its people feel able to take responsibility for their own lives. This strategy aims to empower people, not just make them reliant on public services [...]” (One Nottingham, 2009, p. iv).

Causes for persisting poverty are thus partly individualised through lacking aspirations and a personal failure to take responsibility. However, structural factors such as low wages, high un- and underemployment are not mentioned here.

Individualisation to explain economic inequality has been described as “locat[ing] conditions for overcoming disadvantaged social situations *within* individuals (and their personality)” (Sachweh, 2014, p. 341, emphasis in original). In this way, individualisation in Nottingham decontextualises social problems and thus reduces a critical consciousness towards their structural conditions. Policies and values are thereby co-produced and may be mutually explaining factors in that individualising values afford measures aiming at behavioural change and the latter again substantiate individualising social norms.

Another view of inequality, potentially enabled by its high extent, was the unavailability of deprivation, e.g.: “[...] because somebody has to do the low paid jobs don’t they?” (business representative 1) or

Extract 76

“[t]here will always be a certain amount [of fuel poverty]. [...] [T]here’ll always be a little bit because there’s always [...] the people who find themselves on hard times. But the scale of it is ridiculous” (public sector employee 1).

This interpretation of inequality by necessity also “suspend[s] legitimacy pressures relating to social inequality” (Sachweh, 2014, p. 341).

Other interviewees expressed that economic conditions in Nottingham were actually very difficult. For instance, public sector employee 11 found that

Extract 77

“[t]he problem is [...] the pathway by which somebody who is from a family of intergenerational unemployment now, because of the industrial jobs in the ‘70s

and '80s--how does somebody [...] with that environment, with limited social capital, achieve the social mobility they need to get into the job in a laboratory [...]. And the reality is they can't."

– "without an exceptional early intervention, and for the vast majority that opportunity is missed" [later amended by interviewee].

Public sector employee 14 strongly criticised 'raising aspirations' as patronising:

Extract 78

"I find it repulsive when people talk about raising ambitions actually. I just find it disgusting. Have you ever met a young person that wasn't ambitious? It's patronising. Actual bullshit. It's not about raising ambitions, it's opportunities. See, you can have all the ambition in the world. Young people are really smart [and] [...] they will tailor their ambitions to the expectations. So, if they see no way of them becoming – somebody going to work at BioCity or whatever they want to be, they won't have those aspirations. They're realistic. [...] They don't lack ambition, they lack opportunities. And the patronising crap that goes into some of those strategies about raising ambitions is done from an absolute patronising paternalistic, privileged position. If only you aspire to be what I am, life would be better. I can't tell you how often I've sat in meetings and I can't hear this. [...] [A]nd I hear it a lot in Nottingham, and actually I haven't heard it anywhere else in the same way."

More generally, some interviewees expressed that sufficiently paid, secure work would be the first step to help people in Nottingham. This view emphasises more structural than individual reasons for social problems and challenges the city's policy language. While both contending views exist in the data, the document analysis suggests that the individualising one has shaped significantly what issues are being tackled 'officially' and how (cf. Section 5.2). By contrast, restricting structural conditions came up more in the interviews than in the documents.⁵⁸

A rhetorical pattern connected to individualisation was the recognition of difficult and increasingly challenging conditions – yet an emphasis on resilience,

⁵⁸ This may partly be due to a certain shift in the policy discourse over time with the documents mostly dating back some years (from 2009 to 2017) and interviews taking place in 2018.

ambition, boldness, of taking on challenges and a wealth of opportunities (cf. e.g. Extract 74). This in parallel appeared at the individual level and at the urban level, e.g.: “Nottingham will be the best place in the world” (public sector employee 3).

Altogether, systemic ‘misfits’ between employers’ demands and people’s qualifications and relatively short-term expectations appear to counter sustainability, e.g. through lesser qualification and investments on both sides, un(der)employment and unfilled positions. Whilst the recognition of Nottingham’s difficult labour market conditions concurs with a social justice perspective, interpretations of inequality by necessity and individualisation thwart it.

7.5 Nottingham: economic growth and intergenerational justice

This section explores how informants interrelate economic growth and intergenerational justice through the interview question “What role does economic growth have for future generations/the future?” The way actors negotiate inherent tensions (cf. Section 2.2.2 a)) is insightful regarding political and economic interdependencies.

7.5.1 A need for growth

Most interviewees saw economic growth as “essential”, “critical”, “absolutely vital”, “fundamental”, as “the most important thing” or similar for the future or future generations. Some stated that growth and sustainability could be pursued together. Economic growth was inter alia considered very important for creating jobs, also to offset previous job losses. Economic growth was viewed as good for the tax base and important for businesses, for local investment, to develop the city and widely regarded necessary for good living conditions and to update the infrastructure, e.g.:

Extract 79

“[...] [W]e've got to get economic growth or else the city is going to die because [...] people need to have money coming into their pockets and therefore they need jobs, and therefore you need economic growth [...]” (politician 8).

Coincidentally, Nottingham’s Growth Plan emphasises sharply:

Extract 80

“The programmes aim to provide the optimal conditions to encourage internal development and growth within the key sectors and will run in tandem with a strong and aggressive campaign marketing the city to external businesses, investors and markets” (Nottingham City Council, 2012, p. 34).

7.5.2 Questioning economic growth

Some informants questioned a sole ‘need’ for growth, e.g. as societally unbalanced:

Extract 81

“[...] [I]f there’s any growth, that to me sounds [...] to be what the city council [...] and private sector want. [...] Just going back to my discussion [...], it’s what kind of growth. You can [...] hit all the targets about creating jobs, and it does nothing for inequality and social cohesion, personal income” (public sector employee 14).

Informants also scrutinised the growth measure GDP, for instance:

Extract 82

“[...] Maybe it’s the economists that need to [...] rethink about how they do the numbers. [...] I think growth should be looking at those broader links of measures that look at how well people are, how green things are, how socially connected people are” (public sector employee 6).

Civil society representative 8 perceived the focus on growth as detrimental to other values:

Extract 83

“[...] Economic growth everywhere, oh God. [...] And it’s a very sad story because it’s just reducing our humanity to one dimension, money and capital, and that’s very sad. I think this economic growth is going to fuel further and further

*individualism, greed and deprive us of great moral, social, and spiritual values.
Because it doesn't leave any time, that's what economic growth is about sadly."*

Few interviewees saw economic growth as (mostly environmentally) unsustainable and reflected about what needed to change, e.g.:

Extract 84

"The big question is, with economic growth [...] can democracy deliver a sustainable future for the human race? Or the next question is, [...] [h]ow does democracy have to evolve to ensure that there is a sustainable future? Because you can't ignore economic growth and sustainability. They are in inextricably linked because we live on one planet, and at the moment [...] we are like a pre-teenager, no, we don't think about the consequences" (civil society representative 6).

Besides, several interviewees mentioned "inclusive," "equitable" or "good" growth. Expressed views hereby included that growth should be distributed in a fairer way, that everyone ought to participate in it; that the benefits of growth should go where they were needed most; inclusive growth should be slower and narrow the income gap; good growth should not be off-shore and not based on borrowing.

Altogether, the pursuit of economic growth was central to Nottingham's policies. Informants often saw future well-being depend on it and growth being a cure for socio-economic problems. However, some found that the latter decreasingly materialised and growth conflicted with a more sustainable future. They challenged the growth paradigm and partly wished it to change accordingly. Interpretively, I suggest that Nottingham's severe socio-economic problems may reinforce a *current* necessity for and policy focus on economic growth as the system-inherent way forward – despite discomfort and over problems of its *future* sustainability with regards to the environment, societal values and cohesion.

7.5.3 Environmental pioneerism

Examining a larger related pattern, Nottingham shows – in a national comparison – high ambitions, efforts and successes in increasing its environmental

sustainability (cf. also Cauvain, 2018). For instance, the city exceeded its CO₂ emission reduction goal for 2020 years before (Deakin, 2016) and the East Midlands were the first region signing the Nottingham Declaration, committing its local authorities to develop plans for contributing to CO₂ emission reductions by 2010 “to address the causes and effects of climate change” (The Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, n.d., p. 18; Climate East Midlands Projects, 2018); it has been named Britain’s smartest city for energy in the ‘UK Smart Cities Index’, e.g. with the goal to deliver 20% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 (Nottingham City Council, 2017h); or it has been labelled the least car-dependent city in the UK due to its good public transport system and investments in cycling (Milmo, 2010).

However, Nottingham’s environmental ‘pioneerism’ may partly be enabled by deindustrialisation, its high economic deprivation or restrictions. Accordingly, that 14.6% of Nottingham’s households live in fuel poverty in 2016/17 (Nottingham City Council, 2018h, p. 5) and that the significant fall in CO₂ emissions is due to a reduction in domestic energy use (Nolan, 2016), may contribute to reaching emission reduction targets. Furthermore, “Nottingham city has a much higher proportion of households without access to car (45%) compared to [...] the England average (27%)” (Nottingham 2001 Census data in Nottingham City Council, 2011, p. 135). With more people than in other UK cities ‘depending’ on public transport, low incomes may have brought forth the development of such a system considered exemplary in the UK. Equally, besides the environmental benefits of the installation of solar PVs and the insulation of council homes (Nottingham City Homes, n.d.), these measures might contribute to cost savings – and may have partly been driven by them.

I therefore suggest that there is a partial trade-off between social justice and environmental sustainability in Nottingham, i.e. if less people would be deprived of fulfilling their basic needs or live in a way currently considered a norm, Nottingham would be less environmentally sustainable. While deprivation might drive environmental sustainability, the costs for it are importantly borne by those living in deprivation. It is then involuntary and co-produced with power asymmetries. Other case studies equally point out incompatibilities between environmental integrity and

equity, “raising the need for trade-off decisions” (e.g. Hutton et al., 2018, p. 2). Also, empirical research shows that there is a trade-off between economic growth and environmental quality at lower incomes (Barbier & Burgess, 2015, p. 825). Such a trade-off seems to materialise in Nottingham and is indicative of its polarised social order. Methodologically, this interpretation demonstrates the merits of an integrated approach to sustainability and a whole regime perspective (cf. Section 2.3.3 c)) – which a ‘one pillar’ or single policy approach might have precluded.

7.6 Stuttgart: relation to place, communication and cooperation

Moving on to Stuttgart, I first focus on the local economy’s relation to it.

In the interviews, political and economic actors often spoke with relative appreciation about one another’s behaviour. There appeared to be a shared rationale of agreeing on some matters cooperatively – reflecting German corporatism. Informants on both sides outlined how Stuttgart’s prosperity depended on the well-being of the industry and how the industry in turn required good and stable conditions to develop. However, companies described their influence on specific political decisions as limited, e.g.:

Extract 85

„[...] [C]oncretely, we are like every other company, someone who [...] since years [...] advertises [...] for such a motorway connection. But the political procedures are, I don’t want to say broadly independent of this-, we give many impulses, also regarding economic policy, digital policy, digital literacy and so on, [...]. But I would say: No, we don’t have a larger impact, also other companies not I think, regarding the decisions [...] [in] [...] the Stuttgart [...] area“ (business representative 7).

Equally and despite relatively strong associations’ lobbying, public sector employee 3 saw no significant impact of the big companies on urban politics – which he endorsed:

Extract 86

„[...] [I]n Stuttgart we of course also have a relatively high degree of advocacy work in associations, groups in every form [...] from [...] the automobile association, here massively represented by Daimler and Porsche, who of course have a weight.

Whereby I don't have the impression that the large industrial representatives [...] have a strong impact. So Daimler has no presence at all in urban politics. And neither really does Porsche. And Mahle also makes itself rather rare. The people don't have-, that's Swabian understatement, I don't know, but they do not have this presence that one could actually expect from them. Which I find agreeable."

Businesses' and public sector informants often described their communication and negotiation of local issues as consensus-oriented, very cooperative, involving many of the parties concerned and as relatively balanced. Business representative 6 described this in relation to a controversial issue in Stuttgart:

Extract 87

„[...] [E]specially at the topic of air pollution control I have the feeling that the [city of Stuttgart] proceeds[] very fairly and also enters[] into dialogue with all actors. And then simply looks, how can one reconcile everything as well as possible, the interests of the economy, but also the other interests of concerned actors, be it local residents, be it trade or crafts [...]. So I think there is a very fair togetherness, also a very good balance."

The informant characterised the relation with the city of Stuttgart as “very cooperative” and “very trustful” with the common objective to continue “creating jobs of the future”:

Extract 88

„So I think it is also very important for the city council that one talks with the economy, that one explores together how do we manage [...] now especially with[] the topic of mobility to set the course, so that the city of Stuttgart [...] remains automotive location and mobility location” (business representative 6).

Otherwise, politician 1 found that the economy needed to be driven to orientate itself more towards the future – given Stuttgart's dependence upon the automotive industry:

Extract 89

I: Yes, how do you see altogether [...] the role of the economy in Stuttgart? (13 sec.)

Politician 1: That is, considering the dependence upon the automotive industry in Stuttgart extremely complex. So if the automotive industry oversleeps the future [...], then it goes downhill in Stuttgart extremely quickly. And here everyone is relatively nervous at the moment. [...] [T]he trust into lobbying for safeguarding the portfolio, has [...] been very high in the automotive industry located in Stuttgart. That means the protectionism of politics for the existing has actually rather slowed down the necessary processes of change, i.e. the future orientation. And in the end the economy does not make itself a favour. And those are always such disputes in all political bodies. Do I also drive the economy so to speak, do I claim to also drive the economy into the future? Thereby to support it? Also if it hurts sometimes at the moment? This balance is practically negotiated on a daily basis. Whether in Bundestag, Landtag or in every municipality. [...]

[...] [O]ne in the end has to push the industry in the common interest a bit. Because it also helps us long-term economically.

Oppositely, another informant expressed that the political sector was not well prepared for change in terms of a future orientation.

Regarding communication, interviewees portrayed partially close, supportive and “decidedly constructive” (business representative 9) formal and informal links between companies and politics/administration. However, some wished for more to be done for Stuttgart’s companies, inter alia bureaucratic requirements reduced or a “crusade against the car” stopped (politician 7). Some interviewees perceived political and economic interests as disparate, while another saw the industry being valued as an idea provider in Stuttgart – more than e.g. in Berlin.

I partly inquired whether and why companies would relocate from Stuttgart – also given high labour and production costs. All asked business representatives emphasised their organisation’s commitment to Stuttgart. Resonating with others, public sector employee 3 stressed how political continuity, reliability despite changes of government, good transport links, but mainly the historical rooting of the city’s major companies would prevent them from “even rudimentarily wanting to leave”. Business representative 7 outlined why his company would not move, describing Stuttgart Region as a unique cluster in Europe encompassing varied companies, crafts,

businesses, research institutions and customer relations (about the comparative historical significance of these institutional structures cf. Section 8.2.2):

Extract 90

„So this word ‘mid-sized sector’ [‘Mittelstand’], yes, and this strong reference of businesses to the region who are there since years and reinvent themselves repeatedly and are twinned with each other and completely heterogeneous. [...] That is a cluster, I would allege that exists in the whole of Europe actually only in this Stuttgart Region, like that. [...] So these are clusters which one cannot, also within Germany, easily transplant. [...] That is why in Stuttgart Region one feels very, very comfortable. [...] Now one can ask what is hen and egg, yes. Was it the political side? I think it is a give and take. But politics let’s it go long enough so that companies are comfortable, that I really have to say, yes.“

Besides, business representative 6 emphasised regional know-how and innovativeness:

Extract 91

„What hinders us to leave Stuttgart? [...] Well, for one thing it is actually also this strong cluster which has now built up in the last decades. So this knowhow which simply exists here. The highly qualified workforce which is here on site. And simply this automotive knowledge which one does not find everywhere on the world like this. Where one of course has an enormous advantage in knowledge. That is [...] in fact the great strength here in the region. [...] So there really also sit all the engineers and developers who now work on these future technologies [...]. And that certainly is an enormous locational advantage.“

In turn, informants described employees as often ready to live in Stuttgart as an attractive city. A cumulative strength of the region was emphasised and companies wished to sustain its competitiveness and jobs.

Nonetheless, mentioned hindering factors for companies to stay in Stuttgart included congestion, a deficient digital infrastructure, a lack of commercial and living space, and a certain saturation of the population and little tolerance towards the

uncomforts of industrialisation. These three latter aspects were seen as threatening Stuttgart's prosperity.

While public sector informants were sometimes concerned that Stuttgart's major companies may not be future-proof (cf. Extract 89), they did not fear their departure or lacking communication about such a step. Business representative 6 explained how they related to politics in a previous case of production relocation, emphasising dialogue, trust and fairness:

Extract 92

„But there it was very important for us that one simply informs politics about the development. Und there we really had very, very many intense phone calls and discussions beforehand. And then had [...] the production [of one model] [...] replaced by the production of other models. But this I find [...] simply important, regarding trust between economy and politics. That especially if there are negative messages, that one then enters into dialogue early on. [...] That is certainly our approach, that [...] one then [...] deals fairly with the opposite party [...].“

Altogether, political and economic actors often aimed at maintaining future generations' socio-economic leeway. This went with a shared concern for the threatened car industry on which the city's prosperity was seen to largely depend, partly close and trustful corporatist coordination and longer-term mutual obligations – though not implying companies' direct influence on political decisions.

