Cross-border tourism development:
A case study of the Öresund Region

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Preface

I would like to thank all of the informants who were kind enough to participate during this study and provide interesting and insightful information about tourism development in the Öresund Region. I would also like to thank my supervisor who have helped me effectively to perform this study.
Abstract
Cross-border tourism development have become increasingly popular the last decades and especially within the European Union through Interreg-programmes. The contemporary research have mainly focused on the advantages and challenges associated with such collaborations with a perspective on visitors and private entrepreneurs in border regions. There are however an unfortunate lack of research on the role of local governments such as municipalities in cross-border tourism collaborations. Therefore the aim of this study is to analyse the interest and attitudes among public actors towards cross-border tourism development, and to identify challenges facing these on an interregional level in cross-border tourism collaborations. The case study have been the Öresund Region between Sweden and Denmark where recently a large scale cross-border platform was implemented party focusing on tourism development in the region. A qualitative approach has been utilized with semi-structured interviews focusing on advantages and challenges associated with cross-border tourism development among public actors in the region. The analysis have shown that there is a great interest among the informants for large scale tourism cooperation in order to reach distant markets and to become a stronger competitor on the global market. Identified challenges mainly concern uneven political power structures which may lead to barriers for further cooperation’s.
Introduction

Efforts to develop tourism across international borders in adjacent border regions have gained interest during the last decades. Globalization and geopolitical developments including modifications of borderlands are argued to have altered the function of borders which has led to increasingly permeable borders (Ioannides et al., 2006). The European Union (EU) serves many functions and regional cooperation and integration are two of these. An increasing amount of EU funded Interreg programmes have incorporated tourism as an important part for cross-border developments (Nilsson et al., 2010). There is a great societal value of research on cross-border tourism development as this is an indicative process of European integration (Prokkola, 2010). Additionally there are several benefits and positive outcomes associated with joint cross-border collaborations. These include joint infrastructural developments, strengthened regional identity and marketing, improved regional economy, and catalyst for innovation and knowledge transfer (Timothy, 2001; Timothy et al., 2014; Park, 2014; Hartman, 2006; Weidenfeld, 2013). However, cross-border tourism development projects often encounter challenges of different character. These challenges tend to be associated with difficulties to establish cohesiveness due to different social, cultural, economic, political, and organizational systems in two or more adjacent countries (Timothy & Tosun, 2003; Prokkola et al., 2015; Blasco et al., 2014a).

However, there is a need to apply new perspectives of the contemporary research within the field. Current research have mostly emanated from the perspective of private entrepreneurs and visitors in border regions. There is a gap in the literature of the perspective on public actors involved in tourism development which is unfortunate as local governments often control planning for tourism, and are closely associated to challenges with tourism development (Ruhanen, 2013). There current research have also emanated from extensive contributions of a few authors (Ioannides et al., 2006; Prokkola, 2008; 2010), contributing to a need for new needed knowledge and insights to the literature.

Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee is a cross-border platform which officially initiated on the 1st of January 2016. Among some of their main purposes you find tourism development to attract tourists, and marketing of the Öresund Region. With both the benefits and challenges associated with cross-border tourism development in mind, it is relevant to analyse the experienced and expected thoughts and views of these among the members of this organization. This study can broaden the knowledge of tourism developments in cross-border regions by focusing on the public actors involved in tourism.
**Research questions and objectives**

The aim of the master thesis is to analyse the interest and attitudes among public actors towards cross-border tourism development, and to identify challenges facing these on an interregional level in cross-border tourism collaborations. Focus is on the roles of public actors for tourism development in in regional cross-border cooperation, the perceived advantages and challenges of such cooperation’s, and the perceived impacts of an international border in cross-border projects. This will be executed by analysing public actors located in the Öresund Region involved in tourism development. The objectives of the study are to enhance the academic knowledge of cross-border tourism development and its associated challenges, but also to provide new knowledge of challenges associated with cross-border tourism to the public sector in the Öresund Region. The following two research questions are:

- What are the experiences and expectations among municipalities and tourism organizations for cross-border tourism development in the Öresund Region?
- Which are the perceived challenges for cross-border cooperation facing municipalities and organizations involved in tourism development in the Öresund Region?

**Case study**

The Öresund Region is an interregional area including southern Sweden and eastern Denmark. On the Swedish side it embraces the province of Skåne, and on the Danish side it include the provinces of Sjælland, Lolland, Falster, Môn, and Bornholm (Figure 1). Together this region incorporate a total of 79 municipalities (Örestat, 2012), and form the three regional councils Skåne, Huvudstaden (Köpenhamn and its adjacent areas), and Sjælland. The number of inhabitants in the whole region passed 3.9 million during the third quarter of 2015, and if the population growth continue in the same pace the region will reach 4 million inhabitants in late 2017. The Danish side represent 2.6 million inhabitants while Skåne have just over 1.3 million inhabitants. The largest population growth can be traced to the largest cities such as Köpenhamn, Malmö, and Helsingborg and their surrounding areas (Öresundsinstituttet, 2015a). The population of Köpenhamn is also expected to increase faster than Stockholm in the period 2014-2022 (Öresundsinstituttet, 2015b). The region generated on fifth of the Swedish and Danish GDP in 2010 contributing to make the region considered to be among one of the eight most competitive cross-border regions within the EU (Park, 2014). The names of cities, municipalities and regions in the Öresund Region are sometimes spelled differently in Sweden and Denmark, and as a Swede it would appear more natural to use the Swedish names. In order to be consistent the Swedish names have therefore been used throughout this study. The only exceptions are context when Köpenhamn is discussed as a brand where the name Copenhagen have been used instead.
Tourism in the region

Tourism in both Sweden and Denmark is growing and the number of visitors seems to increase steadily. Skåne constituted for approximately 9.1 percent, or 5.1 million of the total 56.4 million stayovers in Sweden in 2014. In the same year the total number of guest beds in Sweden was 328 411, and Skåne accounted for 29 534 of these, or approximately 8.9 percent. In Denmark there was a total of approximately 17.4 million stayovers in 2014, whereas region Huvudstaden accounted for 8.1 million and region Sjælland 1.2 million of these. This mean that these regions accounted for over 54.1 percent of the total number of stayovers in Denmark. In the same year these two regions accounted for almost 45 percent of the guest beds in Denmark (Table 1).
The overall tourism and stayovers in the region have continued to grow in 2015. In Skåne the number of domestic stayovers increased with 9 percent, while international stayovers increased with 7,6 percent from the previous year. In Huvudstaden the number of stayovers increased by 7,6 while it decreased in Själland by 1,8 percent in the same time period. The number of Swedish stayovers have since 2014 decreased in Huvudstaden (-5,4 percent) and Själland (-4,7 percent). However, the number of Danish stayovers in Skåne increased by 12,3 percent the same time period. Common for both countries was a strong increase of international visitors where Sweden experienced an 10,5 percent increase and Denmark 6,7 percent compared to 2014 (Öresundsinstituttet, 2016). It is possible to confirm that the Öresund region possess an important role for the tourism industry in both countries.

There are many popular and famous tourist attractions in the Öresund region. Even though there are some internationally recognised attractions in Skåne, most of them are located Danish side of the strait. Some of the most popular tourist attractions in and around Köpenhamn are Tivoli Gardens, the sculpture the Little Mermaid, Nyhamn with its canal and restaurants, the old and long shopping street Ströget, Amalienborg Palace with its Royal Guard, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, and Kronborg Castle in Helsingör known from Shakespeare’s Hamlet (VisitCopenhagen, 2016). Among the most popular tourist attractions in Skåne you find the ancient monument Ales Stenar, Turning Torso which is the tallest skyscraper in the Nordics, the 16 kilometre long Öresund Bridge, Sofiero Palace and garden, Malmö Museums with the oldest preserved Nordic renaissance castle, Lund Cathedral, the small island of Hven located between the countries, and Hovs Hallar and Kullaberg with their steep coastal landscape (VisitSkåne, 2016). It is possible to distinguish some differences among the attractions on each side of the strait. Köpenhamn and its surrounding areas seem to offer a majority of more specific attractions such as famous buildings, places, and museums, while Skåne offer more nature experiences.

**Contemporary cross-border collaborations**

Öresundskomiteen have been the official platform for regional political cooperation in the Öresund Region since 1993. On the first of January 2016 Öresundskomiteen and Greater Copenhagen joins to together form the new cross-border platform called Greater Copenhagen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stayovers</th>
<th>Stayover share</th>
<th>Bed capacity</th>
<th>Bed share</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Population share</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sweden</strong></td>
<td>56 401 219</td>
<td>100,0%</td>
<td>328 411</td>
<td>100,0%</td>
<td>9 747 355</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skåne</td>
<td>5 140 333</td>
<td>9,1%</td>
<td>29 534</td>
<td>9,0%</td>
<td>1 286 584</td>
<td>13,2%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Denmark</strong></td>
<td>17 412 700</td>
<td>100,0%</td>
<td>131 371</td>
<td>100,0%</td>
<td>5 655 750</td>
<td>100,0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huvudstaden</td>
<td>8 145 663</td>
<td>46,8%</td>
<td>46 533</td>
<td>35,4%</td>
<td>1 766 677</td>
<td>31,2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Själland</td>
<td>1 272 579</td>
<td>7,3%</td>
<td>11 968</td>
<td>9,1%</td>
<td>819 385</td>
<td>14,5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: SCB, (2015a; 2015b; 2015c); Danmarks Statistik, (2014a; 2014b; 2014c).
& Skåne Committee. The joint collaboration have 12 member organizations including three regional councils, two local governments, and seven municipalities. Five fields of work have been established which include to support the joint marketing of “Greater Copenhagen”, aim for a strong international infrastructure, support and attract investors, tourists, businesses, work for an integrated and sustainable growth region, and to create a joint strategic commercial and industrial business life. (Öresundskomiteen, 2016a). In their strategies for 2020 they mention that they strive to become a popular tourist destination, attract tourists, and invest and offer diverse cultural activities of high quality (Öresundskomiteen, 2016b).

Infrastructure

The Öresund Region function as an important node connecting Sweden, especially the southern parts and eastern Denmark. There are two main connections, the Öresund Bridge between Malmö and Köpenhamn, and the ferries between Helsingborg and Helsingør. In 2015 there were approximately 95,800 single trips across the strait every day. The Öresund bridge accounted for 74,900 of these, while 20,900 were made by ferries. Travelling by car was the most common way to travel which accounted for 42,800 of the daily trips, while 32,100 were made by trains crossing the bridge. The average number of commuters across the strait on a daily basis in 2014 was 15,200, which could be compared with 18,200 between Uppsala and Stockholm (Öresundsinstituttet, 2015c). The amount of people crossing the strait everyday certainly require properly developed and functioning infrastructure.

Kastrup airport just outside Köpenhamn have become an important node in the region, both for commercial travel and logistics. The central location have made the airport to the prime centre for air traffic in Köpenhamn, and since the bridge opened in 2000 for Skåne aswell. Today Kastrup is the second most used airport for Swedish citizens (Örestat, 2012), explaining how important it is for residents living in southern Sweden. In 2015 Kastrup had a total of 26,6 million passengers in, 35 percent of these were Danish and 14 percent Swedish residents. It is also a quite well connected airport with 156 air routes (Københavns Lufthavne, 2015) and is one of Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) main airport hubs. This make Kastrup the largest airport in Scandinavia as Arlanda airport outside of Stockholm which is the second largest had 22,4 million passengers in 2014 (Swedavia, 2014). Malmö Airport is the largest airport in Skåne with 2,2 million passengers in 2015. The airport is located 30 kilometres east of Malmö and 55 kilometres from Köpenhamn (Malmö Airport, 2015).

