

Interpretative Flexibility of the Event-City: Security, Branding and Urban Entrepreneurialism at the European Football Championships 2008

FRANCISCO R. KLAUSER

Abstract

Sport mega-events not only give rise to major economic and socio-cultural opportunities for host cities and nations, but also arouse increased local, national and international security concerns. This article, which focuses on the European Football Championships 2008 in Austria and Switzerland (Euro 2008), seeks to link business and security issues associated with sport mega-events. More specifically, it sets out to investigate the 'interpretative flexibility' — for purposes of security, branding and urban entrepreneurialism — of two types of spatial enclosures, set up temporarily in the host cities of the Euro 2008: UEFA fan zones and stadium security rings. Emphasis will be placed on the building up and articulation of the successive layers of meaning of these zones through various mechanisms of institutional learning and policy transfer. The 'making' of fan zones and stadium security rings will hence be positioned within a complex field of agencies, driving forces and motivations in terms of business and security, including a range of international processes and stipulations, as well as diverse local and national predispositions and impulses.

Introduction

Sport mega-events such as the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup are global spectacles that are often legitimized politically in terms of their potential benefits for urban regeneration, tourism and international standing (Judd and Fainstein, 1999; Degen, 2004). For example, the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany is estimated to have resulted in 5 million international visitors, 18 million entrants to city 'fan zones', a combined global television audience of 26 billion and a boost to the national economy of US \$12.5 billion (Harris, 2007).

However, as sport mega-events have expanded in recent decades, they have also faced new kinds and levels of security threats. Aside from the terrorist attack on the Israeli team at the 1972 Olympics, the post-9/11 context has required sport mega-events to establish ever more expensive and sophisticated securitization strategies. Security expenditure for the 2004 Athens Olympics was US \$1.5 billion, more than double that of the 2000 Sydney Olympics (Samatas, 2007). The security bill for the 2008 Beijing Olympics — although the Chinese government revealed no official figures — is widely believed to

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have topped the amount spent in Athens (Yu *et al.*, 2009). Whilst the cost explosion in security matters at sport mega-events is admittedly justified by the need to provide risk-free Games for the athletes, the local population and the international visitors, it also raises a series of important issues regarding the driving forces, modalities and long-term implications of the massive security efforts surrounding such events.

These comments point towards two major areas of research: the study of sport mega-events in terms of ‘place selling’ (Kearns and Philo, 1993) or ‘urban entrepreneurialism’ (Harvey, 1989; Hall and Hubbard, 1998), and the investigation of the risk, security and surveillance issues at these events (Samatas, 2007; Klauser, 2008; Boyle and Haggerty, 2009; Giulianotti and Klauser, 2010).

Objectives

This article seeks to link ‘urban entrepreneurialism’ and security issues associated with sport mega-events. My analysis also incorporates a third issue, the importance of which has not yet been fully appreciated by scholars investigating the opportunities and vulnerabilities of such events: branding and global corporate interests targeted at the host cities of major sport tournaments. My study sets out to explore the fusing interests and logics — in terms of urban entrepreneurialism, branding and security — shaping the reconfiguration of urban public space in the eight host cities of the European Football Championships 2008 in Austria and Switzerland (hereafter called Euro 2008). Host cities of Euro 2008 were Basel, Berne, Geneva and Zurich in Switzerland and Innsbruck, Klagenfurt, Salzburg and Vienna in Austria.

As shown elsewhere in more detail (Klauser, 2010), host cities of sport mega-events powerfully exemplify the splintering of the contemporary urban environment into a wide range of more or less hermetically enclosed and tightly controlled enclaves that are supported by advanced surveillance technologies and increased numbers of security personnel. In the case of Euro 2008, UEFA produced more than 15 kilometres of tarpaulin to cover the most prominently positioned fences and demarcate a multitude of access-controlled spatial entities, from stadiums to referee headquarters and from team hotels to specifically designed fan zones for ‘public viewing’ (UEFA, 2008). In principle, each of these examples of access control could provide the basis for a detailed, micro-geographical analysis of the agencies and motivations underpinning the differentiations of urban public space by fences, patrolling police agents, access-control installations, surveillance devices, and so on. However, since it is not possible to give an exhaustive interpretation here, the analysis that follows focuses on investigating the interests and meanings — in terms of security, branding and urban entrepreneurialism — associated with two types of spatial enclosures, set up temporarily in the Euro 2008 host cities: UEFA fan zones and stadium security rings. Both fan zones and stadium security rings powerfully exemplify the temporary imprint of Euro 2008 on urban public space:

- In each of the host cities of Euro 2008 at least one fan zone was officially organized by UEFA. Here supporters of different nations could drink and party whilst watching the matches on giant television screens. Clearly separated from their surroundings and carefully planned, regulated and monitored, fan zones were in many ways treated like stadiums, thus reconstituting public space as a stage of the event (Hagemann, 2008). Spectator capacities varied from 40,000 in the host city of Basel and 60,000 in Geneva to 80,000 in Vienna. Smaller fan zones were also set up in most other major Austrian and Swiss cities. However, for the sake of consistency, this article deals only with the official UEFA fan zones in the eight Euro 2008 host cities.
- Stadium security rings provide a second example of event-related restructuring of the Euro 2008 host cities, subject to a variety of constraints and stipulations. Up to several

hundred metres from the stadium, depending on the city, stadium security rings constituted the first fenced barrier to the stadium for arriving fan groups. Restricted to holders of match tickets, accredited staff, members of the press and other authorized persons, the compound area was closed to the general public for the whole duration of Euro 2008.

Approach

My study of the meanings and interests associated with fan zones and stadium security rings is based on two main conceptual 'tools', each of which I now outline briefly.

Interpretative flexibility of the event-city

First, my study centres on the concept of 'interpretative flexibility', as developed in the field of sociology of (scientific) knowledge (Pinch and Bijker, 1984). This concept, defined as the ability of technological artefacts to 'represent different things to different actors' (Law and Callon, 1992: 24), has in recent years been applied to a wide range of phenomena, thus stressing that socio-technical ensembles have different layers of meaning for different groups, as defined by the groups' needs, intentions and expertise (Doherty *et al.*, 2006).

In the case at hand, I suggest scrutinizing the intersecting meanings associated with fan zones and stadium security rings by three key players: UEFA, local political authorities and the police. Thus, the study that follows is structured into three main parts. The first part focuses on the meaning of fan zones and stadium security rings for branding purposes by UEFA and its official event sponsors. This discussion not only underlines the business rationale associated with the two types of spatial enclosure, but also provides an initial reading of some of the mechanisms through which UEFA and its tournament specifications prescribed the making of fan zones and stadium security zones. The second part further investigates the business relevance of fan zones and stadium security rings by addressing their meaning for local policymakers in terms of place selling and urban entrepreneurialism. Finally, the third part of the article explores the meaning of fan zones and stadium security rings for security and crowd-control purposes.

I am aware that this focus does not provide an exhaustive interpretation of all the factors and agents involved in the staging and securitization of Euro 2008. However, I believe that this initial categorization constitutes a useful heuristic for advancing a number of preliminary insights into the interwoven business and security rationales underpinning the restructuring of the eight host cities of the event.

My investigation into the concept of interpretative flexibility also pays close attention to the existence of coercive stipulations pushing towards the creation of fan zones and stadium security rings. Indeed, we will see that from the bidding stage for the event, fan zones and stadium security rings were part of a legally imposed 'institutional agenda' (Cobb and Elder, 1975) set externally by UEFA. However, if we want to understand the actual implantation and functioning of fan zones and stadium rings, such is my main assumption, these zones cannot be reduced to a single meaning assigned by a single actor, but must be understood as the expression of processes involving a range of actors, guided by common goals, acting from mutually enhanced positions and driven by converging benefits, whilst also pursuing their own specific agendas and projects.

Policy learning

Secondly, drawing upon literatures in 'policy learning', 'lesson drawing' and 'diffusion of innovations' in the field of comparative policy analysis (Rose, 1991; Bennett and Howlett, 1992), the article portrays the 'making' (Latour, 1987) of fan zones and stadium

security rings as a complex process of ‘institutional learning’ (Peck and Theodore, 2001), which draws upon experiences from previous events. Indeed, as Schulke (2006) has shown, the actual breakthrough of the fan-zone concept occurred two years prior to Euro 2008, at the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany, marking a clear change in the large-scale restructuring of host cities into spatially extended public viewing areas. The organization of such zones has since become one of the bid requirements for both the FIFA World Cup and the European Football Championships (UEFA, no date) — a matter that will be explored later in this article.

