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**Measuring Meetings Industry Stakeholders Cooperation
from an Embeddedness Perspective**

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To Iñigo and to my parents.

Abstract

According to comparative data on the diversification of destinations, in 1950, 97% of international tourism market share was concentrated in 15 countries (UNWTO, 2015). Today that percentage has dropped to 51.8% (UNWTO, 2015), and there is greater diversification thus opening opportunities for other regions and cities worldwide. It is believed that the expansion of international tourism will create a new market structure that will provide opportunities for subnational tourism destinations, while international competition will simultaneously increase (UNWTO, 2015). The meetings industry, from an association point of view, certainly echoes this pattern (Crouch & Louviere, 2004).

Therefore, cities, as a form of subnational tourism destinations, where the meetings industry is relevant, are meant to measure and analyze the elements that make them remain competitive. The city's image, infrastructure, accessibility, cost, intellectual capital, all of these components among others are part of the analysis process. Moreover, numerous authors point out the significance of cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders for enhancing the destination performance and hence its competitiveness (Araujo & Bramwell, 2002; Beritelli & Laesser, 2011; Buhalis, 2000; Crouch, 2007; Go & Appleman, 2000; Timothy, 1999; UNWTO, 2007; Wilkinson & March, 2008). However, the methodologies for measuring and analysing tourism and the meetings industries at subnational levels are not trivial and INRouTe and the UNWTO are currently drafting the proper international recommendations. Therefore, unsurprisingly, there is a significant void in the literature concerning how to address the measurement of cooperation among stakeholders within the meetings industry of a given city destination (Locke, 2010).

Precisely, the present research work fills the void, taking an embeddedness perspective. The study proposes, tests and validates a methodology to measure cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders within a set of international city destinations where the meetings industry is present. Moreover, the network topography of a set of cities is studied based on the construct cooperation.

Resumen

Atendiendo a datos que comparan la diversificación de los destinos, en 1950, el 97% de la cuota de mercado del turismo internacional se concentraba en 15 países (OMT, 2015). A día de hoy, dicha cifra se ha reducido al 51,8% (OMT, 2015), y hay una mayor diversificación que abre oportunidades a otras regiones y ciudades a nivel mundial. Se cree que la expansión del turismo internacional creará una nueva estructura de Mercado que proporcionará oportunidades para destinos turísticos subnacionales, mientras la competencia internacional ira en aumento simultáneamente (OMT, 2015). La industria de las reuniones, desde un punto de vista asociativo, sin duda se hace eco de este patrón (Crouch y Louviere, 2004).

Por tanto, las ciudades, como un tipo de destinos turísticos subnacionales, donde la industria de las reuniones es relevante, han de medir y analizar los elementos que propiciarán el mantenerse competitivo. La imagen de la ciudad, infraestructura, accesibilidad, coste, capital intelectual, todos estos elementos, entre otros, hacen parte de dicho análisis. Más aún, numerosos autores señalan la importancia de la cooperación entre agentes de interés de la industria de las reuniones para mejorar el desempeño del destino y por ende su competitividad (Araujo y Bramwell, 2002; Beritelli y Laesser, 2011; Buhalis, 2000; Crouch, 2007; Go y Appleman, 2000; Timothy, 1999; OMT, 2007; Wilkinson y March, 2008). Sin embargo, las metodologías para medir y analizar el turismo y la industria de las reuniones a niveles subnacionales no son triviales y actualmente INRouTe y la OMT se encuentran redactando las correspondientes recomendaciones internacionales. Así, no es sorprendente que exista un vacío significativo en la literatura en lo concerniente a la medición de la cooperación entre agentes de interés de la industria de las reuniones de un destino ciudad dado (Locke, 2010).

Precisamente, el presente trabajo de investigación llena este vacío tomando una perspectiva de arraigo (*embeddedness*). El estudio propone, prueba y valida una metodología para medir la cooperación entre agentes de interés de la industria de las reuniones de un conjunto de ciudades internacionales donde la industria de las reuniones está presente. Así mismo, se presenta el análisis de la topografía de redes de un grupo de ciudades basado en el constructo cooperación.

Résumé

À la lumière des chiffres qui comparent la diversification des destinations, en 1950, 97% de la part de marché du tourisme international se concentrait dans 15 pays (OMT, 2015). Aujourd'hui, ce chiffre a reculé jusqu'à 51,8% (OMT, 2015) et il existe une diversification accrue qui ouvre des perspectives à d'autres régions et villes au niveau mondial. On pense que l'expansion du tourisme international créera une nouvelle structure du marché qui offrira des possibilités pour les destinations touristiques infranationales, tandis que la concurrence internationale augmentera simultanément (OMT, 2015). L'industrie des réunions, d'un point de vue associatif, se fait sans aucun doute l'écho de ce modèle (Crouch et Louviere, 2004).

Par conséquent, les villes, comme forme de destinations touristiques infranationales, où l'industrie des réunions est significative, doivent mesurer et analyser les éléments qui favoriseront la compétitivité. L'image de la ville, l'infrastructure, l'accessibilité, le coût, le capital intellectuel, tous ces éléments, entre autres, font partie de cette analyse. En outre, de nombreux auteurs soulignent l'importance de la coopération entre les acteurs concernés de l'industrie des réunions pour améliorer la performance de la destination et donc sa compétitivité (Araujo et Bramwell, 2002 ; Beritelli et Laesser, 2011 ; Buhalis, 2000 ; Crouch, 2007 ; Go et Appleman, 2000 ; Timothy, 1999 ; OMT, 2007 ; Wilkinson et March, 2008). Cependant, les méthodologies pour mesurer et analyser le tourisme et l'industrie des réunions aux niveaux infranationaux ne sont pas simples, si bien qu'INRouTe et l'OMT rédigent actuellement les recommandations internationales à cet égard. Il n'est dès lors pas étonnant qu'un vide majeur existe dans la littérature sur la mesure de la coopération entre les acteurs concernés de l'industrie des réunions d'une destination touristique ville donnée (Locke, 2010).

Précisément, ce travail de recherche comble un tel vide en prenant une perspective d'enracinement (*embeddedness*). L'étude propose, teste et valide une méthodologie pour mesurer la coopération entre les acteurs concernés de l'industrie des réunions d'un ensemble de villes internationales où l'industrie des réunions est présente. De même, elle présente l'analyse de la topographie des réseaux d'un groupe de villes basé sur le concept de coopération.

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List of Abbreviations

B2B – business to business

CVB – Convention and Visitor Bureau

DMO – Destination Management Organization

EC – The European Commission

ICCA – The International Congress and Convention Association

INRouTe – The International Network on Regional Economics, Mobility and Tourism

MI – Meetings Industry

MICE – Meetings Incentives Conferences and Exhibitions

MPI – Meetings Professional International

NTO – National Tourism Organization

OECD – The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PCO – Professional Conference/Congress Organizer

SME – Small and Medium Enterprises

UNWTO - The United Nations World Tourism Organization (OMT in Spanish)

1. Introduction

Tourism is an economic and social phenomenon that incorporates a key commodity, a territory, a place, a destination. Tourism moves visitors all over the world, but experiences occur in local tourism destinations. Simultaneously, tourism as an economic sector embodies some of the largest and most innovative companies worldwide (e.g. Sabre, Amadeus, OAG, Orbitz, Priceline, Hilton, Accor), and also a mare magnum of SMEs.

From a tourism point of view, the Meetings Industry (MI hereinafter) is partially linked to the tourism economic sector, such link is based upon the fact that part of MI's consumers belong to a group named business visitors. The Meetings Industry embodies congresses, conventions, conferences and seminars; trade fairs and exhibitions; and incentive activities (UNWTO, ICCA, MPI & Reed Travel Exhibitions, 2008a). Leaving aside trade fairs, exhibitions and incentives, the industry tends to be divided by its initiator in corporate meetings or congresses and conferences/association or government meetings (usually referred to as association meetings) (UNWTO et al., 2008a). In the present study, the Meetings Industry, more

specifically the association meetings side of the industry is the central object of analysis. Association meetings imply (UNWTO et al., 2008a):

a general term covering all non business-oriented gatherings of participants at a predetermined site and time to attend an organised meeting in which they have an interactive, debating and/or competitive role, and of which the theme or purpose may be of any nature. (p. 3).

The Meetings Industry according to MPI (2015) continues growing steadily worldwide, with meeting attendance on the rise and forecasts for 2015 in the US and Europe including estimates of 1% to 5% increase for organizations' meetings budget. The Meetings Industry is worldwide known as a relevant contributor to tourism and impacting on all other economic sectors (UNWTO, ICCA, MPI & Reed Travel Exhibitions, 2006). This understanding refers not only to economic contribution (business visitors daily expenditure is 2:1 or 3:1 compared to leisure visitors (Davidson & Cope, 2003)), but also to relevant business opportunities that emerge thanks to it, usage of shoulder seasons¹, contribution to destination regeneration, knowledge spreading and innovation and creativity enhancement as Mr. Taleb Rifai² asserts (UNWTO, 2014). ICCA's latest's report presents non-stop growth in the international association meetings as they celebrate 50 years (ICCA, 2013), increase in the number of cities that invest publicly, privately or both in order to count with Convention and Visitors Bureaux (CVBs hereinafter) (UNWTO, 2014) and growing interest by cities across the world on this industry, right at the same time that competition increases and the environment keeps shifting (ICCA, 2013; Severt, Wang,

¹ A travel season between peak and off-peak seasons

² UNWTO Secretary General

Chen & Breiter, 2007; UNWTO, 2012). Cities are recently understanding the Knowledge Economy, in which society is immersed, and many cities are in pursuit of being part of the group leading it as a strategic step (ICCA, 2013). In the words of Arnaldo Nardone (ICCA President, ICCA, 2013):

this is why the most ambitious cities are taking steps to harness the power of the intellectual capital in their universities and research institutes to recruit meetings ambassadors and advocates. And this is why we are seeing more and more central government support for infrastructure, marketing and subvention funds that can increase their country's share of this market and drive forward their economic development agendas. (p. 4).

Localities that are active in meetings industry devote substantial resources to it. They have an interest in raising their performance levels and in standing out as competitive in the international meetings industry scene. Several scholars point out in this regard that cooperation among MI stakeholders is a relevant ingredient for enhancing such performance/competitiveness (Araujo & Bramwell, 2002; Beritelli & Laesser, 2011; Buhalis, 2000; Crouch, 2007; Go & Appleman, 2000; Timothy, 1999; UNWTO, 2007; Wilkinson & March, 2008). Neither MI cooperation correlation to performance of city tourism destinations with pronounced activity in the meetings industry, nor cooperation among MI stakeholders have been empirically tested.

Consequently, in the present thesis, in order to make the first step in that direction, the interest lies in the latter, in measuring cooperation among meeting industry stakeholders within city tourism destinations. Cooperation with regard to meetings industry in the present study is approached from a social embeddedness perspective.

Granovetter (1985) argues that economic action is embedded in the structure of social relations between actors, causing business behaviour to contain elements of sociability, approval, status and power, in addition to economic goals. Networks of social relations are seen to be important not only within firms but also between them, further emphasizing that while profit may be the ultimate aim, it is nevertheless achieved through social processes (Riley, 2000:196). Social competitiveness arises from the presence of forms of social capital (Social capital facilitates the necessary coordination between firms, allows rapid diffusion of best practices, improves the ability to perceive opportunities for innovation and facilitates experimentation between them (Gonzalez & Mendieta, 2009)), which are the result of better links between businesses and related institutions, and its impact on economic competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). This represents a change of vision as to how to build development of tourism destinations, which also has implications in local governance models, where management and decision-making are performed collaboratively.

In sum, the social embeddedness approach is chosen, as opposed to the economic exchange perspective mainly focused on efficiency and the value creation perspective concentrated on competition, because MI, or better yet, the tourism side of MI, is a service industry, where relations are not formally sealed, agents tend to be on an SME scale, and the social web of actors are not seeking efficiency and minimising the resources trade-off when entering a cooperation interaction as the primary objectives.

1.1. Research Problem and Objectives

There is an absence of empirical measurement of cooperation among MI stakeholders at the level of tourism destinations, and this void is the main point addressed in the present research work. The intention is to approach this pioneering and exploratory research from a scalable, replicable and statistically robust perspective, taking into account diverse international city destinations so that the result is a robust and valuable contribution to theory and practice, facilitating further research on cooperation link to performance.

Within this line of thought, the proposed work aims at:

- (1) Contributing to theory regarding organizational cooperation in tourism from an embeddedness perspective.
- (2) Developing and testing a methodology to empirically measure cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders within city tourism destinations.

Additionally, the present research work will study the network topography of destinations based on cooperation attributes.

1.2. Contribution

This study is theoretically, methodologically and practically significant for the following reasons. First, there is a widely accepted consensus on the fact that cooperation among stakeholders leads to better performance of the destination as a whole. However, this has not been empirically tested. There are two significant burdens hindering the test of such accepted statements. On the one hand, the literature lacks research on empirically validated methodologies to quantify cooperation among stakeholders within a given local destination. On the other hand, both nations and cities where these meetings occur find themselves lacking a full picture of what this industry means for their respective economies (UNWTO et al., 2006; ICCA, 2013; UNWTO, 2014). This is due partly to the complexity of the industry's structure itself as it is closely connected to many others (for instance food and beverage, accommodation, transport) and partly due to a lack of widespread implementation of international standards on its measurement³ (UNWTO et al., 2006). Therefore, the present study contributes to advances in theory and methodology by developing and testing a methodology, vertebrated by the concept of embeddedness, which allows quantifying the degree of cooperation of a city tourism destination based on the cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders locally based.

From a policy perspective, the present study provides a methodology to evaluate policies on firms' cooperation with a specific focus on the meetings industry. Moreover, policy makers and practitioners might find relevant to count with a

³ Standards for the national level exist, however for the sub-national level are still in the phase of being defined.

methodology they can replicate in their destination and makes them aware of which are the most cooperating and motivated dyads, key motivations and barriers. Once holding this information, steps can be taken to enhance or soften these, respectively. Additionally, the present work, using the cooperation framework designed, examines the network topography of destinations based on weighted in-degree.

1.3. Outline

The remainder of this dissertation includes five chapters, followed by references and annexes. Chapter Two presents a review of the existing literature in two main parts: Meetings Industry; and Cooperation among Stakeholders: Embedded Relationships. At the end of this chapter the conceptual framework setting the basis to measure cooperation is presented. In Chapter Three, the research objectives and corresponding premises and hypotheses are developed for cooperation measurement. This chapter introduces the methods, the data, sampling, variables as well as the procedure of data collection and the discussion on analytical approaches. Here the methodology conducted to empirically measure cooperation from an embeddedness perspective is presented in detail. Chapter Four presents the description of the sample used, explains the destination cooperation findings for each of the cities participating in the study, provides the descriptive findings on cooperation, presents the hypothesis testing results for cooperation and addresses the network analysis for a selection of cities. Chapter Five is the concluding chapter of the dissertation that includes a review of the research findings and discussions on the implications, limitations and future research of the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Meetings Industry

The Meetings Industry and the Tourism economic sector are connected. And the point of connection is that one of the main-purposes included within the UNWTO (2008) definition of a visitor is business travel, including attending meetings. Meeting participants are not always visitors, as at times participants are within their usual environment, or could be individuals that are over there conducting locally-remunerated work (UNWTO et al., 2006 and 2008b). Moreover, the output of the meeting industry might be consumed by tourism visitors, but also by meetings' hosts and exhibitors, so it is not a characteristic product of the tourism industries (UNWTO et al., 2006 and 2008b). Furthermore, both tourism industries and the Meeting Industry occur within destinations, and many of these destinations are fiercely competing to host both leisure and business visitors.

The meetings industry structure is complex, its understanding eases if seen as twofold: demand side and supply side (UNWTO et al., 2006). From the perspective of measuring MI, the demand side implies the consumer/participants/delegates, the

supply side briefly gathers the organiser, the venue and the host organization (UNWTO et al., 2006). However, if it is seen from the shoes of the city-destination competing to host a meeting, the demand would not only be the delegate, but also the convener, the initiator of the idea of the meeting, in the end the individual, group or organization that makes the decision on the destination selection. From a demand side perspective, the meetings industry circles around the definition of meeting. Lacking a widespread use of the international framework⁴, across the world there are plenty definitions of this term (varying on duration, number of participants, contracted venue or not...etc.), which contributes to the complexity of understanding this industry, more importantly it hinders its measurement.

UNWTO, ICCA, MPI and Reed Travel Exhibitions in their joint publication of 2006, define meeting as follows:

A meeting is a general term indicating the coming together of a number of people in one place, to confer or carry out a particular activity. The key purposes of meetings are to motivate participants and to conduct business. Frequency can be on an ad-hoc basis or according to a set pattern, as for instance annual general meetings, committee meetings, etc. (p. 19)

Following these authors consensus (UNWTO et al., 2008a), this definition excludes the following:

...social and economic activities such as permanently established, formal educational activities (primary, secondary or university level education), purely recreational activities (such as concerts and shows of any kind) or those of a political nature such

⁴ The international framework for meetings industry measurement over the years has been constructed by international bodies: UNWTO, ICCA, MPI, Reed Travel Exhibitions, and INRouTe (INRouTe & UNWTO, 2012).

as campaign rallies, or gathering of consumers or would-be consumers by a company for the purpose of presenting specific goods or services for sale, which would rather fall under the scope of retail or wholesale trade. (p. 2)

The term meeting would include different types: congresses, conventions, conferences and seminars; trade fairs and exhibitions; and incentive activities (UNWTO et al., 2008a). Leaving aside trade fairs, exhibitions and incentives, the industry tends to be divided by its initiator in corporate meetings or congresses and conferences/association or government meetings (usually referred to as association meetings) (UNWTO et al., 2008a). Corporate meetings are defined as “business-oriented meetings usually hosted by a corporation, in which participants represent the same company, corporate group or client/provider relationships)” (UNWTO et al., 2008a, p.2). Association meetings are not business-oriented meetings, and could be scientific congresses, public conferences or lectures, governmental conferences, general assemblies, and conventions⁵. The present research is focused on the association meetings (conference, association, government meetings) given that conveners in this case are more flexible to choose the destination, as opposed to corporate where the business location and headquarters limits the choices (Locke, 2010).

Other important elements, according to UNWTO et al. (2008a) are: (1) the fact that meeting venues refer only to those contracted venues (there must be a payment, even

⁵ According to UNWTO et al. (2008a) “general and formal meetings of a legislative body, social or economic group in order to provide information. In the United States the term is used to describe large, usually national meetings of business circles, for discussion and /or commercial exhibition.” (p.3).

payment in-kind); (2) the minimum participants is set as ten and it should last for a minimum of four hours; and (3) international meetings are those “which a minimum of 20% of the participants are residents of at least one country other than the meeting’s host country” (p.5).

From a supply-side perspective, stakeholders of meetings industry, residents or not of the country hosting the meeting, might belong to the following categories (UNWTO et al., 2008b):

- the convener or meeting host
- the trade fair exhibitor
- the meeting sponsor
- the supply-side entities, which include:
 - specialized meeting organizers
 - venue owners or managers
 - auxiliary service providers
 - other agents (p.7)

Considering the core meetings-characteristic industries, these would be the following (UNWTO et al., 2008b):

1. Specialized meeting organizers
2. Convention Centres, Congress and Exhibition Halls
3. Incentive houses and destination management companies
4. Convention and Visitor Bureaux (p. 8).

If the expanded approach is taken into account these would include accommodation providers and auxiliary service providers: transportation, technical equipment,

secretarial support services, catering, food and restaurant services, speakers' representation services, or stand construction among others (UNWTO et al., 2008a).

Once the term meeting has been explored, as well as elements composing supply and demand sides, in order to further understand the complexity of this industry and the role of these agents in a destination, it should be explained that in many regions of the world, meeting organizers (which could be meeting planners, specialized meeting organizers, Professional Convention Organizers), as intermediaries between attendees and suppliers, play a relevant role, as they select sites, organize meetings, and coordinate services (Kim, Chon, & Chung, 2006; Rutherford, 1990). It could also happen that the venue is playing the role of meeting organizer (UNWTO et al., 2006). Moreover, venues, such as convention centres tend to be publicly owned, privately operated and marketed by the Destination Management/Marketing Organization (DMO hereinafter) or Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB hereinafter) that might be a public, private or public-private-partnership (Pearlman & Mollere, 2009). Then, of course there are other models where private companies such as Destination Management Companies (DMCs hereinafter) market the destination, apart from their incoming agency role or incentive house role, or where the main venues and the CVB are the same organization (Pearlman & Mollere, 2009). These are mere examples of the shifting/poliedric roles some of the core players may have, hindering its measurement both in cooperation and performance.

Last but not least, another relevant element is the type of city. This industry has expanded and the location and shape have changed considerably (ICCA, 2013). For better or for worse, the market share of the few large cities with substantial meetings

infrastructure has been shrinking, as some smaller cities are gaining more and more relevance (Crouch & Louviere, 2004). Understandably, these smaller cities compete for a rather small/mid-size sector. It would appear that they are getting through by competing in other terms, modern venues, ICT implementation, and on the fact of not being the “usual” locations (Crouch & Louviere, 2004). Ashworth and Page (2011) state that:

Tourism can contribute substantial economic benefits to cities but the cities whose economies are the most dependent upon tourism are likely to benefit the least. It is the cities with a large and varied economic base that gain the most from tourism but are the least dependent upon it (p.1).

Similarly, Mistilis and Dwyer (1999) sustain that the so-called gateway cities, would appear to be starting from an advantageous point against smaller cities. Gateway cities as opposed to smaller cities, tend to be larger in population and territory, tend to count with better infrastructure, accessibility, for instance measured on direct flights to the destination, mass means of land-transportation, usually universities and many companies are based within it, access to skilled labour is within means (Nelson & Rys, 2000). As such, when studying cooperation, and performance, within the meetings industry, this divide among cities is to be taken into account.

Synthesis

The Meetings Industry refers to (1) meetings being held by businesses across the spectrum of the economy, and to (2) specialized businesses rendering support services to those holding the meeting and to the facilities where they are held. There are different types of meetings to be held and as part of the present study association meetings are the focus, given that conveners in this case are more flexible to choose the destination, leaving aside corporate meetings, events, tradeshow, incentives, festivals, etc. Association meetings refer to: a general term covering all non business-oriented gatherings of participants at a predetermined site and time to attend an organised meeting in which they have an interactive, debating and/or competitive role, and of which the theme or purpose may be of any nature.

The expanded approach of supply side agents proposed by UNWTO, ICCA, MPI and Reed Travel Exhibitions (2008a) is the one being used in this research. This implies taking into account: specialized meeting organizers; venue owners or managers; incentive houses and destination management companies; Convention and Visitor Bureaux; auxiliary service providers; accommodation providers and other agents.

Finally, literature appears to sustain a meetings industry development/ behaviour divide between gateway / first-tier cities and second-tier cities, which might be of relevance for further research on cooperation and performance relation.

2.1.1. Social components relevance for MI performance at city level

The configuration of today's tourism destinations is related to their cultivated legacy, the historical configuration of each destination's own resources, overcome difficulties, collective projects ventured in, in sum, there is a path dependency. Simultaneously, tourism destinations are not frozen in time, and are not burdened /blessed by their past for life (Minghetti & Montaguti, 2010). On the contrary, it is what these destinations do now, their current development strategies, and how fast decisions are made under a constantly changing socio-economic and technological environment, what matters for destinations to be competitive. In this thesis we depart from the assumption that competitiveness of tourism destinations in the long run is not based on the existence and configuration of resources, or on the availability of excellent practices and productive abilities, as these are easily imitable. It is rather based on dynamic capacities; that is, on a collective capacity to be able to face the competitive challenges subject to generate specific development paths (Zenazurrabeitia Beldarrain, 2007).

Precisely, according to Crouch and Ritchie (2003), the fundamental product in tourism is the experience lived in the destination, and therefore depends heavily on business systems, which provide services to again provide these experiences. Heath (2003) stresses the social dimension, of how businesses are socially embedded, coinciding with Crouch and Ritchie (1994) understanding of tourism destinations competitiveness, being linked to regional competitiveness and social competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1994).

Social capital facilitates the necessary coordination between firms and allows rapid diffusion of best practices (Gonzalez & Mendieta, 2009). It also improves the ability to perceive opportunities for innovation and facilitates experimentation between them (Gonzalez & Mendieta, 2009). This represents a change of vision as to how to build development of tourism destinations, which also has implications in local governance models, where management and decision-making are performed collaboratively, and ideally under a shared vision.

The meetings industry, just like the tourism sector, is characterized mostly by small and medium enterprises; and this is even more the case in smaller cities (Larson & Gyimóthy, 2012). MPI's 2015 outlook report stresses the relevance of holding and cultivating professional relationships with hotels, CVBs, and other agents so that when the time comes these can be leveraged (MPI, 2015). Bernini (2009) stresses how cooperation among firms steers an improved use of skills and resources as well as fosters innovation and improved development within the businesses and in the cluster as a whole (Bernini, 2009). Hence, without disregarding external favourable conditions, Larson and Gyimóthy (2012) highlight that, meeting tourism development requires collaboration for joint bidding, promotion and planning, which implies numerous organizations coming together, and this area has not as much presence on the literature (Larson & Gyimóthy, 2012; Locke, 2010). More specifically, despite literature consensus on the relevance of cooperation, Locke (2010) states:

At this time, very little is known about the relationships between the various stakeholders that make up the supply side of the sector. Conducting a stock take of all stakeholders and their relationships (or, in other words, conducting a network analysis) will assist in determining how to implement and monitor strategies (p. 219).

In sum, cooperation / collaboration / highly functioning business systems / the social dimension appear to be elements that the literature gathers as relevant for the performance of a destination (as a proxy of competitiveness). However, in depth analysis of stakeholders and their relationships and this relevance to performance is yet to be conducted.

2.2. Cooperation among Stakeholders: Embedded Relationships

The following section, deepens into the concept of cooperation by reviewing the literature, the theories explaining it, and presents the constructs proposed to quantify cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders within local tourism destinations, more specifically cities.

2.2.1. Introduction

As Smith, Carrol and Ashford (1995, p.9) assert, literature on cooperation is rich in theory and diverse in its academic roots. This concept not only may be understood differently depending on cultural factors (Keller & Loewenstein, 2011; Smith, Carrol & Ashford, 1995), but also there are a vast set of disciplines that have explored the concept: economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, political science, organizational behaviour, organization theory and strategic management (Smith, Carrol & Ashford, 1995), as well as in dilemma research (Dawes, 1980; Komorita & Parks, 1996), procedural justice research (Tyler & Blader, 2000), and organizational citizenship behaviour research (Organ, 1988) to name but a few. Despite such diversity, scholars tend to agree on the fact that cooperation regards individuals/groups/organizations coming together for mutual gain (Smith, Carrol & Ashford, 1995; Blau 1963; Chen et al., 1998; Jones & George, 1998). Moreover, another confluence point is the fact that cooperation is believed to improve performance (Smith, Carrol & Ashford, 1995; Campion et al. 1996; Stanne et al. 1999), and reduce conflict (Tjosvold, 1998). This kind of statements relating cooperation and performance underpin the core of the present research. In this line, Beer, Eisenstat, and Spector (1990) posited that for innovation and competitive success coordination is necessary. These authors, as Smith, Carrol and Ashford (1995, p.8) gathered,

claimed that cooperation is a prerequisite of coordination and that motivational factors are in turn prerequisites of cooperation. Relatedly, the literature review performed by Thomas's (1992) on conflict showed that *collaboration is related to high satisfaction for cooperating parties, high quality working relationships, a large number of acceptable solutions, and high organizational performance* (Smith, Carrol & Ashford, 1995, p.8). At the organizational level, the positive relationship between cooperativeness among companies and strong levels of efficiency and profitability was documented by Contractor and Lorange (1988). Moreover, some cooperative organizational relationships, such as joint ventures, according to Buckley and Casson's (1988) research, provide cost savings because they reduce expensive monitoring costs for companies (idem).

Moreover, most studies on cooperation aim at analysing cooperation determinants as preconditions of cooperation (Eigenhüller et al., 2013; Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999; Namyslak, 2013; Thompson, 2005); or are focused on factors crucial for successful development of cooperation (Baggio, 2011; Lui Siu-yun, 2000; Pechlaner & Volgger, 2012); or on personal capabilities required for managing tourism cooperation (Beritelli & Laesser, 2011; Mottiar & Tucker, 2008); or on factors of cooperation effectiveness (Buxmann et al., 2008; Costa, 1996; Felzensztein et al. 2012; Grönvoos & Helle, 2012).

All these studies from different disciplines and focusing on diverse economic sectors are very valuable for helping to dissect cooperation. At the same time, when the focus is in tourism related studies, studies on cooperation are rather case-study based and the focus on proposing an empirical method to measure the score on cooperation for a

given destination is scarce (Baggio, 2011; Hsueh et al., 2010). Hence, this study will contribute precisely in that area, and it is not framed within a given case study.

In sum, cooperation is a complex conceptual construct, addressed by literature from numerous fields of research and despite this there seems to be an agreement on its relevance for improved performance. The following section addresses key theoretical perspectives explaining cooperation so that the construct cooperation can be broken down and measured.

2.2.2. Cooperation from an Embeddedness Perspective

According to the literature, when looking into cooperation certain split points emerge very early in the process. First of all, cooperation research might be approached from three different levels of research – individual, groups, organizational - and three objects of research – regions and communities, organizations/firms, institutions/administrative and governing bodies (Beritelli, 2011). Most research on cooperation, within the tourism domain and others, analyses the institutional level and the object of research are called stakeholder groups (Beritelli, 2011). Here the object of research is the destination (in other domains referred to as regions/communities), and the level of research is the organization.

Another important fact is that two forms of cooperation may occur: Formal or Informal (Beritelli, 2011; Smith, Carrol & Ashford, 1995). Formal, refers to contract-based cooperation and is more commonly found among institutions and administrative and governing bodies (Beritelli, 2011). The informal approach refers to more flexible arrangements where behavioural norms determine the contributions of

parties (Smith, Carrol & Ashford, 1995). According to Lee and Cavusgil (2006) formal and informal cooperation most of the time co-exists. For the purpose of the present study, both approaches count.

When business-to-business (b2b) relationships are studied one can broadly first distinguish the static and the dynamic approach (Kamp, 2007). The static approach compares the appropriateness of each organizational form or governance structure for a given resource or transaction at a given point in time (Kamp, 2007). The dynamic approach focuses on the exchange relationship and the inter-firm dynamics and interactions over time between firms, that together function as an interdependent business network through the alignment of complementary assets, resources and activities (Kamp, 2007). There is a relevant school of thought, mainly Scandinavian, focusing on the network and interaction (N&I) approach (Häkansson, 1982, 1987, 1989; Häkansson & Shehota, 1995; Johanson & Mattsson, 1987, 1991; Laage-Hellman, 1997), which emerges from social exchange theory, firm heterogeneity concepts, industrial marketing theory, institutionally oriented economics, behavioural theories of organization development and resource dependence theory, and holds a dynamic approach.

Following this, and when reflecting on cooperation and embracing Granovetter's (1985) statement on - economic action being heavily embedded in its social context, there are three theoretical perspectives to review: economic exchange, social relationship and cooperation as value creation. These three evidently take into account the rational side of seeking a profit, as well as the complex reality of the social context and its dynamism. The following table gathers the premises, theoretical

sources, research focus, key concepts and some representative research works of the three named perspectives.

Table 1 – Source: own elaboration based on Sui-Yun Lui (2000) and Beritelli (2011) <i>Key three perspectives on cooperation</i>			
	Economic exchange	Social relationship	Value creation
Theoretical sources	Transaction cost theory; Game theory; Rational choice theory	Social exchange theory; Channel studies; Institutional theory; IOR theory; Stakeholder Theory	Resource-based theory; Learning perspective
Research focus	Efficiency	Embedded relationship	Competition
Key concepts	Transaction cost, Pay off structure, Contractual safeguards, Commitment, Control, Dependence, Motivation, Opportunism and Trust	Cooperative equilibrium, Resource dependence, Reciprocity, Motivation, Norms, Personal relationship, Reputation, and Trust	Competitive advantage, knowledge sharing, acquiring knowledge, learning rate
Representative research works per perspective and some relevant applications in the tourism field	Arrow & Hahn (1971); Axelrod & Hamilton (1981); Bardhan (1993); Carpenter, Daniere & Takahashi (2004); Dinar & Wolf (1994); Dunleavy (1991); Dyer (1997); Fritsch & Lukas (1999); Gately (1974); Gulati (1995a); Heide & Miner (1992); Holländer (1990); Lang (2002); Lee & Cavusgil (2006); Luo (2002); Morgan & Hunt (1994); Parkhe (1993); Poppo & Zenger (2002); Ring & Van de Ven (1992 & 1994); Von Neuman & Morgenstern (1994); Williamson (1979); Zaheer, McEvily & Perrone (1998)	Axelrod & Keohane (1985); Anderson & Narus (1990); Blau & Alba (1982); Ekeh (1974); Emerson (1962); Freeman & McVea (1984); Homans (1962); Martin & Simmons (2005); Mavondo & Rodrigo (2001); Mohr & Spekman (1994); North (1971); Pesämaa & Hair Jr. (2007 & 2008); Ring & Van de Ven (1992); Rodriguez & Wilson (2002); Uzzi (1997)	Aas et al. (2005); Christiansen (2001); Das & Teng (2000); Doz (1996); Hamel (1991); Jamal & Getz (1995); Lee, Chen & Kao (2003); Lusch & Brown (1996); Pfeffer & Salancik (1978); Remmer (1998); Timothy (1998)

Table 1 Key three perspectives on cooperation

Economic Exchange

Looking at cooperation as economic exchange uncovers game theory, transaction cost theory and rational choice theory. In any case, commitment, control, dependence, trust, and opportunism are significant determinants of exchange behaviour.

Game theory focuses on a view where cooperation is seen as a *Prisoner's Dilemma game* (Axelrod, 1984; Heide & Miner, 1992; Kollock, 1998; Parkhe, 1993). It

represents a visual manner to assert the difficulties for cooperation to be generated. Per each round of the game, both participants (firms in the business setting) can deflect or cooperate. Researchers of the present theory believe that the decision depends on the payoff structure for each participant. Firms tend to deflect, in order to avoid it, Kollock (1998) presented three sets of cooperative incentives: (1) motivational solutions steering a cooperative attitude instead of opportunistic and individualistic; (2) strategic solutions modifying the payoff structure so that deflecting does not represent much gain; (3) structural solutions which would imply changing the game rules so that the motivational and strategic solutions are implemented and sustained over time. Strategic solutions tend to be extremely relevant in the business world, for instance a deflection now can be punished in the future, and if the firm intends to maintain a relationship with the given partner beyond the present *game run* a strategic vision is needed. Likewise, firms not understanding the return on the investment on such cooperation, this is, the absence of the motivational solution, reinforces individualistic behaviour.

Very linked to game theory is rational choice theory, where it is assumed that an individual every time it makes a choice it is thinking on balancing costs against benefits with the aim of maximizing its personal advantage, and the importance does not lie on a single choice rather on a pattern of choices (Arrow & Hahn, 1971; Lang, 2002).

The focus of transaction cost theory is the choice of governance structure (Borys & Jemison. 1989; Hennart. 1988; Kogut. 1988; Zajac & Olsen. 1993). Cooperation is perceived as relational governance that lies in an intermediate position between

market (market imperfections, control mechanisms) and hierarchy (Chen & Chen, 2003). The term market imperfections infers that it might be relatively inefficient obtaining the desired resources from the market (Beamish, 1985; Harrigan, 1984; Stopford & Wells, 1972), as opposed to some form of resource-sharing scheme between the partners, and the term control mechanisms (Beamish & Banks, 1987; Buckey & Casson, 1988; Hennart, 1988) highlights the best way of owning and allocating resources within an organization (Chen & Chen, 2003). Both market imperfections and control mechanisms are related to transaction costs, with strategic alliances being considered a midway house between the market and hierarchy in obtaining resources (Chen & Chen, 2003). However, such alliances come at a cost, for instance, governance cost may relate to bargaining activities and political influence.

Dependency, frequency, motivation and uncertainty, as well as opportunism are significant concepts to be taken into account under this theory (Oerlemans & Meeus, 2001). Game, transaction cost and rational choice theory share the efficiency assumption, as well as the rational and interest ridden behaviour of firms. This perspective presents exclusively two scenarios: win or lose, which appears too extreme as opposed to the diverse colour palette of real life scenarios (Lui Siu-yun, 2000). Moreover, this theory is useful when seeking to understand the choice between joint ventures and contractual alliances, which is not the aim of the present study.

Social relationship

This view highlights the social webs in which actors are embedded. Reciprocity, norms, personal relationship, reputation, and trust are especially relevant in order to reflect on the coordination and the stability of exchange structures (Arino, 1997; Deeds & Hill, 1998; Gulati, 1995a; Larson, 1992; Zaheer & Venkatraman, 1995 as cited in Lui Siu-yun, 2000, p.17). This perspective embodies social exchange theory, channel study, institutional theory, inter-organizational theory and stakeholder theory. The behavioural side of cooperative exchange is stressed by social exchange theory which "examines how the social norms of reciprocity and assessment of equity enact their effects" (Lui Siu-yun, 2000, p.17). As part of the social view cooperation is seen as a process where there are different and continuous stages (Ring & Vand de Ven, 1994). According to the authors these stages could be negotiation, commitment and execution, and these are driven by social-psychological dynamics, hence, the cooperation process might not be linear, rather shaped continually by the actions and the corresponding interpretations of such actions by the different actors involved (Ring & Vand de Ven, 1994). Arino (1997) posits that the "interaction process affects the development of cooperation over time" (as cited in Lui Siu-yn, 2000, p.17). In a sense Ring and Vand de Ven (1994) and Arino (1997) are taking into account the fact that firms might be reassessing every so often the *efficiency and equity of the relationship*, valuing whether the interest in it still remains or has changed. For such assessment Arino (1997) found that veracity and commitment affect cooperative behaviour when two firms collaborate for the first time. Moreover, Larson (1992) by developing a network formation process model, he found out that socio-reputation, personal relationship, reciprocity, trust and control have effects on different stages of the cooperative process. Furthermore, prior experience, effective communication, and

industry similarity were discovered as relevant factors in an atmosphere of change from individualistic behaviour and building a cooperative relationship (Langfield-Smith & Greenwood, 1998)

Continuing with the social perspective, channel study, draws light into a rather specific context: buyers and sellers cooperation relationships. The defined boundary of the scope of channel study has allowed different authors to measure behavioural variables. For instance, some acknowledged process variables embody communication (Mohr, Fisher & Nevin, 1996), commitment (Anderson & Weitz, 1992), decision-making (Sarkar et al., 1998), and power (Provan & Gassenheimer, 1994; Provan & Skinner, 1989). Additionally, variables' effects are argued to be active or latent according to Wilson (1995) depending on the different developmental stages of cooperation. Finally, when power is used to describe cooperation process between buyers and sellers, Heide and Miner (1992) applied flexibility, information exchange, shared problem, and restraint as dimensions.

