

RISE: Region Integrated Strategies in Europe

Targeted Analysis 2013/2/11

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Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	6
2.0	Outline of RISE methodology	6
2.1	Regional Profiling	
2.2	Literature Review	
2.3	Case Studies	
3.0	Policy Integration	8
3.1	Policy Interaction and Policy Integration	
3.2	Policy Transfer and Learning	
3.3	Governance and Meta-governance	
3.4	Collaborative Planning	
4.0	Regional Profiles	12
5.0	Case Study Synthesis	16
5.1	West Midlands UK	
5.2	The Randstat, Netherlands	
5.3	Zealand Denmark	
5.4	Västerbotten Sweden	
5.5	Comparisons	
6.0	A Typology of Regional Integrated Strategies	27
6.1	Regional Governance Consolidation	
6.2	Regional Strategy Integration	
7.0	Ladder of Integration	30
8.0	The Toolkit	33
8.1	The Region	
8.2	Integration	
8.3	Strategies	
8.4	Checklist	
9.0	Concluding Observations	44
	Glossary	49
	Bibliography	50

Figure 1	A Typology of RISs	28
Figure 2	How to improve your regional strategy integration	34
Figure 3	Making strategies work in concert	36
Figure 4	Pluricentric regional governance system	37
Figure 5	Multi-level governance matrix	38
Figure 6	Key concepts of integration	39
Figure 7	The strategic circle elaborated from Groth 2001	41
Figure 8	The variety of overlapping policy territories in Zealand	42
Figure 9	Strategy-driven implementation	43
Figure 10	The MIRT Territorial Agenda	43
Figure 11	Strategic profiles	44

Map 1	RISE Case Study Regions	13
Map 2	Corine Land Cover in Case Study Regions	15

Annex 1: Literature Review

Annex 2: Regional Profiles

Annex 3: Randstad Case Study

Annex 4: Västerbotten Case Study

Annex 5: West Midlands Case Study

Annex 6: Zealand Case Study

Annex 7: RISE Toolkit

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Over recent decades it has become increasingly obvious that the skills and resources of a variety of sectors – not just the public but also voluntary and private sectors – must be brought together in order to achieve successful regional development. This new approach necessitates the creation of new more inclusive forms of governance, with a movement away from traditional hierarchical institutions towards flexible cooperative networks, clusters and partnerships. It also involves a recognition that policy-makers operate within a system of multi-level governance, and that the interventions of different levels of governance may not necessarily be aligned with one another. In this report we set out the findings of the RISE project, which examines the pursuit of integrated strategies in four European regions: the Randstad (NL), West Midlands (UK), Västerbotten (SE), and Zealand (DK). These regions illustrate the diversity of Europe. The Randstad contains the Netherland's two major conurbations and encompasses a complex range of powerful governance centres. The West Midlands includes the urban centres of Birmingham, the Black Country, Solihull and Coventry, as well as an extensive sub-urban and rural hinterland of shire counties. Västerbotten and Zealand are both primarily rural with low levels of urban concentration, although Zealand is adjacent to the capital region of Copenhagen. Despite their differences, these regions are amongst the more economically advanced territories of the EU.

2.0 RISE METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the RISE study is to examine the approaches that are being taken to achieve policy integration, and to build the governance structures that facilitate or inhibit this integration, in these European regions. There are three main components to the research methodology of the RISE project involving both quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis:

1. *Regional profiling* involves an examination of secondary data on regional spatial strategies, and the circumstances of the four regions.
2. *Review of the literature* regarding key concepts such as policy interaction, policy integration, multi-level governance and collaborative planning.
3. *Semi-structured interviews and focus groups* with key individuals, which explored the development of regional integrated strategies.

A common topic guide was used across the four case regions. Interviewees were asked about the *composition of their partnerships*; the nature of *local organizational arrangements* (vertical and horizontal relationships); the *strategic focus* of their organizations; the *implementation levers* being used; their *future aspirations* and *trajectory* and the constraints upon these. The principle of interactive learning (between the research teams and their local practitioner communities) within and between the four regions has been facilitated by the close involvement of the stakeholders throughout the RISE project.

2.1 Regional Profiling

In the first phase of the project, the *regional profiling* component involved the following:

- An examination of secondary data sources on regional spatial strategies, and on the socio-economic circumstances of the four regions.
- A review of relevant spatial strategies, regional development and local governance arrangements and planning systems.

2.2 Literature Review

The aim of the literature review was to surface important insights and concepts concerning policy integration that could usefully inform the case study design(s). In parallel with the regional profiling work set out above four 'groups' of policy integration concepts were identified for further exploration, concerning policy interaction, policy learning, governance and collaborative planning. The literature review helped to define the topics and questions to be addressed in the local case study enquiries, and the critical conceptual and operational issues that needed to be accommodated within the RISE Tool Kit.

2.3 Case Studies

On the basis of the secondary data analysis and the literature review, a case study methodology for the four stakeholder regions was designed, and a set of common variables was established for the data collection. Across the four regions, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with some 100 key individuals – these included stakeholders, decision-makers and others. The purpose of the interviews was to explore good practice in the design, development and implementation of sub-national “integrative strategies”. A common interview topic guide was developed for use across the four case regions. Interviewees were asked about:

- the *composition of their partnerships*;
- the nature of *local organizational arrangements* (vertical and horizontal relationships);
- the *strategic focus* of their organizations;
- the *implementation levers* being used;
- their *future aspirations* and *trajectory* and the possible constraints upon these.

Following on from the interview phase, practitioner workshops were held in each of the 4 regions to discuss and debate the observations on the local spatial planning processes provided by interviewees. The draft RISE “Tool Kit” was also presented at these workshops for testing. These workshops were attended by the local stakeholder organization(s) and by a wider group of practitioners who were either directly or indirectly involved in the design, development and delivery of local and regional spatial strategies. At key points throughout the project, the 4 research teams met to share their observations and findings, and to plan the next stage. Informed on a continuing basis by the learning derived across the three elements of the research methodology, the Tool Kit has been developed iteratively throughout the project.

3.0 POLICY INTEGRATION

The central aim of this chapter is to present some of the most important RISE concepts. Four groups of concepts have been identified:

- **Policy interaction and policy integration.** This is a key concept in the entire RISE project, and it is important to ground the work on improved policy integration firmly in the literature.
- **Policy transfer and learning.** This project concerns the collection and comparison of evidence from various differentiated regions, and so it is important to reflect on some of the challenges in relation to the transfer of policy from one context to another.
- **Governance and meta-governance.** The position of government and governmental actors in nearly all European countries has changed dramatically over recent years. The fact that policy integration takes place in settings with increasing numbers of actors affects the ways this must be approached.
- **Collaborative planning.** Policy integration in a context of a plurality of actors makes it necessary to reflect on the relationships between government, stakeholders and civil actors in terms of potentials and challenges to cooperation as well as political legitimization.

3.1 Policy interaction and policy integration

It is useful to draw a distinction between two aspects to policy integration when considering the conditions for the enhancement of this:

- a. there is the level and type of the *interaction* which exists between separate policies, with these ranging in type from contradiction on the one hand to consistency on the other;
- b. and there are the efforts that are being made by policy-makers to manage this interaction, to improve the *integration* between policies in order to maximise their impacts.

