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Stakeholder Management in Tourism
An explorative case study of three municipalities in the Capital Region of Denmark

[ Interessentledelse i Turisme ]

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“You can’t talk tourism if you don’t involve them. What would you make tourism on if there weren’t any stakeholders?”

- HK Møller
Abstract

As tourism has become one of the fastest growing sectors in the world, and regions have realized the potential benefits of tourism, competition among destinations has increased. In 2014 a new law was passed in Denmark which restricts the role of VisitDenmark to only deal with marketing. Therefore it is now required that the municipalities themselves take on the task of destination development. A critical element of destination management requires that the destination authorities collaborate with their stakeholders. There are several ways to do this, which require that destination managers attribute a varying degree of importance to, and engagement with, stakeholders.

As destination development is a relatively new responsibility for the municipalities in Denmark, this study has looked at how three municipalities in the Capital Region are handling this task. More specifically it has explored how they are engaging with their stakeholders and how this is affecting their performance within tourism. In their Destination Promotion Triad, Sheehan et al. (2007) argue that hotels are the key stakeholder group. This project challenges this view by looking at three additional stakeholders: cultural institutions, the retail industry and events. It does this to explore how they fit the Triad and to evaluate how, and whether, destinations distinguish and prioritize them, and how this affects the destinations’ performance.

To provide a rich understanding of the subject at hand, a comparative embedded multiple-case study has been applied. The three municipalities compared here are Gribskov, Frederikssund and Furesø. Primary data has been collected through in-depth interviews with representatives from the municipalities and their stakeholders. Following meaning condensation, Mitchell et al. (1997) and Savage et al. (1991) stakeholder typologies have been applied to compare the management strategies for each stakeholder applied by the municipalities.

To some extent it has been concluded that stakeholder management affects destination performance. As exemplified with the case of Gribskov, the top performer of the destinations studied here, the more stakeholders are involved and the closer these relationships are, the better the destination is performing. However, it is also important to consider other factors such as sense of community, the history of tourism efforts in the destination, as well as investment in and awareness of tourism.
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INTRODUCTION

Tourism has received an increasing amount of interest and focus, and while many people have engaged in tourism, not many stop to consider the complexity of the industry. It is an industry which makes use of a wide range of products and services found in the destination, and as such there are great economic and employment benefits of tourism, also in related sectors (Edgell et al., 2008; UNWTO, 2015). In fact, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2015), tourism makes up 10% of the world’s GDP and one in eleven jobs. As such it may be considered an easy way to boost a country, region or city’s economy. Add to this that people themselves seek out travel destinations and adventures; you may think that it does not require much effort from the destination. However, it is not quite that simple.

As tourism has become one of the fastest growing sectors in the world (UNWTO, 2015) and regions have realized the potential benefits of tourism, diversification and competition among destinations has increased. To remain ahead of the game, destinations must increasingly promote, brand, develop and manage their destinations and tourism products. In the country of Denmark, this has been the task of the destination marketing organization VisitDenmark. However, in 2014 a new law was passed which restricts the role of VisitDenmark to only deal with marketing. Therefore it is now required that the municipalities themselves take on the task of destination development (Østergaard & Lubson, Turismens økonomiske betydning i Danmark 2012, 2014). As this is a relatively new responsibility it is interesting to look at how the Danish municipalities are handling this task. This project looks at three municipalities in the Capital Region: Gribskov, Frederikssund and Furesø.

A critical element of destination management requires that the destination authorities collaborate with their stakeholders (Edgell et al., 2008; Hankinson, 2009; Page & Connell, 2007). There are several ways to do this, and they often require that destination managers attribute a varying degree of importance to, and engagement with, stakeholders. Furthermore, this process is made more complex as stakeholder groups are classified as primary, secondary, definitive, marginal, supportive, nonsupportive, even dangerous, and the list goes on. Additionally, the attributes on which these assessments are made vary depending on choice of method (Mitchell et al., 1997; Savage et al., 1991). Hankinson (2009) believes that there a few managerial solutions to be found in literature. This view is supported by Edgell et al. (2008) who additionally claim that effective tourism planning integrates stakeholders’ concerns and effective management. Previous studies have tended to look at one or two stakeholder groups at a time: Kuvan and Akan (2012) look at residents and hotels, Ooi and Pedersen (2010) at film-festivals, Xing and Chalip (2006) at sports events, Scaramanga (2012) at the arts, and Du Rand et al. (2003) who look at the role of food.
Sheehan et al. (2007) have even argued that hotels make up the key stakeholder group in the Destination Promotion Triad. This project challenges this view by looking at three additional stakeholders: cultural institutions, the retail industry and events. It does this to explore how these relate to the triad, and to evaluate how, and whether, destinations distinguish and prioritize them, and how this affects the destinations’ performance within tourism.

**Problem Formulation**

As the responsibility of the Danish municipalities to develop and manage their destinations is relatively new, this study seeks to explore how they are engaging with their stakeholders and how this is affecting their performance within tourism. The research question therefore becomes...

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*How does stakeholder management differ between destinations, and how does this affect their performance?*

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The overall assumption is that a higher level of stakeholder involvement will lead to better performance, and that this relationship depends on a number of characteristics. To investigate this assumption the study therefore looks at:

- How are the destinations distinguishing between stakeholders?
- Which stakeholder management strategies are applied by the destinations?
- How does stakeholder differentiation and management differ depending on case characteristics?

This also requires looking at how the roles of the municipality and stakeholders are viewed. Furthermore, as communication is seen as an important element of management, this will also be briefly looked at.

As it is assumed that the characteristics of the destinations have an effect on the relationship between stakeholders and their municipality, findings will be linked to the characteristics. For the cases, or municipalities, explored in this study, these are: size, the presence of a separate DMO, and whether they have a strategy. To provide a more accurate picture of the situation in the destinations, the study will take into account both stakeholder and municipality points of view.

**Project Outline**

To answer the research question two general stakeholder typologies and related management strategies
will be applied to the findings. These are supplemented with what is known as the Destination Promotion Triad and other relevant theory on tourism. The theories are explained in the theoretical framework, which is followed by the methodology. This comments on the chosen data collection and analysis method, as well as the selection of cases which includes a description of the case characteristics and performances. The cases, or municipalities, chosen for this study are described in the following chapter. The core of the project consists of the analysis and discussion which first looks at the individual case findings in order to compare them later. Finally, the conclusion highlights important findings, managerial implications, as well as limitations and future research possibilities. The project structure is visualized in Figure 1 below.

### Figure 1: Project outline
THEORY

To answer the research question it is necessary to look at some of the key themes that the problem covers such as collaboration in tourism and stakeholder management strategies. As roles and communication has also been showed to be of importance in destination management these topics will also briefly be covered.

Tourism

While all have engaged in tourism, not many stop to consider the complexity of the industry. Following the definition of the United Nations World Tourism Organization, tourism is a “social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure” (UNWTO, 2015). Edgell et al. (2008) add that tourism is wide-ranging as it makes use of products and services from other sectors of the economy. As such, it is seen as a significant source of income and employment, and has therefore increasingly attracted the attention of governments and others who have an interest in economic development.

Destination Marketing & Management

As tourism has grown, there has been an increase in the number of places trying to develop their tourism potential. The tourism destination is “the place visited that is central to the decision to take the trip” (UNWTO, 2015), and can be defined to represent a geographical entity such as regions in a country (Page & Connell, 2007). In this study the destinations are defined by municipality boarders. To remain competitive, these places must apply destination marketing: the management process by which tourism products are formulated in order to satisfy potential and actual tourists, who must be identified and communicated to (Page & Connell, 2007).

According to Hankinson (2009) it is commonly known that destination marketing requires a special type of marketing as it tends to be a public sector activity, and as the place product is a complex combination of service providers, physical surroundings and so on. A place therefore has to be marketed through partnerships of players involved in the place product delivery. In relation to tourism planning, strategies relate to actions necessary to achieve the objectives (Edgell et al., 2008). This may include developing new
products, identifying target audiences and resources needed, as well as formation of partnerships and collaborations.

Hankinson (2009) identifies stakeholder partnerships as one of five critical antecedents of successful destination branding. It is therefore assumed that where stakeholders’ concerns and interests are not integrated in tourism planning, stakeholders are less satisfied and the destinations not performing as well.

**Collaboration in Tourism**

Although tourism planning is a public sector activity, it should aim to optimize private sector interests. Therefore an integrated planning process which gathers stakeholders is needed if they are to endorse tourism and incorporate it into their individual businesses. Finding the balance between public and private interests can be difficult. Therefore this project looks at both sides, the municipality (public sector) which is in charge of planning the destination’s tourism initiatives, and stakeholders (primarily private).

In the fragmented and diverse nature of tourism, it may be beneficial to both private organizations and destinations to join forces. Page and Connell (2007) argue that public-private partnerships can help with information sharing, influencing policy-making and developing new products. It may even achieve competitive advantage. Furthermore, according to Edgell et al. (2008) the more the local community is involved in decision making with regards to tourism, the more likely it is that it will lead to positive economic, environmental and social effects, such as increased pride in local heritage, enhanced self-worth, global recognition and innovative thinking. It is therefore assumed that the best performing destination has numerous and the strongest relationships with stakeholders. In planning tourism, it is important that those who will be involved or affected by tourism have a say, especially as they are knowledgeable of the destination and can assist in the planning (Page & Connell, 2007). This will also decrease conflicts or resentment of tourism by the host community.

Stakeholders should therefore be stimulated to participate, not only because of the diversity of interests, but also because stakeholders’ various objectives make tourism policies difficult to implement and coordinate (Edgell et al., 2008). As such, “collaborative multi-stakeholder processes can lead to an agreement on priority issues in setting tourism policy goals” (Edgell et al., 2008, p. 111).

A critical factor in managing and marketing destinations is therefore the selection, understanding and managing of stakeholder partnerships (Hankinson, 2009). Findings show that partnerships are funding-based, where close partners typically contribute with more. Informal relationships are also important. In order to achieve commitment from stakeholders, it is important to form these strong long-term
relationships with “relatively small, but broadly based groups of compatible, committed stakeholders” (Hankinson, 2009, p. 110). This fits with the notion of “strategic fit” to avoid unstable collaborations (Page & Connell, 2007).

**Stakeholder Management**

Freeman (2004, p.229) defines stakeholders as “any group or individual that can affect or is affected by the achievement of a corporation’s purpose”. Savage et al. (1991) add that stakeholders are individuals, groups and organizations who have an interest in the organization. Examples include employees, suppliers, unions, government, local residents and competitors. While there are countless groups of stakeholders, many traditional views have ignored some stakeholders or traded-off the interests of some for other more favoured groups (Freeman & McVea, 2006). As the limitations of these traditional approaches have become apparent, and stakeholders have become more active, knowledgeable and interdependent with the organization, Freeman, McVea and Savage et al. call for stakeholders’ interest to be integrated into the purpose of the organization, and stakeholder relationships to be managed.

To ensure the long-term success of an organization, managers should formulate and implement processes that satisfy stakeholders. Failure to achieve consensus between the public and private sector in tourism planning, can hinder success (Page & Connell, 2007). Freeman and McVea (2006) highlight that “a stakeholder approach emphasizes active management of the business environment, relationships and the promotion of shared interests,” whereas stakeholder theory attempts to answer the question of which groups of stakeholders require or deserve management attention (Mitchell et al., 1997). One of the characteristics of the stakeholder approach is a concern for the survival, or achievement of objectives, of the firm. This is dependent on an understanding of and overseeing the stakeholder relationships which are critical to the organization’s success (Savage et al., 1991). That is, it requires the support of those who can affect it, as well as recognition of how the firm affects others. It is therefore assumed that in destinations where stakeholders are appropriately managed, the destination is more successful.

In referring to Harrison and St John, Freeman (2004) explains that “stakeholder management is built on a partnering mentality that involves communicating, negotiating, contracting, managing relationships and motivating”. Long-term stakeholder collaboration requires that they share a core set of values, and that they support the firm even though individual stakeholders may not benefit from all decisions. Tourism development should therefore “be in harmony with... values and aspirations of the host community” (Edgell et al., 2008, p. 17). Stakeholder management therefore “calls for an integrated approach to strategic
decision making” attempting to satisfy several stakeholders at one time by integrating their perspectives and interests in the same direction over time (Freeman & McVea, 2006).

**Distinguishing Between Stakeholders**

Sheehan et al. claim that DMOs focus on financial and critical resources in determining stakeholder importance. Their findings showed that stakeholder prioritizing was commonly based on economic support, but also to a certain extent according to relevance to the destination promotion activity of the DMO. This is in line with Freeman (2004) who claims that prioritizing stakeholders is more complex than their strength with regards to economic or political power. The value and strategy of the firm may influence with whom partnerships are formed. Savage et al. (1991) add that a stakeholder management approach should address stakeholders’ power, intentions and values. In contrast, Mitchell et al. (1997) propose that stakeholder identification and salience should be based on the presence of one or more of the three relationship attributes: power, legitimacy and urgency. The more attributes are present, the higher the salience of that stakeholder.

Literature has focused on separating stakeholders between primary and secondary, where primary stakeholders are “those who have formal, official, or contractual relationships and have a direct and necessary economic impact upon the organization”, whereas secondary stakeholders are more diverse, and include “those who are not directly engaged in the organization’s economic activities but are able to exert influence or are affected by the organization” (Savage et al., 1991, p.62). This view is limited as it fails to recognize that stakeholders’ significance depends on the situation and the specific issues addressed, as this affects the stakeholder’s relevance, willingness and opportunity to act. Key stakeholders are therefore those where the issue is important to them, and as such “issue specificity suggests that stakeholder diagnosis is an ongoing activity” (Savage et al., 1991, p.63). It is therefore assumed that stakeholder interest and relevance varies according to the strategy of the destination. Stakeholders’ interests, capabilities and needs must therefore constantly be assessed.

**Stakeholder Management Strategies**

Two stakeholder typologies will be used in analysing the engagement with stakeholders in the destinations investigated in this study to account for the municipalities’ different ways of assessing stakeholders. A brief description of these follows.
Mitchell et al.’s Stakeholder Typology

Mitchell et al. (1997) criticise both too broad and too narrow views of stakeholder identification, and argue that salience goes beyond identification, in that it is “the degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims”. They argue that stakeholders should be classified based on their possession of one or more of the following attributes:

- **Power** to influence the firm to bring about the outcomes they desire.
- **Legitimacy** of the relationship with the firm, in that the actions of the stakeholder are perceived as desirable or appropriate.
- **Urgency** of the stakeholder’s claim on the firm, which exists when it is time-sensitive and critical to the stakeholder.

It should be noted that stakeholder attributes may change, are socially constructed, and that stakeholders may not be aware of their possession of attributes or may not be willing to act on them. As such stakeholder relationships are dynamic and consideration should be given to specific situations as well as managers’ perceptions (Mitchell et al., 1997). This is in line with Sheehan et al. who warn DMOs to continually check for new stakeholders in the destination. The stakeholder typology of Mitchell et al. (1997) is illustrated below.

*Figure 2: Stakeholder Typology (reproduced from Mitchell et al., 1997)*
Group 1-3: *Latent stakeholders* have low salience as they only have one attribute. Mitchell et al. believe that such stakeholders should be included as it might help organizations to avoid problems or improve effectiveness. However, managers may not necessarily have to do anything about these stakeholders, and the other way around latent stakeholders may not pay attention to the organization. For example, the power of dormant stakeholders remains unused, but may become more salient which requires managers to be aware of them. Although not necessary, managers may choose to engage with discretionary stakeholders. Finally, demanding stakeholders do not require action as they lack power and legitimacy.

Group 4-6: *Expectant stakeholders* have moderate salience and require the organization to be more responsive and engaging. Mitchell et al. suspect that a formal relationship is present for dominant stakeholders. Dependent stakeholders on the other hand, require that others have power to achieve their will. Finally dangerous stakeholders may resort to coercive practices. As such, they should be identified but not acknowledged.

Group 7: *Definitive stakeholders* possess all three attributes and are of high salience. Managers should prioritize and attend to this group (Mitchell et al., 1997).

*Savage et al.’s Diagnostic Typology*

Savage et al. believe that stakeholders should be assessed on two critical points:

- **Potential to threaten the organization**: determined by the stakeholder’s relative power as in the organization’s dependence on the stakeholder and relevance to the issue at hand. It is affected by the stakeholder’s opportunities and willingness to act.

- **Potential to cooperate with the organization**: This is dependent on the stakeholder’s willingness to cooperate, which in turn is often influenced by their capacity to expand interdependence with the organization, as well as the business environment.