Institutional theory maintains that institutions create a framework of norms, laws and rules that condition firms (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Lu & Lake, 1997; Scott, 1987). This is, institutional theory is looking at the external context of firms, as they are believed to be embedded in a given social structure, cognition, culture and institutions, hence contributing to some degree of contingency (Granovetter, 1985; Osborn & Hagedoom, 1997; Uzzi, 1997). Embeddedness is specifically relevant for institutional theory within the cooperation process, as firms' economic behaviour is believed to be affected by social relations among cooperating firms. Trust, fine-grained information transfer, and joint problem solving arrangements are argued to characterize embedded

relationships (Uzzi, 1997). Moreover, higher individual attachments and structural attachments have been found to steer stabilized contexts for exchange to take place and to reduce the risk of relationships dissolution (Baker, Faulkner & Fisher, 1998). Baker's et al. (1998) study already suggested what other researchers have stated, this is, there are at least two types of embeddedness: relational embeddedness and structural embeddedness, other authors also include positional embeddedness (Gulati, 1998; 1999; Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990) and resource embeddedness (Hsueh et al., 2010). This research and distinction has specifically been conducted when studying networks, where structural embeddedness discusses sparse or dense networks based on the indirect ties firms might have established via a third common firm; and relational embeddedness addresses ties between two firms, measured as strong or weak ties. The right mix of the two is posited to increase the performance of a firm in a network (Rowley, Behrens, & Krackhardt, 2000).

Another path within institutional theory is the one addressing the co-evolution of cooperation and the environment in which it occurs (Sharfman et al., 1991; Lawrence, et al., 1999; Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000).

Stakeholder theory has part of its roots within inter-organisational relations and organisational theory, resource dependence theory and institutional theory. Follett (1918) a pioneer on managerial theory, organizational theory and organizational behaviour already on her time inspired ideas and concepts that backed up stakeholder literature which was not called as such till some years later. One of the earliest works within this stream of literature is represented by, Barnard (1938) who explored the nature of cooperative behaviour in formal organisations (cited in Sheehan, 2006, p.9);

and by March and Simon (1958) who discussed conflict among organisations. Then, a shift to research beyond a given firm occurred by Levine and White (1961) who explored the *potential for cooperation* among firms; followed by Cyert and March (1963) who wrote on the firm's behavioural theory but taking into account other firms' behaviour; Then, Thompson (1967) advanced on the behaviour of firms in relation to external uncertainties; Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) explored the external control of organizations, within the perspective of resource dependency and its intrinsic *potential to threaten*; Axelrod (1984) commented on escalating cooperation provided that certain reciprocity among organisations exists; later on Wood and Gray (1991) stated that, when it relates to collaboration, organisations are autonomous and that they *engage in action on an issue-specific basis*; and then Waddock (1989) disagrees and argues that organisations are not fully autonomous. Moreover, he argues that for collaboration to occur there needs to be:

1) a recognition of interdependence; 2) agreement that the issue is important; and 3) a belief that significant benefits will be derived from addressing the issue (Sheehan, 2006, p.11).

Logsdon (1991) argues that a willingness to collaborate is influenced by two critical factors: 1) the stakes in solving the problem at hand; and 2) the degree of perceived interdependence with other groups that are necessary to solve the problem (as cited in Sheehan, 2006, p. 11).

Wang and Xiang (2007) studying the formation of tourism marketing alliances, design a conceptual framework defined by the following four constructs: precondition, motivation, stages and outcomes. Phillips and Hardy (1997, p.499) identify three primary implications of collaboration: 1) participants must negotiate a shared

understanding of issues and interests; 2) it requires communication; and 3) it may have profound effects not related to the issue at hand and not foreseen by participants.

In sum stakeholder theory and Inter-Organizational Relations (IOR) Theory find themselves nested with cooperation, collaboration, competition, coopetition constructs and re-validates the relevance of motivation and communication when studying cooperation.

As it is gathered, the social relationship perspective examines the environment, social structures, that affect firms and modify, reshape and condition the cooperative behaviour, as the underpinning logic is that firms are embedded in a social context. This perspective traditionally has been approached largely via in-depth case studies, uncovering determinants, factors that may foster the inter-organizational dyads or even networks to cooperate. More recently it has also been used for linking it to performance, thus applying more quantitative methods.

Value Creation

Resource-based theory and learning theory shape this perspective. Cooperation as value creation highlights *the process of how cooperation enhances performance* (Lui Siu-yun, 2000, p. 20), the focus lies on the outcome of cooperation.

Resource-based view conceives a firm as a bundle of resources, and the interest lies on how cooperation increases the resources and the capabilities of participating firms (Das & Teng, 1998 & 2000; Eisenhardt & Schoonhoven, 1996; Hamel, 1991). Mutual commitment and mutual dependence is argued to enable firms to enter strong

networks in order to create extra value (Holm, Eriksson & Johanson, 1999). Firms have different competence to create value through cooperation (Lorenzoni & Lipparini, 1999) in order to measure such competence, the concept of "relational capability" emerged, which refers to a firm's ability to interact and share knowledge with other firms (Lui Siu-yun, 2000). Relational capability probes into the value creation process of cooperation, firms with high relational capability are able to use the alliance to create value (Lui Siu-yun, 2000).

The learning perspective is underpinned by the understanding that by cooperating firms can learn from each other, the focus lies on the process of knowledge transfer and knowledge acquisition (Choi & Lee, 1997; Hamel, 1991; Westney, 1988). A central theme running across research based on the learning perspective is that partners compete during the cooperation process to create knowledge (Lui Siu-yun, 2000, p.22). Hamel (1991) summarized this as a "race to learn" and highlighted the interactive process going on between partners. Moreover, as the cooperation process unfolds firms are believed to be adapting their behaviour, and the firm that learns the fastest would be dominating the relationship (Hamel, 1991). According to Doz (1996 as cited in Lui Siu-yun, 2000, p.22) initial condition- learning-re-evaluation-readjustment cycles form the learning process and as it has been stated within the other two perspectives (economic exchange and social relationship) firms continuously reassess the cooperation. Here it would be based on perceived efficiency, equity, and adaptability. Doz (1996 as cited in Lui Siu-yun, 2000, p.22) posits that per each assessment firms adjust their level, mode, and commitment to the cooperation. Furthermore, Larsson et al. (1998 as cited in Lui Siu-yun, 2000, p.22) by researching learning strategies, understood as being defined by dyads and evolving overtime, they

found out that (1) transparency and receptivity of firms condition the use of different learning strategies; (2) when both partners adopt a learning strategy of collaboration, the outcome can be maximized; (3) choice of present learning strategies affects choice of learning strategies in the future.

In sum this perspective see the cooperation process rather as a knowledge exchange process and competence building process (Hamel, 1991; Holm et al., 1999). The shortcoming of this perspective is that alliances seeking other outcomes, such as increase market power, are not regarded (Khanna, 1998 as cited in Lui, 2000, p. 23).

The review of the three perspectives has helped highlighting numerous elements: trust, transparency, frequency of contact, opportunism, motivation, knowledge sharing, power, and conflict among others that may modify, influence, individuals and organizations when deciding to cooperate with other(s), and to maintain or withdraw such cooperative relationship. At the same time it has helped identifying the relevance of frequency of contact, motivational factors, efficiency sought after, and other elements as perhaps measures of cooperation. But possibly, the most enlightening outcome of the literature review is that it has helped discerning the relevance of firms being embedded on a given social context. As such, the construct cooperation will be studied from an embeddedness perspective, to be further broken down on the following section.

Synthesis

In the present study, the object of research is the destination, the level of research is the organization, the point of access to the organization is via one single informant and both formal and informal forms of cooperation are taken into account. Three perspectives are reviewed: economic exchange, social relationship and value creation.

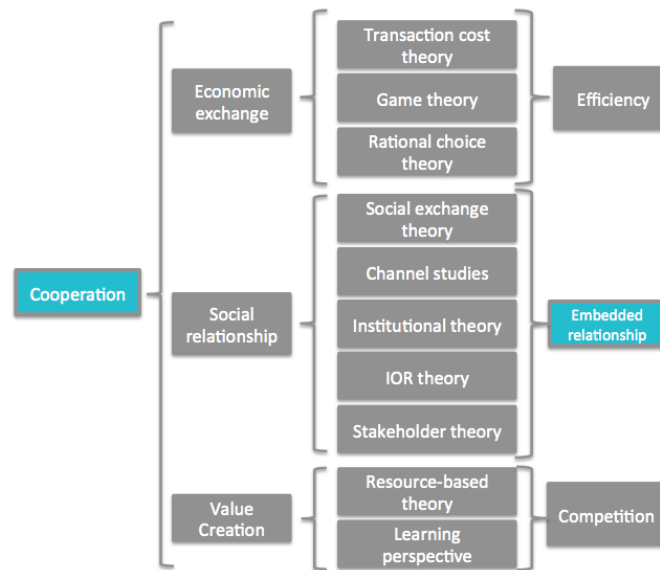


Figure 1 Literature Review on Cooperation and chosen focus

And this process has helped highlighting numerous elements: trust, transparency, frequency of contact, opportunism, motivation, knowledge sharing, power, and conflict among others that may modify, influence, individuals and organizations when deciding to cooperate with other(s), and to maintain or withdraw such cooperative relationship. At the same time it has helped identifying the relevance of frequency of contact, motivational factors, efficiency sought after, and other elements as perhaps measures of cooperation. But possibly, the most enlightening outcome of the literature review is that it has helped discerning the relevance of firms being embedded on a given social context. As such, the construct cooperation will be studied from an embeddedness perspective.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

Despite acknowledging the role of the individual within a given organization and its role as informant for the purpose of this study, the present research it is not as much about individuals themselves, rather about the ties among the organizations individuals work for, the destination as a whole, perhaps understood as a network of actors. It is about analysing whether there are cooperation ties, among which type of agents, for which reason, for how long. Therefore, this embeddedness concept, within the context of inter-organizational network structures is thus now explored.

Embeddedness

Network analysis, emerging from graph theory, social comparison theory and balance theory, it could be said that it is the field of social sciences, which allows for the study of relations among individuals, groups of individuals and organizations (Baggio, 2011; Bras et al., 2010; Costa, 1996; Scott & Laws, 2010). The understanding that economic action is embedded in social networks dates back to classical sociological theory and was brought back to scene by Granoveter as part of his manifesto for a new economic sociology (1985 as cited in Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999, p.1445). In recent years it has been gaining attention and it has been applied to different domains, including tourism. Without disregarding external favourable conditions, Larson and Gyimóthy (2012) highlight that, meeting tourism development requires collaboration for joint bidding, promotion and planning, which implies numerous organizations coming together, and this area has not as much presence on the literature (Larson & Gyimóthy, 2012; Locke, 2010). Moreover, a study by Ogden and McCorriston (2007) conducted in the UK concerning venue managers' relations with suppliers "concluded that long-term ties

with suppliers are beneficial for both the venue and supplier and that positive relationships with suppliers can result in positive outcomes for events” (Locke, 2010, p. 218).

Moreover, Locke (2010) states:

At this time, very little is known about the relationships between the various stakeholders that make up the supply side of the sector. Conducting a stock take of all stakeholders and their relationships (or, in other words, conducting a network analysis) will assist in determining how to implement and monitor strategies (p. 219).

For strategic alliances to be constructed and be successful personal ties are said to be important (Ring & Van de Ven 1992; Doz 1996; Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999, p. 1445).

Beneath the formalities of contractual agreements, multiple informal interpersonal relationships emerge across organizational boundaries, which facilitates the active exchange of information and the production of trust that foster interorganizational cooperation (Gulati 1995a; Walker, Kogut, & Shan 1997; Zaheer, McEvily, & Perrone 1998; Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999, p. 1445).

Firms participating in social networks have access to timely information and referrals (Burt, 1992; Kogut, Shan, & Walker 1992; Gulati 1995b). Moreover, as a study conducted by Gulati and Gargiulo (1999) highlights, firms detect new opportunities and new potential partners thanks to being in contact with their current and past partners. Gulati and Gargiulo (1999, p.1446) found out that firms obtain timely and relevant information on competencies, needs and reliability of potential partners from three sources of information (1) previous direct alliances, (2) indirect alliances ties through third parties, (3) reputation resulting from a potential partner’s position within the network of pre-existing alliances. Such three sources relate to three

network mechanisms defined by Gulati and Gargulio (1999) that for the purpose of the present study facilitate the operationalization of measuring cooperation among stakeholders if they are seen as a network: Relational embeddedness, Structural embeddedness and Positional embeddedness.

Relational embeddedness relates to cohesive ties between a dyad of actors (Gulati & Gargulio, 1999). "Cohesiveness amplifies trust and diminishes the uncertainty associated with future partnerships" (Podolny 1994; Burt & Knez 1995; Gulati 1995a as cited in Gulati & Gargulio, 1999, p.1446). A high frequency of contact over time among firms allows each other to know the projects they are respectively involved in since its conception, thus, being aware of the other's reliability, capabilities and experience, which can contribute to further alliances in the future with each other (Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999).

Structural embeddedness goes beyond the dyad and looks into "the structure of relations around actors on their tendency to cooperate with one another" (Granovetter 1992 as cited in Gulati & Gargulio, 1999, p.1446). Gulati and Gargulio (1999) connect structural embeddedness with structural equivalence; hence they focus specifically on the study of tryads, two actors that are connected to a common third partner, and thus gain even more information and a reputational lock-in can be created. In the present study rather the focus would lie on discovering the structure of relations among actors.

Positional embeddedness emerges from research on equivalence and centrality on network models seeking to identify the roles firms play within the system (Winship & Mandel 1983; Faust 1988; Borgatti & Everett 1994, as cited in Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999, p.1448). It apprehends the positions actors have in the overall structure within the network concerning their cooperation ties (Gulati & Garigiulo, 1999). The more central an actor's position is the better information it has access to and the higher their visibility (Krackhardt 1990; Gulati 1999; Powell et al. 1996, Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999). If central firms have greater access to information and higher visibility than other organizations, then, other things being equal, interorganizational ties should be more common between organizations that occupy central positions in the emerging interorganizational network (Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999: 1449). With the aim of empirically measuring cooperation, positional embeddedness instead of contributing to the final cooperation score, provides another branch of research into discovering central actors per destination.

Thus, relational and structural embeddedness concepts contribute to address a complex construct such as cooperation from a more operational perspective. Pursuing such operationalization these three need to be further broken down. Thus, one of the methodological decisions to be made was to define which attributes determine a link between actors. Mitchell (1969) considers that the content of the links may be of exchange, communication or social nature. Within those 'contents' the variables should be defined depending on the object of the study. In Scott, Cooper and Baggio's (2008) study, they examined cohesion of destination networks through the use of communication as an indicator of effectiveness. It is studied in four case studies, specifically regional destinations within Australia. In order to conduct such study,

Scott, Cooper and Baggio (2008) examine three elements within a network: actors, resources and relationships; and in order to measure cohesion, the concepts of density and centralization are quantified. Relationships are based on communication, any form with any frequency, among any firm. For the purpose of the present research seeking the link between cooperation and performance, any form of communication for any purpose it is not enough. The study conducted by Bendle and Paterson (2010) might bring further light. As part of their study strong links were those that fulfilled one or two of the following conditions: 1) two agents that share cooperative projects and 2) there is regular contact among their office bearers or staff (Bendle & Paterson, 2010, p.1610). A weak link rather would be demarcated by exchange of information and, or either, stakeholders attending regularly events of the others (this responds to the fact that the field of study was the arts and cultural events). Therefore, as part of the present research, within measuring relational embeddedness the strength of those links will be addressed. This is, frequency of contact, longevity and motivation on different scales will determine the strength of such cooperation by dyads.

The following conceptual model is a digest of the key take-aways from the literature review and serves as a means to represent how *cooperation* will be measured when following an embeddedness perspective. Cooperation construct is broken down into two concepts: relational embeddedness and structural embeddedness.

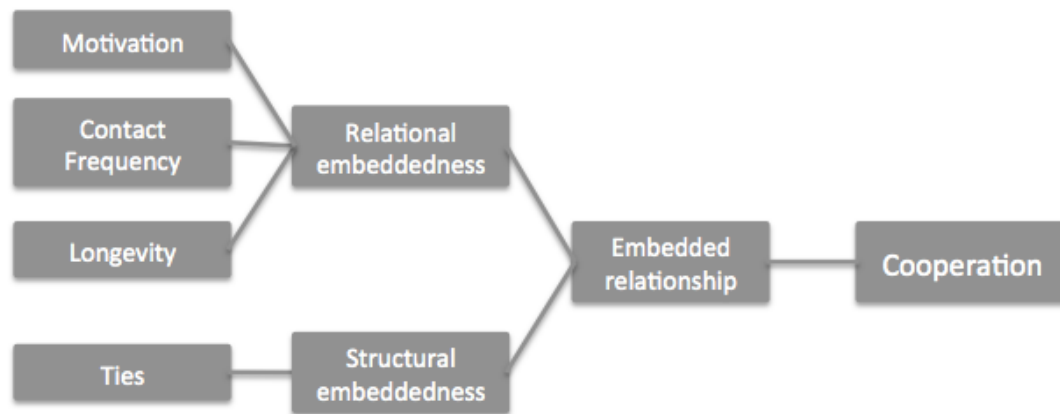


Figure 2 Conceptual Framework for Cooperation from an embeddedness perspective. Source: Own elaboration

Where relational embeddedness is addressed using (1) frequency of contact (Burt & Knez 1995; Costa, 1996; Dyer & Singh, 1998; Gulati 1995a; Gulati & Gargulio, 1999; Heide & Miner, 1992; Podolny 1994;), differentiating face to face contact (Storper & Venables, 2004) and non face to face (William, 2009); (2) longevity of the contact (Ginevicius, 2010); and (3) motivation (Beer, Eisenstat, & Spector, 1990; Kollock, 1998; Smith, Carroll, & Ashford, 1995). And structural embeddedness is measured by (4) selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization cooperates.

Additionally, positional embeddedness is studied with variable (4) using network analysis methods, studying weighted in-degree via Gephi, hence, will not be used to construct the score on cooperation. For that reason it is not reflected on the conceptual framework. Positional embeddedness study counts with a specific sub-chapter in the present document as it is analysed following network analysis methods.

3. Research Design & Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological basis for empirically testing the conceptual model presented in Chapter Two and interpreting the results from data analysis. This chapter addresses the measurement of the construct cooperation and it is broken down into five sub-sections: the first one concerns a reminder of the research objective and measurement construct and presents the premises and hypothesis to be addressed; the second one gathers the explanation of the data and sample used for the study, discussing the target population, sampling frame and unit of analysis and informant; the third sub-section covers the variables and the approach for data collection followed, including the pilot, final survey, survey administration process and data screening; and finally the major contribution to theory of the present thesis is presented in this final part of chapter three: the methodology and analytical approach followed to measure cooperation. Additionally the analytical approach to study the network topography of destinations based on meetings industry stakeholders' cooperation is discussed in detail.

3.1. Cooperation Measurement

3.1.1. Research objective and Measurement Construct

The main aim of the study is to develop, test and validate a replicable and scalable methodology to measure cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders, and obtaining a score on cooperation per destination based on the responses of meetings industry stakeholders to a survey. Additionally, built on the theoretical base established in the literature review this chapter presents a set of premises, and the corresponding hypotheses proposed.

Main Research Question: how is cooperation measured among meetings industry stakeholders within tourism destinations from an embeddedness perspective?

Cooperation construct is regarded through three concepts: relational embeddedness; structural embeddedness; and positional embeddedness. The following table then presents the variables allowing measuring those concepts. As highlighted before, positional embeddedness will be used separately, not for building cooperation scores.

Table 2 <i>Initial Construct Cooperation</i>		
Concept	Operational Definition	Variable definition
Relational embeddedness	It indicates the extent to which a pair of organizations (dyad) had direct contact with each other in the past and the strength of the relationship.	Frequency of contact face to face over the past three years
		Frequency of contact non face-to-face over the past three years
		Longevity of the cooperation relationship
		Motivation for cooperation
Structural embeddedness	It indicates the extent to which a given organization is linked to other organizations	Selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization cooperates
		Selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization has relations
		Specific name of organizations with which the given organization cooperates the most
Positional embeddedness	This construct indicates the extent to which the organization in a dyad occupies similar or different network positions.	The most central organizations are those linked to many organizations, which are in turn linked to several other organizations.

Table 2 Initial Construct Cooperation

Premises and Hypothesis on Cooperation

The overall intent of these premises is to identify variables that affect cooperation behaviour more significantly, and the perception on cooperation enhancing performance. Therefore, all the variables included in the survey are tested against number of agents with which the respondent cooperates, the amount of reasons motivating such cooperation, the frequency of contact, the longevity of such cooperation. Additionally some variables are tested against the perception of the destination as holding a cooperative environment and/or relations among agents being tight.

A set of premises (α to ζ) test whether depending on the type of agent, on being member of the CVB, on MI business representing a higher percentage as opposed to other type of business within a respondent's company, on being an older company, and on being locally based, it significantly affects the amount of agents with which respondents cooperate.

Premise (α): There is a relation between which type of agent the respondent is and with which type of agent they cooperate.

Null hypothesis ($H_0\alpha1$): there is no relation between which type of agent the respondent is (Q4) and with which type of agent they cooperate.

Premise (β): organizations being part of the local Convention and Visitors Bureau cooperate with more agents than those that are not.

Null hypothesis ($H_0\beta1$): There is no difference on the amount of type of agents with whom a subject cooperates, depending on that subject being member or not of the local CVB.

CVBs within destinations have traditionally held leadership positions, either in their public, private or mixed figures, gathering key stakeholders among its members (Getz, Anderson & Sheehan, 1998; Lee, 2011; Sturm, 2013 and Weber, 2001). So here, the intent is to test whether by being part of the CVB the respective agents hold more cooperation relations than those not members.

Premise (γ): older companies cooperate with more agents than younger companies.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\gamma1}$): There is no difference on the amount of agents with whom subjects cooperate, per agents' companies being younger or older (more than ten years old).

Premise (δ): Locally based agents cooperate with more agents and/or for more motivations, as opposed to national, international, multinational entities.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\delta1}$): national, international, multinational entities cooperate with more agents.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\delta2}$): national, international, multinational entities cooperate for more motivations than locally based agents

Premise (ϵ): national, international, multinational entities do not prioritize cooperation with locally based agents against cooperation with agents based elsewhere.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\epsilon1}$): national, international, multinational entities prioritize cooperation with locally based agents against cooperation with agents based elsewhere.

Premise (ζ): national, international, multinational entities have relations with more agents away than locally based agents

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\zeta1}$): there is no difference between local versus national, international, multinational entities on having more or less relations with agents based away than locally based agents.

The following two premises are testing variables that may keep a relation with the amount of reasons motivating the cooperation.

Premise (η): certain dyads' motivation for cooperation is larger than others.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\eta1}$): there is no relation between which type of agent the subject is, with whom they cooperate and for how many reasons (more or less than others) that motivates them.

Premise (θ): Older cooperative relationships are related to amount of reasons motivating cooperation.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\theta1}$): there is no relation between longevity of cooperation among types of agents and amount of reasons motivating cooperation.

Finally different variables are tested concerning the views on the destination cooperativeness and tightness of relations as well as on understanding cooperation as a performance enhancer.

It is assumed that if respondents are members of the CVB are less isolated, they have an impression on at least their association cooperative behaviour, and older companies just by being part of the destination for a longer period may hold different views than those non-members or younger companies.

Premise (ι): Members of the local CVB hold different views on tightness of relations and cooperativeness environment within the destination than non-members.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\iota1}$): There is no difference among agents, members of the CVB, and those that are not members, concerning their understanding on the destination tightness of relations.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\iota2}$): There is no difference among agents, members of the CVB, and those that are not members, concerning their understanding on the destination cooperativeness environment.

Premise (κ): younger (less than 10 years old companies) and older companies hold different views on tightness of relations and cooperativeness environment within the destination

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\kappa1}$): There is no difference on the perspective of cooperativeness environment within the destination according to less or more than ten-year-old companies.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\kappa2}$): There is no difference on the perspective of tightness of relations of the destination according to less or more than ten-year-old companies.

Basically, it is assumed that those being members of the CVB, as this implies a cost in time and resources, and those more engaged on motivations or over time, have either experienced this improvement or expect to experience it.

Premise (λ): Larger amount of reasons motivating to cooperate is related to agreeing that cooperation enhances performance.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\lambda1}$): there is no relation between number of reasons motivating agents to cooperate and agreement or disagreement on cooperation enhancing performance.

Premise (μ): Member and not members of the respective CVB hold different views on cooperation enhancing performance.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\mu1}$): There is no difference on views on cooperation enhancing performance, according to members and not members of the respective CVB.

Premise (ν): Older cooperative relationships are related to agreement on performance enhancement via cooperation.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\nu1}$): There is no relation between the longevity of a cooperation dyad and its level of agreement with cooperation enhancing the performance of their business.

3.1.2. Data and Sampling

Target Population and Informant

Meetings industry businesses within cities – local tourism destinations where the meetings industry is relevant⁶ are the target population of the study. This implies:

- 1) Respondents to the survey will have to choose one city from a list of cities as the first question. This list comprehends only those cities that International Congress and Convention Association, known as ICCA, includes as part of its full city meetings ranking. In total, this ranking includes 417 cities.
- 2) This ranking is built according to a very precise definition of meetings established by ICCA: Organized by International Governmental or Non-Governmental Organizations / associations, attended by more than 50 participants, organized on a regular basis (one time events are not included), and move between at least 3 different countries (ICCA, 2014).
- 3) City convention bureaux or associations on behalf of the city need to actively provide all the information to ICCA so that ICCA decides whether all the meetings the city argues having hosted meet those requirements. This implies compromise and interest from the side of the city to be part of the single worldwide meetings industry ranking for cities and countries.
- 4) Cities: it needs to be a municipality which is the main tourism destination (in the case of greater cities or larger urban zones⁷ more municipalities could be included, but this would never be a whole county, region or province) and the

⁶ Meetings industries being relevant is meant as economically relevant for the city GDP, without establishing a exact percentage. Here being part of ICCA ranking is used as a measure of relevance.

⁷ . Larger urban zone as described by the OECD and EC (2012).

companies interviewed need to have their businesses (or part of them) based within such municipality, greater city or larger urban zone. As part of the control variables one question asks whether the respondent's business is locally based within the destination (neighbouring municipalities are included) or a national/international/multinational business with office(s) in the given destination. Moreover this is addressed within the home page of the survey where it is explained as follows: *the interest of the survey is specifically related to the business conducted within the destination, in the sense of events that are hosted within the destination, not the part of the business that takes place elsewhere. For instance, in the case of PCOs that organize events abroad, which part of the business would be out of the scope of the present study. The relevance here lies within the economic impact of the meetings industry within the local destination where the enquired agents are based.*

- 5) The single-informant approach has been used extensively in management research and is considered a reliable source when the informant is senior enough in the organization (Aday, 1991; BarNir & Smith, 2002). In order to address this, when distributing the survey the message stressed the relevance of higher rank officials within the organization responding to it, as they are assumed to count with a holistic view of the cooperation their organization has with other agents within the destination and elsewhere. 87% of the respondents fulfill that requirement. Concerns have been raised, as responses from different informants of the same organization may coincide when the questions refer to organization age and size but may not on other aspects such as organizational culture (Zammuto & Krakower, 1991). Phillips (1981) suggests that, in order to attenuate measurement error, questions should be

asked in a manner that allows the informants to report more on relatively objective, observable phenomena and make less demanding social judgments. Therefore, the strategy followed to minimize the risk of single-informant bias implied questions being phrased in such a way that the respondents had to quantify their responses (e.g., longevity of the cooperation relationship, frequency of contact, etc.), whereas questions involving informant's attitudes were avoided.

The target informants are representatives of firms pertaining to the meetings industry within the given list of cities mentioned above. These individuals can represent companies from different types of agents involved in the meetings industries. As part of the survey, the type of agent within which the respondent identifies themselves, and those with whom they cooperate, had to be determined.

As it has been mentioned before, as part of the work conducted by UNWTO, ICCA, MPI and Reed Travel Exhibitions (2008a), these organisations stated that the meeting industry *stakeholders might belong to the following categories* (2008a, p. 7):

- The convener or meeting host
- The trade fair exhibitor
- The meeting sponsor
- The supply-side entities, which include:
 - Specialized meeting organizers
 - Venue owners or managers
 - Auxiliary service providers
 - Other agents

Considering the core meetings-characteristic industries, these would be the following (UNWTO, ICCA, MPI & Reed Travel Exhibitions, 2008a):

1. Specialized meeting organizers
2. Convention Centres, Congress and Exhibition Halls
3. Incentive houses and destination management companies
4. Convention and Visitor Bureaux (p. 8)

If the expanded approach is taken into account, these would include accommodation providers and auxiliary services providers: transportation, technical equipment, secretarial support services, catering, food and restaurant services, speakers' representation services, or stand construction among others (UNWTO et al., 2008a).

As part of the present work only the supply side stakeholders are taken into account given that those businesses entities are more likely to have their offices (at least one of them) within the destination and they are far more likely to be economically interested in more events happening in such destination than sponsors, conveners or exhibitors whose motives do not tend to be tied to one city location. After reviewing Bernini, 2009; Larson, 2009; Larson & Gyimóthy, 2012; UNWTO, ICCA, MPI & Reed Travel Exhibition (2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c) the following eight types of agents were defined:

- PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers (1)
- Venues owners or managers (2)
- Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent) (3)
- DMCs or incoming agencies (4)
- Auxiliary service providers (5)
- Association Management Companies (6)
- Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels) (7)
- Others, please specify (8) _____

Auxiliary service providers (5) embody providers of the following services (not being this an exhaustive list): catering, transport, communication agencies, interpretation & translation, stand building, furniture renting, technical equipment renting, secretarial support services, and speakers' representation services.

DMCs were separated from PCOs given that Destination Management Companies beyond the pure event side of their business, also embody more leisure type activities and destination promotion, which is not usually performed by PCOs.

Next, Convention and Visitors Bureau or similar agents had to be included given that (1) they are the point of entry to the destinations surveyed and (2) tend to play a role at bringing a certain amount of stakeholders together and at promoting the destination for meetings industry purposes.

Accommodation providers were also differentiated given that in most destinations (1) they may play a double role as accommodation providers and venues, so the

respondent chooses which role to select, and (2) if the number of companies that can pertain to accommodation providers is counted, it tends to be large as opposed to other suppliers. It should be borne in mind that one of the usual requirements for cities to host large events is to count with a significant amount of bed capacity, which tends to be linked to amount of accommodation providers. Even acknowledging that there is a wide spectrum in the number of beds each accommodation provider may count with.

The only agent that can be supply and convener at the same time refers to Association Management Companies. These entities manage the administrative duties of diverse associations, as well as many times play the role of PCOs for any event, even the large association annual events. This insertion is based on a study on meetings industries international benchmarking conducted by CICTourGUNE (2011). This study, by interviewing key meetings industry stakeholders from Berlin, Vienna, Barcelona, Bilbao and Vancouver, discovered that one key factor for the high league of meeting-hosting-cities to remain so, is to have Association Management Companies based on their destination (CICTourGUNE, 2011). Only large and influential associations can afford to contract the services of Association Management Companies (CICTourGUNE, 2011). Thus, these companies manage medical, pharmaceutical, and the like associations, which tend to organize annual events meeting all the requirements of the definition of a meeting by ICCA. As part of that definition (described on page 52) these events need to rotate between countries, and according to the study made by CICTourGUNE (2011) if the association headquarters is in a given city, as part of the rotation this city tends to host such annual event at a constant of every three years. Moreover, this association host other types of events of

a smaller nature to conduct their usual association activities, which again are relevant for the local economy. Given that in the present study data collection was aimed internationally, it could easily contain first league cities, counting with Association Management Companies.

Sampling Frame

The ideal study would include all members of the social network, or be an egocentric study focusing on a given agent and its relations (Scott, Baggio & Cooper, 2008). An intermediate path, as in most studies is found, implies sampling, which has also been used when the research is on a large scale and a particular population of agents are involved in a complex system of relations (Scott, 2000; Timur, 2005; Ying, 2010).

This is a theory building research where both dependent and independent variables are initially unknown and part of the process has been proposing them and their relation and thus performing an experiment. Moreover, the amount of meetings industries businesses operating in cities across the world where the meetings industries side of tourism is relevant is certainly unknown. By narrowing it down to those belonging to the 417 cities part of the ICCA cities ranking, the population is still unknown, but this ranking provides an indication on different instances. In any case, with an unknown population, dependent and independent variables, instances are to be selected randomly (Dul & Hak, 2008). Snowballing tends to be the technique applied to follow relationships and identify other nodes (Atkinson & Flint, 2001).

Snowballing is performed both for the object of research, this is, for destination selection and for the level of research, for stakeholders selection. For the snowballing process for destinations, later on in the text within the *survey administration* section, this is explained in detail. For the snowballing process concerning stakeholders within destinations, the strategy to address population under-coverage and respondent

selection has been twofold. On the one hand, having the local convention bureau or similar agent as the point of entry to the destination so that this entity distributes the survey to their desired set of stakeholders. Additionally, as part of question Q10, respondents are asked to provide at least three names of organizations with which they cooperate the most, the researcher then searched for their contact details and sent out the survey to them as well. On the other hand, the researcher conducted online search creating a database with agents operating in the cities, collecting company name, type of agent, contact details. It cannot be affirmed that this is a census, but the database gathers all entities being members of those convention bureaus that publish their members company name as well as other associations locally based that embodied further agents the researcher could find. The researcher sent the survey to those as well. The idea was to distribute the survey also to those that are not members of the respective CVBs.

Over-coverage, this is, the same company replying twice to the study is detected as Qualtrics records IP address of the respondent, time and geographical coordinates. One case of this was detected and removed from the main database. Weeks later, a director of the given company contacted the researcher to notify that both himself and a subordinate had replied the survey and that out of the two only the one that stated a number of things should be taken into account. This response was re-inserted in the database.

3.1.3. Variables and Survey structure

A self-administered online survey via Qualtrics was designed in English, Spanish and French (please see Annex I for the full questionnaire in English) to collect the data. Despite surveys not been the panacea method, this approach was chosen based on three considerations. First, in order to test hypotheses grounded in theory, a sufficient sample size is required to allow for statistical inference. A self-administered survey was a suitable choice for this study as it allows collecting a relatively large number of observations at a comparatively low cost. Utilizing interviews would imply a small number of respondents and an even smaller number of destinations given that it is a highly time and resource consuming method. Second, given that snowballing is the recommended technique and higher variability enhances robustness to the experiment, survey is the selected method. Third, by using an online survey, it allowed a more dynamic interaction between respondents and questionnaire by providing survey capabilities far beyond those available for any other type of self-administered questionnaire, for example, skip patterns, pop-up instructions, and drop-down boxes with long list of answer choices, etc. (Dillman, 2000).

A number of measures were carried out during both the survey design and data collection phases to reduce the non-response risk and reporting biases, and will be addressed in detail in following sections.

Survey measures

The survey is divided in seven parts:

1. Introduction or survey home giving context on the research project, it being part of a PhD research process, the survey's focus, confidentiality and anonymity, providing a sense of time to be invested in the questionnaire, gratitude for contributing, stressing the relevance of responding for only the part of the business affecting the destination they select from the list as the first question; specifying the reference year being 2013 and providing practical information on survey filling.
2. General Information about the enterprise. Here respondents were asked to select the destination (Q3); principal activity of the business (Q4) (selecting from the eight type of agents mentioned before); and then three questions on the business being young, exclusively focused on MI (Q5), locally based (Q6), and if not locally based, % of the business the office on the given destination represents (Q7) (Eurostat, 2013).
3. Relations

Three questions concerning having or not on-going relationships with each of the eight-type of agents within the destination (Q9) or outside of the destination (Q11), and naming at least three companies with whom they cooperate the most within the destination currently or within the past three years (Q10). Please refer to the table on the next page for observing how these questions form the variables building structural embeddedness. Structural embeddedness includes question 13 that is explained in the next section on Cooperation.
4. Cooperation. This section counts with 35 questions. The first question (Q13) of this section is a gate opener/closer. Q13 (categorical nominal dichotomous)

defines cooperation and then asks whether the company of the respondent cooperates yes or no with each of the eight types of agents. Next, there are four questions that are repeated per each of the dyad type $4 \times 8 = 32$. This means that if a participant responds that their company cooperate with all eight types of agents, this person will have to respond to 34 questions (the last question, Q47 is conditional to not cooperating with at least one type of agent). On the contrary, if this person only responds to be cooperating with for instance 3 agents, only $Q13 + 4 \times 3 + Q46 + Q47 = 15$ questions will appear. Questions 14 to 45 are conditionals to responses on question 13.

Within the set of four questions repeated per each dyad three of them build relational embeddedness as explained below. Then the forth question (Q17, Q21, Q25... till Q45) asks per dyad whether cooperation has enhanced performance of the respondents company (MI side of the business) measured by interval variable Likert scale (1 – 6).

Questions, Q46 and Q47 address potential elements for cooperation to result on better performance of the company and reasons for not cooperating with some of the type of agents (this question is conditional upon Q13).

The following table gathers this section on cooperation and the one on relations.

Table 3 <i>Initial Construct Cooperation and its measures</i>				
Concept	Operational Definition	Measure	Level of Measurement	
Relational embeddedness	Frequency of contact face to face over the past three years	Questions 15_1, 19_1, 23_1, 27_1, 31_1, 35_1, 39_1, and 43_1	Interval – Likert scale (1-7)	
	Frequency of contact non face-to-face over the past three years	Questions 15_2, 19_2, 23_2, 27_2, 31_2, 35_2, 39_2, and 43_2	Interval – Likert scale (1-7)	
	Longevity of the contact	Questions 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, 36, 40 and 44	Interval – Likert scale (1-4)	
	Motivation	Questions 14, 18, 22, 26, 30, 34, 38, and 42	Categorical	
Structural embeddedness	Selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization cooperates	Question 13	Categorical nominal dichotomous	
	Selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization has relations	Question 9	Categorical	
	Specific name of organizations with which the given organization cooperates the most	Question 10	Open-ended, it is not a variable.	

Table 3 Initial Construct Cooperation and its measures

5. Perspective on the Destination

This section contains three questions: two collecting information on the destination concerning cooperation (Q48 & Q50), and gathering distinction on relevance of relations with agents within the destination or outside the destination (Q49).

6. Final General Information about the Enterprise

Eight more questions on: being part of the local convention bureau or similar agent (Q53), year the business opened (Q54), amount of employees (Q55), % of those being full time employees (Q56), % of employees working on the MI side (Q57), position of respondent within the company (Q58), name of the department

respondent belongs to (Q59) and total turnover of the business based on the destination in 2013 in US\$ (Q60).