The former aspect will be referred to here as *policy interaction*, and concerns the level of consistency or contradiction between policies. Contradictions occur when policies impede or undo each other's work, in either their implementation (inputs and outputs) or in their consequences (outcomes and impacts). Consistencies occur where policies enhance and re-enforce each other's work in their implementation or consequences. The second aspect, *policy integration*, concerns the degree to which consistencies are actively enhanced and contradictions actively attacked by policy-makers. Consensus occurs between policy-makers when they want to share objectives and priorities. Conflicts between policy-makers occur when they disagree with one another over objectives and priorities. Policy integration is the result of intentional efforts by policy-makers to minimise inconsistency between policies and to maximise consistency and synergy.

The desire to integrate policy across different sectoral domains (such as economic development, transport, housing, retail development) is not new.

Over the years there have been many complaints that government departments do not communicate, or that policy actions are contradictory. In fact “no suggestion for reform is more common than ‘we need more coordination’” (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984). Thus while planning systems vary greatly across Europe (CEC, 1997), most countries employ mechanisms to seek policy integration amongst different sectors and different levels of governance. A distinction can be drawn between different forms of policy integration (De Boe et al., 1999):

- Sectoral integration: this is about ‘joining up’ different policy domains and their associated actors within a given territory. Two dimensions can be distinguished: 1) cross-sectoral integration between different policy areas, which can operate at different administrative and spatial scales; 2) stakeholder integration between public, private and voluntary sector agencies.
- Territorial integration: this is about the integration of policy domains between territories, often advocated in the case of positive or negative externalities of certain developments, or in the case of so called ‘intrinsic spatial relations’: spatial structures or systems which cross administrative boundaries but by their nature cannot be easily split up into different parts. Sectoral and territorial integration are potentially in conflict with one another.

An underlying assumption is that policy integration will produce more coherent development and implementation thereby improving outcomes. Before pursuing the integration of policy several questions need to be answered (Briassoulis, 2004):

- Is a general, all-purpose and all-encompassing policy integration scheme possible and desirable, or is a case or issue specific policy integration scheme more appropriate?
- Is horizontal integration sufficient to tackle cross-cutting issues, or is vertical integration necessary too, or both?
- Is policy integration at a given level sufficient or is cross-level policy integration necessary – or even a grand scheme of full-blown integration on and across levels?

Actors pursuing an improvement of policy integration may benefit from the distinction between a ‘planning school’ and a ‘learning school’ (Mintzberg, 1994). The former has the philosophy that organizations can improve performance and delivery if they follow a documented plan or strategy. Here top down planning control tries to increase predictability albeit at the expense of empowerment and flexibility. The counter position is informal and emergent strategy formation, which does not necessarily imply the formulation of a strategy document. In this view, strategy formation cannot be formally planned but instead emerges out of collective and incremental learning processes. What seems desirable in most cases is a kind of middle course: complex plans cannot be drawn up and implemented in a neat linear manner while pure incrementalism – opportunity without strategy – is likely to result in ‘drift’ fashionable innovation.

3.2 Policy transfer and learning

One of the key assumptions of the RISE project is that policy integration in the four case study areas will show a high level of situated practice or contextuality. This means that each case is unique to a certain extent because the level and kind of integration depend on a number of factors which are specific to the region in question. In such a case there are limitations to the transferability of good policy practice from one situation to another. Three issues are closely related to each other:

- The nature of important contextual factors.
- Important barriers to cross-national and cross-regional learning.
- Factors determining the transferability of policies, tools and instruments.

Contextual factors

Important contextual factors include legal, political and cultural differences. The most important distinction in contextual factors is between: formal institutions established by legal rules; informal institutions established by cultural norms and values. In a situation of policy transfer the tension between the formal and informal institutions might come into play. Changes due to policy transfer are typically made in the formal institutions but often fail because of lack of changes in the informal institutions.

Barriers for learning

Barriers to cross-national and cross-regional learning are numerous. There are in general three levels of policy transfer (Spaans and Louw, 2009): (1) inspiration, (2) learning and (3) transplanted. Due to contextual differences, the first is most likely to occur between countries with different political/cultural systems, whereas the last is most likely to take place within the same country or between countries which belong to the same legal and administrative family.

Transferability

Although policy transfer is easier in a situation with similar contextual conditions, there is no guarantee of success. Three factors of policy failure in (voluntary) policy transfer can be distinguished (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000):

1. *Uninformed transfer* – based upon insufficient information about the policy/institution and how it operates in the country from which it is transferred.
2. *Incomplete transfer* – not all the elements crucial to making the policy or institutional structure a success was transferred.
3. *Inappropriate transfer* – when insufficient attention was paid to the differences between the economic, social, political and ideological contexts in the transferring and the borrowing country.

The meaning and implications of forms of governance, and of patterns of strategy formation, is context dependent.

3.3 Governance and meta-governance

Policy integration at the regional level takes place in a political and administrative environment which is becoming ever more complex. There are in practice different ways to respond to this. A first response is to reorganise administrative arrangements so there seems to be a match between territorial divisions (for instance commuting areas) and governmental divisions. Another response is to develop new forms of governance and meta-governance which are often ad-hoc, and have fuzzy boundaries. Many non-statutory planning strategies are the result of such new forms of governance and meta-governance. The shift from government to governance refers to the dispersion of decision making. In contrast to government, where decision making power rests in one hand which enables governments to *govern*, in the case of *governance* decision making power is spread over a range of stakeholders. This leads to the following brief contrast:

- *Government*: the exercise of political authority over the actions, affairs, etc. of a political unit, people, as well as the performance of certain functions for this unit or body.¹
- *Governance*: a complex governing process in which a multitude of public and private actors interact to govern society (Sørensen, 2006, p. 99).

The increasing importance of governance has implication for the territories concerned. Traditional 'hard spaces' based on the geographical perimeters of traditional nations or regions, have in the past been the focus of integrative strategy making. But with governance we see the emergence of 'soft spaces' which, in terms of their organizational fabric, tend to have fuzzy boundaries (Allmendinger and Haughton, 2009). The division of these spaces is rooted not in the administrative division of a country, but in the recognition of places by networks of government and private stakeholders. A distinction can be made between two basic types or models of governance, multi-level governance Type I and Type II (Hooghe and Marks, 2001):

- *Multi-level governance Type I*: involves coordination of decision making between non-intersecting, general-purpose, territories arranged in a hierarchical way.
- *Multi-level governance Type II*: governance as a complex, fluid, patchwork of innumerable, overlapping jurisdictions centred around particular tasks or policy problems.

This distinction is relevant to the analysis of regional integrative strategy processes. Multi-level governance Type I is mainly a function of relationships between different layers of government, without further coordination between government bodies at the same level. Multi-level governance type II is centred around concrete issues and tasks in which non-governmental actors play a role.

¹ The Free Dictionary - <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/government>.

The process of influencing decision-making in governance networks is referred to as meta-governance. Meta-governance is seen as the 'governance of governance' (Jessop, 2004). The purpose of meta-governance is to create – or perhaps to strategically undermine – forms of coordination and integration in the fragmented structures of present day network governance without undermining the autonomy, engagement and self-regulation in governance networks. When the British government abolished Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in England in 2010/11, this was in part in order to disconnect the policy from housing in rural areas from policy to meet the economic development needs of urban areas.

3.4 Collaborative planning

The integration of strategies is a political and administrative endeavour, and requires a new and more nuanced understanding of power and communication. This is associated with what is generally known as collaborative planning (Innes, 1998). This approach involves all important stakeholders being represented in discussions. On that basis, various co-operative arrangements can be established, taking development ambitions and local specificities into account. Stakeholder *partnerships* differ from other forms of collaboration (Leach et al., 2002). These include: (1) advisory committees, covering a specific project or programme conducted by a public agency or a private enterprise, (2) public hearings, covering a specific project proposed by an agency or private developer, and (3) negotiated rule making: a form of collaboration when a specific regulation is proposed.