When determining stakeholders’ potential for threat or cooperation, managers should consider a number of characteristics: relative power, control over key resources, likely type of action, and likelihood to form a coalition with others. In turn, the effects of these characteristics depend on the context and history of the relationship, as well as other stakeholders influencing the organization (Savage et al., 1991). It is therefore assumed that stakeholder power, political and economic, will be higher in destinations where there are few of the same type of stakeholder, and where the stakeholder takes up more space (size). It is expected that these criteria will be present in smaller destinations.
This assessment allows managers to classify stakeholders as either supportive, mixed blessing, nonsupportive or marginal stakeholders (Savage et al., 1991). Once this is known, appropriate generic management strategies can be applied as show in Figure 3 below:

![Diagnostic Typology of Organizational Stakeholders](figure3)

**Figure 3:** Diagnostic Typology of Organizational Stakeholders (reproduced from Savage et al., 1991)

Savage et al. (1991) describe the stakeholders and strategies as follows:

- The **supportive stakeholder** supports the organization’s goals and actions. It has a low potential for threat, but is very likely to cooperate especially in relevant issues. Stakeholders such as these are often overlooked but should be **involved** for instance by applying participative management techniques, decentralizing authority, or increasing decision-making participation.

- The **marginal stakeholder** has low potential for both threat and cooperation. Stakeholders such as these should be **monitored** as issues important to them could cause their potential for threat or cooperation to increase. If decisions include these issues, the organization should attempt to increase stakeholder support or deflect their opposition.

- **Nonsupportive stakeholders** have a high threat potential but are low on potential for cooperation. Initially a **defensive** strategy should be applied to reduce the dependence, but ways to change the status of key stakeholders should be explored.

- **Mixed blessing stakeholders** have high potential for threat and cooperation, and as such they could become either more or less supportive. To maximize cooperation organizations should seek to
collaborate with this stakeholder. This might also make it more difficult for threatening stakeholders to go against the organization. Collaboration could for example occur as joint ventures or mergers.

Stakeholder Management Strategies in Tourism

With respect to stakeholder management strategies, Sheehan et al. (2007) suggest that collaboration be employed with key stakeholders who can threaten or cooperate with the DMO. While they found that the players of the Destination Promotion Triad claim to use the collaborative strategy, actual behaviour may be more in line with an involvement strategy. It was also found that strategies employed in the Triad varied according to the context and relative importance of the stakeholder, as well as the goals of the DMO (Sheehan et al., 2007). According to Hankinson (2009), consultation tends to be applied to achieve an understanding of what the destination can offer, and to establish effective partnerships.

According to UNWTO, development of sustainable tourism projects requires local involvement on several levels (Edgell et al., 2008): first of all early contact with groups likely to be affected; opportunities for all interested stakeholders to discuss in forums; sharing of feedback recognizing participants’ input; and ongoing involvement of key stakeholders. As such “tourism partnerships are a form of cooperation to facilitate often competitive but nonetheless mutual interests” (Edgell et al., 2008, p. 345). Page and Connell (2007) add that such approaches often beyond consultation, and include establishing marketing partnerships, facilitation of stakeholder networks, and training to develop skills. Projects may even be community-controlled where locals develop, promote and operate the tourism product.

Savage et al. (1991) suggest that “managers should attempt to satisfy minimally the needs of marginal stakeholders and to satisfy maximally the needs of supportive and mixed blessing stakeholders, enhancing the latter’s support for the organization”. If applied when issues arise, stakeholder analysis ensures better information and decision making. Furthermore, it is helpful when implementing strategies, as consideration for stakeholders’ orientation avoids the implementation of plans that will be opposed. Hankinson (2009) adds that different strategies may be needed in different environments. For example, he proposes that more focused destination brands, of for example cities, tend to be more successful when compared to broader brands of for example, regions.

Sheehan et al. (2007) found that the power-balance of the triad is not always equal, but propose that it is more balanced where tourism in the destination is important to the local economy. Page and Connell
warn that the outcome of community approaches where local stakeholders are involved may vary. The outcome is dependent on environments, governance, infrastructure and community interest.

Roles

According to Sheehan et al. success in promoting a destination is dependent on how members the Destination Promotion Triad, relate to each other and how they combine their unique resources. While they propose that the city, destination marketing organization (DMO) and hotels are the key players within tourism, they do not deny that other stakeholders exist within the destination. These however are thought to be free riders “who go along with the decisions of the triad because they benefit from the positive externalities of the triad’s destination promotion” (Sheehan et al., 2007, p. 72). They add that nontriad stakeholders are more fractured with diverse interests, and to find a stronger voice they need to organize themselves into an association. It is therefore expected that where stakeholders form alliances or meet in associations the more influence they have and the more involved they will be.

According to Sheehan et al. (2007) the city acts as a financier, and provides a vision for the development of the community and tourism, and ensures critical infrastructure. Additionally, the public sector should play an active role in planning and policy formulation, and assist in the implementation of tourism initiatives (Edgell et al., 2008), as well as tourism development and promotion, and legislation (Page & Connell, 2007). They use taxation revenue to develop and implement initiatives which benefit their community, creating spin-offs that tourists can benefit from, such as developing infrastructure and funding museums. Where tourism is important for the economy, the public sector tends to be more involved. The public sector can also stimulate tourism through offering financial incentives for tourism suppliers, sponsoring research, or through marketing and promotion (Page & Connell, 2007).

The DMO acts as a coordinator. Sheehan et al. claim that this is the most challenging role and that communication is key. In relation to this, Hankinson (2009) found that, especially in smaller local government organizations, the absence of departmental coordination is a weakness. Furthermore, DMOs have responsibility to elected representatives which can affect the long-term investment of building a successful destination. DMOs must also create a strategy for tourism promotion, matching resources as needed, and implement it through the tourism stakeholder network (Sheehan et al., 2007) (Page & Connell, 2007). Finally, the DMO has to assess the results based on for example hotel occupancy levels and tourism spending.
The role of the hotels is to act as a partner in providing nonfinancial or operational resources, such as discounted rooms to travel influencers, and information on supply and demand. Sheehan et al. propose that the city and hotels are the key stakeholders of the DMO, while nontriad organizations simply follow along.

**Communication & Transparency**

Sheehan et al. (2007) argue for the importance of personal relationships with primary stakeholders, and communication to all stakeholder groups. For the triad to be successful it is important that members engage in regular, frequent and clear dialogue to understand each other as well as the various roles. A key issue is the need to achieve broad buy-in from stakeholders (Hankinson, 2009). To establish an understanding of the brand and programme activities, stakeholder managers should be gathered to develop and agree on a destination marketing plan that adds value to a wide range of stakeholders. Therefore stakeholders were found to be critical target groups of marketing communications which take place in a variety of forms, although they typically activity-based and occur face-to-face (Hankinson, 2009).

Page and Connell (2007) argue that access to sufficient information and meaningful interaction between the public sector and host community is central to encouraging participation in the tourism development process, and therefore collaborative decision-making. This requires communicating through various points, and interacting with stakeholders who potentially have conflicting objectives. This is done through public consultation of the tourism plan, for instance in public hearings, to strengthen local support (Page & Connell, 2007).

Transparency of the DMO and its operations, as well as stakeholder perceptions of the DMO especially with regards to vested interests, is also important (Edgell et al., 2008; Sheehan et al., 2007). As such, communication has two objectives. Firstly, the DMO must listen to triad and nontriad stakeholders to understand their needs and perceptions of the DMOs activities as well as supply-demand information. Second, the DMO must inform stakeholders about the destination, the tourism strategy and performance, and areas or tasks where stakeholders could help (Sheehan et al., 2007). Hankinson (2009) adds that internal brand awareness can be difficult in DMOs where there are multiple responsibilities.
METHODOLOGY

This chapter looks at the methodological choices made in order to answer the research question. As the study is of an explorative nature, a qualitative multiple case study has been deemed appropriate. Below follows the argumentation and more detailed description of the data gathering and analysis process.

Research Paradigm

According to Yin (2009), it is appropriate to conduct an explorative study when the existing knowledge base is poor or when there is no conceptual framework. Seeing as the resulting effects of the new law in Denmark regarding municipalities have not been looked at before, and that Hankinson (2009) believes that few management strategies are to be found in literature, it has been decided that the study should follow an explorative nature. From this follows an inductive logic. That is, it aims to establish limited generalizations through pattern analysis of characteristics of social phenomena (Blaikie, 2011). Farquhar (2012) argues that case studies tend to go with inductive reasoning. The chosen research strategy for this project is therefore the case study.

The research paradigm for this project, the theoretical and methodological ideas based on ontological and epistemological assumptions (Blaikie, 2011), follows an interpretivist approach. This is the belief that social reality is regarded as a product of its inhabitants (Blaikie, 2011). Farquhar (2012) goes on to explain that this is where people interpret meanings and actions of actors according to their own subjective frame of reference. Therefore, theoretical meanings must be derived from social actors’ concepts and meanings. This goes well with that qualitative, as well as inductive studies usually follow the interpretivist approach (Farquhar, 2012) and that this project therefore looks at both stakeholders and municipalities. Hermeneutics, which can be linked to the interpretivist tradition, involves an in-depth investigation to gain a fuller understanding (Farquhar, 2012). This fits well with the chosen method of in-depth interviews.

Method & Data Collection

To provide a rich understanding of the subject at hand, it has been decided that a multiple-case study would be appropriate. Yin (2009) argues that multiple cases are typically stronger than the single case study as evidence tends to be more compelling. Therefore three cases have been chosen.
Additionally, the study follows the embedded and comparative case study design, as there are multiple subunits of interest within each case, i.e. the municipalities. The reason being that it is of interest to explore the relationships between the municipalities and their respective stakeholders. Primary data on the cases will be collected through in-depth interviews, and supplemented with secondary data in the form of meeting minutes, newspaper articles and tourism material where available.

**Selection of Cases**

Due to accessibility the destinations explored in this study where all selected from the Capital Region of Denmark. Furthermore, Yin (2009) states that it is important that the unit of analysis, in other words, the case, be appropriately defined. In relation to this study, these are the municipalities as the new law affects the municipalities (Østergaard & Lubson, Turismens økonomiske betydning i Danmark 2012, 2014), and destinations can be defined geographically by the municipalities borders. Multiple-case studies allow the creation of subgroups where different types of conditions can be compared (Yin, 2009). Here, this will be done by comparing two cases with one case, where they differ on some criteria. Selection of municipalities within the Capital Region was therefore based comparable characteristics of the municipalities, as well as on performance reports from VisitDenmark. The purpose of this project is to explore whether, these differences affect the way the municipalities decide to involve and collaborate with stakeholders, and if so, how, these differences may influence the performance of the municipalities.

**Performance**

Tourism performance can be determined on a number of variables. Based on the information available from VisitDenmark’s reports, it has been decided that performance be determined based on tourism spending and tourism share of supply. Tourism spending in this context is calculated from the amount of money spent on products and services in the municipalities where the tourists are spending their night. Tourism share of supply is calculated from the sale of products and services (Østergaard & Lubson, 2014). However, one should be aware that this can distort data as tourist spending in municipalities with little accommodation can be undervalued and vice versa.

Correspondence with VisitDenmark revealed that there have been great methodological changes in the reports. Therefore the data should not be compared year by year, and should only be treated as estimates. With this in mind, and for the purposes of this project, it is possible to see how the municipalities are performing in relation to each other within each year. The data used here is therefore only intended to provide an idea of how the municipalities rank on tourism performance.
When choosing the cases, the municipalities where ranked from high to low performers. The lowest municipalities where then disregarded. For example the municipality of Herlev was initially contacted as it is in the bottom five performers, but it was quickly realized that they had nothing to do with tourism. Therefore subsequent municipalities were checked by searching for the word “tourism” on the municipalities’ website. If no results came up, no material would be available, and the municipality was subsequently disregarded. For the bottom performer Furesø Municipality was chosen. Gribskov Municipality was chosen from the top five performers. Municipalities such as Copenhagen and Bornholm were disregarded, even though they were among the top because they are examples of special cases. When choosing the middle performer, the researcher considered cases valued in between the top and bottom performer. For instance, if the top case had a tourism spending of approximately 1,4 million and the bottom case of 0,4 million – cases with tourism spending of around 0,5-0,9 million would be considered. Before decided on the final cases, the municipalities were researched to determine comparable characteristics. The three final municipalities’ relative performance is illustrated in the graphs below:

Figure 4 & 5: graphs constructed from information found in (Brandt & Thessen, 2011) (Østergaard, 2012) and (Østergaard & Lubson, 2013, 2014).
Please note that at the time of writing, the reports for 2013 and 2014 were not yet available. It would have been interesting to have those numbers as tourism efforts in Frederikssund and Furesø are relatively new. This may have an impact on performance in future reports. Additionally it should be noted that numbers before 2008 have not been used as there was a reform that changed the structure of the municipalities, and therefore information before 2008 would not reflect on the municipalities investigated here. Finally, correspondence with VisitDenmark revealed that no report was created for 2009. Despite these issues it provides an idea of how the municipalities are ranking in relation to one another.

From the graphs above, it is clear that Gribskov is the better performer when it comes to tourism spending and share of supply. This is true for all the years. Frederikssund is classified as the “medium performer”. Finally, Furesø Municipality ranks lowest on performance on both graphs.

*Case Characteristics*

Analysis will look at whether and how, stakeholder management is influenced by the characteristics displayed below. Cases with characteristics in common will form a subgroup to be compared against the third case in the analysis (Yin, 2009).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Gribskov</th>
<th>Frederikssund</th>
<th>Furesø</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Top</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Bottom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size (geographic &amp; population-wise)</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMO function</td>
<td>Municipality’s administration</td>
<td>Outsourced to Frederikssund Business</td>
<td>Municipality’s administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1: Case characteristics (will be used to compare results of the municipalities)*

It is assumed that in the small municipality of Furesø, individual stakeholders will have more power, especially when there are few of one type. In the larger municipalities of Gribskov and Frederikssund it is expected that there are more stakeholders of each type and therefore individual stakeholders will have less influence and will be less engaged with the municipality.

While the main marketing activities for Gribskov are driven by VisitNordsjælland, it is still the municipality that is in charge of tourism development and coordination with stakeholders on non-marketing issues. Similarly, Furesø Municipality is in charge of all tourism related activities. In contrast, Frederikssund Municipality has outsourced its tourism activities to Frederikssund Business. It is assumed this may have an effect on the approach of assessing and engaging stakeholders.
The final characteristic on which the municipalities will be compared is the existence of a formal tourism strategy. Furesø Municipality has recently adopted a tourism strategy, and Frederikssund’s strategy is only a few years old. In contrast, at the time of writing, Gribskov Municipality does not have a tourism strategy. It is assumed that assessment of stakeholders will be based on relevance to the strategy, while it will be based on other factors in Gribskov.

**Selection of Interview Persons**

As the project looks at how municipalities engage with stakeholders, both sides of the story was needed. Two interviewees were chosen for each municipality: one from a political committee and one with a more practical view. It was decided both were needed to match the roles in the Destination Promotion Triad. The former was the chairperson of whichever committee in the municipality dealt with tourism. This person then provided the contact to the second representative from the municipality. This was deemed appropriate since they had more knowledge of who is in charge, and this information was not easily available. The “practical” representative worked as a Centre Manager in a department of the administration of the municipality. In Frederikssund this is outsourced to the Development Manager for Tourism and Experiences in Frederikssund Business. It should be noted that for the ease of reading this paper, Frederikssund Business will be referred to as the municipality’s administration, similarly to the other cases.

Four groups of stakeholders were included in the study. These were representatives from the accommodation industry, cultural institutions, the event industry, and the retail industry. The hotel industry was included because it is mentioned as the key stakeholder by Sheehan et al. (2007). Representatives from the cultural institutions were interviewed because all destinations claimed to focus on cultural attractions. The event industry was included because it is mentioned by some of the municipalities as a way to attract visitors and promote the municipality. Finally, the retail industry was included because, while it is a popular activity among tourists to shop, it tends to be forgotten by tourism managers.

Within these groups organizations were chosen based on availability and “commonness”. For instance, there are many types of events, but music festivals were chosen as are recurring and more visible within the municipalities. Shopping centres were interviewed as they represent a collection of shops, and are therefore more likely to provide better information than a small privately owned shop. Unfortunately, Gribskov Municipality does not have a shopping centre. Instead they have the Trade and Tourism Association, which for obvious reasons seemed appropriate. Regarding cultural institutions, dominating
museums or “cultural houses” were interviewed. It should be noted that for Gribskov, the museums belong to a larger collection of museums called Museum Nordsjælland. Finally, the hotel industry proved to be the stakeholder that was most difficult to get in touch with. A personal contact in Furesø ensured an interview with one of the two hotels in the municipality. For both Gribskov and Frederikssund, several hotels did not want to participate. It was therefore necessary to conduct the interviews with a small hotel and a bed and breakfast.

Within each organization, the person holding the highest position was interviewed as it was assumed they would be most knowledgeable. However, when contacting the potential interviewees it was also asked if another person within the organization would be more appropriate. This constitutes what is known as elite interviews which tend to have secure status where it may be feasible to challenge their statements leading to new insights (Kvale, 2009).