In summary, based on the two concepts of ‘interpretative flexibility’ and ‘institutional learning’, this article sets out to highlight not only the capacity of fan zones and stadium security rings to enrol disparate groups, interests and needs, but also the transnational exchanges and policy learning processes leading to the articulation of successive layers of meaning of these zones for business and security purposes. Based on this, the article concludes by pointing towards some of the main issues involved in the establishment of internationally calibrated, globally circulating best-practice models for multiple (branding, place selling and security) purposes.

Methodology

To address these issues, the article draws upon empirical insights provided by a two-year research project relating to the securitization of Euro 2008. In the context of this study, two methodological approaches were combined. One side of the project relied on the analysis of official reports (minutes of local executive and parliament sittings, executive responses to interpellations and official documents from police sources or UEFA) and on information gathered from various local, national and international media articles. The other side involved ten in-depth interviews with diverse stakeholders in the securitization of Euro 2008 in the Swiss city of Geneva. Interviewees were chosen according to their roles and responsibilities, in order to generate a broad view of the implications of local security operations for Euro 2008. The security stakeholders who were interviewed included the city’s security coordinator, the head of security at the Euro 2008 stadium in Geneva, security personnel at Geneva international airport, representatives from the Ministry of Justice in Geneva (*chancellerie*) and police ground personnel.

Branding the event-cities of Euro 2008

The European Football Championships are generally regarded as the third largest recurrent sport event in the world (Stadtpolizei Zürich, 2007). The event presents important analogies to the FIFA World Cup in that it affects several host cities (unlike the Olympic Games), evokes similar concern in terms of hooliganism and crowd management and results in a comparable cluster of spatial enclosures across the host cities. Although restricted to national football teams from Europe (with the exception of Israel, if its team qualifies), the event is clearly global in scope and scale: an estimated 10 million spectators and fans gathered between 7 and 29 June 2008 in the eight host cities of Euro 2008 (Projektorganisation, 2008: 12). Football matches were broadcast in 231 countries worldwide and were followed by 155 million television viewers per game on average (*ibid.*). In Austria and Switzerland, around 10,000 media representatives and journalists were accredited during the event (*ibid.*). Thus, based on the scale of media interest (Roche, 2000), there are valid reasons for interpreting Euro 2008 as a truly global sport *mega*-event with major business and branding opportunities. It is from this standpoint that I seek to highlight the branding interests of UEFA (and its event sponsors) that are associated with the staging of fan zones and stadium security rings.

The branding rationale of UEFA fan zones

UEFA fan zones appealed to the general public for various reasons. As pointed out by the UEFA tournament requirements, ‘the core element of each fan zone . . . is the live screening of all . . . matches in a public viewing environment which is designed to be open for the entire event and free of charge for visitors’ (UEFA, no date: 77). Besides the live transmission of football matches on large screens, the zones also staged concerts and other entertainment activities, whilst offering a range of catering facilities and other attractions.

For UEFA, the appeal of fan zones was related directly to branding purposes. This claim is best investigated through a review of some of the legal means employed by UEFA in creating a patchwork of ‘clean sites’ (UEFA, no date: 44) across the event-cities for its official partners’ advertisement and merchandise to be displayed. This investigation reveals the external stipulations underpinning the hosting of sport mega-events, which push towards the reproduction of previously tested and subsequently standardized best-practice models. It is informative to start this discussion by looking at the pre-bidding stage of Euro 2008.

In 2002, as a precondition for their bid for Euro 2008, the Austrian and Swiss governments and football associations were required to provide a series of guarantees relating to a wide range of issues. These included provision of event security, the protection of UEFA’s commercial rights, promotional activities, granting of visas and work permits and the free importation of goods listed in UEFA’s Schedule of Conditions (Projektorganisation, 2008: 100–05). The guarantees did not specify explicitly the organization of fan zones and stadium security zones, but did establish their guiding principles (security and exclusive branding rights).

At this pre-bidding stage, UEFA’s Schedule of Conditions also provided potential bidders with detailed documentation regarding the requirements. Whilst the Schedule of Conditions for Euro 2008 can be approached only indirectly through the study of parliamentary protocols and minutes of executive meetings, UEFA’s bid requirements for Euro 2012 can be found on the official UEFA webpage. This document emphasizes the meaning of fan zones and their meaning for branding purposes:

The concept of a Fan Zone is to create an area that is accessible to the general public in which UEFA’s Commercial Partners can stage a variety of UEFA EURO 2012-related activities, entertainment and displays. The Fan Zone(s) will provide certain Commercial Partners with an additional opportunity to leverage off their commercial involvement in UEFA EURO 2012. It is also intended the Fan Zones will become attractions in their own right and, as such, will increase the number of people (both from the Host Country and elsewhere) who will have direct involvement in, and exposure to, UEFA Euro 2012 (UEFA, no date: 45).