Theoretical framework

The tourism industry has experienced a steady growth over the decades and become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world (UNWTO, 2015). The number of international tourism arrivals reached almost 1.2 billion in 2015 (UNWTO, 2016), which can be compared to 25 million in 1950 (Timothy, 2001). In the twenty-first century tourism have become central of importance to social, cultural and economic lives (Hannan & Knox, 2010). The academic interest for tourism research have also gained a lot of attention the last decades. Tourism researchers dedicate time and efforts to understand, explain and problematize issues concerning tourism and traveling. These issues often include questions of local and global economic and political relations (Syssner, 2011). This suggest that tourism is a multi-layered phenomenon influenced by a range of factors such as world politics and economics.
Local governments and tourism

Local governments often play an important role for tourism development and is therefore suitable to include when discussing tourism development in a region. Some key reasons why local governments are important for tourism development is that they represent a broader interest of the population, they are supposed to be impartial, possess the legislative empowerment to implement change, and they are usually not as constrained by short term financial objectives as private actors (Ruhanen, 2013). The planning and policy in tourism involve political debate concerning the agenda, possible issues, who is involved or affected and alternative courses of action that are available (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). As local governments often possess great local knowledge they are often best placed to support tourism development within a destination. Often they are also closest to challenges associated with tourism development and are therefore considered suitable to coordinate tourism development at the local level (Ruhanen, 2013).

Shared responsibility and collaboration among destination stakeholders is commonly advocated. However, coordination and management of sustainable tourism development is complex and is likely to require intervention and regulation by the state and public sector (Bramwell & Lane, 2010; Ruhanen, 2013). This further strengthens the importance of local governments’ involvement in tourism development. The concept of governance is multifaceted but usually implies a focus on the ways that societies are governed and systems of governing. Tourism governance are likely to involve mechanisms for governing, regulating and mobilizing action. This can include hierarchical tiers of formal government, networks of actors, and communities. In order to establish sustainable tourism development there is a need for tailored and effective governance. This is important for the process of securing economic, socio-cultural and environmental goals. By a diverse range of participation of actors in tourism decision-making the democratic process can be enhanced (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). This might be especially important as tourism destinations often are characterized by the coexistence of multiple stakeholders (Ruhanen, 2013).

Local governments are obviously important for tourism development. However, there is also critique against the strong involvement of local governments in tourism development. This criticism is largely based on top-down planning and lack of strategic view and direction of decisions. It is also argued that the public sector often fail to establish participative planning processes which is crucial for sustainable development as destinations embrace multiple stakeholders (Ruhanen, 2013). These accusations are rather serious as they are aimed at the very same functions governments are supposed to be responsible for in tourism development. If government planning for tourism development becomes more important in the future a greater attention should be aimed towards improving the democratic character and effectiveness (Bramwell & Lane, 2010). Consequently the challenge for local governments seems to relate to the multi-scaled and complex character of the tourism industry.

Tourism and international borders

Tourism and travelling almost always include crossing either regional or international political boundaries. The interaction between borders and tourism are multifaceted and influenced by a range of factors (Timothy, 2001) as international borders are places where political entities collide, cultures blend, and economies converge. As tourism is one of the most globalized industries of today (Timothy, 2006), tourism is certainly influenced by borders. A border region is an area which is characterized by its economic and social life
being directly and significantly influenced by the proximity to an international border. Tourist destinations or zones sometimes extend across, or meet at borders. Here communication and cooperation might lead the zone to work as one entity, or otherwise risk becoming a barrier. The conditions in each border region is different around the world as international borders possess different degrees of permeability (Timothy, 2001). The permeability of a border is influenced by the function of the boundary as well as sociocultural similarity on each side. The sociocultural similarities or dissimilarities and function of the border are influenced by the political and ideological systems (Timothy & Tosun, 2003), most likely making some border regions more open than others.

The function of borders have changed quite rapidly during the last decades. Traditionally international borders had the purpose of constructing barriers for the flow of people and goods, economic trade, services and transportation. They have strongly influenced the demarcation of “us” and “them” (Sofield, 2006; Timothy, 1999; Webster & Timothy, 2006; Weidenfeld, 2013). The international frontiers have for long limited contact and cooperation between states, and consequently been a barrier to human movement (Timothy & Saarinen, 2013). The growing interest of borders within tourism studies can be derived to geopolitical developments followed by dismantling of countries creating new borderlands and the changing nature of borders as a consequence of globalisation (Ioannides et al., 2006). There has been a relaxation of requirements to cross borders in the last decades including visas and passports with the adoption of the Schengen agreement (Blasco et al., 2014a). As the role and function of borders have changed, they have become more lines of contact and zones of production, trade and tourism. Two sides of an international border cannot ignore what transpires on the other side (Timothy, 2001). Cooperation and collaboration between countries are essential in achieving sustainable tourism development in an increasingly competitive world as a consequence of globalisation (Tosun et al., 2005).

There are four specifically interesting relationships between tourism and borders. First, boundaries which also function as tourist attractions. Second, borders as barriers to travel by either physical barriers or restrictions as visas. Third, boundaries as lines of transit and fourth, the growth of supranationalism (Timothy, 2006). Crossing international boundaries has fascinated people for centuries and can be a motivation for some people to travel (Timothy, 2001; 2006). Many of the most popular tourist attraction in the world are located near, or right on international borders (Timothy, 2001). The attractiveness of border regions might sometimes be as simple as the borderline itself with demarcation indicators such as fences and walls. Other factors could be activities, attractions and special features of communities in the vicinity of the border such as restaurants, shopping and bars (Timothy, 2006).

Cross-border tourism development

Outset of research

Academic research with focus on tourism and destinations spanning over international borders can usually be found in cross-border tourism literature. One of the earliest attempts to analyse the relationship between tourism and borders was at a conference in 1977 sponsored by the International Geographic Union (Timothy, 2001). A growing interest has since followed, but still have political borders only recently become popular within tourism research (Prokkola, 2010; Weidenfeld, 2013). The research within the field has since the end of the 1970s focused on examining political, economic, social, cultural, and psychological effects of borders on tourism (Timothy, 2001). Most of the literature deals with the opportunities and the problems
related to border situations in tourist destinations (Wachowiak & Engels, 2006). Except from being a relatively understudied field of research are there also quite few researchers within the field who has contributed to the literature. Timothy Dallen J. is argued to have made extensive contributions within the research of borders and tourism (Ioannides et al., 2006), and much of the research within the field relies on his prolifically contributions (Prokkola, 2008; 2010). The contemporary research have quite a specific geographical focus on North America, Europe and Southeast Asia. The reason for this may relate to the strong promotion of regional cooperation in these regions such as the European Union (EU), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (Timothy & Teye, 2004), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Timothy & Saarinen, 2013).

Multiple scales of cross-border tourism collaborations

Border regions can be categorised depending on the current situation in the area between the adjacent countries. These categories could be alienation, coexistence, cooperation, collaboration, and integration. Ranging from almost hostile borders, to weak and non-existent efforts for collaboration, to initial efforts to solve mutual issues, to stable relations and established joint efforts, and finally to regions where both sides are functionally coalesced (Timothy, 2001). Global political and economic changes have given way to cross-border cooperation and there are international organizations and advocacy groups who for long have advocated the dismantling of political frontiers. Some of these are the World Customs Organization (WCO), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Timothy, 2001).

There are also different scales of cross-border collaborations. These include global alliances (UN, UNWTO, OECD), regional alliances (EU), bilateral networks (Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union), and inter-local cooperation (Euroregions) (Timothy & Saarinen, 2013). Even though only a few of the larger supranational alliances have tourism as a major focus, they still deal with issues that directly affect tourism. This include issues such as environmental protection, simplifying and encouraging cross-border travel, interregional marketing, and infrastructural development (Timothy, 2006). Specific tourism related cross-border alliances are possible to find on each of the four different scales. UNESCO is a great example of a global alliance with strong ties to tourism, with at least sixteen sites located over international boundaries in Europe. On a regional level Interreg programmes funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) often focus on enhancing cultural cooperation and heritage developments (Timothy & Saarinen, 2013). These programmes are argued to have been the most relevant initiative for tourism development in European border regions (Faby, 2006). The growing importance of tourism have also led to a greater implementation of tourism in Interreg programmes (Nilsson et al., 2010). Tourism related collaborations on the bilateral scale commonly include joint cross-border tourism marketing. Examples of this level of tourism collaboration could be two countries who market themselves as one destination, sharing of booking services or disseminating each other’s tourist information. Inter-local tourism collaborations usually include twin towns where cultural and natural resources overlap political borders. The Euroregion of Haparanda-Tornio is a great example where they share various public services such as a joint tourist information office (Timothy & Saarinen, 2013).

European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), which more commonly is known as Interreg, have played an important role for cross-border tourism development. Therefore it is suitable to
examine this initiative a bit more thoroughly. The main objective of ETC is to promote a harmonious economic, social and territorial development of the EU. Each Interreg programme is built around three strands of cooperation which include cross-border (Interreg A), transnational (Interreg B), and interregional (Interreg C) (EU, 2016). Interreg A include cooperation between NUTS III regions and it aims to deal with identified joint challenges in the border region, enhance cooperation and exploit growth potential (EU, 2016a). Interreg B focus on a larger scale and involves regions from several EU countries forming bigger areas. Projects within this strand often relate to innovation, environment, accessibility, communication and urban development (EU, 2016b). Interreg C has the largest scale of the three strands and involve all 27 EU member states. Focus of projects on this level include building networks for practice, facilitate exchange, and transfer of experience by successful regions (EU, 2016c). The programmes are organized in different time periods with Interreg I (1990-1993), Interreg II (1994-1999), Interreg III (2000-2006), Interreg IV (2007-2013), and finally the current Interreg V (2014-2020). Since the first programme period of Interreg I, the commitment budget has almost tenfold to 10,1 billion euro for the Interreg V period (EU, 2016d).

Tourism destinations in border regions

Another important subject to discuss concerning tourism and cross-border collaborations are the notion of destinations. From the perspective of strategic marketing planning and brand management, it is important to define the nature of a tourism destination in its depth, in order to build the preconditions for successful destination marketing (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011). Basically, if one aim to market a tourism destination, it is important to define and delimit the destination. There are different approaches to defining tourism destinations in the literature, and Saraniemi and Kylänen analyse four different theoretical approaches to problematize the concept of tourism destinations. The first is the economic geography-oriented approach which is a rather static perspective and where destinations traditionally are regarded as geographical areas (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011). Here the concept of destinations are often taken for granted as destinations are regarded as a defined geographical area, such as a country, island, province or town. Destinations gets defined as fixed territorial entities with administrative boundaries where tourists come and go via different routes (Blasco et al., 2014b). The second perspective is the marketing management-oriented approach where the tourism product consists of separate components that make up a complete product. Destinations are agglomerations of services and facilities designed to meet the needs of tourists. The customer-oriented approach is the third perspective where the destinations is reduced down to the service environment facilitating the experience. The fourth and final perspective is the sociocultural construction of destinations. Here the authors emphasize that destinations are not stable and closed systems, rather under constant negotiation (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011). However, there are also arguments to delimit tourism destinations on the basis of tourists’ consumption patterns rather than on administrative borders (Blasco et al., 2014a). Delimitating destinations based on consumption patterns get especially interesting in cross-border regions where adjacent territories meet. If the consumption patterns stretch over international border the destination limit might be questioned.