The Interviews

To gain a more in-depth view on the subject matter at hand, it was decided that conducting interviews would be the appropriate data collection method. Kvale (2009, p.9) states that “the qualitative interview is a key venue for exploring the way in which subjects experience and understand their world. It provides a unique access to the lived world of the subjects, who in their own words describe their activities, experiences and opinions”. This fits well with the intention of the present study, as it is interested in learning about the interviewees’ experiences and perceptions.

Furthermore, qualitative interviews can be exploratory as is the nature of this study. This was ensured by creating open-ended semi-structured interview guides. According to Kvale (2009, p.12) this allows the subject “to bring forth the dimensions they find important by the theme of inquiry”. It allows the interview to be focused on the interviewee’s point of view and experiences and for new information to be brought to light that was not part of the original interview questions as respondents can respond more freely within their own frame of reference. This tends to make the interviews more valuable, and would not have been possible with a more strict data collection method.

While this type of interview is good for creating new knowledge it can also complicate later comparison and analysis. Hence, the interview guides focused on certain themes to ensure that all relevant topics would be covered, but still allowed for the interview subject to add information where he/she deemed it relevant. This was also why the last question asked whether the interviewee had something to add, if they felt that an important topic had not been brought up.
The interviews were designed so that answers from the municipalities could be compared with their respective stakeholders. As such, the overarching topics could be found in both interview guides. See Appendix B and C for interview guides. Several versions of the interviews were drafted before reaching the final version. The themes were: involvement with municipalities/stakeholders and the reasoning behind this, the collaboration, as well as reflections. Each new topic was introduced. It may be worthwhile to mention that interviewees were sent the topics but not the questions prior to the interview. As an ice-breaker, easier questions were asked about interviewees own organization. Some questions were repeated to check whether the interviewee said the same things, or could add more in relation to the new topic. Neutral prompts encouraged the interviewee if in doubt, and answers were followed up and clarified where needed. The interviewees were allowed to proceed without interruption except for clarification and probing.

While it would have been an option to have group interviews as the questions focused on the same themes, it was decided that it would be more appropriate to conduct individual in-person interviews. This allows focus on the individual, they are allowed more talking-time and can explain their considerations and experiences in more detail. It is a better environment for probing further and asking follow-up questions that relate to the individual and not the entire group. The interviewee is likely to be more honest about his/her experiences and opinions as they are less likely to be influenced by others’ statements. Especially with regards to the municipality, there may risk of a power-imbalance or influence. Finally, there is the practical aspect of ensuring that all interviewees are able to participate at the same time, and the risk of personal feuds.

In relation to the above, an important aspect of the interview process is “to create a stage where the subject is free and safe to talk of private events for later public use” (Kvale, 2009, p. 8). This was especially relevant as truthfulness about the relationship between the municipalities and their respective stakeholders was important if useful results were to be achieved. Hence, before the interview commenced, it was stressed that there were no right or wrong answers, and that the main purpose was to learn about the interviewee’s experiences. Furthermore, the recordings and summaries of the interviews would not be shared other than for academic purposes. Farquhar (2012) stresses that it is important, that the subject of research is not removed from his/her normal surroundings. Therefore the interviews have been conducted at a place of the interviewee’s choosing. Typically this would be at the interviewee’s place of work. Only one interviewee asked that the interview be conducted over skype.
Data Analysis

Following the case study method, the interviews conducted here have been reduced to individual case reports that allow for cross case conclusions. This has been enabled by using what Yin (2009) terms the case database, which is a way to organize the accumulated information on each case, and is essentially a collection of notes.

Kvale (2009) argues that the act of transcribing or summarising the main points of an interview is in itself an initial interpretation of the results. The form and amount depends on the purpose of the study. Therefore, for the purposes of this study interviews have been summarized in detail (see Appendix D-F) and meaning condensation has been applied. This is where meanings expressed by interviewees are rephrased into a few words (Kvale, 2009, pp. 106-107). Therefore, this includes focus on attitude towards, or the perception, of the stakeholder-municipality relationship, roles, and communication. The resulting points have then been entered in the case database. These notes have been organized so that they answer the research question.

Limitations

As with any study, the present one has its limitations. First of all, it should be noted that the interviews were recorded (with the interviewee’s permission). This increases the value of results as no detail is lost, and the interview can be replayed. However, for some of the interviewees it proved to be a distraction as they were more aware of what they said. For others, it seemed to make no difference. This may of course affect the results obtained. Additionally, only what was said was included in the analysis. Other factors, such as body language has not been considered. Closer attention to such details may have revealed deeper feelings that could be explored further.

As interview time is limited, only a certain amount of questions can be asked. This requires a selection, and therefore elimination, of questions. It is therefore possible that potentially important questions and topics were not raised. The final question of whether the interviewee had something to add, was therefore useful as a way of checking for this. It should be noted that the interviews were conducted in Danish, the native language of the interviewees, so that they could express themselves more accurately and easily. Data handling therefore involved translating the answers to English, which can results in potential loss of information. Care was therefore taken to ensure that key points and meanings were transferred by reviewing the recording. Data analysis could have been improved if, for instance, the Yin’s case database had been generated by a second investigator to check whether the same points had been reached.
Furthermore, it should be noted, that politics were excluded from the analysis. To explain: the chairperson from the committee in each municipality is a politician. With a different political standpoint comes a different focus on tourism, which also affects the administrative representative. Additionally, while Gribskov and Frederikssund have already established collaborations with other municipalities, and Furesø is in the process of doing so, these collaborations have not been explored. Focus is on the actions related to the individual municipality, not how they work on a larger scale - although this could be equally interesting.

In general interviews are criticised for not being scientific and quantitative. While quantitative methods have their advantages, it was decided that a qualitative method would be most appropriate as it is an explorative study. The present study is not interested in measuring relationships, but rather describe them, and explore the reasoning behind and nature of the stakeholder-municipality relationship. Future research could expand, or quantify the occurrence of the results found here by conducting a quantitative study.

**Reliability & Validity**

There are several criteria for judging the quality of a research study. Depending on the type of design and method applied, some are more applicable than others. According to Yin (2009), reliability and validity are key to case studies.

Reliability refers to the ability to replicate the case study and achieve the same findings (Yin, 2009). As such, it is concerned with consistency and trustworthiness (Kvale, 2009), and aims to minimize errors and biases (Yin, 2009). This has been attempted by following the above described procedure, by the use of an interview guide and case study database. However due to the semi-structured nature of the interview, answers may not be the same, as the interviews could go in new and unexpected directions. With regards to bias it is important to mention that the author has lived in Furesø Municipality for several years and has worked at Hotel FC Nordsjælland, the hotel interviewed for this municipality. It can therefore not be excluded that analysis may be biased with regards to Furesø, although great effort has been taken to treat all cases similarly.

Validity in turn, is concerned with whether a method investigates what it claims to (Kvale, 2009). An explorative case study must deal with two types of validity: construct and external (Yin, 2009). The former focuses on defining the concepts and identifying operational measures, and occurs during data collection (Yin, 2009). Regarding this project, focus is on stakeholder management and how this varies between cases. It is therefore the stakeholder-municipality relationship that is of interest. This has been defined by theory reviewed in the previous chapter. It has been stressed throughout the interviews that the relationship
described should only concern tourism-related subjects. One tactic to deal with construct validity asks for multiple sources of evidence. The study therefore looks at both stakeholders and municipalities. Another tactic is chain of evidence, this has been attempted by describing the process taken from data collection to analysis. That is, boiling down the information from the interviews to answer the research question. The final tactic is having key informants review the draft. This has unfortunately not been possible due to time constraints and interviewee vacation schedules.

The second type of validity that is relevant to case studies is external validity. This is concerned with defining the domain to which a study’s findings can be generalized (Yin, 2009). Here, case studies rely on analytic generalization where “the investigator is striving to generalize a particular set of results to some broader theory” (Yin, 2009, p. 43). With a multiple-case design, replication logic can be applied: “if two or more cases are shown to support the same theory, replication may be claimed” (Yin, 2009, p. 38). In particular it depends on the similarities and differences of the cases (Kvale, 2009). To put it simply: is the behaviour seen elsewhere in cases in similar contexts? In relation to the present study, three cases are involved and will be compared on three variables where two cases form subgroups at a time. This should determine whether the stakeholder-municipality relationship is dependent on each variable in turn. If findings are consistent across cases the there is greater confidence that the findings apply to other similar municipalities as well.
CASE DESCRIPTIONS

While destination marketing organizations (DMOs) such as VisitDenmark are in charge of marketing Denmark as a destination, a new law has now made the municipalities responsible for managing and developing their own tourism industry (Østergaard & Lubson, 2014). This project looks at three such municipalities located in the Capital Region of Denmark: Gribskov, Frederikssund and Furesø. These are presented below.

Gribskov Municipality

Covering an area of 280km², Gribskov is the largest municipality in the north of Zealand, Denmark (Gribskov Kommune, 2015a). Located in the most northern part of the Capital Region, it borders the Hesselø Bay and is approximately 48km from Copenhagen.

According to its website, Gribskov Municipality wants to be known for its unique nature and cultural heritage with “living local environments” (Gribskov Kommune, 2015b). From this follows their desire to offer flexible solutions stemming from the individual resident and the local environment, to reflect, support and further develop the diversity in the municipality.

The municipality claims that it is innovative in its attempts to improve the quality of service to its 40,829 residents (Gribskov Kommune, 2015b). They claim that “openness and inclusion are key values in Gribskov municipality’s political and administrative work” (Gribskov Kommune, 2015b).

Tourism in Gribskov

When it comes to tourism, there is a strong focus on nature: “with beautiful scenery, glorious beaches; dense treetops and the glossy Gribsø competing with Arresø, it is clear that the municipality invites to
As such the area has for several generations been popular among summerhouse vacationers and one-day visitors at the beach.

Gribskov Municipality has entered into collaboration with four municipalities (Fredensborg, Helsingør, Hillerød and Halsnæs) to form VisitNordsjælland, a regional destination marketing organization. The DMO is also known as Kongerne’s Nordsjælland (the Kings’ North Zealand) to reflect that the area has castles, idyllic coastal cities, the Danish Riviera, and green nature (VisitNordsjælland, 2015).

Politically, tourism falls under the Business and Tourism Committee (ETU) of Gribskov Municipality. In relation to tourism, its main task is tourism development including relations with VisitNordsjælland (Gribskov Kommune, 2015d) which receives a yearly grant of 2,020,000DKK (Gribskov Kommune, 2014).

At the time of writing, Gribskov Municipality does not have a tourism strategy. There are however plans to create one as they have recognized the importance of tourism to the local economy: according to VisitDenmark tourism consumption in the municipality was approximately 1.4 billion DKK in 2013 (Gribskov Kommunne, 2015e). Especially the two coastal towns of Gilleleje and Tisvildeleje seem to attract tourists. It has been suggested by the administration that the strategy should focus on event, cruise and business tourism as they see these as potential growth areas (Gribskov Kommunne, 2015e). However, as the strategy is still in the planning phase it will not be taken into further consideration.

**Frederikssund Municipality**

Frederikssund Municipality covers an area of 248.63km² (Frederikssund Kommune, 2015a) and is located in the north-western part of the Capital Region. The destination is split into two by Roskilde Fjord, and as such there is easy access to beaches and nature (Frederikssund Kommune, 2015a).

While Frederikssund is geographically smaller than Gribskov, it has more residents, namely 44,412 (Frederikssund Kommune, 2015a). The distance to Copenhagen is approximately 48km.

On its website, Frederikssund states that its vision is to be “strong, sustainable and development oriented”, and “a centre for development of interesting settlement-areas and business development” (Frederikssund Kommune, 2015a).

**Tourism in Frederikssund**

Tourism-wise, Frederikssund Municipality aims to be “the destination where Danish and Swedish families on vacation and excursions, go to for active experiences taking point of departure in the nature, culture and
This perfectly summarizes the municipality’s tourism strategy of 2013. The seven year strategy, to be revised after four years, takes departure in the destination’s strengths, characteristics and current events. It is the intention that the development of tourism in the area be of gain to both tourists and locals (Frederikssund Kommune, 2013). As such, it should grow the tourism industry, improve the economy, and brand the municipality as an attractive place to visit and live in.

The strategy focuses on six paths: nature and movement, art and culture, history, events and festivals, the retail and catering industry, and transversal organization and networking. The aim is that the Viking theme should be present throughout the tourism experience in Frederikssund, including accommodation, restaurants, retail, etc. (Frederikssund Kommune, 2013).

Another important element is increased collaboration and networking with, and among, tourism stakeholders: “We are very dependent on these enthusiasts. We cannot carry out all the activities that will help to implement the strategy” (Frederikssund Kommune, 2013, p. 8). They claim to have a “close, constructive and developing cooperation” with the local stakeholders. In relation to this, the municipality defines its role as a facilitator of networks, coordinator and communicator. They should create the framework and support the local tourism stakeholders in relation to the legislation, permits, etc. (Frederikssund Kommune, 2013).

Frederikssund collaborates with four municipalities (Holbæk, Lejre, Odsherred and Roskilde) located around the Ise and Roskilde fjords in what is known as Fjordlandet (Fjordlandet, 2015). The focus of the collaboration is on history, the fjords and nature, and local culinary experiences. Again, the Vikings form the prevalent topic.

Politically, the tourism sector of Frederikssund Municipality falls under the Growth Committee. However, the servicing of tourists as well as the more practical development and marketing of tourism, has been outsourced to Frederikssund Business, an organization that links the private sector and the municipality (Frederikssund Kommune, 2013). Approximately 3.5 million has been dedicated to the results in the contract with Frederikssund Business (Appendix E1).

On its website, Frederikssund Municipality leads potential visitors to its official tourism website: visitfrederikssund.dk. Here there is an abundance of information on events, experience and accommodation. Additionally it provides information about the local tourism bureau, also headed by Frederikssund Business.
Furesø Municipality

Unlike the other municipalities, Furesø is located in-land, and is only 18km from Copenhagen and only covers 56.81km². As of January 2015, the number of residents was 39,074 (Furesø Kommune, 2015a).

Furesø wants to be an attractive municipality with active locals. In accordance to this, their vision reads: “We create solutions together” (Furesø Kommune, 2015b). The vision ensures a common identity and course for the municipality’s development. It creates an ongoing and open dialogue with the residents of the municipality. Accordingly, Furesø Municipality is presented as “more than popular sporting activities and wonderful countryside - it is also home to a vibrant culture scene, a creative melting pot that has something for everyone, whatever their artistic preferences” (Furesø Kommune, 2015c).

Tourism in Furesø

Looking at Furesø Municipality’s website, it is clear that it is intended for its residents, rather than outside visitors. There is however, a link to VisitDenmark’s website where Furesø is featured, and another leads visitors to a local calendar.

It is only recently that Furesø Municipality has started looking at tourism. In an interview in the local newspaper, Peter Kattrup, member of the Culture, Leisure and Sports Committee, states that it is important that the municipality makes tourism a political priority (Furesø Avis, 2013). This should be done for instance by setting up an appropriate framework, improve qualifications of relevant employees and service providers, establishing bike paths, etc. (Furesø Avis, 2013).

The tourism sector falls under the Culture, Leisure and Sports Committee (KFIU). Of Furesø Municipality’s total budget 900,000DKK go to tourism activities the next three years. (Furesø Kommune, 2015c).

While a tourism strategy has recently been approved, it can still only be found in draft form in the Committee’s meeting minutes (Furesø Kommune, 2015e). The strategy consists of three paths: local qualities (a picnic concept), Copenhagen Green Belt (a collaboration with nearby municipalities: Gentofte, Rudersdal and Lyngby-Taarbæk (Furesø Kommune, 2015e)), and international tourist packages currently focused on Japan where business delegations should learn about Danish welfare, culture, etc. As such, the focus of tourism in Furesø will be on cultural and nature experiences (Tolderlund, 2014).

The first two initiatives target people in the Greater Copenhagen area and who like getting out in nature. Additionally, the strategy seeks to attract one-day visitors, Danish and international (Furesø Kommune,
Overall, Furesø wants to target both the common tourist as well as, if not especially, the business guest and tourist (Tolderlund, 2014).

The municipality’s role is to create the framework, coordinate, support and network creation (Furesø Kommune, 2014, 2015e). It is highlighted that the municipality should not enter into the tourism project as other stakeholders, but be strong in its role in relation to others and support them (Furesø Kommune, 2014). Additionally, to ensure stakeholder participation it is important that stakeholders see there is something in it for them, whether this be in relation to branding, growth, or quality (Furesø Kommune, 2014).