7.7 Stuttgart: structures, power relations and conflicts

Contrary to other places in the Western world, Stuttgart has not largely lost its industrial base (cf. Section 3.4.2c)) and associated structures. Highly-paid and often high-skill jobs concentrate in Stuttgart with 73,026 € gross value added per employee (2012), Stuttgart Region's being 67,003 € and Germany's 57,364 € (Durchdenwald, 2015). Employment and economic value creation particularly depend on the car industry cluster. It accounts for more than two thirds of investments in the region and almost 200,000 persons work in it, equalling ca. a sixth of socially insured employees in Stuttgart Region (Dispan et al., 2015, p. 75; Durchdenwald, 2015). Companies which

informants mentioned as important to Stuttgart were inter alia (number of employees in Stuttgart Region in parentheses): Daimler (80,900), Bosch (34,963), Porsche (17,700) and Mahle (6,696) (IHK Region Stuttgart, 2017). These all partially belong to the car industry cluster which business representative 6 saw as “a very tight network of companies and suppliers and that is the great strength in Stuttgart and the region”. The high proportion of often family-owned medium-sized businesses in Baden-Württemberg forms part of it. They are frequently regionally rooted, plan long-term and have close links between entrepreneur, company and employees (Lochner, 2016). Furthermore, Stuttgart’s seven public universities (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-n) were mentioned as important to the educational and research landscape, but not specifically as carrying economic weight.

An opinion in Stuttgart – more bluntly expressed by civil society representatives – was that of a one-sided dependency with ‘the economy’ being the most powerful part in the city and having a decisive impact over what happened politically. For instance, civil society representative 5 named as key players in formulating policies in Stuttgart: “Daimler, Porsche, Mahle, Bosch. Those are the crucial actors” [later specified by interviewee]. Conversely, civil society representative 4 described political and economic interdependence as “a kind of symbiosis”: „[...] You support me with political power and I help you with your interests of generating money, preserving jobs [...]”. Similarly, public and economic sector informants described Stuttgart’s power structures as an interplay of politics and economy with civil society influences. Extract 85 evinces limits of businesses’ impact. Business representative 3 found that the car industry was met with more criticism since a Green Party-led mayor and state government were in power, but did not consider policies as “industry-critical”:

Extract 93

„I certainly think that every politician, no matter of which political colour, if he is in governmental responsibility, understands that without the jobs and also the

business tax revenue of the large companies, he can hardly implement what he wants. So that there is in any case a coordination and at least an exchange [...]. I would not say that industry-critical or -destructive policies are imposed in the Stuttgart area.”

Politicians equally recognised a strong agreement between political and economic interests, e.g.:

Extract 94

I: [W]hat is [...] your impression, how far do political decisions [...] comply with the interests of the local economy? [...]

Politician 8: (8 sec.) All in all there is much agreement. If one is honest. So, [...] of course, the trade associations would probably wish for even more investments into road construction. But indeed they also see that one reaches boundaries here. [...]

Although many in Stuttgart hold relatively favourable jobs, there are signs of increasing labour market inequalities. This is through rises in low wage employment, marginal employment, fixed-term contracts, more subcontracted labour and more bogus self-employment between 2000 and 2013 in Baden-Württemberg (Klee & Klempt, 2014). Almost every fourth German employee in 2015 earns below the low pay threshold of 10.22 € per hour (Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund & Hans Böckler Stiftung, 2018, p. 14). These increasingly difficult conditions found repercussions in some interviews (cf. Section 7.8.2). Besides, average working conditions are gendered with higher paying jobs being overproportionately those of ‘male breadwinners’. That “[t]he ‘main-earner model’ continues to dominate in Germany” (OECD, 2016a, p. 19) corresponds to lasting conservative welfare state arrangements. Accordingly, mothers in Germany contribute less to household incomes than in most OECD-countries: women’s earnings on average account for almost a quarter of household incomes in couples with a female partner aged 25 to 45 and at least one child (OECD, 2016a, p. 20).

With the relevance of Stuttgart’s economy as a tax base, in the provision of jobs and socio-economic structures, its interests seemed powerful and intertwined with those of local politicians and administration. Maintaining these socio-economic

structures partially appeared as a shared task between political and economic spheres – modes of which however conflicted with environmental sustainability. I subsequently explore a crucial conflict case for this in policy-making.

Industry over health and environment? The case of air pollution. For Stuttgart, the air pollution conflict constitutes a paradigmatic within-case, i.e. a “[...] case[] that highlight[s] more general characteristics of the societies in question” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 232), as it is indicative of power relations between the car industry, politics and civil society. I examine these via relating views (state: January 2019) and refer to Section 6.5.2 for the role of civil society within the developments. The issue is particularly pressing in Stuttgart as the German city with the highest air pollution⁵⁹ (Südwestrundfunk, 2017) since more than a decade (Resch & Kuhlmann, 2016) which exceeds EU legal limits. As effective action to comply with the latter stayed out for some time, the EU threatened Stuttgart with penalties amounting to millions in case it further exceeded the thresholds (Leibbrand, 2017). Manfred Niess, who sued Baden-Württemberg because of this, described the situation as follows:

Extract 95

„That cannot be, that the state government breaches law. Here in Stuttgart is a legal vacuum since 2005 every day or at each particulate matter alarm. And the government looks away, because it has to look away, because the automotive industry tells it, yes, we cannot make driving bans now. The government should make the decision and not the automotive industry” (Götz, 2018).

Indeed, economic actors opposed driving bans as a solution – which finally had to come into force in 2019 after court rulings (cf. Section 6.5.2):

Extract 96

„[...] [T]he city of Stuttgart says [...] we cannot avoid driving bans. And it is just important to us that one also considers the proportionality. And looks at solving this problem rather through innovations and not through driving bans. So I think

⁵⁹ This is also attributed to much of the traffic passing through the city, the industry and mainly Stuttgart’s basin-shaped topography (Südwestrundfunk, 2017).

*that is such a point which the economy certainly advocates very, very strongly“
(business representative 6).*

Politician 8 hereto outlined a trade-off in that Stuttgart

Extract 97

*„[...] will just always remain an industrial location and not a spa town“. „[...]
[T]hose who then just want an air spa simply have to move to Baden-Baden or to
Freudenstadt. [...] But of course we are eager to improve the air quality.“*

Civil society representative 5 found that an amalgamation between economic and political interests as centres of power – apart from democratic processes – led to a unity of opinions rejecting driving bans:

Extract 98

*„[T]he climate was never important to Daimler. [...] Mr Zetsche [Daimler CEO at the time] obviously also meets Mr Kretschmann [state premier of Baden-Württemberg]. And there are then the important things discussed, not in the Landtag. [...]
[...] [B]esides [...] Daimler, Bosch and Mahle [...], Porsche there is also the IHK [Chamber of Industry and Commerce]. That is another powerhouse. [...] If it raises its voice, then normally it is listened to. [...] If the IHK for instance says: ‘No driving bans.’ Is this familiar to you? The same which Daimler and Porsche also say, but also what the municipal council and the mayor say. In this way, the centre of power in Stuttgart forms itself. [...]“ [parts later specified by interviewee].*

Business representative 8 ascribed this perceived economic primacy to feared job losses:

Extract 99

„[I] believe in the end the economy decides with what it makes its money. [...] So now, if one [takes] this Diesel issue- I mean there one actually could decide very differently. One could voice the topic, one could always have done the tests right and not let oneself be captivated by the lobbyists [...]. So that means consequently, I would certainly think that politics does not have terribly much influence on the economy. [...] So politics could have it, but doesn’t take it. [...] Because it is far too

scared. Because it thinks anyone only needs to say something about the workforce [...] and the theme is through already."

Concludingly, political actors in this critical instance seemed to decide in view of a dependence upon the car industry in terms of prosperity. Informants saw this as a reason for why the authorities – despite high problem pressure – have not enforced EU air pollution controls earlier, thereby stretching the rule of law and trading off population health and environmental sustainability for the industry's well and related benefits for Stuttgart. Policies aiming for health and environmental protection then originated from civil society's legal action, not from formal political actors.

7.8 Stuttgart: economy in society

7.8.1 Companies' societal impact

Stuttgart's businesses get involved societally in various ways. A representative survey of 541 Baden-Württemberg companies in 2005 about their entrepreneurial civic involvement gives related insights (Zentrum für zivilgesellschaftliche Entwicklung, 2007). It states changing relations between state, economy and society which challenge entrepreneurs to understand themselves as parts of civil society and whose contributions to solving societal questions become increasingly important – and would complement state social security and civic engagement (Zentrum für zivilgesellschaftliche Entwicklung, 2007, p. 8). Almost every second participating company found that "civic involvement belonged to entrepreneurial tasks" (Zentrum für zivilgesellschaftliche Entwicklung, 2007, p. 10). The three most important reasons why businesses got involved were personal concerns (for 81%), the relation to the business location (70%) and that the engagement suited the company (68%) (Zentrum für zivilgesellschaftliche Entwicklung, 2007, p. 18). Companies perceived most need for regional action in relation to overcoming unemployment (75%), to education and training (68%), regarding the values of diligence and commitment (56%) and "carrying responsibility for each other" (53%). Thereby, the study's authors see businesses emphasising the idea of a 'social market economy' (Zentrum für zivilgesellschaftliche Entwicklung, 2007, p. 9). Finally, it was most likely for businesses to engage if they

knew involved companies in their environment, if they were larger and if their economic activities were more regional (Zentrum für zivilgesellschaftliche Entwicklung, 2007, p. 28).

Stuttgart Region's economic strategy similarly diagnoses a return to social market economy traditions and a shift to more sustainable orientations:

Extract 100

„In society, a change in values is furthermore observable. Sustainability in the sense of an economic, ecological and social responsibility towards future generations has gained a new significance. The companies often return to the traditions of the social market economy: to a rather long-term orientation of business activity, to a cooperative partnership between employees and employers and to a commitment to social security“ (Verband Region Stuttgart, 2013, p. 3).

Exploring informants' views, public sector employee 4 characterised the involvement of Stuttgart's companies as exceptional and compensating for social injustices:

Extract 101

„Stuttgart simply is a city which has a lot to give. That means we have many funds for example. Here in the area of civic involvement, Daimler has donated a pot of money. That means they have supported civic involvement during the last years with a large annual donation of 80,000 to 100,000 Euro [later specified by interviewee]. [...] Other cities can only dream thereof. From that, a lot in social grievances can be offset as it were. And such pots also exist in other areas.“

Indeed, Stuttgart hosts the fifth most private foundations across German large cities with 72 of them per 100,000 inhabitants (Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen, 2018).

Companies understood their societal commitment for instance “[...] at first via the business tax [...], thereby the city benefits [...]” (business representative 6). Business representative 7's view included tariff-bound pay, strong unions, societal integration, recognition and spatial loyalty beyond shareholder value:

Extract 102

„[...] [T]he economy is society. So I have never understood this contradiction between society and economy [...]. So [...] at our location are working 3,500 people, yes. [...] These are families, these are tariff workplaces. I mean the IG Metall [union] has just now got out 4.3 percent [pay rise] for pay-scale employees. That is incredibly much. The integration, also how migration functions, if they have successful experiences, if they have a structure, an everyday life. So I can actually not think of a greater power for societal responsibility than companies in a place. Who don't pay dumping salaries, but top salaries, because there is an IG Metall, strong unions and so on. So that is already the basis, in general. And then beyond that, companies take on very, very much in the region. That is why the cultural sector and the educational sector are flourishing. [...] Those are companies who build museums, who acquire image collections, very clearly they support the youth, support sport events, support-, so in one sentence: Stuttgart Region is also doing so well, not only economically, but also culturally, because there are engaged companies. Who do not only consider shareholder value, but actually also say: 'We are here. We are here since eternities, we want to stay here.' This high loyalty to location. [...] [T]hat is something different than a banking location, right [...], than [...] from a hedge fund or so to the City of London [...]. [...] And that's a high entrepreneurial responsibility here. Really.“

However, politician 5 found that companies' societal engagement had changed and local ties partly weakened with globalisation:

Extract 103

„I certainly think that due to decision-makers in many companies [...] being en route globally and also changing the work location frequently, there naturally is a lesser connection to the city itself. And that was surely [...] different in the past, right? [...]
So I certainly think that this is a concomitant also of globalisation. Which indeed brings us many, many advantages. Therefore, one also cannot only lament it.“

Another politician wished for more societal engagement of companies. As an example, civil society representative 8 saw Daimler's responsibility dwindling:

Extract 104

„[...] Daimler, who is sitting there with its several thousand jobs, just doesn't create one more job. Wherever it can, it indeed rather outsources to elsewhere. I mean-. Workplaces anywhere into a country where production is cheaper. So here it did not take on a real responsibility, this huge employer. [...] It is like such an own [...] state in the city.“

This latter idea can be related to businesses providing (additional) welfare only to their own workforce, thereby becoming relatively exclusive. This may encompass job-related benefits, such as public transport tickets at reduced costs ('Jobticket'), an employer's name improving chances on Stuttgart's tense housing market; or companies providing privately for their district's safety after drug and crime issues, as described in an interview. These company-related privileges become increasingly important during rising inequalities and tend to reinforce them – as the least advantaged can less likely access these privileges. Besides, the characteristics of Nottingham businesses' local community support discussed in Section 7.4.1 largely apply to Stuttgart. Thereby, a multifaceted picture emerges with companies exceptionally and significantly complementing public provision and sustainability in the sense of a 'social market'. Its configurations however remain selective and possibly strengthen inequalities.

7.8.2 Expectations and the public

Between companies and potential employees, a certain misfit of the former's demands and the latter's skills came up in the data. I explore this tension subsequently.

Business representative 5 laid it out as follows:

Extract 105

„So the [workshops] also complain, because they don't find professionals. [...] But they simply also complain because they don't find apprentices. [...] [...] [T]hat is [...] a complaint which we hear since quite a while now. That the young who come out of school, are not really mature to qualify. They may have a diploma, but [...] they then also partly lack basic knowledge, like calculating and so on. But they also often lack social skills. That they are punctual, right? That they have a

certain appearance. Crafts has a lot to do with clients, right? [...] And we also have many businesses who [...] if so to speak the academic performance is not the best, [...] then at the same time commit themselves privately and give them tutoring and so on. But if it simply lacks at the very fundamental things, how do I act in business life. If there is nothing given to them by the parental home, then sometimes a business cannot save the situation either. And then training relationships also [...] dissolve.“

The interviewee stated that employers still saw apprenticeships as worthwhile, even if apprentices left after their three to four years long dual training (split between vocational school and work in a company). While this business representative saw deficits on the side of apprentices partly being compensated for by companies, politician 1 depicted how companies' willingness to take on "the weakest people" varied with the economic climate:

Extract 106

„[...] [I]t now comes to pass, the need of many companies for qualified or unqualified employees. That means they open up stronger for our responsibility of people who without support don't find the way into the labour market or don't stay in it. So today actually, everyone who can walk and withstands a certain mental and physical exposure, [...] finds work. And if he cannot do this alone yet, then he gets according support. And here the employers are more open for such models today than before. But which relates to the economic situation, I need people. [...]

At the moment where economic activity drops, it [the economy] will discharge from this openness again and logically hand the weakest over to the public sector again" (politician 1).

However, business representative 5 also saw demands in crafts rising:

Extract 107

„So I would say earlier, 30, 40 years ago, crafts was maybe still such a catch basin for those who didn't make it elsewhere. [...] That also becomes less and less in

crafts. And the professions become increasingly specific. And [...] really also increasingly demanding.“

Beyond that, civil society representative 8 – working with long-term unemployed people – described a decreasing engagement of companies for employees, including job cuts and outsourcing (cf. also Extract 104). The informant observed a “fight for work, for training positions”, leaving behind “weaker people”:

Extract 108

„Also the conditions on the first labour market are made so that someone weaker doesn't get in anymore. [...]

That has something to do with large companies simply outsourcing very many things, [...] that already aggravates the pressure. [...] And age-, I think by now [...] from end 40, 49, 50, has a lot of difficulties to enter anywhere again. Thus many applications eliminate themselves due to age. Hence because prognosis: could be ill more often, not as [...] productive anymore and so on. Experience does not matter anymore [...].

So the togetherness I think, becomes more difficult in the future. [...] With the way, how the sorting out, the fight for work, for training positions. [...] How this is all organised for the youth [...]" (civil society representative 8).

In conclusion, while the perceived longer-term commitments of employers and employees and the willingness to qualify the latter may contribute to social and intergenerational justice, growing demands, competition and discrimination likely exclude more disadvantaged groups. The cyclicity of companies' engagement for the latter evinces how social justice efforts are economically bounded.

7.9 Stuttgart: economic growth and intergenerational justice

7.9.1 The growth imperative

When asked “What role does economic growth have for future generations/the future?”, many interviewees stressed its relevance within the current market economy. They invoked that economic growth was a “macrosocially desirable model”, played a “great role”, was “very significant” “indispensable”, we “depended” on it or that it was “always the motor” and the basis of Stuttgart's prosperity. It was

considered essential for jobs – these again being important for societal cohesion – and tax incomes. A politician outlined that the city’s budget and capacities depended on future growth. Growth was also described as favouring peace, education, integration and enabling citizens by freedom from existential fears to stand up for things. An example for this ‘growth imperative’ perspective is:

Extract 109

„[...] [E]conomic growth is actually always needed due to the completely ordinary economy. If there is a standstill, that means immediately with jobs loss and so on, that means we will always need to grow“ (civil society representative 3).

Some informants expressed that Stuttgart’s economic growth essentially depended on the automotive industry – with the fear of it being left behind in global markets (cf. Section 7.9.2).

Absent growth was seen as problematic for future generations. One informant questioned whether democracy would work without economic growth and a few found that imagination was lacking about how society would be without growth.