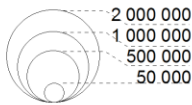
4.0 REGIONAL PROFILES

The purpose of this chapter is to compare the four *RISE* case study regions, and to place these within a broader European context. The diversity of scales used in the four case studies has made it difficult to analyse and compare the regions within a single framework. It has also been challenging to create a comparative analysis due to national differences in classifications, terminology, timeliness and comprehensiveness of data. The overview is based on the most recent information available on these regions utilising a number of indicators. The data presented draws upon Eurostat/GISCO and other ESPON projects (i.e. FOCI, TEDI, DEMIFER and RERISK). Data that addresses lower levels than NUTS 3 is limited and not always updated annually. In cases where data do not exist on NUTS 3 level, NUTS 2 level was used as a basis for the analysis. The regions are also compared through the European Cohesion Policy and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), highlighting the different conditions for implementing the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas. The delimitation of *RISE* regions used in this European comparison is presented in Map 1.

RISE - Case Study regions

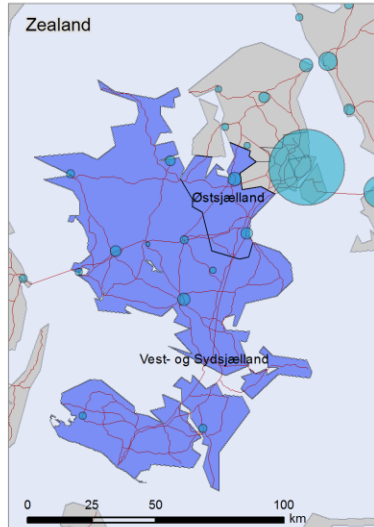
Main cities

Population in main city areas

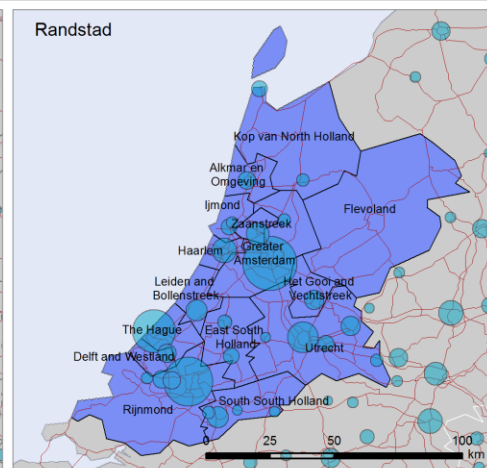
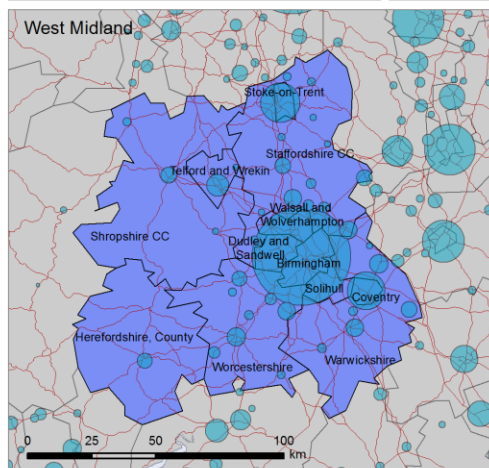
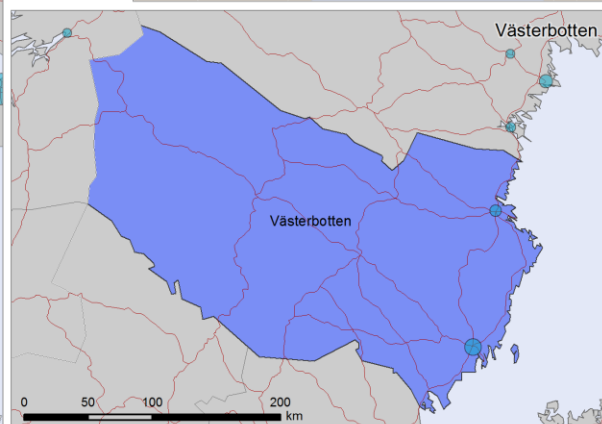


Main roads
NUTS3 region (with name)

Case study region	Administrative delimitation
West Midland	West Midland NUTS1
Randstad	Western Netherlands NUTS1; Flevoland NUTS2
Region Zeeland	Zealand NUTS2
Västerbotten County	Västerbotten NUTS3



This map does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the ESPON Monitoring Committee



Map 1. RISE Case Study Region, including administrative delimitation and main cities and roads.

Clearly the case study regions face different challenges due to their very different physical, economic and social conditions. Despite these differences all the regions fall under Objective 2 according to the EU Cohesion Policy 2007 – 2013, where employment, innovation and regional sustainable economic growth are prioritized. This indicates that the four regions are among the most economically developed regions in the EU. But the RISE

regions illustrate the diversity of European regions as well; ranging from densely populated polycentric urban areas to “deep rural” regions with fewer urban settlements. The Västerbotten region is among the European regions with the lowest population density, with only small and medium sized cities and a low level of accessibility. At the other end of the scale we have the Randstad, which is one of the densest and most accessible regions in Europe, with four large polycentric metropolises.

Region Zeeland has a distinctive type of rural morphology, where the northern part is characterized by small and medium sized cities in close interaction with the metropolitan region of Copenhagen, while the southern part is more rural and less accessible. As regards Birmingham-West Midlands, the region demonstrates all points on the rural-urban scale, ranging from metropolitan polycentric structures to more rural areas with more dispersed settlement structures. The land use pattern in the RISE regions is shown in Map 2, based upon Corine Land Cover 2006. The problems associated with urban extension are focused upon Europe’s highly urbanized areas, such as West Midlands-Birmingham and The Randstad. As regards accessibility, the highest accessibility values can be seen in the core of Europe. The Randstad region is among the top ranked in multimodal accessibility, while Region Västerbotten is at the other end of the scale with low accessibility values, while West Midland and Region Zeeland perform around the European average in multimodal accessibility.

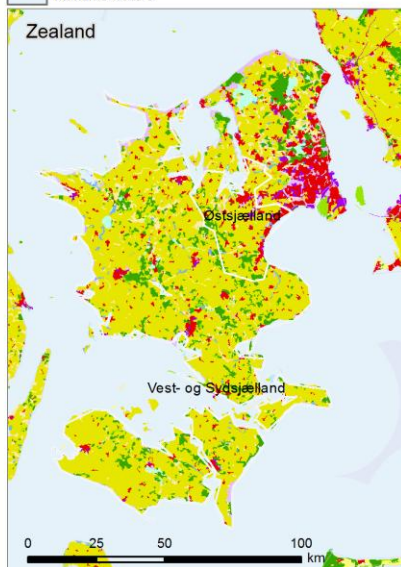
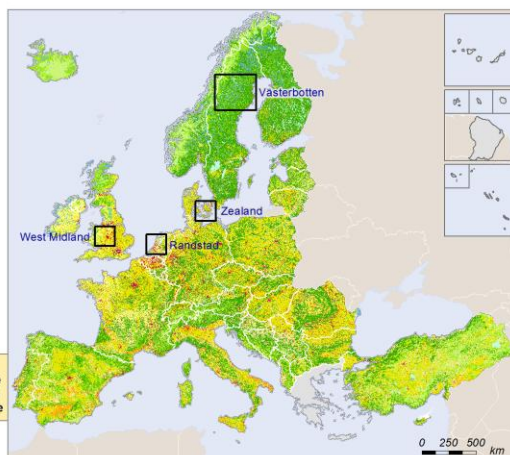
Demographic trends show common features across the EU, but individual regions are affected in different ways. For instance, ageing and migration flows have stronger effects in some parts – as in Västerbotten and Region Zeeland – than others. Both regions are affected by an array of negative demographic phenomena: very low fertility rates, massive outward migration of young people (especially relevant for many parts of Västerbotten), and the marked ageing of the remaining population. These trends will eventually increase the dependency ratio, and thus health care will underpin economic pressure in Västerbotten and other Northern regions in sparsely populated areas. On the other hand, the Netherlands and UK are experiencing a constant population growth due to natural population increase and high figures of immigration as exemplified in the case of the Randstad, although West Midlands is experiencing population growth due only to natural population increase, with a negative migration rate.