According to Kattrup, local tourism stakeholders are currently underrepresented in tourism networks. Therefore it is important that the municipalities themselves take initiative to ensure participation of these groups (Furesø Avis, 2013). In relation to this a reference group has been created. The group consists of representatives from smaller businesses within the experience, service and tourism industry. The purpose of the reference group is to discuss ideas, communication platforms, values and organization.
ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

To answer the research question first the findings from the interviews of Gribskov, Frederikssund, and Furesø will be looked at one at a time, comparing the views and experiences of the municipality and stakeholder representatives on the main topics. For interview summaries please see Appendices D to F. Quotes, referenced with the name of the interviewee and timestamp, can be found in their original form in Appendix G. Next the findings will be compared across municipalities.

Individual Case Analysis

Gribskov Municipality

Distinguishing Between Stakeholders

Both Bruun, chairperson of the Trade and Tourism Committee of Gribskov Municipality, and Frandsen, centre manager of the Culture, Leisure and Tourism department, point to the cultural institutions and retail industry as key stakeholders. Among cultural institutions is mentioned traditional culture like museums or events such as Museum Nordsjælland and Musik i Lejet. Also mentioned the many volunteers who organize these events.

What Frandsen terms *growth with quality* helps to assess stakeholder groups. On the one side is the quality of service, on the other, the exclusion of particular stakeholders to maintain image. An example is the retail industry as they are the point of contact and therefore affect the way the destination is portrayed. This points to several of the criteria identified in literature regarding stakeholder differentiating, such as values (Savage et al., 1991) as both the municipality and retail industry recognize the importance of good hosting. As this behaviour is also desired by the municipality, it is a legitimate stakeholder (Mitchell et al., 1997). Finally, as the municipality is dependent on this stakeholder to carry out the initiative they have a certain level of power and relevance (Mitchell et al., 1997; Savage et al., 1997; Sheehan et al., 2007). The retail industry is therefore an important stakeholder.

Another way of assessing stakeholders is force of attraction. Bruun claims that the municipality listens to everyone, but does not deny that some have more weight. This seems to depend on the size and attraction of the stakeholder, and points to stakeholder differentiation by power (Savage et al., 1991; Mitchell et al. 1997). Cultural institutions and the retail industry are important because they attract tourists. In line with Bruun’s comment, Frandsen plans to invite places that receive a lot of guests and where they are
dependent on them survive to shape the upcoming tourism strategy. The municipality hopes to live off tourism (Appendix D1) which requires happy guests who spend more money or become repeat visitors. This economic aspect could possibly be the reason for taking such consideration of this group as it gives them urgency when survival is dependent on tourism (Mitchel et al., 1997).

Associations are also important and bed & breakfast owner Rasmussen says: “my prejudice is that the municipality would get in touch with the more professional stakeholders, hotels and larger vacation home clusters” (Rasmussen, 9:30). Noting the size of the summerhouse market, he believes that his bed & breakfast is too small and falls “under their radar”. Yet again, this supports the notion of basing stakeholder importance on power. This is also illustrated in the case of events where it seems that the individual event organizer does not have much influence, however it is not the case with Musik i Lejet, most likely because of their size and force of attraction.

Focus in relation to accommodation tends to lie on summerhouses or where hotel employees are involved in other activities. From a hospitality perspective, this tends to be the perception as well. Bruun states that there are only few organized accommodation providers and many bed & breakfasts, but that they do not know how much they contribute. As such the municipality does not engage with accommodation providers. This is interesting as the municipality has identified a lack of accommodation. Additionally it does not fit with Sheehan et al. (2007) who argue that hotels are the most important stakeholder.

Jensen, acting museum director of Museum Nordsjælland, believes that Gribskov is working with tourism in a way that fits with the Museum’s exhibitions, and says: “here I think it will be easier for us to take part, be a bigger player in the municipality” (Jensen, 38:45). Even within the cultural sector, Jensen is able to identify differences, and considers it lucky that the museum is treated so well. Bruun confirms this by highlighting the Museum’s importance in relation to branding of the city. This makes the Museum a relevant stakeholder for the municipality as identified in literature.

In contrast, Grauengaard, founder of Musik i Lejet, believes that while his festival fits many of the points that are important to Gribskov Municipality’s cultural strategy, they do not get a special status. He thinks this is because the festival only takes place for three days and is therefore just a fraction in the work of the administration. This is in stark contrast to what Frandsen had to say about Musik i Lejet: “It is not just an event, it is like our own national mini-Roskilde Festival and therefore we have to treat them differently” (Frandsen, 59:06). As such it seems like the size or reputation of the event may distinguish it from others. This can be linked to power in that the festival attracts many visitors, provides business for the locals and
increases awareness of the area (Savage et al., 1991; Mitchell et al., 1997). It can also be argued that this provides legitimacy to the stakeholders as the event is desired by the municipality (Mitchell et al., 1997).

It has been discovered that while events are acknowledged as a major attraction, and the effort is appreciated by the municipality, it is not motivated as such. To illustrate, the case of Gilleleje Havnefest has been incorporated into the interviews. In an article, the organizers explain their decision to stop the festival after more than 20 years, stating that the requirements to organize a festival are increasing which takes a lot of their time, economy and administrative work. Furthermore they do not feel that they are receiving sufficient support from the municipality’s administration (Dietz, 2014). Both municipality representatives think that the festival had surpassed its time and that it was healthy that it will no longer be held. According to Bruun, events constantly “pop up by themselves” (Appendix D1) and Frandsen agrees there are so many so they are not scared that there will not be something else.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

As summarized by Bruun, relationships with stakeholders have to be formal with regards to following the rules and applications for grants. Daily work with the municipality’s administration bring the parties closer to each other and therefore establish more informal relationships. This is valued by Frandsen who believes “the better you get to know people, the further you are often able to go, and the closer you are able to go in your role of advising and inspiring” (Frandsen, 47:22). At the same time, she warns against a relationship that is too close as this can make it difficult to distinguish roles.

**The Accommodation Representative**

While Rasmussen, the hotel representative is not involved with Gribskov Municipality, he also confesses that he has not looked into the possibility. Three hotels from Gribskov Municipality declined to partake in an interview, stating that they did not know anything about the topic or that they were too busy. Perhaps this reflects the trend that accommodation providers are not involved with the municipality. Furthermore, it seems that Rasmussen is not even monitored but rather ignored. This may be because he has no power to threaten the municipality because of his size (Savage et al., 1991). Applying Mitchell et al.’s stakeholder typology, Rasmussen may even be classified as a nonstakeholder. This is argued because he has no power. He does not have urgency as he sees the bed & breakfast as a hobby, and he is not necessarily interested in becoming involved. Finally, he may have some legitimacy in that the municipality is low on accommodation providers, however Rasmussen is only marginally contributing to this industry. As such, he may at the most
be a discretionary stakeholder, which according to Mitchell et al. does not require action from the municipality.

The Cultural Representative

From a political perspective, Bruun says that the relationship with museums is rather formal and focused on financial support. While tourism and culture are in separate political committees, they fall under the same department in the administration. Here, the cultural institutions are considered a close partner where planning and strategy issues are discussed.

Following a merger, Museum Nordsjælland is looking for new facilities, a process is actively supported by the municipality. Furthermore they are working together on establishing a new museum which is expected to attract many visitors. Jensen says there is a close and good cooperation with the cultural committees which includes regular meetings. While involvement is focused on developing the Museum, this also serves to increase the attraction and contributes to branding of the destination. Frandsen claims that they are someone who they will definitely talk to and whose opinions are important to the municipality. As such the relationship is closer than with other stakeholders and is rather informal. Jensen describes it as “a symbiotic relationship; we are dependent on one another” (Jensen, 19:40). They have the same interest (attracting more guests) and Frandsen adds that they speak the same language and mutual understanding.

It may be argued that the museum is a marginal stakeholder as it is has an equally low potential for cooperation and threat. This is because the museum is bound by a law which requires it to prioritize certain tasks of which tourism is not a part. Furthermore the museum is dependent on the financial support of the municipality. However as Gribskov wants to attract more visitors by developing a new museum, Museum Nordsjælland moves to become a supportive stakeholder as this is an issue which falls under their interest. As such, theory suggests it should be more involved. Following Mitchell et al.’s typology, the museum can be classified as a dependent stakeholder as it has both legitimacy and urgency, but not power. It is given this by the municipality in form of financial resources and moves to a definitive position. In relation to developing the new museum it is accordingly prioritized and attended to.

The Retail Representative

Andersen comments that the relationship with the municipality is incredibly close and that you can just call the politicians if you have anything to say: “their approach to things is amazing and they don’t hold back from getting involved” (Andersen, 26:42). He believes this is because of the bonds that exist between the
Association and the municipality. It is interesting to note that Frandsen comments that she hardly communicates with the retail industry. Perhaps this means that their point of contact lies with the politicians rather than the administration of the municipality.

Frandsen expects to contact the retail industry regarding developing their tourism strategy as they are among the stakeholders which receive many guests and it is therefore be especially interesting for this group. Andersen confirms this and believes that they will be able to influence the strategy. As discussed, the retail industry covers many of the attributes mentioned by both Savage et al. and Mitchell et al. and as such they can be classified respectively as a mixed blessing and definitive stakeholder. According to Andersen, the Association is typically involved early on because the municipality needs support for their projects, and rather than going back and changing their work, they ask for the Association’s input right away. Frandsen comments that they can often contribute with interesting ideas.

Cooperating with the municipality has been an interesting process. According to Andersen, they understand the Association’s needs, but are not always good at doing something about it. However, once a decision has been made, they are good at implementing it. This, along with the municipality’s easy approach and availability makes the relationship good. As such, the retail industry is prioritized and attended to, however, there was no mention of a joint venture or merger which is implied in Savage et al.’s view of collaboration. It seems that the municipality is rather involving the stakeholder.

The Event Representative

The relationship between Musik i Lejet and the municipality is primarily political and economic. Bruun states that the municipality has to provide grants and make facilities available for events, and as such, is a rather formal relationship. Frandsen expands that the festival is under a cultural contract. An important aspect of this is the evaluation meetings. These are organized for bigger events and for those that have received many complaints, to discuss the occurrences and possible solutions. It is important to address these issues if they want to keep the events. At the same time the negative experiences should not distract from the positive majority. Grauengaard faces several issues with these evaluation meetings. First of all he prefers that it be called something else, such as development meetings. Second, he feels that they are only used to scold the organizers. This is exactly what Frandsen fears when she does not want the municipality to be seen as a bureaucrat. Thirdly, Grauengaard does not feel they receive the support they need: “the municipality is very quick to shield itself from any responsibility and against a collaboration because that is more than their daily routine allows them to do and because it takes time” (Grauengaard, 20:34).
These challenges have led Musik i Lejet to be in less contact with the municipality despite the fact that there has been a development, they have stopped to explain issues they face or would like to be changed. He goes on to say that the collaboration is necessary: “It is not a question of whether we want to. It is a question of that no matter what we do, the municipality is part of the big stakeholder group of the Festival. So we can’t ignore them. The question is how much we want to go around them to find our own solutions without asking them for advice” (Grauengaard, 57:18). It is interesting to note that he addresses the municipality as a stakeholder of the festival. Grauengaard goes on to say that he does not believe it is because the municipality does not want to collaborate but rather that “they get lost in their own nest and lose their own will to find quick solutions because of this huge bureaucracy” (Grauengaard, 22:57).

Grauengaard therefore feels that the involvement with Gribskov Municipality is more of a measure than a collaboration. He guesses that the municipality would probably call it a collaboration, whereas he sees it as a necessity. The engagement involves coordination meetings, financial and practical support, and previously the festival has also contributed to developing an event guide. Grauengaard says that he is happy that they are in collaboration and that, while there are many difficulties, they cannot allow themselves to complain. He goes on to say that he feels that their problems are only heard or understood to some degree, and that they are rather just swept aside. He likens this to two desks with a gap in between where people are just waiting for the papers to fall through so that they do not have to deal with them.

It follows that the municipality sees the event a definitive stakeholder as they attempt to prioritize and attend to it. However, this is not what Grauengaard is experiencing and as such there is a discrepancy.

**Roles**

Typically, the municipality offers financial support through direct or deficit grants. Events, the associations and museums are the most common beneficiaries. While Grauengaard who has a cultural contract, says it is not much, it provides a stamp of approval which he believes makes it more attractive for others to fund. Furthermore they would not have the same motivation if they did not receive this support, even if they were able to do it by themselves. This is also one of the roles that Frandsen points out when she says that the municipality should encourage people to create. This is interesting as it seemingly goes against the finding that smaller events are not motivated to keep going as exemplified by Gilleleje Havnefest.

Bruun clarifies that the municipality’s political role is to set the overall framework. Frandsen adds that they also ensure infrastructure and make it possible to build hotels. Creating the tourism strategy will help to
make their role even clearer (Appendix D2). Interestingly Bruun states that the City Council is the most important when it comes to tourism. According to him, if they do not lead and acknowledge the importance of tourism, the rest will not work (Appendix E1). Grauengaard agrees saying that when something has been politically accepted, it should “shine through the whole administration” (Grauengaard, 15:40). This points to the importance of leadership as argued by Sheehan et al. (2007), also in setting a direction for the municipality’s tourism management.

Frandsen admits that they need to rearm internally to achieve a common understanding of prioritizing stakeholder support. In an effort to do so, the administration dedicates a contact person for bigger events to guide and research possibilities. However Grauengaard is currently experiencing is “a quite big bureaucracy, with incredibly many tables with very little knowledge about the responsibility on each table within the municipality, and few people who actually make decisions, and who are basically more concerned with the complaints that we are scolded for” (Grauengaard, 15:01). This is exactly what Frandsen hopes to avoid when she describes a bad relationship as one where the stakeholder feels rejected without a good explanation, and where they are frowned around in a system where no one takes responsibility. Similarly, Andersen claims that collaborating with the municipality you need perseverance and “you constantly have to ask to ensure things won’t just be put in a pile” (Andersen, 55:54). As such he believes that cooperation could be further improved with less bureaucracy and faster reaction time. Bruun acknowledges these issues when he jokes that “the slowness of the municipality knows no boundaries” (Bruun, 34:58). Frandsen is aware that they should improve but adds that “all enthusiasts simply can’t understand why we can’t just do this and why the municipality doesn’t just do that” (Frandsen, 45:26).

Frandsen brings up an important point in that it is about how stakeholders perceive their own role in relation to tourism that counts and they must therefore make them aware of their potential role, gain and contribution. As the municipality has no direct control over stakeholders, quality and hosting must be encouraged among other things. According to Andersen, he sees the Association’s role as providing ideas for the municipality which then supports them financially. This is in contrast to Sheehan et al. (2007) who claim that the stakeholders’ (hotels) role is providing financial resources, although it could be argued that critical resources could be considered ideas as well. Furthermore the Association supports the tourism players and stores with information to enable them to improve service.

**Communication**

Rasmussen explains that when he was about to open his bed & breakfast he consulted a colleague because “It is good to be confirmed. It can help with the insecurity in the beginning” (Rasmussen, 14:10). In relation
to this he says that it might be nice if there was an industry organization, network or something to gather accommodation providers in Gribskov. He believes that this would also benefit the area: “I think that it may be of value for the municipality on a more strategic level that you had a network or something unifying, or some form of leading, so that one could collectively market Gribskov" (Rasmussen, 10:50). This would also help in terms of communicating various events. He goes on to say that this might already exists but he is not aware of such a thing. Furthermore, he complains that he had to read in the local newspaper that Gilleleje Trade and Tourism Association had arranged something with regards to tourism. As such there is not just lack of communication from the municipality but also among stakeholders themselves. Frandsen points out that it is easier to involve retail as there are already formal fora in place which makes it easier to include their points of view. Andersen who is part of such an association believes that they have time to listen and can provide an answer right away. He feels that the municipality acknowledges good ideas which is really positive as “that shows that I have a municipality that wants to collaborate ...to a far greater extent that I know others do” (Andersen, 44:08). Generally, the retail and cultural representatives agree that the municipality is good at listening and understanding their needs. However perseverance is key.

Frederikssund Municipality

Distinguishing Between Stakeholders

Seneca, development manager for tourism and experiences, says that some of the stakeholders that are focused on in the tourism strategy are the Vikings and accommodation providers such as bed & breakfasts and camping sites who have a direct interest to be part of tourism. Other players include the museums, for example JF Willumsen; the retail industry and trade associations which have a commercial interest in tourism; the harbour environments which fall in line with the nature strategy path; and the network of enthusiasts and associations such as the New Initiative Council.