The quote not only underscores UEFA’s branding interest in the event-cities, but also hints at the exemplification of fan zones as a best-practice model, prescribed to potential hosts of the event in UEFA’s pre-bidding Schedule of Conditions. Thus, the meaning of fan zones for branding purposes was imposed from the very start, without taking into account any particular local characteristics, such as legal issues arising from the temporary privatization of public space.

Following UEFA’s decision to award EURO 2008 to Switzerland and Austria, the initial framework of pre-bidding guarantees and event specifications was further refined, and by January 2007 a collection of detailed terms and conditions, named the Host City Charter, had been elaborated between UEFA and the eight host cities. The charter specified the mutual rights and duties of the main event stakeholders, as well as the infrastructure that was to be put in place. Whilst the liability implications of UEFA’s pre-bidding Schedule of Conditions had raised some debate in Switzerland and Austria (Arpagaus, 2008), the Host City Charter gave the meaning of fan zones for branding purposes legally binding recognition:

Each host city is responsible for planning, organizing and putting into effect one or several fan zones, situated in an appropriate and highly frequented zone of the city . . . UEFA sponsors enjoy exclusive advertisement rights within these sites (UEFA Host City Charter Euro 2008, cited in République et Canton de Genève, 2007; author's translation).

This quote again testifies to the meaning of fan zones as 'clean sites' (UEFA, no date: 44) for advertisement by UEFA's official partners: each site had to be made available to UEFA free of any contractual obligations (such as leases, utilization agreements, supplier agreements, food, beverage agreements, and so forth) and pre-contracted advertising, in order to allow the site's re-territorialization by UEFA and its official sponsors. Furthermore, the quote also reveals the contractually imposed location of fan zones in highly frequented and well-connected areas of the host cities.

Branding and stadium security rings

An almost identical interpretation can be made of the meaning of stadium security rings. It is revealing that in UEFA's Schedule of Conditions for Euro 2012, stadium security rings are also named 'fan zones':

Each Stadium must have a minimum of 1,000 m² inside the Stadium Perimeter that can be made available to Commercial Partners for the creation of "fan zones" where they can display their products and entertain spectators with interactive activities. In order to ensure the maximum exposure for Commercial Partners and maximum spectator enjoyment, such fan zones must be located in close proximity to the Stadia on or adjacent to significant spectator access routes (UEFA, no date: 22).

Despite being restricted to holders of match tickets, security zones surrounding the stadiums provide a second context within which to consider the branding rationale underlying the partitioning of the event-cities into a series of more or less hermetically enclosed spatial entities.

In summary, for UEFA, fan zones and stadium security rings served to temporarily re-territorialize particularly attractive parts of the Euro 2008 host cities in the interest of visibility and branding for its commercial partners. From the outset, the partitioning of the urban environment stood in a specific set of relationships to the city, mediated through UEFA's intentions to create a 'clean environment' for its official partners' branding and merchandise.

Urban entrepreneurialism

My analysis has so far explored the externally driven, commercially motivated impetus for setting up fan zones and stadium security rings. By means of a form of 'policy convergence through penetration' (Bennett, 1991), mediated by pre-bidding guarantees, tournament specifications and the Host City Charter, UEFA ensured that from the very start of the bidding process for Euro 2008, fan zones and stadium security rings conveyed a meaning of 'exclusive disposal and branding'.

Yet it is important to consider the role of local agency and motivation too. Fan zones were not only imposed externally, but also adopted locally. At this stage, 'interpretative flexibility' comes into play. It is to this issue that I shall turn my attention in the section that follows, exploring the meaning of fan zones for local policymakers.

Resonating business interests in the organization of fan zones

For local policymakers, fan zones were understood, and eagerly put into effect, as a means for city marketing and place selling (Philo and Kearns, 1993). These two accounts substantiate this claim:

Knowing that these zones make up for a large part of the fascination of such tournaments, . . . the city council will ensure that during Euro 2008, a diverse and attractive range of events with live transmission on large screens will be offered . . . As highlighted by the 2006 World Cup, there is an opportunity here for host cities to present themselves in their best light both nationally and internationally (Stadtrat Zürich, 2006a: 6–7; author’s translation).

It is part of the city’s mandate to distinguish itself as a host city through the creation of its own individuality and character. This distinction essentially results from a colourful intercultural and diverse supporting programme (Stadtrat Zürich, 2006b: 29; author’s translation).