Based on the available data, the Randstad region is the strongest performing region among the RISE regions, with one of the highest GDP-PPS per Capita and as well as one of Europe’s lowest unemployment rates. On the other hand, Zeeland is performing at lowest level of the four and is below the EU27 average, and far below the national average. Concerning West Midlands it is on European average, but has seen some high rates of unemployment over recent years. Similar unemployment patterns have been seen in Västerbotten as well where unemployment rates have increased. However, Västerbotten performs relatively well, and its economic performance is slightly above the EU27 average.

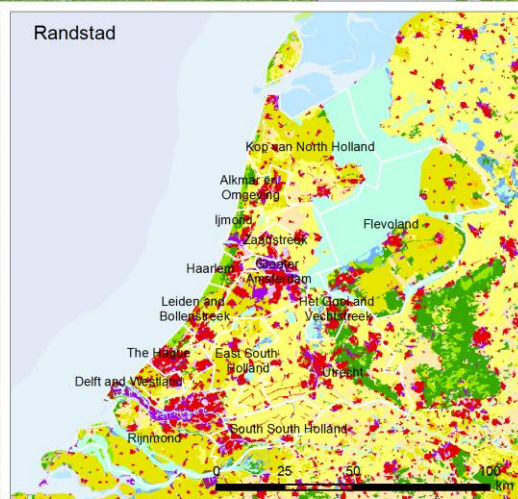
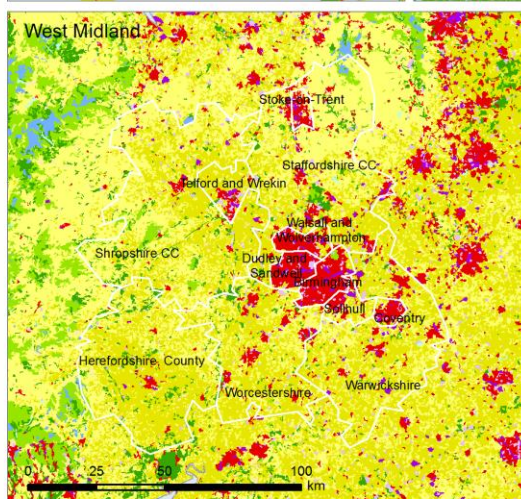
Land Use in the RISE Case Study Regions

Land Use after CORINE Land Cover

- Urban fabric
- Industrial, commercial and transport
- Mine, dump and construction
- Artificial, non-agricultural vegetated areas
- Arable land
- Permanent crops
- Pastures
- Heterogenous agricultural areas
- Forests
- Scrub and/or herbaceous
- Open spaces with little/no vegetation
- Inland wetland
- Maritime wetland
- Inland waters
- Maritime waters



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© Nordregio, RISE, 2012
Regional level: NUTS2/NUTS3
Source: ESPON Database 2013
Origin of data: GISCO, NSIS
© EuroGeographics Association for administrative boundaries

Map 2. Corine Land Cover in case-study regions in 2006 .

In the last decade, innovation has been prioritised within the European Union, and the “Innovative Union” has been outlined as a “flagship initiative”.² This is widely addressed in the 5th cohesion report as well as the Europe 2020 strategy, where it is stressed that we must develop an economy based on knowledge and innovation in order to create a competitive EU. One of the targets in Europe 2020 strategy is that every region should invest 3 % of GDP in research and development and increase the employment rate among the population aged 20-65. All the RISE regions are among the high performing innovative regions in Europe. The West Midlands, The Randstad and Västerbotten all score in line with their countries innovations performance. Region Zealand is situated in one of the high performing countries in Europe, but when downscaled to NUTS 3 level, it is noticed that region faces a number of challenges concerning its innovation capacity. None of the regions are among the very high performing regions such as London, Stockholm or Copenhagen.

Seen from the typologies developed in ESPON KIT, the RISE regions show an interesting and relatively coherent pattern. The only region that is classified as technology-advanced region is the West Midlands (excluding the NUTS3 Shropshire & Staffordshire), whilst the other three regions are defined as advanced service regions. West Midlands, The Randstad and Västerbotten are all strong in the field of research and scientific activities, whilst Zealand does not have that solid research infrastructure. However, we cannot neglect Northern Zealand’s proximity to the Capital Region of Copenhagen which is among top ranked regions in the EU in terms of research activities. Most research activity in Region Västerbotten is spatially concentrated in the coastal city Umeå, and to some extent also to Skellefteå. All RISE regions are seen as “Knowledge Networking”, which means that they all have high level of spatial inter-linkages in form of external R&D, external patent applications and external framework programme budgets.³

5.0 CASE STUDY SYNTHESIS

Each regional case study is summarised in this chapter, and described in detail in the Annex.

5.1 West Midlands, UK

The situation with regard to economic development, the national spatial planning system and the role of the region in the UK has changed since the election of a Coalition Government in May 2010. Regional institutions, including the Regional Development Agencies (RDA) and all associated regional strategies have in effect been abolished, but with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) being subject to a Revocation Order which is yet to be confirmed under the Localism Act 2011. Following the abolition of regional tier, the Coalition Government has established Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs), “joint local authority-business bodies brought forward by local

² Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative Innovative Union (2010), Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee, and Committee of the Regions, European Commission

³ KIT – Interim Report, applied research 2013/1/13 Version 24/02/2011 p. 27-28

authorities themselves to promote local economic development” (HMG, 2010: p10). These have been given the role of overseeing planning, housing, transport and infrastructure, employment, and enterprise and business start-ups, although in practice LEPs will not take on all these roles.

The stated reason for abolition of RDAs was decentralisation to the local level is that the government sees regions as being arbitrary, whilst LEPs are based on ‘functioning economic geographies’ at a more local scale. Government also says it wants to shift control to the local level, to empower people and to engender civic responsibility. However, LEPs are essentially non-democratic bodies and have no statutory powers or statutory resources as yet, and day-to-day organizational support for the LEPs is provided by the local authority partners. Delivery is through the myriad of national and local Governmental and other institutions. At the same time, however, responsibility for inward investment, sector leadership, innovation, access to finance and business support is being shifted to central government. Thus there are now two levels of regional government in the UK, the national and the local.

In a reform of the planning system, the Coalition Government has introduced the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Local Development Orders. The national agenda is to stimulate economic growth by simplifying a spatial planning system that is still considered to be too restrictive of development – despite many decades of deregulation, in contrast to other more successful European economies. However, the NPPF assigns responsibility for plan-making to Local Authorities and not LEPs, and so there will be a number of different local plans for each LEP area, although under the new Localism Act there is a statutory duty for collaboration on cross-boundary matters. Needs and plans risk being found ‘unsound’ if local authorities cannot demonstrate that the necessary collaborative effort has been made. Liaison between local authorities within the same LEP area is one way this can be achieved. Local authorities can, if they choose, produce joint development plans and these could relate to LEP areas.