Søbæk, chairperson of the Growth Committee, aims for a political signal that shows “we want to play with everyone who thinks it is fun to play with us and who can add something” (Søbæk, 12:28). However, he realizes that the municipality needs to attach to bigger players. This is reflected in what Bergdahl, centre manager of Sillebroen shopping centre, believes in that you get more influence by participating in the associations as he does. He assumes that one of the reasons for being invited to join the tourism initiative is the size, strength and not the least know-how of the shopping centre. It is important to have someone who can lift a certain level of activities (Appendix E5). This points to the importance of power (Savage et al., 1991; Mitchell et al., 1997), and can be linked to whether stakeholders possess critical resources (Sheehan et al., 2007) to carry out the initiatives.
Søbæk expects that Frederikssund Business, who are responsible for strategy execution, will involve stakeholders who it makes sense to engage with in relation to the strategy goals. Three main paths have been chosen in the strategy (classic, Viking and nature tourism), which implicitly exclude un-related players. As such, relevance is a key factor in distinguishing between stakeholders. While they must focus on the strategy, they cannot avoid working with other things as well, and Seneca sees no limitations to who the municipality should be able to work with; as long as they contribute it does not matter if they are from outside the municipality. It can therefore be argued that legitimacy, in terms of desired outcomes, and values is also important in determining which stakeholders to cooperate with.

Even though JF Willumsen Museum is part of these paths and has been mentioned specifically by Seneca, Johansen, the museum director, experiences that she is treated differently than other players, and that the museum is seen as an “appendix” to the strategy. She believes they have a different status because of local interests and are therefore not seen as an attraction. This can be argued relate to the values of the municipality (Savage et al., 1991). As such there is a discrepancy between the municipality’s intention to include the traditional tourism stakeholders and how the cultural representative feels that the museum is included.

As Seneca is new in her position in Frederikssund Business, she claims she is not differentiating stakeholders at the moment, but does not exclude that this may make sense later according to distances between the stakeholders and the project (Appendix E2). Again, this points to the fit of the stakeholder with the municipality. Søbæk adds that it must also be beneficial for stakeholders: “there is a great diversity in the stakeholder mass. All the way from the small villa owner who has two bed & breakfast rooms... up to the large conference hotels... The stakeholders are very different in their conditions to participate and therefore it can be difficult to hit something that makes sense for them all... My experience is that they all got the offer” (Søbæk, 14:20). Contradicting this statement Larsen, bed & breakfasts owner, points out that he experiences preferential treatment of the hotels which have always been there, and people who are part of boards or clubs, and that it is very difficult to get on the inside. Both municipality representatives agree that whatever is chosen should be something that has a lasting effect for the residents, and not like Søbæk says “that everything is only event tourism or something that has a passing value” (Søbæk, 5:07). In the end, Søbæk claims, the buyer has the power.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

Previously, there was not a tradition to do much or invest in tourism (Appendix E1). As such there has been a shift in political orientation in relation to tourism to a more developmental mind-set (Appendix E2). One
of the signs of change is the initiative of a workshop where stakeholders were involved in the development of new tourism strategy. While Johansen and Wilhelmsen, the event representative, appreciated the initiative, the evaluation and follow up was unsatisfactory.

While Seneca and Søbæk both agree that personal relations are crucial to achieving their goals, Seneca explains that she cannot let herself be influenced by others, as she otherwise would not be doing her job. Søbæk expects that stakeholders will interfere to the extent that it is relevant for them to participate. As such, it seems that it is the stakeholders who must take the initiative.

The Accommodation Representative

In contrast to what both Søbæk and Seneca claimed, the accommodation representative is not involved with the municipality. Hotel owner Larsen says that he has not been offered to participate. According to him, the tourist office that is part of Frederikssund Business and is just down the street, sends potential guests to another hotel across town. He believes this is because he does not pay to be included in their tourism catalogue. Furthermore, two hotels declined to partake in the interview. As such, it seems that only some accommodation providers are involved. Larsen has several times offered his participation in various events but has continually been declined. He refers to a theatre event that was partly organised by the tourism office, where they showed no willingness to cooperate: “they had their partners and that was that” (Larsen, 5:05). It seems that Larsen has a high willingness to cooperate but low potential threat, and as such may be classified as an overlooked supportive stakeholder (Savage et al., 1991). Somewhat contradicting himself, Larsen does not believe he is missing out on anything as his hotel is fully booked already, but he does think that a collaboration could offer him something more, for example increased visibility. While he will continue to offer his services in relation to various initiatives, he is not willing to fight for it (Appendix E3). As such he has no urgency and can therefore be classified as a discretionary stakeholder according to Mitchell et al.’s typology. This implies that the municipality does not necessarily have to take action, which they are not.

The Cultural Representative

Other than participating in the workshop, tourism related tasks are considered low priority for JF Willumsen Museum (Appendix E4). The challenge, Johansen believes, is that of money and location. The museum has too few resources to produce foreign language materials and believes tourists tend to go to areas where for example Louisiana is located. Despite these difficulties and in an effort to support local initiatives, Johansen buys advertising space in Fjordlandet’s brochure. Additionally, Johansen suggested a
combined ticket for the municipality’s museums which Seneca understood but the other players held back because of their dependency on entry tickets. Johansen experiences that the municipality is very positive and open, but it cannot help financially: “that’s the problem here. When it matters you don’t really want it. Yes, you want it, but it can’t cost anything” (Johansen, 31:46).

The daily work of the museum is with the cultural department. However when she first started employees of the municipality were not aware that JF Willumsen belongs to the municipality. Therefore, much of her focus has been on making them aware of this relationship. As such it seem that the museum could be classified as a supportive stakeholder as there is low potential for threat but Johansen would like to be involved and support local initiatives. This calls for an involvement strategy which has been followed by inviting Johansen to participate in the tourism strategy development workshop. Unfortunately further involvement is limited because of financial reasons. As such one may say that the museum is also a dependent stakeholder as its actions are deemed legitimate and to some extent the criteria of urgency is also present as the museum is dependent on visitors.

The Retail Representative

Bergdahl sees the centre as part of Frederikssund’s attractions and also in the larger region. He says that the engagement is mainly focused on marketing and generation of awareness of Sillebroen by the traditional use of brochures. According to Seneca this is the classical way of involving stakeholders in the municipality, whereas creating packages and other solutions is a newer attempt. There are instances where Bergdahl collaborates with the city for events, that the municipality supports practically.

Bergdahl stresses that there has to be formal relationships as this allows you to “confirm and not the least present your ideas in a forum where you get it on paper” (Bergdahl, 9:05). However he also sees the value of informal relations and open dialogue where you have someone you can go directly to, and where “you know each other well, and not the least when you are in the associations and board member compared to an official such as a tourist manager” (Bergdahl, 13:45). Bergdahl goes on to explain that being part of an association works as a communication device from him to the municipality to “influence, accelerate and wish for different initiatives” (Bergdahl, 1:50). This is linked to the importance that Søbæk has assigned associations. As such there seems to be more engagement with the municipality through the associations than directly with Sillebroen.

Bergdahl generally experiences that the municipality is interested in hearing ideas with the intention to support them. This goes well with what Søbæk hopes to signal: “we actually worry about the retail industry
and we think tourism is significant” (Søbæk, 33:35). This suggests that the retail industry is viewed as a legitimate stakeholder. Furthermore, Bergdahl himself claims that the shopping centre has power which is enhanced by its participation in associations. It can be discussed whether this stakeholder also possesses the urgency criterion as it is not interested in tourism per se. If it can be agreed that Sillebroen possesses all three attributes it can be described as a definitive stakeholder and as such should be prioritized and attended to. On the other hand, with only power and legitimacy, Sillebroen has moderate salience and forms a dominant stakeholder with which the municipality should form a formal relationship with. The latter seems to be the case as the primary engagement of the retail representative was payment for features in marketing material. Applying Savage et al.’s typology places Sillebroen as a marginal stakeholder as although it has power, potential for threat and cooperation must be judged to be low due to limited relevance and intentions. As such, it is a stakeholder which should be monitored. This seems to be in line with what is being done which is the most important issue for the shopping centre.

The Event Representative

Outside of participating in the workshop, Frederikssund Festival’s engagement is focused on a deficit guarantee. Recently the municipality has been willing to offer more on the festival, though they have declined to provide them with a direct grant. Wilhelmsen believes that this is because the festival has proved itself successful. He has experienced that “as soon as there is a new initiative that is supported by the associations, the municipality is willing to put some money in it, but as soon as the interest falls a bit they pull back the cashbox” (Wilhelmsen, 44:43). As such it could be argued that legitimacy, and therefore whether the actions are desirable, depend on customer interest which is in line with Søbæk’s focus on buyer power. Despite his complaints, Wilhelmsen highlights that it is not because the municipality does not support them as they make things available and give them priority in booking facilities. Additionally the Festival is in touch with the tourist office which helps them with marketing activities, ticket sales and booking of camping spaces. Wilhelmsen would like Municipality to be more involved but finds that it is difficult to convince them. An explanation could be that it is because the municipality is not focusing on events because of their short-term value.

It seems that the municipality views the festival as a marginal stakeholder as it only engages with it when it is necessary, and as such follows a monitoring strategy. While the event has legitimacy, and to some extent urgency, it has no power and as such is dependent on the municipality. Although the event was more involved in the development of the strategy this was a temporary increase in engagement.
**Roles**

In referring to the lack of follow-up after the workshop, Johansen finds it difficult to see the municipality as a player within tourism. She applauds their initiative, but is missing them in the daily work and believes they see tourism as a *can* task rather than a *must* task: “*Overall, I think they are missing money, a willingness and belief that it has an effect if we get together and make some joint initiatives*” (Johansen, 9:21). Wilhelmsen has identified a change where the municipality has realized that they need to be more involved. This can be linked to the fact that Søbæk sees the municipality as setting the direction, as argued by Sheehan et al. (2007). Wilhelmsen guesses that part of this is because of the pressure put on the municipality by the New Initiative Council of which he is a member. He questions whether some of the people in the Committees really care about their positions.

Bergdahl believes that the development and focus on tourism should be lifted, as should the logistics and infrastructure of the city. A role also highlighted by Sheehan et al. For example, it is difficult to reach the JF Willumsen Museum without car, though not impossible (Appendix E4). In agreement with Bergdahl, Wilhelmsen highlights the need to prioritize the tourism project. While Johansen appreciates the effort in initiating the workshop, she warns against “*initiating such activities too many times where they just fade out*” (Johansen, 39:25). Currently, she does not feel like anything is happening.

Whereas Wilhelmsen recognizes that the municipality has realized that they need to involve the associations, he believes they could still do better and listen more. He suggests organizing a meeting with the bigger players, such as himself, the Vikings and JF Willumsen, to talk about what to do and how to support it.

Søbæk points to Frederikssund Business as a central player as they are developing and executing the tourism project. He recognizes the need to have “wise people” to qualify suggestions and put them in a framework, on which the politicians can base a decision from a professional stand point. Frederikssund Business’ tourism office is viewed as a classic service function. Here they inspire visitors, help with tickets and classic marketing.

Johansen feels that there is missing a uniting strategy, a unifying power or coordinator. She points to the positive development of hiring Seneca as a way to upgrade efforts on tourism synergy and visibility. Søbæk has specifically asked for the creation of networks where members can hear what the municipality does and wants, and what they can help with. In accordance to this, Seneca sees her role as creating better and more collaboration, and expanding networks. Additionally, she sees herself as a connection between...
stakeholders. Seneca highlights that “without networks, without collaboration, without ownership of these things, it doesn’t work in the long run” (Seneca, 12:28). Ideally, Seneca would like her position to be a service function, proving a place for networking, exchanging knowledge, offering advice and where stakeholders can air their ideas.

As Seneca is new, her focus is currently making people aware of her position. She experiences that people often think that the municipality will do everything. Therefore she must explain that the stakeholders are the ones who have to lift the task, and that the municipality and herself, are there to support and guide them. It is important that stakeholders take initiative as Seneca does not believe it would make sense if the municipality made up their own ideas. Søbæk adds that there is a need for the tourism players should view themselves as more commercial than cultural.

**Communication**

Søbæk highlights the importance of continually disseminating political announcements regarding their ambitions and demonstrating genuine interest in stakeholders who should experience a political focus on tourism. The municipality has until now not been successful with this, as Wilhelmsen feels that “we (Frederikssund Business and Frederikssund Festival) maybe have a common interest somewhere, and maybe the municipality also has that interest, they are maybe just not so good at showing it” (Wilhelmsen, 24:36).

One way of keeping stakeholders informed and involved are the traditional hearings. However, according to Søbæk only few people are aware of these, but he expects that people who are affected by the project are involved. At the same time he admits that processes could be made more open and transparent. Confirming this point, Wilhelmsen explains that he might not know all the possibilities that exist for stakeholders, for instance regarding to marketing. The municipality therefore has to be more proactive in informing them about these things. Johansen adds that there is too little support, and asks that municipality tell her something, anything, about what is happening in referring to the post-workshop silence. Johansen mentions the need to have a platform or contact person who can disseminate tourism information. With hiring Seneca, Wilhelmsen and Johansen believes that something positive is happening.

Both municipality representatives have experienced frustrated stakeholders because they have not felt listened to. Wilhelmsen agrees that the municipality does not listen enough and adds that they are not really heard either. This is exemplified by the strategy workshop where Wilhelmsen felt that it was already determined beforehand: “it was a strategy that I felt, and we weren’t the only association which felt, that the municipality, already before the meeting we should have, had decided on what it was they wanted. But
you just wanted to shut the mouths of the associations, and involve them so they felt that they had put their mark on some of it” (Wilhelmsen, 8:30). According to Seneca they have to keep listening to stakeholders and their ideas if they hope to generate something with them. Summing up the importance of communication, she explains that it is easier to be part of something if you feel you have a say and are listened to.

**Furesø Municipality**

**Distinguishing Between Stakeholders**

The newly approved tourism strategy builds on three paths, each of which requires different stakeholders and collaborations. The picnic path builds on local businesses, primarily culinary stakeholders, restaurants and smaller leasing companies of bikes and canoes, accommodation providers and the centre associations. The visitor packages are two-fold and include the institutions of the municipality, such as the libraries, as well as the local businesses. Finally, the third path, Copenhagen Green Belt, builds on cross-collaboration with the nearby municipalities (Appendix F1, F2). The tourism strategy tries to exploit the possibility to combine culture, nature and the culinary with exercise (Appendix F2). Interestingly, Rosgaard includes event bureaus in his list of stakeholders (Appendix F2), whereas Møller proclaims that events are not ongoing and therefore not something you can build a brand on, and as such believes they fall under regular operations rather than tourism (Appendix F1).

Rosgaard says “we are relatively open as long as it’s within the paths. If someone comes and suggests something else, then we will say no, no doubt about that. Focus is important. We are not very big, we don’t have a lot of money, we don’t have many resources. The three paths, that’s being broad enough” (Rosgaard, 35:36). Relevance therefore seems to be the dominating criteria for differentiating stakeholders. Rosgaard summarizes stakeholder involvement as follows: “depending on which path we are running or where in the process we are, we have more dialogue with some than others” (Rosgaard, 26:58). La Cour believes that experiences rather than hotels were perhaps more relevant for the project. Therefore she felt it was completely fair when she was given lower priority when scheduling a meeting (Appendix F3). This clearly points to relevance as an important criteria in distinguishing between stakeholders.

Both municipality representatives agree that accommodation providers are important because “…being the only two places, we almost need to include them” (Rosgaard, 32:09). This suggests that stakeholder involvement is based on power. As the hotels are typical tourism players and they are few, the municipality
is dependent on the hotels to make accommodation available for potential guests. On the other hand, the strategy caters primarily to one-day visitors and as such hotels are not entirely relevant.

Explaining the tourism development process, Møller compares it to looking into a toolbox to see who you have and what you can do on the basis of this. Likening stakeholders to tools, places them as critical resources (Sheehan et al., 2007). Rosgaard highlights size and experience, believing that the other stakeholders also listen to experienced players (Appendix F2). Regarding size, he thinks that stakeholders would have been stronger and more influential if they had coordinated their efforts. In relation to experience, Jahn has run many big successful projects and believes she is given special consideration by the Mayor because of this. In relation to power she claims to have “within my own area, a lot. A lot. But then I have to perform. Those things are connected” (Jahn, 27:33). At the same time she believes that the municipality respects and listens to others; they have just as much to say regarding their own area.

If stakeholders can contribute with something they should be able to participate (Appendix F1, F2). Expanding on this, Møller compares the municipality’s considerations to that of a bank: the strength of the idea, whether the person can deliver, and whether will it generate tourism. La Cour has experienced that it is up to the stakeholders how much they want to be involved. Rosgaard compliments this by saying “the other way around, there are probably some who don’t collaborate with us because they can’t see the effect of it in relation to what they do and the focus they have” (Rosgaard, 35:26). For example, he mentions the fact that Bytortvet did not initially want to participate as they could not see the benefit. It was easier to convince stakeholders who already saw themselves as part of the tourism industry and the value of it.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

The tourism development process was initiated by a conference that involved politicians, the administration, stakeholders, and public and private players. Ideas were passed on to the political level where they were sorted, prioritized and narrow down. Then a reference group was established. While not providing any further explanation as to how they decided on these stakeholders, the group consists representatives from the business life: hotels, Rokkedyssegård, Furesø Museums, a mountain bike renter and an event bureau (Appendix F3).