Moreover, informants qualified which kind of economic growth was desirable. One stressed that “real growth” was important, meaning that companies’ profits should be invested in the region, that the number of jobs was paramount and not stock market values. Another informant emphasised that long-term economic growth should take into account ecological and social considerations. However, documents and interviewees often rather referred to “economic development” or the “economic location” than to “economic growth”.

7.9.2 Limits of growth?

Informants also discussed limits of growth. This was inter alia in terms of resource use, species extinction, spatial limits and our wealth being based on exploiting countries rich in raw materials. While some found that growth and sustainability could be reconciled, others saw both in an unsolvable dilemma.

Alternatives to a sole growth-orientation such as an economy for the common good were suggested.

Spatial limits to growth were e.g. described by politician 8:

Extract 110

„Thus we simply come up against our [spatial] boundaries. But we certainly have to do everything, so that companies just also stay here and don't move away. [...] And then there actually was such a consideration to say, no, ok, the city is now simply at, I don't know, 600,000 or 550,000 [inhabitants]. Is simply saturated. [...] Thus, I believe, say 700,000 or so, that's completely unrealistic in Stuttgart. My perception“.

Contrary to limiting spatial growth, business representative 6 favoured “intelligent solutions” to enable it further:

Extract 111

„[...] [I]f one wants to grow, one accordingly [...] needs space. And there, one also has to see here in Stuttgart that one [...] provides this as well. That one can also grow further economically. By intelligent solutions. There is actually no need to always further build on the surface, but it can also happen upward and downward. But one has to think about this as early as possible.“

Specifically, a number of interviewees expressed that Stuttgart's future depended upon the future of its automotive industry. For instance, civil society representative 5 stated: „All the wealth here in Stuttgart is automotive industry“. Walter Rogg of Stuttgart Region Economic Development outlines how the region faces historical challenges and could either grow further or decline – like the US ‘car city’ Detroit (Dalcolmo, 2017):

„[...] [T]he industries of which we live, [...] [face] the biggest existing challenges altogether in history. We have the topic of digitalisation, as industrial revolution, we have the topic that the automotive industry has to totally reinvent itself. In the area of banks, trade, insurances, many jobs will face a big change or loss through digitalisation. We have too little space for the companies, space which is needed urgently. We have infrastructure problems with internet connection, we have few

professionals, we have far too expensive housing. We are really at a crossroads as a growth region and successful economic region. [...] It no longer suffices for us, particularly not for the children and the future generations. [...] And either we deal with it today, where we have the possibilities, where we still have enough money, have social peace, or do we really first have to wait until the big crises come, the large firms leave, big numbers of unemployed emerge. [...]

We have not led the discussion about the limits of growth consequently I think. If one had led it consequently, one could already have intervened earlier [...]. Today, we still have the possibility to reroute, to take into account what the firms need. So that our jobs, training positions, tax revenues are good further on. [...]"
(Dalcolmo, 2017).

Rogg emphasised that companies' needs should be reacted to – to provide for future generations socio-economically, who would otherwise suffer from “great crises”. However, also with the low availability of commercial spaces, more companies already left Stuttgart than entered it between 2013 and 2016 (Reimers & Fleischer, 2018, p. 17; Wirtschaftsförderung Region Stuttgart et al., 2017, p. 5). Relatedly, Rogg concluded that “[w]e are a victim of the success” (Dalcolmo, 2017) – with this market economy's modes of operation undermining its required conditions (e.g. enough resources, commercial and housing space).

Some interviewees were ambivalent towards continued economic growth. One questioned whether ‘green growth’ (cf. Section 2.2.2 a)) was possible; another opted for growth via products that did not consume resources and one did not see growth ensuring that everyone was better off. Beyond ambivalence, few informants wholly dismissed economic growth, seeing the current situation as frustrating, power- and helpless and leading to ecological breakdown, e.g.:

Extract 112

„So, I think the system which we have at the moment, of the neoliberalism which only depends on growth, growth, growth, doesn't work, will not work. And that is absolutely certain. The only question is: when will the crash come? [...]

So we not only have Peak Oil, but we have Peak Everything. [...]

So the economists who think the ecology was a subsystem of the economy. That is a huge deception. The economy is a little subsystem of the nature" (civil society representative 5).

Altogether, economic growth was often considered imperative for present and future well-being which was reflected in Stuttgart's development. Other informants rejected economic growth, saw it contradicting sustainability or discussed how far its urban limits were reached. Similar to Nottingham, its shorter-term socio-economic advantages appear to largely dominate over the seemingly more distant dilemmas it implies.

7.10 Discussion – research question 3

The following interprets and compares findings with respect to RQ 3, *How do political and economic interdependencies relate to sustainability?*, and the business ideal type defined in the chapter's introduction.

(Neo-)liberal economic theory understands profit maximisation as companies' sole purpose (cf. Section 7.1). Despite increasing contestation such as through heterodox economics, liberal economic theory still dominates the field and has also moulded policy-making and discourses. Contrasting with the widespread separation into economic, political and social issues (cf. Section 2.2.1), this study empirically-founded concurs with an economic sociology perspective, viewing 'state' and 'market' as mutually embedded.

A main conclusion is that Nottingham's local economy appears more disintegrated from local society and politics than Stuttgart's. This corresponds to my overall observation that it assumes lesser according obligations – making

Nottingham's regime socio-economically less sustainable and exhibiting a more neoliberal understanding of economic life. I explain this in the section's remainder.

Structurally, these differences likely correlate with the withdrawal of some large employers from Nottingham and thereby a diminished role which the local economy could assume. By contrast, this has barely happened in Stuttgart where economic interests seem more decisive for local developments. Relatedly, Nottingham's labour market appears relatively polarised with a limited number of well-paid jobs requiring higher qualifications and large sections of low productivity and low wage work. There are a strong reliance on public sector jobs, few larger companies or the student economy. Conversely, Stuttgart is still strongly industrialised with a comparatively large proportion of highly paid, high value jobs in the private sector. As factors keeping them in their places, companies in Stuttgart emphasised the cluster of businesses and institutions in automotive or engineering, including in education and research, expertise and qualified employees as well as firm's local traditions. In Nottingham, the value of employees, strong local and historical ties were stressed, while clusters were of lesser relevance.

Perceptions in Stuttgart reflect corporatism and major companies holding considerable informal power in the city – with politics across parties largely accommodating it in main developments. Economic interests were thereby described as often informally promoted and partly internalised by politicians – rather than colliding in conflicts – who recognised how Stuttgart's prosperity depended upon the local economy. The paradigmatic within-case of air pollution regulation exemplifies this, particularly through a constrained rule of law (i.e. not respecting legal pollution thresholds). Communication between companies and politics/administration was reported to be often close and confident. In contrast, economic actors' impact on Nottingham policies was described as markedly weaker, also as they were in some significant cases enforced against businesses' interests. Relations and cooperation between city council and businesses were partly viewed as conducive; and partly as clouded, removed and marked by eroded communication and trust, as in the case of Boots. Some saw both sectors' logics and ways of working as disparate.

While businesses in Nottingham and Stuttgart undoubtedly seek profits, they also do other things which do not appear nor were described as most effective ways to maximise profits. These partly relate to societal conventions and interdependencies, such as the qualification of apprentices and employees, benefits for them, their dependents or wider society, the foundation of charities or the pursuit of local projects. Companies thereby also act and understand themselves as societal entities which contradicts Friedman's Doctrine of a 'free' economy, where businesses' only social responsibility is to increase its profits (Mayer, 2018, p. 7). Informants' views and empirical instances reflect that Stuttgart's local economy takes on a more comprehensive societal role than Nottingham's, which thereby appears more neoliberalised – though I have not found comparative quantifying urban data. This manifests in an often lower – systemic – commitment to qualify and hold (local) people, in a seemingly higher financial volume of firms' societal investments or the stronger belief of local actors in companies' spatial loyalty in Stuttgart than in Nottingham. These differences partly comply with a more shared provision of public goods, higher levels of trust and mutuality between public sector and economy in Germany's coordinated than in the UK's liberal market economy (Hall & Soskice, 2001). In capitalist systems where majorities (indirectly) depend on paid labour, conventions of a more coordinated market economy appear socio-economically more sustainable than those of the more competitive liberal form. While both regimes converge slightly in that companies' local ties partly weakened with globalisation, local conditions and conventions still differ markedly.

Oppositely, environmental and pollution protection was in a number of instances more ambitious and effective in Nottingham than in Stuttgart. However, deindustrialisation and widespread deprivation might confine materially more expansive practices in Nottingham. Such an outcome appears less likely in Stuttgart's wealthier and more equal society. Despite some discomfort, problems of sustainability and lacking space in Stuttgart, economic growth remained without alternative to provide for future generations in both places.

I conclude that considering local economies as differently embedded in local societies is more empirically accurate than assuming a sole liberal profit orientation across capitalist configurations. Besides pursuing profits, such an understanding includes companies' varying roles in providing livelihoods, public goods and as places of social interaction and recognition. Coincidentally, Mayer (2018, p. 8) states that

“[p]resuming that corporate purpose is simply profits potentially creates too great a divide between private interests of shareholders and those of society at large. Equating it with social purpose unduly restricts the corporate purpose to those determined by social interests. Determining where they should correspond and can deviate is a fundamental consideration that has received inadequate attention to date [...].”

This comparative study illustrates instances where a stronger societal embeddedness of ‘the economy’ appears socio-economically more sustainable. It suggests that for an according recalibration, values of mutuality, fairness and trust would be central. In more detail and to help “address many of the major environmental, political and social issues of the 21st century”, Mayer (2018, p. 5), argues for an approach

“[...] that emphasizes the role of corporate purpose, commitments, trustworthiness and culture in which companies specify their purposes, clarify their associated commitments and demonstrate how their ownership, governance, performance measurement and management enable them to fulfil their obligations” (Mayer, 2018, p. 5).

Besides and corresponding with this research, Collier (2019) suggests to address the “derailments of capitalism” – inter alia increasing spatial inequalities – with the creation of knowledge clusters in towns and taxing successful centres.

8 Comparison and conclusion: the co-production of policies and social order in two governance regimes

8.1 Introduction

This chapter compares governance in Nottingham and Stuttgart in relation to sustainability and explains divergence. Besides, it considers limitations of this study and its research and practical implications. Arguments are normative from the viewpoints of social and intergenerational justice (as defined in Section 2.2.3). The interpretive co-production lens directs attention to how social order with its power structures, values and moralities is simultaneously co-constructed with policies, their making and related reason and how both influence each other.

I address some questions emerging through the comparison, e.g.: Why do policy approaches focus more on individual behaviours in Nottingham and more on (infra-)structures in Stuttgart? Why are policy objectives in Nottingham more often measurable and monitored, while they are more developmental in Stuttgart? Why are policies and practices in Nottingham partly more environmentally progressive than in Stuttgart? Why did moves towards market-principles yield different developments in both places?

Building on the comparative case study's findings, Section 8.2 interprets how the governance regimes approximate and deviate from the initially assumed ideal types and how they constitute two specific variations of democratic capitalism. Sections 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5 explain selected diverging aspects of how policies and social order interact in both regimes (RQ 4). They are thematically organised along the three preceding empirical chapters and concluded on in Section 8.6. The chapter's remainder focuses on limitations (Section 8.7), research implications (Section 8.8), practical and policy ramifications (Section 8.9).

8.2 Interpreting governance regimes

This section interprets Nottingham's and Stuttgart's governance regimes altogether. It emanates from the assumed ideal types of NPM for Nottingham, embedded in a liberal welfare state and market economy; and of a Weberian bureaucracy for Stuttgart, embedded in a conservative-corporatist welfare state and a coordinated market economy (cf. Chapter 3). I explore how the empirical cases converge – or not – with the ideal types or typologies and draw on further governance concepts which help understanding the cases.

Section 8.2.1 addresses urban governance, while I discuss welfare state and market economy contexts in Section 8.2.2. However, as this is an in-depth-study of two cases, its focus is not to develop a governance typology capturing a great number of cases (such as DiGaetano & Strom, 2003; Pierre, 1999) – which is more purposefully generated on a larger-n basis –, but to gain insights about broader phenomena by understanding how policies and social order are co-produced in the two cases.

8.2.1 Urban governance regimes

a) Nottingham

Governance in Nottingham resonates in numerous instances with the business- and market-oriented NPM as its initial ideal type (described in Sections 3.3.4 b) and 3.3.5 a)). Nottingham approaches a minimal state vision in being increasingly confined to its statutory duties through governmental policies. Also, competition, market and business principles are applied to the local state. In relation to NPM's external dimension, tasks between the state and the market have been redistributed in terms of favouring market-mechanisms which the state enables. This was mostly government-led since the 1980s and includes privatisations (water, gas and electricity supply), 'quasi-markets' (public transport), commercialisation and bidding for funding, i.e. competition, among local authorities. Nottingham City Council adopts this in successfully bidding and commercialising some of its services. At the same time, privatisation and marketisation are also widely resented and partly circumvented in Nottingham with public assets, infrastructures and services deliberately being kept

public as far as possible (bus system), instated publicly (Robin Hood Energy – collapsed in 2020) or regulated above national standards (private renting: Selective Licensing Scheme). Reasons of the city council for these measures are their empirical inefficiency and social injustice. These market mechanisms were not perceived to empower citizens, as NPM assumes. While the local state largely attempts to provide an enabling environment for the market – as assumed in NPM – its efforts are only partly successful. They are restricted by structural devaluations in terms of averagely difficult living conditions, low educational attainment and skills and thereby partly low margins for businesses.

Regarding NPM's internal dimension, many private sector management principles have been transferred to Nottingham's public sector. Such managerial attributes partly stem from government requirements, including controlling, performance measure- and management (with budgeting by departments) and partnership approaches. Enabling network governance also conforms to governance theory. Entrepreneurial forms of governance are present in a number of strategies and plans, inter alia as measurable objectives with defined time-frames and responsibilities for implementation. Though some of the according regulations have later been repealed, informants explained that the approaches were partly useful and therefore further pursued in Nottingham. Government also promoted administrative decentralisation through agencies, quangos, etc., thereby significantly weakening steering capacities of local authorities (cf. Section 3.3.5 a)). Value for money and service orientation towards its 'clients' are primary concerns of the council and e.g. polled in the citizens' survey (cf. Section 6.3.1) – possibly relating to government's austerity measures. However, the NPM assumption of a separation of politics and management in governing does not hold true in Nottingham. Finally, its urban 'bureaucrats' often appear as competitive employees (NPM) and as mediators and networkers (governance theory). Overall and in line with national developments, the NPM ideal type suits the Nottingham case in many ways, while local counteraction to marketisation deviates from it. The case also resonates with assumptions of governance theory, but barely those of an 'old public administration' (cf. Table 2).

However, some NPM assumptions hardly materialise in Nottingham and appear overly optimistic or not applicable to an accordingly 'peripheral' and devalued place. This is the case for the workings of competition, the local state as market-enabler, democracy and power (cf. Table 2). Limitations to the two former are described above. Third, NPM theorises democracy as an aggregation of individual preferences defined by politicians. The First-past-the-post voting system significantly diminishes the plurality of such an aggregation. Also, the recent (2019) electoral turnout in local elections of less than a third, partial political apathy and the high power gap between an average member of the public and policy developers speak for an accordingly limited effectiveness of Nottingham's local democracy. Fourthly, contrary to the NPM assumption that power is dispersed through the market and therefore unproblematic, questions of power are in fact crucial to governance in Nottingham. It was the lack of power through centralisation which impeded the city council to shape local government policies differently; and lacking power of many Nottingham citizens to seek more favourable living conditions in contrast to wealthier people and places. The impact of government policies in Nottingham may be captured through a thesis Wacquant (2012, p. 66) puts forth to understand the neoliberal state transformation, drawing on Bourdieu's concept of bureaucratic fields. He argues that neoliberalism entails a tilting of the space of bureaucratic agencies defining and distributing public goods in favour of "a Centaur-state that practises liberalism at the top of the class structure and punitive paternalism at the bottom". Correspondingly, public provision has been hollowed out increasingly and paternalistic views towards the more disadvantaged e.g. materialise in interpretations of inequality (cf. Section 7.8.2) or stigmatisation, e.g. regarding begging (BBC News, 2016) – thus reinforcing an increasingly unequal social order. In these respects, a neoliberal policy regime and a neoliberal social order mutually stabilise and condition one another.

While NPM does not cover Nottingham's tendency to counteract privatisation, the welfare model of urban governance (Pierre, 1999) helps to further differentiate Nottingham's regime. It resembles the welfare model in terms of being an old industrial city with severe problems of economic restructuring and limited regeneration. "This made [...] [these cities] dependent on governmental spending to

maintain individual and collective existence at a subsistence level” (Gurr & King, 1987, p. 200; as cited in Pierre, 1999, p. 386). With its predominance of and dependence on public sector institutions and employers (cf. Section 3.4.1c)), this applies to Nottingham. However, a subsistence level seems to be reached less and less with a declining life expectancy. Also, the formation of leftist and progressive policies in the welfare model resonates with Nottingham. Nonetheless, in contrast to the welfare model, the city clearly aims at economic growth and business support; and a primary use of intergovernmental contacts does not appear fruitful, given significant discrepancies with central government (Pierre, 1999, pp. 385–387).

Furthermore, Peterson (1981) suggests that cities would pursue developmental and not redistributive goals because they would ‘die’ if they could not retain mobile businesses and residents. While many Nottingham citizens are barely in the position to choose their place of residence over its attractiveness, they however enjoy a better public infrastructure than they would in many British cities. In this, Mossberger’s (2009, p. 41) explanation that more generous social policies would attract poor people and repel businesses and affluent residents to avoid high taxes partially applies to Nottingham, also with one of the highest Council Tax rates in the UK and views expressed in interviews that businesses would partly prefer to locate at places with higher educational attainment and skill bases. Though consequences of such tendencies in terms of a lower tax base and higher spending needs were sometimes problematised, this logic of displacement has not been applied by Nottingham City Council in favour of more socially just policies.