Within the ESPON RISE framework, the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (GBSLEP) was chosen for further investigation which was established in 2011. Hitherto it has been too early to measure the extent of intra-regional/cross-boundary working between West Midlands’ LEPs. The GBSLEP main board comprises 17 members primarily drawn from private or local authority sectors, with the Chair of the Board from the private sector. The Board membership provides a good geographical spread, although the performance of the ‘core’ Birmingham economy was the key driver for the extended GBSLEP territory. Two possible problems have been raised: to what extent might tensions arise between the different public and private sector interests where joint working is concerned; and how far is it possible for different Local Authorities to be able to pool their ‘sovereignty’ on a non-prejudicial basis over an extended timescale? Whilst the Board membership has been established, there are on-going discussions concerning the range and type of sub-committees/technical working groups that will work to the Board as well as their precise membership and remit.

There is no law to ensure co-operation among LEPs and other agencies; LEPs have no statutory powers, or resources of their own to secure the spatial and economic development of their locality. Nonetheless, strategic integration appears to be taking place through on-going discussions around planning and economic development matters in the LEP and as evidenced also by a recent 'Visioning Event'. This brought together a wider group of stakeholders to discuss aligning economic development and spatial planning strategies, possibly leading to a coupling of strategies with delivery on the ground. However, it might be that policy integration will be achieved at best at an operational level, on particular development projects. In the GBSLEP individual local authorities will continue produce their own development plans, but there is a recognition that joint working is required and that the LEP is a suitable body to coordinate this, and to consider high-level strategy. Territorial integration is in principle being achieved horizontally in relation to economic development matters in the LEP as there is a general willingness to work with other neighbouring LEPs, with informal talks having taken place.

The GBSLEP priorities are being organised around three strategic 'pillars' of Business, Place, and People, in the yet to be published strategy. However, the domains over which policy integration is beginning to take place is limited and yet to be seen in practice. Moreover, housing, environmental sustainability, urban regeneration, social exclusion are not among the policy domains of the LEP. Nonetheless, the decision of the GBSLEP Board to prepare a strategic spatial framework plan will enable strategic consideration of matters beyond those identified by the three pillars. This augurs well for cross sectoral policy integration. Interagency integration is in evidence in so far as the LEP has identified policy implementation agencies that would help meet priority objectives, this also to ensure integration between public, private and voluntary sector agencies. A major issue is the difficulties the LEP will have in achieving policy coherence up and down the spatial scales. The national government has been announcing a number of funding schemes which it alone has control over. Among these is the Regional Growth Fund which is disbursed directly to companies, with LEPs having at best an advisory role. Enterprise Zones, with simplified planning regulations and incentives for development apply, are designated by national government. The Growing Places Fund is being allocated for infrastructure projects but to Local Authorities. These funding schemes can cut across LEP priorities and hinder the achievement of territorial integrative strategic planning.

The main GBSLEP 'lever' is *influence* rather than the disbursement of *direct new investment*. Given the current fiscal climate the GBSLEP will not have significant public resources to disburse directly, notwithstanding any income derived from the tax returns secured (and shared) from the Enterprise Zone in central Birmingham. The policies and funding streams which can be accessed by LEPs are administered at the national level. The LEPs are expected to co-ordinate planning, economic development, housing and transport in their areas, but within a fragmented institutional structure at the sub-regional level that is to rely on a duty to co-operate among local authorities. Difficulties can be anticipated in achieving strategic influence over the multitude of other actors without their own public funding. There are some concerns that the

private sector will walk away from the initiative unless some quick wins can be achieved. This makes it all the more important that, as the duty to co-operate requires, local authorities within and between LEPs work together in taking an integrated strategic approach to spatial and economic planning.

5.2 The Randstad, Netherlands

The Dutch government structure is a three-tiered, decentralised unitary state, based upon the self-government of provinces and municipalities. Co-government is the underlying principle: central government involves the provinces, the municipalities, or both in the formulation and execution of its policies. Unity cannot be imposed on the country from above, but must come from a plurality of forces resolving their differences within an agreed-upon framework. Unity is brought about by negotiation and consensus building. As for planning, there is no clear-cut hierarchy defined by a binding national plan, planning at lower levels includes the (re)interpretation of plans and policies of higher levels of government. The formal government at the level between the state and the municipality is the province, and there is a long-lasting and unresolved search for a governance structure which fills the 'regional gap' between provinces and the state and between province and municipalities. This 'regional gap' has been discussed for almost half a century, and specifically for the Randstad (the Dutch case)⁴ there has been a search for such regional governance.

In the late 1950s the planning concept of the Randstad was introduced to deal with an active planning approach for the densely urbanised western part of the country and for the Green Heart, which at this stage was witnessing high levels of immigration from peripheral parts of the country. The Randstad approach, which aimed for urban containment, has however never been supported by a level of government of about equal size, although there have been calls for the creation of such a governance structure mainly inspired by issues of economic competitiveness. Instead cooperation between provinces and municipalities has been relied upon. In terms of scale the largest cooperation bodies can be found currently on what traditionally are called the wings of the Randstad. Within the wings there are numerous cooperation networks across and between provinces, municipalities, WGRs (cooperative municipal bodies) and urban regions. Each wing has its own founding rationale, responsibilities and activities.

The highest level of the entire Randstad is without any doubt the most unsuccessful level of cooperation. In September 2002 the four Randstad provinces, the four main urban regions plus their core municipalities, established Regio Randstad as a political negotiation and cooperation platform. Its formal base was statutory: the law on administrative cooperation (WGR, below), but following discouraging moves by central government the support for a Randstad approach has evaporated, and Regio Randstad was dissolved in January 2008. The present coalition government (in office since September 2010) sees the reorganisation and simplification of the

⁴ The Randstad is covered by four provinces: South-Holland, North-Holland, Utrecht and Flevoland (see map in full case study). Only parts of these provinces are located in the Randstad, and between different policy documents or administrative platforms the spatial configuration of Randstad changes.

administrative structure of the Randstad as a priority. There will be no changes at the provincial level – such as amalgamation – so if there will be changes these will occur at lower levels of scale. In 2007, a new law (*WGR: Wet Gemeenschappelijke Regelingen*) came into force which created eight regions where cooperation was enforced between municipalities in the field of spatial planning, housing, traffic and transport, economic affairs and environment. These WGR-plus areas have a number of explicitly defined competences which ‘normal’ WGR bodies do not have. Boards are formed by administrators from municipalities who have to give account of their decision in their municipal council.

Dutch provinces have always been heavily involved in strategic spatial planning, for which the legal instrument of the structure vision is the main integrative document. The province usually involves a wide array of public and civic stakeholders in the formulation of provincial structure visions and other territorial integrative strategies⁵. While the provincial level is the formal government level to address regional integrative strategies, other formal and informal government levels also formulate these, i.e. national, wing and WGR-plus level. The wing level is not a formal government level, however integrative territorial policy documents are considered as crucial by the participants: they form the link between the voluntaristic structure visions of the individual government tiers. Each WGR-plus region provides a regional structure plan addressing housing, working, mobility, landscape and green spaces. The plan includes concrete policy decisions about projects or amenities of regional importance.