Møller and Rosgaard agree that it has been a fruitful collaboration. They experienced commitment and interest from stakeholders; positive spirit, support and engagement from the administration; and political support. According to Møller, work is informal until you have a common bank account or have signed a contract. Especially because it is such a small community, she describes the relationships as rather informal,
trusting and open. Rosgaard describes it as very laidback with a good tone and understanding of each other. As the project has moved along, Rosgaard believes the relationships have become rather limited in that the municipality delivers what they are able to.

Rosgaard would like to have included Wonderful Copenhagen earlier in the process. As they could have sped up the process. However he is aware that this might have an effect on stakeholders. He has experienced projects where stakeholders were involved in a pseudo-like manner, and believes that “if you really want to build something around some stakeholders, they have to feel that they have a say in the decisions and are fully part of it” (Rosgaard, 60:45). Møller agrees that involving them from the beginning ensures ownership and that they will participate in the project: “we get the idea, gather some people, then we run it, what would you say, politically and administratively forward forward forward. And then we already have some people on board. Because it’s like a test to see if it’s viable. If they fall off, it’s not like we will be in the ice cream shop” (Møller, 41:18). Rosgaard agrees that stakeholders will have to lift the task in the end.

The Accommodation Representative

Although she realizes that it was an open invitation, la Cour questions why the hotel was not invited to join the conference that kick-started the tourism project. While la Cour does not believe it would have made a difference, she thinks that it would have been an opportunity to add some things, and helped her to evaluate the relevance of participating: “it is also that: is it valuable for our business to be part of such a reference group? And right now, no. I don’t think it has” (la Cour, 24:40). As the strategy focuses on one-day visitors, it has also been a process of acknowledging the role of this stakeholder group (Appendix F2). Although she feels that she cannot currently participate to a greater extent, la Cour does not exclude that the hotel will be more involved in the future. This points to the dynamic nature of stakeholders and the importance of continually accessing them (Mitchell et al., 1997).

La Cour was invited to join the reference group to develop tourism by providing suggestions and inputs. Overall, she feels that it is difficult to call it a collaboration as she only participated in one meeting. She blames the lack of involvement on herself as she believes she could easily have volunteered to do more. Applying Savage et al.’s (1991) typology the municipality follows an involvement strategy of the hotel although it has recently moved to a more of a monitoring strategy as the hotel is no longer active. Similarly, the hotel could be classified as a dominant stakeholder when using Mitchell’s typology as it is missing the urgency criteria.
The Cultural Representative

In terms of involvement in the Japanese tourism path which is not far from her usual work, Jahn says she was brought in early, before everyone else, she claims to have formulated a paper about what to do which was later broadened. She has later said no to coordinate it as it fell outside her area of expertise. As mentioned Jahn brings a certain level of legitimacy and power to the organization. This indicates a dominant stakeholder, and Kulturhuset follows an involvement strategy as it is supporting the municipality’s tourism initiatives, both through the strategy paths but also as an ad hoc tourism bureau.

Reflecting on the cooperation, Jahn says that it is still very new, but that there is confidence, respect, frequent communication and good responsiveness. She goes on to say that the process “it’s alright. It’s not always... It has been incredibly hard. It has been so difficult. It has been politically difficult because I think there has been political disagreement about it. But it resulted in agreement to financially support it. But I don’t think it has been worked through enough” (Jahn, 20:50). She feels that the City Council need to have a discussion about the project and find out what it is they want and how to do it. This problematic is reflected in the management of expectations is investigated in “Emergent Findings”.

The Retail Representative

The involvement of the retail industry has varied throughout the process. Rosgaard explains that they have been involved in the beginning but later said they had no interest as they had difficulty seeing the benefits. He adds that it is about meeting the stakeholders where they are, and is therefore understanding of them only being involved in peak events. This suggests a monitoring strategy should be applied where the retail industry is involved where it is relevant. Interestingly, Thamdrup says that she took initiative herself to attach to the picnic path. She suspects this is because the municipality did not consider whether Bytorvet wanted to participate, which seems to depend on projects and contacting the right people. Thamdrup therefore states that she is not engaged with the municipality, but primarily attaches to the tourism paths through stakeholders she has met through other networks.

Thamdrup comments that “I think it’s completely stupid that we don’t work more together. And exactly because we might as well make some initiatives that as many as possible in the municipality can support. So that it becomes as massive as possible. So yes, definitely. I think we all could really benefit from it” (Thamdrup, 4:35). She would even consider changing the goal setting of the shopping centre to be more focused on tourism. As such it seems that Thamdrup is an overlooked supportive stakeholder as she is very willing to participate. It may be argued that this is partly her own fault as she initially expressed that she
had no interest in participating (Appendix F2). Applying Mitchell et al.’s typology, suggests Bytorvet can be classified as a discretionary stakeholder as resources are a challenge, and as such the municipality may choose to engage with it but it is not necessary.

The Event Representative

Sterndorff, chairperson of Jonstrup Jazz Festival, says that there is no collaboration between the festival and the municipality. The only support they receive is a deficit guarantee and that facilities are made available for them. “We only get it if there is a deficit. And we would rather do it by ourselves” (Sterndorff, 3:46) says Sterndorff. As such the festival is dependent on the municipality and therefore has no power. Other than the Mayor opening the festival, which allows for some conversation, Sterndorff claims that “you could actually say that the municipality is not bothered by us because they don’t do anything” (Sterndorff, 10:44).

While there is no further involvement with the municipality, Sterndorff was awarded the Værløse Cultural Prize and the festival is featured in the Welcome to Furesø Municipality brochure (Appendix F6). This suggests that the festival is a valued feature of the area, and as such it possess legitimacy. As the festival is an event for locals rather than visitors, urgency is not attributed. This identifies the festival as a discretionary stakeholder which requires no action (Mitchell et al., 1997). On the other hand, placing the event in Savage et al.’s typology indicates that it is a marginal stakeholder also because Sterndorff has no intention to engage more with the municipality. This may only attribute a monitoring strategy to a limited extent.

Roles

There is a clear division of roles in Furesø as Rosgaard highlights that it is not the municipality’s task to perform or promote activities – that is a commercial task. The municipality’s role is to create the frameworks and a foundation for people to meet and work together. They should set a direction, provide access to material and enable interested stakeholders to support the strategy and each other. Møller adds that the municipality should facilitate things, and gather expert knowledge. The role of the municipality has changed from a consultancy role, as they did not know where to go, to a more coordinating and supporting role once the paths were identified, to enable involved stakeholders to deliver. Møller highlights the need of political focus and will behind the project. To which Jahn comments that “I am not sure that the municipality really understands the need, the importance of it. But I think they are starting to realize it now” (Jahn, 16:34). As such, Jahn identifies a need for the municipality to “really bet on it” and find money for it.
Both Rosgaard and Møller question the municipality’s role in relation to finance as they are not the stakeholders’ business partner and financial support has to be balanced against other tasks. Møller is wary of financing stakeholder projects as it can lead to cronyism. There is a need to discuss politically what the municipality is able to help with and communicate this to stakeholders. According to Thamdrup, projects often end because of lack of resources. With each new project she has to consider whether it is worthwhile for the municipality or for Bytorvet. Møller appreciates this concrete money angel. This fits with Rosgaard’s expectations that the stakeholders have to see the point of participating.

Rosgaard points to the inclusion of the City Council in decision making which Møller feels this is a strange role as it is not based on expertise or business. Currently, Møller is the highest politically responsible for tourism, although she suspects that people go above her and directly to the Mayor. When Jahn talked about her collaboration on the Japanese project, she referred to Per Kattrup as the chairperson of the tourism committee. This points to a confusion of roles and departments within Furesø Municipality. In relation to this Thamdrup adds that “in reality I think it is very individual, because there are so many employed in the municipality, that it is difficult that everyone knows that: oh, we would like to be involved if that is possible in any way” (Thamdrup, 17:16). Thamdrup thinks the tourism project could benefit from having one person with the overall responsibility. Currently she is experiencing that people, stakeholders as well as the municipality, are only concerned about what they were hired to do, and that they do not look further. This makes it difficult to know what is going on and who to contact. It seems that Furesø is missing an outright coordinator and project manager.

Regarding the administration’s role it is more practical as they realize the visions of the politicians. Møller explains that they find the relevant people and create the meeting. Normally they would also organize the conference and negotiate with partners. Møller also assumes that the administration have agreed on milestones with the participating stakeholders.

Stakeholders in turn should carry out the tourism initiatives. Rosgaard hopes that the tourism projects are be able to run by themselves after the project period without interference or support from the municipality. The role of the stakeholders, as seen by Møller, is to pave their way and make others aware of them. They have to find each other and collaborate to grow. Møller believes that you cannot talk tourism without stakeholders as you would have nothing to base it on, and therefore hopes to achieve: “that they, the stakeholders, can get something up and running together, that they can exploit each other, the synergy, and refer to each other and all that” (Appendix G1, 35:24). She realizes that they could have facilitated these networks better during the conference.
Communication

As the process of developing tourism in Furesø Municipality has been slow, Rosgaard highlights the importance of openness and dialogue. Rosgaard explains that they have regular meetings with the reference group and inform broadly two to three times a year at the Business Development Forum. He believes this is valuable in the long run as staying informed may increase willingness for stakeholders to participate later. This is in accordance with the wish of la Cour who would like to be on the sidelines and stay updated.

Sharing her concerns regarding information sharing with Rosgaard, la Cour says “I was told that there was this app, and that’s fine. But in a way I didn’t feel like they really considered what I had asked about” (la Cour, 28:03). Thamdrup explains that the tourism project was mentioned shortly during a Business Contact Committee meeting, but that there was no further information. She had to read in the newspaper that the paths had been approved and adds “here I would like that... involve us, tell us when something is happening, when it has been decided send out the information so that we can start planning... But I haven’t gotten that and that is completely typical. So here the municipality could be more alert, and that might be because they don’t have someone who is responsible for it” (Thamdrup, 49:40). Similarly, it was discovered that Jahn has not heard about the tourism paths other than what is directly relevant for her. Again, this points to a lack of communication which is reflected in the reason la Cour joined the reference group.

Overall there seems to be a communication issue in Furesø, not just as dissemination of information from the municipality’s side but also between stakeholders. For example Thamdrup says that she is often unaware of what her neighbour, Kulturhuset, has planned which she could attach to. She believes that the more the stakeholders are able to talk to one another the better, but it is also just as much about getting into the right mind-set, being aware of the possibility and prioritizing it. In line with la Cour, Thamdrup says that she is missing a base or network by which to share calendars as they could all do better if they knew what each other were doing.

Finally, Thamdrup believes that the municipality is bad at marketing activities, events and sights in Furesø, and suggests putting up information boards at places where many people come (Appendix F5). She is sceptical of this idea becoming reality as she experiences that the municipality is often afraid that something will look ugly and that people will complain. As an example, Thamdrup has fought for putting up signs pointing to Bytorvet saying “shopping centre”. It was a tedious process as the project had to be approved by several committees (Appendix F5).
Cross-Case Comparison

Distinguishing Between Stakeholders

While all municipality representatives claim that everyone is welcome to be involved, and they treat everyone equally, some are more equal than others as the saying goes. Comparing the three municipalities’ way of distinguishing between stakeholders on the case characteristics clearly shows that the presence of a tourism strategy has great influence on which stakeholders are involved. In the case of Frederikssund and Furesø, stakeholders are first sorted by relevance to the strategy paths. Gribskov Municipality does not have a tourism strategy and the study has found that they do not distinguish stakeholders by relevance to the same extend. Here it was rather in terms of common values (quality of hosting and service mindedness). Therefore it can be concluded that the presence of a tourism strategy helps to narrow down stakeholders by relevance.

In relation to this, clarifying what the strategy entails ensures that stakeholders are more accepting of the degree to which they are included. An example of this was when la Cour, was prioritized lower than others when scheduling a meeting which she believed was fair as she recognized that experiences rather than hotels were relevant for the strategy. This process can however be affected by how the strategy is reached. For example while it is relevant for Frederikssund’s strategy that the Vikings are more involved, how they became part of the strategy is questioned in relation to cronyism.

With relation to size of the municipality two things were observed. First, in Furesø hotels were given more power because there are only two hotels in the destination and as such the municipality is dependent on them. This is also assumed to be in combination to them being classic tourism providers as for example the shopping centre, of which there are also only two, was not given the same treatment. Second, viewing the stakeholders as critical resources in ability to lift tasks was more prevalent in Furesø and Frederikssund. Although it does not directly relate to size in Frederikssund’s case, their budget is significantly smaller than Gribskov. So here size could also be reflected in budget size. The other way around, stakeholder size mattered in all municipalities. In Frederikssund and Furesø because of this was again linked to ability to lift tasks, while in Gribskov it was in relation to force of attraction.

The third characteristic was having a separate DMO. This does not seem to have an effect as Seneca, similarly to Furesø assessed stakeholders based on primarily relevance and critical resources.

Gribskov which is the top performing of the three destinations primarily based stakeholder differentiation on power. Power here was judged based on size of the stakeholder and force of attraction. Relevance was
only judged in relation to fit with the municipality’s values which again was linked to attracting tourists. As such it seems that Gribskov looks at what the tourist is drawn to, what is already popular in the municipality, before looking at what makes the destination different which seems to be what the other municipalities have focused on in developing their strategies. Frederikssund partly recognized this when Søbæk said that the buyer has the final say. This is interesting as Furesø, the bottom performer was focused on attracting potential residents rather than only tourists, although Frederikssund also did this but not to the same extent. Performance and stakeholder differentiation seems to be related to who the municipality has in mind when developing tourism.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

**Accommodation Providers**

Of the three accommodation representatives only the one from Furesø was involved in the development of tourism. This followed an involvement strategy, but has recently become more passive (monitoring strategy). La Cour can also be classified as a dominant stakeholder as it lacks urgency. In contrast, Gribskov’s accommodation representative, Rasmussen, is ignored and is classified as a discretionary or even nonstakeholder. However, he may not necessarily be interested in being involved. Here the accommodation sector was not mentioned as an important stakeholder, only the summerhouses. This is interesting as Gribskov Municipality has identified a lack of beds. Finally, Frederikssund’s accommodation representative, Larsen is not engaged with the municipality which is in contrast with the municipality’s intentions. Additionally, he feels that he is treated differently than the other hotels in the destination, but this seems to be determined by payment for ads. In attempting to become involved, Larsen felt that they showed no willingness to cooperate. As such he is classified as a supportive, but overlooked, stakeholder.

It is interesting to note that Søbæk, Furesø Municipality’s administrative representative explains the reason to engage with the local hotels as necessary as they are the only ones in the destination. This can be linked to the size characteristic. In contrast to Furesø, Frederikssund and Gribskov municipalities are close to the same size and have a greater number of accommodation providers. Despite the fact that the latter have said that they are lacking accommodation providers and have mentioned them as an important stakeholder, they are not engaging with them. This is in contrast to Sheehan et al.’s (2007) findings which propose that hotels are the most important stakeholder and the remaining stakeholder groups simply follow along. It may be argued that this is because they support the DMO financially as is not the case here.
**Cultural Institutions**

All cultural representatives were involved with their municipalities. Because Gribskov does not have a tourism strategy, unlike the other two municipalities, Jensen’s involvement was focused on development of the museum and as such, the attractions of Gribskov. Therefore it is seen as a possible branding opportunity. Museum Nordsjælland is deemed a marginal stakeholder with respect to tourism. However as one of Gribskov Municipality’s initiatives is establishing a new museum, this moves the museum to a supportive stakeholder position. Johansen was invited to participate in the tourism development workshop in Frederikssund and as such her involvement is broader. However, this seems to be limited to the one workshop and has since reverted to its usual tasks. As Kulturhuset in Furesø is only focusing on activities which directly affect the institution it can similarly to Museum Nordsjælland be classified as a marginal stakeholder. In contrast to this however, is the argument that the Mayor contacted Jahn specifically to develop the Japan tourism path which implies that she is supporting the tourism strategy. However, similarly to Johansen, Jahn has since then limited her involvement to what is directly relevant to the cultural house.

As can be seen there is not a big difference between the engagements of the cultural institutions. It is assumed that this is because all municipalities recognize the stakeholders’ potential in attracting visitors. Involvement for the cultural institutions in Frederikssund and Furesø temporarily goes beyond individual interests where the stakeholders are invited to develop their municipalities’ strategies. It should be noted that Frandsen, the administrative municipality representative of Gribskov, highlighted that when the time came to develop their tourism strategy they would involve Museum Nordsjælland.