The spatial distribution of attractions can have great influence over the potentiality of a tourism destination. Hence, instead of delimitating destinations by administrative borders, there is a great opportunity to define the tourism destination based on the tourists’
consumption space and the spatial distribution of attractions (Blasco et al., 2014b). It is possible to view destinations as multiple layers overlapping ranging from community, region, country, and continent. The important part is to understand that the perception and purpose of a destination differ between different target groups, and thus define their destination differently. When service providers and local actors begin to cooperate they intend to work unified to develop, organize, and to market their destination. Even though there might be several actors involved selling a range of services, it is important that they appear as a homogenous tourist product to the visitor (Hartman, 2006). Avoiding traditional definitions of destinations based on administrative borders seems to be a key feature in the process of understanding destinations. In the context of tourists’ consumption space and spatial distribution of attractions, border regions become especially interesting.

International borders add additional dimensions to the complex process of organizing tourist destinations in border regions. A form of regionalization leading to more autonomous levels of governance on a subnational level have influenced many national political systems (Blatter, 2004). This global trend for regional commerce and economic development is difficult to achieve without close cooperation between nations in border regions (Tosun et al., 2005). By implementing a destination management, cooperation across borders can become more effective, professional, sustainable, and closer to the targeted market (Hartman, 2006). The emergence of effective cross-border structures and management become easier when there are bridging institutions and actors present. In order to establish trust among involved actors, it is important to establish close and power-symmetric personal relationships (Blasco et al., 2014a). The core business of the cross-border cooperation need to be defined, marketing networks established and professional organizational structures need to be implemented to achieve successful destination management. The key aim of any destination management concepts should be to ensure competitiveness and sustainable development (Hartman, 2006). As destination management and cooperation across border involves actors from different national systems it can be of great importance to consider additional patience in communication and planning due to social, cultural and economic differences. This is to enhance cohesiveness and understanding among involved actors (Park, 2014). If effective destination management is established there are great opportunities for the destinations, such as achieving a better market position by valuing the overall qualities of the border region. It is also an opportunity to distinguish oneself from national competitors. The result might be improved economic situation for each involved local actor and strengthened regional awareness (Hartman, 2006).

As a consequence of an increasingly competitive global tourism market, identity have become another important feature to discuss concerning tourism destinations. Destinations are under increasing pressure to construct and promote distinct identities as a strategy to position themselves in the global market (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003). Tourists often view destinations as a unique entity, which is given an identity by its brand name (Blasco et al., 2014b). Regional identities are relational, formed through the historical evolution and the relationships with adjacent areas. Regional identities are therefore neither territorially nor temporally fixed (Prokkola et al., 2015). As tourism is a place-based phenomenon the production of destination identity is also performed on different levels, depending if it is a national, regional of local destination (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003). Destination identities are especially interesting in cross-border regions. These are areas where national identities may overlap with regional identities. There may already be a collective identity among the residents living in the region.
as they share language and culture. However, the complexity of cross-border regions sometimes lead to conflicts as identities differ between parts of the region (Nilsson et al., 2010). Sometimes cross-border regions adapt a new collective name, which can be seen as an indicator of regional identification. This strategy is often used in order to attract tourists, but also attention from higher levels such as Eurocrats in Brussels. The constructed identity is often strongly influenced by current relations and disjuncture in the region. Increasing and strengthened transnational partnerships in the border regions can act as catalysts for the emergence of transnational identities (Prokkola et al., 2015).

Positive outcomes of cross-border tourism collaborations

There are obviously a relation between borders and tourism, different levels of cross-border collaborations, and a complex network destinations and attractions in border regions. It is therefore also suitable to discuss what outcomes and advantages there are with tourism related cross-border collaboration. The tourism industry can be credited with certain parts of some emended relationships in the world. It is argued to be able to be used as a mean to improve local infrastructure (Timothy, 2001). More specifically in the context of border regions, tourism also have the ability to alter political boundaries and the surrounding physical landscape. These changes are due to the increased demand of additional border crossings, boundary demarcations, and border-related services tourism creates in a region (Timothy et al., 2014). Effective and functional infrastructure is of great importance for the tourism industry, and with an internationalization of infrastructural development in border regions the transportation standards can be maintained better. Expensive infrastructural developments such as airports, hotels and shopping centres are commonly used by tourists. However, cross-border cooperation and networking concerning infrastructure developments can decrease expensive and possibly needless duplication of facilities and services such as these (Timothy, 2001). Hence, by cooperating across borders it is possible to better utilise tourism related infrastructure and services.

Effective marketing and strengthened regional identity is another advantage of cross-border tourism development. Borderlines separating nations sometimes become historic markers or attractions in themselves. When this is the case, tourism have the possibility to alter the way a border is viewed and interpreted (Timothy et al., 2014). Cross-border tourism collaborations can be understood as a significant force for changing the function of borders. The emergence of transnational identities is a result of increased mobility and deeper cross-border partnerships in border regions (Prokkola et al., 2015). A strong international identity is highly valued within the tourism industry in order to reach a broad market. In this context multination efforts for promotion and marketing are especially important in border regions. By working together in marketing there is a greater chance to maximize the tourism potential of the whole region and bring greater benefits to the involved parties (Timothy, 2001).

Improved regional economy and creation of jobs is another benefit of tourism in border regions. Tourism is often a way to obtain hard currency and have the possibility to improve the balance of payments. Therefore it has become an integral part of economic restructuring (Timothy, 2001). The socio-economic growth as a result of tourism development have become a powerful tool in changing the form of nation-states by modifying boundaries and territorial exchanges (Timothy et al., 2014). The creation of new jobs, higher standard of living, increased regional income, and more efficient management are additional benefits of
Cross-border cooperation (Timothy, 2001). Cross-border tourism collaborations therefore have an important role in social and regional development.

Cross-border tourism collaborations may also work as a catalyst for innovation and knowledge transfer. Regions have become important in order to create and transfer knowledge, this is much due to the globalization of economic order and the increased knowledge- and creativity-based economy. Clusters of actors and organizations in border regions become especially important as they may contribute to knowledge transfer across the border. Benefits of engaging in innovative clusters may result in access to knowledge and learning processes that cannot easily be acquired on the market (Park, 2014). Sustaining regional competitiveness is of great importance within the global market (Hartman, 2006), and therefore public regional actors involved in tourism development might benefit greatly by taking part in broader collaborations across national borders. By doing so, they get access to new valuable knowledge and have greater chances in maximizing the tourism potential of the region.

Other outcomes of further cross-border tourism developments in border regions might include a general increase of travel across the border and social change. There are regions were tourism has not been a major agent of changing the function of the border. However, subsequently to changes in border formalities and the function of a border tourism have often become a salient user of the border territories (Timothy et al., 2014). Tourism is sometimes seen as a symbol of freedom as it allows citizens to travel freely, and also as a catalyst for social change by allowing and encouraging closer interaction between tourists and host communities (Timothy, 2001). Consequently cross-border tourism developments might lead to more effective use of border territories, as a mean to allow and encourage citizens to travel across borders and to strengthen the interaction between tourists and the region.

Challenges associated with cross-border tourism development

Just as there are advantages and positive outcomes of tourism related cross-border collaborations, there are challenges associated with these types of collaborations. Even though borders have an obvious influence in international travel are there some authors who have examined them within a tourism context (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). As the second focus of this study is to analyse the institutional challenges facing public actors in cross-border tourism collaborations, this section is dedicated to discuss these further. When the literature concerning the challenges associated with cross-border tourism collaborations had been scrutinized a rather distinct pattern evolved. Most of the challenges related to factors such as social, culture, economy, politics and regulations, and organization and governance. By arranging these into a figure, clear themes of cross-border tourism challenges become obvious as seen in figure 2 below.
Social, cultural and economic differences
As a result of globalization countries has been brought together through social, economic and political relationships contributing to an interdependent system of the worlds’ economies. However, the social mindset, institutions, and public administration systems of a lot of tourist destinations are often ill-prepared of the rapid changes brought by globalization (Tosun et al., 2005). Border regions and their adjacent areas are usually highly influenced socially by their proximity to a border (Gelbman & Timothy, 2011), and depending on the social differences on each side in a border region, functional barriers might be formed (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). Even though countries have started to work closer together over borders, their border regions might not be sufficiently prepared for the clash of different social way of life. As a result this influence the collaborations as the degree of functional barriers increase. It is not only municipalities and inter-regional organizations working with tourism development whom become affected by social differences, but also tourists. Travellers specifically notice negative attitudes among people who work in border crossings which influence their experience of the region. This issue arise as border officials usually not see themselves as a part of the tourism industry (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). Hence, the social climate of border regions influence both collaborations on a higher level as well as ordinary travellers visiting the region.

Alongside social cohesion and understanding, are cultural and linguistic similarities and differences of great importance to consider in human interaction (Timothy & Tosun, 2003), as in collaborations across borders. The cultural similarities or dissimilarities are usually strongly related to the history and function of the border, as to what extend residents in the area have been able to interact (Timothy, 2001). As the cultural cohesion is tied to historical
relations every border region possess unique features different from other geographical locations. Different national regimes on each side of a border influence the lifestyle and culture of the population. Therefore border regions and adjacent areas become highly influenced culturally by their proximity to an international border (Gelbman & Timothy, 2011). Even though the geographical distance is not far, cultural dissimilarities in border regions can lead to an increased perceived distance. This is usually tied to the perception among people of entering an unfamiliar sphere. The cultural difference between each side of a border will similarly to the social factors influence the degree of barrier the border cause (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). Different language and culture are more specific examples attributes which possibly lead to barriers to tourism and cross-border collaborations (Timothy, 2001). Some countries are of course closer to their neighbours than others, but cultural differences might still create barriers for people, even at friendly borders. Formalities tied to crossing the border especially increase this type of barrier (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). Even though their research lack connection to cross-border tourism collaborations, Björkman et al. (2007) rise some interesting points regarding cultural barriers in mergers of organizations. They use the term ‘cultural distance’ which refers to the difference between national cultures. As employees respond to different organizational values there is a risk of an ‘us vs. them’ perspective, consequently leading to failed collaborations and lost opportunities for learning. The benefits of successful integration become limited as a result of the cultural barriers and language problems creating major obstacles (Björkman et al., 2007). As public organizations are influenced by national values the cultural distance among tourism developers in border regions might create barriers for further collaborations across the border.

Economic related factors might as well as social and cultural dissimilarities lead to barriers in cross-border integration and collaborations. Residents who live in border regions usually become separated by the different economic landscapes on each side of the border (Gelbman & Timothy, 2011). Depending on the contemporary relationship between the sovereign nations in a border region the economic difference might influence collaborations variously. However, similar to the culture will economic differences most likely create barriers for interaction even at friendly borders (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). As regions are highly influenced by their own national economic system new relationships across borders might be difficult to form. It is argued that ties among economic actors in border regions not always occur naturally (Blasco et al., 2014a), which certainly influence cross-border collaborations. Separate and distinct taxation systems on each side of the border sometimes increase the competitive relation between countries and create barriers for collaboration (Ioannides et al., 2006; Hampton, 2010). The multiplicity of involved actors in the process of developing cross-border projects combined with distinct taxation systems often lead to a complex process of setting up financial plans. A great consequence of this complexity is the difficulty of finding funding for cross-border projects (Durand, 2014).