Altogether, Nottingham’s governance regime exhibits many NPM characteristics, but NPM’s core assumptions barely materialise. From this cases’ perspective, NPM’s normative presumptions therefore appear flawed. The regime is further qualified by the welfare model of urban governance, governance theory and trade-offs between developmental and redistributive goals.

b) Stuttgart

Stuttgart's governance regime partly overlaps with its initially assumed ideal type, the Weberian bureaucracy (cf. Sections 3.3.4 a) and 3.3.5 b)). Though formal power over many decisions and processes is with the city council – thus resting on legal authority as central to the Weberian bureaucracy –, evidence speaks for also locating it in coordination, a certain economic primacy and citizens' impact. First, coordination across sectors, political parties and between politics and administration was often described as important in Stuttgart to decide on priorities and to build consensus. This specifically materialises in terms of a relatively 'coordinated' market economy (cf. next Section), where informants appreciate fundamental dependencies between public and economic sectors. While the local state steers, controls and provides many public goods and services, it also offers an enabling environment for the market. On these grounds, the local state's role appears as a hybrid of a Weberian bureaucracy and NPM. Second, a certain economic primacy manifests in Stuttgart where economic interests dominated over environmental and health protection as in the cases of air pollution, continuing growth and land use (cf. also Section 8.5.1). Finally, in some crucial instances citizens contested the city council's legal authority, e.g. in the cases of Stuttgart 21 or air pollution. Altogether, power in Stuttgart's governance is only to an extent "identifiable, visible and located in the centre of government" (Kjær, 2009, p. 139), as the Weberian bureaucracy implies. Conversely, power is also constructed and reconstructed in formal and informal exchanges of actors from different sectors; and thus partly not easily identifiable. This also to an extent takes power out of democratic control, thereby again deviating from the Weberian bureaucracy.

Further discrepancies to the ideal type exist in relation to its view of the urban bureaucrat as a neutral implementer of decisions taken by the city council, working in steep hierarchies with marginal scope of action. The empirical partly exhibits negotiating scope of administrative employees and transformations of hierarchies taking place, as was the case with the NSM introduction (German NPM version). With input-oriented budgeting and resource management as well as the according

reporting being characteristic to the Weberian bureaucracy, NSM established some elements of an output orientation in Stuttgart. These are a partial reporting system, including performance indicators separated into departments, product groups, objectives and measures. While this enables more financial control, direct output steering and contract management have been abandoned (cf. Section 6.4.1).

Overall, the Weberian bureaucracy ideal type suits the Stuttgart case in some ways and helps understanding its provenance. This is in terms of input-oriented budgeting, management by resources, a developmental policy orientation and NSM reforms building on these. However, the Weberian bureaucracy does not adequately characterise its locus of power, cooperative and participative traits (no clear separation between politics and administration; public and private spheres), nor its moves, reversals and remnants of NPM-inspired reform. As in Germany, a paradigm shift to a managerial NSM stayed out in Stuttgart nonetheless. Besides, the Stuttgart case resonates with governance theory (cf. Table 2) in terms of coordination and participation of various actors, partly making the urban state less of a 'steerer' than a mediator. Power is then to an extent shared in consensus-building networks. Notwithstanding, Stuttgart differs from a more 'networked' governance by mostly retaining its capacities as an initiator and implementer. Democracy in Stuttgart appears to be substantially secured through the municipal council, constituted via the competitive local elections with a participation rate of over 55% in 2019; but amended by participation of multiple actors, especially with a civic culture of – partly effective – contestation. Relatedly, some actors perceived local democracy as undermined by economic primacy. The case thereby combines assumptions about democracy of the Weberian bureaucracy and governance theory. In sum, the Stuttgart case cannot be assigned essentially to the Weberian bureaucracy; neither to NPM nor to governance theory, as it shows characteristics of all three. I therefore do not examine it against one model's assumptions (cf. Table 2), as with NPM for Nottingham (cf. Section 8.2.1 a)).

The 'Neo-Weberian State' describes hybrid governance forms emerging through Weberian local administrations adopting NPM elements and their partial

reversal (Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019; originally: Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). The concept, described in Section 3.3.5 b), helps to contextualise and further interpret the Stuttgart case. Overall, Kuhlmann & Bogumil (2019, pp. 10–11) conclude that a new ‘Neo-Weberian’ administrative model has not yet developed in Germany and that the emerging ambivalent picture requires empirical exploration – to which this study contributes. However, they describe shared traits of a Neo-Weberian State. Stuttgart exhibits all its ‘Weberian’ elements: the state’s central role in solving new complex problems, continued relevance of representative democracy to legitimise government action, the importance of administrative law in grounding state action, legal certainty and the preservation of a civil service with a specific status and conditions (Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019, p. 2). Also, the concepts’ main ‘neo’ elements occur in Stuttgart: an increased external, results- and citizen-orientation instead of an internal rule-orientation only through a new service culture; expanding citizen participation; and city council employees/civil servants becoming more citizens-oriented besides their legal and administrative expertise (Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019, pp. 2–3). The Neo-Weberian State can thereby also serve as a normative reform model, combining legality with productivity, results- and customer-orientation. However, Stuttgart’s trajectory is certainly not teleological towards a Neo-Weberian State, as the external governance dimension illustrates. This appears as following a discursive hegemony of modernisation through NPM approaches – and/or budget pressures –, subsequent learning, some backpedalling, correction of certain elements and retention of others (‘NPM-return’; Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019, p. 5). The latter could be adopted successfully and linked to the prevailing legalist practice (e.g. citizen participation), while others did not suit it well. Also, some elements did not fit Stuttgart’s fabric of marked political competition (e.g. measurable objectives and relating accountability, cf. Section 6.4.1). These incoherences partly explain observable malfunctions. Returns from NPM elements were also initiated to re-gain steering capacity (Kuhlmann & Bogumil, 2019, p. 5) – being pronounced in the Weberian tradition – and after public pressure (e.g. re-communalisation, repurchase and insourcing of local public services and assets; cf. Section 5.7.4). Herein, Stuttgart is a significant exemplar, moving from a relatively enthusiastic ‘NSM-pioneer’ and most comprehensive urban privatiser in

Germany with increasing experience towards re-valuing traditionally more 'continental European' administrative practices. I agree with Kuhlmann & Bogumil (2019, p. 6), who interpret these 'NPM reversals' as learning curves and administrative resilience. They (2019, p. 5) argue that these context-sensitive adaptations after NSM reforms in German local authorities proved to be more stable and sustainable than the radical policy changes in British public administration. My comparative observations support this for Nottingham and Stuttgart. Besides, I argue that NPM expresses lower levels of trust towards politics and administration than previous governance modes, since its principles embody attempts to establish control, e.g. through measurement and monitoring.

Overall, the Neo-Weberian State captures Stuttgart's governance regime better than the Weberian bureaucracy, as a 'middle-way' between the latter and NPM – but barely represents its overlaps with governance theory.

8.2.2 Capitalist welfare state and market economy types

Proceeding to the level of welfare states and market economies, I subsequently relate the cases to Esping-Andersen's (1990) and Hall & Soskice's (2001) respective conceptions (cf. Section 3.2).

The UK case of a liberal welfare state seems to have pushed its principles far, to a point of regressing human development in terms of average population welfare. This relates to decreasing de-commodification and containing the scope of social rights during a decade of austerity. Nottingham illustrates this well, being an extreme case on the end of poverty in the UK. It shows how eroded state-organised solidarities and a nationally increased market-rule counter socio-economic aspects of social and intergenerational justice. Co-produced with the welfare state's dismantling are increasing societal power asymmetries and diverging experiential worlds, which again relate to growing stigmatisation, authoritarianism towards and dehumanisation of disadvantaged groups (Tyler, 2020). With Stuttgart (still?) representing the prosperous end of a German conservative-corporatist welfare state, the stronger emphasis on de-commodification and communitarian values promotes – in line with the initial

expectation – more socio-economically sustainable policies on a national level. Countering the typology's expectation, the German welfare state however appears less class- and status-preserving with its higher provision than the contemporary British liberal one, despite the latter's progressive and egalitarian residencies (Castles & Mitchell, 1992, p. 20). These retrenchments happen in a welfare state partly built upon appropriations as part of Empire (Holmwood, 2000). Their dissolving also links to the industrial and socio-economic decline which particularly concerns places like Nottingham.

Conversely, how far may the German welfare state follow an 'Anglo-American' liberalising path, as the 'stages' of capitalism approach suggests? German pension, labour market and social security policies have moved towards the liberal welfare state model (Knuth, 2014, p. 5; Seeleib-Kaiser, 2016, p. 235) and inequalities widened. I observed a certain cultural appreciation of a more Anglo-American 'soft capitalism' (Thrift, 2005, p. 20), e.g. in terms of entrepreneurship, fast innovation or individualistic values. However, there was distancing from neoliberal business practices in both Nottingham and Stuttgart in interviews and documents (e.g. in favour of more "sustainable" ones, cf. Extract 100). Also, both cases evince returns to state-solutions in public provision (being nationally restricted in Nottingham). In the German debate, there is some apprehension regarding surging inequalities in more liberal capitalism and in relation to 'Brexit'.⁶⁰ This might indicate a certain re-orientation to the German welfare state's more preserving, coordinated institutional arrangements and related values. However, similar criticism exists in the UK, suggesting that the split in relating views goes through both countries – but appears more polarised in the UK. Reversals of more neoliberal policies often emanated from learning through own experiences or observing others' examples. Diverging policy reversions and insistences occurred despite similar tendencies in contemporary capitalism, e.g. in terms of pressures of globalisation or rising inequalities. While the existence of broadly similar struggles

⁶⁰ Relatedly, I hold that rapid, politically-driven deindustrialisation moves with no or little compensation as in the cases of mining in the Midlands or through 'Brexit' are unlikely in Germany's more corporatist structures with a stronger economic primacy.

supports a 'phases' view of capitalism, their differential course speaks more for capitalist 'varieties', in which actors prefer to preserve existing structures for their known equilibria and expectations (Fioretos, 2001, p. 220). Concludingly, elements of both approaches help interpreting the cases (cf. also Section 8.3.4).

The 'liberal' (UK) and 'coordinated' (Germany) market economy types resonate with many of the cases' findings (cf. Section 7.10). For instance, this concerns higher inequalities of the British labour market, along with shorter-term profit expectations and economic action. Companies tended to 'dissociate' themselves more from Nottingham's society than in Stuttgart, e.g. in terms of providing quasi 'public goods'. The German coordinated market economy appears more socio-economically sustainable through its longer-term financing, lesser labour market inequalities, stronger unions and often an investment in quasi 'public goods'. Stuttgart's regime thereby co-exists with more collectivist values and a certain structural conservatism, whereas individual performance, responsibility and rapid change are more prevalent in Nottingham's. Overall, economic and societal responsibility seem more shared in Stuttgart with a closer coordination of political and economic actors than in Nottingham. Also, the Stuttgart case does not support a contradiction between creating an enabling environment for the market and distributive policies, which the Anglo-American governance literature partly establishes (e.g. Swanstrom, Todd, 1985). I argue that this is due to the diverging logics of a liberal and a coordinated market economy. Actors in the latter, also of civil society, are aware that in their governance set-up, economic development often enables – and not only competes with – distributive measures. The dichotomy materialises stronger in Nottingham's more neoliberalised context and partially parallels party-political cleavages. Consequentially, I suggest that local economic interests are in fact more internalised by many actors in the corporatist Stuttgart/German case than in the liberal Nottingham/UK one – although governance in the British case appears more market-oriented. However, this neoliberal sense of 'market' is less concerned with the city's broader development – which distinguishes it from Stuttgart's more embedded view of a 'social market economy'. Neoliberalism and NPM therefore fit the German understanding of urban governance less than the British and reflect geographical foci

of governance research. Where Wittrock & Wagner (1996, p. 107) observe “deep-seated intellectual differences” between Anglo-American and European welfare states in the co-emergence of social knowledge and social policy (cf. Section 2.3.2 b)), I have shown that such differences similarly exist in the co-production of governance research and practices of the urban state and market.

Supporting the ‘varieties of capitalism’ approach historically, Piore and Sabel (1986) explain the varying institutional structures of the US and Germany in terms of labour relations, corporate structure, state regulation and international trade as responses to the requirements of mass-production (US) or the retention of craft production elements (Germany). They argue that in Germany, this has led to a stronger emphasis on collaboration and paternalism, community, local and regional development and small-scale institutions – whilst mass production in the US inter alia promoted managerial control (Taylorism) and the creation of internal labour markets (Brody, 1985). This also has explanatory power for the British and the German cases, where these differences similarly materialise – along with a higher significance of crafts and apprenticeships in Stuttgart.

8.3 Policy approaches – research question 4

While Section 5.8 summarised Chapter 5’s findings in relation to RQ 1, *How do policy approaches relate to sustainability?*, this section deepens the comparison of selected according aspects and addresses RQ 4: *How far can a co-production of policies and social order explain divergence?* This correspondingly applies to Sections 8.4 and 8.5.

8.3.1 Individualism/collectivism and state-society relations

Comparing the documents analysed in Sections 5.2 and 5.5, policy areas and issues to which they are assigned diverge strikingly between Nottingham and Stuttgart. Where in Nottingham issues of health, health-associated behaviours and social problems are accordingly salient, in Stuttgart the natural and built environment are most important. Consistent with NPM principles, public efforts thereby focus more

on individual level issues in Nottingham than in Stuttgart, where (infra-)structural approaches prevail. Correspondingly, more responsibility for change to the better is located at individuals in Nottingham, whereas it appears more as a collective task in Stuttgart; where individual behaviour change is rarely demanded. For example, the aim to change individual behaviours occurs in Nottingham documents on teenage pregnancies, breastfeeding, weight, alcohol, smoking and mental health. This also relates to its partial 'nanny state' approach. By contrast, none of the Stuttgart documents nor significant sections within them are dedicated to these named issues. Also, disadvantaged groups are barely being targeted nor markedly higher expectations raised towards them, as is the case in Nottingham (cf. Section 5.2.2 a)).

What issues urban strategies deal with – or not – expresses power as agenda setting (Lukes, 1974) (cf. Section 3.3.1). At first, both cities' politicians and administrations are in principle free to define policy problems more individually or more collectively. One could then assume that the cities' diverging problem definitions relate to varying problem pressures. Indeed, this seems to be case for teenage pregnancies which are probably much more seldom in Stuttgart than in Nottingham.⁶¹ However, this 'reason-based' explanation does not hold for some issues. For instance, local and national figures suggest a similar or lower alcohol consumption in Nottingham/UK than in Stuttgart/Germany⁶² – yet only Nottingham pursues an alcohol strategy. This illustrates how 'objective' problem pressures have diverging policy implications in both regimes which gives insights into their social orders. Accordingly, it appears less common for policy developers in Stuttgart to advise citizens on how to

⁶¹ Comparative urban frequencies of teenage pregnancies may be approximated as follows. In Nottingham, there are 152 conceptions in the 15- to 17-year-old age group in 2015 (Cann-Livingstone, 2017, p. 3), that is ca. 48.4 per 100,000 inhabitants (UK Population 2016, 2018; own calculation). Contrarily in Baden-Württemberg, there are 337 live births of women under 18 years old in 2015 (Brachat-Schwarz, 2017, p. 8), that is ca. 3.1 per 100,000 inhabitants (Statista, 2019; own calculation).

⁶² Alcohol consumption in the UK is averagely 11.4 litres per capita in 2016 and over 12 litres in Germany (Drinkaware, 2019). To approximate, self-reported (citizens' survey) data for Nottingham of 2012-2014 suggest that around 10% of the population drink at levels which have a greater risk for their health, resonating with estimates by Public Health England in 2014 of 7% of Nottingham's population being higher-risk drinkers (Keenan et al., 2015, p. 11). Based on Stuttgart's 2011 citizens' survey, 28% of men and 21% of women have a risky alcohol consumption (Erb et al., 2012, p. 412).

conduct oneself than in Nottingham. This again resonates with greater power gaps and inequalities between both groups in Nottingham than in Stuttgart (cf. Sections 6.3.3 and 6.5.3). Interacting with governance in Stuttgart are then a less polarised state-society relationship, a stronger collectivism, possibly a view that health-related behaviours are more private and a lesser questioning of conventional practices such as smoking or drinking alcohol than in Nottingham.

Correspondingly, Ulrich Beck characterises individualisation as a long-term tendency in modernised societies where people increasingly engage with the intimate and more public aspects of their lives – which were previously governed by taken-for-granted norms (Beck, 1997; Elliott, 2008, p. 290). The above identified differences between the cities can be related to a further progressed individualisation in Nottingham than in Stuttgart. Individualisation in Nottingham involves a power asymmetry where such an increasing engagement is suggested by more powerful to less powerful members of society. The ensuing behavioural approaches partly neglect wider structural conditions and thereby to an extent make the latter responsible for the ‘social problems’ they experience. This exemplifies Straßheim & Korinek’s (2016) finding that behavioural governance became most influential in the UK with an imagined future – by government – turning “societies into highly individualized states of mind” where citizens should make better decisions in a much smaller and smarter state (Straßheim & Korinek, 2016, pp. 121–122), cf. Footnote 23. Contrary to this expectation, the Nottingham case demonstrates how such a progressed individualisation obstructs social and intergenerational justice. This is as excessive demands on groups who often lack adequate resources to meet them and as a rationalisation of socio-economic decline through assumed individual responsibility and stigmatisation. These phenomena did not occur comparably in Stuttgart. I therefore suggest that a lesser belief in individual responsibility and lesser inequalities in Stuttgart than in Nottingham are co-produced with and partly explain Stuttgart’s more collectivist policy approaches – which in this capacity are more socially and intergenerationally just than Nottingham’s more individualising ones. More collectivist or individualistic policy approaches in turn underpin prevailing values in a place.