**Retail Representatives**

Engagement of the retail representatives varies greatly between the three municipalities. In Gribskov the Trade and Tourism Association is typically involved early, and has great influence. It has been classified as a definitive stakeholder, or according to Savage et al. (1991) a mixed blessing which requires a collaboration strategy. However, it was discovered that it rather follows an involvement strategy. In contrast, Frederikssund Municipality has applied a monitoring strategy in the case of Sillebroen as it has limited relevance to the strategy. Applying Mitchell et al.’s (1997) typology, Sillebroen is a dominant stakeholder as it lacks urgency with respect to tourism. This implies that the municipality should form a formal relationship with Sillebroen, which is witnessed as the shopping centre pays to be featured in marketing material. At the same time, Bergdahl argues that he is able to influence initiatives and as such it is important to monitor this
stakeholder. This was something which Furesø Municipality were not able to do sufficiently in the case of Bytorvet. Here the retail representative’s role has changed over time and Thamdrup had to attach independently to relevant tourism paths. Accordingly, Bytorvet has been identified as an overlooked supportive stakeholder.

Two things become evident. Firstly, the retail industry has limited relevance to the tourism strategies of Frederikssund and Furesø municipalities, and therefore they are not as involved as the retail representative from Gribskov. Second, Gribskov hopes to live off tourism on which the retail industry is dependent. According to theory where a destination is more economically dependent on tourism, the public sector tends to be more involved (Page & Connell, 2007). Interestingly, the retailers’ level of involvement is reflected in the performance of the municipalities. In Gribskov, which is the top performer, the retail representative was most involved, whereas in Furesø, the bottom performer, the retailer was overlooked. This is not to assume that it is the only reason for the municipalities’ performance, but it is an interesting observation which may, in combination with other factors, partly explain it.

**Event Organizers**

Event involvement varies between the municipalities. Musik i Lejet provides for an interesting case as it has been discovered that Gribskov Municipality views the event as a definitive stakeholder and accordingly attempts to prioritize it. However, while there is great political goodwill, this does not show in the administration. It is almost as if the roles are reversed when Grauengaard refers to the municipality as a stakeholder. As such, he views the relationship as a necessity rather than a collaboration. Similarly to Musik i Lejet, Frederikssund Festival is supported financially and practically. However, it has also been involved in development of Frederikssund’s tourism strategy. As such, Frederikssund Festival has temporarily been classified as a supportive stakeholder. However, outside strategy development, the festival is classified as a marginal stakeholder. Jonstrup Jazz Festival’s involvement is limited to a formal relationship based on a deficit guarantee and availability of facilities. However, it should be mentioned that Møller believes these activities fall under the municipality’s regular tasks and as such is not relevant to tourism. Therefore the festival has been identified as a discretionary stakeholder which does not require action.

Closer examination shows that Musik i Lejet is valued much higher than others as it forms a big attraction for Gribskov. Additionally, the event also receives a direct grand, in comparison to a deficit guarantee, and a contact person as part of the cultural contract it has with the municipality. Frederikssund Festival is only accessed higher than Jonstrup Jazz Festival because it participated in the tourism strategy workshop which was open to a broad range of stakeholders. The lower level of involvement in Frederikssund and Furesø is
repeated in relevance to strategy. Similarly to the retail industry, the level of involvement of events is reflected in the performance of the municipalities.

**Overall**

Stakeholder engagement varies between the municipalities included in this study. One case characteristic which came into play when distinguishing between stakeholders is size of the destinations. In the small municipality of Furesø there are fewer accommodation providers than in the larger destinations of Gribskov and Frederikssund. This has led the municipality of Furesø to involve the hotels in the reference group despite the low relevance to the tourism strategy, whereas the accommodation representatives in Gribskov and Frederikssund were not engaged with their municipalities. As previously mentioned, this goes against Sheehan et al.’s (2007) findings. Apart from this, size of destination was not found to have an effect.

The characteristic of separation of the political and administrative tourism authority, where Frederikssund Business acts the role of DMO, did not seem to have an effect on stakeholder engagement. The only potential difference is that Seneca sees her new role as very extrovert and focused on creating relations with many stakeholders. However, it is intended rather than actual behaviour. In the other municipalities it is just an extra task and as such there is no particular focus on it.

Finally, the presence of a strategy has an influence. This was not possible in Gribskov as there is currently no tourism strategy, and therefore other considerations have been made by the municipality representatives. In relation to this, Frederikssund and Furesø municipalities organized strategy development workshops for the broad range of stakeholders. This is in accordance with UNWTO who suggests that there should be opportunities for all interested parties to discuss the tourism issues in a forum (Edgell et al., 2008). The intentions of these workshops were to brainstorm ideas and hear the stakeholders views. As such, they follow what Hankinson refers to as collaboration by consultation to achieve common understandings and possibly establish partnerships.

Once the paths had been narrowed down, relevant stakeholders were involved in the ongoing development. This makes stakeholder assessment more dynamic as stakeholders vary from being involved to not being prioritized or pulling back themselves. Another recommendation from UNWTO is the ongoing involvement of key players (Edgell et al., 2008). This was ensued in Furesø Municipality by establishing a reference group. Some of these became project owners as they developed the tourism paths. This supports Page and Connell’s (2007) observation that stakeholder engagement in tourism often goes beyond consultation as some projects may be community controlled.
As Gribskov does not have a tourism strategy, involvement of stakeholders is focused on developing the stakeholders and their activities, to make the destination more attractive. Gribskov involved the retail industry and event organizers more than the other municipalities, as already mentioned is reflected in performance rankings. It engaged in close involvement with the culture representative similarly to the other municipalities. The accommodation providers were barely acknowledged. There seems to be closer collaboration with stakeholders who attract tourists and where they are dependent on them. Furthermore it seems that Gribskov has closer relationships with more stakeholders compared to the other municipalities who tend to use broader engagement of stakeholders.

Roles

It is important to settle expectations with regards to roles as it has been discovered there is some confusion about this in Furesø. Sheehan et al. (2007) represented the roles of city, DMO and hotels in their Destination Promotion Triad. While results here will be compared to the triad, it is important to recognize that the destinations discussed here differ from the triad on a number of points. First of all the level of investigation is on municipalities and therefore broader than a single city. Second, the municipalities have taken on the role of DMO to some extent (described below). Finally, this project challenges Sheehan et al.’s assumption that hotels are the key stakeholder, and therefore the analysis compares the role of the hotels to three other stakeholders: cultural institutions, the retail industry and event organizers.

The Municipality’s Role

The political side of the municipality can be compared to Sheehan et al.’s “city” while the administration can be compared to the “DMO”. Most importantly is perhaps the politicians’ role to set the direction or vision of the municipality (Sheehan et al., 2007). This is in accordance with findings which show that the political focus should shine through the whole administration. Gribskov and Frederikssund experience challenges here as stakeholders respectively do not feel that the message has reached the administration (Appendix D6), and that tourism is seen as a can rather than a must task (Appendix E4). As such, Johansen feels that it has been difficult to see Frederikssund Municipality as a player within tourism. However, this is changing.

All municipalities point to the importance of supporting their stakeholders to implement tourism projects which is suggested by Edgell et al. (2008). This varies from financial support, access to material and facilities, to paying for experts’ knowledge as also recognized by Page and Connell. This links to the next point, where Sheehan et al. found that the city acts as a financier. This is also in accordance with Page and
Connell (2007) who explain that the city can stimulate tourism by offering financial incentives. In all municipalities events and museum are financially supported. Grauengaaard comments that this acts as a motivator and stamp of approval if funding is to be applied for elsewhere. Furthermore, in Frederikssund and Furesø money has been set aside to develop the tourism paths, while Gribskov pays a significant amount to VisitNordsjælland for marketing activities. Page and Connell expect the public sector to stimulate tourism through marketing and promotion. Stakeholders in both Frederikssund and Furesø complain about a lack of resources. Furthermore, Gribskov spends more money than the others on tourism, and therefore seems to be more conscious of the effect this has. For example if offers direct grants, whereas the other municipalities typically provide deficit guarantees for their events. A yearly 2 million DKK of Gribskov’s budget goes to VisitNordsjælland (Appendix D1). In Frederikssund 3.5million have been dedicated to the seven year strategy (500,000DKK per year)(Appendix E2), while only 300,000DKK per year for the duration of three years has been set aside in Furesø (Appendix F1, F2). It is interesting that Gribskov has the highest budget although they do not have a specified tourism strategy. In referring to a previously mentioned argument, this may be due to the fact that the municipality is economically dependent on tourism (Page & Connell, 2007). In Frederikssund and Furesø stakeholders complained about a lack of resources available for tourism initiatives. This is exemplified by Johansen who experiences that the municipality would like to help but not if it costs them anything.

Furthermore, in all destinations the financial support has to be balanced against the municipalities’ other tasks. However, as recognized by Page and Connell tax revenues can be used to create something that is of benefit to both residents and tourism. This links to the role of ensuring infrastructure (Sheehan et al., 2007). Gribskov highlighted the need to ensure infrastructure and related to this ensure that it is possible to build hotels as the destination lacks accommodation. However, this role was barely mentioned by the other municipalities. Only Frederikssund’s cultural and retail stakeholder commented on the need to improve infrastructure. It seems that Gribskov is more aware of its role and acts on it although there is a problem with the administration. This could be linked to better performance.

The Administration’s Role

In the traditional sense, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) do not exist within the municipalities. While there is a trend to collaborate with other municipalities and brand the region through a common DMO, such as VisitNordsjælland (Gribskov), Fjordlandet (Frederikssund), and eventually Copenhagen Green Belt (Furesø), it is the administrative part of the municipalities which has taken on some of these tasks. Despite the trend of collaborating across municipalities it is important that the municipalities do something
for themselves as Hankinson (2009) claims that more focused destination brands tend to be more successful than broader brands. It is important to note that Frederikssund has outsourced the non-political tasks in an attempt to “professionalize” tourism activities, while in Gribskov and Furesø this is kept inhouse.

The most important role of the DMO is coordination (Sheehan et al., 2007). This entails communication which will be discussed in the following section. All municipalities have experienced problems with this. Gribskov has been criticised for being too bureaucratic (Andersen, Bruun, Grauengaard). Frederikssund was missing a uniting power or coordinator, but the hiring of Seneca is a positive development (Bergdahl, Johansen, Wilhelmsen). Finally, in Furesø Thamdrup comments that it very much depends on who you get a hold of in the municipality. It is interesting to note that the problem persists whether or not the DMO function is kept in-house or not. Furthermore, Hankinson (2009) claims that this problem is especially a weakness in smaller local government organizations. However, this investigation showed no difference between the smaller municipality (Furesø) and the others. Only in performance where Furesø is worst but this could also be attributed to other factors.

Another important task of the DMO is creating a strategy, matching resources to it and implementing it through the tourism stakeholder network (Sheehan et al., 2007; Page & Connell, 2007). In line with Hankinson (2009), Møller proclaims that it is the job of the administration to make the political visions happen. In Frederikssund and Furesø strategy development has been a collaborative activity with political, administrative representatives. Matching of resources typically happens by reviewing stakeholder applications for grants. What this is based on was not discussed further during the interviews.

Strategy implementation seems to be focused around stakeholders and networking. Gribskov currently makes use of existing networks, for example the associations whereas Frederikssund and Furesø are working on establishing networks. This could reflect how well stakeholders are involved and therefore performance.

**Stakeholder Roles**

This project attempts to investigate Sheehan et al.’s claim that the hotel is the most important stakeholder in tourism destinations. Therefore this section looks at how the municipalities view stakeholders’ role in general, and more specifically.

In short, Møller proclaims that you need to base tourism on stakeholders. Rosgaard expands by saying that it is not the municipality’s task to perform tasks; that is a commercial task. As such, stakeholders have to carry out the initiatives. This can be compared to what Sheehan et al. refer to when they say that the hotel
(as the key stakeholder) provides nonfinancial or operating resources. However as observed by Frandsen, it is also about how stakeholders perceive their own role. Rosgaard adds “It’s about settling expectations in terms of what role do they see themselves play in this... So I think it’s also a lot about meeting the stakeholders where they are, find some common directions. But not expect that everyone is cheering and can see that this is happiness, because it might not be” (Rosgaard, 32:39).

Søbæk believes that stakeholders should view themselves as more commercial rather than cultural. In relation to this Møller believes that it is the stakeholders must pave their way forward, create awareness and grow things together. Similarly, Seneca believes it is important that the stakeholders take initiative to ideas. An important observation is made by Frandsen who says that it is the municipality’s task to encourage stakeholder to participate and support initiatives as the municipality has no direct control over stakeholders. In comparison it seems that Gribskov attempts to develop stakeholders rather than involving them in projects, by encouraging them to improve their service, develop their offers and handle complaints. This could be related to performance as already mentioned.

**Accommodation Providers**

Hotels are seen as the most important stakeholder by Sheehan et al. who argue that their role is to provide nonfinancial or operating resources such as discounted rooms, and to provide information on supply and demand. Findings have showed the opposite in the case of Furesø. Here, Rosgaard believed that it was the municipality’s task to inform hotels of upcoming events, so that hotels could prepare for an increase in demand. Furthermore, involvement here has only required the hotel representative’s time and input to the strategy paths. La Cour found it difficult to see her role as the hotel’s target group did not match that of Furesø’s tourism strategy. Additionally, the remaining two hotel representatives simply saw themselves as a supplement to the accommodation offers available in the destination.

**Cultural Institutions**

Overall the role of the cultural institutions was seen as that of an attraction, although Johansen believes that JF Willumsen Museum’s value in this regard has not been fully recognized. In Furesø, Kulturhuset was also used as an impromptu tourism information house for inbound and outbound tourism. In relation to the tourism strategy, Jahn attaches to the paths where it fits with her work. Jensen sought to develop the museum rather than force tourism, although he was aware that they needed to improve with regards to foreign language materials.
Retail Representatives

The role of the retail industry varied greatly between the municipalities. Andersen saw the role of Gilleleje Tourism and Trade Association as that of provider of ideas and knowledge. Furthermore, the already established network allows for dissemination of information, in terms of guidance and event calendars, to members which in turn enable them to support the municipality’s goal of improving service. In Frederikssund, Bergdahl claimed that Sillebroen be seen as an attraction but also as a critical resource when certain tasks must be lifted. Finally, Bytorvet’s role has been somewhat unclear but overall it is a supporter of activities. As such, it can be argued that the retail industry can provide the municipality with critical resources, similarly to what Sheehan et al. claim that their hotel does, and greatly affects Gribskov’s performance.

Event Organizers

While Grauengaard primarily sees his role as supplementing the type of tourism that is already found in Gribskov and contributing to local businesses, the remaining festivals are more focused on creating life in their towns for the locals. Additionally, Wilhelmsen is proud of the fact that the festival donates resources to local causes and associations. Sterndorff sees the festival as creating unity and pride among locals. As Jonstrup Jazz Festival is also featured in the Welcome to Furesø brochure it is assumed that it must also be recognized as an attraction.

Overall

From this follows that, in contrast to what is suggested by Sheehan et al. hotels are far from the only key stakeholder in developing and promoting tourism in the three municipalities. In contrast to what Sheehan et al. (2007) claim, for the destinations investigated here, hotels are the freeriders and it is the other stakeholders which shape the attractions and therefore the type of tourism present in the destination. Furthermore their role is more clear in tourism development whereas the perception of hotels is restricted to that of providing a bed. With regards to performance it seems that in Gribskov, the top performer, stakeholders are more aware of their role in relation to tourism compared to other destinations.

Communication

As identified by interviewees and theory, communication in tourism management is key. It is important to continually inform stakeholders of political decisions and ambitions, and show them that the municipality is
genuinely interested in them (Appendix D1, F2). Sheehan et al. highlight the need to engage in regular, frequent and clear dialogue.

The lack of communication in all destinations has several implications. In Gribskov this is taken as a sign that the municipality is not prioritising tourism development and collaboration (Appendix D3). In Frederikssund stakeholders question whether they have the same goal as this is not visible (Appendix E6), and stakeholders beg for more information especially with regards to post-workshop decisions (Johansen). Finally, in Furesø stakeholders have not received formal information about the tourism paths which leads to confusion and missed opportunities (Appendix F4, F5). This highlights the need of informing stakeholders about the destination and programme activities (Hankinson, 2009; Sheehan et al., 2007).

A general issue occurring in all three municipalities seems to be an inefficient communication of local events. Often stakeholders must read about it in the local newspaper, and therefore ask that the municipality be more proactive in letting stakeholders know the possibilities that exist for them. Rasmussen adds that it would be beneficial, both to the individual stakeholder as well as the destination, if there was an industry organization or network. Thamdrup says that this issue requires that everyone involved is in the right mind-set, is aware of the possibility and prioritizes it. Similarly, several municipality representatives recognize that the more everyone talks, the better (Appendix D2, E2, F1).