Distinct political views and regulations
The second set of challenges associated with cross-border tourism collaboration concern political related factors. International borders are politically inflicted in their crude nature (Sofield, 2006) as they mark a line that usually separate different political systems and sometimes also ideological views (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). Areas in close proximity to border regions therefore become heavily influenced by the political relationship between the bordering countries. This also influence to what extent and degree the border become a
As international tourism always include crossing borders (Timothy, 2001), the tourism industry become affected by political related issues in border regions. For tourists the functional barrier of borders as a consequence of political disputes have great influence over their experience of the destination (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). There are also chances of constraining the tourism flow across borders as may tourism become entangled in sensitive political issues (Sofield, 2006), which possible affect the local tourism actors and perception of the destination.

It is not only the tourists and local tourism actors who become affected by the political relationship in border regions. Politics also influence regional cross-border collaborations on a higher level. Political frontiers caused by functional borders often lead to difficulties in achieving collaboration, cooperation and integration. These difficulties derive from the political environment on each side of the border. The political environment especially influence decision making processes in infrastructural developments and marketing (Timothy, 2001). Related to the political environment are laws and regulations. In cross-border development collaborations where juxtapositions of different urban planning laws and regulations need to be considered difficulties are often encountered (Durand, 2014). A common outcome of such challenges produced by distinct political systems is that regional tourism tend to become competitive instead of complementary (Timothy, 2001). Competition on each side of border obviously affect the regional tourism industry and the tourism flow across the border. However, there are also chances of conflicts emerging when some of the cities in a cross-border region experience greater interest and attention than others. The hierarchy among cities are not necessarily determined by size, but rather by the national interest in the region (Prokkola et al., 2015). If the national interest in a cross-border region is significantly different on each side there is a risk for the weaker region to be politically excluded and economically exploited (Saxena & Ilbery, 2011). A possible consequence of such a situation might be that one of the side get more input and support in developing the regional tourism. Politics also have the potential to lead to bureaucratic planning. In the border region between Sweden and Finland political related challenges have had impacts on joint tourism developments. A project in the region called ‘Eurocity’ partly failed as it was driven by political organizations instead of regional and local businesses. Local entrepreneurs in the region also felt that the process of implementing cross-border projects was too bureaucratic, hence constraining further collaborations (Prokkola, 2008; Prokkola et al., 2015).

**Organization and the establishment of governance**

Organizing and establishing governance in cross-border tourism collaborations constitute the third set of challenges associated with these types of collaborations over national borders. There have only been a few attempts to study governance structures in cross-border regions, and literature have revealed that there are a lack of success in attempts to create governance structures in these areas (Blasco et al., 2014a). A possibility for both the lack of research and the establishing of governance structures might be the complex and multiple levels of different collaborations between regions, nations and supranational unions. A key issue concerning the establishment of governance structures derive from different institutional nature between different regimes (Blasco et al., 2014a). There are however some place specific differences in the organization of cross-border collaborations around the world. In Europe for instance, it is common with purely intergovernmental cross-border cooperation’s
with a strong dominance of public representatives, while in North America there is a much higher degree of involvement of private and non-profit actors (Blatter, 2004). Cross-border governance in Europe is challenging as collaborative initiatives often are top-down, nationally inbounded and rarely links up with popular aspirations and lead to failure (Saxena & Ilbery, 2011; Blasco et al., 2014a), which is a possible result of strict intergovernmental involvement.

Common issues encountered in cross-border development often relate to the lack of coordination on an institutional level on each side of a border. The juxtaposition of different territorial systems contribute to the main challenge of coordination in cross-border regions (Durand, 2014). This is why well-structured organization and governance are of great importance in cross-border developments. Another common constraint is when there are administrative differences between nations give rise to barriers among politicians and organizations for further collaborations (Zhang et al., 2006). As involved actors on each side sometimes have different priorities for the development of the region, administrative difference also might increase difficulties in building consensus around common goals (Park, 2014). Lack of knowledge and expertise among local officials of the neighbouring country’s territorial also negatively affect cross-border cooperation. The lack of knowledge and uneven power structures are major weaknesses especially contributing to constraints in participatory planning (Timothy, 2001; Durand, 2014). Under-developed organizational and governance structures might have serious impacts on the development of cross-border regions. In some regions have there been a great reliance of short-term Interreg-programmes. Becoming too reliant of a few key actors increase the vulnerability is some actors encounter probl

Methodology

Method

A qualitative research method have been used for this study due to the character of the aim and research questions. As the aim was to analyse the interest and attitudes for cross-border tourism development it was needed to use a method enabling me to gather rich first-hand information from public actors. As this type of research strategy usually emphasize words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman, 2016) a qualitative approach was considered suitable for this study. Qualitative research methods are also suitable when personally involved individuals describe their experiences in their own words (Veal, 2011), when perception and interpretation of gathered data is at the forefront (Holme & Solvang, 1997), and when the research seek to gather a lot of rich data from a limited number of respondents (Johannessen & Tufte, 2003). The use of a qualitative research process facilitate the potentiality to identify the full range of issues in large-scale studies, including views and attitudes (Veal, 2011). Such a methodology would enhance the possibility to identify profound thoughts, experiences and expectations among public officials working with tourism and destination development in the region.

Each step of the research process have been characterized by a qualitative line of thought, from the aim, choice of theoretical framework, chosen method, targeted informants, and the analysis of gathered data. This means that the chosen theory have been considered relevant to
the case study, the informants have been carefully selected depending on their positions, and
the analysis have focused on personal experiences and expectations. To maintain such a
consistent qualitative perspective through each step usually considered of great importance
when conducting qualitative research (Holter, 1996). As this study include a lot of personal
opinions and experiences the aim have been to apply an as objective perspective as possible.
However, as research cannot be value free the researcher always present a specific version of
social reality (Bryman, 2016) much efforts have been made to not generalize the analysis.

Primary data
The primary data in the study is gathered through seven semi-structured interviews based on a
pre-constructed interview guide. In order to gather personal attitudes, experiences, and
expectations among the informants such interviews were chosen, as they provide information
from the perspective of the respondent(s) (Kvale, 1997) and yield rich insights and detailed
information about peoples’ experiences, opinions, aspirations, attitudes and feelings (Bryman,
2016; May, 2001). Even though most of the informants had similar positions their tasks
within their organizations differentiated. Therefore it was important to use a flexible interview
 technique such as semi-structured interviews where questions not have to be in a specific
order and can be adjusted according to the respondent (Trost, 2005). The flexibility of semi-
structured interviews also allow the researcher to ask follow-up questions (Bryman, 2016)
which was highly valued as the interviews included very specific information. Even though
semi-structured interviews allow respondents to answer more on their own terms, they still
provide a great structure for comparability between different interviews (May, 2001). This
enabled me to compare the answers between the interviews and find similarities and
dissimilarities.

An interview guide was used during the interviews create a structure for the conversation and
ease the process of comparing the information gathered. The use of such guide is preferred as
it function as a manual for the interviews, even though it is not necessary to follow the order
of the questions of topics (Holme & Solvang, 1997). As it is important to consider the
structure of the guide and order of the questions to achieve a positive interaction and flow
during the interview Trost (2005) the interview guide differed slightly between the interviews
as new topics were brought up by informants and some were considered irrelevant. By doing
so it was possible to improve the flow of each interview. It is argued that interview guides
should include short and structured questions or topics related to the theoretical framework
(Trost, 2005; Kvale, 1997). Therefore are the pre-determined topics based on the theoretical
framework from this study and structured similarly as seen in the final version of the
interview guide (Appendix 1).

It is usual to use different kinds of questions when performing interviews in order to retrieve
as rich information as possible. These questions can be initiating, follow-up, probing,
exploratory, specific, direct, indirect, structured, silence, and interpreting (Kvale, 1997;
Bryman, 2016). A mix of these have been used in this study. The interviews usually began
with initiating questions concerning the function of the organization and the respondent’s role.
The main part of the interviews were based on direct questions which usually was followed up
by additional questions (Appendix 1).
Secondary data
Secondary data in this study have mostly been used to describe population, infrastructure, and tourism in the chosen region. In contrast to primary data the secondary data usually refers to existing information such as official statistics and documents (Veal, 2011). For this study have therefore official statistics of population and tourism numbers from both Sweden and Denmark been used.

Data collection
Audio-recording during the interviews was used in order to collect the information from the respondents. Before initiating each interview the respondents was informed how the information was going to be used, and then asked for permission to record the interview. This is a rather convenient method as audio-recordings and transcripts of interviews can be of great value and practical when analysing the result of the information provided (Veal, 2011). Audio-recording also allow the interviewer to concentrate on the conversation during the interview instead of taking notes (Trost, 2005; May, 2001). This is of great importance as the interviewer need to be alert on what being said and be ready with follow-up questions (Bryman, 2016). There was of course a chance the respondents was going to refuse to allow me to record the interview, therefore a pen and paper was brought to each interview as an back-up alternative and allow me to take notes. Recording the interviews also enables the researcher to listen to the discussion several times and transcribe the interview (Trost, 2005).

In order to avoid technical issues when recording the interviews, two different audio- recorders were used. The primary audio-recorder was a mobile phone and the secondary audio-recorder was a laptop were the default pre-installed audio-recorder was used. VLC media player was used in the process of transcribing the interviews. The process of transcribing interviews is however very long and time-consuming (Trost, 2005; May, 2001; Bryman, 2016). In order to not forget important details such as body language and expressions not possible to record, the transcribing process started as early as possible after the interviews were done. The interviews was also fully transcribed word by word enabling the rich use of quotes in the analysis which also added to the time consuming process of transcribing the gathered material.

Sampling strategy and targeted respondents
The sampling strategy have been to locate and contact employees working within the public sector with tourism development. This means tourism officials for municipalities and larger organizations with knowledge of tourism development within the Öresund Region. Incorporating informants representing to whole region would be ideal as it would provide opinions from both smaller distant municipalities and larger municipalities located close to the border. However, this would be an overwhelming task considering the magnitude of the region and time frame of the thesis. It was therefore necessary to delimit the studied region further. The initial plan was to contact each of the 12 member organizations of Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee. This would provide a varied range of public respondents on a regional level involved in an organization partly working with tourism development in the region.
After initiating the process of contacting these members it became obvious that adjustments had to be made concerning the targeted respondents. As the member organizations were municipalities and regional councils involved in a wide range of tasks, it was necessary to target officials within these with responsibility and knowledge of tourism development. Not all of the 12 member organizations were involved in specifically tourism development, or displayed any interest in participating in the study. However, four members agreed to participate, and these were the municipalities of Malmö, Landskrona, Helsingborg, and Lund all of them in Sweden. These informants recommended additional three organizations which were contacted. These were Helsingör municipality, VisitNordSjælland in Denmark and STRING network operating between Skåne, the capital region of Denmark, and northern Germany. Figure 3 below display the targeting approach used in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Öresund Region</th>
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<td>79 municipalities</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greater Copenhagen &amp; Skåne Committee</th>
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<tr>
<td>12 member organizations including regional governing bodies and municipalities</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Targeted respondents + recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malmö, Landskrona, Helsingborg, Lund, Helsingör, VisitNordsjælland, STRING network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 3. Approach for targeting the respondents.*

Great efforts was made to contact both Wonderful Copenhagen which is the official tourism organization of Köpenhamn municipality and the regional tourism organization of Tourism in Skåne. These two were recommended by all of the participating informants as both of these play important roles for the tourism development in the Öresund Region. However, neither of these displayed any interest to participate in the study and was therefore left out. As both of these possess important coordinating roles for tourism development in the Öresund Region this study lack the perspective from their positions. However, the participating informants still provided unique, rich, and insightful information making it a relevant study.