Both quotations highlight the aspiration of policymakers not only to comply with UEFA’s stipulations in staging fan zones, but also to take the opportunity to set up a truly distinguishing range of events with a view to enhancing the city’s national and international profile. I have included these quotations here for three main reasons. First, they highlight the locally perceived benefits and assigned meaning, and hence the interpretative flexibility, of fan zones. Secondly, they testify to the merging interests between UEFA and policymakers, or, in other words, to the resonance between UEFA’s external stipulations and local motivations in terms of place selling and urban entrepreneurialism. Thirdly, they underscore the need to move beyond an understanding of local stakeholders at sport mega-events as passive recipients of authoritative orders imposed from the outside.

Although the staging of fan zones was prescribed by UEFA, we must also take into account other kinds of meanings, defined by other actors, perspectives, needs and interests if we are to understand the actual implantation, functioning and implications of these zones (for example, the organization of events in these sites). As the example shows, it is important that we orient our study towards the socio-political dynamics unfolding locally as a result of the perceived benefits of the restructured event-city.

Conflicting interests in global branding and city marketing

Despite fusing interests in fan zones, however, the positions of UEFA and local policymakers also differed in important ways. For UEFA, the creation of ‘clean sites’ across the host cities was based on de-territorialized interest in the event as a brand. For local policymakers, the business relevance of fan zones was related to a specific city to be promoted. Whilst UEFA, ultimately, was driven by global corporate interests, local policymakers aimed at maximizing place-related business benefits. The latter’s position, although sympathetic to the festivalization of urban public space, was caught somewhat uncomfortably between UEFA’s efforts to enhance exclusive branding in the re-territorialized event-city, and the claims of ownership by local businesses:

EURO 2008 did not only take place in the football stadia, but also occupied large public areas in the host cities. Regarding the rights of sponsors and brands, and copyright matters, this leads to inevitable conflicts of interest with those who were already occupying these areas or wanted to profit from the ‘football’ product. With the signing of guarantees, especially those protecting UEFA’s commercial rights and those of its sponsors, we were hardly aware of the potential consequences. The legal situation is still unclear and the subject is totally controversial and media-bound (Overall Project Coordination Swiss Authorities, 2008: 6).

This quotation is a striking testimony to the conflicts of interest between UEFA and those who previously occupied the areas that became defined and enclosed as fan zones. It also highlights the controversies that unfolded from the implantation of fan zones. Although these controversies were suspended temporarily with the Host City Charter, giving UEFA’s claims binding recognition for the duration of Euro 2008, the legal issues arising from UEFA’s temporary appropriation of urban public space remained unclear. For future research in urban entrepreneurialism and sport mega-events, it will be of major interest to explore the subsequent turns of this debate both in Switzerland and in other

national contexts in which similar events will be staged. However, for the moment we return to the article's concern with the 'interpretative flexibility' of fan zones.

Indeed, the example at hand also tells us something about the meanings, values and aspirations associated with the spatial reconfiguration of the event-city. Fan zones are not to be understood simply as the outcome of a generalized fusion of interests but, rather, must be positioned within a complex field of agencies, driving forces, motivations and understandings, including a range of international interests and stipulations, as well as a series of converging and diverging national and local predispositions and impulses. If we are to understand the processes and relationships underpinning the staging of fan zones, the tensions and frictions arising from a globally calibrated model that is imposed in a specific local context must also be recognized. This supposition can be further refined by looking in more detail at fan zones in terms of risk and security.

Spaces of risk and security at Euro 2008

From a risk and security perspective, based on the interviews conducted and reports studied, two broad understandings of fan zones and stadium security rings can be distinguished.

On the one hand, the two forms of spatial enclosure were approached and portrayed as specific 'places at risk' and as areas representing heightened security concerns. A reading of *The National Swiss Security Strategy* for Euro 2008 reveals the multifaceted terrorist threats associated with both zones (Public Authorities Security Sector, 2007). However, owing to their high degree of public accessibility, risks of spectator and political violence were related almost exclusively to fan zones and not to stadium security rings. Securing these publicly accessible places at risk thus became one of the main focal issues for police forces, as well as for other risk-prevention agencies such as fire brigades, medical staff and private security services.