7. Once the respondent had completed the survey, a message thanking for contribution appeared and the email address and name of the present researcher was offered in case the respondent would like to receive an executive summary of the main findings. This implies that those completing the survey if interested could contact the researcher but not the other way around.

Section 2 and 6 of the survey contain the control variables. As advised by most of the literature reviewed on survey design the most sensitive information is asked last.

Table 4
<i>Control variables at individual and organizational levels</i>
Individual level
Organizational position & department
Organizational level
Destination
Weight of the business based on the destination within the business as a whole
Principal activity of the business
Belonging to the local convention bureau or similar agent
Organization age
Organization size (full time employees & total turnover)
Weight of MI within the business (% of employees working on the MI side)
Table 4 Control variables at individual and organizational levels

3.1.4. Data collection

A self-administered online survey was used for the data collection. A first draft was designed and distributed among experts, then a new version of the survey was generated and a pilot test was conducted, and next the final survey was distributed.

Pilot

In order to test the instrument a pilot was conducted in the three province capitals of the Basque country, this is, Vitoria, San Sebastian and Bilbao from February 13th to March 26th 2014. The points of entry to those destinations were the respective Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB hereinafter). This point of entry could embody a potential limitation, as perhaps stakeholders responding to the survey are only those close to the Convention and Visitor Bureau representative that distributed the survey. This was addressed by the researcher searching the web for agents operating in the three cities, collecting company name, type of stakeholder, contact details, and the researcher sent herself the survey to those as well. The idea was to distribute the survey also to those that are not members of the respective CVBs.

As it was a pilot, feedback was gathered from each of them prior to completing the survey and once they had filled it out. It might be worth highlighting that the general comment was that it was easily & quickly understood and filled-out. All three CVBs gladly distributed the survey to stakeholders within their respective cities.

The only changes made, as a result of the pilot, were applied to the invitation body of text and instructions in the survey instrument (including the average time it takes to fill it out). The respondents report that the survey took about 16 minutes to complete (Qualtrics online service provided that information as well, so it could be verified), and thought the survey was “not long at all” or “not long”.

The pilot collected 42 cases based in the three cities in the Basque Country. The method designed to construct [Cooperation] values, underwent a Cronbach's Alpha test to check the reliability of the method, initially resulting on Cronbach's Alpha = .581, suggesting a Cronbach's Alpha of .930 based on Standardized items. Therefore, variables [Motivation], [Frequency] and [Longevity] were re-scaled into [R_Motivation], [R_Frequency] and [R_Longevity].

Cronbach's Alpha for [COOPwithwhom], [R_Motivation], [R_Frequency] and [R_Longevity] were .857 (M = 4.97; SD = 1.73), .890 (M = 2.11; SD= 1.35), .897 (M= 2.52; SD = 1.25) and .892 (M= 5.09; SD = 1.84) respectively, indicating that the scales had acceptable internal consistency. This in turn provided Cronbach's Alpha = .911, validating the reliability of the method used.

Final Survey

The survey instrument distributed to the pilot region and to the international audience was the same. It had sixty questions displayed through seven sequential screens. Introduction is the first screen, second screen refers to the first set of control variables easy to respond, third screen on relations questions, cooperation's 36 questions are divided in two screens (fourth & fifth), sixth screen referred to the perspective on the destination questions and seventh screen gathered the last control variables. The questionnaire can be found in Annex I. The online survey service Qualtrics (www.qualtrics.com) was used to develop and administer the online survey.

Literature sustains that, next to response bias, self-assessment and the use of only one survey instrument may hinder common method bias. It results from data variance being attributed more to a measurement method than to the constructs being measured (Madu & Kuei, 2012). According to Cote and Buckley (1987) the extent of common method bias varies across fields and it is below average in marketing and business

studies. Self-assessment or requesting data on independent and dependent variables does not per se imply the existence of common method bias since its strength can differ among sub-groups of respondents (e.g. respondents from different countries as it happens in this study) and since method-related variance can deflate or inflate the relationships observed (Podsakoff et al., 2003 as cited in Madu & Kuei, 2012, p. 232). For the survey data used in the present research a number of procedural steps were taken to ensure that common method bias is minimized or at least reduced. Different response formats were used, the anonymity of respondents was ensured, scale-items were improved specially after the session conducted with the first draft, and the instructions provided in the emails distributing the survey ask for higher rank positions within the organization person to answer it.

Survey Administration

In order to reach an international audience, the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme was contacted and accepted distributing it, as it fits with the approach they are following with their projects seeking collaboration for better results and proceeded to distribute it in two ways:

1. via UNWTO Member States
2. via UNWTO Affiliate Members

The first approach implied that UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme sent an email message to tourism ministries or National Tourism Organizations (NTOs hereinafter) of UNWTO member states explaining: (1) the study, (2) within their country which cities could be subject of the study (as not all cities within a country are part of ICCA

ranking) and (3) asking whether they would be willing to pass it on to the person in charge of the local Convention Bureau or similar agent for them to fill the online survey and distribute it to MI stakeholders within the city (this message can be found on Annex II). The elements stressed on the *target population and informant* section of this document were highlighted in such message.

The UNWTO counts with 156 member states. Out of 94 countries embodying the 417 cities of ICCA ranking, 76 countries are UNWTO member states. The table below gathers the 94 countries and in bold are highlighted the non-UNWTO member states.

Table 5

List of countries whose cities are subject of the study

Algeria	Indonesia	South Korea
Antigua and Barbuda	Ireland	Spain
Argentina	Israel	Sri Lanka
Australia	Italy	Sweden
Austria	Japan	Switzerland
Bahrain	Jordan	Taiwan, China
Bangladesh	Kenya	Tanzania
Belgium	Latvia	Thailand
Benin	Lebanon	Trinidad and Tobago
Bolivia	Lithuania	Turkey
Brazil	Luxembourg	U.K.
Brunei	Malaysia	Uganda
Bulgaria	Malta	Ukraine
Cambodia	Mexico	United Arab Emirates
Canada	Monaco	Uruguay
Chile	Mongolia	USA
China	Montenegro	Venezuela
Colombia	Morocco	Vietnam
Costa Rica	Namibia	
Croatia	Nepal	
Cuba	Netherlands	
Cyprus	New Zealand	
Czech Republic	Norway	
Denmark	Panama	

Dominican Republic	Paraguay
Ecuador	Peru
Egypt	Philippines
Estonia	Poland
Ethiopia	Portugal
Finland	Puerto Rico
France	Qatar
Georgia	Republic of Singapore
Germany	Romania
Ghana	Russia
Greece	Serbia
Hungary	Slovakia
Iceland	Slovenia
India	South Africa

Table 5 List of countries whose cities are subject of the study

The latter approach implied staff of UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme filtering Affiliate Members from their database based on (a) cities part of the study (Q3) and (b) Meetings industry agents. With these filters, UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme team distributed the survey to a number that cannot be disclosed. The information that can be provided is that at the moment of the survey UNWTO counted with 440 affiliate members and many of them fitted both conditions. Moreover, some of the affiliate members are international associations related to Meetings Industries, local convention and visitors bureaus, hotel associations at different geographical levels and some of this individual members or groupings belong to countries that are not member states. This is, this second approach reached the 17 countries that were left out on the first approach.

The email message body for the NTO member states was used and slightly modified for (1) those affiliate members that are groupings and embody different members that could be of interest to the study, then (2) individual members not being CVBs, finally (3) affiliate members being CVBs. As it happened with the Basque Country pilot, the

local convention bureau is not only presented with the study and ask to participate but also asked to distribute it to stakeholders within its city.

The researcher prepared the main message body, and then UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme team change it according to their organizations logic and blind copied the researcher in the first email sent out (included in Annex II), but not in the full distribution, as it is easily understood aiming at protecting the confidentiality of their members' contact details.

Having the opportunity of the UNWTO distributing the study implied reaching a broader audience from a worldwide renowned and respected United Nations agency. It also meant that the researcher could not have full control of the distribution process technically speaking. It must be stressed that the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme team was supremely collaborative, despite the time investment and work load it meant for them.

Data screening

The data collection period run from February 13th to August 10th 2014, this includes the pilot and the international survey. Qualtrics provides the data already on SPSS readable file, so there was no need for data entry by the researcher.

Prior to the data analysis for constructing cooperation value per destination and hypothesis testing, a series of data check were carried out mainly on missing values, and fit between the value distribution of variables and the assumption of multivariate analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

By the end of the data collection, 3187 valid email invitations were sent, 165

surveys were completed and 419 partially completed. The response rate calculated in this study adopts the concept of “maximum response rate” defined by the American Association for Public Opinion Research, which is: $\text{response rate} = (\text{complete response} + \text{partial response}) / \text{total number of the eligible sample}$. Therefore, the response rate for this survey study was 18.32%. This is in line with other studies in tourism, such as Spanos, Prastacos, and Poulymenakou (2002) (18.2%) and Huang (2006) (20.39%).

Concerning missing values, three questions were detected containing missing values: Q53, Q55 and Q60. Q53 is a conditional question, if the respondent on Q4 responded that he/she represents a CVB, Q53 does not appear for them, as it asks whether they are members of the CVB. All the missing values found for this question, 20 in total, had selected value 3 (CVB) in Q4. Therefore, they were no actual missing values. So the researcher proceeded to change these to number 3, which is presented as CVB as a value response.

Q55 gathered three respondents with missing values. It is a question on number of employees, as it is not critical for the cooperation value generation those three cases are not removed from the database.

Q60 it is not a compulsory question, so the missing values ($n=14$, 8.48%) are transformed to 7 = DK (don't know).

Therefore, none of the variables items had missing values exceeding 10%, which is usually deemed acceptable (Byrne, 2001).

3.1.1. Analytical approach to measure Cooperation

The aim of the study is to measure cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders, and obtaining a score on cooperation for the destination based on the responses of meetings industry stakeholders to a survey. The construct cooperation was broken down into relational and structural embeddedness, as the table below reminds, including its measures and level of measurement.

Table 6 <i>Initial Construct Cooperation, measures and level of measurement</i>				
Concept	Operational Definition	Measure	Level of Measurement	
Relational embeddedness	Frequency of contact face to face over the past three years	Questions 15_1, 19_1, 23_1, 27_1, 31_1, 35_1, 39_1, and 43_1	Interval – Likert scale (1-7)	
	Frequency of contact non face-to-face over the past three years	Questions 15_2, 19_2, 23_2, 27_2, 31_2, 35_2, 39_2, and 43_2	Interval – Likert scale (1-7)	
	Longevity of the contact	Questions 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, 36, 40 and 44	Interval – Likert scale (1-4)	
	Motivation	Questions 14, 18, 22, 26, 30, 34, 38, and 42	Categorical	
Structural embeddedness	Selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization cooperates	Question 13	Categorical	
	Selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization has relations	Question 9	Categorical	
	Specific name of organizations with which the given organization cooperates the most	Question 10	Open-ended, it is not a variable.	

Table 6 Initial Construct Cooperation, measures and level of measurement

An element that had to be removed was question 10. It is not a variable. Its purpose was filled as a method to reach further agents per destinations to whom distribute the survey and that are considered relevant by its peers. However it cannot be quantified in order to build the cooperation score for the city.

Therefore the operationalized measurement of the construct cooperation follows the table below:

Table 7 <i>Measurable construct cooperation and its measures</i>			
Concept	Operational Definition	Measure	Level of Measurement
Relational embeddedness	Frequency of contact face to face over the past three years	Questions 15_1, 19_1, 23_1, 27_1, 31_1, 35_1, 39_1, and 43_1	Interval – Likert scale (1-7)
	Frequency of contact non face-to-face over the past three years	Questions 15_2, 19_2, 23_2, 27_2, 31_2, 35_2, 39_2, and 43_2	Interval – Likert scale (1-7)
	Longevity of the contact	Questions 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, 36, 40 and 44	Interval – Likert scale (1-4)
	Motivation	Questions 14, 18, 22, 26, 30, 34, 38, and 42	Categorical
Structural embeddedness	Selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization cooperates	Question 13	Categorical
	Selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization has relations	Question 9	Categorical

Table 7 Measurable construct cooperation and its measures

Building relational embeddedness

Then the next step implied constructing the variable relational embeddedness, made by frequency, longevity and motivation.

Frequency and longevity are intervals on seven and four point scales respectively, where 7 or 4 indicate that respondents are in contact with the different types of industries with which they cooperate more often, and that they have been cooperating for a longer period.

[FREQUENCY] is formed by the questions 15_1, 19_1, 23_1, 27_1, 31_1, 35_1, 39_1, 43_1, 15_2, 19_2, 23_2, 27_2, 31_2, 35_2, 39_2, and 43_2 (_1 meaning face to face contact and _2 non-face to face contact).

Given that the aim is for [FREQUENCY] to gather higher values representing higher frequency of contact and lower values for lower contact, being this via email, phone, etc. or face-to-face, the operation executed was a sum, which allows replicability:

$$\text{FREQUENCY} = \text{SUM}(\text{Q15_1}, \text{Q15_2}, \text{Q19_1}, \text{Q19_2}, \text{Q23_1}, \text{Q23_2}, \text{Q27_1}, \text{Q27_2}, \text{Q31_1}, \text{Q31_2}, \text{Q35_1}, \text{Q35_2}, \text{Q39_1}, \text{Q39_2}, \text{Q43_1}, \text{Q43_2}).$$

Regarding [LONGEVITY] the operation has been also sum, following the same logic:

$$\text{LONGEVITY} = \text{SUM}(\text{Q16}, \text{Q20}, \text{Q24}, \text{Q28}, \text{Q32}, \text{Q36}, \text{Q40}, \text{Q44}).$$

Concerning [MOTIVATION], the categorical questions 14, 18, 22, 26, 30, 34 and 42 were recoded into variables F14, F18, F22, F26, F30, F34, F38 and F42 as follows:

Value 1(least) for responses 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17

Value 2 for responses 3, 7, 8, 9, 10

Value 3 for responses 1, 2, 4, 6

Value 4 (most) for responses 5, 11, 16

The following table explains the recoding. Motivations that implied a higher level of commitment, higher investment in time and / or resources was valued higher.

Table 8 <i>Recoding variable [MOTIVATION]</i>	
Values	Reponses
Value 1 (least)	Exchange of information and experiences (12) Analysing synergies and common problems (13) Seeking advice or support with issues/problems (14) Seeking funding (15)
Value 2	Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad (3) Destination Promotion actions (7) Online marketing strategies (8) PR actions abroad – to gain international contacts (9) PR actions at the national level – to gain national contacts (10)
Value 3	Proposal preparation when Bidding (1) Present and Defend the candidacy jointly (2) Lobbying in front of Professional associations (4) Providing technical visits of the destination to potential clients (6)
Value 4 (most)	Event production and execution (5) Training actions (11) Obtaining Certifications (quality, environmental, ...etc) (16)

Table 8 Recoding variable [MOTIVATION]

Then, following the same logic as for frequency and longevity, the variable [MOTIVATION] was created via sum:

MOTIVATION=SUM(F14,F18,F22,F26,F30,F34,F38,F42) (Cronbach Alpha = .901 validating reliability of the measure).

The variables [FREQUENCY] and [MOTIVATION] are not normally distributed ($\rho = .039$; $\rho = .000$ respectively) and [LONGEVITY] is ($\rho = .080$).

Building structural embeddedness

Originally, structural embeddedness included three questions: one categorical referring to respondents selecting types of industries with whom they have relations (Q9), another open ended where respondents mention three organizations with which they cooperate the most (Q10), and one categorical selecting types of industries with whom they cooperate (Q13). The open ended one was removed, as abovementioned.

The question on relations was a categorical measure not normally distributed ($p = .004$), recoded into [RELATIONS] via sum:

(RELATIONS=SUM(Q9_1,Q9_2,Q9_3,Q9_4,Q9_5,Q9_6,Q9_7,Q9_8).) and the categorical measure on cooperation was recoded into [COOPwithwhom] via sum as well:

(COOPwithwhom=SUM(Q13_1,Q13_2,Q13_3,Q13_4,Q13_5,Q13_6,Q13_7,Q13_8).). The reason for a sum, is that higher values would indicate the respondents have relations and cooperate with more types of agents. [Coopwithwhom] is not normally distributed either ($p = .001$).

The variable [RELATIONS] was removed as one of the constructs building structural embeddedness due to three elements: (1) relations might be too vague a concept, cooperation is the core of the survey; (2) a non-parametric correlation test was run comparing question 9 (relations) and 13 (with whom cooperate, which has no normal distribution either) and there was a positive correlation between the two variables, $r = .647$, $p = .000$. Ideally it should have been over .75; (3) regarding both variables plot, they simply have a direct relation.

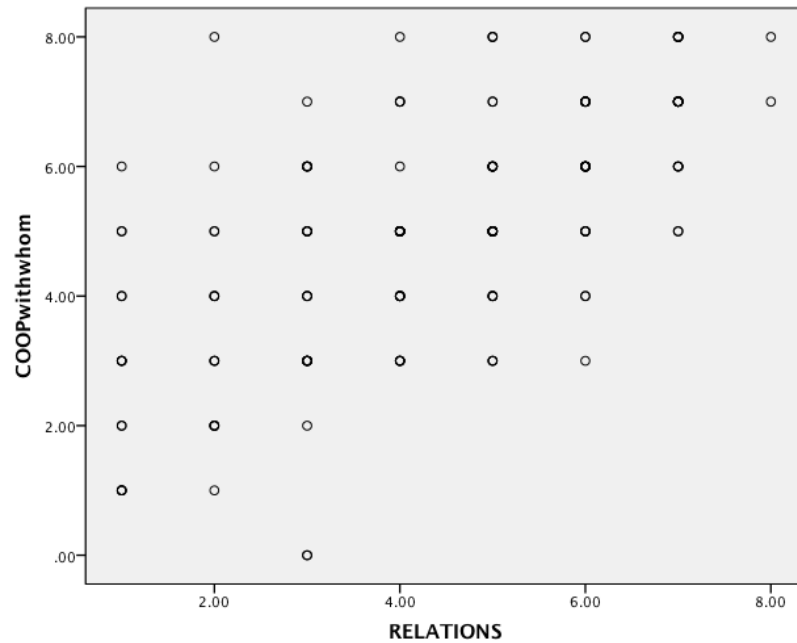


Figure 3 Correlation Plot [Coopwithwhom] and [Relations]

In any case, question nine after the pilot process is not removed, in order to retest it once a larger sample was collected. However, even in that case the correlation resulted on $r = .65$, $p = < .001$. In conclusion, this question should have been significantly rephrased, or “having relations” should have been clearly explained as opposed to “cooperating”.

After removing question 9 and 10, only question 13 remains, expressed by [COOPwithwhom] as variable, when building structural embeddedness.

Building positional embeddedness

Positional embeddedness is treated separately, network analysis is performed using Gephi, and this will be presented in Chapter 3, section 3.1.2 and the corresponding findings on Chapter 4, section 4. 5.

Building Cooperation

In sum, in order to empirically construct *cooperation* relational and structural embeddedness are taken into account with the following measures and levels of measurement.

Table 9 <i>Final Construct Cooperation</i>					
Concept		Operational Definition	Measure	Level of Measurement	
Relational embeddedness	[FREQUENCY]	Frequency of contact face to face over the past three years	Questions 15_1, 19_1, 23_1, 27_1, 31_1, 35_1, 39_1, and 43_1	Interval Likert (1-7)	– scale
		Frequency of contact non face-to-face over the past three years	Questions 15_2, 19_2, 23_2, 27_2, 31_2, 35_2, 39_2, and 43_2	Interval Likert (1-7)	– scale
	[LONGEVITY]	Longevity of the contact	Questions 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, 36, 40 and 44	Interval Likert (1-4)	– scale
	[MOTIVATION]	Motivation	Questions 14, 18, 22, 26, 30, 34, 38, and 42	Categorical	
Structural embeddedness	[COOPwithwhom]	Selection of industry types of organizations within which the given organization cooperates	Question 13	Categorical	

Table 9 Final Construct Cooperation

Given that most of the variables, only with the exception of Longevity, are not normally distributed, one operation that could be considered to obtain the value for *Cooperation* from the four of them (frequency, longevity, motivation and Coopwithwhom) would be MCA (Multiple Correspondence Analysis) as they are categorical variables. However, this would provide a value for each subject that it is based on the full sample and not on the subject itself. It should be taken into account

that the sampling has been at random, there are cities with numerous respondents and cities with just one, in sum the sample it is not representative of the universe.

Therefore, the procedure chosen has been to act in a way that any other researcher could replicate exactly this step to obtain the same results, this way also the value for cooperation will be exclusively created for each subject, based on this subject and not on the group. Moreover, for a potential future analysis on performance, cooperation ideally should be an indicator of cities where more/less cooperation has been recorded than in others. This is, cooperation should count with scores in a rank. For that purpose, the values obtained for each of the four variables that are to construct cooperation have been grouped into eight ranges, as it can be seen below. Another factor motivating this change is the fact that Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to check the reliability of the method. It initially resulted Cronbach's Alpha = .581, suggesting a Cronbach's Alpha of .930 based on Standardized items.

Given that the survey asked the same question eight times per each of the eight types of industries included in the survey, eight seemed an appropriate number of categories, and it implies losing less information than with smaller number of categories.

Table 10 <i>Building ranges to create cooperation</i>		
Motivation R_MOTIVATION	-> 0 to 312	0-38 / 39-77 / 78-116 / 117-155 / 156-194 / 195-233 / 234-272 / 273-312
Frequency R_FREQUENCY	-> 0 to 112	0-13 / 14-27 / 28-41 / 42-55 / 56-69 / 70-83 / 84-97 / 98-112
Longevity R_LONGEVITY	-> 0 to 32	0-3 / 4-7 / 8-11 / 12-15 / 16-19 / 20-23 / 24-27 / 28-32
COOPwithwhom	1 to 8	0-1*,2,3,4,5,6,7,8

Table 10 Building ranges to create cooperation

* There were two respondents obtaining a zero in COOPwithwhom they have been recorded as 1, the least possible score in that variable.

The names of the ranges are:

Ranges	Strongly tied	Tied	Moderately tied	Mildly tied	Mildly untied	Moderately untied	Untied	Strongly untied
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The recoded variables in ranges are not normally distributed; as a result the next three operations are considered and performed:

- 1) Factor analysis is conducted to observe the results, despite acknowledging that the cooperation values that will be obtained from this operation cannot be used for further operations, as variables [R_MOTIVATION], [R_FREQUENCY], [R_LONGEVITY], [R_COOPwithwhom] are not normally distributed.
- 2) MCA (Multiple Correspondence Analysis) is conducted given that this text is meant for categorical variables and for nonparametric data.
- 3) A Sum is performed, so that this methodology can be replicated by any other researcher and given that the sample is not representative of the universe, this operation allows values to be obtained only concerning the subject in question not the rest of the group as opposed to the other two operations listed above. This results in COOPERATION being an indicator on scores from 1 to 32.

1) Factor analysis

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .81, above the recommended value of .6, and Bartlett's test was significant ($\chi^2(6) = 418.253$, $p < .05$). In sum, this verifies that factor analysis can be computed and the results can be interpreted. The variable resulting is saved as [FAC_1] and is normally distributed ($p = .754$).

2) MCA (Multiple Correspondence Analysis)

It appears that with one component .80 of variance can be explained.

Discrimination measures plot indicates that all variables are on the positive side, as it can be seen in the following graph:

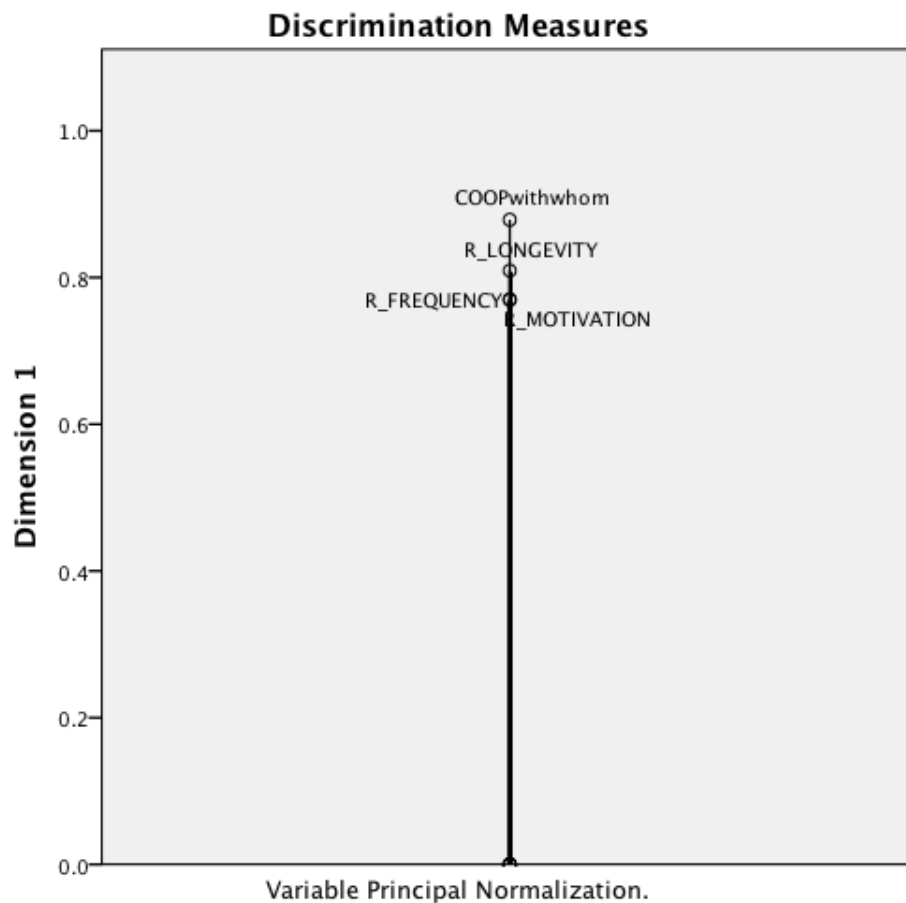


Figure 4 Discrimination Measures

The variable resulting is saved as [Object Scores dimension 1] and is normally distributed ($p = .601$).

3) Sum

The operation performed is:

COOPERATION=SUM(R_MOTIVATION,R_FREQUENCY,R_LONGEVITY,COOPwithwhom).

This variable is normally distributed ($p = .439$).

Once the three different operations have been conducted, and all three resulting variables are normally distributed, a Pearson correlation test was computed to assess the relationship of COOPERATION, FAC_1 and Object Scores dimension 1. There is a positive correlation between COOPERATION and FAC_1 $r = .999$, $n = 165$, $p = .000$; There is a positive correlation between COOPERATION and Objects scores $r = .985$, $n = 165$, $p = .000$; There is a positive correlation between FAC_1 and Object Scores $r = .984$, $n = 165$, $p = .000$). Overall, there is a strong positive correlation among the three variables constructing cooperation.

The variable that could be analysed against performance will be the one named [COOPERATION] obtained via sum. It is obtained via sum so that it can be replicated by other researchers. Cronbach Alpha validates the reliability of this measure .893, and each scale [COOPwithwhom] .828 ($M = 5.03$; $SD = 1.80$), [R_Motivation] .877 ($M = 2.22$; $SD = 1.43$), [R_Frequency] .878 ($M = 2.75$; $SD = 1.39$) and [R_Longevity] .858 ($M = 4.90$; $SD = 1.95$) appear to have sufficient internal consistency.

This variable needs to represent the cities, and currently represents each and every one of the 165 respondents, for this purpose the mean of cooperation is created based

on the city. With this purpose, a one-way ANOVA is computed where the dependent is cooperation and the independent is question three (Q3) that represents the city. However, this test is not significant ($F(34,130) = 1.14, p = .29$) the result is that the city is not affecting the mean values of cooperation, which could have been expected given the different sample groups per city. The MEAN of COOPERATION, formed by the means of cooperation per city is normally distributed ($Z = .750, p = .628$).

3.1.2. Analytical approaches for hypothesis testing and network analysis

This study adapted two main analytical procedures: statistical analysis and network analysis. SPSS software was used in order to test the hypothesis and in order to build the cooperation score per city tourism destination according to individual informants representatives of meetings industries organizations based on such city tourism destinations. As already explained, cooperation was constructed based on structural and relational embeddedness defined measures. Positional embeddedness is addressed via network analysis and Gephi software in a separate chapter.

In order to create cooperation, Factor Analysis, Multiple Correspondence Analysis and a sum of variables have been conducted and compared via Pearson Correlation, as explained in the previous section. Additionally, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed in order to check whether the city is affecting the mean values of cooperation.

With the purpose of testing the hypothesis numerous non-parametric tests are conducted: Mann-Whitney U Test in order to study whether subjects cooperate with more agents depending on subjects being members of the local convention visitor bureau or not, company's age, business based exclusively locally or not, and other type of variable cross-checking; Kruskal-Wallis Test is used to test whether there is a relation between who the subject is (type of agent), with whom they cooperate and the amount of reasons motivating them to cooperate; Contingency tables with Pearson Chi-Square Test in order to determine the significance, if any, of the relation of two

variables (for instance which type of agent the subject is and with whom they cooperate; longevity of the cooperation and amount of reasons motivating to cooperate), looking into whether frequencies across categories of a variable are distributed in a relative manner; and Spearman Correlation is utilized to study the relation of the longevity of cooperation and the level of agreement with cooperation enhancing the performance of the business.

Network analysis

Network analysis is conducted to address the positional embeddedness within the cities being part of the study. The aim is to identify the most central organizations, defined as those cooperating with the largest number of agents and with the strongest cooperation, measured via degree and weighted in-degree. In a number of real-world networks, ties are often associated with weights that differentiate them in terms of their strength, intensity or capacity (Barrat et al., 2004; Opsahl & Panzarsa, 2009; Wasserman & Faust, 1994). However, while a substantial body of research has investigated network topological features (Barabási et al., 2002; Ingram & Roberts, 2000; Kossinets & Watts, 2006; Uzzi & Spiro, 2005; Watts & Strogatz, 1998), relatively little work has been conducted that moves beyond merely topological measures to take explicitly into account the heterogeneity of ties (or edges) connecting nodes (or vertices) (Barrat et al., 2004; Opsahl & Panzarsa, 2009). Granovetter (1973) argued that the strength of social relationships in social networks is a function of their duration, emotional intensity, intimacy, and exchange of services. According to Scott, Cooper and Baggio (2008):

Strength refers to the intensity of a relationship; for example, a relationship in which a large number of resources are exchanged or in which actors meet and exchange

information frequently is stronger than a relationship in which few goods are exchanged or in which information is exchanged infrequently. (p. 148)

In order to fully capture the richness of the data, Opsahl & Panzarsa (2009) argue “it is therefore crucial that the measures used to study a network incorporate the weights of the ties” (p.155). Networks are usually represented by a diagram formed by dots (nodes or vertices), which in this case represent stakeholders, and a number of lines (arcs or edges) here representing cooperation, which connect certain dots (Baggio, 2006; Borgatti & Halgin, 2011). These lines can be undirected, the direction of the line from one dot to the other is not measured or considered not relevant, or directed (Scott, Baggio and Cooper, 2008). In the present study the direction is relevant, thus, the lines are named arcs (edges are rather used for undirected), and go from a source node to a target node.

Destinations object of the study

Given that not all city destinations part of the survey collected count with the same amount of respondents, this analysis is conducted exclusively for those cities for which there are ten or more respondents. This implies: Barcelona (n= 24; m = 88); Bilbao (n=24; m = 88); Bogotá (n=20; m = 59); Medellín (n=22; m = 68); San Sebastián (n=25; m = 87); Vitoria (n=16; m = 45).

Measures

The literature on complex networks commonly uses a set of measures to describe a network's structure, given that the present networks are directed and weighted the measures provided will be:

Order of the network = number of nodes

Size of the network = number of links

Nodal Degree = number of links a single node has

Average weighted degree = Average of sum of weights of the edges of nodes

In-degree: the number of head endpoints adjacent to a node

Out-degree: the number of tail endpoints adjacent to a node

Edges and Weight

Arcs among nodes are drawn if as part of question 13 the respondent has affirmed cooperating with the given types of agents. The respondent's type of agent is represented as follows TYPEOFAGENT + CITY + #, PCOBCN1 for instance. The agents code name is as follows: for PCOs or specialized meeting organizers is PCO, VENUE for venue managers or owners, CVB for Convention and Visitors Bureaux, DMC for Destination Management Company, AUX for Auxiliary Service Providers, AMC for Association Management Company, ACC for accommodation providers and OTH for others. The cities' code name is: BCN for Barcelona, BIO for Bilbao, BOG for Bogotá, MED for Medellin, SS for San Sebastian and VITO for Vitoria. Then the number appears if there is more than one agent of that type and city that has responded, and represents the random order in which respondents completed the survey.

The type of agent with whom the respondents affirm cooperating brings a G before (e.g. GDMCBIO), in the sense of this being a Group, not a single agent, with the exception of CVB that as there is only one per destination, there is no G, so there are destinations with reciprocal arcs.

Then the arcs are weighted based on the measures building cooperation: motivation, frequency and longevity. The methodology followed has been the same as the followed to create the cooperation scores, with the difference that they are not aggregated all for obtaining a score per respondent, rather a figure is gathered per each dyad, and no range is created. The cooperation range here for weighted ties goes from one to 57.

Analysis

Gephi is used to conduct this analysis and present the graphs. In order to identify those agents most central the ranking based on weighted in-degree is used, and the nodal degree ranking. In-degree in the present study is especially relevant because the manner in which the survey is conducted respondents identify with which type of agent (G) they cooperate. Hence the weighted in-degree expresses here the type of agent with which most respondents cooperate, with highest cooperation value as weight. The weighted out-degree here would only help identifying those respondents that cooperate with more/less types of agents and the weight of those cooperation arcs. Both graphs, weighted in-degree and weighted out-degree, are presented and the ranking on nodal degree, weighted in-degree and weighted out-degree are listed as well.

In order to interpret the graph, it is important to note that node color represents nodal degree and the node's size represents weighted in-degree or weighted out-degree depending on the graph. It could occur that intense colored nodes are not the largest, this would imply the node holds one of the largest number of links, but other nodes hold higher arc weight.

4. Findings

4.1. Description of the sample

There were 165 completed surveys. Informants replied for 35 different cities belonging in total to 15 countries. The following table gathers the frequencies per cities. Most of the respondents are concentrated in Barcelona (Spain) (n=17, 10.30%); Bilbao (Spain) (n=17, 10.30%); Bogotá (Colombia) (n=14, 8.48%); Medellín (Colombia) (n=14, 8.48%); San Sebastián (Spain) (n=17, 10.30%); and Vitoria (Spain) (n=10, 6.06%).

Table 11			
<i>City Destinations participating in the study</i>			
City Destinations	Frequency	City Destinations	Frequency
Antalya	1	Madrid	8
Barcelona	17	Malaga	8
Berlin	1	Medellin	14
Bilbao	17	Guanajuato	1
Bogota	14	Nairobi	2
Buenos Aires	1	Nicosia	1
Cadiz	2	Palma de Mallorca	2
Cape Town	3	Salamanca, SA	1
Cartagena	8	Salvador (Bahia)	1
Cordoba	1	San Sebastian	17
Durban	3	Santander	2
Espoo	2	Santiago de Compostela	2
Florianopolis,Sc	1	Sao Paulo	1
Halifax, NS	1	Sevilla	7
Helsinki	3	Sydney (NSW)	1
Istanbul	5	Vienna	1
Jyvaskyla	1	Vitoria	10
Lisbon	5	Total	165

Table 11 City Destinations participating in the study

The city of Guanajuato in Mexico, was not part of the list of cities subject to be part of the study. However, a respondent chose Mexico City, and as part of Q5 (type of organization) explained that they were responding for Guanajuato City and not Mexico City. This city is considered in this part of the study.

The city of Vitoria (Basque Country, Spain) was included as part of the pilot study.

Country wise, there is a clear response concentration in Spain (n= 94, 56.97%) and Colombia (n=36, 21.81%).

Table 12 <i>Countries with at least one city in the sample</i>			
Country	Frequency	Country	Frequency
Argentina	1	Germany	1
Australia	1	Kenya	2
Austria	1	Mexico	1
Brazil	3	Portugal	5
Canada	1	South Africa	6
Colombia	36	Spain	94
Cyprus	1	Turkey	6
Finland	6		

Table 12 Countries with at least one city in the sample

Concerning the type of organizations, as it could be expected, given that most agents within a tourism destination tend to be accommodation providers they represent 24.8% of the sample (n=41), then followed by PCOs (n=22, 13.3%) and CVBs (n=20, 12.1%).

Table 13 <i>Type of organizations as part of the sample</i>		
Type of Organization	Frequency	Percent
PCOs or Specialized meetings organizers	22	13.3
Venue owners or managers	14	8.5
Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	20	12.1
DMCs or incoming agencies	13	7.9
Auxiliary service providers	16	9.7
Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	41	24.8
Others, please specify	39	23.6
Total	165	100.0

Table 13 Type of organizations as part of the sample

Within the 39 respondents that selected “others” looking into the text responses given, the first conclusion perhaps is that the concept “auxiliary providers” might not have been understood by some. This represents a lesson learnt, as perhaps it should have been explained which type of companies where therein embodied. Moreover, the expression Venue owners or managers, as opposed to simply venues, provoked that 5 venues used the “others” option instead of the venue option. Again, highlighting a wording issue.

Then, one respondent that selected the “others” option, used it for other purposes, to explain the city they were responding for, another respondent left it blank, and another wrote something uncomprehensible. These three are considered missing values, for that question only.

Thus, the type of organizations table once the 39 “others” responses have been re-grouped as follows:

Table 14 <i>Type of organizations once “others” option is analyzed</i>		
Type of Organization	Frequency	Percent
PCOs or Specialized meetings organizers	26	15.76
Venue owners or managers	19	11.52
Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	22	13.33
DMCs or incoming agencies	13	7.88
Auxiliary service providers	26	15.76
Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	41	24.85
Others, please specify	15	9.09
Missing values	3	1.82
Total	165	100.0

Table 14 Type of organizations once “others” option is analyzed

Four respondents were specialized meeting organizers, five represent venues, two are similar agents to Convention and Visitor Bureaus, 10 are auxiliary providers such as catering companies, transport providers, stand building companies etc., and another 15 companies remained as others given that are tourism attractions, tour-operators, guides, consultancy companies, representatives of academia...etc.

In sum, accommodation providers remain the most represented (n=41, 24.85%), followed by PCOs and Auxiliary Providers (n=26, 15.76% each).

Concerning whether companies, participating in the study, are locally based or rather count with an office in the destination but the business is also present beyond the destination, most companies responding are based within the destination (n=110,

66.7%). 36 respondents are affiliated to a national business with office(s) in the given destination (21.8%), 11 are international businesses (6.7%) and 8 multinational businesses with office(s) in the given destination (4.8%).