8.3.2 Civic epistemologies: co-producing knowledge, policies and social order

‘Civic epistemologies’ capture “the social and institutional practices by which polities construct, evaluate and utilize politically relevant knowledge” (Hilgartner et al., 2015, p. 7), cf. also Section 2.3.1 b). This culturally specific knowledge (Miller, 2008, p. 1900) “shapes and is shaped by the social and political context in which it is made – used by democratic societies in turn to defend, legitimize and critique the exercise of power in democratic societies (Ezrahi, 1990)” (Miller, 2015b, p. 202). In their comparison, I suggest that Nottingham exhibits an ‘individualising’ and Stuttgart a ‘collectivist’ civic epistemology. Carving these out contributes to knowing both governance regimes; and shows how both cities’ governance and welfare state regimes express these civic epistemologies. Subsequently, I discuss this in relation to how policies and employed data interact, using smoking as an example; reflect on according anthropological assumptions; and outline the two civic epistemologies.

In tendency, individualisation in Nottingham is intertwined with a recourse to geographically fine-grained behavioural data, such as about breastfeeding (cf. Section 5.2.2 b)). By contrast in Germany, these data partly do not exist at a city nor a sub-city level. For instance, there are no consistent local breastfeeding data (Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung, 2018) nor general performance rankings of schools. Besides, city level data partially cannot be used or are not being used for monitoring nor to base policies on (e.g. teenage pregnancies: Brachat-Schwarz, 2017). Finally, I notice a rarer recourse to data for comparing Stuttgart’s standing nationally or internationally than in Nottingham. Therefore, data regulation, production and use are also indicative of what constitutes politically relevant knowledge. This is e.g. in terms of what should be monitored; or how far behaviours should be attributable to those exhibiting them. If policies are then based on certain knowledges, these are functioned as instruments of power. This interpretation partially resembles Foucault’s idea of ‘governmentality’, allowing the exercise of a specific form of power “which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge, political economy, and as its essential technical means, apparatuses of security” (Foucault et al., 1991, pp. 102–103).

Smoking provides an example for the distinct institutional practices of co-producing policies and social order. With no dedicated plan nor measurable objective on smoking in Stuttgart, efforts appear less targeted and encompassing than in Nottingham. However, measures to reduce the harmful impact of smoking are pursued: regulation on protecting non-smokers and tobacco control measures have been significantly intensified in the last years and there are awareness-raising measures in schools and help in smoking cessation (Gesundheitsamt Stuttgart, 2008; Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, n.d.-l). Conversely, the Nottingham Plan 2010-2020 set the aim to “[r]educe the proportion of adults who smoke to 20% by 2020” and a key principle of the Tobacco Control Strategy 2015-2020 is to promote non-smoking as the social norm, thereby “[i]nspiring Nottingham’s smokefree generation” (Nottingham City Council, n.d.-b, pp. 22; 1). Similar patterns exist in other policy areas: an ambitious, prescriptive and more behavioural-individual approach in Nottingham and a less interfering, partly more conservative approach in Stuttgart, where smoking barely appears as a primary urban problem. Both approaches illustrate diverging views of citizens in society: one emphasising that individuals make choices which should be improved in Nottingham and one rather depicting smoking as a practice occurring in society which should be reduced, but not necessarily ended through municipal efforts in Stuttgart.

In aiming for individual behaviour change, policy approaches in Nottingham are more paternalistic towards citizens than in Stuttgart. I suggest that this is again associated with more unequal state-society relations, more control of and lower trust towards citizens. It is expressed in the practice of setting behavioural targets with time-frames, measuring and working towards them. By contrast, less polarised state-society relations underlie Stuttgart’s behaviourally more conservative, incremental, often less ambitious and less targeted policy approaches.

In summary, Nottingham’s ‘individualising’ civic epistemology is marked by behavioural and individual-level foci in how policy-relevant knowledge is generated, interpreted and used. Public policy in turn should be ‘evidence-based’. The civic epistemology is further characterised by a measurement- and audit-culture (e.g.

Power, 1999), comparisons and competition, often due to governmental practices – thereby being closer to a “modernist paradigm of scientific rationalization and control” (Jasanoff, 2005, p. 41) than Stuttgart’s regime; a need for individual action, sometimes linked to stigmatising disadvantaged groups; the setting of measurable objectives tied to generated data; foci on transparency and data accessibility. This importantly describes a tendency of political and institutional practices in Nottingham – and not of its entire society.

Stuttgart’s ‘collectivist’ civic epistemology exhibits a (legally) more restricted use of behavioural data. Policies are less often ‘evidence-based’ and instead stem more from conventional practices, values and ideas – though monitoring increases. Urban data are only partly publicly available and sometimes sold by the city’s statistical office. In comparison to Nottingham, health-related issues remain more in the private sphere of the citizen and disadvantaged groups are barely being stigmatised. This knowledge is co-produced with more collectivist debates, often developmental objectives, and consensus-seeking across governance levels, political parties and sectors.

Concludingly, I propose that Nottingham’s ‘individualising’ civic epistemology furthers more individualising policy approaches – which in turn stabilise the authority of individualising knowledges. Conversely, Stuttgart’s ‘collectivist’ civic epistemology promotes more developmental and collectivist policies – which in turn underpin more collectivist knowledges. However, comparatively relating both civic epistemologies to sustainability yields ambiguous interpretations. While approaches in Nottingham aim for social and intergenerational justice by improving population health (e.g. smoking, alcohol, weight, breastfeeding, carbon emissions), they are partly patronising, sometimes treat symptoms rather than causes and are socially unjust in their higher expectations towards disadvantaged groups. In Stuttgart, some practices harmful to health appear politically more accepted than in Nottingham (e.g. smoking, air pollution). While disadvantaged groups are not confronted with higher expectations, they often disproportionately suffer from these practices’ adverse health impacts.

Others have comparatively examined civic epistemologies, such as Jasanoff (2005) in relation to public policies for the life sciences over three decades. For Germany (“Consensus-seeking”), the UK (“Communitarian”) and the US (“Contentious”), she similarly finds significant divergence in styles of public knowledge-making, public accountability (basis for trust), demonstration practices, objectivity registers, expertise foundations and the validity of expert bodies (Jasanoff, 2005, p. 259). Such findings could be drawn together for further research on civic epistemologies – which still constitute a research gap.

8.3.3 Policies, justice and expectations

Interviewees in Nottingham saw local policies more often accounting for social and intergenerational justice than in Stuttgart. While this might reflect the higher proportion of public sector informants in Nottingham – and a potential interest in representing local policies positively – I suggest that it also relates to varying expectations in both cities.

Informants were aware of Stuttgart’s comparatively high socio-economic living conditions and support of disadvantaged groups – as they were of Nottingham’s entrenched socio-economic problems and lack of local means to alleviate them further. Responses reflected these diverging initial conditions as higher expectations in Stuttgart to account for social and intergenerational justice than in Nottingham. For instance, citizens fulfilling basic needs was thematised more often in Nottingham, whereas demands in Stuttgart were more often higher up in a ‘hierarchy of needs’. However, citizens’ surveys evidence a relative satisfaction with the city (Nottingham) or its quality of life (Stuttgart; cf. Sections 6.3.1 and 6.5.1). I argue that informants adjusted their expectations to local perceptions and that this illustrates the context-dependency of the case study. British welfare state retrenchments may thereby have facilitated a habituation to higher deprivation and inequalities in Nottingham, which did not happen likewise in Stuttgart. The created social order might in turn influence policy-making via lowered expectations towards public provision in Nottingham.

8.3.4 Two cities as counterfactuals

Taking the comparative findings of these sections further, I suggest that Nottingham and Stuttgart can be interpreted as each other's counterfactual.

For one thing, if Nottingham's structural conditions were better (as in Stuttgart), e.g. more jobs with higher salaries available or if the welfare state would adequately secure livelihoods, social problems may be less pressing and citizens may be asked less to change their behaviours as a remedy. Since these structural conditions are more favourable in Stuttgart, it can herein serve as Nottingham's counterfactual. As shown, individualisation barely occurs on a policy level in Stuttgart. For example, low formal qualifications are less problematised and can go with high salaries in Stuttgart's manufacturing industries, whereas Nottingham's lower qualified citizens are on a policy level asked to further qualify and aspire more (cf. Section 7.4.2) – thereby individualising the societal problem.

Then again, Nottingham may be Stuttgart's counterfactual in relation to industrial decline. While both cities were cradles of the industrialisation – Stuttgart later than Nottingham –, an encompassing deindustrialisation with severe socio-economic implications so far only occurred in Nottingham. How far might Stuttgart follow Nottingham's trajectory, should Stuttgart's car industry cluster which is vital for the city's prosperity, decline as feared? This would imply a 'stages' view of capitalism in which its British (neo-)liberal variety is at the front of developments with more coordinated and corporatist varieties such as the German following. In relation to the two countries, this pattern indeed exists with tertiarisation, tides of privatisation, some welfare state retrenchments, a growing low wage sector and partly hardened attitudes towards disadvantaged groups. Notwithstanding, these tendencies mostly occur to lesser extents in Germany than in the UK and British 'forerunning neoliberalism' partly serves as an inspiration, but partly also as a deterrent model promoting alternative orientations (cf. also Section 8.2.2). This contradicts a simple 'stages' model. Not attempting to forecast a future convergence of both cases, Nottingham gives insights into how industrial decline might play out with other factors of social order; and which problems might arise in that case. Therefore, if Stuttgart

had Nottingham's deindustrialisation and deprivation, a more polarised social order with more marked social problems and their individualisation seem likely – though being alleviated by more collectivist orientations and a stronger welfare state in Germany (the Ruhr area may be an example).

Altogether, the comparative case study demonstrates how vitally structural conditions in a polity interact – are co-produced – with its policies, and may alter citizens' opportunities, the recognition and demands they encounter.

8.4 Policy negotiations – research question 4

8.4.1 Justifying 'choices'? Inequality and moralities of living conditions

These sections move on to explaining factors in relation to policy negotiations. As a first comparative aspect, moralities in relation to aspects of urban life differ in terms of stronger valuations and devaluations in Nottingham than in Stuttgart. I relate this to higher levels of inequality in Nottingham (cf. Sections 3.4.1 d) and 3.4.2 d)). Discussed examples are places of residence, modes of transport and foodbank use.

First, Nottingham interviewees sometimes referred to the neighbourhoods they inhabited in terms of justifying their choice, attaching ideas or values to them. For instance, one informant did not opt for a neighbourhood as it was "too posh" for him. Another denoted himself as "eccentric" for living in a partly deprived neighbourhood. In tendency, interviewees rather lived outside Nottingham's boundaries, often in wealthier suburbs. By contrast, Stuttgart informants rarely referred to their places of residence. According justifications did not come up and the issue appeared less loaded. I suggest that higher deprivation and inequalities – as in Nottingham – incentivise and pressure citizens to select more favourable environments; and interact with valuations and devaluations which interviewees expressed. The consequential residential segregation is detrimental to social and intergenerational justice as it promotes a solidification of socio-economic disadvantage along with many experiencing disrespect. Such a 'morality of distinction'

and segregation seems weaker in Stuttgart. Relatedly, literatures about urban segregation and regeneration established that

“deprived neighbourhoods are not just receptacles of the victims of a divided and polarized society, but that living in such neighbourhoods contributes to the reproduction of inequalities and is a further source of social exclusion” (Atkinson & Kintrea, 2002, p. 162).

Besides, spatial valuation patterns are opposed in Nottingham and Stuttgart. Whereas inner-city living becomes increasingly valued, gentrified and exclusive in Stuttgart with displacement effects, more desired places to live in the Nottingham area are often outside the city’s boundaries. In this context, commuting to work into the city appears as a more ‘white middle-class’ way of life, while others more often inhabit deprived inner-city neighbourhoods. Social order thereby interacts with municipal boundaries and particularly confines Nottingham’s options to act upon residential segregation as wealthier districts are outside the local authority’s reach (cf. also Section 5.3.3).

Second, there is a differential ‘morality of transport’ in both cities. In Nottingham, modes of transport appear relatively tied to socio-economic status. While the better-off were described as often commuting by car (cf. above) and partly by tram, public buses were sometimes portrayed as being ‘for the poor’, or cycling as a marginal practice. I did not come across similar devaluations of the latter in Stuttgart – only their capacities were seen as insufficient. However, there was a certain cleavage in both cities between individual car use and promoting more public transport, cycling and walking – reinforced in Stuttgart with its coinage as a ‘car city’. A more polarised ‘morality of transport’ as in Nottingham seems detrimental to more environmentally friendly transport options (e.g. regarding congestion, air pollution or material use), as it devalues them.

Third, permanently depending on a food bank was an accepted and possible condition in Stuttgart with an identifying badge, whereas a Nottingham informant expressed that people should not become dependent on food banks and access to them generally required a referral. The difference illustrates the stronger emphasis on self-reliance in Nottingham – which is however harder to achieve than in Stuttgart.

Overall, I argue through these three comparative instances that higher inequalities in Nottingham than in Stuttgart partly explain stronger valuations and devaluations in Nottingham. These often contradict social justice.

8.4.2 Political representation and political culture

Interacting with political representation principles, local political power in Nottingham is concentrated in terms of the Labour Party's enduring city council majority and a lacking effective opposition. Conversely, it is relatively dispersed in Stuttgart with its 11 groups in the city council, requiring and promoting more negotiation; as well as with its principles of interest mediation and stakeholder representation. These disparate political power distributions partly explain diverging policy-making processes. Accordingly, Nottingham's Labour Party pursues consistent long-term approaches, often aiming for social and intergenerational justice, which partially counteract more market-based government policies. In Stuttgart, policies emerge in less determined, seemingly less consistent and often slower ways with shifting majorities. This manifests in ongoing discussions and power struggles, concrete instances of which are policy reversals (of infrastructure privatisations and NSM) or successful citizens' contestations (e.g. regarding air pollution, cycling infrastructure development or Stuttgart 21). Though policy development in Stuttgart appears to incorporate a greater array of interests which may reduce polarisation, Nottingham's persistent concentration of political power may enable its pioneering role in environmental policies and public infrastructure provision. Nottingham's leaner local state could also be argued to act more effectively, while Stuttgart's was partly seen as not fulfilling its duties in a timely manner and subordinating to economic interests. I conclude that principles of political representation in the UK and Germany are co-produced with social orders in that they foster and partly explain diverging local political cultures: more confrontative, capable of acting and dominating in Nottingham under the First-past-the-post system and more cooperative, incremental and contesting in Stuttgart with its proportional representation.

8.4.3 Central-local relations and role of the local state

Furthermore, local political power in Nottingham and Stuttgart does not translate into similar spheres of influence. There is strong divergence in local autonomy, local budgets, regional inequalities and political cleavages.

High power inequalities mark the relation between central and local governments and between some regions in the UK – with Nottingham economically often being situated at a relatively ‘losing end’. This amplified with government’s austerity measures which the city had to implement in a highly centralised system, increasingly restraining it to its statutory duties and reinforcing interregional inequalities through its funding regime (cf. Section 6.2.2 a). These tendencies contradict social and intergenerational justice. They also relate to party-political and ideological cleavages between the Conservatives-led central government and Labour-dominated Nottingham, partly working against each other. Behind this backdrop, Nottingham’s local state, but also government and partly companies (cf. Section 7.4) decreasingly assume responsibility for citizens’ basic needs. The local authority’s role is thereby diminished, developing into a – partly commercialising – body managing a number of local services – but which is underfunded for a general public provision.

Conversely, the relationship between federal and local government was not an issue of contention in Stuttgart. Local policies rather complement national ones, also in relation to concerns for social and intergenerational justice. Relatedly, the German constitution grants the federal state the right to legislate in order to establish equal living conditions (GG Art 72). Besides, in a system of high local autonomy, Stuttgart is structurally advantaged with its strong local economy, partly of high added value, and related stable municipal budgets.

Nottingham City Council has therefore a considerably smaller sphere of influence in many policy areas than Stuttgart’s. I conclude that less local autonomy, stronger cleavages and higher inequalities between regions and between central and local governments facilitate friction losses and more structural disadvantage – which counter socio-economic sustainability. On the contrary, more local autonomy, more

concerted political action and lesser such inequalities appear conducive to complementary policies and more interregional balancing.

8.4.4 Consolidation regimes?

Altogether, policy negotiations and social order shape each other differently in Nottingham and Stuttgart. Despite Nottingham City Council's remarkable and pioneering counteraction (cf. Section 6.3.2), continued austerity in the UK is linked to an increasing shift of public provision into the private sphere. This also implies postponing costs into the future, e.g. in the form of underfunded public infrastructures, debts or loans. Nottingham thereby approximates a 'consolidation regime' (Streeck, 2016, pp. 113–142). This excludes a growing share of citizens from living standards which are then only enjoyed by the wealthier – thus restricting social justice. My findings illustrate how the consolidation regime reinforces inequalities, undermines social and economic rights and therefore (local) democracy through lacking basic security. This increasing polarisation and disenfranchisement of large parts of the population may be characteristic for the current trajectory of liberal welfare states.