In the Randstad case study one specific integrative territorial strategy among the many was chosen for detailed analysis – the MIRT territorial agenda. Since 1999 infrastructure projects financed by central government were included in the MIT project book (*Meerjarenprogramma Infrastructuur en Transport*, long-term programme for infrastructure and transportation) as an annex to the Infrastructure Fund in the central government budget. Projects above a certain threshold sum are financed via the MIT, and through consultation between regional and central government decisions are made on which projects to be financed through the MIT. After 2007 this programme was broadened to MIRT in which the R stands for Territory (*Ruimte*) to bring more coherence in investments in territory, economy, accessibility and quality of life. The MIRT is an implementation instrument, and it links budgets with projects. Ministers, State Secretaries and lower tier administrators meet twice a year (from 2012 once a year) in so-called multi-level government meetings, in which projects from the MIRT project book are on the agenda.

In order to provide a strategic framework to assess which programmes and projects should be taken up, the central government asked eight regions – together covering the entire country – to develop a so-called territorial agenda. These agendas are drawn up cooperatively by central and lower tier governments in each region and are based on existing policy documents.

⁵ An example of an informal integrated strategy at provincial level is the Utrecht 2040 document, in which also the social domain is included (see also annex on the Randstad case study).

They constitute the underpinning with respect to potential new programmes and projects. The agendas are agreed upon in the multi-level government meeting and form the basis for the agenda of these meetings. In the first part of the agendas the for the territorial development ambitions for the medium range are formulated and the corresponding objectives are laid down. There is a clear distinction between the vision part which has an integrative ambition and the list of projects which has a more limited ambition. In the second part the territorial issues are concretised, forming a source for possible programmes and projects. Three of the eight territorial agendas are located in the Randstad, and they cover the Randstad completely. The MIRT agenda approach means that territory forms a framework for multi-sectoral and multi-level policy integration and the prioritization of investments. The content is negotiated between different governmental levels and on the whole derived from statutory (spatial) planning documents. Participation and involvement from stakeholders is indirect, via statutory planning documents and related processes.

5.3 Zealand, Denmark

The role of the regional tier in Denmark was drastically changed in 2007 as a result of an administrative reform. The former 275 municipalities were merged into 98, and the 14 counties were abolished and replaced by five new 'regions'. The former counties could set taxes and, hence, operate within their own budgets, but the new regions must operate within budgets financed by the national government and the municipalities. The regions are governed by a directly elected regional council, and the central body responsible for the regional integrated strategies. The region shows great internal diversities, stretching from remote areas in the southern part to prosperous areas in the northern part, functionally connected with the Capital region. Zealand Region is one of the five administrative regions.

The core responsibility of the new regions is hospitals. Next to this, the regional councils have to prepare regional development plans (RUP) which in this case is investigated as a RIS. The RUP has no legal or administrative authority towards municipal plans, but the municipal plans should be prepared in accordance with the RUP. Present RUPs have moved from land-use planning to a strategic and communicative instrument, in order to facilitate dialogue between public and private, local and regional stakeholders. The RUP shall by law be prepared in cooperation with the municipalities. A mediating body called KKR (the Contact Committee) was established to coordinate the work between regions and municipalities. Members of the KKR are the mayors of each of the municipalities in the region plus the chairman of the regional council. Besides the KKR, the region and the municipalities meet in the Growth Forum, the Health Coordination Committee and several other joint consulting committees. Further, after the reform the municipalities formed their own non-statutory local government contact council (KKR) at the regional level. The KKR's discuss regional matters and prepare themselves for the KKR meeting with the regions. The KKR's were organised as an instrument for matching the regional councils on regional matters.

In relation to the RUP, the Growth Forum is important. It is a legal body, formed in each region according to the Business Development Act. The regional growth forum consists of 20 members from the regional council, municipalities, regional business organisations, regional knowledge and education institutions and local trade unions and industry organisation. The two most important tasks of the growth forum are preparation of a Regional Business Development Strategy, and reviewing and submitting recommendations on co-financing for business development projects linked to the Business Development Strategy and EU Structural Funds. The secretariat is hosted and financed by the region. The regional growth fora are coordinated nationally by the Danish Growth Council, established just prior to the 2007 reform. Besides the key strategy stakeholders, a number of other sectoral agencies and councils are part of the regional stakeholder milieu in Zealand. Trans-regional issues are dealt with in at least four important co-operations – the Oeresund Committee, IBU Oeresund, Fehmarn belt Forum, and the Ministry of Environment.

In Zealand region the RUP of 2008 and the RUP 2011 were chosen as examples of a RIS, in combination with the Regional Business Development Strategy 2011-14. The regions have to prepare a RUP every fourth year and it has to include the Regional Business Development Strategy prepared by the Growth Forum. The RUP has a wide regional development perspective, whereas the Business Development Strategy is more focused on prioritising activities for improvements of the regional framework for business. The more narrow perspective of the Business Development Strategy is probably due to the responsibilities of the growth forum for submitting recommendations on regional and EU co-funding of concrete project applications. The case study of Zealand illustrates a learning process to the regional council, the Growth Forum and the municipalities. They all had to be familiar with new formal roles and to the challenges of cooperation in a pluricentric rather than hierarchical governance situation. Together, they had to produce a Regional Development Strategy (RIS) and a Business Development Strategy using new hitherto untried planning tools. It became a very difficult process dominated by conflicts of power in the first RUP process but also developing into a new form of cooperation and coordination in the second process, which brought the region closer to an integrated strategy making in this new pluricentric situation.

The new regions had to move from the former regulatory and hierarchical role as counties to a collaborating, visioning, facilitating and mobilising function in regional planning. It was a difficult process for the regional authority, and in the first process of making a RUP the regional planners tried to develop a comprehensive RIS in a traditional way based on their own expert knowledge and with the region as the leading part and main contributor. Therefore, the first RUP in Zealand region became a battlefield between the region and the municipalities about the control of regional development. The regional administration also had problems in cross sector cooperation in the administration, and the first RUP was an overall strategy combined with several sector strategies and only few cross sector themes.

The region has its own limited development funds and no authority to make others follow the strategy. The Growth Forum reviews project applications for EU funding and half of project applications for Regional funding. Recommendation on the former are submitted to the national government, whereas recommendations on the latter are submitted to the regional council. Usually, the Zealand regional council follows the recommendation of the Growth Forum. The region is completely dependant on others to finance and implement the RUP. Thus, it is crucial through the planning process to create a broad stakeholder ownership of the RUP. The regional council failed to do so during the preparation of the first RUP, and it became mostly the regional council own strategy, a strategy on paper.

The second version of the RUP (2011) was made in a quite different situation. The region and the municipalities (through KKR) decided to stop fighting and start working together in solving regional problems. A new chairman of the region was elected with the knowledge and skills to perform network governance. This influenced the regional administration and the new role was accepted, competences developed, and organisational and personal changes in the administration were made. All actors had by now 4 years of experience in the new context, which in turn made it much easier to create a collaborative second RUP process. In the second process the regional council built the strategy on existing and planned activities in close cooperation with the municipalities. Only four cross sector themes were selected, fewer goals were established, and an action plan prepared together with first efforts to develop some form of measurement. The RUP and the Business Development Plan complemented each other, and the RUP illustrated an effort to make an integration of strategies relating to specific development issues in the region agreed upon as the most important by key regional actors.

The regional council used several instruments to fulfil its new planning role as strategy coordinator in the pluricentric situation. Financial funding was one instrument, but the region has few of its own resources. Making expert analyses and producing regional data is another efficient instrument much valued by the municipalities and important in the creation of mental maps about the region, its problems and solutions. A third instrument is visioning and consensus making, and a fourth instrument is facilitation and networking. Especially the last instrument was very useful to regional strategy development in the second RUP period. The regional administration is still searching for closer cohesion within and between a few strategies, using the RUP as the higher order strategy, integrating all other strategies beneath it. Regional politicians, however, are not concerned about strict strategy coordination, and do not mind different strategies being made. They see the sheer making of strategy as a productive process joining people and interests in engaged discussions and decisions about important policy issues. Thus, politicians seem inclined to strategy-making, whereas planning officials search for the merger of sub-strategies into the single and all-embracing integrated strategy, the RIS.