Table 15

Presence of local businesses representatives within the sample

	Frequency	Percent
Locally based within the destination (neighbouring municipalities are included)	110	66.7
A national business with office(s) in the given destination	36	21.8
An international business with office(s) in the given destination	11	6.7
A multinational business with office(s) in the given destination	8	4.8
Total	165	100.0

Table 15 Presence of local businesses representatives within the sample

Then, for the remaining 55 companies not exclusively based locally, the next question addressed the percentage of the total business turnover coming from the selected city tourism destination.

Table 16

Percentage of total turnover the office in the destination represents

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 10%	12	21.8
10 – 30%	14	25.5
30 – 50%	12	21.8
Over 50%	17	30.9
Total	55	100.0

Table 16 Percentage of total turnover the office in the destination represents

Other control variables inserted regarded the experience of the respondent, the organization in the meetings industries, and such in the given destination. The next table gathers the responses, where more than one could be selected. It may appear relevant to highlight that 78 respondents selected that the company has had the events business services as part of its portfolio since it started, not necessarily being the core

of the business and at the same time 48 respondents assert that event business has always been the core activity of the company, and 25 respondents whose company has recently expanded to the events businesses.

Table 17 <i>Multiple choice statements on personal and organizational background</i>	
	Frequency
The company is young but I have been in the events business for a long time	19
The company has been running for a while but it has recently expanded to the events business	25
The company has been running for a while, but it has recently opened up an office in this destination	5
The company since it started has had the events business services as part of its portfolio of services, not necessarily being the core of the business	78
The event business has always been the core activity of the company	47
Table 17 Multiple-choice statements on personal and organizational background	

As one of the main voids highlighted in the literature is the absence of empirical tests linking cooperation with performance, one question gathered that 111 respondents (67.3%), for the purpose of a better performance of their company, when thinking on meetings taking place on their destination, their relations with locally based agents are considered equally important to their relations with agents based outside of the destination. Relations with locally-based agents were recorded as more important for 46 respondents (27.9%) and less important for 8 (4.8%).

Concerning membership to the local Convention and Visitors Bureau, there are 20 CVB representatives within the sample. Removing those, 81.38% of the respondents are members of their respective local CVB.

Regarding the organization age, the following table presents the longevity of most of the business participating in the sample. 70.91% of organizations are over 10 years old in 2015.

Table 18 <i>Organizations' age</i>		
Year range	Frequency	Percent
2009 - 2013	27	16.36%
2004 - 2008	30	18.18%
1999 - 2003	27	16.36%
1994 - 1998	20	12.12%
1989 - 1993	16	9.70%
1984 - 1988	12	7.27%
1979 - 1983	6	3.64%
prior to 1979	27	16.36%

Table 18 Organizations' age

One of the most important control variables referred to the position of the informant within the organization. As part of the sample 20.6% were presidents or members of the Board of Directors (n=34); 35.2% directors through managers of one or more departments (n=58); 30.9% managers of one or more departments (n=51); and then 7.3% were supervisors over a section of a department (n=10) and 6.1% had no supervisory responsibility (n=10). In sum, 86.67% of respondents held a higher position within the organization they represent as managers across one or more departments or above. This had been described as part of the study design, as one of the relevant requirements when only one informant is considered to represent one company.

Concerning the departments to which the informants belong to within their respective organizations 45.45% of them are Management departments (n=75) and 24.85% belong to Events / Conventions / MICE departments (n=41).

Table 19 <i>Departments of respondents within respective organizations</i>		
Departments	Frequency	Percent
Administration	4	2.42%
Management	75	45.45%
Sales	29	17.58%
Events / Conventions /MICE	41	24.85%
Communication	3	1.82%
Tourism	5	3.03%
Food & Beverage	1	0.61%
Missing value	7	4.24%
Total	165	100.00%

Table 19 Departments of respondents within respective organizations

When looking into the organization size, one compulsory question was number of employees. Many respondents were affiliated with small-sized tourism organizations with less than 10 employees (32.12%). Over eighteen percent (18.79%, n=31) of the organizations had 11-20 employees, and 11.52% (n=19) had 21-30 employees. It is interesting to notice that organizations with 51-100 employees also accounted for a percentage of 9.09% and those with 101 to 150 employees for 10.30%.

Table 20 <i>Number of employees</i>		
Employees	Frequency	Percent
1 - 10	53	32.12
11 - 20	31	18.79
21 - 30	19	11.52
31 - 40	5	3.03
41 - 50	9	5.45
51 - 100	15	9.09
101 - 150	17	10.30
151 - 200	0.0	0.00
201 - 250	4	2.42
251 - 500	3	1.82
>500	6	3.64
Total	165	100.00

Table 20 Number of employees

The other measure on organization size is total turnover, which was not part of a compulsory question. The following table presents how respondents are concentrated in the two ends, small turnovers or one million and more.

Table 21 <i>Total turnover of the organization in 2013</i>		
US\$ total turnover	Frequency	Percent
less than 100,000	26	15.8
100,000 - 499,999	34	20.6
500,000 - 999,999	16	9.7
1 - 2 million	26	15.8
3 - 5 million	24	14.5
over 6 million	25	15.2
DK/NA	14	8.5
Total	165	100.0

Table 21 Total turnover of the organization in 2013

Going back to employees, and asking over full-time employees, 89.7% of the respondents state that more than 50% of the employees earlier reported are full-time employees.

Table 22		
<i>Full – time employees</i>		
Full-time employees	Frequency	Percent
less than 10%	3	1.8
11 - 30%	2	1.2
31 - 50%	12	7.3
more than 50%	148	89.7
Total	165	100.0

Table 22 Full - time employees

Regarding the percentage of employees that work for the meetings industry side of the business, 50.3% of respondents are affiliated to an organization where the event side accounts for less than 30% of the activity of the business, and 30.9% of respondents belong to companies where it represents more than 60% of the business activity.

Table 23		
<i>% of employees working for the event side of the business</i>		
	Frequency	Percent
less than 30%	83	50.3
between 30 and 60%	31	18.8
more than 60%	51	30.9
Total	165	100.0

Table 23 % of employees working for the event side of the business

Synthesis

Most of respondents represent accommodation providers, PCOs and Auxiliary Service Providers, mainly locally based, and most are members of the respective local CVB. Most companies are over 10 years old (in 2015). Concerning size there is more variability: 32% of respondents belong to companies which size ranges from 1 to 10, 19% ranging 11 to 20, 9% 51 to 100 and 10% 101 to 150, and for most responding businesses more than 50% of the reported number of employees work full time. When looked from the turnover perspective the sample appears to be rather divided between the higher end, on the one hand, with 45% of businesses counting with more than 1million€ turnovers (for the locally based portion of the business) and on the other hand on the lower end, 36.4% of respondents are in between less than 100.000€ (15.8%) and 100.000 – 499.999€ (20.6%).

For most businesses meetings have always been part of the company's portfolio, 50.3% of respondents are affiliated to a company where meetings represent less than 30% of the business activity, and for other segment of respondents meetings is the core activity, 30% of respondents are affiliated to a company where meetings represent more than 60% of the business activity.

Most respondents agree that for performance improvement relations with agents based within the destination or based elsewhere are equally important.

Regarding the profile of the respondent over 86% hold managerial positions across one or more departments and 45% belong to Management departments and 25% to MICE departments.

4.2. Descriptive Cooperation Findings from survey data

The present section explains the descriptive statistics for the sample gathered via the survey on cooperation.

Regarding holding relations, the following table gathers the frequencies for subjects holding relations [Q9_n (n = 1 to 8)] with agents based on the destination. CVBs, PCOs and Auxiliary service providers stand out.

Table 24 <i>Types of agents based on the destination with whom respondents hold relations</i>	
	Frequency
PCOs	118
Venues	71
CVBs	134
DMCs	100
Auxiliary service providers	117
Association Management Companies	56
Accommodation providers	109
Others	16

Table 24 Types of agents based on the destination with whom respondents hold relations

Now, the table below presents the frequencies of subjects holding relations with agents based outside of the destination, where PCOs stand out, followed by DMCs and CVBs.

Table 25 <i>Types of agents not based on the destination with whom respondents hold relations</i>	
	Frequency
PCOs	97
CVBs	84
DMCs	88
Auxiliary service providers	70
Association Management Companies	45
Professional Associations (for instance Medical Associations..)	78
International agents such as ICCA, MPI,..	61
Others	17

Table 25 Types of agents not based on the destination with whom respondents hold relations

Concerning cooperation, it could be expected that there are some agents with whom there is more cooperation than others; particularly it could be expected CVB, PCOs

and Venues: CVB as they are, or are expected to be, a central player within the destination, added to the fact that tend to work to promote the destination as a meeting host and at times may be able to bring business to the destination; PCOs as they agglomerate numerous services needed to execute a meeting, added to the fact that tend to work to promote themselves jointly with the destination as a meeting host and at times may be able to bring business to the destination; Venues are the condition sine qua non to host a meeting, so it would appear relevant to cooperate with these agents.

144 out of 165 respondents affirm cooperating with their locally based Convention and Visitors Bureau or similar agent, followed by Accommodation Providers, PCOs and Auxiliary providers.

Table 26 <i>Types of agents with whom respondents cooperate</i>	
	Frequency
CVBs	144
Accommodation providers	128
PCOs	125
Auxiliary service providers	123
DMCs	119
Venues	97
Association Management Companies	60
Others	32

Table 26 Types of agents with whom respondents cooperate

Table 26 agrees with the premise of CVBs, and PCOs. However, concerning venues, it clearly refutes it, and Accommodation Providers and Auxiliary Providers appear more relevant actors. It should be taken into account that this is drawn from a small sample, which does not count with a balance amount of respondents per each type of agent and that the point of entry to destinations were actually CVBs.

By selecting cases that for question Q4 had selected CVB or similar agent, and then regarding the frequencies of the created variable [COOPwithwhom] the following table is drawn. This table explains that most of the 22 CVBs responding cooperate with 6 types of agents or more. Which might point to the relevance of CVBs within the different given destinations.

Table 27 <i>With how many type of agents CVB cooperate</i>	
	Frequency
8	4
7	8
6	6
5	1
4	0
3	1
2	0
1	0
Total	20

Table 27 With how many type of agents CVB cooperate

It would appear that most subjects hold relations with CVBs, followed by PCOs, Auxiliary service providers and Accommodation Providers.

When dyads of agents are studied, in the sense of dyads of agents that cooperate most with, the survey conducted highlights some more frequent dyads that can be observed in the following figure 5.

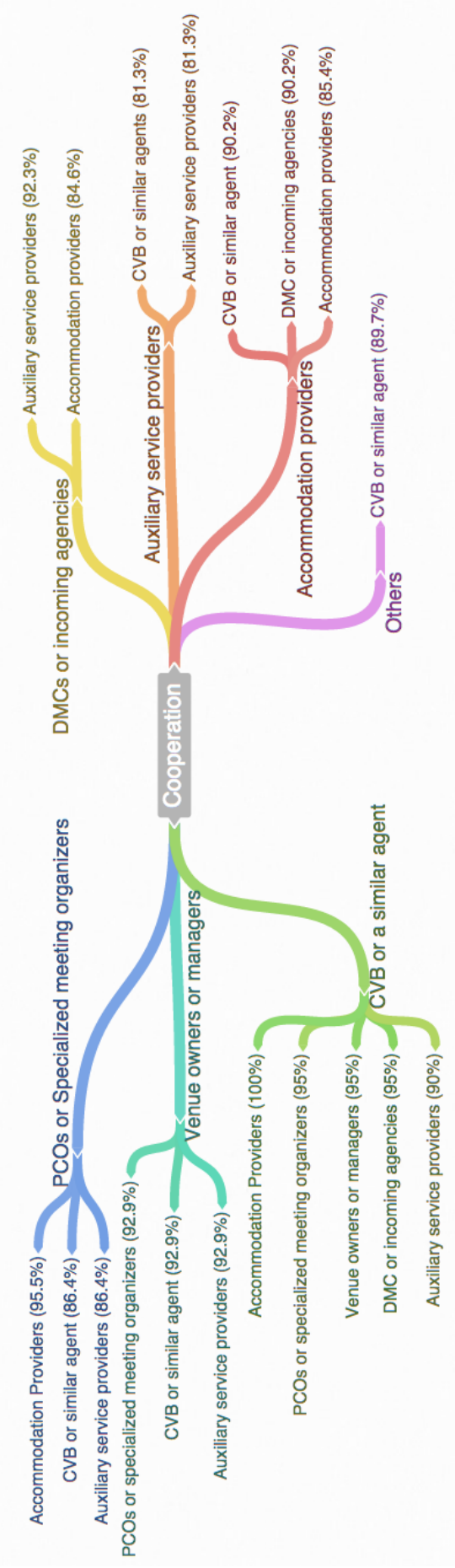


Figure 5 Cooperation main Dyads

It would appear that Venues cooperate most with those agents that earlier appear as the central ones: CVB, PCOs and Auxiliary Providers; and Venues only appear mentioned in the top list for CVBs, among other five types of agents; then DMCs appear relevant for Accommodation Providers and CVBs; and Auxiliary providers are specially relevant for Venues, DMCs, CVBs and PCOs.

Please see the following table for full frequency and percent per dyads.

Table 28 Frequency and Percent of type of agents respondents cooperating with types of agents																
Respondents	Cooperating with															
	PCOs		Venue		CVB		DMC		AUX		AMC		ACC		Others	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers Venue owners or managers Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	13	59.1	15	68.2	19	86.4	11	50	19	86.4	5	22.7	21	95.5	3	13.6
	13	92.9	5	35.7	13	92.9	11	78.6	13	92.9	7	50	8	57.1	1	7.1
	19	95	19	95	17	85	19	95	18	90	11	55	20	100	9	45
DMCs or incoming agencies Auxiliary service providers	9	69.2	10	76.9	10	76.9	6	46.2	12	92.3	5	38.5	11	84.6	2	15.4
	11	68.8	8	50	13	81.3	9	56.3	13	81.3	3	18.8	9	56.3	4	25
Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	35	85.4	22	53.7	37	90.2	37	90.2	24	58.5	14	34.1	28	68.3	5	12.2
Others, please specify	25	64.1	18	46.2	35	89.7	26	66.7	24	61.5	15	38.5	31	79.5	8	20.5

Table 28 Frequency and percent of type of agents' respondents cooperating with types of agents

Now that most frequent dyads of cooperation have been presented, the next elements to be described are the motivations for such cooperation, the frequency of contact and the longevity of the cooperation.

It could be expected that agents whose weight of the meetings side of the business is rather central cooperate with more agents locally based, and the motivations for such cooperation are larger.

The variable used to determine the weight of the meetings side of the business within a company is Q57 when the response is 3, which implies that more than 60% of employees work for the events side of the business. This variable is checked against the created variable [COOPwithwhom]. The following table presents the number of types of agents with whom respondents cooperate (1 to 8) crossed with percentage of employees working for the event side of the business within the respondent's organization.

Table 29			
<i>Cooperation and relevance of the event side of the business</i>			
	With how many	Frequency	Percent
less than 30%	1	6	7.2
	2	5	6
	3	12	14.5
	4	13	15.7
	5	11	13.3
	6	19	22.9
	7	16	19.3
	8	1	1.2
total		83	100
between 30 and 60%	1	1	3.2
	2	1	3.2
	3	5	16.1
	4	4	12.9
	5	7	22.6
	6	8	25.8
	7	1	3.2
	8	4	12.9
total		31	100
more than 60%	1	0	0
	2	1	2
	3	6	11.8
	4	3	5.9
	5	20	39.2
	6	6	11.8
	7	7	13.7
	8	8	15.7
total		51	100

Table 29 Cooperation and relevance of the event side of the business

Those subjects, whose company counts with more than 60% of employees dedicated to the events side of the business, embody the highest amount of respondents cooperating with all eight types of agents, and more than 80% of respondents cooperate with at least five types of agents, which is the highest if compared with organizations with less than 30% focus on events business where only 56.7% of respondents cooperate with at least five agents or more, or 64.5% in the case of organizations with 30 to 60% employees working on the events side of the business.

Then, when looking into motivation, the variable [R_Motivation] is used and it gathers the sum of motivations in a range from 1 to 8, being 8 the largest possible amount of motivations in all-8 possible dyads per subject responding.

Table 30 <i>Motivations and relevance of events business</i>			
		Frequency	Percent
less than 30%	1	32	38.6
	2	27	32.5
	3	15	18.1
	4	4	4.8
	5	2	2.4
	6	1	1.2
	7	2	2.4
	8	0	0
	Total	83	100
between 30 and 60%	1	13	41.9
	2	8	25.8
	3	3	9.7
	4	1	3.2
	5	3	9.7
	6	0	0
	7	2	6.5
	8	1	3.2
	Total	31	100
more than 60%	1	14	27.5
	2	23	45.1
	3	8	15.7
	4	4	7.8
	5	1	2
	6	1	2
	7	0	0
	8	0	0
	Total	51	100

Table 30 Motivations and relevance of events business

Here, there does not seem to be a relation, as the highest frequencies for organizations where more than 60% of employees work for the events side of the business are located in the lower end of motivations, range 1 and 2, the same way that other organizations where the events business plays a smaller role.

The following table studies the relation between who the respondent is (Q4), with whom they cooperate (ranging from F14 to F42) and the mean value of [R_Motivation] that gathers the sum of motivations in a range from 1 to 8 (8 being the largest possible amount of motivations) per all 8 possible dyads per subject responding.

Table 31

Dyads of type of agents with mean of reasons motivating their cooperation

	Q4	N	Mean
F14 - PCO	PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	13	12.5385
	Venue owners or managers	13	13.8462
	Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	19	19.7895
	DMCs or incoming agencies	9	17.6667
	Auxiliary service providers	11	12.0909
	Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	35	16.9714
	Others, please specify	25	15.2
	Total	125	15.88
F18 - Venue	PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	15	13.4
	Venue owners or managers	5	10.6
	Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	19	20.8947
	DMCs or incoming agencies	10	11.9
	Auxiliary service providers	8	10.25
	Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	22	14.0455
	Others, please specify	18	13.4444
	Total	97	14.4639
F22 - CVB	PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	19	18.5789
	Venue owners or managers	13	20.7692
	Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	17	19.4706
	DMCs or incoming agencies	10	18.9
	Auxiliary service providers	13	10
	Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	37	17.2162
	Others, please specify	35	13.0857
	Total	144	16.4444
F26 - DMC	PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	11	9.2727
	Venue owners or managers	11	9
	Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	19	15.6842
	DMCs or incoming agencies	6	9.3333
	Auxiliary service providers	9	9.3333
	Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	37	13.0811
	Others, please specify	26	11.8846
	Total	119	12.0336
F30 - Aux	PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	19	7.2632
	Venue owners or managers	13	9.0769
	Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	18	14.0556
	DMCs or incoming agencies	12	10.0833
	Auxiliary service providers	13	9.5385
	Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	24	9.25
	Others, please specify	24	9.8333
	Total	123	9.8537
F34 - AMC	PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	5	8.8
	Venue owners or managers	7	8.2857
	Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	11	15

	DMCs or incoming agencies	5	11
	Auxiliary service providers	3	18.3333
	Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	14	11.5714
	Others, please specify	15	11
	Total	60	11.7333
F38 - Acc	PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	21	8.7143
	Venue owners or managers	8	5.5
	Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	20	19.2
	DMCs or incoming agencies	11	11.4545
	Auxiliary service providers	9	8.5556
	Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	28	11.2143
	Others, please specify	31	8.1613
	Total	128	10.7891
F42- Oth	PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	3	5
	Venue owners or managers	1	15
	Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	9	13.8889
	DMCs or incoming agencies	2	10
	Auxiliary service providers	4	15.25
	Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	5	16.4
	Others, please specify	8	8.25
	Total	32	12

Table 31 Dyads of agents with mean of reasons motivating their cooperation

The present table already suggests that the CVB holds a larger amount of reasons to be motivated to cooperate with five of the eight types of agents. Then venues, auxiliary providers and accommodation providers are the ones with more reasons motivating them to cooperate per one dyad each: Venues with CVB, Auxiliary providers with Association Management Companies and Accommodation Providers with Other agents. The following graph appears to show that Venue owners and managers, when cooperating with CVB and CVB cooperating with Venue owners, reach the highest number of reasons motivating them to cooperate with each other.

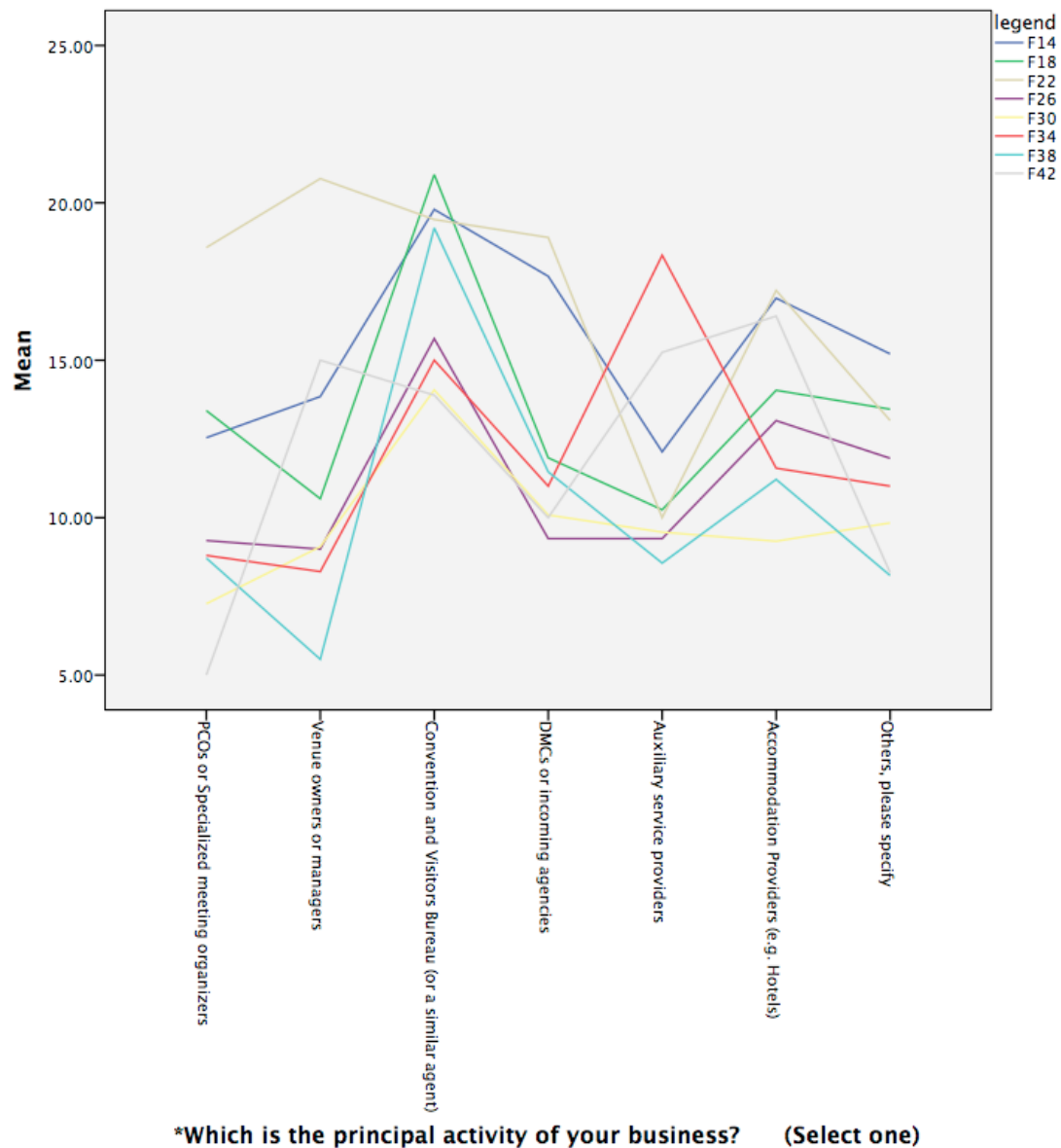


Figure 6 Motivation means per type of subject and with whom they cooperate

Regarding the relation between where is the company based, the amount of turnover of the company and the amount of cooperation and reasons motivating such cooperation, it would seem reasonable to expect that those national, international, multinational entities with fewer turnovers obtained in the destination cooperate less locally, and the motivations are less engaging.

[Q6_dichotomy] divides the sample among those respondents whose business is exclusively locally based (value 1) against those whose business counts with office(s) in the destination but the business is national, international or multinational (value 2); Q60 is the question collecting the amount of total turnover revenue that the business achieved in 2013 in US \$; and finally the mean of [Coopwithwhom] gathers the mean of the number of type of agents with whom an organization cooperates with. The following table and graph presents how only for turnover being 500,000 - 999,999; 3 to 5 million and over 6 million the premise seems to be sustained, meaning that locally based businesses cooperate with more type of agents within those cases of turnovers. However for the other three segments of turnovers the alternative to the given premise applies.

Table 32 <i>Exclusively, vs. not, Locally based organizations, total turnover of the business within the destination and mean of number of types of agents with whom cooperate</i>		
Q6_dichotomy	Total turnover of the business based in the destination in 2013 in US\$	Coopwithwhom Mean
1	less than 100,000	4.6111
	100,000 - 499,999	4.4231
	500,000 - 999,999	4.7
	1 - 2 million	5
	3 - 5 million	5.7333
	over 6 million	6.3846
	DK/NA	5.5
	Total	5.0909
2	less than 100,000	5
	100,000 - 499,999	4.625
	500,000 - 999,999	3.3333
	1 - 2 million	5.5
	3 - 5 million	5
	over 6 million	5.3333
	DK/NA	4.5
	Total	4.9091

Table 32 Exclusively vs. not, Locally based organizations, total turnover of the business within the destination and mean number of types of agents with whom cooperate

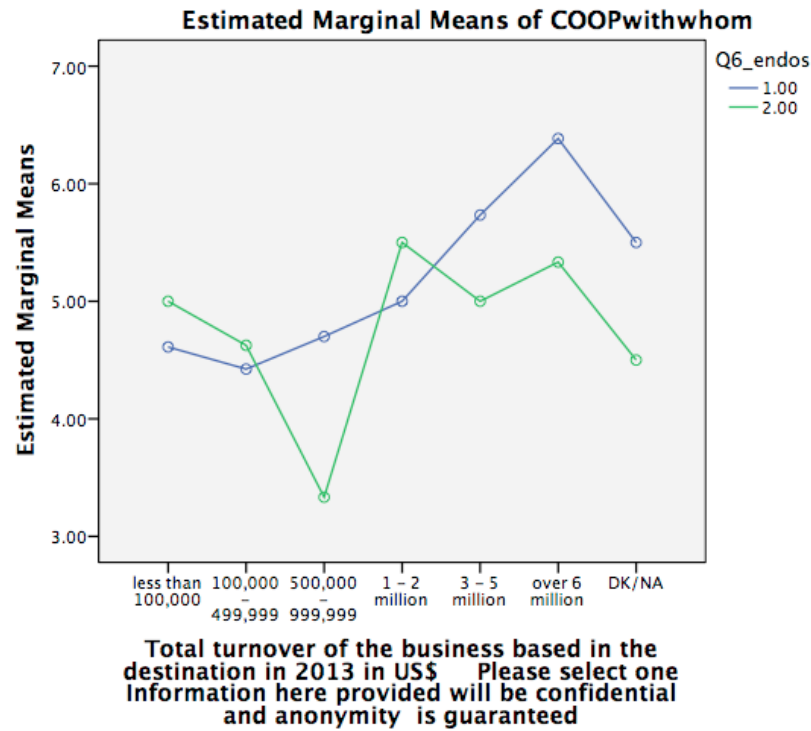


Figure 7 Estimated marginal means Coopwithwhom

A test of between-subjects effects results on a low R^2 ($R^2 = .132$). Therefore there is barely a connection among the three variables and only Q60 (turnover ranges) appears significant ($p = .032$). Then looking into motivation the mean of [Coopwithwhom] is removed and the mean of [R_Motivation] is used. [R_Motivation] contains eight ranges of number of reasons motivating cooperation among agents, the higher the number the more reasons a subject is motivated to cooperate with other.

Table 33 <i>Exclusively, vs. not, Locally based organizations, total turnover of the business within the destination and mean of number of reasons motivating cooperation</i>		
Q6_dichotomy	Total turnover of the business based in the destination in 2013 in US\$	R_Motivation Mean
1	less than 100,000	2.1111
	100,000 - 499,999	1.9231
	500,000 - 999,999	2.1
	1 - 2 million	2.125
	3 - 5 million	2.2
	over 6 million	3.1538
	DK/NA	2.4167
	Total	2.2364
2	less than 100,000	2.25
	100,000 - 499,999	1.75
	500,000 - 999,999	1.6667
	1 - 2 million	1.9
	3 - 5 million	1.8889
	over 6 million	3.0833
	DK/NA	3
	Total	2.2

Table 33 Exclusively vs. not, Locally based organizations, total turnover of the business within the destination and mean number of reasons motivating cooperation

Both the table and the graph indicate that in this case those agents whose organization is locally based, and whose total turnover is between US\$100.000 and over 6 million, hold higher number of reasons to be motivated to cooperate with others.

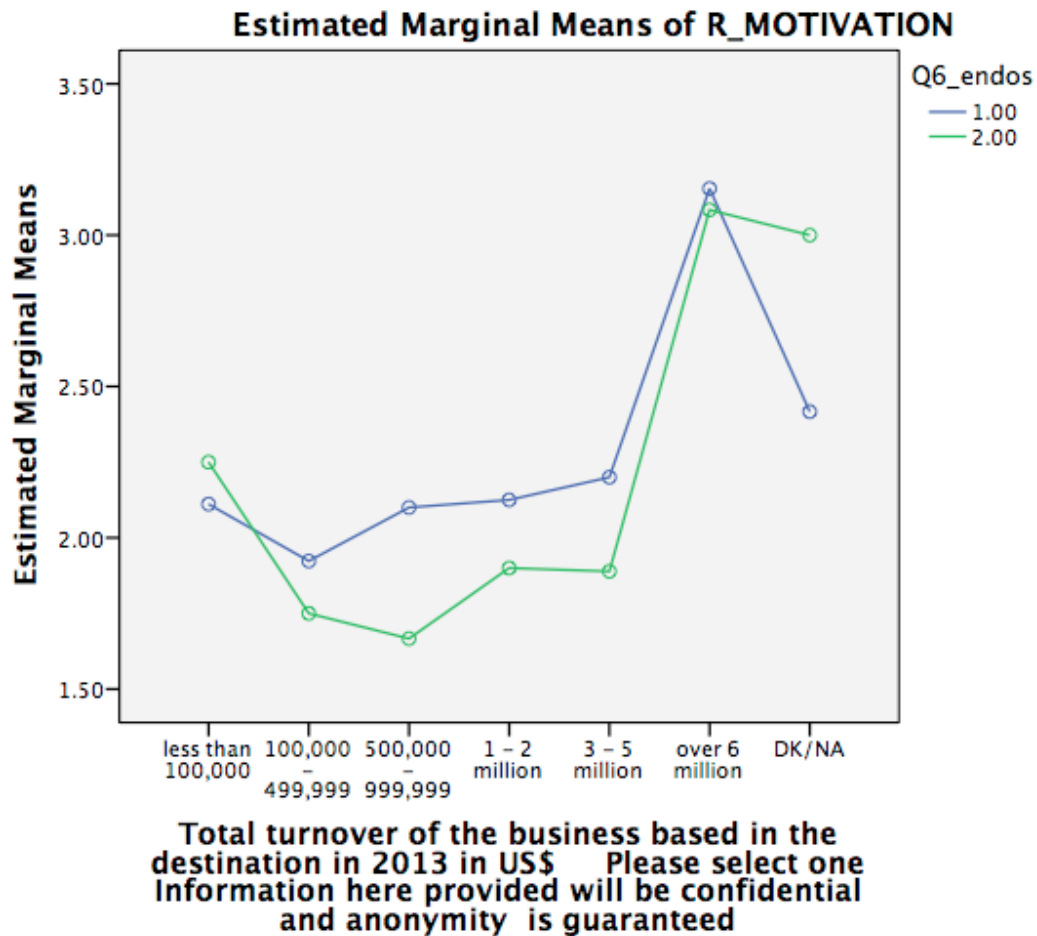


Figure 8 Estimated marginal means of R_Motivation

A test of between-subjects effects results on a low R^2 ($R^2 = .091$). Therefore there is barely a connection among the three variables and only Q60 (turnover ranges) appears significant ($p = .031$).

The table 34 (further down) presents the frequencies and percent of the reasons motivating subjects to cooperate with the eight given types of agents. On a first look, the “event production and execution” appear as the most frequent response when cooperating with Auxiliary service providers, PCOs, DMCs, CVBs, Accommodation, Venues, Association Management Companies and others (in order of more frequent to

less). It is striking how far from the first position are venues. Auxiliary service providers and PCOs being so relevant for event production and execution would seem reasonable given that auxiliary service providers embody most of services needed for event production and PCOs in most cases are those leading the process. Then regarding with whom the respondent cooperates (taken into account that the sample does not count with equal amount of dyads), there are some differences. Cooperation with PCOs, and Venues appears to also be motivated by:

- Proposal preparation when bidding
- Present and defend the candidacy jointly
- Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad
- Event production and execution
- Providing technical visits of the destination to potential clients
- Destination promotion actions
- PR actions at the national level to gain national contacts
- Exchange of information and experiences
- Analyzing synergies and common problems

Cooperation with CVBs appears to also be motivated by the following elements:

- Proposal preparation when Bidding
- Present and defend the candidacy jointly
- Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad
- Lobbying in front of Professional associations
- Event production and execution
- Providing technical visits of the destination to potential clients
- Destination promotion actions

- PR actions abroad to gain international contacts
- PR actions at the national level to gain national contacts
- Training actions
- Exchange of information and experiences
- Analyzing synergies and common problems
- Seeking advice or support with issues/problems

Cooperation with DMCs appears to also be motivated by the following elements:

- Proposal preparation when Bidding
- Present and defend the candidacy jointly
- Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad
- Event production and execution
- Providing technical visits of the destination to potential clients
- Destination promotion actions
- Exchange of information and experiences

Cooperation with Auxiliary service providers appears to also be motivated by the following elements:

- Proposal preparation when Bidding
- Event production and execution
- Exchange of information and experiences

Cooperation with Association Management Companies, does not appear to count with a given central motivation, neither is the case for “others”.

In the case of Accommodation providers:

- Proposal preparation when Bidding
- Event production and execution
- Providing technical visits of the destination to potential clients
- Destination promotion actions
- Exchange of information and experiences
- Analyzing synergies and common problems

Motivation	PCO		Venue		CVB		DMC		Aux		AMC		ACC		Oth.	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Proposal preparation when Bidding	60	36.4	49	29.7	69	41.8	48	29.1	47	28.5	23	13.9	53	32.1	12	7.3
Present and defend the candidacy jointly	56	33.9	40	24.2	70	42.4	41	24.8	16	9.7	25	15.2	36	21.8	10	6.1
Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad	57	34.5	43	26.1	94	57	46	27.9	18	10.9	17	10.3	34	20.6	10	6.1
Lobbying in front of Professional associations	32	19.4	28	17	53	32.1	20	12.1	14	8.5	20	12.1	23	13.9	8	4.8
Event production and execution	86	52.1	63	38.2	74	44.8	80	48.5	95	57.6	27	16.4	66	40	14	8.5
Providing technical visits of the destination to potential clients	85	51.5	57	34.5	97	58.8	66	40	38	23	26	15.8	60	36.4	15	9.1
Destination promotion actions	83	50.3	53	32.1	98	59.4	61	37	36	21.8	25	15.2	67	36.4	11	6.7
Online marketing strategies	38	23	25	15.2	40	24.2	22	13.3	18	10.9	11	6.7	20	12.1	10	6.1
PR actions abroad to gain international contacts	42	25.5	24	14.5	61	37	28	17	14	8.5	10	6.1	21	12.7	7	4.2
PR actions at the national level to gain national contacts	51	30.9	34	20.6	59	35.8	32	19.4	21	12.7	14	8.5	22	13.3	9	5.5
Training actions	33	20	20	12.1	46	27.9	16	9.7	25	15.2	16	9.7	17	10.3	8	4.8
Exchange of information and experiences	65	39.4	45	27.3	74	44.8	41	24.8	47	28.5	27	16.4	51	30.9	15	9.1
Analyzing synergies and common problems	53	32.1	36	21.8	60	36.4	31	18.8	37	22.4	18	10.9	42	25.5	9	5.5
Seeking advice or support with issues/problems	38	23	29	17.6	50	30.3	22	13.3	27	16.4	13	7.9	32	19.4	8	4.8
Seeking funding	15	9.1	16	9.7	24	14.5	9	5.5	11	6.7	9	5.5	13	7.9	8	4.8
Obtaining certifications (quality, environmental...)	23	13.9	15	9.1	25	15.2	9	5.5	12	7.3	7	4.2	14	8.5	6	3.6
Others	5	3	5	3	9	5.5	6	3.6	3	1.8	1	0.6	11	6.7	3	1.8

Table 34 Frequencies and percent of motivations per type of agent with whom subject cooperates

The following two tables refer to the frequency of contact (face to face table 35, and non-face-to-face table 36) per types of agent with whom the subject asserts cooperating. It would seem that in none of the cases for face-to-face contact the frequency is high, rather more than once a year but not as frequent as every month.

Table 35 <i>Frequencies and percent on the frequency of contact face to face among cooperating agents</i>																			
		PCO		Venue		CVB		DMC		Aux		AMC		ACC		Others			
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
0	40	24.2	68	41.2	21	12.7	46	27.9	42	25.5	105	63.6	37	22.4	133	80.6			
less than once a year	41	24.8	27	16.4	33	20	39	23.6	31	18.8	26	15.8	31	18.8	10	6.1			
less than once a month	47	28.5	33	20	56	33.9	38	23	39	23.6	20	12.1	36	21.8	9	5.5			
once a month	16	9.7	18	10.9	30	18.2	21	12.7	19	11.5	9	5.5	26	15.8	5	3			
2-3 times a month	8	4.8	4	2.4	11	6.7	8	4.8	13	7.9	1	0.6	16	9.7	1	0.6			
once a week	4	2.4	5	3	5	3	3	1.8	6	3.6	2	1.2	5	3	3	1.8			
2-3 times a week	5	3	5	3	2	1.2	6	3.6	8	4.8	2	1.2	9	5.5	3	1.8			
daily	4	2.4	5	3	7	4.2	4	2.4	7	4.2	0	0	5	3	1	0.6			
Total	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100			

Table 35 Frequencies and percent on the frequency of contact face to face among cooperating agents

Table 36

Frequencies and percent on the frequency of contact non face to face among cooperating agents

	PCO		Venue		CVB		DMC		Aux		AMC		ACC		Other	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
0	40	24.2	68	41.2	21	12.7	46	27.9	42	25.5	105	63.6	37	22.4	133	80.6
less than once a year	11	6.7	14	8.5	9	5.5	11	6.7	10	6.1	18	10.9	19	11.5	6	3.6
less than once a month	26	15.8	25	15.2	29	17.6	31	18.8	35	21.2	16	9.7	29	17.6	8	4.8
once a month	28	17	17	10.3	40	24.2	23	13.9	17	10.3	12	7.3	26	15.8	4	2.4
2-3 times a month	12	7.3	13	7.9	26	15.8	18	10.9	18	10.9	5	3	22	13.3	5	3
once a week	11	6.7	4	2.4	14	8.5	13	7.9	12	7.3	3	1.8	8	4.8	1	0.6
2-3 times a week	25	15.2	8	4.8	14	8.5	13	7.9	15	9.1	4	2.4	11	6.7	4	2.4
daily	12	7.3	16	9.7	12	7.3	10	6.1	16	9.7	2	1.2	13	7.9	4	2.4
Total	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100

Table 36 Frequencies and percent on the frequency of contact non face to face among cooperating agents

Then in the case of non face to face contact, despite being similar, cooperation with CVBs seems to have some higher frequency, of once a month for many, and with PCOs it is somewhat divided in between less than once a month and 2-3 times a week which for the period when an event is being produced seems consistent. The question asked for the highest frequency reached across the past three years.