In the process of contacting targeted respondent it is important to keep it short and concise, present your name, where you study, your thesis, aim and objectives (Trost, 2005). Therefore an information sheet was constructed which functioned as a guide for introducing the thesis to respondents. This guide included aim and objectives of the study, a brief description of interview themes, and ethical considerations regarding audio-recording and use of data (Appendix 2). However, it is important to mention the details such as research questions and
title have been modified after the interviews was performed and therefore not correlate with those in Appendix 2.

Interviewed respondents
The interview process for this study lasted in the period of February 18th to April 14th 2016. As the informants had busy schedules it was not possible to perform all the interviews early. Five of the interviews was performed in Sweden and two in Denmark. The interviews lasted for approximately 40 to 60 minutes, depending on the schedule of the informants. However, as all respondents in advance received a document containing discussion themes (Appendix 2) they were all prepared and could quickly give rich information about the subject without needing explanations. The informants are:

- Informant 1: Tourism Manager, Helsingborg
- Informant 2: Tourist Office Manager, Lund
- Informant 3: Business Manager Private Travels and Contact for International Collaborations, Malmö
- Informant 4: Project Advisor, STRING Secretariat
- Informant 5: Project Leader, Cruise Manager, Tourist Office Leader, VisitNordsjælland
- Informant 6: Tourism and Event Coordinator, Helsingör
- Informant 7: Destination Developer, Landskrona

The interviews are performed with five informants working for municipalities with marketing, tourism- and destination development, and international collaborations, one informant who work for a large tourism organization in Denmark and then one informant who work for a cross-border collaboration organization. The seven targeted informants are considered suitable for this study as they all are involved in public organizations, tourism development, and cross-border projects in the Öresund Region. The informants are experienced in their roles which generated rich information of high quality. Information gathering through qualitative interviews is a very demanding which also limit the number of informants to include in a study (Holme & Solvang, 1997). Other factors influencing the amount of interview possible to perform are the time the researcher have to dispose and the level of sought competence among the informants. However it is more important with a few interviews of high quality than a great amount of low quality (Kvale, 1997).

Data analysis
The analysis of the data is based on a deductive approach where the theory of cross-border tourism development make up the ground for the analysis. This is a common view of the relation between theory and social research were theory usually guide the research (Bryman, 2012). Theory works as the starting point for the empirical observations. This allow the researcher to utilise the information about what is known in a particular domain to study empirical consequences in relation to the theory (Halvorsen, 1992; Bryman, 2016). This study have a similar approach where theory and findings in cross-border tourism development literature have inspired the structure and classification of the gathered data, also known as a thematic analysis. In combination with a deductive approach it is common to create categories or themes of collected information. By extracting reoccurring themes the data can be broken down into categories and be labelled. By coding the data in this way it is then possible to search for links, similarities and differences between the transcripts and the theories (Holter,
A similar approach have been applied to the data analysis in this study. The theory was categorized into two main parts of the function and advantages of cross-border tourism development, and the challenges associated with such collaborations. The empirics were then coded and sorted into these categories creating a similar structure for the analysis. Practically the gathered data was scrutinized and placed under the same headings as in the theory enabling finding similarities and dissimilarities between theory and empirics. However, a new sub-section focusing on spatial and geographical challenges related to cross-border collaborations was added in the analysis section due to the place specific and unique information provided by the informants.

Comments on method

Many of the previous studies on cross-border tourism development have used qualitative methods with semi-structured interviews which also influenced the choice of method for this study. A lot of these studies have mainly focused on analysing tourism development in border regions, advantages and challenges with such collaborations, and perceptions from visitors and entrepreneurs. As this study focus on the experiences and expectations among public actors it has a rather unique approach compared to current research within the cross-border tourism development literature. The study add a new important perspective with first-hand information on cross-border tourism collaborations from large scale actors such as municipalities and organizations. This is therefore a valuable addition to the cross-border tourism research as these types of actors possess an important role for decision-making and planning in tourism development.

Quotes have been used frequently in the analysis section when discussing the information gathered from the informants. The interviews were performed in both Swedish and Danish and therefore the quotes have been translated carefully. As the sentence structure between written and spoken language differ drastically, combined with the need to translate it was a demanding task to avoid interfering with the meaning of the sentences. Therefore some quotes may appear grammatically odd.

Ethical considerations

The aim of this study have been to gather information, views, and opinions about tourism development in a cross-border region from public actors. Therefore ethical considerations have been acknowledged in this study concerning information, consent, and interpretation of the gathered data. Even though the aim and objectives of this study are uncontroversial, it is important to discuss the ethics of the study. Ethics in research are about principles, rules and guidelines which specify if proceedings are correct or incorrect (Johannessen & Tufte, 2003). This is of great importance in social research, especially when it involves human subjects (Veal, 2011). Ethical considerations should be included throughout the whole research process from the planning stage to the final report. This include to get consent from respondents, to critically analyse the information, and consider consequences for the respondents and their institution (Kvale, 1997). The prospective respondents should be given as much information as needed to be able to decide if they want to participate in the study (Bryman, 2016). These considerations has been realized by providing all of the informants with the aim and objectives of the study both by phone and an information sheet. The informants have been asked for permission to audio-record the interviews and been promised that the information will not be used in any other purpose than this study. The gathered
information is stored safely on a locked personal online storage service where no other individuals have access. To avoid negative consequences for involved informants have been of great importance. Therefore the gathered material have been carefully treated in respect to ethical considerations and sensitive comments have been avoided to not put informants against each other. Instead the focus have been to describe the informant’s thoughts on cross-border tourism collaborations, their experiences, expectations, and then discuss the consequences.

Case analysis
As this study has applied a deductive approach where the theory function as the starting point this analysis section strongly focus on comparing empirical findings with current cross-border tourism development literature.

Perspectives of cross-border tourism development in the region
The role of public actors for regional tourism development
Local governments such as municipalities have been argued to hold an important role for tourism development. One of these roles concern coordination and management as destinations often include a great amount of local stakeholders which make tourism development a complex process (Bramwell & Lane, 2010; Ruhanen, 2013). This perspective is very much shared with the interviewed informants of this study. They mention that municipalities possess an important role to lead, coordinate, and plan tourism development. Municipalities should also apply a holistic perspective and take a central role to coordinate development. This view of the role of local governments for tourism development is of great importance as effective governance and networks of actors are essential for sustainable tourism development (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). Some of the informants mention that their municipalities seldom own many of the products and facilities themselves and therefore it becomes important to collaborate with the tourism industry and to maintain a good relation with the local businesses.

Local governments also represent a broader interest of the population and possess legislative empowerment to implement change (Ruhanen, 2013). This is mentioned as one of the key areas for the municipalities in the study. There are a lot of smaller businesses within the tourism industry who lack time and resources to keep up with market developments and trends. In Malmö they try to use their resources where private actors cannot easily access, especially on international markets. This supportive and coordinating role of municipalities is important as they often possess great local knowledge which they can utilise for tourism development (Ruhanen, 2013). In Landskrona this is realized by lectures in export maturity and revenue management among others to try to support local actors and provide opportunities for new businesses. In Malmö, Lund, and Helsingborg they especially emphasized their roles for marketing. This imply taking a strong role for marketing, to sell and market the destination, and to function as a marketing organization and attract events and conferences.

Another interesting role mentioned by some of the respondents which is not discussed directly in the literature is the role as creators of incentives for development. Combined with possessing a coordinating role Landskrona strive to create incentives for new businesses. In a similar context are public actors used by the STRING Network organization to create

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incentives and lead path for development. In tourism development decision processes it is important with a diverse range of participating actors in order to enhance the democratic process (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). As municipalities possess this role to lead the path for tourism development it becomes very important to establish good relations and effective communication with the local business life.

Tourism collaborations among public actors in the Öresund Region

Earlier it was mentioned about a recently started cross-border project named Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee. This cross-border collaboration has a wide agenda with some parts focusing on developing tourism in the Öresund Region. However, before moving on discussing this platform further here follows a discussion of past, contemporary, and interest for cross-border tourism collaborations in the Öresund Region among the interviewed public actors.

There has been a range of different tourism related cross-border collaborations among public actors in the Öresund Region in the past. Some informants mention that generally the tourism industry has developed quickly the last ten years and they experience that municipalities, organizations, and businesses have started to cooperate more. These past collaborations mostly correspond to the two smaller inter-local and bilateral scales compared to regional and global alliances (Timothy & Saarinen, 2013). For some of the interviewed municipalities and organizations cross-border collaborations have been more natural than for others, especially in Malmö where it was mentioned that “/…/ we have been working with Wonderful Copenhagen and VisitDenmark in many projects for 15 years surely. It is ‘nothing new under the sun’, so to say” (Informant 3, 25/2-2016). For them cross-border collaborations in the Öresund Region are nothing unfamiliar, instead a natural way or working. Except for various Interreg projects Helsingborg also have a history of joint projects together with Köpenhamn, which also applies for Lund who more specifically have had several meetings, lectures, and exchanges of experiences together with Köpenhamn as well. Köpenhamn definitely seem to be an important partner as three of the largest municipalities on the Swedish side all have had some type of tourism related collaborations or exchanges with them. Landskrona on the other hand lack the natural connection and proximity to Denmark as Malmö and maybe Lund have to Köpenhamn, or Helsingborg and Helsingör. Instead they have been involved in various Interreg projects with Danish destinations. One specific project was with the Danish city of Brøndby called “Hubs” focused on how smaller cities could take advantage of tourist flows from close larger cities. This type of project highlights the importance of joint collaborations to disperse all tourism flows from the major attractions to other destinations in the Öresund Region.

On the Danish side the organization of VisitNordSjælland have a history of cross-border tourism collaborations with especially North West Skåne which include bicycle projects with joint maps and bicycle paths. Another rather interesting project have been “Gränslösa dagar” (Borderless days) where residents and tourists have been able to travel for free with the ferries between Helsingborg and Helsingör for a limited period of time. The aim of this project have been to encourage Danish residents to visit Helsingborg and Skåne and vice versa. It was described as “/…/ it is completely unique” (Informant 5, 9/3-2016), which also demonstrate the efforts for collaboration and integration between the two countries in the region. One project on a more bilateral scale have been the Öresund Event Center with the aim to develop an event strategy for the whole region. This project was led by the former Öresundskomiteen
and included both international events and smaller local events to attract visitors. However, it is not yet clear if this strategy will be brought to life again with the new Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee.

Except for past cross-border tourism collaborations there are some current projects of different scales. The recently started Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee is of course mentioned as one of these by several of the informants. It will definitely be interesting to follow the progress of this large scale collaboration as they have just started to identify areas concerning tourism development they will focus on. Chinavia is another large scale project focusing on the Chinese market and to attract Chinese tourists to visit Scandinavia. Even though this project focus on a broader area than the Öresund Region it is an important and interesting project for the region as it is very much driven by Wonderful Copenhagen. On a more inter-local scale Helsingborg and Helsingör work closely together in the HH-collaboration where municipal directors from both cities currently discuss a future strategy where tourism development is included. Both of these harbour cities also participate together in Cruise Baltic to attract cruise tours. Helsingör also recently became an “infopoint” for Helsingborg, meaning that the city will provide tourist information about Helsingborg. This year it is also the 400th anniversary for Shakespeare at Kronborg Castle in Helsingör which will be celebrated with a large theatre festival. Helsingborg will be a part of this my marketing this event on the Swedish side. The close cooperation between these two cities demonstrate that there is a strong will for collaboration. Another small scale project is the ferry line during summers between Nyhavn in Köpenhamn and the island Ven outside Landskrona. This has been a very successful project where a lot of Danish resident go on day excursions to the island.