5.4 Västerbotten, Sweden

The fundamental cornerstone of policies for economic growth in Sweden is the assumption that national growth depends on regional and local growth processes. These processes are then assumed to be best governed and nurtured through regional expertise and action. In order to support these processes the Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications has developed a *National strategy for Regional Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Employment 2007-2013*, which brings together a range of policy areas such as employment, and the EU cohesion policy.

Within this framework four thematic priorities are outlined. Any activity undertaken within Swedish regional development policy, on any level by any actor, is to follow these four priorities. Further, the strategy specifies guidelines for implementing EU Structural Fund Programmes, Regional Development Programmes, Regional Growth Programmes, and Territorial co-operation programmes. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) are the most important external funds. Structural Fund resources are mainly directed towards innovation, renewal and accessibility. Two laws on co-operative municipal bodies set the legal foundation for Region Västerbotten (the regional body) to produce and implement regional strategies. Further, a strategic plan must be established for the region, and it should be implemented through third party involvement. Region Västerbotten is also responsible for the resourcing of development activities through co-ordination of EU and national funds. The law is fairly open in terms of how those tasks should be implemented, and leaves it to Region Västerbotten's discretion.

The *Regional Development Programme* (RUP) 2007-2013 is owned by Region Västerbotten, and defines the visions, prioritised strategy areas and measurable goals for future development of the region. During 2010 a revision of the RUP was initiated, which resulted in a *Regional Development Strategy* (RUS). As with the revision of the national strategy, the new RUS is motivated by findings from the OECD Territorial Review of Sweden, the adoption of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy and global events and challenges. However, being more recent the RUS also includes the EU2020 strategy, noting the smart, sustainable and inclusive growth ambitions set out there.

The national strategy stresses co-operation and networking along vertical and horizontal lines. The same approach is valid for the RUP even though there are few explicit references to cross-cutting issues. In the RUS the Regional Development Forum is mentioned, and supposed to involve the regional partnership in an on-going dialogue. The aim is to promote insights into the development preconditions of the region. *The Regional Growth Programme* (RTP, *regionalt tillväxtprogram*) is the operational programme for implementing visions and strategies presented in the RUP/RUS above. The RTP is revised annually, and co-ordinates strategic targets in RUS with funding from other operational programmes, mainly EU funding. The RTP guides funding decisions, where projects shall contribute to the fulfilment of RUS priorities. Measures in the RTP are the same as for the national strategy presented above, which in turn is valid also for the RUS. Regional

development activities in Västerbotten are to a large extent funded from external sources, of which EU and national funding are absolutely essential. Important funding sources from the EU level are for instance: ERDF, ESF, Rural Development Programme, Interreg (several), FP7, etc. But there is also funding from the local level through municipal membership fees to Region Västerbotten providing for the administrative infrastructure.

The RTP co-ordinates priorities and ambitions in RUS with existing sources of funding. Each strategic end is divided into means and measures that on a detailed level are presented in the programme. Funding sources are identified and their relations to programme measures are described. The RTP thus connects ambitions, objectives and measures in the RUS – which in turn connects to national and EU level policies – with funding from a number of sources. Since a large share of resources comes from the state and external agencies the majority of public sector development initiatives are promoted through projects, rather than through permanent administrative structures. The RUS and the RTP are embedded in co-operative structures and partnerships. Each actor in Västerbotten opting for project funding makes their own funding decisions. However to be eligible for RTP funding, applications should connect to RUS priorities, as well as be coherent with certain selection criteria (mainly related to sustainable growth and networking). Actions undertaken within the RTP framework emanate mainly from business needs.

Once ideas are transformed into funding applications, there are a number of groups with responsibilities for the promotion of development. Here the actual integration for regional development takes place, be it amongst politicians, wider partnerships or among hired staff with specific competencies. The Regional Development Forum decides contents, the Regional Office manages them. Experts are invited on a needs basis, any of the Västerbotten actors can call them in. Working groups are appointed and dissolved, also on a needs basis. As for the administrative processes, they also involve various constellations and procedures for co-ordination and integration. One example is where Region Västerbotten, the County Administrative Board in Norrbotten (neighbouring county), the Growth Agency (responsible for ERDF) and the ESF Council – both national agencies - meet and prepare for Structural Fund Partnership meetings.

5.5 Comparisons

As noted in the literature review, policy integration may be a consequence of the desire towards more efficient policy processes, more concise and effective outcomes and overall a more seamless, non-contradictory, non-wasteful policy implementation (see e.g. Briassoulis 2004, Kidd 2007, Stead and Meijers 2009, Vigar 2009). In each of the regional cases in this study various strategic approaches and actions are undertaken to improve the overall economic development. Policy production and strategic conduct can be analysed along a continuum ranging from top-down *planning* to more discrete and incremental *learning* (Mintzberg 1994). Real circumstances are positioned somewhere in between. They could perhaps also be understood as a variety of actions (undertaken along the continuum above) within a wider framework (Steurer and Martinuzzi 2005). It would then be possible to use a

broad theme to combine hierarchical strategy, vision and steering with collaboration in networks that enable learning and adaptation and the deployment of different modes of governance.

Sectoral integration is about the “joining up” of different public policy domains and their associated actors within a given territorial area. Without proper coordination or integration sectoral domains remain “inefficient, in that they can result in competing and contradictory objectives and duplication of effort, and ineffective, in that they ignore the complexity of interactions between different areas of public policy interest” (Kidd, 2007). Within sectoral integration two dimensions can be distinguished – cross-sectoral integration between different policy areas, and inter-agency integration between public, private and voluntary sector agencies.

In each of our case studies efforts are being made to co-ordinate various policy sectors – economy and business, land use, infrastructure and transportation, employment and environmental policies. In Västerbotten EU policies relating to economic growth and cohesion are identified as key drivers for policy co-ordination, and to a somewhat lesser extent in Zealand. In the Randstad, the EU is one of many influences for action, whereas the supranational influence is very limited in the GBSLEP, and focus is national and sub-regional. National influence upon cross-sectoral integration is clearly evident in all case study regions, even if the economic development focus is most pronounced in the GBSLEP case. Municipalities are involved in strategic regional policy making in all case study regions.

The inter-agency aspect of integration are also evident in all case study regions. Of specific importance in all cases is the public-private sector interaction. In Denmark the public sector (regional) production of RUPs has to include strategic decisions made within the Growth Fora with strong business representation, and labour market organisations. In UK the LEPs have strong business representation as well, together with municipalities. In the Randstad the main strategic document analysed is a state and public sector concern, however in the complex policy web private interests are of great importance. As for Västerbotten, the inter-agency integration is formalised in strategic partnerships and through the financing of inter-agency projects.

Territorial integration concerns the integration of public policy domains between territories: “The argument here is that current planning approaches are, to a greater or lesser extent, disjointed across territorial divisions. This situation can [again] lead to inefficiency and ineffectiveness in dealing with important policy issues and infrastructure investments that transcend administrative boundaries” (Kidd 2007). Territorial integration is often advocated in the case of positive or negative externalities of certain developments, or in the case of what is often called ‘intrinsic spatial relations’: spatial structures or system which cross administrative boundaries but to their nature cannot be easily split up in different parts. As Kidd (2007) and De Boe et alia (1999) emphasize, the category of territorial integration also encompasses different dimensions: both “vertical integration”—policy coherence across spatial scales, and “horizontal integration”—policy

coherence between neighbouring authorities (nations, states, regions etc.) and areas with some shared interest.