Table 37 Frequencies of longevity of cooperation per type of agent with whom respondent cooperates																
	PCO		Venue		CVB		DMC		Aux		AMC		ACC		Others	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
0	40	24.2	68	41.2	21	12.7	46	27.9	42	25.5	105	63.6	37	22.4	133	80.6
Less than a year	10	6.1	6	3.6	6	3.6	5	3	2	1.2	4	2.4	5	3	2	1.2
1-3 years	26	15.8	17	10.3	29	17.6	17	10.3	24	14.5	12	7.3	16	9.7	5	3
4-6 years	22	13.3	19	11.5	25	15.2	22	13.3	18	10.9	15	9.1	18	10.9	6	3.6
More than 6 years	67	40.6	55	33.3	84	50.9	75	45.5	79	47.9	29	17.6	89	53.9	19	11.5
Total	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100

Table 37 Frequencies of longevity of cooperation per type of agent with whom respondent cooperates

Regarding longevity of the cooperation, it would seem that most of the dyads pertain to mature cooperation activities, if more than six years could be labelled “mature”.

It could be expected, that most respondents consider that cooperation has enhanced performance of their respective company (meetings side of the business). The questions involved are {Q17, Q21, Q25, Q29, Q33, Q37, Q41 and Q45}, which range from 1 strongly disagree to 6 strongly agree.

Table 38 <i>Frequencies of respondents on cooperation enhancing performance of their respective company</i>		
	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	0.4
Disagree	8	1.0
Slightly Disagree	34	4.1
Slightly Agree	151	18.2
Agree	385	46.5
Strongly Agree	247	29.8

Table 38 Frequencies of respondents on cooperation enhancing performance of their respective company

Clearly, most respondents agree to different extents with the sentence that cooperation enhances the cooperation of their company.

When this is looked per type of agent responding and per type of agent with whom respondents cooperate without knowing the type of agent the respondent represents, the following table gathers some differences.

Table 39

Frequencies of respondents on cooperation enhancing performance of their respective company per type of agent with whom they cooperate

	PCOs		Venues		CVB		DMCs		Auxiliary		AMC		ACC		Others	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.8	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.8	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.4	0	0	1	0.8	0	0.0	4	3.1	1	3.1
Slightly Disagree	6	4.8	4	4.1	5	3.5	5	4.2	5	4.1	6	10.0	2	1.6	1	3.1
Slightly Agree	24	19.2	14	14.4	26	18.1	23	19.3	19	15.4	11	18.3	28	21.9	6	18.8
Agree	60	48.0	43	44.3	64	44.4	56	47.0	64	52.0	27	45.0	59	46.1	12	37.5
Strongly Agree	34	27.2	35	36.1	47	32.6	35	29.4	34	27.6	16	26.7	34	26.6	12	37.5
Total	125	100	97	100	144	100	119	100	123	100	60	100	128	100	32	100

Table 39 Frequencies of respondents on cooperation enhancing performance of their respective company per type of agent with whom they cooperate

The higher frequencies for “strongly agree” are reached with CVB, for “agree” with CVB and Auxiliary Providers, and “slightly agree” with Accommodation Providers. When analyzing per type of agent with whom the respondent cooperates, in all types of agents the scale is unbalance towards agreeing on cooperation enhancing performance with its peak being among those cooperating with auxiliary service providers.

Then, question Q46 addresses different elements that are for the subjects to agree or disagree on a six-Likert-scale if they may affect cooperation enhancing performance. This question's frequencies have been divided in two tables, for illustration ease.

Table 40								
<i>Frequencies on elements relevance for cooperation enhancing performance</i>								
* For cooperation to result on better performance of your company please value the following sentences								
	Further share of key information		Working on trust issues on both sides		Further alignment in the type of demand that them and us target		Cooperating with a powerful organization is very relevant for improving performance	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	0.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	2	1.2	2	1.2	2	1.2	4	2.4
Somewhat Disagree	6	3.6	5	3	9	5.5	18	10.9
Somewhat Agree	21	12.7	22	13.3	30	18.2	39	23.6
Agree	88	53.3	87	52.7	84	50.9	59	35.8
Strongly Agree	47	28.5	49	29.7	40	24.2	45	27.3
Total	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100

Table 40 Frequencies on elements relevance for cooperation enhancing performance

Most respondents somewhat agree, agree and strongly agree on further share of information, working on trust issues on both sides, further alignment in the type of demand that both sides target and cooperating with a powerful organization as elements fostering cooperation enhancing performance.

Likewise, the following table illustrates that most respondents somewhat agree, agree and strongly agree on the following elements helping cooperation to result on better performance: fostering cooperative culture across the organization, so that both organization's employees actually cooperate; cooperating with a central organization within the destination; more compatible goals and operating philosophy of both organizations; cooperating with a legitimized organization.

Table 41

Frequencies on elements relevance for cooperation enhancing performance_II

* For cooperation to result on better performance of your company please value the following sentences

	Fostering a cooperative culture across the organization so that both organization's employees actually cooperate		Cooperating with a central organization within the destination is significantly relevant for improving performance		More compatible goals and operating philosophy of other organization(s) and ours		Cooperating with a legitimized organization is significantly relevant for improving performance	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
Disagree	2	1.2	3	1.8	1	0.6	0	0
Somewhat Disagree	7	4.2	7	4.2	14	8.5	8	4.8
Somewhat Agree	25	15.2	34	20.6	39	23.6	38	23
Agree	86	52.1	75	45.5	85	51.5	74	44.8
Strongly Agree	45	27.3	46	27.9	26	15.8	44	26.7
Total	165	100	165	100	165	100	165	100

Table 41 Frequencies on elements relevance for cooperation enhancing performance_continued

Given that some respondents chose “no” when asked if they cooperated with the list of eight type of agents, not necessarily for the eight of them (that has not occurred) but at least with one/some of them, there was a question on reasons why that is the case.

Table 42

Frequency on reasons for not cooperating with some agents within the destination

	Frequency
The company does not see the return on investment	63
We do not trust them enough to cooperate with them	26
They are our competitors	38
We rather cooperate with partners outside of our destination that will bring us business	21
We do not count with resources to be able to cooperate	35
We have cooperated in the past and it did not work for us	21
We are a new company in the destination, it is too soon to tell whether we will be cooperating in the future or not	18
Other reasons	26

Table 42 Frequency on reasons for not cooperating with some agents within the destination

The most frequent response without a doubt is “the company does not see the return on investment” which is consistent with the debate in the literature on cost-effective cooperation.

Finally, it would appear the subjects mostly agree on relations with agents based outside or within the destination being equally important for the purpose of a better performance of their respective company.

Table 43

Frequencies on within-destination/outside relations importance on performance

*Do you consider that for the purpose of a better performance of your company when thinking on meetings taking place on your destination your relations with locally based agents are: Please select one

	Frequencies	Percent
More important than with other agents based outside of the destination	46	27.9
Equally important	111	67.3
Less important than with other agents based outside the destination	8	4.8
Total	165	100

Table 43 Frequencies on within-destination/outside relations importance on performance

Synthesis

Summing up most agents cooperate with CVBs (84%), Accommodation providers (77.57%), PCOs (75.75%) and Auxiliary providers (74.54%), in most cases this cooperation has been lasting for more than six years already (45.35%), and the main reasons are: event production and execution, participation in fairs/trade-shows abroad (especially when cooperating with CVBs – 57%), providing technical visits for potential clients (especially when cooperating with CVBs-58.8% and PCOs-51.5%), destination promotion (especially when cooperating with CVBs-59.4% and PCOs-50.3%). Looking into most frequent dyads within the sample, it would appear that Venues cooperate most with those agents that earlier appear as the central ones: CVB, PCOs and Auxiliary Providers; Venues only appear mentioned in the top list for CVBs; then DMCs appear relevant for Accommodation Providers and CVBs; and Auxiliary providers are specially relevant for Venues, DMCs, CVBs and PCOs.

Regarding frequency of contact, the highest frequency for face-to-face (less than once a month) is reached with CVBs, followed by PCOs, and for non-face-to-face, the highest frequency (2-3 times a week) is reached with PCOs and (once a month) with CVBs. Over 76% of respondents agree and strongly agree on performance enhancement thanks to cooperation, especially when cooperating with Auxiliary service providers (79.6%).

Then concerning barriers to cooperation, most respondents consider that there is the need for further sharing of key information (81.81%), working on trust issues (82.4%), fostering a cooperation culture within the organizations (79.4%), and holding more compatible goals and operating philosophy among others and one's organization (67.3%). Finally, those not cooperating with some agents affirm that the main reason is that the company does not see the return on investment (38%).

4.3. Destination Cooperation Score Findings

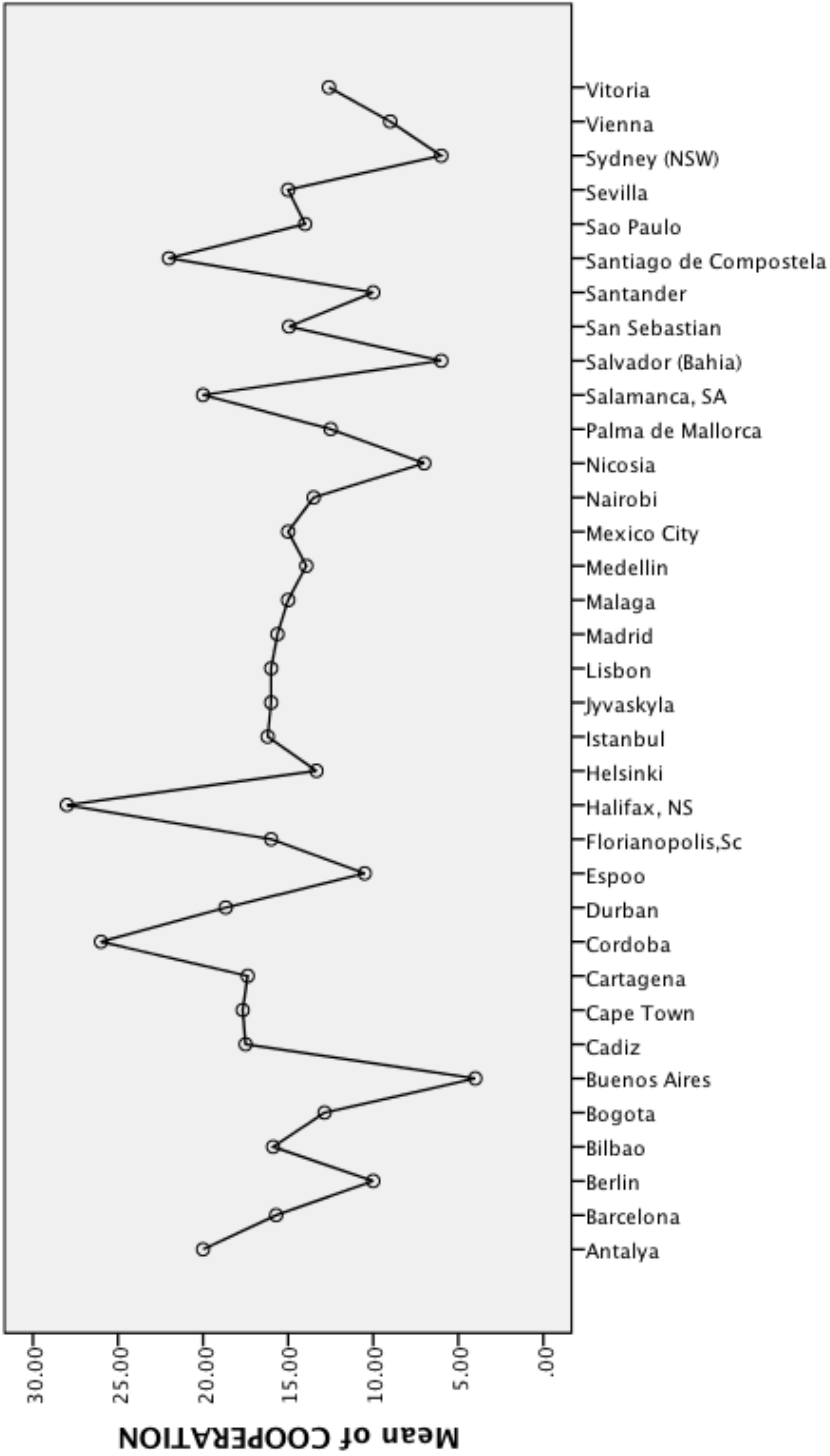
The following graphs present first the mean of cooperation per each city (Q3), and then the second graph represents per city the max and min values of cooperation by Q3 (the city).

The first one highlights higher cooperation scores for cities such as Córdoba (Spain) and Halifax (Canada), and lower cooperation scores for Buenos Aires (Argentina), Nicosia (Turkey), Salvador Bahía (Brazil) and Sydney (Australia).

Then the second graph evidences the partial unreliability of the first graph as some destinations that have lower scores on cooperation (such as Nicosia, Salvador, Sydney) are also those destinations represented exclusively by one respondent, as the opposite occurs as well with Cordoba and Halifax that count with perhaps a more optimistic respondent.

Cities with larger sample are Barcelona, Bilbao, Bogotá, Medellín, San Sebastian and Vitoria. Should there be a larger and balance sample per each city, the results shown of both graphs would certainly be more insightful as to the cooperation occurring among MI stakeholders per each city and the comparison among such diverse cities.

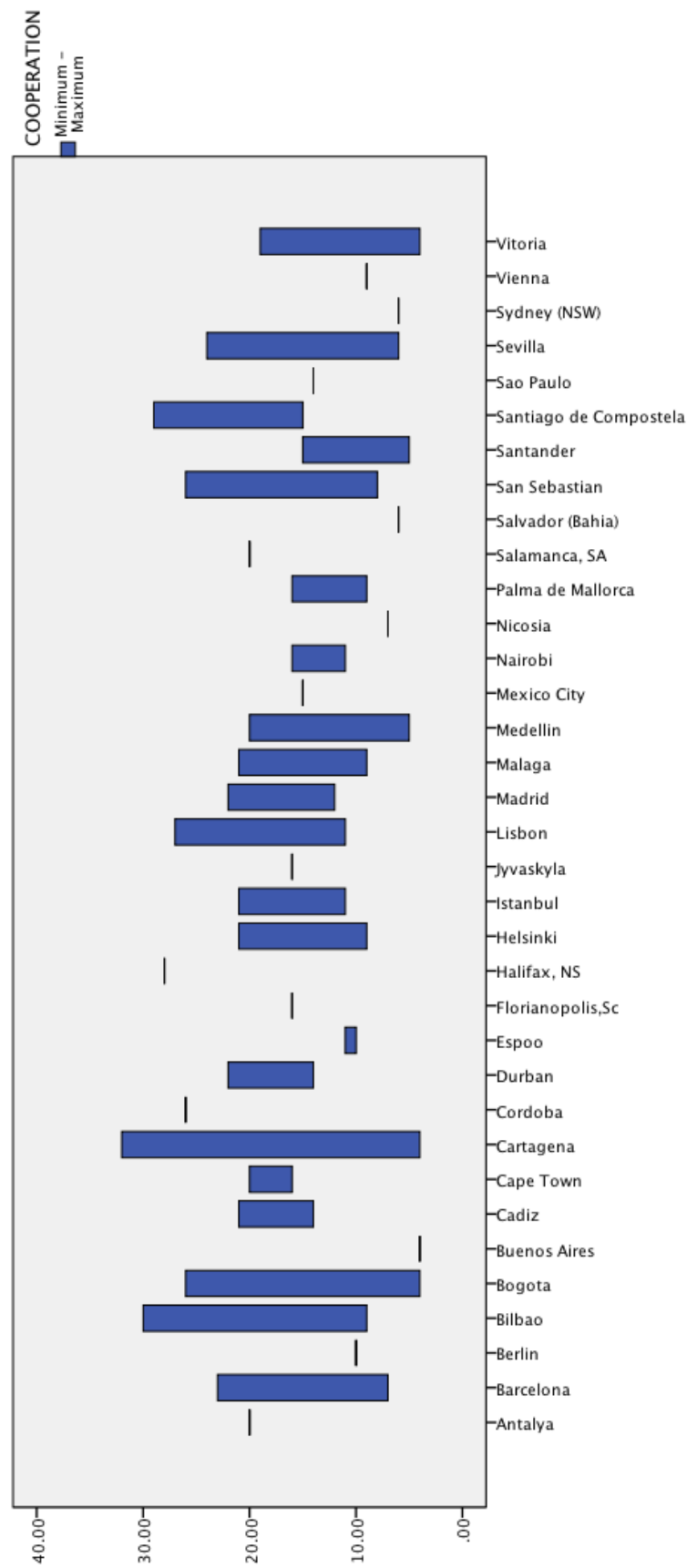
This graph represents per city the mean values of cooperation by Q3 (the city)



*Please select from the list below the destination for which you will be responding - this means that your company or a branch of the same is based on this municipality or it is immediately nearby....

Figure 9 Cooperation Means per City Tourism Destination

This graph represents per city the max and min values of cooperation by Q3 (the city)



*Please select from the list below the destination for which you will be responding - this means that your company or a branch of the same is based on this municipality or it is immediately nearby....

Figure 10 Max and Min Cooperation values per City Tourism Destination

Synthesis

As a conclusion on the creation of the score Cooperation per each city based on the respondents responses, it should be noted that (1) it has been created via a one-way ANOVA of the individual scores on cooperation per respondent created via SUM of relational embeddedness (frequency of contact, longevity and motivation) and structural embeddedness (amount of type of agents with whom respondents cooperate), (2) that the resulting measure is validated via Cronbach alpha test .893 and it is normally distributed.

Moreover, the creation of cooperation was also tested via Factor Analysis and Multiple Correspondence Analysis. All three variables resulted normally distributed and strongly correlated among each other. The one created via SUM was selected given that this would guarantee replicability by other researchers and it implies that the score is created concerning the subject in question and not the rest of group, given the randomly obtained sample.

4.4. Hypothesis Testing: Cooperation

This chapter presents the premises and null hypotheses stated in section 3.1.1. The premises and corresponding null hypotheses are restated and then there are descriptions of how each of them was tested and the corresponding results are provided.

Premise (α): There is a relation between which type of agent the respondent is and with which type of agent they cooperate.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\alpha1}$): there is no relation between which type of agent the respondent is (Q4) and with which type of agent they cooperate.

A contingency table is drawn below and it would appear that CVBs followed by PCOs and Others are those agents that cooperate more with the full set of eight type of agents. In order to build this table two variables are used, question Q4 asking the principal activity of the business, and [COOPwithwhom] that represents with how many types of agents a subject cooperates.

Table 44 <i>Type of agent relation to with whom cooperate</i>									
	COOPwithwhom								Total
Principal activity of your business	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	1	0	3	4	10	1	0	3	22
Venue owners or managers	0	0	2	2	5	3	2	0	14
Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	0	0	1	0	1	6	8	4	20
DMCs or incoming agencies	0	1	2	1	4	2	3	0	13
Auxiliary service providers	1	0	4	3	4	3	0	1	16
Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels)	2	3	4	7	6	11	6	2	41
Others, please specify	3	3	7	3	8	7	5	3	39
Total	7	7	23	20	38	33	24	13	165

Table 44 Type of agent relation to with whom cooperate

Despite the sample fitting with the premise expectation, there does not seem to be a relation between the type of agent responding and with which type of agent the subject cooperates, according to a Pearson Chi-Square test ($p = .082$). In case this would be a balanced sample among the different types of agents perhaps this could be further tested. Therefore, the null hypothesis $H_0\alpha_1$ is accepted.

Premise (β): organizations being part of the local Convention and Visitors Bureau cooperate with more agents than those that are not.

Null hypothesis ($H_0\beta_1$): There is no difference on the amount of types of agents with whom a subject cooperates, depending on that subject being member or not of the local CVB.

In order to test this hypothesis variable [Q53dichotomy] was created based on Q53. The new variable gathers with value 1 those members of the CVB and those being CVB, and

2 else. Additionally, the variable named [Coopwithwhom] containing the amount of types of agents with whom each subject cooperates was used. Neither variable is normally distributed ($p = .000$ and $p = .001$, respectively). Therefore, a non-parametric test was conducted.

According to a Mann-Whitney U test the Group 1 ($n=138$) constructed by those subjects members of the local CVB, cooperate with a larger number of types of agents (Sum of Ranks 12143.00), than those not members of the CVB (Group 2; $n = 27$; Sum of Ranks 1552.00). More importantly these results are significant ($p = .002$), hence rejecting the null hypothesis and indicating that agents being part of the local Convention and Visitors Bureau cooperate with more agents than those that are not, as the premise stated.

Premise (γ): older companies cooperate with more agents than younger companies.

Null hypothesis ($H_0\gamma1$): There is no difference on the amount of agents with whom subjects cooperate, per agents' companies being younger or older (more than ten years old).

The present hypothesis is tested based on variables [Old_New_Biz] and [Coopwithwhom]. Variable [Old_New_Biz] was created based on Q54. The new variable gathers with value 1 those subjects whose company was created in or after 2006, and under value 2, else; basically 1, less than ten years old, and 2, ten or older. Neither variable is normally distributed ($p = .000$ and $p = .001$, respectively). Therefore a non-parametric test is run. According to a Mann-Whitney U test the Group 2 ($n = 122$) constructed by those subjects whose company is older than 10 years, cooperate with a

larger number of types of agents (Sum of Ranks 10364.50), than younger companies (Group 1; $n = 43$; Sum of Ranks 3330.50). Hence, the sample appears to validate the premise. However, these results are not significant ($p = .369$), which implies that these results cannot be generalized.

Premise (δ): Locally based agents cooperate with more agents and/or for more motivations, as opposed to national, international, multinational entities.

Null hypothesis ($H_0\delta1$): national, international, multinational entities cooperate with more agents.

In order to test this hypothesis the question Q6 was transformed in a dichotomy variable [Q6_endos] 1= 1 which represents subjects whose organization is locally based; else = 2 representing respondents whose organizations are national, international, multinational businesses with office(s) in the given destination. Additionally, the variable named [Coopwithwhom] containing the amount of types of agents with whom each subject cooperates was used. Neither variable is normally distributed ($p = .000$ and $p = .001$ respectively). Therefore, a non-parametric test was conducted.

According to a Mann-Whitney U test the Group 1 ($n=110$) constructed by those subjects whose business is exclusively locally based, cooperate with a larger amount of agents (Sum of Ranks 9317.50), than those national, international, multinational businesses (Group 2; $n = 55$; Sum of Ranks 4377.50). However these results are not significant $z = -.658$, $p = .511$.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\delta 2}$): national, international, multinational entities cooperate for more motivations than locally based agents

In order to test this hypothesis variable [Q6_endos] was used, as well as [Motivation], which represents a sum of the number of reasons that motivate subjects to cooperate with per each of the given agents with whom they cooperate. Neither variable is normally distributed ($p = .000$ and $p = .080$, respectively). Therefore, a non-parametric test was conducted.

According to a Mann-Whitney U test the Group 1 ($n=110$) constructed by those subjects whose business is exclusively locally based, cooperate motivated by a larger number of reasons (Sum of Ranks 9146.00), than those national, international, multinational businesses (Group 2; $n = 55$; Sum of Ranks 4549.00). However these results are not significant $z = -.055$, $p = .956$.

Premise (ϵ): national, international, multinational entities do not prioritize cooperation with locally based agents against cooperation with agents based elsewhere.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\epsilon 1}$): national, international, multinational entities prioritize cooperation with locally based agents against cooperation with agents based elsewhere.

In order to analyze this premise a crosstab was run using the variable [Q6_endos] 1= 1 which represents subjects whose organization is locally based; else = 2 representing

respondents whose organizations are national, international, multinational businesses with office(s) in the given destination. Additionally, question Q50 was used, which enquires on whether cooperation with locally based agents is more important than with agents from outside of the destination (value 1), equally important (value 2) and less important (value 3) was used.

Table 45

Exclusively, vs. not, Locally based organizations and relevance of cooperation with agents based within the destination and beyond.

		More important than with other agents based outside of the destination	Equally important	Less important than with other agents based outside the destination	Total
Q6_endos	1	32	71	7	110
	2	14	40	1	55
Total		46	111	8	165

Table 45 Exclusively vs. not, Locally based organizations and relevance of cooperation with agents based within the destination and beyond

The contingency table illustrates that agents whose organization is not exclusively based within the destination consider equally important cooperating with agents based outside or within, which also appears to be the case for locally based agents. Therefore, there does not seem to be a difference by where the organization is principally based. A Pearson Chi-square test also demonstrates this not being significant $X^2(2, N = 165) = 2.10, p = .350$.

Premise (ζ): national, international, multinational entities have relations with more agents away than locally based agents

Null hypothesis (H_0): there is no difference between local versus national, international, multinational entities on having more or less relations with agents based away than locally based agents.

In order to test this hypothesis variable [Q6_endos] was used, as well as [OUTrelations], which represents a sum of the number of agents based outside of the destination with whom subjects have relations. Neither variable is normally distributed ($p = .000$ and $p = .000$, respectively). Therefore, a non-parametric test was conducted.

According to a Mann-Whitney U test, the premise is refuted as the Group 1 ($n=110$) constructed by those subjects whose business is exclusively locally based, have relations with more agents based outside of the destination (Sum of Ranks 8968.50), than those national, international, multinational businesses (Group 2; $n = 55$; Sum of Ranks 4726.50). However these results are not significant $z = -.565$, $p = .571$.

When the relations within the destination are regarded, the Mann-Whitney U test indicates that Group 1 ($n=110$) constructed by those subjects whose business is exclusively locally based, have relations with more agents based within the destination (Sum of Ranks 9303.00), than those national, international, multinational businesses (Group 2; $n = 55$; Sum of Ranks 4392.00). However these results are not significant $z = -.605$, $p = .545$.

For this test the variable [Relations] was used as it gathers a sum of the number of types of agents based within the destination with whom subjects have relations.

Premise (η): certain dyads' motivation for cooperation is larger than others.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\eta1}$): there is no relation between which type of agent the subject is, with whom they cooperate and for how many reasons (more or less than others) that motivates them.

For this premise Q4 defines the type of agent the respondent is, with whom they cooperate (ranging from F14 to F42) and the mean value of [R_Motivation] that gathers the sum of motivations in a range from 1 to 8 (8 being the largest possible amount of motivations) per all 8 possible dyads per subject responding.

Responding to the hypothesis on being a relation between who the subject is, with whom they cooperate and for how many reasons (more or less than others) that motivates them, a Kruskal Wallis test was run. This is a non-parametric test given that variables are not normally distributed. The sample of this study witnesses some significance when the cooperation is with venues ($X^2(6) = 13.14$, $p = .041$), CVB ($X^2(6) = 16.16$, $p = .013$), DMC ($X^2(6) = 13.04$, $p = .042$) and Accommodation providers ($X^2(6) = 27.13$, $p = .000$). However for the other four types of agents with whom subjects can cooperate this is not sustained. Having a balanced sample perhaps would provide clearer results.

Premise (θ): Older cooperative relationships are related to amount of reasons motivating cooperation.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\theta1}$): there is no relation between longevity of cooperation among types of agents and amount of reasons motivating cooperation.

In order to test this hypothesis the following variables have been used: [R_Motivation] which is an eight-range variable holding from least (1) to highest (8) number of reasons motivating cooperation, and questions Q16, Q20, Q24, Q28, Q32, Q36, Q40, Q44 that per type of agent with whom the respondent cooperates asks for the longevity of such cooperation in a four scale.

The contingency tables below illustrate that for seven out of eight type of agents with whom subjects cooperate, the highest concentration of subjects are those whose amount of reasons motivating them to cooperate fit within range two and the longevity of the cooperation is for over six years.

Table 46
Contingency table on motivation and cooperation longevity

R_MOTIVATION										Tot.	R_MOTIVATION										Tot.
PCO	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			Aux	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
0	31	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	40		0	30	10	1	1	0	0	0	0	42	
Less than a year	4	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	10		Less than a year	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	
1-3 years	9	8	7	2	0	0	0	0	26		1-3 years	9	8	6	1	0	0	0	0	24	
4-6 years	2	12	4	4	0	0	0	0	22		4-6 years	3	9	4	2	0	0	0	0	18	
More than 6 years	13	26	12	3	6	2	4	1	67		More than 6 years	17	30	14	5	6	2	4	1	79	
Total	59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165		Total	59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165	
R_MOTIVATION										Tot.	R_MOTIVATION										Tot.
Venues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			AMC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
0	37	23	7	1	0	0	0	0	68		0	51	40	11	3	0	0	0	0	105	
Less than a year	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	6		Less than a year	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	
1-3 years	6	4	5	2	0	0	0	0	17		1-3 years	4	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	12	
4-6 years	0	10	4	4	0	0	1	0	19		4-6 years	0	5	6	2	1	0	1	0	15	
More than 6 years	13	19	9	2	6	2	3	1	55		More than 6 years	3	7	5	3	5	2	3	1	29	
Total	59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165		Total	59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165	
R_MOTIVATION										Tot.	R_MOTIVATION										Tot.
CVB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			ACC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
0	17	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	21		0	20	13	3	0	1	0	0	0	37	
Less than a year	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	6		Less than a year	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	
1-3 years	10	8	6	4	1	0	0	0	29		1-3 years	8	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	16	
4-6 years	6	11	4	4	0	0	0	0	25		4-6 years	2	10	3	3	0	0	0	0	18	
More than 6 years	22	36	13	1	5	2	4	1	84		More than 6 years	26	29	16	6	5	2	4	1	89	
Total	59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165		Total	59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165	
R_MOTIVATION										Tot.	R_MOTIVATION										Tot.
DMC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			Others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
0	36	9	0	1	0	0	0	0	46		0	52	53	17	5	4	0	2	0	133	
Less than a year	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	5		Less than a year	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
1-3 years	5	4	7	1	0	0	0	0	17		1-3 years	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	5	
4-6 years	2	12	5	3	0	0	0	0	22		4-6 years	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	6	
More than 6 years	15	30	13	4	6	2	4	1	75		More than 6 years	3	2	6	1	2	2	2	1	19	
Total	59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165		Tot.	59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165	

Table 46 Contingency table on motivation and cooperation longevity

In order to test whether these variables are related and how much if any, a Pearson Chi-square test was run including symmetric measures. It shows that when this concerns cooperation with:

- **PCOs variables are quite related** (X^2 (28, N = 165) = 69.91, $p = .000$, and its contingency coefficient is .546, $p = .000$)
- **Venues variables are related** (X^2 (28, N = 165) = 57.29, $p = .001$) but not highly given its contingency coefficient being .508 ($p = .001$)
- **CVBs variables are somewhat related** (X^2 (28, N = 165) = 47.61, $p = .012$, and its contingency coefficient is .473, $p = .012$)
- **DMCs variables are quite related** (X^2 (28, N = 165) = 75.49, $p = .000$) and its contingency coefficient is .560 ($p = .000$)
- **Auxiliary service providers variables are somewhat related** (X^2 (28, N = 165) = 49.44, $p = .007$, and its contingency coefficient is .480, $p = .007$)
- **Association Management Companies variables are quite related** (X^2 (28, N = 165) = 77.42, $p = .000$, and its contingency coefficient is .565, $p = .000$)
- Accommodation providers variables are not related (X^2 (28, N = 165) = 29.85, $p = .370$, and its contingency coefficient is .391, $p = .370$)
- **Other agents variables are quite related** (X^2 (28, N = 165) = 73.10, $p = .000$, and its contingency coefficient is .554 ($p = .000$))

In sum, the alternative hypothesis is validated for agents cooperating with all type of agents to different extents except for cooperation with Accommodation providers, where the tests have been proven not significant.

Premise (t): Members of the local CVB hold different views on tightness of relations and cooperativeness environment within the destination than non-members.

Null hypothesis (H_{0t1}): There is no difference among agents, members of the CVB, and those that are not members, concerning their understanding on the destination tightness of relations.

Null hypothesis (H_{0t2}): There is no difference among agents, members of the CVB, and those that are not members, concerning their understanding on the destination cooperativeness environment.

In order to test H_{0t1} , variable [Q53dichotomy] was used and it gathers, under value 1, those members of the CVB and those being CVB, and under value 2, else. Additionally, question Q49_n (n = 1 to 8) was studied, which looks into the tightness of relations among agents within the destination on a six Likert-scale.

Table 47

Agents members or not of the local CVB and their perception on relations within the destination

	Q53dichotomy	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Q49_1: Relations among agents involved within the meetings industry are tight	1	138	84.93	11720
	2	27	73.15	1975
Total		165		
Q49_2: There is a difference in the strength of relations between those members of the convention bureau and those that aren't	1	138	86.18	11892.5
	2	27	66.76	1802.5
Total		165		
Q49_3: The relations among members are tighter than among those that aren't members	1	138	85.14	11749.5
	2	27	72.06	1945.5
Total		165		
Q49_4: There are trust issues among agents involved within the meetings industry	1	138	84.39	11646.5
	2	27	75.87	2048.5
Total		165		
Q49_5: There has always been a core of agents that have had tighter relations than others	1	138	84.63	11679.5
	2	27	74.65	2015.5
Total		165		
Q49_6: New comers after a certain time tend to join the existing collaborative spirit	1	138	82.87	11436.5
	2	27	83.65	2258.5
Total		165		
Q49_7: New comers after a certain time tend to work on their own	1	138	83.25	11488
	2	27	81.74	2207
Total		165		
Q49_8: Relations among agents involved within the meetings industry are conflictive	1	138	84.83	11707
	2	27	73.63	1988
Total		165		

Table 47 Agents members or not of the local CVB and their perception on relations within the destination

The table presents significantly higher sum of ranks in all cases for agents being part of the Local CVB. Thus, the results within the sample follow the rationale behind the premise c1. Now the significance of this is tested.

None of the variables are normally distributed ($p = .000$ all). Therefore, a non-parametric test was conducted. According to a Mann-Whitney U test the premise is only significant for Q49_2 ($p = .044$). In sum, it is safe to say that these results cannot be generalized for any of the questions 49 under the current sample characteristics.

Table 48

Perspective on destination cooperative environment and company age

	Old_New_Biz	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-For the good of the destination's success as a meeting host, the relations among agents should improve	1	43	88.3	3797
	2	122	81.13	9898
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-It is key to have on-going relations with agents based within the destination for the good of the destinations success as a meeting host	1	43	80.38	3456.5
	2	122	83.92	10238.5
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-It is key to have on-going relations with partners that are based away from the destination for the good of the destination success as a meeting host	1	43	85.12	3660
	2	122	82.25	10035
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-The Meetings Industry is a legitimized economic sector in the destination	1	43	81.13	3488.5
	2	122	83.66	10206.5
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-The Meetings Industry is a legitimized economic sector in the nation	1	43	83.07	3572
	2	122	82.98	10123
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-Tourism is a legitimized economic sector in the destination	1	43	87.05	3743
	2	122	81.57	9952
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-Tourism is a legitimized economic sector in the nation	1	43	88.43	3802.5
	2	122	81.09	9892.5
Total		165		

Table 48 Perspective on destination cooperative environment and company age

Null hypothesis (H_{0i2}): There is no difference among agents, members of the CVB, and those that are not members, concerning their understanding on the destination cooperativeness environment.

In all cases the premise seems to be sustained, the sum of ranks is higher for subjects being members of the CVB than those that are not. Now the significance of this is tested.

Table 49 <i>Members and non-members of CVB view on the cooperativeness within the destination</i>				
	Q53dichotomy	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Q51_1: For the good of the destination's success as a meeting host, the relations among agents should improve	1	138	85.08	11741.5
	2	27	72.35	1953.5
Total		165		
Q51_2: It is key to have on-going relations with agents based within the destination for the good of the destination's success as a meeting host	1	138	86.93	11997
	2	27	62.89	1698
Total		165		
Q51_3: It is key to have on-going relations with partners that are based away from the destination for the good of the destination success as a meeting host	1	138	86.24	11901.5
	2	27	66.43	1793.5
Total		165		
Q51_4: The Meetings Industry is a legitimized economic sector in the destination	1	138	86.63	11955.5
	2	27	64.43	1739.5
Total		165		
Q51_5: The Meetings Industry is a legitimized economic sector in the nation	1	138	84.53	11664.5
	2	27	75.2	2030.5
Total		165		
Q51_6: Tourism is a legitimized economic sector in the destination	1	138	84.79	11701.5
	2	27	73.83	1993.5
Total		165		
Q51_7: Tourism is a legitimized economic sector in the nation	1	138	83.96	11586.5
	2	27	78.09	2108.5
Total		165		

Table 49 Members and non-members of CVB view on the cooperativeness within the destination

None of the variables are normally distributed ($p = .000$ all). Therefore, a non-parametric test was conducted. According to a Mann-Whitney U test the premise is only significant for Q51_2 ($p = .008$); Q51_3 ($p = .035$) and Q51_4 ($p = .020$). In sum, the sample seems to validate the alternative hypothesis where there is a clear difference among those members and those that are not. However, only three statements are significant. It could be re-tested in case of a homogeneous sample seeking further significance in such a way that the results could be generalized.

Premise (κ): younger (less than 10 years old companies) and older companies hold different views on tightness of relations and cooperativeness environment within the destination

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\kappa1}$): There is no difference on the perspective of cooperativeness environment within the destination according to less or more than ten-year-old companies.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\kappa2}$): There is no difference on the perspective of tightness of relations of the destination according to less or more than ten-year-old companies.

In order to test H_{011} , variable [Old_New_Biz] was created based on Q54. The new variable gathers with value 1 those subjects whose company was created during or after 2006, and under value 2, else; basically 1, less than ten years old, and 2, ten or older. Additionally, the questions Q49_1 up to Q49_8 are studied. None of the variables are normally distributed ($p = .000$ all). Therefore, a non-parametric test was conducted.