Curiously, while in the British case – more than in the German – partnership approaches are promoted, building on voluntarism, reciprocity and trust as assumed in governance theory (Kjær, 2009, p. 144), basic security as a precondition for such engagement exists less in Nottingham than in Stuttgart. Stuttgart still deviates from a consolidation regime, though similar tendencies occur: raising levels of private debt (Baur, 2017), increasing inequalities and polarisation, particularly through rising housing costs, and an expanded low wage sector. However, in comparison, the national welfare state and the local state provide at higher levels in Germany than in the UK.

8.5 Political and economic interdependencies – research question 4

8.5.1 Economic primacy?

As summarised in Section 7.10, Nottingham's and Stuttgart's economies assume differential roles in their urban fabrics. In Stuttgart, a view prevailed where politicians across parties followed the local economy's interests in major conflictual instances to sustain the city's prosperity. This perceived dependence partly explains why economic interests prevailed over environmental and health protection as in relation to air pollution, continuing growth and land use. This interpretation underwrites findings of the community power debate (cf. Section 3.3.2) in explaining diverging urban outcomes to tackling air pollution as follows. That the US-city Gary took 13 extra years to enact anti-pollution legislation compared with equally-polluted neighbouring cities has been linked to the dominance of the industrial complex in Gary, i.e. U.S. Steel being identified with the town's prosperity (Crenson, 1971, p. 169; as cited in N. Robinson, 2006, p. 7). However, contemporary Stuttgart differs from former Gary in that its prosperity is not mainly linked to a sole company, but to the automotive cluster – and to some other industries. This may have played a role in air pollution not being displaced from the agenda in Stuttgart. Also, Stuttgart's 'economic boundedness' involves high degrees of – partly successful – public contestation in the city council and by civil society. This has not characterised cases of stronger economic primacy in the literature such as Atlanta, where local representative democracy provided a smokescreen for dominant economic interests and issues only moved with the approval of a business-dominated elite (Hunter, 1953; Harding, 2009). Stuttgart's dominance of economic interests is therefore less pervasive and obvious than in some historic US cases.

Conversely, Nottingham's economy does not approach the weight of Stuttgart's. In comparison, it appears diminished and more disembedded from society. Behind this backdrop, politicians sometimes enforced policies more confrontationally against economic interests, which also forms part of Nottingham's 'forerunner role' regarding environmentally progressive and redistributive policies. Examples are the

objective of becoming carbon neutral as the first UK city by 2028 (Nottingham City Council, 2019e), the Workplace Parking Levy (cf. Section 7.3) or the Selective Licensing Scheme (cf. Footnote 26). Comparing these to Stuttgart, its vision to become climate neutral by 2050 (Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2016b) is significantly less ambitious time-wise.⁶³ More generally, Nottingham takes a pioneering role in environmental sustainability (cf. Section 7.5.3). By contrast, Stuttgart's environmental regulation was relatively reluctant in instances concerning its industries or traffic infrastructure, e.g. in tackling air pollution and carbon emissions reduction – despite partly more pressing problems than in Nottingham. Furthermore, I have not found an urban policy charging employers for workplace parking to redistribute towards public transport as the Workplace Parking Levy; nor was there a local measure to counter poor housing conditions like the Selective Licensing Scheme. However, both cities' national contexts differ markedly, e.g. in terms of high housing standards in Germany in an EU comparison (Noll & Weick, 2014) and partly stronger antagonisms in the British case.

The cases' divergence is not explained by neo-pluralist arguments (Lindblom, 1977), cf. Section 3.3.2. While 'structural power' – i.e. the critical importance of business decisions for providing public welfare (Harding, 2009, pp. 33–34) – is high in both cities, it is more dispersed across companies in Stuttgart. Nottingham's few large businesses may therefore hold a relatively higher structural power, as the Boots case exemplifies (cf. Section 7.2). However, empirically this does not seem to translate into 'instrumental power' – i.e. businesses' ability to mobilise their case effectively and receive attentive hearing (Harding, 2009, pp. 33–34). Businesses' instrumental power generally appears higher in Stuttgart which is counterintuitive from the neo-pluralist standpoint, where a company's higher structural power would imply more instrumental power. Contrastingly and in light of this study, I argue that urban policy-

⁶³ “[...] [T]he term climate neutral is similar to carbon neutral, but has one crucial difference: it covers all greenhouse gases (GHGs) as defined by the Kyoto Protocol” (T. Butler et al., 2015, p. 2). As a rough orientation, 82% of US greenhouse gas emissions in 2017 were carbon dioxide (US Environmental Protection Agency, 2017). “The inclusion of non-CO₂ GHGs in the term climate neutral provides additional options for climate mitigation” – in comparison to carbon neutrality (T. Butler et al., 2015, p. 3).

making is much more interwoven with a governance regime's social order, conventions and values. As discussed throughout Chapter 7, these diverge significantly between Nottingham and Stuttgart. Variation in the cases' economic primacy – stronger in Stuttgart than in Nottingham – can therefore partly be explained by differing senses of businesses' obligation, coordination, interest mediation, mutuality and trust between the economy, politics and society (as partly captured by the 'liberal' and 'coordinated' market economy types, cf. Section 8.2.2). Stuttgart's stronger economic primacy, its close, corporatist links with the automotive cluster and relatively preservationist values may then also have precluded more progressive environmental policies at an earlier stage – while the relative absence of such an industrial counterweight in Nottingham and a stronger embrace of change may have enabled them.

8.5.2 Labour markets and individualisation

Differences in both cities' labour markets are striking. This is in terms of structures, opportunities, relating debates and expectations (cf. Sections 7.4.2 and 7.8.2). Nottingham data evince an antagonism between employers looking for skills which they barely find locally, while being partly unwilling to qualify local people to their expectations. The discrepancy relates to relatively short-term commitments between employers and employees and neither was the further education system seen to bridge this gap. The antagonism is also present in Stuttgart, though to lesser extents. As mitigating factors appear a significantly higher proportion of better paid private sector jobs, the stronger provision of quasi 'public goods' through businesses, including the dual vocational training system, higher qualifications, longer-term commitments and a stronger welfare state.

However, responsibility for the discrepancy was sought more at individuals struggling with the labour market in Nottingham than in Stuttgart; or a collective obligation for them of state, educational institutions and companies appeared higher in Stuttgart (cf. also Section 5.2.2 c)). Correspondingly, the neoliberal economic view which rejects businesses' pursuits not directly linked to profit maximisation (Crouch, 2012, p. 363) materialises more in Nottingham. This might be qualified in terms of a

more short-term profit orientation in Nottingham and one which is more long-term in Stuttgart. Nottingham accordingly exemplifies a neoliberal labour market regime. I argue that the latter is less sustainable since it partly relies on drawing in qualified labour externally – thus presupposing educational provision elsewhere – and produces many who lose out. They are often excluded from sufficient material provision, societal recognition and participation. This labour market polarisation and dualisation counters social justice. ‘The market’ therefore co-produces a relative rule of the powerful and strong, competition, inequality and decreasing solidarity. Effects of this occur more in Nottingham than in Stuttgart in terms of social disintegration, weakening societal cohesion, up to dehumanising those in need – enabled by explaining their suffering through a lack of individual responsibility (cf. Sections 6.3.1 and 7.4.2).

I conclude that diverging degrees of labour market polarisation in both cities relate to a more extensive market rule in Nottingham than in Stuttgart. Higher expectations towards the disadvantaged and formally lower qualified are then partly explained and reinforced by their stronger marginalisation – i.e. initially weaker position in the social order – in Nottingham than in Stuttgart.

8.5.3 Economic growth and intergenerational justice

While both variations of capitalist governance regimes function in intergenerationally unjust ways, i.e. transfer socio-economic and environmental costs into the future, they hold on to growth paradigms. In Nottingham, a politically shaped polarised social order left many impoverished. The normalisation of this condition again underpins national policies perpetuating a system which locally does not work for many. Economic growth is being adhered to, even with little notable signs of improving living conditions – although growth is increasingly aimed at being inclusive. While Stuttgart’s population averagely suffers less from deprivation than Nottingham’s, the city approaches its physical limits under continued growth. Herein, economic development partly appears to be prioritised over environmental and human health protection.

Problems relating to their current economic models are however differently debated. Notwithstanding its present economic strength, there is a sense of falling behind in Stuttgart in terms of the automotive industry and innovation. In Nottingham, there is a clear consciousness of the city's severe socio-economic problems. In both places, urban strategies frame economic growth as a precondition for future generations' prosperity. Foci therein are the preservation of Stuttgart's industrial base and the creation of jobs in Nottingham – reflecting their respective problem pressures. However, Nottingham's rhetoric is more focused in relation to economic growth than Stuttgart's, e.g. aiming for “a strong and aggressive campaign marketing the city to external businesses, investors and markets” (Nottingham City Council, 2012, p. 34). Stuttgart's growth rhetoric is more concerned with economic development and emphasises the preservation of economic structures and companies. These two versions of pursuing economic growth interact with their economic models as discussed throughout this chapter, more ‘coordinated’ and persistent in Stuttgart and more ‘liberal’ and prone to rapid change in Nottingham (e.g. in carbon emission reduction, environmental policies, industrial change, digitalisation, socially progressive/partly identity-based policies or behavioural approaches to health policies). Both varieties of expansionist modernity imply the described – diverging – problems for future generations.

8.6 Discussion – research question 4

This last empirical chapter hitherto focused on comparing both cases and explaining their divergence. Building on the thesis' empirical findings, I examined the ideal-typical expectations from which this study departed. Governance in Nottingham appears as a composite of many NPM traits – but contradicts some of its optimistic assumptions –, the welfare model of urban governance and governance theory. The Stuttgart case is better captured by the Neo-Weberian State than by the Weberian bureaucracy. Beyond that, the cases can be interpreted from many other angles. While there are limits to this within the thesis, I attempted to detail the cases' complexity, contradictions and messiness to do justice to them and to allow for further analyses.

Where RQ 4 asks: *How far can a co-production of policies and social order explain divergence?*, it indeed explains significant findings of this study. The following summarises main explanations along four comparative aspects.

First, more individualising policies in Nottingham compared to more collectivist ones in Stuttgart are enabled by stronger beliefs in individual responsibility, higher inequalities and greater social distancing in Nottingham than in Stuttgart. They also interact with varying civic epistemologies: a more 'individualising' in Nottingham and a more 'collectivist' in Stuttgart. These policies again give rise to the described diverging values and beliefs. However, individualisation counters socio-economic sustainability.

Second, local government regulation sets out power relations between central and local government. Whereas the British system confines local autonomy, budgetary leeway and subjects Nottingham to (additional) structural disadvantage, the German system assures local autonomy and with its high business tax income, Stuttgart is structurally advantaged. This relates to policies countering each other and party-political cleavages between Nottingham and central government, which are not an issue in Stuttgart. Therefore, higher spatial inequalities, political power concentrations and ideological cleavages interact with less consensus-building and policy approaches opposing one another – facilitating less sustainable friction losses and more politically caused disadvantage.

Third, where politicians in Stuttgart were forced by citizen activists and courts to act upon air pollution, Nottingham's environmental policies driven by the city council were among the most progressive in the UK. This can partly be explained by Stuttgart's powerful automotive cluster, shifting city council majorities requiring political brokering and an impactful civil society. Conversely, a similar seeming 'industrial opponent' is absent in Nottingham, the stable Labour Party majority in the city council enables long-term action and there is a larger power asymmetry between policy developers and the public. While policies are often more environmentally sustainable in Nottingham, this may be partly facilitated by high deprivation.

Fourth, some Nottingham policies were enacted against local businesses' resistance – which did not occur as a theme in Stuttgart. A partial explanation lies in varying urban fabrics where economy and society are more embedded in Stuttgart with closer, more corporatist and trustful links between politics and economy than in Nottingham. These urban policies again co-produced – e.g. clouded or boosted – relations between businesses and politics. More shared concerns for the city across sectors appear socio-economically more sustainable.

Altogether, the initial ideal types capture governance in Nottingham and Stuttgart only to varying degrees. Notwithstanding, the theoretical expectation that the regime which is more impacted by neoliberalism (Nottingham) is less sustainable than the more traditional one (Stuttgart) holds for various aspects of socio-economic sustainability. By contrast, Nottingham's more neoliberalised regime in tendency produced more environmentally sustainable policies than Stuttgart's. I have thereby concluded on the research aim of this study: *To compare and explain how governance in Nottingham and Stuttgart relates to sustainability.*

The remainder of the chapter illuminates limitations of this study and then moves beyond the two cases by considering its implications for research and practice.

8.7 Limitations

As every research, the one at hand has its limitations. I discuss four of them subsequently: consequences of my predominant cultural rooting, concerns regarding the case selection, partial knowledge underlying the study and the depth of its interpretations.

First, having grown up and spent most of my life in Germany, my cultural orientations and views about society and economy are moulded by the experience. In comparison, I perceived very marked differences to the British context, values and attitudes during my more than three years in Nottingham. This particularly concerns questions of political culture, individualism/collectivism, inequalities and intensified with the 'Brexit' crisis. My research surely reflects this. Although I have attempted to

understand and do justice to both cases and their comparison, achieving this may have been limited by my perspective, being more an 'outsider' to Nottingham and more an 'insider' to Stuttgart. This might promote blind spots in relation to the latter and limited understanding in relation to the former.

Second, one might object whether the cases Nottingham and Stuttgart are at all 'comparable', as they are so different. Contrarily, high variation within one country could hold institutional and cultural variation more constant. For instance, Nottingham could be compared to wealthier Brighton or more neoliberally governed Northamptonshire (cf. Footnote 29); Stuttgart could be compared to structurally weaker Duisburg. This could ease singling out particularly local factors. However, areas of homogeneity are defined in relation to the research interest (cf. Section 4.3.2). The strength of this study's case selection is to include marked varieties of capitalism, wealth and inequalities, political systems, cultures and civic epistemologies. These divergences allow drawing conclusions about relating factors and consequences – which a within-country comparison would to far lesser extents (cf. Sections 2.3.3 c) and 4.2.1).

Third, as all research this study draws on partial knowledge. Different interviewees and a different researcher might alter interpretations. Also, purposive sampling likely rather attracts informants with relating interests and could be done in many ways. However, I attempted to build a diverse and broad data base and be attentive to instances countering my narrative (cf. Section 4.4), so as to arrive at a measured, justified and thorough representation which is as valid as possible. Throughout this thesis, I aim to integerly display how I constructed interpretations, striving for transparency and trustworthiness (cf. Section 4.2.2 c)).

Fourth, interpretations can be further driven forward. With the set time-frame requiring to conclude at some point and my view of how I could deepen interpretations evolving in the course of this research, additional theoretical development can follow. However, this study is a substantive start and contribution in itself.

8.8 Implications for future research

Numerous implications for future research can be derived from this thesis. I discuss some predominant ones subsequently.

Primarily, cognitions of the comparative case study could be transposed into co-production regime (ideal) types which characterise interactions between policies, their knowledge claims and social order. They could particularly expand on the civic epistemologies described in Section 8.3.2.

Considering how governance in Nottingham and Stuttgart relates to sustainability through the lens of policies and social order being co-produced brought diverse insights to the fore. Throughout the empirical chapters, I have related them to the advance of neoliberalism and inequalities. The thesis therefore speaks to significant sociological puzzles around both themes which I have opened up in the Introduction (Chapter 1):

Why is neoliberalisation still advancing, despite its many unsustainable tendencies?

Why is there not more resistance against widening inequalities, particularly in places where they are more pronounced, despite their negative consequences for many?

Partial answers to both questions lie in differential power relations in Nottingham and Stuttgart, as discussed in Chapter 8: Those who suffer the most from both tendencies are hardly in the place to decide about instances of their advance (e.g. poorer citizens). And those sympathising with the latter hold limited power in relation to these broad trends (e.g. Nottingham Labour Party with respect to austerity; local politicians with respect to cities' rising housing costs). With power being central to better understand the two puzzles, it should be central to future research. The following outlines according routes in relation to four themes: researching inequalities; roles of government, economy and civil society; studying economy and society; and separating issues into dimensions and disciplines.

First, researching poverty while leaving aside inequality and wealth as its structural conditions bears the risk of individualisation and decontextualisation. Instead, carving out and theorising their interrelations would be crucial to apprehend power through economic resources. Moreover, researchers should consider the ‘power bias’ particularly in the existence of quantitative data, so as to not unconsciously reproduce the higher scrutiny of disadvantaged vs. powerful citizens. This involves closing the research gaps about wealth, high incomes – as reflected in the case descriptions for Nottingham and Stuttgart (cf. Sections 3.4.1 d) and 3.4.2 d)) – and relating attitudes and morals.

Second, research should reconsider how the nature, scope and purpose of government, nationally and locally, is co-produced with neoliberalisation and rising inequalities. This implies substantial power shifts in the local fabric, as exemplified in Nottingham, e.g. in terms of a weakened civil society whose subsistence level is not granted or businesses’ rising ‘structural power’ (cf. Section 8.5.3). The latter aspect is for instance addressed by Crouch (2011); or Birch (2019) theorises the rising significance of rentiership in capitalism. Contrarily, more or less established conceptualisations appear decreasingly transtemporal in the face of recent developments. For example, Foucault’s view of a government’s purpose and steering capacity seems overly optimistic (cf. Section 6.6). The same applies to governance theory’s idealistic expectations of an actively participating civil society, helping to provide in networked governance what the public sector partly withdrew from – as it leaves aside underlying power relations (cf. Sections 6.1 and 6.6). Finally, Habermasian (1996) ideas of a deliberative democracy partly oversee implications of widened inequalities and power asymmetries as in the British case. They thereby overestimate citizens’ capacities to engage in public debate, but also the meaning of such debate for a national political level. The role of civil society and its relation with those in power should come to the fore, as also strikingly demonstrated by misapprehensions in relation to the ‘Brexit’ vote.

