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**Ajeeb, D.**

A paper abstract published in *Tourism in Contemporary Cities: Proceedings of the International Tourism Studies Association Conference*, University of Greenwich, London, UK 17–19 August 2016.

The full proceedings are available at:

<http://intl tourismstudies.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/ITSA-2016-C...>

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## Decentralization and England's Governance of Tourism Case Study: Greater Manchester

Dimah Ajeeb

**PhD Candidate, University of Greenwich, United Kingdom**

This research, employing multi-level governance (MLG) approach, intends to investigate the implications, and efficacy, of Coalition's decentralization on England's governance of tourism. In the context of devolution, MLG model is claimed as a valuable organizing perspective for understanding the changing nature of policy making in Britain (Bache and Flinders, 2004b), as well as to enhance decentralization for more effective governance of policymaking and service delivery (Charbit, 2011).

In 2010, the Coalition government came to power after 13 years of Labour government. The Coalition changed the national policy towards decentralization to the local level. Their approach to decentralization and rebalancing economic development resulted with a set of enforcing institutional and reform policies and hence with radical changes in governance and financial arrangements (Goodwin et al., 2005; Hildretha and Bailey, 2013; Shutt et al., 2012). The reforms include; the shift from regional to sub-regional level of governance through the abolition of England's Regional Development Agencies and the establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships, changes in the local economic delivery landscape, a massive cut in public funds, and the further engagement of private sector in economic development (Goodwin, 2013: 4; Pugalys and Bentley, 2013: 669; HM Government, 2010; Ward and Hardy, 2012: 4; Bentley et al., n.d.; Hildreth and Bailey, 2012).

Consequently, England's governance and financial arrangements for tourism have changed radically (Kennell and Chaperon, 2013; VisitEngland, n.d.-c; Coles et al., 2012; Penrose, 2011; Dinan et al., 2011; Cameron, 2010), as well as the relationship between tourism and the local economic development (Kennell, 2015; Kennell, 2011; VisitEngland, m.d.).

Given the contradictory attitudes towards the changes in England's governance of tourism, and the substantial research which avers that decentralization involves opportunities for the development of tourism governance, this research is to examine the implications, the opportunities and challenges, and the efficacy that the Coalition's decentralization delivers to the English governance of tourism.

Adopting the multi-level governance approach, and utilising a realist research methodology, this study will draw on in-depth interviews and participant observations of the implications of Coalition's decentralization on Greater Manchester's governance of tourism. At the end, the research would contribute with a more reliable and accurate answer to whether Coalition's decentralization was effective to develop the English governance of tourism.

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