According to a Mann-Whitney U test the Group 2 (n=122) constructed by those subjects whose company is older than 10 years have different views on all Q49 questions (Sum of Ranks is higher in all), compare to those whose company is older than 10 years (Group 1, n = 43). This could imply that the alternative hypothesis could be validated. However, none of these results are significant ($p > .050$), hence accepting the null hypothesis.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\kappa2}$): There is no difference on the perspective of tightness of relations of the destination according to less or more than ten-year-old companies.

In order to test $H_{0\kappa2}$, variable [Old_New_Biz] is again used. Additionally, the questions Q51_1 to Q51_7 are studied. None of the variables are normally distributed ($p = .000$ all). Therefore, a non-parametric test was conducted.

Table 50

Perspective on destination relations tightness and company age

	Old_New_Biz	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-Relations among agents involved within the meetings industry are tight	1	43	76.49	3289
	2	122	85.3	10406
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-There is a difference in the strength of relations between those members of the convention bureau and those that aren't	1	43	87.67	3770
	2	122	81.35	9925
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-The relations among members are tighter than among those that aren't members	1	43	81.42	3501
	2	122	83.56	10194
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-There are trust issues among agents involved within the meetings industry	1	43	86.49	3719
	2	122	81.77	9976
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-There has always been a core of agents that have had tighter relations than others	1	43	84.81	3647
	2	122	82.36	10048
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-New comers after a certain time tend to join the existing collaborative spirit	1	43	78.91	3393
	2	122	84.44	10302
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-New comers after a certain time tend to work on their own	1	43	78.65	3382
	2	122	84.53	10313
Total		165		
*Please value each of the following sentences				
-Relations among agents involved within the meetings industry are conflictive	1	43	83.93	3609
	2	122	82.67	10086
Total		165		

Table 50 Perspective on destination relations tightness and company age

According to a Mann-Whitney U test the Group 2 (n=122) constructed by those subjects whose company is older than 10 years have different views on all Q51 questions (Sum of Ranks is higher in all), compare to those whose company is older than 10 years (Group 1, n = 43). This could imply that the alternative hypothesis could be validated. However, none of these results are significant ($p > .050$), hence accepting the null hypothesis.

Premise (λ): Larger amount of reasons motivating to cooperate is related to agreeing that cooperation enhances performance.

Null hypothesis ($H_0\lambda1$): there is no relation between number of reasons motivating agents to cooperate and agreement or disagreement on cooperation enhancing performance.

In order to test this hypothesis the following variables have been used: [R_Motivation] which is an eight-range variable holding from least (1) to highest (8) number of reasons motivating cooperation, and questions Q17_1, Q21_1, Q25_1, Q29_1, Q33_1, Q37_1, Q41_1 y Q45_1 that per type of agent with whom the respondent cooperates asks whether the subject agrees or disagrees on a six-Likert-scale with cooperation enhancing performance of the respondent's company.

The contingency tables below illustrate that for seven out of eight type of agents with whom subjects cooperate, the highest concentration of subjects are those whose amount of reasons motivating them to cooperate fit within range two and agree with cooperation enhancing performance.

Table 51

Crosstab Motivation with cooperation enhancing performance

			R_MOTIVATION								Total
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
*Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers-Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business)	Strongly Disagree	0	31	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	40
			0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
		Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Slightly Disagree	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
		Slightly Agree	5	10	8	1	0	0	0	0	24
		Agree	14	27	10	2	3	1	3	0	60
Strongly Agree		5	10	7	6	3	1	1	1	34	
Total		59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165	
			R_MOTIVATION								Total
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
*Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Venue owners or managers-Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business)	Strongly Disagree	0	37	23	7	1	0	0	0	0	68
			1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
		Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Slightly Disagree	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
		Slightly Agree	1	7	3	1	0	1	1	0	14
		Agree	13	15	9	1	3	0	2	0	43
Strongly Agree		5	11	7	6	3	1	1	1	35	
Total		59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165	
			R_MOTIVATION								Total
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
*Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)-Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business)	Strongly Disagree	0	17	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	21
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Disagree	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
		Slightly Disagree	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
		Slightly Agree	12	7	4	1	0	1	1	0	26
		Agree	18	27	9	4	4	0	2	0	64
Strongly Agree		7	21	10	4	2	1	1	1	47	
Total		59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165	
			R_MOTIVATION								Total
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
*Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with DMCs or incoming agencies-Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business)	Strongly Disagree	0	36	9	0	1	0	0	0	0	46
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Slightly Disagree	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
		Slightly Agree	7	12	3	0	0	1	0	0	23
		Agree	9	21	17	2	4	0	3	0	56
Strongly Agree		4	14	6	6	2	1	1	1	35	
Total		59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	165	
			R_MOTIVATION								Total
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
*Please value the following		0	30	10	1	1	0	0	0	0	42

statement concerning cooperation with Auxiliary service providers-Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business)	Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Disagree	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Slightly Disagree	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
	Slightly Agree	5	9	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	19
	Agree	17	25	14	3	3	0	2	0	0	64
	Strongly Agree	4	12	8	5	2	1	1	1	1	34
Total		59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	1	165
R_MOTIVATION										Total	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
*Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Association Management Companies-Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business)	Strongly Disagree	0	51	40	11	3	0	0	0	0	105
	Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Slightly Disagree	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	6
	Slightly Agree	1	4	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	11
	Agree	4	7	7	4	3	0	2	0	0	27
	Strongly Agree	1	4	4	2	2	1	1	1	1	16
Total		59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	1	165
R_MOTIVATION										Total	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
*Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Accommodation Providers (e.g.Hotels)-Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business)	Strongly Disagree	0	20	13	3	0	1	0	0	0	37
	Disagree	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Slightly Disagree	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	Slightly Agree	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Agree	11	12	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	28
	Strongly Agree	16	23	15	1	1	0	3	0	0	59
Total		7	8	7	6	3	1	1	1	1	34
Total		59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	1	165
R_MOTIVATION										Total	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
*Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Other agents-Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business)	Strongly Disagree	0	52	53	17	5	4	0	2	0	133
	Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Slightly Disagree	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Slightly Agree	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Agree	0	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	6
	Strongly Agree	4	2	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	12
Total		1	1	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	12
Total		59	58	26	9	6	2	4	1	1	165

Table 51 Crosstab Motivation with cooperation enhancing performance

In order to test whether these variables are related and how much if any, a Pearson Chi-square test was run. It shows that when this concerns cooperation with:

- **PCOs variables are quite related** (X^2 (35, N = 165) = 73.49, $p = .000$, and its contingency coefficient is .555, $p = .000$)
- **Venues variables are somewhat related** (X^2 (35, N = 165) = 53.85, $p = .022$) but not highly given its contingency coefficient being .496 ($p = .022$)
- CVBs variables are not related (X^2 (35, N = 165) = 44.39, $p = .133$, and its contingency coefficient is .460, $p = .133$)
- **DMCs variables are quite related** (X^2 (35, N = 165) = 85.33, $p = .000$) and its contingency coefficient is .584 ($p = .000$)
- **Auxiliary service providers variables are related** (X^2 (35, N = 165) = 61.84, $p = .003$, and its contingency coefficient is .522, $p = .003$)
- **Association Management Companies variables are quite related** (X^2 (35, N = 165) = 76.49, $p = .000$, and its contingency coefficient is .563, $p = .000$)
- Accommodation providers variables are not related (X^2 (35, N = 165) = 49.25, $p = .206$, and its contingency coefficient is .479, $p = .206$)
- **Other agents variables are related** (X^2 (35, N = 165) = 62.46, $p = .003$, and its contingency coefficient is .524 ($p = .003$))

In sum, the alternative hypothesis is validated for agents cooperating with all type of agents to different extents except for cooperation with CVBs and Accommodation providers, where the tests have been proven not significant.

Premise (μ): Member and not members of the respective CVB hold different views on cooperation enhancing performance.

Null hypothesis ($H_{0\mu1}$): There is no difference on views on cooperation enhancing performance, according to members and not members of the respective CVB.

In order to test this premise, variable [Q53dichotomy] was created based on question Q53. The new variable gathers, with value 1 those members of the CVB and those being CVB, and 2 else. Additionally the variables resulting from the questions on cooperation enhancing performance have been individually used (Q17, 21, 25, 29, 33, 37, 41 and 45).

These questions are phrased as follows: Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with [here there are the eight type of agents]: Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business).

Table 52

CVB members or not with Cooperation enhancing performance

	Q53dichotomy	Mean	N
PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers	1	3.97	138
	2	2.63	27
Total		3.75	165
Venue owners or managers	1	3.2	138
	2	1.93	27
Total		2.99	165
Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)	1	4.66	138
	2	3.04	27
Total		4.39	165
DMCs or incoming agencies	1	3.85	138
	2	2.44	27
Total		3.62	165
Auxiliary service providers	1	3.8	138
	2	3.41	27
Total		3.74	165
Association Management Companies	1	1.8	138
	2	1.63	27
Total		1.78	165
Accommodation Providers (e.g.Hotels)	1	3.91	138
	2	3.22	27
Total		3.79	165
Other agents	1	1.09	138
	2	0.37	27
Total		0.98	165

Table 52 CVB members or not with Cooperation enhancing performance

Perhaps the following graph further helps visualizing how in this sample (which does not count with the same amount of subjects for all type of agents) those agents being members of the CVB in all cases further agree on cooperation enhancing performance of their own company. Factor 2 represents the eight type of agents for which the question Q17 to Q45 is asked on cooperation enhancing performance of the subjects company on a six Likert scale.

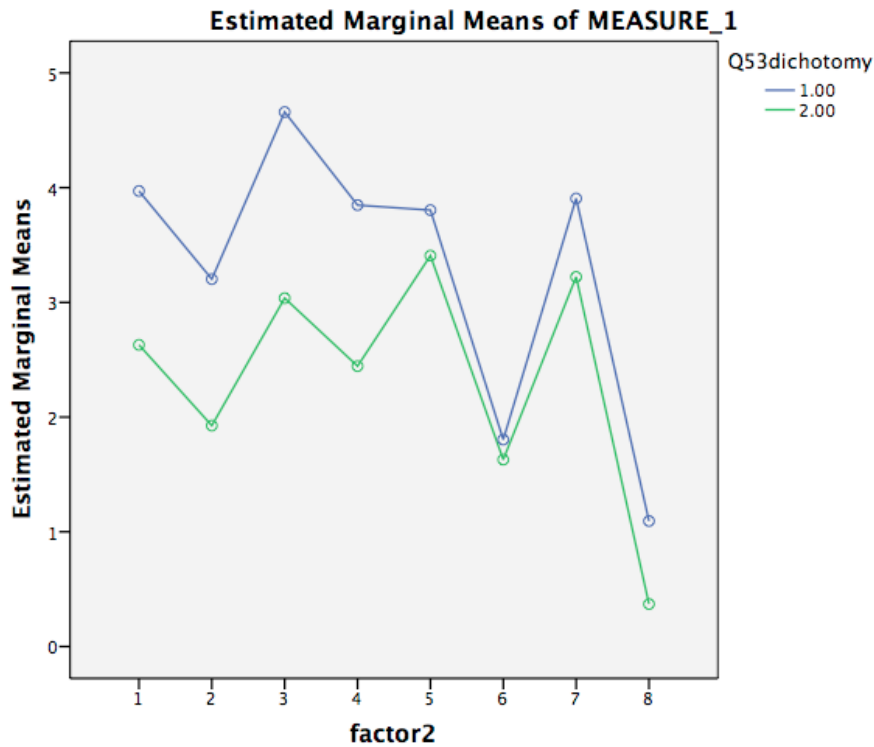


Figure 11 Estimated marginal means of Measure_1

None of the variables is normally distributed ($p = .000$) except for Q45 $p = .054$. Therefore, a non-parametric test was conducted. According to a Mann-Whitney U test in all cases those being part of the CVB obtain higher Sum of Ranks, than those not being members of the CVB. However, these results are not significant ([1] $p = .209$; ([2] $p = .914$; ([4] $p = .241$; ([5] $p = .771$; ([6] $p = .939$; ([7] $p = .260$; ([8] $p = .741$;) except for the case of Cooperation with CVB ($p = .006$). In sum, both the descriptive statistics and the Mann Whitney U test highlight that those members of the CVB further understand performance enhancement as a result of cooperation as opposed to non-members. However, these results are not significant and even in the case of the cooperation with

CVB, that are significant, they cannot be generalized given the characteristics of the current sample.

Premise (v): Older cooperative relationships are related to agreement on performance enhancement via cooperation.

Null hypothesis (H_{0v1}): There is no relation between the longevity of a cooperation dyad and its level of agreement with cooperation enhancing the performance of their business.

In order to test this premise four variables are needed: which type of agent the subject is (Q3); with which type of agent they cooperate (withwhom); and two variables which are eight repeated measures, first the ones related to the longevity of the cooperating dyad Q16, Q20, Q24, Q28, Q32, Q36, Q40, Q44 and then the cooperation enhancing performance variables Q17, Q21, Q25, Q29, Q33, Q37, Q41 y Q45.

A Spearman test is conducted and only in the following cases the correlation is significant: PCOs cooperating with Venues $R_s = -.543$, $p = .037$ and Accommodation providers with Auxiliary service providers $R_s = -.423$, $p = .039$ implying that the shorter the cooperation period the more inclined are PCOs cooperating with Venues and Accommodation providers with Auxiliary service providers to agree on cooperation enhancing performance of their business, this is refuting the premise; then Venues with Association Management Companies results on $R_s = .814$, $p = .026$, which on the contrary validates the premise.

Table 53 Mean of cooperation longevity, Mean of degree of agreement with cooperation enhancing performance, R squared and number of instances between which type of agent the respondent is and with which type of agent they cooperate																								
	PCO			Venue			CVB			DMC			Auxiliar			Association Management			Accommodation Providers			Others		
	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean	Longevity Mean	Enhance Mean		
PCO	3,08	N=13	4,54	3,40	5,20	5,05	3,64	4,91	3,47	N=19	5,05	4,80	3,67	N=21	4,95	3,00	4,80	3,67	N=5	5,05	4,80	3,67	N=3	4,33
		Rs=0,137						Rs=0,269		Rs=0,095				Rs=0,420			Rs=0,471						Rs=0,000	
Venue	3,08	N=13	4,85	2,80	4,80	5,08	3,36	4,64	3,54	N=13	5,00	4,85	3,00	4,50	3,00	5,00	4,85	3,00	N=7	5,00	4,50	3,00	N=1	5,00
		Rs=0,376						Rs=0,111		Rs=0,032				Rs=0,133			Rs=0,814							
C Bureau	3,42	N=19	5,32	3,42	5,63	5,41	3,42	5,32	3,50	N=17	5,41	5,44	3,27	3,60	5,60	3,56	5,36	3,60	N=11	5,36	5,60	3,56	N=9	5,67
		Rs=0,191						Rs=0,004		Rs=0,185				Rs=0,139			Rs=0,249						Rs=0,382	
DMC	2,00	N=9	5,22	2,90	5,00	4,80	2,83	5,17	3,08	N=10	4,80	5,00	2,80	3,55	5,09	2,50	5,00	3,55	N=5	5,00	5,09	2,50	N=2	4,50
		Rs=0,287						Rs=0,059		Rs=0,037				Rs=0,269			Rs=0,645						Rs=0,000	
Auxiliar	3,36	N=11	5,00	3,38	4,75	4,62	3,33	4,33	3,31	N=13	4,62	4,62	3,33	3,89	4,44	3,75	4,67	3,89	N=3	4,67	4,44	3,75	N=4	4,75
		Rs=0,224						Rs=0,265		Rs=0,063				Rs=0,500			Rs=0,306						Rs=0,544	
Accommodat	3,37	N=35	4,89	3,27	4,86	5,16	3,59	5,11	3,50	N=37	5,16	4,92	3,57	4,68	4,00	5,20	4,43	3,57	N=14	4,43	4,68	4,00	N=5	5,20
		Rs=0,120						Rs=0,321		Rs=0,423				Rs=0,204										
Others	3,12	N=25	4,92	3,28	5,00	4,91	3,19	5,08	3,38	N=35	4,91	5,08	2,87	4,74	2,75	4,75	4,93	3,19	N=15	4,93	4,74	2,75	N=8	4,75
		Rs=0,178						Rs=0,024		Rs=0,104				Rs=0,277			Rs=0,622							Rs=0,622

Table 53 Mean of cooperation longevity, Mean of degree of agreement with cooperation enhancing performance, R squared and number of instances

between which type of agent the respondent is and with which type of agent they cooperate

As a summary of the hypotheses having been tested concerning cooperation, the following table gathers the premise, the corresponding null hypotheses and whether they were rejected or not.

Table 54 Summary of Hypotheses Testing on Cooperation		
	Premises and Hypotheses	Rejection
α	There is a relation between which type of agent the respondent is and with which type of agent they cooperate.	
	$H_{0\alpha1}$ There is no relation between which type of agent the respondent is (Q4) and with which type of agent they cooperate.	No
β	Organizations being part of the local Convention and Visitors Bureau cooperate with more agents than those that are not.	
	$H_{0\beta1}$ There is no difference on the amount of type of agents with whom a subject cooperates, depending on that subject being member or not of the local CVB	Yes
γ	Older companies cooperate with more agents than younger companies.	
	$H_{0\gamma1}$ There is no difference on the amount of agents with whom subjects cooperate, per agents' companies being younger or older (more than ten years old).	Yes*
δ	Locally based agents cooperate with more agents and/or for more motivations, as opposed to national, international, multinational entities.	
	$H_{0\delta1}$ national, international, multinational entities cooperate with more agents.	Yes*
	$H_{0\delta2}$ national, international, multinational entities cooperate for more motivations than locally based agents	Yes*
ε	National, international, multinational entities do not prioritize cooperation with locally based agents against cooperation with agents based elsewhere.	
	$H_{0\varepsilon1}$ national, international, multinational entities prioritize cooperation with locally based agents against cooperation with agents based elsewhere.	No
ζ	national, international, multinational entities have relations with more agents away than locally based agents	
	$H_{0\zeta1}$ there is no difference between local versus national, international, multinational entities on having more or less relations with agents based away than locally based agents.	Yes*
η	Certain dyads' motivation for cooperation is larger than others	
	$H_{0\eta1}$ there is no relation between which type of agent the subject is, with whom they cooperate and for how many reasons (more or less than others) that motivates them.	No
θ	Older cooperative relationships are related to amount of reasons motivating cooperation.	
	$H_{0\theta1}$ there is no relation between longevity of cooperation among types of agents and amount of reasons motivating cooperation.	Yes

ι	Members of the local CVB hold different views on tightness of relations and cooperativeness environment within the destination than non-members.	
<i>H_{0ι1}</i>	<i>There is no difference among agents, members of the CVB, and those that are not members, concerning their understanding on the destination tightness of relations.</i>	Yes*
<i>H_{0ι2}</i>	<i>There is no difference among agents, members of the CVB, and those that are not members, concerning their understanding on the destination cooperativeness environment.</i>	Yes ¹
κ	younger (less than 10 years old companies) and older companies hold different views on tightness of relations and cooperativeness environment within the destination	
<i>H_{0κ1}</i>	<i>There is no difference on the perspective of cooperativeness environment within the destination according to less or more than ten-year-old companies.</i>	Yes*
<i>H_{0κ2}</i>	<i>There is no difference on the perspective of tightness of relations of the destination according to less or more than ten-year-old companies</i>	Yes*
λ	Larger amount of reasons motivating to cooperate is related to agreeing that cooperation enhances performance	
<i>H_{0λ1}</i>	<i>there is no relation between number of reasons motivating agents to cooperate and agreement or disagreement on cooperation enhancing performance.</i>	Yes
μ	Member and not members of the respective CVB hold different views on cooperation enhancing performance.	
<i>H_{0μ1}</i>	<i>There is no difference on views on cooperation enhancing performance, according to members and not members of the respective CVB.</i>	Yes*
ν	Older cooperative relationships are related to agreement on performance enhancement via cooperation.	
<i>H_{0ν1}</i>	<i>There is no relation between the longevity of a cooperation dyad and its level of agreement with cooperation enhancing the performance of their business.</i>	Yes ¹

Table 54 Summary of Hypotheses Testing on Cooperation

Please note:

Some of the null hypotheses are rejected based on the sample data, however these results are not significant, these cases are marked with an asterisk *. Also, others are rejected and significant only for some type of dyads or types of agents, this is marked with a ¹.

Synthesis

In sum, concentrating on significant results, CVBs appear to hold a central position according to the sample; those agents members of their respective local CVB and those businesses where MI is more central cooperate also with more agents; members of local CVB hold different views on the cooperative environment of the destination; more mature cooperation relationships hold more reasons motivating dyads to continue cooperating.

Finally those dyads holding larger reasons motivating to cooperate, and those more mature cooperation relationships, further agree on cooperation enhancing performance.

4.5. Positional Embeddedness Network Analysis

Network analysis is conducted to address the positional embeddedness within the cities being part of the study. The aim is to identify the most central organizations, defined as those cooperating with the largest number of agents and with the strongest cooperation, measured via nodal degree and weighted in-degree. This is done for Barcelona, Bilbao, Bogotá, Medellín, San Sebastián and Vitoria, as they count with ten or more respondents. Gephi is used to conduct this analysis and present the graphs.

Interpreting the graphs

Node color represents nodal degree and the node's size represents weighted in-degree or weighted out-degree depending on the graph. It could occur that intense colored nodes are not the largest; this would imply the node holds one of the highest number of links, but other nodes hold higher arc weight.

The respondent's type of agent is represented as follows TYPEOFAGENT + CITY + #, PCOBCN1 for instance. The agents code name is as follows: for PCOs or specialized meeting organizers is PCO, VENUE for venue managers or owners, CVB for Convention and Visitors Bureaux, DMC for Destination Management Company, AUX for Auxiliary Service Providers, AMC for Association Management Company, ACC for accommodation providers and OTH for others. The cities' code name is: BCN for Barcelona, BIO for Bilbao, BOG for Bogotá, MED for Medellín, SS for San Sebastian and VITO for Vitoria. Then the number appears if there is more than one agent of that

type and city that has responded, and represents the random order in which respondents completed the survey.

The type of agent with whom the respondents affirm cooperating brings a G before (e.g. GDMCBIO), in the sense of this being a Group, not a single agent, with the exception of CVB that as there is only one per destination, there is no G, so there are destinations with reciprocal arcs.

Measures provided

Each destination counts with information on:

Order of the network = number of nodes

Size of the network = number of links

Nodal Degree = number of links a single node has

Average weighted degree = Average of sum of weights of the edges of nodes

Ranking on nodal degree (colour in the graph)

Ranking on weighted in-degree (node size in the graph)

Ranking on weighted out-degree (node size in the graph)

Results per City

BARCELONA

Order of the network = number of nodes = 24

Size of the network = number of links = 88

Nodal Degree = {3 – 23}

Average weighted degree = 82.875

Table 55

Barcelona Nodal degree ranking

23	CVB
16	GPCO
14	GDMC
11	GACC, GAUX
9	GVENUE
8	GAMC
7	VENUEBCN5, ACCBCN8
6	ACCBCN6, ACCBCN7, VENUEBCN2, ACCBCN5, VENUEBCN4, ACCBCN4
5	ACCBCN3, AUXBCN
4	VENUEBCN1, OTHBCN1, ACCBCN2
3	GOTHBCN, ACCBCN1, DMCBCN, VENUEBCN3

Table 55 Barcelona nodal degree ranking

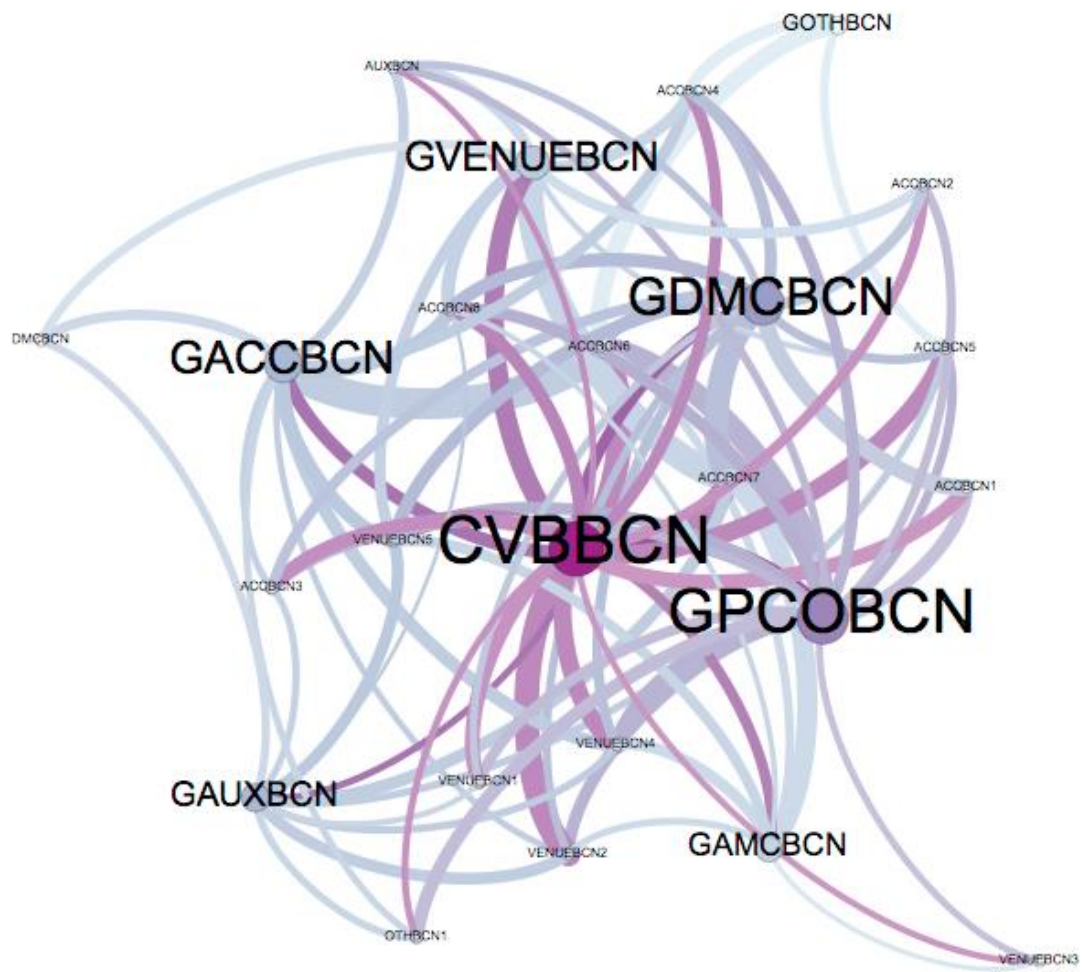


Figure 12 Barcelona weighted in-degree

Table 56

Barcelona weighted in-degree ranking

427	CVBBCN
386	GPCOBCN
313	GDMCBCN
257	GACCBCN
222	GVENUEBCN
168	GAUXBCN
146	GAMCBCN
70	GOTHCBCN

Table 56 Barcelona weighted in-degree ranking

Table 57			
<i>Barcelona weighted out-degree ranking</i>			
246	ACCBCN7	89	ACCBCN3
214	ACCBCN6	84	ACCBCN1
166	VENUEBCN5	82	AUXBCN
159	CVBBCN	76	ACCBCN2
141	ACCBCN8	72	VENUEBCN1
139	VENUEBCN4	65	OTHBCN1
132	ACCBCN4	51	DMCBCN
130	VENUEBCN2	34	VENUEBCN3
109	ACCBCN5		

Table 57 Barcelona weighted out-degree ranking

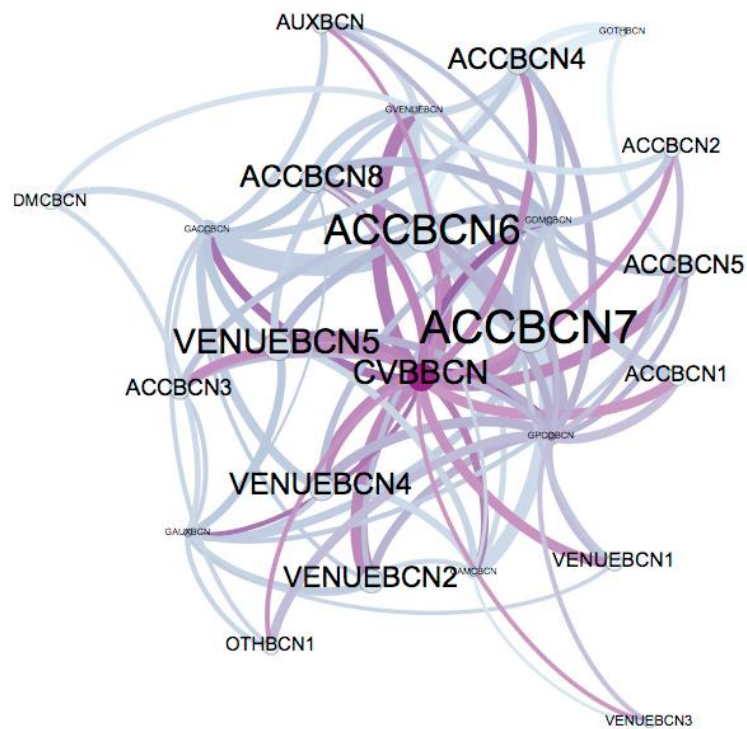


Figure 13 Barcelona weighted out-degree

Barcelona appears to count with the Convention and Visitor Bureau as the most central actor; not only by holding the highest degree but also the highest weighted in-degree. This means that Barcelona CVB not only cooperates with the largest number of agents but also the strength of such cooperation is the highest according to the measures used in this study and the sample gathered. Then, the following two more relevant actors concerning weighted in-degree are PCOs and DMCs.

BILBAO

Order of the network = number of nodes = 24

Size of the network = number of links = 88

Nodal Degree = {1 – 22}

Average weighted degree = 85.875

Degree ranking:

Table 58	
<i>Bilbao Nodal degree ranking</i>	
22	CVB
15	GAUX
14	GPCO, GACC
13	GDMC
12	GVENUE
8	OTHBIO2
7	AUXBIO5, AUXBIO6
6	ACCBIO2, AUXBIO4
5	PCOBIO1, VENUEBIO1, VENUEBIO2, AUXBIO3, OTHBIO1, PCOBIO2, PCOBIO3
4	ACCBIO1
3	AUXBIO1, VENUEBIO3, AUXBIO2, GAMCBIO
1	GOTHBIO

Table 58 Bilbao nodal degree ranking

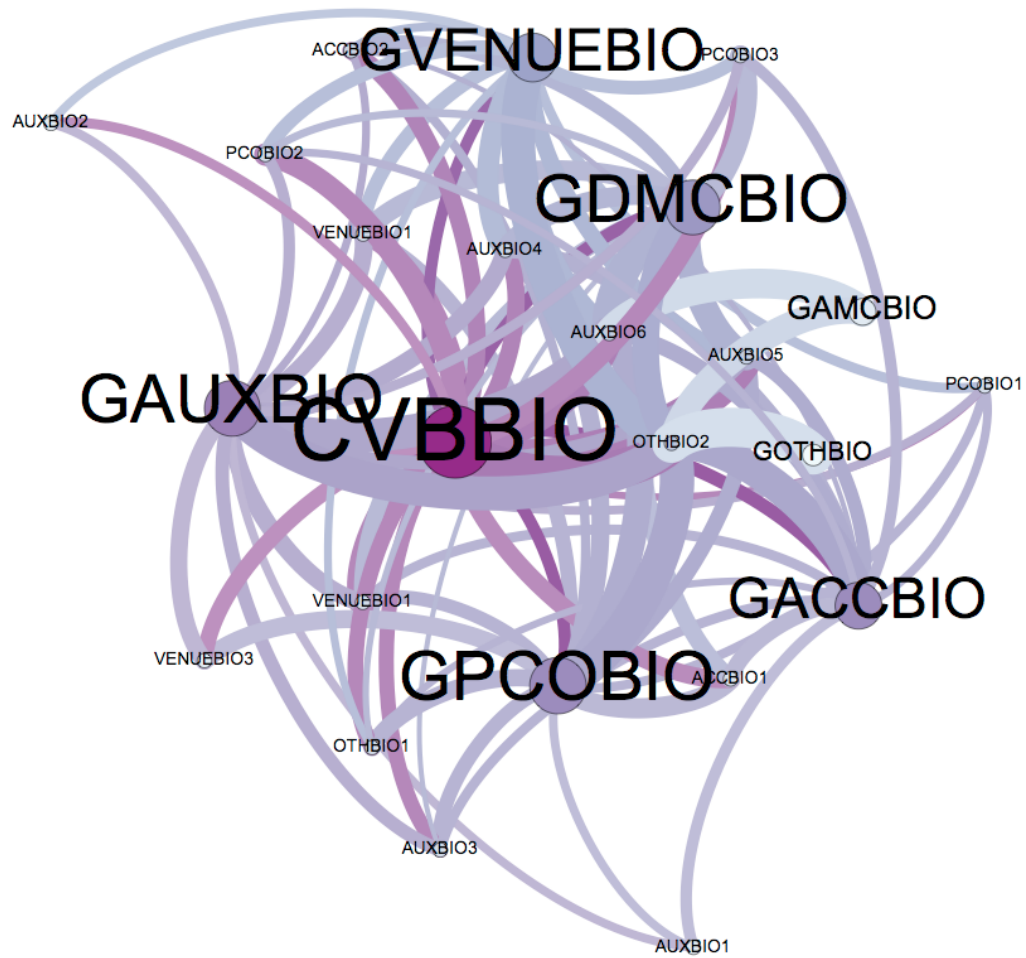


Figure 14 Bilbao weighted in-degree

Table 59	
<i>Bilbao weighted in-degree ranking</i>	
447	CVBBIO
324	GPCOBIO
318	GAUXBIO
311	GDMCBIO
264	GVENUEBIO
249	GACCBIO
94	GAMCBIO
54	GOTHBIO

Table 59 Bilbao weighted in-degree ranking

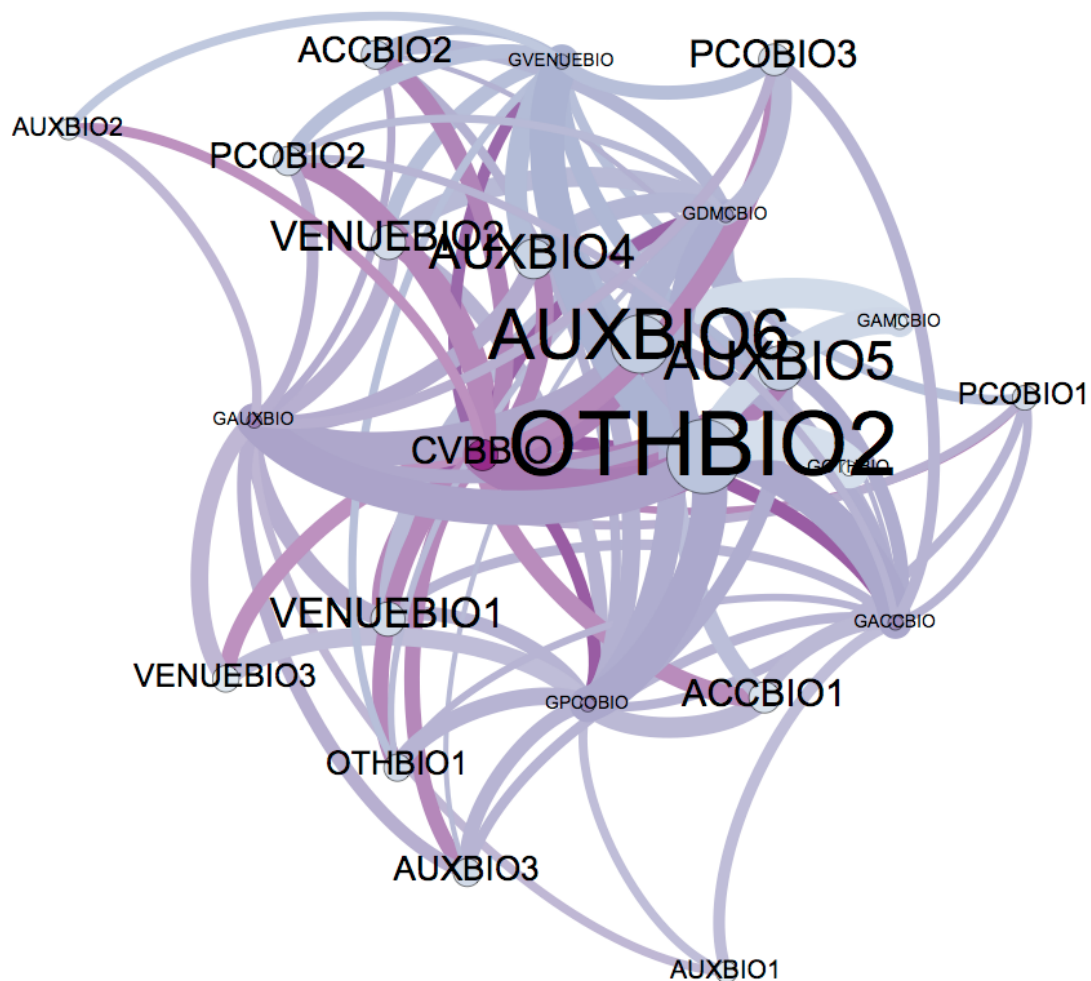


Figure 15 Bilbao weighted out degree

TABLE 60			
<i>Bilbao weighted out-degree ranking</i>			
366	OTHBIO2	89	PCOBIO2
268	AUXBIO6	87	ACCBIO2
185	AUXBIO5	81	AUXBIO3
153	AUXBIO4	76	OTHBIO1
120	VENUEBIO2	72	VENUEBIO3
119	VENUEBIO1	61	PCOBIO1
104	PCOBIO3	40	AUXBIO1
101	CVBBIO	39	AUXBIO2
100	ACCBIO1		

Table 60 Bilbao weighted out-degree ranking

Bilbao appears to count with the Convention and Visitor Bureau as the most central actor; not only by holding the highest degree but also the highest weighted in-degree. This means that Bilbao CVB not only cooperates with the largest number of agents but also the strength of such cooperation is the highest according to the measures used in this study and the sample gathered. Then, the following two more relevant actors concerning weighted in-degree are PCOs and auxiliary service providers.