There have obviously been quite a few tourism related cross-border projects in the region and still are. The media debate of Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee started long before the collaboration officially started and therefore it was both interesting and relevant to discuss the interest of such a large scale collaboration platform with the informants. In Helsingborg the informant expressed that “I experience that there is an unbelievable spark, a will to collaborate and to have joint visions and joint priorities now” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016). This demonstrate that there is a perception of a growing interest for cross-border collaboration in the region. There definitely exist an interest for the creation of a more joint destination in in the Öresund Region, but not under the name Öresund. This is not an interesting name or a brand people know about, but Copenhagen is. Even though Malmö prefer to market themselves under their own name they mean that the use of Copenhagen is better than Öresund for marketing. The implementation of the name Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee may be seen as an indicator for regional identification. This strategy to adapt a collective name is often used to attract tourists and attention from higher levels (Prokkola et al. 2015). Some of the informants point out that it is especially from the international perspective these types of interregional cross-border collaborations are interesting. They mean that the interest for large scale collaborations in the Öresund Region may be a result of the great amount of smaller municipalities, especially in Skåne who are too small to develop in a larger scale by themselves. However, identities often differ in parts of cross-border regions which increase the chances of conflicts (Nilsson et al., 2010). Even though there is a great interest for a joint destination on an international scale it needs to be evident that there are more cities than just Köpenhamn, to not lose the local identity. “/…/ if you start to call the whole area Greater Copenhagen then you have to be very evident too that there is a
Landskrona, there is a Helsingborg, a Lund” (Informant 7, 14/4-2016). Even though there is an experienced general interest for a large scale interregional destination it is mentioned in Helsingör that the interest sometimes feels stronger on the Danish side compared to Skåne. This cannot really be justified in this study, but the close proximity of Helsingör and long history of collaborations with Köpenhann might certainly influence this statement. Another challenge that is mentioned by one informant is that it may take several years before people associate the region as one joint region which might influence collaborations and the marketing of the region as one. This is of course a serious challenge, but regional identities are relational and formed through relationships with adjacent areas (Prokkola et al., 2015). The long history of tourism cross-border collaborations in region and the interest for large scale projects might ease the implementation of marketing the region as a joint destination in an international perspective.

Advantages of cross-border tourism collaborations in the Öresund Region
There are often a number of positive outcomes associated with tourism collaborations in border regions. These are usually improved infrastructure and a way to handle expensive investments as the region can share facilities, strengthened regional identity, creation of jobs, effective marketing, and knowledge transfer and innovations (Timothy, 2001; Timothy et al., 2014; Park, 2014). Many of these advantages of cross-border tourism collaborations were recognised by the informants in the studied region. Even though not much was mentioned about how such tourism collaborations can improve the regional infrastructure it is clear that Kastrup, the airport of Köpenhann possess an important role for travelling to and from the region. This is especially highlighted by the Swedish informants who argue that the short distance of 20-25 minutes to the airport contribute to making Kastrup the airport hub of the. It is also argued that the Swedish side is highly dependent of the airport, which can be confirmed by the statistics showing that approximately 3.7 million of the airports passengers in 2015 were Swedish (København Lufthavne, 2015). The airport is not only important as a gateway for Skåne but also for other provinces of southern Sweden. “Somewhere in Småland, Halland, Blekinge there is a limit from here you are drawn down towards Kastrup /…/” (Informant 7, 14/4-2016). As airports are extremely expensive and function as important infrastructure for tourism (Timothy, 2001), Kastrup serves as a great example of how such infrastructure is shared in the border region of Öresund. Combined with effective tourism collaborations there is a greater chance for adjacent destinations to take advantages of the flow of passengers at Kastrup.

Joint marketing and regional identity to attract visitors was probably the most important outcome of further cross-border tourism collaborations identified by the informants. The advantage definitely seem to concern reaching distant markets and to compete against similar regions in Europe. This is of great importance as a strong international identity is highly valued in the tourism industry if one aim to reach a broad market (Timothy, 2001). “/…/ I think it is right that you try to gather a larger region which may compete against similar regions, with Hamburg and some of the larger metropolitan areas in Europe” (Informant 6, 31/3-2016). Together the region then can become a strong competitor with greater efforts in marketing. Other informants mention that there is a need to work together in the region to be able to reach markets in China, India, and USA which could benefit everyone involved.

“We should take advantage of the international hub in Köpenhann and a brand and attraction which could make huge differences for us in the future, to
become internationalized. /.../. Don’t we want to take advantage of this? In that case we would be stupid in my opinion” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016).

Many of the informants recognise that Denmark and especially Köpenhamn already have a very strong international brand symbolizing Scandinavia, which make it the strong attraction in the region for international visitors. Köpenhamn is often awarded as one of the best cities, greenest cities, and the most liveable city in the world. Their brand can help other destinations in the region on markets outside of Europe such as in Asia and USA. However, it is not just about sailing on the brand of Copenhagen. With joint efforts in marketing is it possible to maximize the tourism potential of a border region and bring greater benefits to all parties involved (Timothy, 2001). With further cross-border tourism collaborations some informants point out that you can package the destination and improve the brand as the different attractions and cities in the region complement each other. Skåne with its nature and experiences can be viewed as the wild backyard of Köpenhamn adding to the tourist experience. By collaborating in marketing of the region the informants mean that there is an extra value for the customers as they get the possibility to experience two countries. However, joint marketing efforts might not always be necessary. In both Lund and Malmö they mean that working together as a joint cross-border destination depends on different levels and context. When aiming to attract visitors from the closest neighbouring countries there is no need to market Malmö and Skåne together with Köpenhamn and Denmark.

By working more together as one joint destination in the Öresund Region it is possible to improve the regional economy. Tourism is a way to obtain currency and improve the balance of payments during different seasons (Timothy, 2001). With joint efforts to sell the region it might be possible to improve the tourism flows during low seasons as destinations can market each other. One informant mention that by working together in the region they can create volume and become a stronger competitor. As the EU strive for collaborations across borders another informant mean that a more interregional joint destination might lead to more support to finance developments of the region. In Lund they claim that joint efforts across the border might increase spill-over effects which may improve the regional economy. “/.../ I would say generally /.../, if the visitors increase to Danmark or to Köpenhamn automatically it will be more visitors at this side” (Informant 2, 19/2-2016). Tourism as a generator for increased socio-economic growth in a border region have the possibility to change the traditional form of nation-states for more exchanges (Timothy et al., 2014). By working together as a joint destination with deeper tourism collaborations in the Öresund Region it is possible to boost the regional economy and importance. Improving the regional economy and importance of Skåne is highlighted by one informant as especially important as one of the long term visions is to make Skåne succeed Västra Götaland as the second most competitive region in Sweden after Stockholm.

The emergence of a large scale cross-border collaboration in the Öresund Region is also important for the growth of knowledge. In Malmö it was mentioned that “It is very important that you share the competence across the strait /.../” (Informant 3, 25/2-2016) and that increased cooperation between Wonderful Copenhagen and Skåne will be great as it enable the region to enhance the competence level. It will be important for competence development, exchange of knowledge, and joint analyses. A strong and effective cross-border platform in the Öresund Region could therefore facilitate interaction among actors and organizations. Clusters of actors and organizations are of great importance in border regions as the may lead
to knowledge transfer among actors, knowledge which cannot easily be acquired on their own (Park, 2014). In the Öresund Region such a platform may lead to product development making the region a stronger competitor according to one informant. Sustaining such competitiveness is of great importance within the global market (Hartman, 2006) which further highlights the importance of a strong and effective cross-border platform.

Some of the informants mentioned certain important aspects for a more joint tourism development agenda to be successful in the Öresund Region. One of them mentioned that if a lot of actors and people have the interest it can become successful. As many of the other informants have expressed that they experience a strong interest within their own organizations and among partners there seem to be a general interest at least. In Helsingborg they argued that “We need to adapt a perspective on our surrounding /.../ and keep an objective perspective. Not end up in our administrative borders which we have created on our own” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016). This demonstrate that there is a will to focus on what can improve the region instead of wasting energy on barriers. Finally and probably most important it was also mentioned that for the success of a joint tourism agenda in the region is that the actors stand together.

The influence of an international border in the region

The Öresund Region is divided by the international border stretching through the strait. The relationship between borders and tourism can take many different forms where borders can become attractions, barriers, lines of transit, and signs for the growth of supranationalism (Timothy, 2006). Therefore it is relevant to discuss how the border influence tourism in the case region. The border itself is practically invisible as it pass through the strait meaning that there are no handmade physical barricades. However, all of the informants recognise a positive effect of the border on the touristic experience in the region.

“/.../ a lot of tourists ask us ‘what is it on that side?’ or ‘can you travel to Sweden?’, many become surprised of how easy it is to travel to Sweden. Tourists find it very surprising that the ferries take 20 minutes and operate for 24 hours” (Informant 5, 9/3-2016).

Crossing international borders have fascinated people for centuries and can become a motivation for people to travel (Timothy, 2001; 2006), which the above description clearly demonstrate. In Helsingör the informant notice visitors who automatically want to visit Sweden as they can see it on the other side. In both Malmö and Lund the informants describe how they receive a lot of visitors on day excursions from Köpenhamn who often only have some hours to spend in the cities. In this context the proximity of the two countries and effective transport links probably motivate visitors to travel across just to have visited an additional country. People get an opportunity to visit two countries at once which contribute to the interest of the region. For many tourists, especially cruise visitors the borderland is perceived as open according to one informant and describe that “/.../ they stop with the ship here, and then ‘you can go this way or this way’, ‘are we in Sweden or are we in Denmark, where are we now?’” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016). As the permeability of a border usually depends on and sociocultural, political, and ideological similarities or dissimilarities between the bordering countries (Timothy & Tosun, 2003) it is possible to presume that Sweden and Denmark are quite similar countries where the border not function as a barrier for travel.
Except for the border itself other special features of communities in the vicinity of a border such as restaurants, shopping, and attractions often add to the attractiveness of border regions (Timothy, 2006). Some of the informants mean that the Öresund Region become exciting as there are two countries and two cultures. The visitors get a lot of experiences as the region offer world class culture, nature, cuisine, everything within a small radius. Another interesting phenomenon noticed by some of the informants is the effects of movie tourism in the region. “It is a lot who choose to take the trip across the Öresund bridge as they have seen Bron on TV” (Informant 6, 31/3-2016) and refers to the Swedish/Danish TV-show “Bron” (The Bridge). They mean that this type of marketing through movies and TV-shows can contribute to a greater interest for tourism in the region. However, two sides of an international border cannot ignore what transpires on the other side (Timothy, 2001) as collaborations between countries are essential in achieving sustainable tourism development (Tosun et al., 2005). Similarly one of the informants describe that there have to be some pull-factors and it would not be the same attraction if the Öresund Region was a rural area. Hence, borders may contribute to make border regions interesting as visitors are able to visit more countries and cultures. However, there need to be something more to attract tourists to actually go there in the first place, stay there, and to travel in the region across the border.

Perceived and experienced challenges of cross-border tourism collaborations

Cross-border tourism collaborations usually face various challenges as two or more countries need to negotiate and adapt to different national cultures and systems. Therefore the aim of this section is to discuss how such challenges influence cross-border tourism collaborations in the Öresund Region.

