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ABSTRACTS

Sustainable Transformation and Spatial Interaction of People and Places

Urban and Rural Landscapes for
mobility, migration and tourism



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Title

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DETERMINANTS OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE MECHANISM CHOICES IN THE PROVISION OF OFFICIAL COMPANION ANIMAL SHELTERING SERVICES IN PORTUGAL

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Abstract

Purpose | This study aims to identify the key factors that influence the selection of governance mechanisms employed by local governments to deliver public services through official collection centres (CRO) for companion animals in Portugal.

Methodology/Approach | The research will utilize a non-experimental cross-sectional design, encompassing all 308 municipalities in Portugal. It is important to note that 82 of these municipalities currently lack any governance structure related to this service, despite its classification as mandatory in national legislation. For the operationalization of the model, three dependent variables will be examined: (i) whether the municipality provides the service; (ii) whether the service is offered through inter-municipal cooperation; and (iii) the specific governance mechanism that is adopted. In terms of independent variables, the analysis will include factors that the literature has recognized as influencing governance choices. These factors include municipal size, population density, financial constraints, and the ideological orientation of local executives (Camões et al. 2021; Peixoto et al. 2024).

Expected Results | The findings of this research are expected to align with existing academic literature, which suggests that larger municipalities with greater financial resources are more likely to manage CRO directly (Rodrigues et al. 2012). In contrast, smaller municipalities often tend to outsource services or share them, either out of necessity or as a strategic choice (Bel et al. 2013). Politically, it is anticipated that left-leaning local governments will prefer public or cooperative solutions, while right-leaning officials will be more inclined to adopt market-based approaches (Tavares & Camões, 2010). This study aims to address a significant gap in the literature, particularly due to the limited number of studies on the provision of CRO public services (Ilukor, 2017), and it contributes to a better understanding of municipal decision-making in this area.

Keywords | Official companion animal sheltering, Governance mechanisms, Local governments, Economic factors, Political factors.

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