BOGOTA

Order of the network = number of nodes = 20

Size of the network = number of links = 59

Nodal Degree = {1 – 18}

Average weighted degree = 74.450

Table 61	
<i>Bogota Nodal degree ranking</i>	
18	CVB
10	GAUX, GACC
9	GPCO
7	VENUEBOG, OTHBOG1, DMCBOG, GVENUE
6	GDMC, GAMC
5	AUXBOG2
4	PCOBOG3, AUXBOG1, ACCBOG2
3	PCOBOG2, PCOBOG4, PCOBOG1
2	OTHBOG2, AUXBOG3
1	ACCBG1

Table 61 Bogota nodal degree ranking

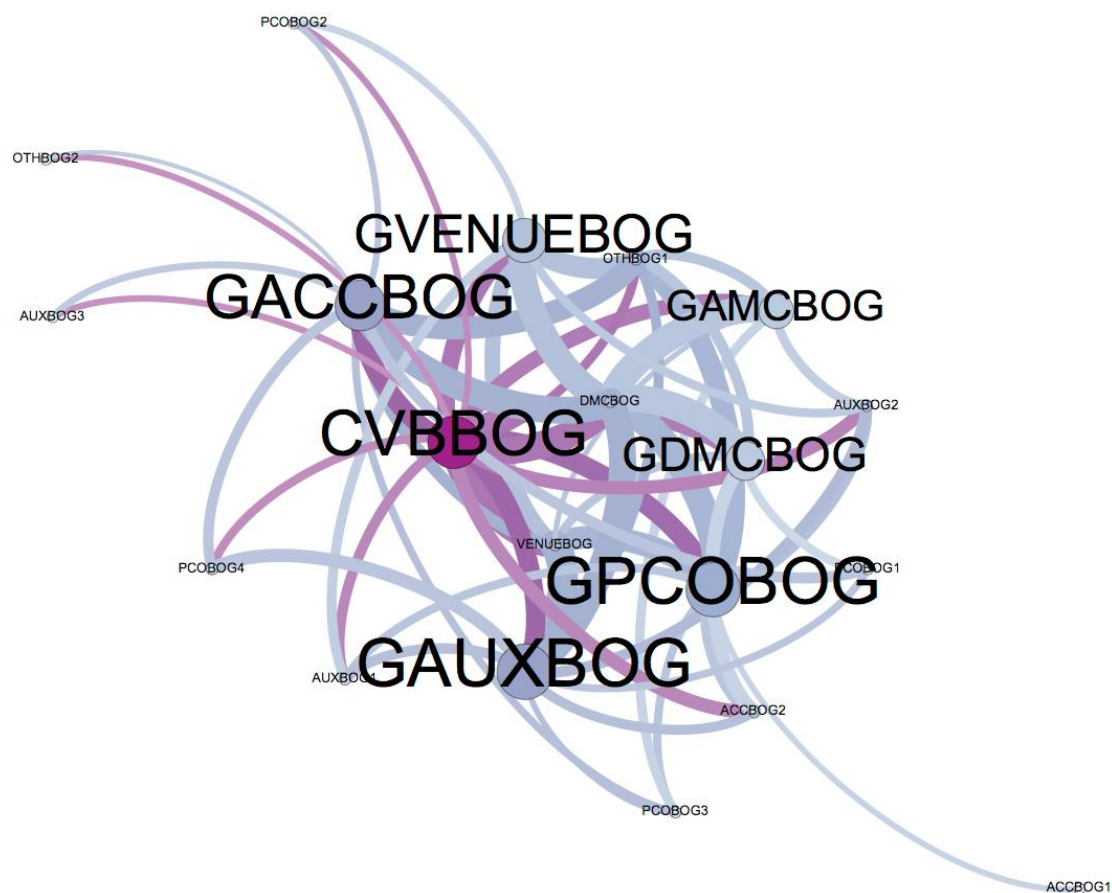


Figure 16 Bogota weighted in degree

Table 62

Bogota weighted in-degree ranking

262	GAUX
254	GPCO
243	CVB
233	GACC
194	GVENUE
163	GDMC
140	GAMC

Table 62 Bogota weighted in-degree ranking

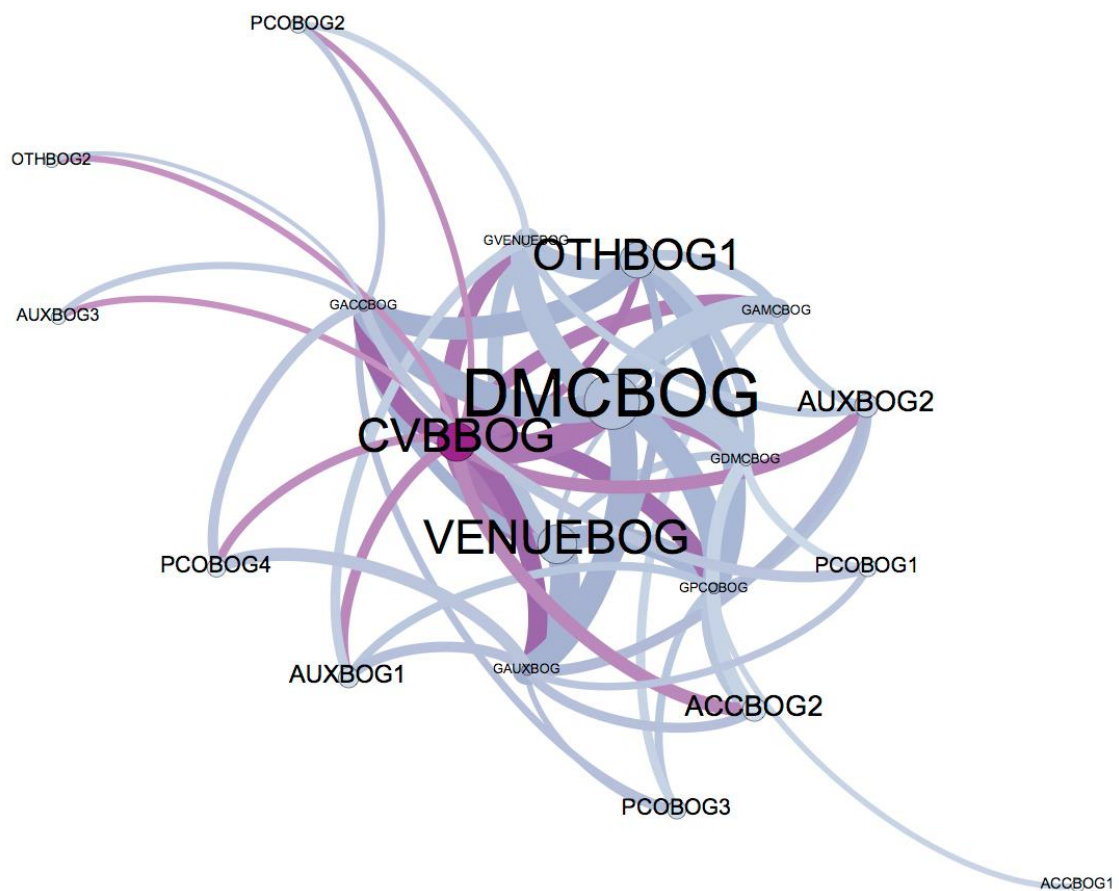


Figure 17 Bogotá weighted out degree

Table 63 <i>Bogota weighted out-degree ranking</i>			
343	DMCBOG	57	PCOBOG3
217	VENUEBOG	50	PCOBOG1
214	CVBBOG	37	PCOBOG2
192	OTHBOG1	25	AUXBOG3
96	AUXBOG2, ACCBOG2	20	OTHBOG2
72	AUXBOG1	11	ACCBG1
59	PCOBOG4		

Table 63 Bogota weighted out-degree ranking

Bogota appears to count with auxiliary service providers as the most central actor considering the highest weighted in-degree; if nodal degree is considered this would be the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Therefore, the CVB of Bogota, according to the

sample gathered cooperates with the largest number of agents, however the strength of such cooperation, according to the measures of the present study is not the tightest, it is the third. Then, between the Auxiliary service providers as first, and the CVB as third, the second are PCOs.

MEDELLIN

Order of the network = number of nodes = 22

Size of the network = number of links = 68

Nodal Degree = {1 – 13}

Average weighted degree = 65.409

Table 64

Medellin Nodal degree ranking

13	CVB
11	GAUX, GACC
9	GPCO
8	PCOMED4, GVENUE, GDMC
7	ACCMED3
6	PCOMED3, VENUEMED, DMCMED2, DMCMED3, OTHMED
5	PCOMED2
4	DMCMED1, AUXMED2, PCOMED1, GAMCMED, GOTHMED
3	ACCMED2
2	ACCMED1
1	AUXMED1

Table 64 Medellin nodal degree ranking

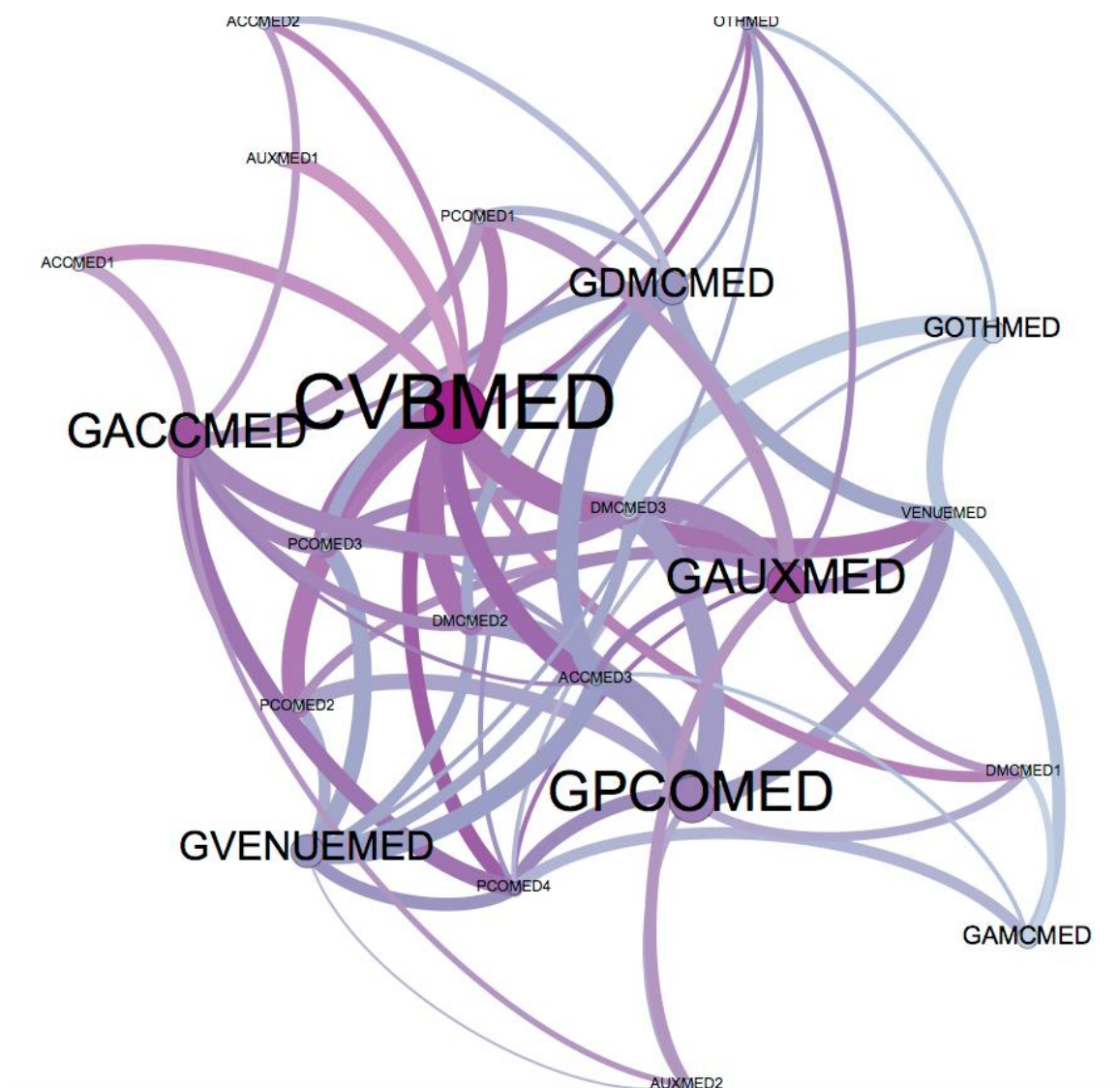


Figure 18 Medellin weighted in degree

Table 65	
<i>Medellin weighted in-degree ranking</i>	
370	CVB
246	GPCO
199	GAUX
197	GACC
149	GVENUE
147	GDMC
72	GOTH
59	GAMC

Table 65 Medellin weighted in-degree ranking

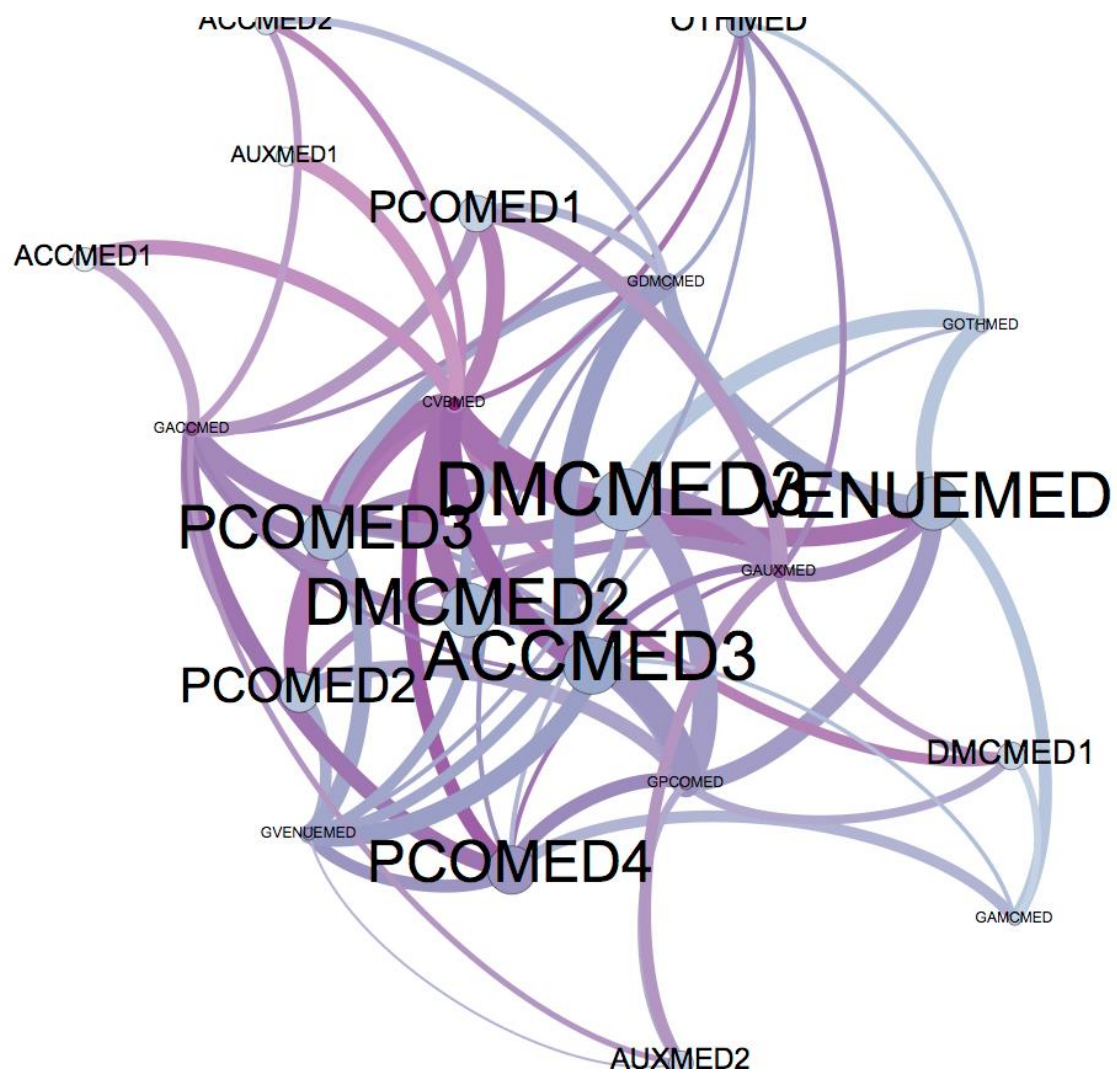


Figure 19 Medellin weighted out degree

Table 66

Medellin weighted out-degree ranking

192	DMCMED3	93	PCOMED1
173	ACCMED3	59	DMCMED1
161	DMCMED2	55	OTHMED
158	VENUEMED	46	AUXMED2
147	PCOMED3	44	ACCMED1
139	PCOMED4	40	ACCMED2
107	PCOMED2	25	AUXMED1

Table 66 Medellin weighted out-degree ranking

Medellin appears to count with the Convention and Visitor Bureau as the most central actor; not only by holding the highest degree but also the highest weighted in-degree. This means that Medellin CVB not only cooperates with the largest number of agents but also the strength of such cooperation is the highest according to the measures used in this study and the sample gathered. Then, the following two more relevant actors concerning weighted in-degree are PCOs and auxiliary service providers.

SAN SEBASTIAN

Order of the network = number of nodes = 25

Size of the network = number of links = 87

Nodal Degree = {3 – 16}

Average weighted degree = 69.64

Table 67

San Sebastian nodal degree ranking

16	CVB
15	GDMC
14	GACC
13	GAUX
11	GPCO
8	ACCSS6, GVENUE
7	CVBSS2, OTHSS2
6	ACCSS2, ACCSS3, ACCSS4, ACCSS5, OTHSS1, GAMC
5	PCOSS1, PCOSS2, VENUESS
4	AUXSS3, AUXSS4, GOTH
3	AUXSS2, AUXSS1, ACCSS1, AUXSS5

Table 67 San Sebastian nodal degree ranking

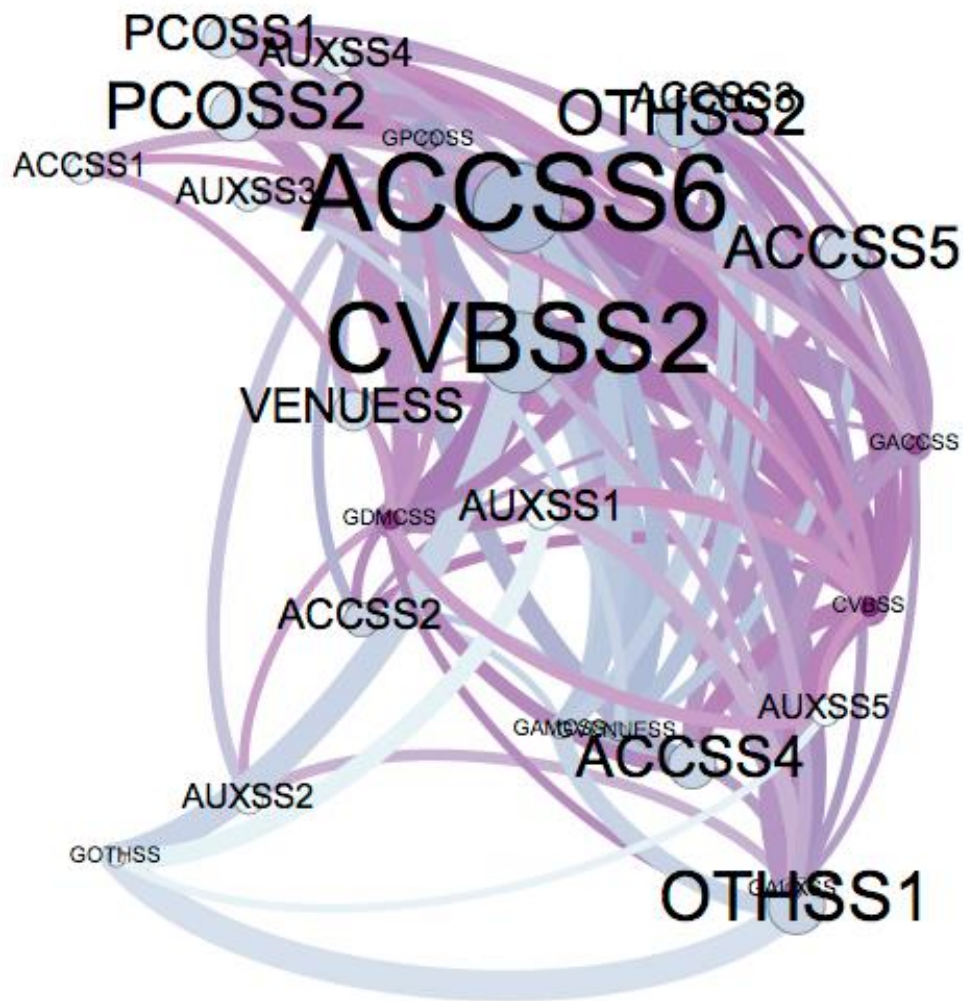


Figure 21 San Sebastian weighted out degree

Table 69			
San Sebastian weighted out-degree ranking			
273	ACCSS6	83	VENUESS
241	CVBSS2	65	AUXSS1
148	OTHSS1	63	ACCSS2, ACCSS3
138	PCOSS2	57	AUXSS4
131	OTHSS2	47	AUXSS3
120	ACCSS5	39	AUXSS2
113	ACCSS4	38	AUXSS5
84	PCOSS1		

Table 69 San Sebastian weighted out-degree ranking

San Sebastian appears to count with the Convention and Visitor Bureau as the most central actor; not only by holding the highest degree but also the highest weighted in-degree. This means that San Sebastian CVB not only cooperates with the largest number of agents but also the strength of such cooperation is the highest according to the measures used in this study and the sample gathered. Then, the following two more relevant actors concerning weighted in-degree are PCOs and DMC. DMC appeared as second concerning nodal degree, however PCOs are fifth in the ranking of nodal degree, and the weight of such arcs has made PCOs be second on weighted in-degree. Clearly indicated that PCOs cooperation ties in San Sebastian might not be the most numerous but are significantly strong, always taking into account the sample gathered and measures used as part of this study.

VITORIA

Order of the network = number of nodes = 16

Size of the network = number of links = 45

Nodal Degree = {1 – 8}

Average weighted degree = 46.938

Table 70

Vitoria nodal degree ranking

8	CVB, GAUX
7	DMCVITO2, ACCVITO5, GDMCVITO
6	GPCOVITO, AUXVITO2, ACCVITO4, GVENUEVITO, OTHVITO1
5	ACCVITO2, ACCVITO3, GAMCVITO, GACCVITO
2	DMCVITO1
1	ACCVITO1

Table 70 Vitoria nodal degree ranking

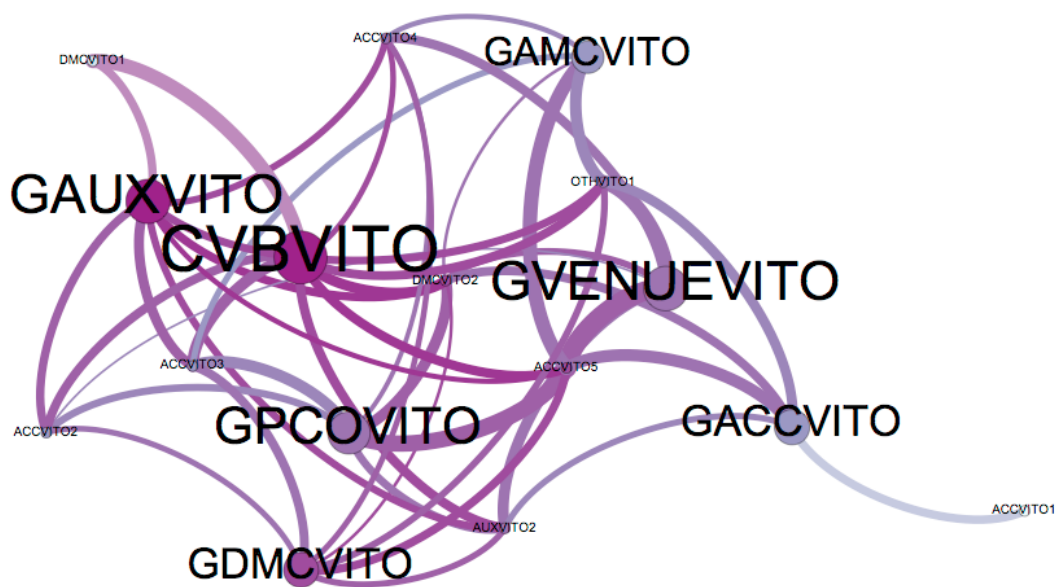


Figure 22 Vitoria weighted in degree

Table 71	
<i>Vitoria weighted in-degree ranking</i>	
150	CVB
120	GVENUE
119	GAUX
112	GPCO
87	GACC
86	GDMC
77	GAMC

Table 71 Vitoria weighted in-degree ranking

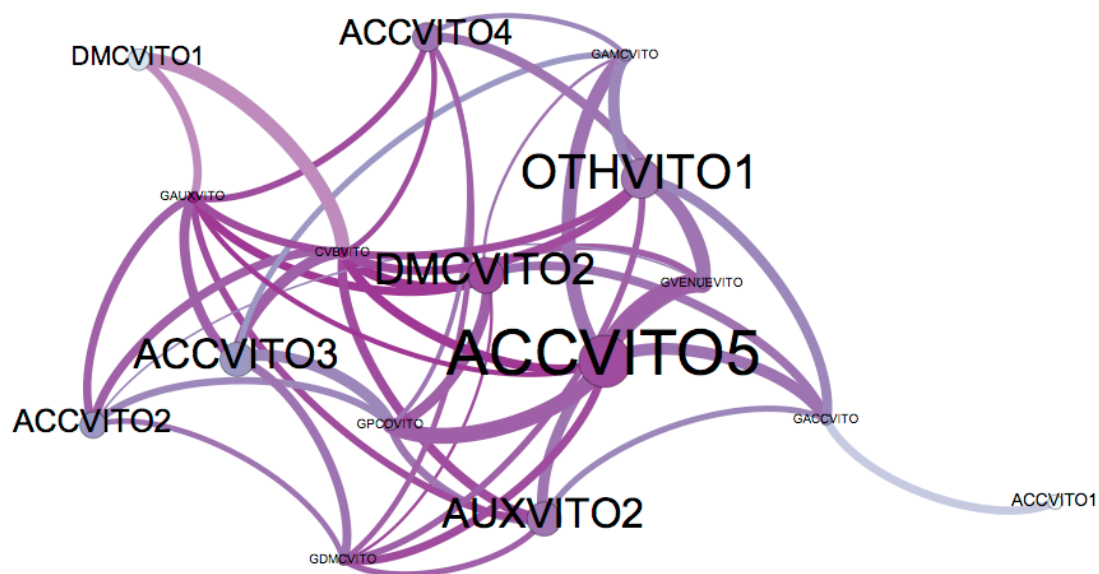


Figure 23 Vitoria weighted out degree

Table 72	
Vitoria weighted out-degree ranking	
162	ACCVITO5
113	OTHVITO1
99	DMCVITO2
92	ACCVITO3
72	ACCVITO4
62	ACCVITO2
43	DMCVITO1
16	ACCVITO1

Table 72 Vitoria weighted out-degree ranking

Vitoria appears to count with the Convention and Visitor Bureau as the most central actor; not only by holding the highest degree (shared with Auxiliary service providers) but also the highest weighted in-degree. This means that Vitoria CVB not only cooperates with the largest number of agents but also the strength of such cooperation is the highest according to the measures used in this study and the sample gathered. Then, the following two more relevant actors concerning weighted in-degree are Venues and Auxiliary service providers.

Conclusions on these six cities directed weighted network topology analysis

When looking at all these six cities three main actors stand out according to weighted in-degree, as shown in the following table. It would appear that CVB and PCOs are clearly relevant for respondents, followed by Auxiliary service providers.

Table 73 Three main actors based on weighted in-degree per city			
Barcelona	CVB	Medellin	CVB
	PCO		PCO
	DMC		AUX
Bilbao	CVB	San Sebastian	CVB
	PCO		PCO
	AUX		OTH
Bogota	AUX	Vitoria	CVB
	PCO		VENUE
	CVB		AUX
Table 73 Three main actors based on weighted in-degree per city			

This conclusion should be understood taking into account that the sample is not large for any of these cities, CVBs where the point of entry to these destinations, and that auxiliary service providers embody numerous services (catering, stand construction, translation services, etc.).

Clearly, PCOs are key actors when international association meetings are considered, so there is no surprise on this result. Perhaps the surprise lies on venues. Venues are a sine qua non requirement for meetings to occur.

However, venues do not appear as relevant, only in the case of Vitoria, venues make it to the top three of nodal degree and weighted in-degree. In smaller cities, such as Bilbao, San Sebastián, Vitoria, it could be argued that the size of the meeting tends to define the only possible venue to host it, so perhaps this would explain the absence of cooperation results with venues. In the case of cities such as Barcelona, Bogotá or Medellín, where numerous options are available, the explanation appears unclear.

Table 74			
<i>Three main actors based on nodal degree per city</i>			
Barcelona	CVB	Medellin	CVB
	PCO		AUX – ACC
	DMC		PCO
Bilbao	CVB	San Sebastian	CVB
	AUX		DMC
	PCO - ACC		ACC
Bogota	CVB	Vitoria	CVB – AUX
	AUX - ACC		DMC, ACC....
	PCO		PCO, VENUE,...
Table 74 Three main actors based on nodal degree per city			

Another element comparing nodal degree ranking and weighted in-degree ranking is that accommodation providers tend to be among the top three for degree but are not in the top three concerning weighted in degree. This may respond to the fact that accommodation providers perhaps are perceived as merely instrumental and the motivations for such cooperation are not as high.

If the top three weighted out-degree are regarded, studying source-wise instead of target, accommodation providers appeared to be highly connected. It should be taken into account that in many of these cities respondents' business type is higher for accommodation providers.

Table 75			
Three main actors based on weighted out-degree per city			
Barcelona	ACC	Medellin	DMC
	ACC		ACC
	VENUE		DMC
Bilbao	OTH	San Sebastian	ACC
	AUX		CVB
	AUX		OTH
Bogota	DMC	Vitoria	ACC
	VENUE		OTH
	CVB		DMC
Table 75 Three main actors based on weighted out-degree per city			

5. Conclusions and Implications

This chapter is divided into five sections. In the first section, the proposed major hypotheses are reviewed in relation to the research findings. The second and third sections respectively provide the theoretical and practical implications of the study. The limitations of this study are discussed in the fourth section followed by the final section, which concerns recommendations for future research.

5.1. Review of Research Findings

The purpose of this doctoral dissertation was to contribute to the development of theory by exploring and deepening into the concept of cooperation, developing, testing and hopefully validating a methodology to empirically measure cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders within city destinations. This is a pioneer and exploratory research where the dependent concept is known, though its measurement is unknown, its independent concepts were unknown and propositions are made in order to contribute to theory. Moreover, these propositions, beyond a mere discussion, are tested via an experiment, which results on the validation of the conceptual framework are presented.

The concept cooperation was studied, reviewing how the literature had approached it, and it is certainly a complex construct. It has been explored from a vast set of disciplines: economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, political science, organizational behaviour, organization theory and strategic management (Smith, Carrol & Ashford, 1995) to name but a few. However the core focus of studies on cooperation was not empirically measuring it, rather analysing the factors fostering it or on the contrary acting as barriers. Exploring three main perspectives from which cooperation had been most studied: economic exchange, social relationship and value creation, allowed identifying numerous elements that could potentially be independent or intervening variables. Moreover, the literature review helped discerning the relevance of firms being embedded on a given social context, thus in the patch of the social relationship perspective. As such, cooperation as a construct was broken down into another three sub-constructs, relational, structural and positional embeddedness. Hence, the main finding lies on the validation of a methodology that allows operationalizing the measurement of the first two sub-

constructs, which in turn provides cooperation scores per each international city participating in the survey. The third sub-construct, positional embeddedness, was analysed separately, using the cooperation dyads identified as part of the survey and studying the weighted in-degree topography of the network of a set of cities.

Analysing the survey findings on cooperation, it is relevant to note the key role of CVBs, Accommodation Providers, PCOs and Auxiliary Providers as most agents cooperate with these, and how venues, despite being a condition *sine qua non*, are comparatively not as relevant. The network topography analysis performed for six of the cities participating in the study confirms the central role of CVBs and PCOs. Moreover, not only CVBs on their own hold many cooperation dyads, there is a statistically proven relation between being a member of the CVB and (1) cooperating with more agents, (2) holding different views on the tightness of relations and cooperativeness environment within the destination, and (3) on cooperation enhancing performance. The same way, being an older businesses or one exclusively based on the destination is related with cooperating with more agents within the destination, and for more motivations.

The main motivation for agents to cooperate with each other, is rather instrumental, event production and execution, but then additional key motivations refer to getting more businesses, such as: participation in fairs/trade-shows abroad (especially when cooperating with CVBs), providing technical visits for potential clients (especially when cooperating with CVBs and PCOs), destination promotion (especially when cooperating with CVBs and PCOs). Furthermore, the amount of motivations appears to be related to

the longevity of the cooperation among agents and the perception on cooperation enhancing performance.

Concerning barriers to cooperation, the absence of perception on the return on investment is the major one, and for cooperation to improve, respondents see the key on: working on further share of information, working on trust issues, fostering a cooperation culture, and further alignment of goals, all of these factors are consistent with the studies mentioned as part of the literature review.

Additionally, it may seem relevant to highlight that as a result of the analysis of the sample, it has been proven that the perception on cooperation enhancing performance of the respondent's business is related to long-standing cooperation dyads and with respondents being members of the local CVB.

5.2. Theoretical implications

Numerous authors stress the relevance of cooperation for improved competitiveness of destinations (Araujo & Bramwell, 2002; Beritelli & Laesser, 2011; Buhalis, 2000; Crouch, 2007; Go & Appleman, 2000; Timothy, 1999; UNWTO, 2007; Wilkinson & March, 2008). There were two significant burdens hindering the test of such accepted statement. On the one hand, the literature lacked research on empirical validated methodologies to quantify cooperation among stakeholders within a given local destination. On the other hand, both nations and cities where these meetings occur find themselves lacking a full picture of what this industry means for their respective economies (UNWTO, ICCA, MPI & Reed Travel Exhibitions, 2006; ICCA, 2013; UNWTO, 2014). This is due partly to the complexity of the industry's structure itself as it is closely connected to many others, for instance tourism, and partly due to a lack of widespread implementation of international standards on its measurement, that still today are to be defined, especially at the local level (UNWTO, ICCA, MPI & Reed Travel Exhibitions, 2006).

Therefore, the present research contributes to the literature in two ways. (1) This pioneering and exploratory research contributes to theory on organizational cooperation in the tourism domain from an embeddedness perspective by proposing a conceptual framework for measuring cooperation. (2) A methodology to empirically measure cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders within city tourism destinations from a scalable, replicable and statistically robust perspective, is developed, tested and validated.

An extensive body of research regarding relationships among businesses highlights their diversity and importance. The present research takes into account formal and informal relationships among stakeholders within city destinations, and as such the object of research is the destination and the level of research is the organization. And for such purpose the social relationship perspective is selected as it takes into account the rational side of seeking a profit and most importantly it stresses the complex reality of the social context in which firms are embedded. As such, the construct cooperation was studied from an embeddedness perspective, further broken down into structural and relational embeddedness. These are measured via ties among stakeholders and via motivation for cooperation, longevity of the cooperation relationship and frequency of contact respectively. This set of constructs and their respective measures not only allow cooperation to be measured in a scalable and replicable manner, but also prove to be a statistically robust method to address it.

Moreover, many b2b (business to business) relationships may very well be considered networks (Williamson, 1991; Håkansson, 1993). In line with this, destination stakeholders are seen as a network; thus, their positional embeddedness is studied via network topography analysis based on weighted in degree.

In sum, the present research work, contributes to theory with a validated methodology to measure cooperation from an embeddedness perspective, using a scalable and replicable method, at the same time that the results provide indications on central actors, main motivations, key barriers to cooperation, among others.

5.3. Practical Implications

In addition to theoretical contributions, a number of practical implications can be drawn from this study, both for the interest of tourism practitioners and policy makers. There are regions in the world where there has been substantial investment on fostering cooperation but research was lacking on how to evaluate the success of these investments, on how to measure cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders within a given city destinations, on the weight cooperation has on performance, on which other variables are to be in place for cooperation to impact on performance, and on whether different types of cities may require further attention to their cooperation than others.

From a policy maker perspective, the conceptual and empirical model for measuring cooperation could be highly instrumental, as it can help evaluate a given destination and modify policies accordingly. For policy makers and practitioners alike, it may well be significantly useful to comprehend the results on most cooperating and motivated dyads, and on the most central organizations via network analysis conducted for a selection of cities.

Additionally, it may also be important to understand the motivations behind such cooperative behaviour, beyond the mere instrumental ones, as exploiting these might actually be precisely what improves performance, going after further clients, promoting the destinations, for instance. As well as the barriers detected, the absence of perception on the return on investment is the major one, and for cooperation to improve, respondents

see the key on: working on further share of information, working on trust issues, fostering a cooperation culture, and further alignment of goals.

Finally, it is perhaps note worthy in the specific case of Destination Management Organizations or Convention Visitors Bureau the fact that the present study finds that it is statistically proven the relation between being a member of the CVB and (1) cooperating with more agents, (2) holding different views on the tightness of relations and cooperativeness environment within the destination, and (3) on cooperation enhancing performance.

In sum, practitioners can benefit from a ready to use methodology that has been tested for cities across the world which would help them evaluate their own destination's stakeholders cooperation behaviour, main actors, barriers, motivations, to name but a few.

5.4. Limitations

The core focus of the present exploratory dissertation was proposing and testing a methodology to measure cooperation among MI stakeholders within city destinations. Despite facing lack of comprehensive and comparable data at the city level, it shed light on topics that had been the object of little prior research. As there is no external database with data on cooperation to check results against, the present study had to obtain primary data based on an ad-hoc survey, which inherently implies that the results should also be considered within the study limitations.

The main limitations of the present research concern the sample and the point of entry. It would be desirable to count with a larger sample and a more balance one per destination. So that cooperation scores per city would all be based on similar or equal number of participants per destination, and within the destination, the balance of type of agents represented would be similar as well. Then, concerning the point of entry, in this study it has been mainly local CVBs and in a lesser scale direct contact with agents in the different destinations. As such, despite the obtained results pointing out that even members of the local CVB cooperate more than those non-members, it could be fair to wonder (if the survey administration could be achieved otherwise for an international sample) whether CVBs would result as relevant as the present findings have shown.

5.5. Further research

The present research approached cooperation from a social embeddedness perspective and perhaps other perspectives, economic exchange or value creation for instance could be followed to empirically measure cooperation. Businesses are embedded in relationships and while still seeing stakeholders within a network perspective, it may be worth approaching cooperation with an economic return focus. This is, cooperation arcs would respond to economic flows, and more research is needed in the sense of the monetary trail within the meetings industry side of tourism and its impact on city destination's performance.