On the other hand, fan zones and stadium security rings were understood to be 'security elements' in their own right. The following account is particularly relevant to this article, for it not only emphasizes the interpretative flexibility of fan zones, but also hints at the transfer of the zones as security elements from event to event:

The public viewing events which took place on an as yet unprecedented scale at the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany were of outstanding importance for the safety and security of the overall championship. The public viewing not only eased the strain on the police and forces of order in and around the stadia, but also made a decisive contribution to the successful interaction between safety and security, on the one hand, and the fulfilment of the World Cup motto 'A time to make friends', on the other . . . Public viewing events should therefore also be perceived as a preventive security element at large-scale international sporting and related events and implemented as such . . . Experiences of both the 2006 FIFA World Cup and UEFA Euro 2004 in Portugal have been incorporated into the present National Security Strategy for Euro 2008 in terms of 'best practice' (Public Authorities Security Sector, 2007: 17).

In the light of the above quotation, we see that fan zones were understood not only as a means for branding and urban entrepreneurialism, as shown previously, but also adopted as a locus, medium and tool for event security. Fan zones eased the strain on the security forces in and around the stadia, allowing the concentration, monitoring and regulation of fans at specifically designed, enclosed and secured perimeters across host cities. Special norms and constraints in the fan zones (including spot-checks of onlookers and special regulations), monitored by temporarily installed CCTV cameras and patrolled by public and private security agents, allowed the securitization of particular portions of space, while other urban areas remained less considered. Thus, fan zones not only bear striking testimony to the event-related 'festivalization' of urban public space (Häussermann and Siebel, 1993), but also provide an illuminating example of the separation, fencing and surveillance of extended parts of Swiss and Austrian city centres during Euro 2008. The

UEFA fan zone in Vienna, for example, which covered more than 100,000 m² of the city centre, was surrounded by more than four kilometres of fencing (Vienna Organizing Committee EURO 2008, 2008). Other host cities erected fencing of similar proportions.

A similar interpretation can be made of stadium security rings, as a second example of the translation of event security onto the level of urban territory, following the need to manage a context of increased density and risk. Both zones bear material testimony to the internal fragmentation of the host cities of Euro 2008 into a patchwork of access-controlled and monitored spatial entities. Fences around these zones not only created an exclusive perimeter for UEFA's commercial partners, but also separated and marked out specific loci of increased securitization and surveillance.

The quotation above also points at the subsequent learning processes pertaining to the meaning of the zones for security purposes. Indeed, if we are to understand the interpretative flexibility of fan zones and stadium security rings, we need to move beyond an exclusive understanding of these zones as legally and externally imposed best-practice models, and look in more detail into the multiple channels and interactions in the model's transfer to, and re-articulation in, the host cities of Euro 2008. It is not possible to provide an exhaustive analysis of this issue (that will be the subject of a separate work — see Klauser, forthcoming). In the remainder of this article, my aim is simply to provide a few preliminary insights into some of the mechanisms and channels mediating the making of the security rationale for fan zones.

Previous practical experiences

Shortly after Euro 2008 was awarded to Austria and Switzerland, various mechanisms were put in place for security stakeholders to learn about the meaning and functioning of fan zones for security purposes. Most notably, many of the key stakeholders in event security at Euro 2008 were already involved in, or at least present at, the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany. Stakeholders, having gained initial awareness of the security relevance of fan zones, could therefore draw a first series of lessons from previous experience and integrate these into the project planning for Euro 2008.

Project leaders in the police department had already gained important experiences from local security at the Football World Cup 2006 in Germany. Impressions from visits to the games and to public viewing events in Stuttgart and Munich, as well as the results of coordinated evaluations from project leaders, strongly influenced our own project planning (Stadtpolizei Zürich, 2007; author's translation).

Thus, fan zones were not only imposed legally, but also transferred practically. The learning processes leading to the implementation of fan zones as a tool and locus for event security had begun long before the establishment of the Host City Charter. While the legal framework underlying the implementation of fan zones was established by UEFA, the first steps towards the practical policy transfer for fan zones relied on the mediating role of the German police, whose position as a 'connector' (Latour, 2005: 239) was defined by its practical experience of, and coordinating position in, previous event security. As the security coordinator of the Geneva football stadium stated:

When I went to Stuttgart, I was not in contact with my colleague from stadium security. I was with the police. I've visited external fan zones, the stadium and its computer system, but not with my counterparts from stadium security . . . Anyway, I saw what I had to see (interview with security coordinator, Geneva football stadium, 14 February 2008; author's translation).