Third, I argue that relations between ‘economy’ and ‘society’ should be empirically studied in their meanings and consequences, rather than being pre-

conceived in terms of beliefs such as following from liberal theory (e.g. Friedman & Friedman, 2002). The latter implies a social order where the economy is disembodied from society, in tendency (unsustainably) privatising profits and collectivising societal and environmental concerns (cf. Sections 7.1 and 7.10). Conversely, this study evidences economic actors feeling (differently) co-responsible for their localities' social state. It thereby contributes to the growing economic sociology literature which realises an empirical and more accurate perspective on interrelations of economy and society. This promotes considering factors of social order which are co-produced with economic policies and behaviours, such as mutual commitment and trust in different capitalist regimes. These prove to be significant in the comparison and should thus receive more attention in future research – as also suggested by Collier (2019) and Mayer (2018), cf. Section 7.10.

Fourth, this study generally makes an empirical case for not isolating sectors (e.g. economic, political, societal) nor sustainability dimensions (e.g. environmental, social, economic) by research design (cf. Sections 2.2.1 c) and 2.3.3 c)). This would have precluded understanding their interdependencies and relating power dynamics, such as between state/society and economy or between environmental sustainability and social justice (cf. Section 7.5.3) – which are of high sociological relevance. Alternatively, relegating social problems to sociology and 'social' dimensions only would free 'economic', 'technological' and 'environmental' disciplines and dimensions from them – although they are concerned with the structural conditions in which those social problems arise. In terms of power relations, this resembles individualisation at a discipline or thematic level.

Besides specific themes, further integrating governance regime research with the constructionist co-production lens holds promising perspectives. As shown, it allows recognising blind spots in relation to power – where normative, realist or rationalistic orientations partly prevailed. The interpretive approach renders visible normativity and ideas about what is valued or devalued in different governance regimes. This study substantially contributes to the sparse intersection of both research strands – beyond single issues or instruments (cf. Section 2.3.3 c)). Future

research could expand on this by examining further urban and welfare state regime types. Since the comparative approach prove useful, the weight of factors and their combinations could be systematically explored using Qualitative Comparative Analysis (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009).⁶⁴ The research at hand could serve as a starting point in relation to according cases and factors to study, in order to better understand conditions of a more sustainable governance.

8.9 Practical implications

Numerous practical implications can be derived from this research in relation to social and intergenerational justice. After first reflecting on the study's practical significance, I argue for three – interacting – major practical implications: reducing inequalities, reviving the welfare state and altering expansive practices.

With this study, I aim to contribute to a public sociology (Burawoy, 2005). Relatedly, Flyvbjerg (2011, p. 166) recommends for a “[s]ocial science that matters” to take up “problems that matter to the local, national, and global communities in which we live” and to do it in ways that matter, i.e. “focus on issues of values and power”; and finally to “effectively communicate the results to our fellow citizens”. I support and attempt to realise all these aspects – the latter through subsequent, also non-academic, writing and talks.

In the initial Chapters 1, 2 and 3, I have laid out unsustainable tendencies in ‘Western’ democratic capitalism since the last decades. However, capitalist varieties exist within this and contribute to explaining diverging policy outcomes – as this study does. The overall unsustainable tendencies include environmental degradation and climate change, a relatively low consideration of future generations’ interests in democratic processes, rising economic inequality, a declining rate of economic growth and rising debt, public and private. Many of them accelerated with neoliberalisation. Partly harshening living conditions interact with a differential sense of societal

⁶⁴ Its subtype fuzzy set ideal type analysis (Kvist, 2007) also enables assessing ideal types more formally.

polarisation, hardening and decline; which possibly relate to the erosion of shared facts and values, populism and the rise of movements which devalue certain population groups, such as the far right.

Regarding this outset, I hold that change for the more sustainable requires as a first step to appreciate and acknowledge the rational grief of those disadvantaged through the mentioned developments. Contrarily, narratives of resilience, coping and defensive reactions which I sometimes encountered may devalue their perceptions ('public gaslighting') and individualise the problems to which collective approaches are more socially just and appear more effective. Throughout this thesis, I show how there is nothing 'natural' or inevitable about the social orders which the case study depicts – but how they are co-produced with certain power structures, the recourse to certain knowledges, certain values and ideas about the nature of society. Recognising this shows how things could be different.

At this, the value of the comparative approach lays in illustrating different routes, their implications, struggles and turnarounds in relation to neoliberalisation and rising inequalities in two broadly similar systems – but with disparate configurations. Though transferrals across political communities may not easily be possible in a network of interdependencies (cf. Section 2.3.3 c)), understanding how different combinations of factors may play out in relation to social and intergenerational justice can inspire policy lessons. This is evidenced by constitutions being used as orientations; or by policy models which states broadly took over from others, such as in the cases of parental benefits ('Swedish model') or prostitution regulation ('Nordic model'). A practical experience and its narrative appear crucial to these adoptions – which this comparative case study provides.

Based on this thesis, I argue that reducing inequalities, reviving the welfare state and reconsidering our expansive practices would enhance social and intergenerational justice.

First, the cases' comparison illustrates how higher inequalities regularly counter social and intergenerational justice. Higher inequalities in income and wealth,

knowledge, education and health often co-emerged with stronger political and societal power asymmetries and with larger ideological polarisations. Stronger system logics of competition and confrontation (e.g. through a majoritarian voting system; between state and 'market'; on the labour market; between central and local government; between citizens and places) often went with less communication, negotiation and cooperation; but also with less stable conditions for people, places and businesses. Stronger inequalities and polarisations also co-developed with more social distancing, declining mutual understanding and empathy – up to a point where government ministers seemed to have lost touch with living conditions in their country (cf. Section 1.1.1). These tendencies again seemed connected to less mutual recognition, respect and trust. I conclude that reducing inequalities, polarisations and competition within and between political communities would promote cooperation, societal cohesion and socio-economic sustainability. While promoting these factors appears ambiguous in relation to countering the climate and environmental crises in capitalism, relating responsibilities and contributions were likely more shared.

Second, I argue for maintaining or reviving the welfare state to reduce some of the mentioned inequalities. Securing social and economic rights prove effective to ameliorate living conditions and enable broader educational and societal participation for many Europeans after the Second World War. However, this requires an adequate tax base and thus solidarities on the side of the state, the public and the economy; and must exclude (neo-)colonial exploitation as practiced. Relating material and mental changes should thus be conceived together. More cooperation and coordination between the public sector and the 'market' likely support businesses and the welfare state. Accordingly, 'varieties of capitalism' contributions and this study "suggest that many kinds of social policies actually improve the operation of markets and enhance the capacities of firms to pursue distinctive strategies" (Porter, 2003, p. vi). Besides, Prasad (2012, p. xiv) identifies "a trade-off across the industrial countries between reliance on the welfare state and reliance on credit-based consumption". The UK significantly relies on the latter – less so Germany (Giles, 2019) with its stronger welfare state. Regarding the US – herein resembling the UK –, Prasad concludes

“that developing the public welfare state would benefit economic growth [...] by loosening the grip of mortgage Keynesianism, thereby lowering the demand for finance and reorienting political efforts and resources away from the financial sector and towards more stable sources of growth” (Prasad, 2012, p. xiv).

The severe crisis around the virus Covid-19 currently challenges the capacities of welfare states. Thus far, the dismantled British welfare state, its political management and particularly the NHS appear less robust in the face of the outbreak than the German system where – despite an economisation of health care and further calls to reduce hospital beds – the political handling of the crisis seems more effective. The more cooperative and coordinated system thereby appears more resilient in the face of this pandemic than the liberal, which also demonstrates the tragic consequences of a continuously underfunded public provision.

Finally, the capitalist growth logic of constant material expansion⁶⁵ – and an established understanding of welfare in both regimes – contradicts environmental sustainability and builds on exploitative practices towards the Global South. With no indications that similar growth-oriented economic practices would become environmentally sustainable nor more socially just in the future, their collective change remains as the more sustainable development path. As we know many factors contributing to less expansionist practices, but partly fail to realise them (voluntarily), further recognising the co-production of our material and mental infrastructures (Welzer, 2013, p. 64) – as this thesis has shown – may be a way forward. Reconsidering how we want to live together, materially (which systems and policies? How ‘much’?) and mentally (which values, morals, knowledge, power structures?), and relatingly re-shaping our polities is more hopeful than understanding us as objects of destructive systems with pervasive power structures beyond our impact. However, if environmental sustainability should be improved in socially just ways, it is necessary to address the partial trade-off between social justice and environmental sustainability and the questions of social order it raises (cf. Section 7.5.3). The absence of existential

⁶⁵ Material improvement altogether mostly also implies material expansion.

struggles, e.g. via an intact welfare state, is often a necessary condition for the named reconsiderations. As this study illustrates, single factors and actions can change courses and contribute to a more sustainable development.

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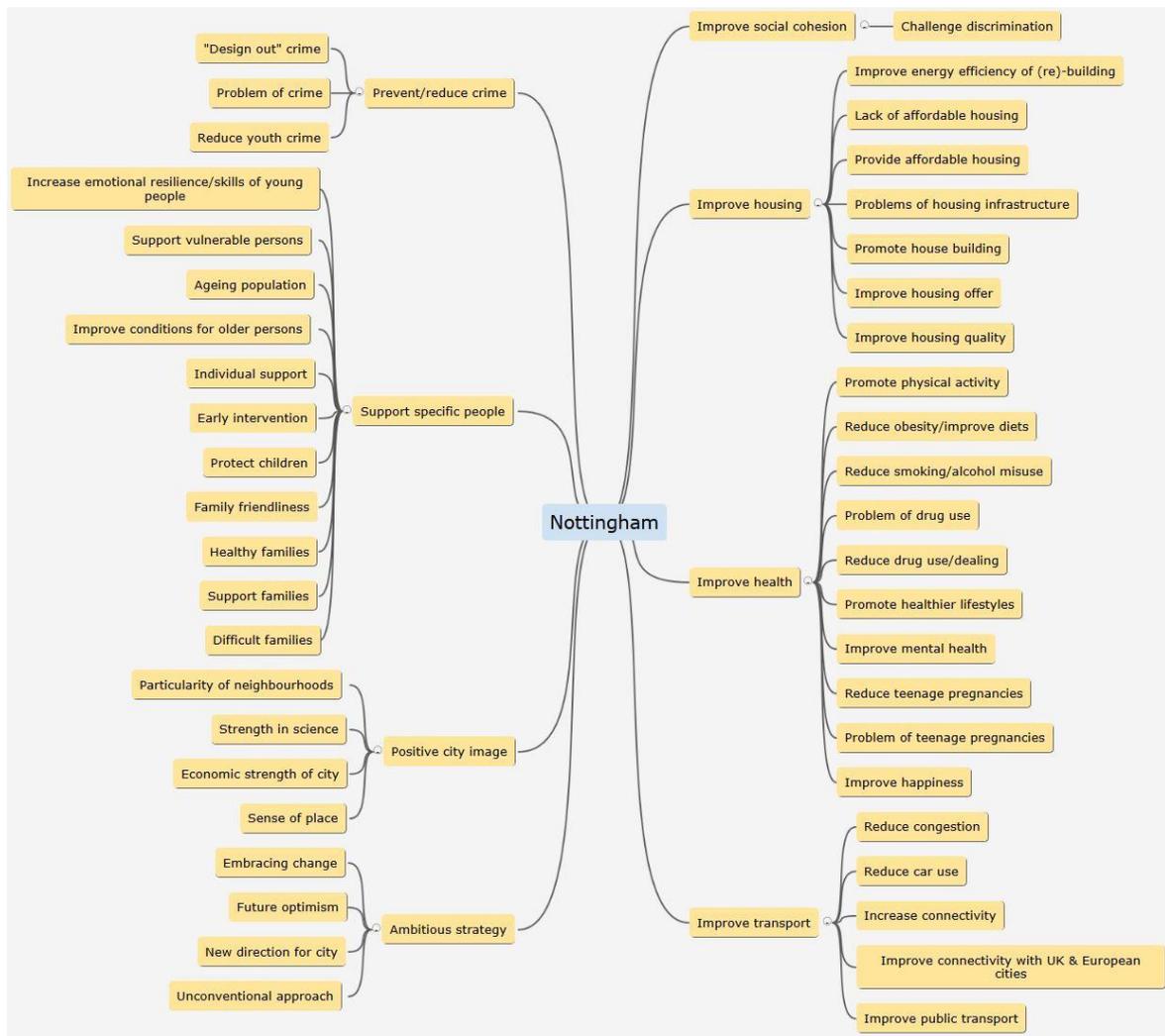
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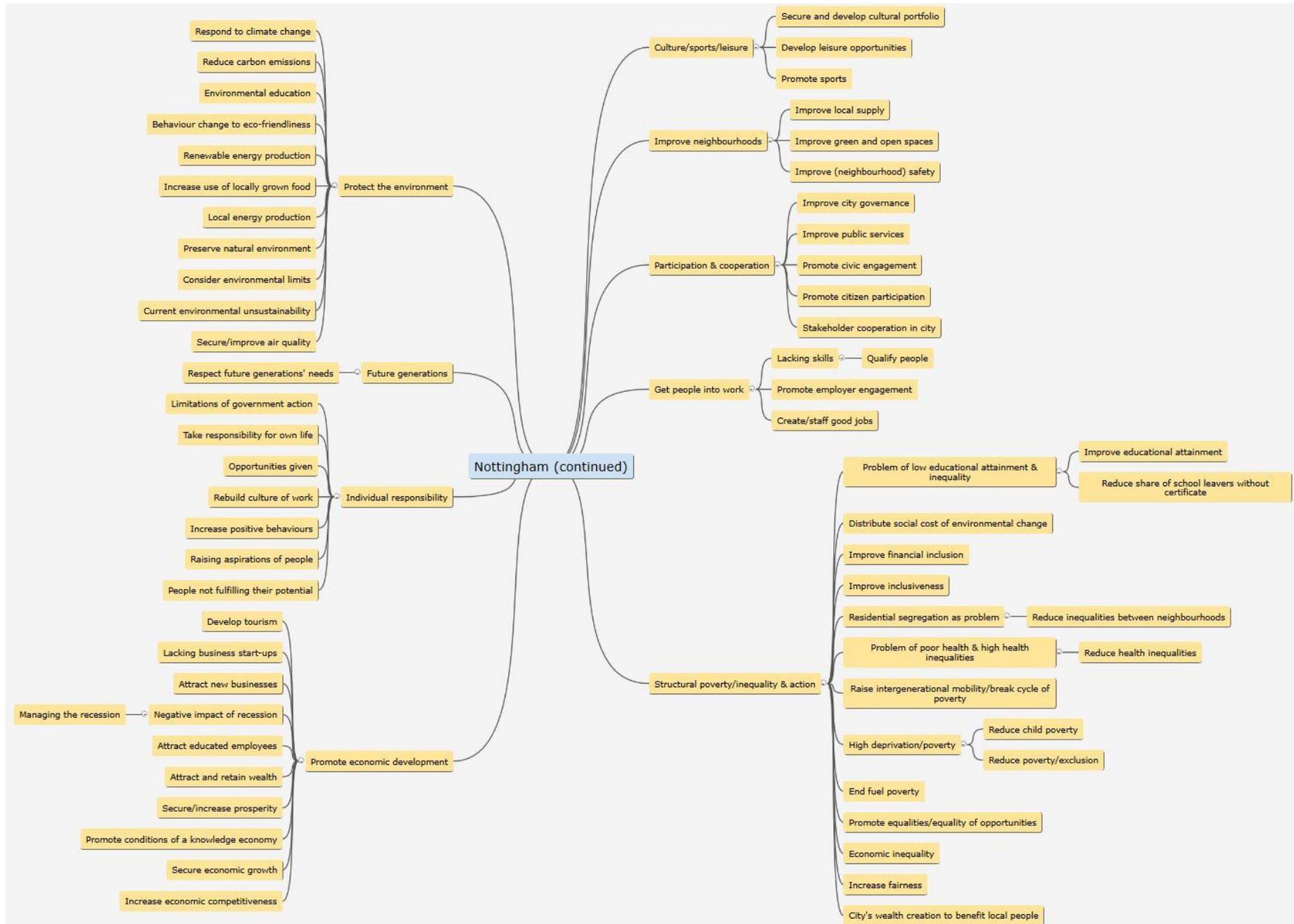
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Appendix