Perhaps, what matters for destinations to be competitive, best performers, it is what these destinations do now, their current development strategies, and how fast decisions are made under a constantly changing socio-economic-technological environment. As it was mentioned as part of the introduction, here it is argued that competitive challenges are to be faced based on dynamic capacities; rather than on easy imitable elements (Zenazurrabeitia Beldarrain, 2007). Dynamic capacities, in the case of the meetings industry, are shaped or conditioned by numerous elements. MI, just like the tourism sector, is characterized mostly by small and medium enterprises; and this is even more the case in smaller cities (Larson & Gyimóthy, 2012). Moreover, in the case of the meetings industry, the literature stresses potential performance differences between first-tier and second-tier cities. The image of the destination is to be taken into account, which is of special relevance for tourism in general, and for the meetings industry in particular (Boo, Koh & Jones, 2008).

Hence, without disregarding external favourable conditions, Larson and Gyimóthy (2012) highlight that, meeting tourism development requires collaboration for joint bidding, promotion and planning, which implies numerous organizations coming together, and this area has not as much presence on the literature (Larson & Gyimóthy, 2012; Locke, 2010). Heath also stresses the social dimension, of how businesses are socially embedded, coinciding with Crouch and Ritchie (1994) understanding of tourism destinations competitiveness, being linked to regional competitiveness and social competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1994). Social capital, resulting from better links between businesses and related institutions, facilitates the necessary coordination between firms and allows rapid diffusion of best practices (Gonzalez & Mendieta, 2009). It also improves the ability to perceive opportunities for innovation and facilitates experimentation between them (Gonzalez & Mendieta, 2009). This represents a change of vision as to how to build development of tourism destinations, which also has implications in local governance models, where management and decision-making are performed collaboratively, and ideally under a shared vision. In sum, there is a set of intangibles that need to be wisely managed in order to steer dynamic capacities towards competitive development of the industries and the destination as a whole, and this opens up numerous lines of research to be yet explored.

In line with this and rethinking the abovementioned divide on first and second tier cities, as part of a further research working paper not included in this thesis, using the cooperation results obtained in the present research, a preliminary empirical model linking performance and cooperation is formulated, tested and statistically validated. It is

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found that cities could be clearly divided into two clusters based on cooperation and performance and as such there is a sound distinction between the cooperation scores of first-tier cities and second, with the latter scoring higher. The implications of these results invite to continue in this direction to deepen into intervening variables perhaps concerning destination image, accessibility, relations among other business sectors / academia / public entities and MI stakeholders and these relations strength (or other characteristics) impact on performance. Likewise, a variable potential, providing dynamism to the model would be relevant to be explored, either from the current social perspective, from a more economic one, or from a combined view.

The meetings industry is a poliedric industry and the present research exclusively focuses on the association side of it, it would be relevant to regard the other sides as they also impact on the destination's economy.

Furthermore, when regarding the measurement of performance, beyond the vast need of rigorous research needed to set the basis for consistent measurement of tourism and MI economic activities, perhaps a longitudinal approach for a more limited number of destinations could provide further knowledge on the relative relevance on the long run of the different set of variables. For instance, it should be taken into account that it is not always a matter of the largest number of relationships the better; it reaches a point in the long term where some adverse effects occur due to disperse and non-focused relationships (Eisingerich, Rubera & Seifert, 2009).

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7. Annexes

Annex I – Survey Questionnaire in English



An Affiliate Member of UNWTO

English

Cooperation among meetings industry stakeholders is said to be key for local tourism destination competitiveness. The present research work will deepen into the link between cooperation and meetings industry performance and it will seek further understanding on how to improve the meetings industry performance. This survey is part of a PhD thesis work conducted by a researcher at **CICTOURGUNE Research Center**, an Affiliate Member of the **UNWTO**.

Information here provided will be confidential and anonymity is guaranteed.

Respondents please note:
The interest of the survey is specifically related to the business conducted within the destination, in the sense of events that are hosted within the destination, not the part of the business that takes place elsewhere. For instance in the case of PCOs (Professional Congress organizers) that organise events abroad, that part of the business would be out of the context of the present study. The relevance here lies within the economic impact of the meetings industry within the local destination where the enquired agents are based.

The reference year for the present study is 2013

When filling out the questionnaire:

- Your responses are save each time you click on >>
- Clicking on << allows you to go back
- Once you click >> on the last page you will not be able to change your responses
- fields marked with * are mandatory

Filling it out will take you a few minutes

Sincere gratitude for your cooperation on this research work

>>

0% 100%

General information about the enterprise

* Indicates response required

Q3 *Please select from the list below the destination for which you will be responding – this means that your company or a branch of the same is based on this municipality or it is immediately nearby. Select one

Aachen (1)	Bandar Seri Begawan	Boulder, CO (53)
Aalborg (2)	(27)	Braga (54)
Aarhus (3)	Banff, AB (28)	Brasilia, DF (55)
Aberdeen (4)	Bangalore (29)	Bratislava (56)
Abu Dhabi (5)	Bangkok (30)	Bremen (57)
Accra (6)	Barcelona (31)	Brest (58)
Addis Ababa (7)	Bari (32)	Brighton, Sussex (59)
Adelaide, SA (8)	Bariloche (33)	Brisbane (QLD) (60)
Albuquerque, NM (9)	Basel (34)	Bristol (61)
Algiers (10)	Beijing (35)	Brno (62)
Amman (11)	Beirut (36)	Brugge (63)
Amsterdam (12)	Belfast (37)	Brussels (64)
Ankara (13)	Belgrade (38)	Bucharest (65)
Ann Arbor, MI (14)	Belo Horizonte (39)	Budapest (66)
Antalya (15)	Bento Goncalves (40)	Budva (67)
Antigua (16)	Bergen (41)	Buenos Aires (68)
Antwerp (17)	Berkeley, CA (42)	Busan (69)
Arusha (18)	Berlin (43)	Buzios (70)
Asuncion (19)	Berne (44)	Cadiz (71)
Athens (20)	Biarritz (45)	Cagliari (72)
Atlanta, GA (21)	Bilbao (46)	Cairns, QLD (73)
Auckland (22)	Birmingham (47)	Cairo (74)
Austin, TX (23)	Bogota (48)	Calgary, AB (75)
Aveiro (24)	Bologna (49)	Cali (76)
Bali (25)	Bonn (50)	Cambridge (77)
Baltimore, MD (26)	Bordeaux (51)	Canberra, ACT (78)
	Boston (MA) (52)	Cancun, Qr. (79)

Cannes (80)
 Cape Town (81)
 Caracas (82)
 Cardiff (83)
 Cartagena (84)
 Cebu City (85)
 Chengdu, Sc (86)
 Chennai (87)
 Chiang Mai (88)
 Chicago, IL (89)
 Cleveland, Oh (90)
 Cluj-Napoca (91)
 Cochabamba (92)
 Coimbra (93)
 Cologne (94)
 Colombo (95)
 Concepcion (96)
 Copenhagen (97)
 Cordoba (98)
 Corfu (99)
 Cork (100)
 Cotonou (101)
 Cracow (102)
 Curitiba, Pr (103)
 Daegu (104)
 Daejeon (105)
 Dalian (106)
 Dallas, Tx (107)
 Dar-Es-Salaam (108)
 Darmstadt (109)
 Davos (110)
 Delft (111)
 Denver, CO (112)
 Dhaka (113)
 Doha (114)
 Dresden (115)
 Dubai (116)
 Dublin (117)
 Dubrovnik (118)

Duesseldorf (119)
 Durban (120)
 Durham (121)
 Edinburgh (122)
 Eindhoven (123)
 Enschede (124)
 Erlangen (125)
 Espoo (126)
 Essen (127)
 Estoril (128)
 Evanston, Il. (129)
 Florence (130)
 Florianopolis, Sc (131)
 Fortaleza, Ce (132)
 Foz Do Iguaçu (133)
 Frankfurt am Main (134)
 Freiburg (Im Breisgau) (135)
 Fukuoka (136)
 Funchal, Madeira (137)
 Galway (138)
 Gdansk (139)
 Geneva (140)
 Genova (141)
 Gent (142)
 Glasgow (143)
 Goettingen (144)
 Gold Coast, Qld. (145)
 Göteborg (146)
 Granada (147)
 Graz (148)
 Grenoble (149)
 Groningen (150)
 Guadalajara (151)
 Guangzhou (152)
 Guayaquil (153)
 Guimaraes (154)
 Gwangju (155)
 Halifax, NS (156)

Hamburg (157)
 Hammamet (158)
 Hangzhou (159)
 Hanoi (160)
 Havana (161)
 Heidelberg (162)
 Helsinki (163)
 Hiroshima (164)
 Ho Chi Minh City (165)
 Hong Kong (166)
 Honolulu, HI (167)
 Houston, TX (168)
 Hsinchu (169)
 Hyderabad (170)
 Incheon (171)
 Innsbruck (172)
 Istanbul (173)
 Izmir (174)
 Jaipur (175)
 Jakarta (176)
 Jeju (177)
 Jerusalem (178)
 Johannesburg (179)
 Jyväskylä (180)
 Kampala (181)
 Kanazawa (182)
 Kaohsiung (183)
 Karlsruhe (184)
 Kathmandu (185)
 Kazan (Tatarstan) (186)
 Kiel (187)
 Kiev (188)
 Kita-Kyushu (189)
 Kobe (190)
 Kolkata (191)
 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah (192)
 Kuala Lumpur (193)
 Kuching (194)

Kyoto (195)
 La Paz (196)
 La Plata (197)
 Larnaca (198)
 Las Vegas, NV (199)
 Lausanne (200)
 Leeds (201)
 Leeuwarden (202)
 Leiden (203)
 Leipzig (204)
 Leuven (205)
 Liege (206)
 Lille (207)
 Lillehammer (208)
 Lima (209)
 Limassol (210)
 Limerick (211)
 Linz (212)
 Lisbon (213)
 Liverpool (214)
 Ljubljana (215)
 London (216)
 Los Angeles, CA (217)
 Lucerne (218)
 Lugano, Ti (219)
 Lund (220)
 Luxembourg (221)
 Lyon (222)
 Maastricht (223)
 Macao (224)
 Madison, WI (225)
 Madrid (226)
 Malaga (227)
 Malmö (228)
 Manama (229)
 Manchester (230)
 Manila (231)
 Mannheim (232)
 Mar del Plata (233)

Maribor (234)
 Marrakech (235)
 Marseille (236)
 Matsue (237)
 Maui, HI (238)
 Medellin (239)
 Melbourne (VIC) (240)
 Mendoza (241)
 Merida (242)
 Mexico City (243)
 Miami Beach, FL (244)
 Miami, FL (245)
 Milan (246)
 Minneapolis, MN (247)
 Monte Carlo (248)
 Monterrey (249)
 Montevideo (250)
 Montpellier (251)
 Montreal (QC) (252)
 Montreux (253)
 Moscow (254)
 Mumbai (255)
 Munich (256)
 Nagoya (257)
 Nairobi (258)
 Nancy (259)
 Nanjing (260)
 Nantes (261)
 Naples (262)
 Nara (263)
 New Delhi (264)
 New Orleans, LA (265)
 New York City, NY (266)
 NewcastleGateshead (267)
 Niagara Falls, ON (268)
 Nice (269)
 Nicosia (270)

Niigata (271)
 Nijmegen (272)
 Noordwijk (273)
 Novi Sad (274)
 Odense (275)
 Opatija (276)
 Orlando, FL (277)
 Osaka (278)
 Oslo (279)
 Ottawa, ON (280)
 Oulu (281)
 Oxford (282)
 Padova (283)
 Palma de Mallorca (284)
 Panama City (285)
 Paphos (286)
 Paris (287)
 Pattaya (288)
 Perth, WA (289)
 Philadelphia, PA (290)
 Phoenix, AZ (291)
 Phuket (292)
 Pisa (293)
 Pittsburgh, PA (294)
 Playa del Carmen (295)
 Port of Spain (296)
 Portland, OR (297)
 Porto (298)
 Porto Alegre, RS (299)
 Portoroz (300)
 Potsdam (301)
 Poznan (302)
 Prague (303)
 Pretoria (304)
 Puebla (305)
 Puerto Vallarta, JI (306)
 Punta Cana (307)
 Punta del Este (308)
 Québec City, QC (309)

Quito (310)
Recife, Pe (311)
Rennes (312)
Reykjavik (313)
Rhodes (314)
Riga (315)
Rio de Janeiro (316)
Rome (317)
Rosario (318)
Rostock (319)
Rotterdam (320)
Salamanca, SA (321)
Salta (322)
Salvador (Bahia) (323)
Salzburg (324)
San Antonio, Tx (325)
San Diego, Ca (326)
San Francisco, Ca (327)
San Jose (328)
San Juan (329)
San Sebastian (330)
Santa Cruz (331)
Santa Fe (332)
Santa Fe, Nm (333)
Santa Marta (334)
Santander (335)
Santiago de Chile (336)
Santiago de Compostela (337)
Santo Domingo (338)
Sao Paulo (339)
Sapporo (340)
Seattle, Wa (341)
Sendai (342)
Seoul (343)
Sevilla (344)
Shanghai (345)

Shenzhen (346)
Siem Reap (347)
Singapore (348)
Sofia (349)
Sorrento (350)
Southampton (351)
Split (352)
St. Andrews (353)
St. Gallen (354)
St. Julians (355)
St. Petersburg (356)
Stavanger (357)
Stellenbosch (358)
Stockholm (359)
Strasbourg (360)
Stresa (361)
Stuttgart (362)
Suzhou (363)
Sydney (NSW) (364)
Szeged (365)
Tainan (366)
Taipei (367)
Tallinn (368)
Tampere (369)
Taormina (370)
Tarragona (371)
Tartu (372)
Tbilisi (373)
Tel Aviv (374)
The Hague (375)
Thessaloniki (376)
Tianjin (377)
Tigre (378)
Timisoara (379)
Tokyo (380)
Torino (381)
Toronto (ON) (382)

Toulouse (383)
Tromsø (384)
Trondheim (385)
Tsukuba (386)
Turku (387)
Ulan Bator (388)
Uppsala (389)
Utrecht (390)
Valencia (391)
Valletta (392)
Valparaiso (393)
Vancouver (BC) (394)
Venice (395)
Venlo (396)
Verona (397)
Vienna (398)
Vilnius (399)
Vina del Mar (400)
Vitoria (401)
Vladivostok (402)
Wageningen (403)
Warsaw (404)
Washington (DC) (405)
Wellington (406)
Windhoek (407)
Wroclaw (408)
Wuhan (409)
Würzburg (410)
Xi'an (Sian) (411)
Xiamen, Fj (412)
Yeosu (413)
Yokohama (414)
York (415)
Zagreb (416)
Zurich (417)

Q4 *Which is the principal activity of your business? (Select one)

- ☐ PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers (1)
- ☐ Venue owners or managers (2)
- ☐ Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent) (3)
- ☐ DMCs or incoming agencies (4)
- ☐ Auxiliary service providers (5)
- ☐ Association Management Companies (6)
- ☐ Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels) (7)
- ☐ Others, please specify (8) _____

Q5 * Please select the statement(s) that fit(s) better with your business Select one or more

- ☐ The company is young but I have been in the events business for a long time (1)
- ☐ The company has been running for a while but it has recently expanded to the events business (2)
- ☐ The company has been running for a while, but it has recently opened up an office in this destination (3)
- ☐ The company since it started has had the events business services as part of its portfolio of services, not necessarily being the core of the business (4)
- ☐ The event business has always been the core activity of the company (5)

Q6 *Your business is: Select one

- ☐ Locally based within the destination (neighbouring municipalities are included) (1)
- ☐ A national business with office(s) in the given destination (2)
- ☐ An international business with office(s) in the given destination (3)
- ☐ A multinational business with office(s) in the given destination (4)

*Answer If *Your business is: Locally based within the destination (neighbouring municipalities are included) Is Not Selected*

Q7 *Approximately what percentage (%) of the total turnover of the overall business

does the destination you selected represent? Select one Information here

provided will be confidential and anonymity is guaranteed

- ☐ less than 10% (1)
- ☐ 11 - 30% (2)
- ☐ 31 - 50% (3)
- ☐ over 50% (4)

Relations

* indicates response required

Q9 * For the purpose of your business, does your company have on-going relationships with any of the following types of organizations based on your destination? Select one or more

- ☐ PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers (1)
- ☐ Venue owners or managers (2)
- ☐ Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent) (3)
- ☐ DMCs or incoming agencies (4)
- ☐ Auxiliary service providers (5)
- ☐ Association Management companies (6)
- ☐ Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels) (7)
- ☐ Other agents, please specify (8) _____

Q10 Please provide the names of at least three companies/organizations with which your company cooperates the most within your destination (currently and/or within the past three years) Information here provided will be confidential and anonymity is guaranteed

Q11 * For the purpose of your business does your company have on-going relationships with any of the following types of organizations that are not based on your destination? Please select one or more

- ☐ PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers (1)
- ☐ Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent at a geographical level superior the one of your destination, for instance the National Convention Bureau) (2)
- ☐ DMCs or incoming agencies (3)
- ☐ Auxiliary service providers (4)
- ☐ Association Management companies (5)
- ☐ Professional Associations (for instance Medical Associations, Union of International Associations...) (6)
- ☐ International agents such as ICCA, MPI, ... (7)
- ☐ Other agents (please name what kind of agent it is) (8) _____

Cooperation

* Indicates response required

Q13 If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end (for instance event organization), * Does your company cooperate with the following types of agents (based on your destination) currently and/or within the past three years? Please answer per each agent

	Yes (1)	No (2)
PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers (1)	☐	☐
Venue owners or managers (2)	☐	☐
Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent) (3)	☐	☐
DMCs or incoming agencies (4)	☐	☐
Auxiliary service providers (5)	☐	☐
Association MGMT companies (6)	☐	☐
Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels) (7)	☐	☐
Other agents, please specify (8)	☐	☐

If No Is Equal to 8, Then Skip To End of Block

[Please note questions 14 to 45 are conditioned to responses on question 13. Example: Only if a subject responds yes to cooperating with PCOs, questions 14, 15, 16 and 17 will be asked. Otherwise these questions will not appear in the only questionnaire of the given survey participant.]

Answer If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end... PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers - Yes Is Selected

Q14 * Please select the motivation(s) for such cooperation with PCOs or Specialized

meeting organizers, you can select as many as you deem suitable:

- ☐ Proposal preparation when Bidding (1)
- ☐ Present and Defend the candidacy jointly (2)
- ☐ Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad (3)
- ☐ Lobbying in front of Professional associations (4)
- ☐ Event production and execution (5)
- ☐ Providing technical visits of the destination to potential clients (6)
- ☐ Destination Promotion actions (7)
- ☐ Online marketing strategies (8)
- ☐ PR actions abroad – to gain international contacts (9)
- ☐ PR actions at the national level – to gain national contacts (10)
- ☐ Training actions (11)
- ☐ Exchange of information and experiences (12)
- ☐ Analyzing synergies and common problems (13)
- ☐ Seeking advice or support with issues/problems (14)
- ☐ Seeking funding (15)
- ☐ Obtaining Certifications (quality, environmental, ...etc) (16)
- ☐ Other, please specify (17) _____

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers - Yes Is Selected

Q15 For whichever motive of the ones selected before concerning cooperation with

PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers, how often does your company ... * Please

choose the highest frequency you have reached in the past three years

	less than once a year (1)	less than once a month (2)	once a month (3)	2-3 times a month (4)	once a week (5)	2-3 times a week (6)	daily (7)
...meet face-to-face with each other? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... stay in touch via email, telephone, social networks or any other channel (non face-to- face)? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers - Yes Is Selected

Q16 *For whichever motive of the ones selected before, for how long has your

company been cooperating with them? Select one

- ☐ Less than a year (1)
- ☐ 1-3 years (2)
- ☐ 4-6 years (3)
- ☐ More than 6 years (4)

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... PCOs or Specialized meeting organizers - Yes Is Selected

Q17 *Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with PCOs or

Specialized meeting organizers

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly Disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Venue owners or managers - Yes Is Selected

Q18 * Please select the motivation for such cooperation with Venue owners or

managers, you can select as many as you deem suitable:

- ☐ Proposal preparation when Bidding (1)
- ☐ Present and Defend the candidacy jointly (2)
- ☐ Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad (3)
- ☐ Lobbying in front of Professional associations (4)
- ☐ Event production and execution (5)
- ☐ Providing technical visits of the destination to potential client (6)
- ☐ Destination Promotion actions (7)
- ☐ Online marketing strategies (8)
- ☐ PR actions abroad – to gain international contacts (9)
- ☐ PR actions at the national level – to gain national contacts (10)
- ☐ Training actions (11)
- ☐ Exchange of information and experiences (12)
- ☐ Analysing synergies and common problems (13)
- ☐ Seeking advice or support with issues/problems (14)
- ☐ Seeking funding (15)
- ☐ Obtaining Certifications (quality, green, ...etc) (16)
- ☐ Other, please specify (17) _____

Answer If If cooperation in this context is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end, e.g. bidding, event organization and

execution. please, per each of the following... Venue owners or managers - Yes Is Selected

Q19 For whichever motive of the ones selected before concerning cooperation with Venue Owners or Managers, how often does your company ... * Please choose the highest frequency you have reached in the past three years

	less than once a year (1)	less than once a month (2)	once a month (3)	2-3 times a month (4)	once a week (5)	2-3 times a week (6)	daily (7)
...meet face-to-face with each other? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... stay in touch with each other via email, telephone, social networks or any other channel (non face-to-face)? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Venue owners or managers - Yes Is Selected

Q20 *For whichever motive of the ones selected before, for how long has your company been cooperating with them? Select one

- ☐ Less than a year (1)
- ☐ 1-3 years (2)
- ☐ 4-6 years (3)
- ☐ More than 6 years (4)

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Venue owners or managers - Yes Is Selected

Q21 *Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Venue

owners or managers

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly Disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent) - Yes Is Selected

Q22 * Please select the motivation(s) for such cooperation with Convention and

Visitors Bureau (or similar agent), you can select as many as you deem suitable:

- ☐ Proposal preparation when Bidding (1)
- ☐ Present and Defend the candidacy jointly (2)
- ☐ Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad (3)
- ☐ Lobbying in front of Professional associations (4)
- ☐ Event production and execution (5)
- ☐ Providing technical visits of the destination to potential client (6)
- ☐ Destination Promotion actions (7)
- ☐ Online marketing strategies (8)
- ☐ PR actions abroad – to gain international contacts (9)
- ☐ PR actions at the national level – to gain national contacts (10)
- ☐ Training actions (11)
- ☐ Exchange of information and experiences (12)
- ☐ Analysing synergies and common problems (13)
- ☐ Seeking advice or support with issues/problems (14)
- ☐ Seeking funding (15)
- ☐ Obtaining Certifications (quality, green, ...etc) (16)
- ☐ Other, please specify (17) _____

Answer If cooperation in this context is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end, e.g. bidding, event organization and execution. please, per each of the following... Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent) - Yes Is Selected

Q23 For whichever motive of the ones selected before concerning cooperation with

Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent), how often does your company ...

* Please choose the highest frequency you have reached in the past three years

	less than once a year (1)	less than once a month (2)	once a month (3)	2-3 times a month (4)	once a week (5)	2-3 times a week (6)	daily (7)
...meet face-to-face with each other? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... stay in touch with each other via email, telephone, social networks or any other channel (non face-to- face)? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent) - Yes Is Selected

Q24 *For whichever motive of the ones selected before, for how long has your company been cooperating with them? Select one

- ☐ Less than a year (1)
- ☐ 1-3 years (2)
- ☐ 4-6 years (3)
- ☐ More than 6 years (4)

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent) - Yes Is Selected

Q25 *Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent)

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly Disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... DMCs or incoming agencies - Yes Is Selected

Q26 *Please select the motivation(s) for such cooperation with DMCs or incoming agencies, you can select as many as you deem suitable:

- ☐ Proposal preparation when Bidding (1)
- ☐ Present and Defend the candidacy jointly (2)
- ☐ Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad (3)
- ☐ Lobbying in front of Professional associations (4)
- ☐ Event production and execution (5)
- ☐ Providing technical visits of the destination to potential client (6)
- ☐ Destination Promotion actions (7)
- ☐ Online marketing strategies (8)
- ☐ PR actions abroad – to gain international contacts (9)
- ☐ PR actions at the national level – to gain national contacts (10)
- ☐ Training actions (11)
- ☐ Exchange of information and experiences (12)
- ☐ Analysing synergies and common problems (13)
- ☐ Seeking advice or support with issues/problems (14)
- ☐ Seeking funding (15)
- ☐ Obtaining Certifications (quality, green, ...etc) (16)
- ☐ Other, please specify (17) _____

Answer If cooperation in this context is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end, e.g. bidding, event organization and execution. please, per each of the following... DMCs or incoming agencies - Yes Is Selected

Q27 For whichever motive of the ones selected before concerning cooperation with DMCs or incoming agencies, how often does your company ... * Please choose the highest frequency you have reached in the past three years

	less than once a year (1)	less than once a month (2)	once a month h (3)	2-3 times a month (4)	once a week (5)	2-3 times a week (6)	daily (7)
...meet face-to-face with each other? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... stay in touch with each other via email, telephone, social networks or any other channel (non face-to-face)? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... DMCs or incoming agencies - Yes Is Selected

Q28 *For whichever motive of the ones selected before, for how long has your company been cooperating with them? Select one

- ☐ Less than a year (1)
- ☐ 1-3 years (2)
- ☐ 4-6 years (3)
- ☐ More than 6 years (4)

Answer If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end... DMCs or incoming agencies - Yes Is Selected

Q29 *Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with DMCs or incoming agencies

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly Disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end... Auxiliary service providers - Yes Is Selected

Q30 * Please select the motivation for such cooperation with Auxiliary service providers, you can select as many as you deem suitable:

- ☐ Proposal preparation when Bidding (1)
- ☐ Present and Defend the candidacy jointly (2)
- ☐ Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad (3)
- ☐ Lobbying in front of Professional associations (4)
- ☐ Event production and execution (5)
- ☐ Providing technical visits of the destination to potential client (6)
- ☐ Destination Promotion actions (7)
- ☐ Online marketing strategies (8)
- ☐ PR actions abroad – to gain international contacts (9)
- ☐ PR actions at the national level – to gain national contacts (10)
- ☐ Training actions (11)
- ☐ Exchange of information and experiences (12)
- ☐ Analysing synergies and common problems (13)
- ☐ Seeking advice or support with issues/problems (14)
- ☐ Seeking funding (15)
- ☐ Obtaining Certifications (quality, green, ...etc) (16)
- ☐ Other, please specify (17) _____

Answer If If cooperation in this context is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end, e.g. bidding, event organization and execution. please, per each of the following... Auxiliary service providers - Yes Is Selected

Q31 For whichever motive of the ones selected before concerning cooperation with Auxiliary service providers, how often does your company ... * Please choose the highest frequency you have reached in the past three years

	less than once a year (1)	less than once a month (2)	once a month (3)	2-3 times a month (4)	once a week (5)	2-3 times a week (6)	daily (7)
...meet face-to-face with each other? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... stay in touch with each other via email, telephone, social networks or any other channel (non face-to-face)? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Auxiliary service providers - Yes Is Selected

Q32 *For whichever motive of the ones selected before, for how long has your company been cooperating with them? Select one

- ☐ Less than a year (1)
- ☐ 1-3 years (2)
- ☐ 4-6 years (3)
- ☐ More than 6 years (4)

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Auxiliary service providers - Yes Is Selected

Q33 *Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Auxiliary service providers

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly Disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Association MGMT companies - Yes Is Selected

Q34 * Please select the motivation(s) for such cooperation with Association

Management companies, you can select as many as you deem suitable:

- ☐ Proposal preparation when Bidding (1)
- ☐ Present and Defend the candidacy jointly (2)
- ☐ Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad (3)
- ☐ Lobbying in front of Professional associations (4)
- ☐ Event production and execution (5)
- ☐ Providing technical visits of the destination to potential client (6)
- ☐ Destination Promotion actions (7)
- ☐ Online marketing strategies (8)
- ☐ PR actions abroad – to gain international contacts (9)
- ☐ PR actions at the national level – to gain national contacts (10)
- ☐ Training actions (11)
- ☐ Exchange of information and experiences (12)
- ☐ Analysing synergies and common problems (13)
- ☐ Seeking advice or support with issues/problems (14)
- ☐ Seeking funding (15)
- ☐ Obtaining Certifications (quality, green, ...etc) (16)
- ☐ Other, please specify (17) _____

Answer If If cooperation in this context is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end, e.g. bidding, event organization and execution. please, per each of the following... Association MGMT companies - Yes Is Selected

Q35 For whichever motive of the ones selected before concerning cooperation with Association Management companies, how often does your company ... * Please choose the highest frequency you have reached in the past three years

	Less than once a year (1)	Less than Once a Month (2)	Once a Month (3)	2-3 Times a Month (4)	Once a Week (5)	2-3 Times a Week (6)	Daily (7)
...meet face-to-face with each other? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... stay in touch with each other via email, telephone, social networks or any other channel (non face-to-face)? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Association MGMT companies - Yes Is Selected

Q36 *For whichever motive of the ones selected before, for how long has your company been cooperating with them? Select one

- ☐ Less than a year (1)
- ☐ 1-3 years (2)
- ☐ 4-6 years (3)
- ☐ More than 6 years (4)

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Association MGMT companies - Yes Is Selected

Q37 *Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Association

Management Companies

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly Disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels) - Yes Is Selected

Q38 * Please select the motivation(s) for such cooperation with Accommodation

providers (e.g.Hotels), you can select as many as you deem suitable:

- ☐ Proposal preparation when Bidding (1)
- ☐ Present and Defend the candidacy jointly (2)
- ☐ Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad (3)
- ☐ Lobbying in front of Professional associations (4)
- ☐ Event production and execution (5)
- ☐ Providing technical visits of the destination to potential client (6)
- ☐ Destination Promotion actions (7)
- ☐ Online marketing strategies (8)
- ☐ PR actions abroad – to gain international contacts (9)
- ☐ PR actions at the national level – to gain national contacts (10)
- ☐ Training actions (11)
- ☐ Exchange of information and experiences (12)
- ☐ Analyzing synergies and common problems (13)
- ☐ Seeking advice or support with issues/problems (14)
- ☐ Seeking funding (15)
- ☐ Obtaining Certifications (quality, green, ...etc) (16)
- ☐ Other, please specify (17) _____

Answer If If cooperation in this context is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end, e.g. bidding, event organization and execution. please, per each of the following... Accommodation Providers (e.g. Hotels) - Yes Is Selected

Q39 For whichever motive of the ones selected before concerning cooperation with Accommodation providers (e.g. Hotels), how often does your company ... * Please choose the highest frequency you have reached in the past three years

	Less than once a year (1)	Less than Once a Month (2)	Once a Month (3)	2-3 Times a Month (4)	Once a Week (5)	2-3 Times a Week (6)	Daily (7)
...meet face-to-face with each other? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... stay in touch with each other via email, telephone, social networks or any other channel (non face-to-face)? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Hotels - Yes Is Selected

Q40 *For whichever motive of the ones selected before, for how long has your company been cooperating with them? Select one

- ☐ Less than a year (1)
- ☐ 1-3 years (2)
- ☐ 4-6 years (3)
- ☐ More than 6 years (4)

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Hotels - Yes Is Selected

Q41 *Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Accommodation Providers (e.g.Hotels)

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly Disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end... Other agents, please specify - Yes Is Selected

Q42 * Please select the motivation for such cooperation with Other Agents, you can select as many as you deem suitable:

- ☐ Proposal preparation when Bidding (1)
- ☐ Present and Defend the candidacy jointly (2)
- ☐ Participation in fairs/trade-shows/exhibitions abroad (3)
- ☐ Lobbying in front of Professional associations (4)
- ☐ Event production and execution (5)
- ☐ Providing technical visits of the destination to potential client (6)
- ☐ Destination Promotion actions (7)
- ☐ Online marketing strategies (8)
- ☐ PR actions abroad – to gain international contacts (9)
- ☐ PR actions at the national level – to gain national contacts (10)
- ☐ Training actions (11)
- ☐ Exchange of information and experiences (12)
- ☐ Analysing synergies and common problems (13)
- ☐ Seeking advice or support with issues/problems (14)
- ☐ Seeking funding (15)
- ☐ Obtaining Certifications (quality, green, ...etc) (16)
- ☐ Other, please specify (17) _____

Answer If cooperation in this context is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same end, e.g. bidding, event organization and execution. please, per each of the following... Other agents, please specify - Yes Is Selected

Q43 For whichever motive of the ones selected before concerning cooperation with Other Agents, how often does your company ... * Please choose the highest frequency you have reached in the past three years

	Less than once a year (1)	Less than Once a Month (2)	Once a Month (3)	2-3 Times a Month (4)	Once a Week (5)	2-3 Times a Week (6)	Daily (7)
...meet face-to-face with each other? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... stay in touch with each other via email, telephone, social networks or any other channel (non face-to-face)? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Other agents, please specify - Yes Is Selected

Q44 *For whichever motive of the ones selected before, for how long has your company been cooperating with them? Select one

- ☐ Less than a year (1)
- ☐ 1-3 years (2)
- ☐ 4-6 years (3)
- ☐ More than 6 years (4)

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... Other agents, please specify - Yes Is Selected

Q45 *Please value the following statement concerning cooperation with Other agents

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly Disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Cooperation has enhanced performance of our company (meetings side of the business) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q46 * For cooperation to result on better performance of your company please value
the following sentences

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Further share of key information (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working on trust issues on both sides (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Further alignment in the type of demand that them and us target (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cooperating with a powerful organization is very relevant for improving performance (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fostering a cooperative culture across the organization so that both organization's employees actually cooperate (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cooperating with a central organization within the destination is significantly relevant for improving performance (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
More compatible goals and operating philosophy of other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

organization(s) and ours (7)						
Cooperating with a legitimized organization is significantly relevant for improving performance (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○

Answer If If cooperation is understood as follows: the action or process of working together to the same en... - No Is Greater Than or Equal to 1

Q47 *Why doesn't your company cooperate with some of these agents based on your destination? Please select one or more

- ☐ The company does not see the return on investment (hours invested in meetings, resources..etc) (1)
- ☐ We do not trust them enough to cooperate with them (2)
- ☐ They are our competitors (3)
- ☐ We rather cooperate with partners outside of our destination that will bring us business (4)
- ☐ We do not count with resources to be able to cooperate (5)
- ☐ We have cooperated in the past and it did not work for us (6)
- ☐ We are a new company in the destination, it is too soon to tell whether we will be cooperating in the future or not (7)
- ☐ Other reasons, please specify (8) _____

Perspective on the Destination

* Indicates response required

Q49 *Please value each of the following sentences

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
Relations among agents involved within the meetings industry are tight (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a difference in the strength of relations between those members of the convention bureau and those that aren't (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The relations among members are tighter than among those that aren't members (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are trust issues among agents involved within the meetings industry (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There has always been a core of agents that	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

have had tighter relations than others (5)						
New comers after a certain time tend to join the existing collaborative spirit (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
New comers after a certain time tend to work on their own (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relations among agents involved within the meetings industry are conflictive (8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q50 *Do you consider that for the purpose of a better performance of your company when thinking on meetings taking place on your destination your relations with locally based agents are: Please select one

- ☐ More important than with other agents based outside of the destination (1)
- ☐ Equally important (2)
- ☐ Less important than with other agents based outside the destination (3)

Q51 *Please value each of the following sentences

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly disagree (3)	Slightly Agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
For the good of the destination's success as a meeting host, the relations among agents should improve (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is key to have on-going relations with agents based within the destination for the good of the destination's success as a meeting host (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is key to have on-going relations with partners that are based away from the destination for the good of the destination success as a meeting host (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Meetings Industry is a	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

legitimized economic sector in the destination (4)						
The Meetings Industry is a legitimized economic sector in the nation (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tourism is a legitimized economic sector in the destination (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tourism is a legitimized economic sector in the nation (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Final General Information about the enterprise

* Indicates response required

*Answer If *Which is the principal activity of your business? (Select one)*

Convention and Visitors Bureau (or a similar agent) Is Not Selected

Q53 *Is your company a member of the Local Convention and Visitors Bureau?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Q54 *Please provide the year when your business opened (YYYY)

Q55 *How many employees did your business have in 2013? Please estate a number

Q56 * How many of those employees worked full-time? Please select one

- ☐ less than 10% (1)
- ☐ 11 - 30% (2)
- ☐ 31 - 50% (3)
- ☐ more than 50% (4)

Q57 * Percentage of your employees working for the event side of the business Please select one

- ☐ less than 30% (1)
- ☐ between 30 and 60% (2)
- ☐ more than 60% (3)

Q58 * What is your position within the company? Please select one Information here provided will be confidential and anonymity is guaranteed

- ☐ President / Member of the Board of Directors (1)
- ☐ Director, through managers, of one or more departments (2)
- ☐ Manager of one or more departments (3)
- ☐ Supervisor over a section of a department (4)
- ☐ No supervisory responsibility (5)

Q59 * Please provide the name of the department you belong to Information here provided will be confidential and anonymity is guaranteed

Q60 Total turnover of the business based in the destination in 2013 in US\$ Please
select one Information here provided will be confidential and anonymity is guaranteed

- ☐ less than 100,000 (1)
- ☐ 100,000 - 499,999 (2)
- ☐ 500,000 - 999,999 (3)
- ☐ 1 - 2 million (4)
- ☐ 3 - 5 million (5)
- ☐ over 6 million (6)

Annex II – UNWTO message to NTOs

From: Xxx Xxxxxx <xxxxx@unwto.org>
Date: March 27, 2014 at 4:24:45 PM GMT+1
Subject: Study on cooperation in the Meetings Industry

Dear Affiliate Member,

We hope this email finds you well.

In this opportunity we would like to invite you to collaborate in a multi-national study conducted by an Affiliate Member of the UNWTO. The research seeks to deepen into the link between cooperation and meetings industry performance and further the understanding on how to improve the latter. More specifically it intends to study the cooperation between agents of the Meetings Industry in urban destinations.

We would very much appreciate it if you could help us distribute the present survey to the person in charge of the local Convention Bureaux (or similar agents), as well as distribute it to directors of locally based agents involved in this industry (PCOs or specialized meeting organizers, venues, DMCs or incoming agencies, auxiliary service providers, association management companies, accommodation providers, e.g. Hotels, other agents). You can also share their respective contact details with us, and we will contact them directly.

In Spain, the study is focusing exclusively on the following cities: **Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Sevilla, Granada, Cordoba, Cadiz, Palma de Mallorca, Tarragona, Santander, Malaga, Salamanca, SA, Santiago de Compostela.**

The anonymous survey takes around 16 minutes and can be accessed here:

https://qtrial.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_eR8rt9czpSyu3kh

Finally, it would be greatly appreciated if you could forward this message to other organizations that fit this profile.

Thank you very much for your time and interest!

Best regards,

The Affiliate Members Programme



Xxx Xxxxxx
Affiliate Members
Programme
xxxxxx@unwto.org

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