Interestingly the need for more and better information has not been as profound in Gribskov which is the top performer. This maybe because there is more focus on the individual stakeholder. Here, the municipality is generally considered to be good at listening and understanding stakeholder needs and communication varies from stakeholder to stakeholder. In this relation, Frandsen says that it is easier to involve and inform people where there are already formal fora in place. This is exemplified by the Tourism and Trade Association which seems to be most informed about the municipality’s tourism activities.

Areas for improvements tend to focus on bureaucracy and internal communication of the municipality. In accordance with this, Hankinson (2009) explains that internal brand awareness is difficult to achieve in DMOs where there are several responsibilities. However this is experienced in all municipalities.

There therefore seems to not only be communication problems in terms of the municipality disseminating information, but also between stakeholders. Municipality communication especially seems to be an issue in Frederikssund and Furesø, while lack of stakeholder communication is more evident in Gribskov and Furesø. This issue is something that the theory applied here does not recognize but whose importance has been highlighted by all interviewees. Networking and communication between stakeholders is important if they are to support tourism strategies outside of the activities initiated by the municipality.
Emergent Findings

Cronyism

In an attempt to professionalize tourism work, Frederikssund’s politicians rely on their knowledgeable staff to prepare them for making political decisions (Appendix E1). This is important as stakeholders have pointed to the issue of cronyism. Similarly, Møller has questioned Furesø Municipality’s role in relation to finance as they are not the stakeholders’ business partner and furthermore in such a small community there is a risk of experiencing cronyism: “that’s what feels so strange when you get to a local level. That you outright take sides with one over another. I think that’s a very difficult balancing act, because then the free competition is no longer present... It’s a nice responsibility disclaimer to say: may the best man win” (Møller, 33:50). Despite these concerns, this was not an issue in Furesø nor Gribskov.

Larsen experiences that he is treated differently than the other stakeholders in Frederikssund. He states that “it is a very clubby town” (Larsen, 5:15) and that people who are part of various clubs or councils are prioritized above others. Larsen and Johansen mention that JF Willumsen is treated differently than the Vikings. Like Larsen and Johansen, Wilhelmsen comments that: “Their chairperson (of the Vikings) is in the City Council and he has a hat that turns one way, and sometimes he has to remember to turn it. Sometimes I think he only has it turned half way, because then he has both... That’s why I say that you sometimes experience nepotism in such a small community... There is a little bit too much of this clubbiness in some of it. I mean, the same people are also in the City Council, then it’s difficult” (Wilhelmsen, 40:45).

Both Bergdahl and Wilhelmsen believe that it is possible to create something for Frederikssund, other than the Vikings. Wilhelmsen complains that the municipality primarily supports the Vikings and says “I am often misunderstood in the town when I say this. People tell me: it’s just because you hate the Vikings. And I tell them: that’s not true. I have great respect for what they do, but what annoys me is that they get all the attention... There are other things than just Vikings in this town. We can also do something... We can represent the city in a different way” (Wilhelmsen, 39:50). He experiences that the municipality spends all their energy and money on them, and that they should be listening more to others. Summing it up, Johansen states: “our problem is that Willumsen wasn’t born and raised in Frederikssund and that he wasn’t a Viking” (Johansen, 33:45). This issue calls for increased transparency in decision-making processes, and is something that Frederikssund Municipality should address.
Managing Expectations

Rosgaard and Møller experienced that the biggest challenge in developing Furesø’s tourism was settling expectations. They believe it is important to settle expectations with respect to the municipality and stakeholders’ roles, what kind of support the municipality can provide, political expectations, what tourism and tourists are, that not everyone may be interested in participating, and finally how the projects will be carried out as well as their timeframe.

Describing the process as one of acknowledgement and self-discovery, Rosgaard says that it focused on reaching a common understanding and a more realistic view of tourism and Furesø Municipality. Møller adds that the municipality thinks that the stakeholders can deliver more than they can, and vice versa. Seneca recognizes this tendency in Frederikssund as well, where stakeholders often expect that the municipality does everything. As such, it is important for the municipality to inform stakeholders of what the municipality is able to help with.

Regarding another collaboration, Thamdrup comments that the outcome did not live up to the high expectations that had been built. She goes on to say that “there wasn’t any money, so all these thoughts were a bit oh, okay... it was a bit of a waste. ...there was a really good atmosphere at the meeting, but afterwards it fell to the ground because there wasn’t really the follow up that was needed. ...So actually I experienced the process as a bit frustrating that we didn’t achieve the goal that we wanted to” (Thamdrup, 22:00). She suggests that when doing such things expectations should be lowered and more realistic. Similarly, Rosgaard comments that in formulating Furesø’s tourism strategy, he experienced that you can quickly build yourself up to something you are not. He believes this experience has brought some realism into their way of thinking which is reflected in other projects as well.

Another issue concerns tourism discourse as Rosgaard has experienced that many people expected busses of Chinese tourists arriving at the municipality. Thamdrup adds “I think you have to do something other than calling it tourism. I think you have to use a word that for everyone means everyone who is from outside. That it’s also if you’re from Hillerød... I think that would help. That you would think it’s easy to connect to” (Thamdrup, 38:05). This might explain why Thamdrup opted out of the tourism project at first. According to Thamdrup people think it is “overkill” to talk about tourism and they have a difficulty seeing what Furesø can offer visitors. While Jahn believes that the Japan project does not fall far from her usual work, she wonders how much tourism there is in it as it seems to facilitate outbound tourism, and questions who the municipality is interested in: tourists or organizations, cities and delegations? Following UNWTO’s definition of tourism (UNWTO, 2015), these groups could all be classified as tourists. This
suggests a discourse issue. It is therefore important that the municipality firstly clarify the meaning of tourism, and second their intentions of the strategy. It may be important to mention that this issue was not seen in Gribskov, whereas it was very profound in Furesø which is the worst performer.

**Municipality Boarders**

Although Gribskov does not currently have their own tourism strategy, the municipality works closely with VisitNordsjælland a regional DMO which typically has the daily contact with involved stakeholders. An implication of this is that Frandsen is very aware of not doing things twice. When the DMO was established Andersen also expressed concerns that the municipality would forget to continue to develop the local tourism.

The argument for establishing collaboration across municipalities is that Bruun claims that visitors do not know, and do not care, about the boarders of the municipalities. This is also recognized by Frederikssund and Furesø who have respectively established Fjordlandet, and working on creating Copenhagen Green Belt. Additional argumentation for the tendency to create these cross-collaborations is expressed by Rosgaard in that he believes municipalities are too small to lift bigger tasks. Furthermore, many of the municipality representatives interviewed agreed that their destinations are so close to Copenhagen that compared to larger cities such as Berlin or Paris, they might as well be considered part of Copenhagen (Appendix E1, F1). As such there is a trend to merge with other municipalities to form regional DMOs. However, Hankinson (2009) warns that more focused destination brand such as cities, tend to be more successful than broader brands, such as regions. In contrast Gribskov, which is focusing on this collaboration, ranks as the top performer and Furesø, which is at the bottom, is only just new working on it.

**Sense of Community**

There seems to be a strong sense of local patriotism among the stakeholders of Gribskov Municipality. Although not involved with the municipality, Rasmussen claims that in a way he is a local patriot and therefore advertises on VisitNordsjælland’s website which is a local initiative. Additionally, he promotes local sights and services to his guests (Appendix D3). Similarly, Johansen buys advertising space in Fjordlandet’s brochure to support Frederikssund’s tourism initiatives.

Grauengaard is very aware of the festival’s effect on the local area and sees Gribskov Municipality as one of his stakeholders. The festival is a natural continuation of the area’s tourism focus and it interacts with the town of Tisvilde, providing business to local shops and takes on local volunteers (Appendix D6). Finally,
Andersen spoke of the importance of unity and that it is important that they all work together and not as “solitary oasis” as they are all affected by each other’s actions (Appendix D5). The only stakeholder from Gribskov who did not mention this was Jensen, but this may be because he covers three municipalities and not just Gribskov.

In Furesø Municipality Møller believes that more should be done to create networks within the destination. Jahn adds that she sees tourism as an important element in what the municipality has recently introduced as “chain-pulling”. As such tourism can be an important factor in facilitating work across stakeholders and departments in the administration (Appendix F4). Sense of community was most profound in Gribskov, although there was awareness of the need for it in Furesø. It can be argued that this affects performance as more people work collectively to promote and develop local initiatives such as tourism.
CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate whether stakeholder management has an effect on destinations. To some extent it can be concluded that it does. As exemplified with the case of Gribskov which was the top performer of the destinations studied here, the more stakeholders are involved, the better the destination is performing. However it is also important to consider other factors such as the history of tourism in a destination. For example, Gribskov has long had a history of working with tourism (although not formalized in a strategy) whereas the other destinations have not. Similarly, Gribskov has for several years worked with other municipalities on marketing the region through VisitNordsjælland, whereas Frederikssund has recently established Fjordlandet and Furesø’s is being developed. While cross-collaborations such as these have not been considered here, it is worth acknowledging the effects that this collaboration has had on the destination. Despite these hesitations it may be concluded that Gribskov is the better performer not the least because of its closer relationships with, and greater engagement of, stakeholders. Furthermore, stakeholders seemed more aware of their role in relation to tourism.

In analysing the results an interesting factor emerged which could also partly explain Gribskov’s success in tourism. This was found in the sense of community which permeated in almost all stakeholder interviews. It seems that here, stakeholders think more holistically and not just about their own businesses. The only stakeholder in Gribskov who did not mention this was Jensen from Museum Nordsjælland, however he is also responsible to two other municipalities. Despite this he is involved in upgrading Gribskov’s attractions for example with the new museum they have planned. This links to another factor which stood out in Gribskov which is the focus on the retail industry and attractions such as events. This is directly reflected in the performance parameter of tourism share of supply. While the other municipalities also realize the importance of attracting tourists, they do not distinguish their stakeholders based on this criterion.

In addition to performance, the project looked at whether characteristics of destinations influence how the destination managers engage with their stakeholders, which in turn here has been showed to affect performance. In this relation, three characteristics were looked at: size, the presence of a DMO, and whether there was a tourism strategy.

Findings show that size of the municipality may have an effect as it assigns greater value, or power, to stakeholders who are few in smaller municipalities. This was seen in the case of Furesø and the involvement of hotels. This, despite the fact that the hotel director, la Cour, saw limited relevance to the strategy. Additionally, in destinations with smaller budgets stakeholders were distinguished as critical
resources. However, other than this size did not have an effect. In fact, Gribskov which is a large municipality had the closest relationships with several of the stakeholders interviewed here.

The second characteristic was the presence of a DMO separate to that of the municipality. This criteria looked at whether the practical tasks of the municipality which to some extent resemble that of a DMO, have been kept in-house or outsourced. Frederikssund was the only municipality investigated here which had outsourced this function to Frederikssund Business in the hope of professionalizing their tourism efforts. This did not have an effect on who was involved, but it showed a change towards improving communication, coordination and involvement of stakeholders and the facilitation of networks.

Finally, the project looked at the effects of having a tourism strategy. Gribskov was the only municipality which has not yet developed a tourism strategy. It was discovered that the presence of such a strategy greatly affected the differentiation of stakeholders. With a strategy, stakeholders were assessed for their relevance to the tourism paths. In contrast, Gribskov Municipality based their assessment of stakeholders on power and force of attraction. Accordingly, stakeholders who scored higher on these attributes were more engaged with the municipalities. It is worth noting that while Frederikssund and Furesø invited a broad range of stakeholders to develop their tourism strategies, this only resulted in temporary increased involvement. Despite not having a tourism strategy, Gribskov’s stakeholders were more engaged with the municipality in developing their and Gribskov’s attractions, events and service quality.

With regards to emergent findings, cronyism was not mentioned in Gribskov, there was less doubt about expectations, more awareness and understanding of tourism, and as mentioned a greater sense of community. Furthermore, Gribskov has a history for supporting tourism initiatives, for instance through Visitordsjælland. It is believed these points also contribute to Gribskov’s performance.

**Contribution & Managerial Implications**

Each of the destinations investigated here is doing something right and has areas which could be improved. Combining the best from each and their ideal views of the process and relationships, provides a sort of best practice to inspire other Danish destinations as more responsibility is now placed on the municipalities.

An essential element of is the clarification of expectations and discourse. This includes reaching a common understanding of roles and what is expected from the involved parties. For instance, how much the municipality is able to support financially. It is important to be realistic as efforts can otherwise be seen as a waste of time. In relation to clarification of roles it is also important to appoint a contact person or coordinator to the process. Additionally, networking should be facilitated, and existing fora exploited.
It is not expected that all stakeholders will be satisfied, but strategy formation should reflect stakeholder input. This is important as stakeholders have expressed their efforts may seem wasted if there is a lack of follow up and recognition of input. Including external consultants may be advantageous to inspire and set a direction, however this should not be at the expense of stakeholders. It is important that they feel they can influence decisions and that their input is taken into consideration.

Performing tourism tasks, whether a strategy exists or not, the municipality may distinguish between stakeholders. It has been shown that Gribskov as the best performer does this based on force of attraction. It may also be worth considering power, in terms of size and critical resources. While the municipality should access stakeholders, it is also important to consider how stakeholders view themselves with regards to tourism. This is only somewhat acknowledged in theory through willingness or intentions to cooperate or threat (Savage et al., 1991) and in terms of urgency (Mitchell et al., 1997), but could be developed further. As there has been identified a discourse issue, stakeholders’ perceptions of their role, contribution and gain, may also change when this is clarified.

Stakeholder engagement may also change over time. Stakeholders who may immediately seem important may not be so later, and vice versa. As such, stakeholder assessment and engagement should remain flexible, while ensuring key stakeholders, such as project owners, are committed.

Part of tourism facilitation is also dedicating the necessary resources and balancing this against municipality’s other tasks as projects often end because of lack of resources. Additionally it seems to promote and motivate tourism initiatives. However the municipality should be aware of cronyism as this may lead to frustrated stakeholders.

It is important to communicate tourism efforts and possibilities. A broad range of stakeholders should receive this information, and associations’ existing fora could be used to disseminate this information. It may also be considered whether possible “attachment points” for secondary stakeholders should be presented. Continual communication may be valuable in the long-run as stakeholders may be more willing to participate later.

Finally, as already disclosed there is a trend to form cross-collaborations with surrounding municipalities. This can be advantageous on many points, but at the same time, it is important that this is weighted against the existing strategy and that it does not overshadow the local efforts.
Limitations & Future Research

A limitation of this project is the fact that the new law was introduced in 2014, but performance indicators have not been available for 2013 and onwards. This means that management of stakeholders in the municipalities may have changed but not yet be and reflected in performance measures. As such, the differences between rankings of the municipalities may have changed. It is however, assumed that the ranking itself has not changed, but simply that the lower performing municipalities may have moved closer to the top performer. It would therefore be worthwhile to compare the efforts and strategies of stakeholder management with more recent evaluations once these are made available.

With the relatively new focus on tourism, municipalities are improving efforts on this front as can for example be seen with the hiring of Seneca in Frederikssund Municipality. This has a clear effect on stakeholder satisfaction, and is likely to change performance of the municipality. Additionally, this restricted Seneca’s statements to intentions rather than actual behaviour. Again, follow-up research could provide interesting insights.

Perceptions and management of stakeholders could have been made more explicit if the municipalities had mapped them themselves, rather than the author analysing their statements and matching them with theoretical typologies. This could be placed against stakeholder perceptions or mappings. Furthermore, the present study has not measured relationships, but only described them. Future research could expand, or quantify the occurrence of the results found here, by conducting a quantitative study.

Similarly, performance has only been looked at in relation to overnight stays and tourism share of supply. Another measure of performance would be to look at stakeholder satisfaction. Although satisfaction could have been guessed from the interviews in terms of stakeholder complaints or frustrations, this has not been done. Future research could therefore look more closely at this and perhaps ask stakeholders to rate their satisfaction. Jahn, the cultural representative from Furesø for example spontaneously rated her relationship with the municipality from a scale of one to ten. Although she gave it a nine, she also expressed a certain level of frustration. As such it may also be interesting to weigh satisfaction of various elements against each other such as, the level of involvement and information sharing. Interestingly, although Gribskov was the best performer, the event representative expressed great frustrations. This indicates differences in performance and satisfaction, which is a relationship which could be explored further.
The study identified a number of emergent findings which could inspire further research. For example the effect of patriotism is something that could be looked closer at in relation to willingness to cooperate and the effectiveness of collaboration in destinations. Additionally, the trend to form cross-collaborations should also be explored and weighted against the effects on stakeholder perceptions and destination performance. Jensen, the cultural representative from Gribskov, commented on the balancing of the museum’s role as communicator of history and culture versus that of entertainer. This *tivolisation* of cultural institutions is an interesting debate which calls for further research.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