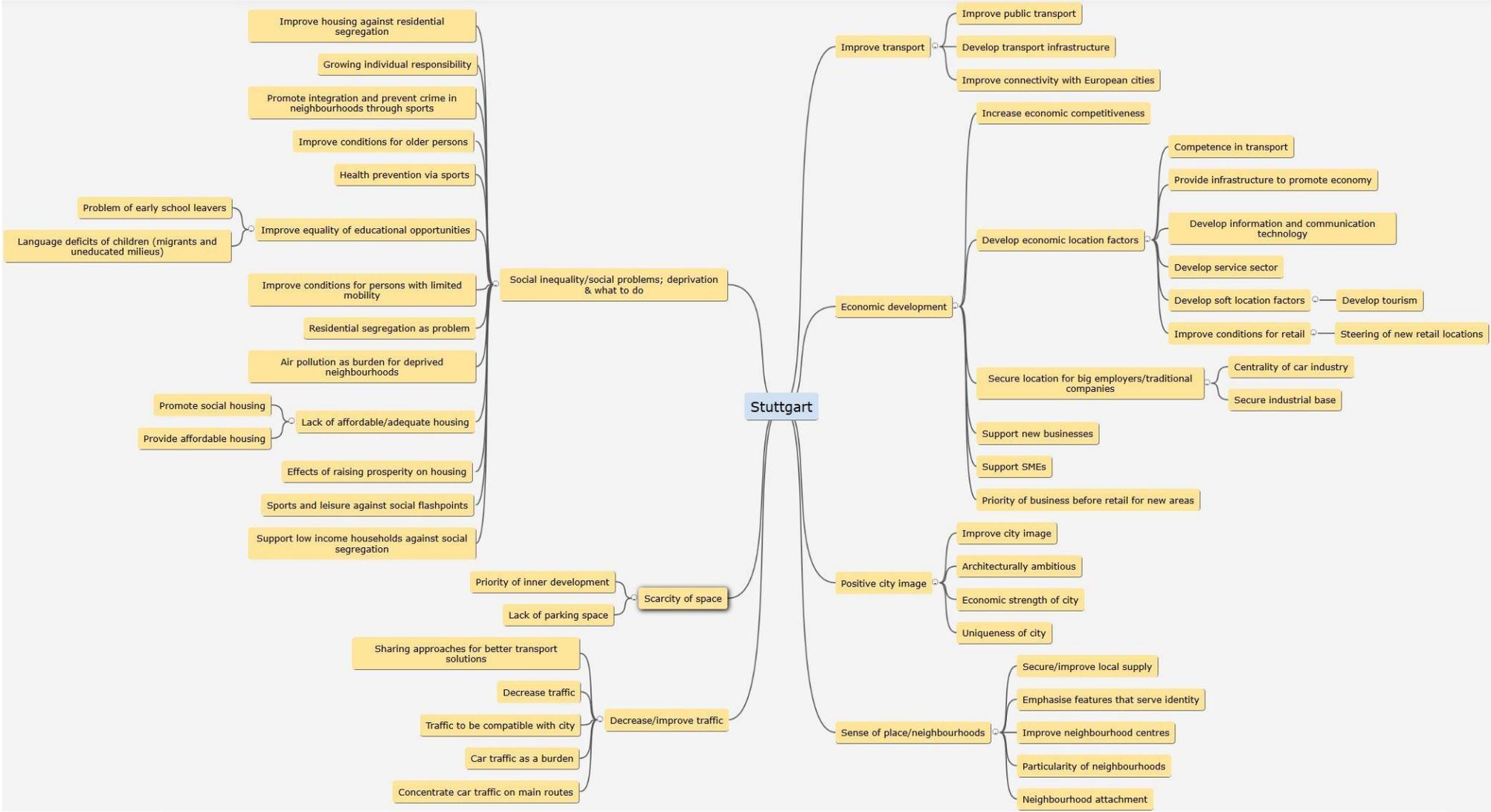
A) Thematic maps of the two current city strategies

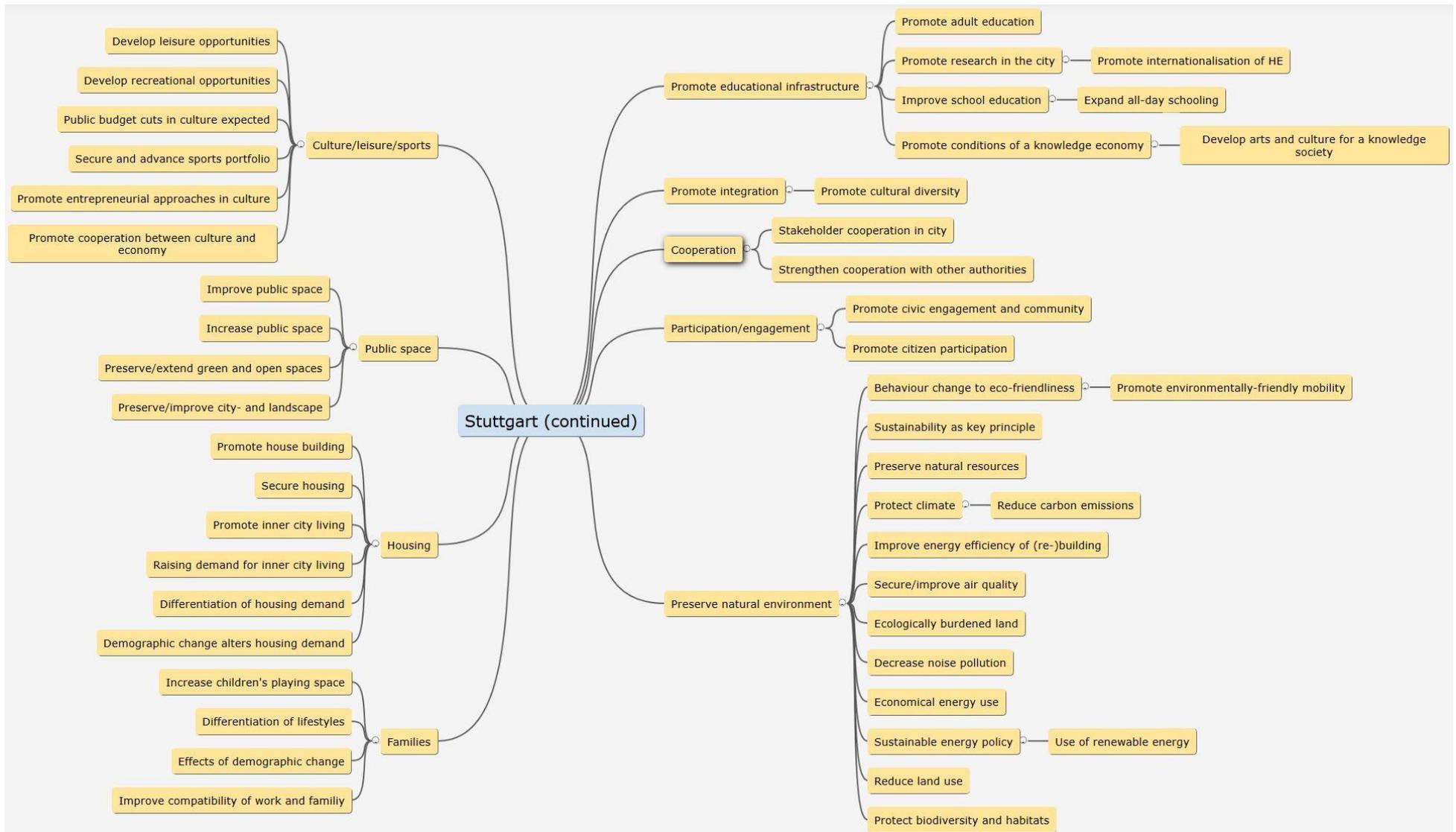
Nottingham (own research based on One Nottingham, 2009):





Stuttgart (own research based on Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, 2006):





B) Analysed policy documents

Nottingham	
Documents selected: 38	Target interval
Key strategies and plans	
Ambition 2025. 10-year strategic plan	2015 - 2025
Building a better Nottingham. Neighbourhood Regeneration Strategy	
Nottingham Growth Plan	next 5 - 10 years, i.e. ca. 2013-2023
Nottingham Growth Plan. Summary	next 5 - 10 years, i.e. ca. 2013-2023
Children and young people's plan 2016 - 2020	2016 - 2020
Council Plan 2015 - 2019	2015 - 2019
Energy strategy 2010 - 2020	2010 - 2020
Happier Healthier Lives. Nottingham City Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016 – 2020	2016 - 2020
The Housing Nottingham Plan. The three year plan of the Nottingham Housing Strategic Partnership 2013-2015	2013 - 2015
Greater Nottingham. Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough, Nottingham City. Aligned Core Strategies. Part 1 Local Plan	Adopted 2014
Nottingham Local Transport Plan: Strategy 2011 – 2026	2011 - 2026
Nottingham Crime & Drugs Partnership. Partnership Plan 2015 to 2020	2015 - 2020
Family, Neighbourhood, City. One Nottingham. The Nottingham Plan to 2020	2010 - 2020
Sustainability and Transformation Plan 2016 - 2021. Summary Guide	2016 - 2021
Sustainability and Transformation Plan 2016 - 2021. A healthier future for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Summary Guide. Executive Summary	2016 - 2021
A Waste-Less Nottingham. Waste Strategy 2010-2030	2010 - 2030
Instruments of citizen consultation and engagement	
Customer Charter - Nottingham City Council	
Nottingham Citizens' Survey 2016	
"Your City, Your Say" Nottingham Citizens' Panel (Website, downloaded 09/08/2017)	

Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership. Respect for Nottingham Survey 2016	
BUDGET CONSULTATION 2017/18	
Further strategies and plans	
Breastfeeding: A Framework for Action Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City 2015 - 2020	2015-2020
Nottingham Cold Weather Provision Plan 2016-2017	2016-2017
Nottingham City Inter-agency Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2013 - 2018	
Healthy Weight Strategy for Nottingham City 2011-2020	2011-2020
Tackling Deprivation in Nottingham: Towards a '2020' Roadmap. Discussion Paper: Challenges and priorities. SQW Consulting	2020
N2 ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY	
Safe.Responsible.Healthy: Nottingham's approach to alcohol	2012-2015
Nottingham Children's Partnership. Family Support Strategy 2010-2014. earlier support, stronger families	2010-2014
Autism Strategy for Adults who live and work in Nottingham City 2014 - 2017	2014-2017
Autism Strategy for Adults who live and work in Nottingham City 2014 - 2017 - Summary	2014-2017
Nottingham City Suicide Prevention Strategy 2015-18	2015-2018
Wellness in Mind Nottingham City Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017	2014-2017
Nottingham City Tobacco Control Strategy 2015-2020. Inspiring Nottingham's smokefree generation	2015-2020
The Nottingham Community Climate Change Strategy 2012-2020	2012-2020
The Nottingham Community Climate Change Strategy 2012-2020 - Executive Summary	2012-2020
Nottingham Bus Strategy 2014-2019	2014-2019
Nottingham City Teenage Pregnancy Plan 2014-16	2014-2016

Stuttgart	
Documents selected: 45	Target interval
Key strategies	
Stadtentwicklungskonzept Entwurf 2004	
Stadtentwicklungskonzept Dialog 2005	

Stadtentwicklungskonzept Strategie 2006	
Stuttgart 2030: Ideensammlung/Mitschrift aus der Debatte mit den acht vorläufigen Themenfeldern und den jeweiligen Leitsätzen, die der Gemeinderat auf seiner Klausur am 19. und 20. Mai 2017 erarbeitet hat	
Further strategies, plans and outlines	
Das Bodenschutzkonzept Stuttgart (BOKS) (Kurzfassung)	published 2007
Flächennutzungsplan Stuttgart	published 2012
Wissenswertes zur Flächennutzungsplanung	
Richtlinie zur Foerderung von urbanen Gaerten in Stuttgart	published 2014
Kommunales Gruenprogramm. Förderung der Hof-, Dachund Fassadenbegrünung	published 2017
Hof-, Dach- und Fassadenbegrünung. Richtlinie für das kommunale Grünprogramm der Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart zur Förderung der Hof-, Dach- und Fassadenbegrünung	published 2017
10-Punkte-Programm des Oberbuergemeisters (Stadtklima) (Website, downloaded 22/07/2017)	
Für unsere Umwelt. Klima schützen, Ressourcen schonen, Energie sparen	
Luftreinhalteplan für den Regierungsbezirk Stuttgart Teilplan Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart 3. Fortschreibung des Luftreinhalteplanes zur Minderung der PM10- und NO2-Belastungen	2020, max. 2021
Nachhaltiges Bauflächenmanagement - NBS (Website, downloaded 22/07/2017)	
Aktionsplan Nachhaltig mobil in Stuttgart	
Ablauf der Lärmaktionsplanung in Stuttgart mit Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung	
Leitbild der Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart zur Umsetzung der Ziele der UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention (Website, downloaded 24/07/2017)	
Energiekonzept "Urbanisierung der Energiewende in Stuttgart" (Website, downloaded 22/07/2017)	2020; 2050
Energiekonzept Urbanisierung der Energiewende in Stuttgart	2020; 2050
Übersicht der Ergebnisse der Abstimmungsgespräche zum Energiekonzept der Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart	2020; 2050
VEK 2030. Das Verkehrsentwicklungskonzept der Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart	
Nahverkehrsplan Stuttgart. 2. Fortschreibung	2016 - 2021

Zeitstufenliste Wohnen 2014 - Fortschreibung Potenziale für den Wohnungsbau in Stuttgart	published 2015
SIM Stuttgarter Innenentwicklungsmodell. Perspektiven und baulandpolitische Grundsätze für eine sozial ausgewogene und qualitätsorientierte Stadtentwicklung	
SIM Stuttgarter Innenentwicklungsmodell Baulandpolitische Grundsätze	published 2017
Ziele und Aufgaben der Arbeitsförderung (Website, downloaded 22/07/2017)	
Stuttgarter Partnerschaft Eine Welt (Website, downloaded 24/07/2017)	
Zehn Ziele der Partnerschaft ("Eine Welt") (Website, downloaded 24/07/2017)	
Gründung der Partnerschaft ("Eine Welt") (Website, downloaded 24/07/2017)	
Bündnis für Integration (Website, downloaded 24/07/2017)	
Integration - der Stuttgarter Weg (Website, downloaded 24/07/2017)	
Integrationspolitik (Website, downloaded 24/07/2017)	
Lärmaktionsplan der Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart. Fortschreibung 2015 mit Ergebnissen der Lärmkartierung 2012	published 2015
Vision Lärmschutz Stuttgart 2030	
Klimaanpassungskonzept Stuttgart KLIMAKS	published 2012
Strategie für den Wirtschafts- und Wissenschaftsstandort Region Stuttgart	published 2013
Handlungsstrategie Soziale Stadtentwicklung Stuttgart Mitteilungsvorlage	published 2015
Konzeption Kinderfreundliches Stuttgart 2015 bis 2020	2015-2020
Soziale Entwicklungsperspektiven für die Stadtgesellschaft - Infrastruktur im Wandel (Website, downloaded 25/07/2017)	
Strategische Gesundheitsförderung und Kommunale Gesundheitskonferenz in Stuttgart (Website, downloaded 28/07/2017)	
Gesundheitsberichterstattung (Website, downloaded 28/07/2017)	
Instruments of consultation and engagement	
Leitlinie fuer informelle Buergerbeteiligung in der Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart	published 2017
Haushalt und Bürgerhaushalt 2017	
Symposiumsdokumentation "Die produktive Stadt"	
Bürgerumfrage Stuttgart	
Salz & Suppe. Stuttgart im Dialog. Projektinfo Salz & Suppe	

C) Consent form

School of Sociology and Social Policy

University of Nottingham

Participant Consent Form

Project: A tale of two cities – justice and sustainability in Nottingham and Stuttgart

(working title)

Researcher's name: Hannah Keding

Supervisors' names: Reiner Grundmann, Jenni Cauvain, Paul Nathanail

In signing this consent form I confirm that:

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may decide not to continue at any stage, without providing reason and this would not disadvantage me in any way. I understand that participation is unlikely to be of direct benefit to me.
- Interviewees will not be named. Where participants could be readily identified, identifying information will not be disclosed to preserve their anonymity. Anonymous and not anonymous quotes – the latter only if agreed to below – will be used in reports/publications. Interviewees will have the opportunity to approve any anonymous and not anonymous quotes prior to publication.
- I understand that the interview will be recorded using electronic voice recorder.
- I understand that data will be securely stored.

- I understand that the information provided can be used in other research projects which have according ethics approval. In these cases, where participants could be readily identified, identifying information will not be disclosed to preserve their anonymity. Equally, quotes will be handled as specified above.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Officer of the School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.
- I agree to take part in the above research project.
- I agree that extracts from the interview may be anonymously quoted in any report or publication arising from the research.

Please tick boxes if applicable:

I would like to approve any anonymous quotes in draft copies of publications with respect to whether these might reveal my identity.

I agree that extracts from the interview may be not anonymously quoted (referring to my full name) in any report or publication arising from the research.

I would like to approve any not anonymous quotes in according draft copies of publications.

I would like to be sent a copy of my interview transcript in order to review in terms of accuracy, correcting errors, and providing clarifications.

_____	_____	_____
Participant's name	Participant's signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Researcher's name	Researcher's signature	Date

D) Interview guideline

Policy process

- (How) are you involved in the formulation of policy objectives in Nottingham (unitary authority)?
- Which actors or groups are involved in formulating the city's policy objectives?
 - Which should maybe be involved but are not currently?
- How are these actors or groups involved in formulating the city's policy objectives?
 - How are economic actors involved in the process?
- What are main influences on the city's policy objectives?

Policy objectives

- In your view, how do policy objectives in Nottingham account for social justice?
 - Is economic inequality a justice issue?
- In your opinion, how do policy objectives in Nottingham account for future generations?

Policy approaches

- What would be your priorities to be tackled in Nottingham?
- What role does evidence play in the formulation of city policies?

Future generations

- Looking into the future, how do you think will the city develop and what will this mean for its citizens?
- What role does economic growth have for the future?

Political and economic spheres

- How far do political decision making processes comply with the interests of the local economy?
- How far does the local economy rely on continuously favourable location conditions?

Governance

- What leeway do the city and its citizens have in shaping the city's future?

- What is the significance of municipal strategies and plans?

Ending questions

- Is there anything else you would like to say?
- Is there anyone you think I should talk to about these issues?