A socially and culturally close border region

Functional barriers may be formed between actors in border regions if there are great social, cultural, and economic differences between the bordering countries (Timothy & Tosun, 2003), which potentially influence the success of cross-border collaborations. Among the interviewed informants were there none who perceived that social, cultural, and economic differences between the countries had any serious influence over cross-border collaborations. As all of the informants organizations have been involved in projects and collaborations across the strait, some for many years, they may not experience the same social and cultural challenges as other more heterogeneous border regions. It was highlighted that it is important to “/…/ prioritize to find areas where you can cooperate instead of those areas where you cannot cooperate /…/” (Informant 6, 31/3-2016), demonstrating a sense of awareness and confidence not to cooperate for the sake of cooperating. Except for the long stable relations and cooperation between the countries the socio-economic conditions in the region may ease cross-border collaborations. In a personal reflection about Interreg projects in the region it was mentioned that “/…/if you travel north Sweden or if you are on Ireland, for them it is a question about survival to get these EU money. For Skåne and Danmark it might be more of a pleasing addition.” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016). If it is not a question of survival for a region to cooperate across a border they may have additional time and resources to focus on relevant areas to cooperate. Actors and organizations in the Öresund Region might not have to rush into cross-border tourism collaborations, and therefore allocate more time to overcome social and cultural differences.

Different languages and cultures are often argued to lead to obstacles in tourism and collaborations (Timothy, 2001), and even though this was recognised by all of the informants
they meant that it is not any direct challenge for them. It was mentioned that “/…/ there is always an additional challenge to work with Danmark because it is between two different languages and two different mentalities.” (Informant 7, 14/4-2016). This on the other hand does not imply that there are any direct barriers for cross-border collaborations as another informant point out, there are always differences when working with other countries. As the cultural cohesion is tied to historical relations in border regions (Gelbman & Timothy, 2011) the long stable relations between Denmark and especially southern Sweden might explain why there are few major differences influencing collaborations in the Öresund Region. However, as mentioned in the quote above there seemed to be some differences in the cultural mentality and way of working. One of the informants described “I mean Swedes /…/ are maybe a little bit more careful and maybe a little bit more civil and you seek a mutual solution, while Danes often are more direct and outspoken.” (Informant 4, 7/3-2016). This was shared by other informants who meant that Danes often are perceived as more eager while Swedes strive for consensus. Similarly another informant meant that “Swedes are in my opinion very bureaucratic, surprisingly bureaucratic.” (Informant 5, 9/3-2016) and that it is often the Danes who take initiatives when it comes to taking decisions during meetings. Even though these differences in working culture are not perceived as any problems by any of the informants, they may become serious challenges for the integration of the region. One if the informants mentioned that they may discover more distinct social and cultural differences in the future as Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee is such a large scale collaboration. As different organizational values may increase the risk of an “us vs. them” perspective (Björkman et al., 2007) it is possible that actors in the region might face more difficult challenges in the future.

Different economic systems among countries are usually also a factor which may lead to challenges in cross-border tourism collaborations (Gelbman & Timothy, 2011). Not many of the informants had any input regarding this subject which may be due to that they are more involved in other types of work. However, both Sweden and Denmark use their own currencies and have for instance different taxation systems on alcohol. As such differences sometimes increase the competitive relations between bordering countries (Ioannides et al., 2006; Hampton, 2010), it is possible that competition become uneven between the two countries. The currency differences have effects as it is mentioned that “/…/ we have had a huge increase with Danes with over 10% in guest nights and this is due to the Danish crown perform better than the Swedish.” (Informant 2, 19/2-2016). Even though none of the informants mention it as a challenge, uneven competition between the two countries might arise if the currencies change more drastically.

In cross-border projects where a lot of different actors are gathered, such as in the Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee platform, it is often a complex process to set up financial plans (Durand, 2014). For the informant involved in the STRING cross-border organization this was definitely recognised and mention that it is a challenge as involved parts have different economy and conditions much depending on their mandates from respective government. As a consequence of this complexity it is also argued that it is difficult to find funding for cross-border projects (Durand, 2014). However, here it is possible to distinguish differences between the theory and empirics as it is mentioned that “/…/ it is considerably easier according to me to obtain funding when you join several countries, because it is to a great extent this the EU want to see in a lot of their tourism-programmes, the interregional consideration.” (Informant 4, 7/3-2016). This however probably depends on the purpose and
scale of projects, but also where it takes place. As the EU strive for further collaborations among its member nations it may be easier to obtain funding in this part of the world.

**Border controls and politics**

Political related challenges in cross-border collaborations are not unusual as international borders that usually separate different political systems and sometimes also ideological views (Timothy & Tosun, 2003) and the Öresund Region is no exception. However, before the beginning of 2016 the most reoccurring political challenge discussed by the informants would most likely not have been mentioned at all. The issue in question concern the current border controls implemented by the Swedish government as a consequence of the recent migration crisis. For travellers this means that they have to be able to provide identification or visas before they can make the journey across the strait.

“Well right now we are in a phase which isn’t very good with the border controls for example. This one is devastating in the future, both for residents and the tourism, I’m totally convinced about that. At least it damage the brand a lot in the long term” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016).

This quote clearly demonstrate how political decisions and tourism can become entangled, which also increase the risk of constraining tourism flows across borders (Sofield, 2006). This issue is brought up by most of the informants who mean that it affects travelling across the border and the integration in the region. In this context it is important to consider which types of tourists and visitors who become affected by the border controls. One of the Swedish informants argue that “/…/ we will be affected by day-excursions from Danmark because the Danes will become tiered of showing a passport /…/ and the day-visitors to Malmö are really important /…/.” (Informant 3, 25/3-2016). Many of the informants cannot see how the border controls might affect tourists who come from other countries as these often consider it rather normal to show identification when crossing an international border. Even though it might come naturally for people who travel far to present identification, the functional barrier of borders as a consequence of political disputes have great influence over their experience of the destination (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). This is a serious issue, especially as one informant mention that “/…/ we say that we are the most liveable place and smartest and the most liberal country, welcoming and such, and then we are none of these.” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016). Even though the current border controls have a far greater impact on daily commuters than on tourists it may influence their perception of the Öresund Region. One informant add that in this context it may be important to provide information why there are controls to avoid that visitors “/…/ not experience it as unpleasant.” (Informant 2, 19/2-2016). As travellers specifically notice negative attitudes among people who work in border crossings (Timothy & Tosun, 2003) it may be suitable to provide clear information to visitors.

“And it is there this region need to become better, between the Swedish and Danish governments you need to find agreements making it easier to run businesses and easier to work across the border, there it is still a lot of barriers today in different areas.” (Informant 7, 14/4-2016).

As described in the above quote, laws and regulations needs to be considered in order to avoid barriers for cross-border tourism collaborations (Durand, 2014). One of the informants describe that a hypothetical challenge for Skåne in the future is if Denmark would implement restrictions for entering the country as this would have huge effects on the Swedish side of the
border. Even though no specific laws are mentioned there seem to be challenges to integrate the two societies in the region. As Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee now take their initial steps for large scale collaborations in the region this is an issue which need to be addressed as soon as possible as it sometimes take several years to change legal frameworks.

Even though the different characters of the region complement each other in regard of tourism activities and experiences, there may be an uneven political climate. The national interest often determine the hierarchy among cities (Prokkola et al., 2015) which make border regions vulnerable if one side attracts more interest than the other. As capitals often possess great political power and have a strong national interest the situation in the Öresund Region become uneven. Denmark’s capital Köpenhamn is located in the centre of the region while the Swedish capital of Stockholm is located approximately 600 kilometres north. This is something many of the informants recognise, especially concerning the current border controls and mention that “It disrupt us in our joint pursuance. Stockholm sadly doesn’t see the potential of this region /.../.” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016). Another informant mean that this is an example of a decision taken in Stockholm which have horrible effects for southern Sweden. There are some great issues related with such political uneven interests in border regions as there is a risk for the weaker region to be politically excluded and economically exploited (Saxena & Ilbery, 2011). It is therefore a risk for Skåne to not be able to influence the development of the region to the same extent as the Danish side. The uneven political power between Skåne and eastern Denmark might lead to barriers in future collaborations.

Organization, perspectives and decision processes
The third set of challenges associated with cross-border tourism development usually relates to the organization and governance of projects. As there only have been a few attempts to study organization and governance structures in cross-border regions (Blasco et al., 2014a) it was interesting to discuss this topic with the informants. However, it was a complex topic as the informants all are involved in different projects of different scales with different purpose. As Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee recently started it was difficult for them to judge the organizational structures, but one informant described that there were some challenges before it initiated.

“It took some time to establish Greater Copenhagen, once again you were stuck in different viewpoints in the negotiations, who should have the most power in Greater. Because from the Danish you think there are three parts, it is Skåne, it is Region Huvudstaden and Själland. From the Swedish side you think it is two parts, Köpenhamn /.../ and us here in Skåne.” (Informant 7, 14/4-2016).

This quote demonstrate the challenge of establishing and organizing a large scale cross-border platform. Such uneven power structures are argued to be major weaknesses especially contributing to constraints in participatory planning (Timothy, 2001; Durand, 2014). It is also a great example of how easy it is to get stuck in organizational and coordination processes before you look at aim. This is highlighted by one informant who said “I think the common mistake is to build up large administrative and organizations, instead of focusing on the purpose for what you want to do.” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016). For Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee to avoid ending up in administrative difficulties and become a political colossus one of the informant highlight the need for part deliveries, to display the progress for
the public and mediate what they are working with. Horizontal networks among local actors and vertical networks linking these to higher administrative levels are important to avoid organizational and governance failures (Perkmann, 1999). By doing so you increase the pressure to deliver concrete development plans and progress and may put more effort into solving organizational issues.

Different priorities among actors may add to organizational challenges in the region. Each country work a bit differently and sometimes focus on different things. It was mentioned that “/…/ we have a little different targets maybe and sometimes don’t speak to each other but past each other /…/.” (Informant 7, 14/4-2016). As these types of issues often increase difficulties in building consensus around common goals for collaborations (Park, 2014) it is a relevant challenge to address for actors in the Öresund Region, especially if Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee are to be successful.

Long and complex decision processes are also contributing to challenges in collaborations across international borders. It has been argued that cross-border cooperation’s in Europe often are dominated by public representatives (Blatter, 2004) leading to top-down and nationally inbounded decision processes (Saxena & Ilbery, 2011; Blasco et al., 2014a). One of the informants mention that the intentions are often very good, but decision processes are very long and point out that:

“/…/ when you work with a lot of actors and from different countries there is always the challenge as said that everyone have their own processes. /…/ as soon some changes are made from one region or a partner and it become rewritten it should be sent in a revised version for approval again to everyone and then it starts from the beginning again.” (Informant 4, 7/3-2016).

Such bureaucracy affect and constrain cross-border collaborations which was the case in the border region between Sweden and Finland where local entrepreneurs thought the implementation of cross-border projects were too bureaucratic (Prokkola, 2008; Prokkola et al., 2015). However, one informant said that even though bureaucracy influence their work, it is possible to handle as long as there is energy to cooperate. For the moment there definitely seem to be a great energy and a positive attitude for large scale cross-border tourism collaborations in the Öresund Region among the informants. Once again it will be interesting to follow how the tourism agenda and collaborations of Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee will progress, if they will be able to avoid creating an administrative organization and overcome social, political, and organizational barriers.