Conferences and workshops

From these early exchanges and experiences, initial ties of collaboration developed, linking security professionals in charge of different events. Subsequently, step by step, additional opportunities arose for the various stakeholders to meet and interact,

constituting another series of mediating moments of policy transfer for the fan-zone model. In interviews, police and stadium personnel who were involved in the securitization of Euro 2008 in Geneva repeatedly emphasized the importance of workshops, expert conferences and other types of gatherings.

Exercises and assessments

Whilst such meetings allowed the establishment and modulation of networks of expertise underpinning policy transfer for fan zones, the specific practices developed from an understanding of the model in security terms also had to be exercised and institutionalized. In Switzerland and Austria, a wide range of individual and collective training sessions and exercises were organized before Euro 2008 (these also, although not exclusively, related to the staging of fan zones and stadium security rings). Based on the need to deal with the medium created by the model, this chain of practical preparations consisted of various steps, according to different levels across the hierarchy of actors involved:

Preparations were finalized in an exercise held in two public places, the Plainpalais fan zone and the Bout-du-Monde fan village. Police forces were able to work with 50 mock fans in order to train reactions to diverse threats. In the Plainpalais fan zone, which had a capacity for up to 45,000 people, security forces prepared for three scenarios: the removal of unruly fan groups, the removal of unruly individuals and the control of a specific risk zone. The second part of the exercise was carried out in the Bout-du-Monde fan village, where 30,000 spectators are expected, and more than 3,000 fans are likely to be accommodated. At this location, therefore, staff received training specific to the issues of camping and accommodation zones. Local, national and international media also followed the exercises (Schweizerische Kriminalprävention, 2008; author's translation).

At least two major points stand out from the media report above in terms of this study's concern with interpretative flexibility and policy learning regarding fan zones. First, it illustrates the role of exercises for the 'articulation' (Latour, 1999: 142) *in situ* of the twofold security meaning of fan zones, as both 'places at risk' and as 'security elements' in their own right. Albeit temporarily, risk issues associated with, and security practices developing from, fan zones could be tested in and adapted to the socio-spatial attributes of the planned urban site of implantation. In short, the objective of the exercise was to render the model in its twofold security meaning practically 'inhabitable' in its chosen urban context.

Secondly, the reference to media representatives and other spectators assisting in the exercise touches upon another key issue in the making of and policy transfer for fan zones, namely the role of external agents and institutions in the development of the meanings and functions of the zones (these agents and institutions included local residents, media representatives, experts in mega-event security, and so forth). Thus, specific 'best-practice models' are not only legally prescribed and practically transferred from place to place and from event to event, but also followed, commented upon and assessed, both formally and informally, by a wide range of external agents and institutions. A study of the interpretative flexibility of fan zones must also focus on these comments, judgements and assessments, as yet another set of mediating mechanisms enrolling and carrying along disparate groups, interests and needs associated with the restructured event-city.

Conclusions

This article has shown how Euro 2008 stakeholders have filled fan zones and stadium security rings with different meanings, as defined by their own needs and interests, and how these layers of meaning have been built up through multiple mechanisms, from

pre-bidding guarantees to the Host City Charter and from expert conferences to practical exercises. Admittedly, this study does not provide anything more than an initial sketch of some of the mediating mechanisms in the making of fan zones and stadium security rings. Many other mechanisms, from debriefing sessions to internal and external evaluation reports or technology fairs, would have to be considered to complete the picture that is emerging here. Nonetheless, my study, which is centered on the concepts of 'interpretative flexibility' and 'policy learning', provides crucial insight into the logics and motivations shaping the establishment of fan zones and stadium security rings as legally imposed, practically transferred and locally adopted models of spatial enclosure, related to purposes of branding, place selling and security. By way of conclusion, it is worth reiterating three key lessons deriving from this study.

The first key lesson to highlight refers back to my account of UEFA's efforts and legal stipulations pushing towards the staging of fan zones and stadium security rings as a means to enhance its branding opportunities across the host cities. For local and national policymakers, the question ceased to be whether, but how, fan zones were to be set up during Euro 2008. On the one hand, this issue directs attention towards the transnational circuits of imitation and exemplification that characterize the staging of highly visible projects such as sport mega-events. On the other hand, there are valid reasons for taking this account as a starting point for considering the pressures and problems arising locally from the imposed replication of globally circulating models shaped by private business interests, which restrict not only the autonomy of local decision makers but also the possibility and scope for real democratic debate. As the relevant parliamentary commission in Basel, one of the Euro 2008 host cities, put it:

The JSSK [Commission for Justice, Security and Sport] can but conclude that the scope of action of local parliaments as regards Euro 2008 is considerably restricted . . . The fact that cantonal authorities should agree to provide financial support, when in reality they are not really able to influence essential elements must be considered highly questionable (Grosser Rat des Kantons Basel, 2007: 3; author's translation).