Spatial and geographical related challenges

During the interviews performed for this study there was a reoccurring theme of more spatial and geographical related challenges creating barriers for cross-border tourism collaborations in the Öresund Region. Even though some of them have been mentioned briefly before they will be discussed further in this section.

The geography of the Öresund Region definitely have some positive advantages as discussed earlier, but it may also influence the integration of the whole region as the strait somewhat function as a natural barrier. It has been argued that borders generally have become more of lines of contact instead of barriers (Timothy, 2001), but the lack of natural connection between the two countries might limit the integration. Similar to how ties among economic
actors in border regions not always occur naturally (Blasco et al., 2014a), the social and political contact may be limited. However, one of the informants brought up an interesting point regarding the strait and mentioned that “One area I think have been neglected is that we have an Öresund but we don’t have many activities in Öresund /…/ it could be developed more and you could utilize the water between Sweden and Denmark and utilize the sea as an activity area.” (Informant 7, 14/4-2016). Except for adding additional tourism activities to the region such developments may connect actors of different scales on each side.

The geographical position of the Öresund Region have a lot of advantages as it become a gateway for people travelling from Europe to the Scandinavian and Nordic countries. However, as the region include the capital region on the Danish side and Skåne on the very outskirts of Sweden on the other side, there are some additional challenges. Informants in Skåne mention how they experience that their region become neglected which increase the political uneven relationship in Öresund. One of them explained how a politician in Sweden recently expressed himself indelicately when discussing the air traffic development in Sweden and said that Arlanda have to compete against Köpenhamn. “/…/ basically he say we have to turn our backs toward Köpenhamn /…/.” (Informant 7, 14/4-2016). Another similar example is that when the first charter from China through the Chinavia project arrived during the autumn, VisitSweden never mentioned that they actually arrived in Köpenhamn and then later travelled to Sweden. Skåne then end up in a bit of an awkward position as politicians in Stockholm neglect the importance of Kastrup Airport for both Skåne and Sweden. However, it is not just a challenge for Skåne but for Köpenhamn as well as “/…/they will have a very difficult time influencing infrastructure or migration politics or similar, national politics in Sweden.” (Informant 1, 18/2-2016). This may lead to conflicts and barriers in future collaborations when one side lack the political power to take major decisions concerning the development of the region.

The great variety of destinations and attractions have been argued by many of the informants to complement each other making the Öresund Region an exciting and strong destination. Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee are working to integrate the region on different levels and in different fields and it will be interesting to see how the internal competition between cities will be influenced. As there are three large regions, 79 municipalities and numerous cities there is a chance many of them will compete for the same visitors. “It is a challenge to say to the shipping companies ‘try to stop in Helsingör and tell the passengers what they can experience here’. /…/ we have a great challenge being located such close to a large city.” (Informant 5, 9/3-2016). Even though destinations adjacent to the larger cities experience a great spill-over effect of tourists this quote demonstrate the challenges with such positions. A challenge for municipalities and cities may be how to manage their identity on different levels and in different contexts as they participate in collaborations of different scales.

A similar challenge will be to convince smaller distant municipalities of the advantages to be a part of a large scale cross-border platform. There may be a greater understanding and interest for cross-border tourism collaborations among larger cities located close to the border and border crossings than small distant municipalities. One informant said that:

“/…/ some cities in both Nordsjälland and Skåne struggle to see the purpose of collaborating with other municipalities, don’t want to understand. I
immediately think of cities south of Köpenhamn who also are a part of Greater Copenhagen, if they don’t see the idea, if I’m going to be honest it is troublesome.” (Informant 5, 9/3-2016).

This is definitely a serious issue as it will become difficult to establish a large scale cross-border region when there is lack of interest from some actors. Once again a key to success may be part deliveries as highlighted by some informants, to communicate the progress and result of projects. If Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee can develop the interregional tourism and attract more visitors to other areas than the major destinations there is a chance they can convince smaller and distant municipalities of the advantages of working together.

Discussion

This case study have shown that cross-border tourism development is interesting and relevant among larger public actors located close to the border in the Öresund Region. The aim of the study to analyse the experiences, expectations, and challenges among public actors have also been highly relevant because of the recent implementation of the Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee platform. It is important to clarify that the gathered information of experiences and expectations cannot be generalized for either the case region or on a larger scale as these are rather place specific and only include some of many public actors in the Öresund Region. However, it still provides a new perspective to the contemporary research of cross-border tourism development and valuable insights from larger public actors.

Cross-border collaborations among public actors involved in tourism development is nothing new in the Öresund Region. The informants of the study seem to have rather positive experiences of such cooperation’s and experience a strong will for large scale initiatives in the region. However, as many of the interviewed municipalities are directly involved in Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee they may become advocates of the initiative and promote the positive aspects. The perceived challenges facing the municipalities and organizations of the study seem to relate to a mix of political, organizational, and geographical factors. This is due to the complex composition of different sized municipalities and cities in the region which contribute to uneven political power relations among public actors.

Compared to the previous research on cross-border tourism development and cooperation this study is rather unique as it has focused on the role of public actors for tourism development and their perceived experiences and expectations of such collaborations. The actors of this study definitely seem to have a similar view of their roles for tourism development as argued for in the theory of local governments concerning coordination and decision-making. The border also seem to add an additional dimension to the tourism in the region by motivating people to travel across the strait and experience two countries in a close proximity. The Öresund border may not be an actual attraction as borders often become according to previous studies, but it seem to influence the regional tourism positively with its well-developed connections making it easy to travel across. With the implementation of Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee the region scale up from various inter-local collaborations towards bilateral-like cooperation with a greater agenda and perspective for interregional development. The information provided by the informants regarding advantages of collaborating across the border shared great similarities with those argued for in the theory. This especially concern the sharing of infrastructure such as Kastrup Airport, joint marketing to reach distant markets, and knowledge sharing and the creation of innovations.
In previous research have social and cultural differences been argued to influence cross-border collaboration and create barriers for cooperation. Among the interviewed informants in this study on the other hand, are there not any issues concerning such differences in their collaborations. However, with further collaborations including more actors there is a chance such challenges arise as actors of different scale and perspectives need to negotiate. The current border controls implemented by Sweden serves as a great example how politics influence collaborations across borders. The uneven political power and national interest on each side of the border also create challenges for collaboration as Skåne might not be able to influence the development of the region to the same extent as the Danish side with the capital of Köpenhamn. The organization of cross-border projects have also been argued to be challenging due to decision-processes, administration, and perspectives. As Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee just recently been implemented many of the informants perceived that there are not any serious issues concerning the organization of collaborations in the region. However, the great scale of Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee may lead to future challenges concerning especially bureaucracy and long decision-processes. It will therefore become interesting to follow the progress of the cooperation and see if they will be able to avoid such issues. The geographical aspects of the region also contribute to difficulties for further collaborations. The great variety of larger municipalities and cities, and smaller distant municipalities may lead to difficulties in creating cohesion and joint visions. A great challenge will certainly be to avoid increased competition among the many destinations in the region.

The greatest contribution of this study to the contemporary research of cross-border tourism collaboration and cooperation have been the perspective of public actors. The first-hand information provided by public actors involved in such collaborations will be valuable to take into consideration in future research on the topic. It has especially highlighted how the composition of different sized public actors with uneven political empowerment create challenges for cross-border cooperation. The geographic perspective of the study is also worth mentioning as it highlights how the national interest of a border region can lead to difficulties in cooperation. This issue will be of great importance for studies of regions where there is a significant difference between the bordering countries.

This study have focused on the experiences, opinions, and expectations of public actors on cross-border tourism development as a consequence of the implementation of Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee. However, there is certainly a need to conduct further research on cross-border tourism development in the region. Suggestions for such research are to perform a similar study after one, two, three years or more when actual projects have been performed under Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee. Such research could focus on how tourism cross-border collaborations in the region have proceeded, how they are perceived by public actors, and how the tourism have developed in the region. It may also be interesting to study the interest, perceptions, and expectations among peripheral municipalities in the region for large scale cross-border tourism development. Such research could focus on how peripheral municipalities will relate to the interregional brand of Copenhagen and what advantages and disadvantages they experience in such a large scale cooperation.
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Appendix
Appendix 1.

Interview guide

Interview number:
Date & time:
Respondent’s name and position:
Location:

Introduction

- Thank respondent for participating
- Explain aim, research question and objectives of study
- Explain ethical considerations and ask for permission to audio-record the interview

Interview begin (audio-recording starts)

General information

- Could you briefly describe what your organization is working with?
- What is your specific task within this organization?

Cross-border tourism related information

- What role does public actors such as municipalities and organizations possess in regional/cross-border tourism development?
  - Coordination, planning, communication, analysis?
- Are there any cross-border tourism related collaborations in the Öresund region?
  - INTERREG, STRING network or similar?
- Does your organization participate in any tourism related cross-border collaborations in Öresund?
  - How and which ones?
- What are your experiences of/or expectations of greater tourism collaborations in Öresund?
- How do you perceive the coordination of cross-border tourism collaborations?
  - Bureaucratic, top-down, close to the business life?
- Is there any interest within your organization to develop Öresund as a joint tourist destination?
- Are there any advantage associated with working with Öresund as one joint tourist destination?
  - Marketing, activities, identity
- Does the border have any positive influences on the tourism in the region?
  - Exotic?
Challenges with cross-border tourism development

- What challenges does your organization and you experience in your work?
- Is there any specific cross-border related challenges?
  o Social, cultural and economic factors
    ▪ Language, traditions, history, taxation-systems
  o Political factors
    ▪ Laws & regulations, policies, power relations
  o Organizational and governance related factors
    ▪ Communication, networks, visions, coherence
  o Other factors
    ▪ Physical barriers, weak transport links, lack of financial resources, interest from private actors
- How do you work to solve/avoid challenges associated with cross-border collaborations?
- Does the border influence tourism in the region negatively?
- Do you experience a strong national focus on the countries capitals regarding tourism development?
  o Regions less important, support, attention?

Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee

- What are your views on this recent collaboration?
- How can this collaboration enhance tourism in the Öresund region?
- What could be improved with this collaboration?

Ending of interview

- Are there anything the respondent would like to add on the topic?
- Thank respondent for participating
- Give contact information

Interview ended (audio-recording ends)
Title
Cross-border destination development: Pre-conditions for collaborations and challenges facing the public sector on an interregional level

Aim and research questions
The aim of the master thesis is to investigate the interest and attitudes towards cross-border tourism development, and to identify the challenges facing the public sector on an interregional level in cross-border tourism collaborations.

- What are the pre-conditions for cross-border tourism development in the Öresund Region?
- Which are the institutional challenges facing the public sector in cross-border tourism development in the Öresund Region?

Objectives of study
- To analyse how cross-border tourism collaborations occur within the public sector in the Öresund Region.
- To enhance the academic knowledge of cross-border tourism and its associated challenges.
- To provide new knowledge of challenges associated with cross-border tourism to the public sector in the Öresund Region.

Interviews
- Semi-structured interviews based on advantages and challenges associated with cross-border tourism development in the Öresund Region.
  - Discussion themes are based on literature concerning advantages and challenges associated with:
    - Social, cultural and economic aspects.
    - Political aspects.
    - Organizational aspects.
  - Open discussion to allow respondents steer the interview regarding themes they consider important related to cross-border tourism development.
- Respondents are interviewed within their position and title, not as private individuals.
  - Respondents represent their organization and answer only to the extent they feel comfortable with the questions.
- Audio-recording during the interview at approval from respondent.
  - The audio-recording is guaranteed to only be used for the analysis within this study and not in any other context.

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