The second key lesson of my study indicates the need to move beyond an understanding of fan zones and stadium security rings as legally imposed means for branding purposes, and to look in more detail into the interpretative flexibility and policy transfer for the two models of spatial enclosure. This article has shown that local policymakers both understood and eagerly put into effect fan zones and stadium security rings as a means for city marketing and place selling. Furthermore, this study has brought to the fore the meaning of such zones as a locus, medium and tool for event security, hence exemplifying the intimate relationship between opportunities and vulnerabilities associated with urban public space at sport mega-events. Together, the perspectives of policymakers and police underscore the fact that fan zones and stadium security rings, although imposed externally, were also adopted locally. If we are to understand the actual implantation, functioning and implications of the enclosed perimeters (for example, organization of events in specific fan zones), we must take into account their multiple meanings, as defined by multiple actors, perspectives, needs and interests. Therefore we must also consider the complex socio-political dynamics unfolding locally from the perceived benefits of the restructured event-city.

The third key lesson of this article follows on from the above. This article not only points out current trends of transnational imitation and standardization in the staging of sport mega-events, but also highlights that local stakeholders at such events should not be understood merely as passive recipients of authoritative orders imposed from the outside. My study has paid attention not only to the resonating concerns, fusing interests, converging goals and shared benefits amongst the studied stakeholders, but also — albeit to a lesser degree — to the tensions and dilemmas arising from the ways in which fan zones and stadium security rings were framed, approached and exploited by particular actors and for particular needs. In particular, the article has pointed towards the

unresolved conflict of interests arising between UEFA and those previously occupying the enclosed city squares. As the final report of Euro 2008 in Switzerland argues, ‘these legal-political issues need to be clarified with respect to future candidacies for major sporting events’; it does admit, however, that this will be possible only ‘as far as the competitive situation of a candidacy proposal permits’ (Overall Project Coordination Swiss Authorities, 2008: 6).

It will be interesting to follow this controversy over time, both in Switzerland and Austria and in future host nations of the European Football Championships. However, precisely *because* of the model’s high capacity to respond not only to a single, predominant intention (for example, UEFA’s branding attempt), but also to enrol other actors, meanings and aspirations (for example, urban entrepreneurialism and security), there is to date little reason to believe that the model — and hence UEFA’s claim to the establishment of ‘clean sites’ across the host cities — will be truly challenged at future events. A look at the recent 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, at which an identical arrangement for fan zones could be found (Haferburg *et al.*, 2009), confirms this reading. The speculative hypothesis to put forth here thus rather takes the opposite direction, postulating that fan zones indeed become the ‘norm to follow’, not only in the context of sport mega-events, but for the collection of larger or smaller numbers of individuals into spatially articulated conglomerates of togetherness more generally.

Francisco R. Klauser (Francisco.klauser@unine.ch), Institut de Géographie, Université de Neuchâtel, Espace Louis-Agassiz 1, 2000 Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

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Résumé

Les méga-événements sportifs offrent des possibilités économiques et socio-culturelles considérables pour les villes et pays d'accueil, mais ils accentuent aussi les problématiques de sécurité locales, nationales et internationales. En s'intéressant à l'Euro 2008 de football qui s'est tenu en Autriche et en Suisse, cet article relie les enjeux économiques et sécuritaires associés à ce genre d'événement. Plus particulièrement, il étudie la 'flexibilité interprétative' — en termes de sécurité, de stratégie de marque et d'entrepreneuriat urbain — propre à deux types de cadres spatiaux créés temporairement dans les villes d'accueil de l'Euro 2008: les UEFA Fan Zones et les périmètres de sécurité des stades. Le but est d'examiner la superposition et l'articulation des différents niveaux de signification de ces zones à travers plusieurs mécanismes d'apprentissage institutionnel et de transfert d'action publique. La 'fabrication' des Fan Zones et des périmètres de sécurité des stades sera donc replacée dans un cadre complexe d'agences, de dynamiques et de motivations en matière d'activité économique et de sécurité, révélant ainsi toute une série de conditions et de processus internationaux, ainsi que différentes prédispositions et initiatives d'ordre local et national.