In the Netherlands and the Randstad region the MIRT territorial agenda the focus is on the vertical dimension as it relates (existing) policy from different government levels. The horizontal dimension is not absent but limited compared to the vertical one. In Västerbotten, infrastructure investments include both vertical (across national, regional and local scales) and horizontal integration between neighboring authorities. Within the GBSLEP Local Authorities are expected to co-operate, especially where it is important for councils and other public bodies to work together across boundaries, to plan for the housing, transport and infrastructure that local people need. This suggests that planning might be done jointly, and that the local authorities in adjoining LEP areas might produce a joint planning strategy. In Zealand the Business Development Strategy is one of three pivotal strategies, the other two being the RUS and the Agenda 21. Integration is taking place here *between* strategies developed in their own right by agencies belonging to the same family of overlapping strategy and policy communities (the government, the Regional Council, the Growth Forum and regional institutions and business sectors).

6.0 A TYPOLOGY OF REGIONAL INTEGRATIVE STRATEGIES

On the evidence of the four regional case studies there are a number of different variables that are relevant for the comparison and classification of RISs. In the development of a typology of RISs, however, we have focussed here upon two aspects of regional governance that are germane to the main focus of the study. Region here is defined as the primary sub-national functional economic area:

1. **Governance consolidation:** the degree to which the governance of the region is institutionally centralised at the regional level (as defined in the regional profiles), or devolved to the sub-regional level in various ways, or centralised above the region to the national level. This establishes a scale from nationally centralised, to unitary regional governance, to bifurcated (where regional governance is divided between the metropolitan core and the sub-urban or rural hinterland), to pluralistic regional governance (involving a plurality of sub-regional agents).
2. **Policy integration:** the degree to which policies for different sectors or sub-regional territories are drawn together and harmonised within overarching strategies, to produce integrated strategies at the regional-level. In some regions a high proportion of the policies have been coordinated with one another, whether within a single or several strategies. In other regions less progress has been made in this direction, and more policies remain uncoordinated. This establishes a scale from low to high integration.

These two dimensions generate a typology as set out in Figure 1, and discussed below. The applicability of the typology is not restricted to the

current state of policy integration, but also allows us to describe the progress of policy integration and options for the future in the case study regions and elsewhere.

		REGIONAL POLICY INTEGRATION		
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
REGIONAL GOVERNANCE CONSOLIDATION	Nationally centralised	West Midlands		
	Regional centralised	?		Västerbotten
	Sub-regional bifurcated		Zealand ?	?
	Sub-regional pluralistic	West Midlands Zealand	Randstad	Randstad wings

Figure 1: A Typology of RISs

Dotted arrows: possible future development. Full arrows: historical development

6.1 Regional Governance Consolidation

The regions differ from one another in the degrees to which regional governance, in its territorial institutional framework, is unified and consolidated at the regional level. Some regions have this unified structure, whilst others have a divided arrangement between two sub-regional units (the urban metropolitan core and the sub-urban or rural hinterland), or are divided into a plurality of sub-regions that work more or less well together. In some regions the national level plays a key role, and in England there has been a transfer of aspects of regional governance to the national level, alongside the establishment of the LEPs.

In The Randstad and in the West Midlands we have fluid and pluralistic situations in which there are relatively defined functional economic regions, but these have been unable to build or retain a regional tier of government, and central government has accommodated a devolution of responsibility to the sub-regional level, and to partnerships between sub-regional agencies. Here the traditional or recognisable regions are governed from the sub-regional level – in the UK the LEP sub-region is less economically coherent than the West Midlands (although it may have been more politically coherent). This sub-regional governance of the region is however much more developed in the Randstad than it is in the West Midlands, and it remains to be seen how far the LEPs will between them be able to take on the governance of the development of the West Midlands region. For example, it is not entirely clear

to what extent the LEPs will between them be able to develop the regional strategies required for the disbursement of European Structural Funds, or to administer these funds. At present this governance in the West Midlands is undertaken nationally (in the Randstad case the disbursement of EU Structural Funds takes place via policy trajectories which are loosely coupled with territorial frameworks such as the MIRT agendas). In Västerbotten and Zealand, on the other hand, we have recognisable economic regions in which government is located either at the regional level, or in the hands of two sub-regions (in the case of Zealand and the Capital Region, which are clearly interdependent). Furthermore, this governance system, although relatively new in Zealand and traditional in Västerbotten, is relatively consolidated and non-fragmentary.

6.2 Regional Policy Integration

Another respect in which the regions differ from one another is in the degree to which policies for different sectors or sub-regional territories are drawn together and harmonised within overarching strategies, to produce integrated strategies at the regional-level. In some regions a high proportion of the policies have been coordinated with one another, whether within a single or several strategies, whether or not these are formulated by regional or sub-regional agencies. In other regions less progress has been made in this direction, and more policies remain uncoordinated. This establishes a scale from low to high integration.

In the West Midlands the recent abolition of the regional tier of government agency has left a gap in the formulation of regionally integrative strategies that has yet to be filled through cooperation at the sub-regional level. Indeed it is likely that inter-agency cooperation will be more difficult to achieve at the regional level between a plurality of sub-regional agencies, than within one single regional level agency. In the Randstad, on the other hand, there is a long established tradition of sub-regional cooperation (and conflict) around regional strategies for the Randstad region taken as a whole. Here there is a relative proliferation of integrative regional strategy formulating, all done from agencies located at sub-regional levels of the multi-level governance system. The main challenge in this case relates to the coupling between the various integrative regional strategies, and thus is mainly accomplished through a process of leap-frogging whereby new strategies taken on board important components of existing strategies. In Västerbotten and Zealand, where we have relatively consolidated regional governance at the regional level, there are also integrative regional strategies, representing different sectors of policy, for land-use, for the economy, for business. These are formulated at the regional level itself.

When these different dimensions are combined then we arrive at the typology and chart set out above. It appears that where there is greater stability and regional institutional consolidation – in Zealand and Västerbotten – then greater cross-sectoral alignment of policy has been possible at the regional level, and possibly greater cross-territory alignment within sectors. The case of Zealand Region is illustrative: a pronounced improvement of cooperation took place from the first regional strategy to the second due to a maturing of

institutional relations between the region and the municipalities following the political and administrative reform in 2007. In the Randstad the complexity of sub-regional coordination arrangements and multi-level coordination arrangements make cross-sectoral integration and inter-regional integration more complex and difficult. However, the MIRT process reveals that well defined frameworks for policy making profit from agencies having experience in networking and cooperation. The above mentioned process of leap-frogging can be quite successful for this reason in terms of delivering improved policy integration. In the West Midlands, the novel and pluralistic sub-regional structure means that inter-sectoral policy integration, and inter-territorial policy integration, are as yet relatively undeveloped. Regional-level governance of the region has radically reduced with the abolition of the RDAs, and much of this has been centralised at the national level. Sub-regional governance of the region may be emerging – in the context of the new LEPs – but is not as yet very extensive.

7.0 LADDER OF INTEGRATION

It has been noted elsewhere that different policies interact with one another to different degrees. The degree of policy integration can be assessed by considering the **inclusiveness** of strategy frameworks – the range of different interacting policies that are embraced within the same strategic framework. And it can be assessed by considering the level of **harmonisation** achieved within this framework between different policies – the degree to which each policy is designed in order to enhance rather than to inhibit the effects of other policies within the framework. A fully integrated regional strategy is one that has high inclusiveness and high harmonisation.

Contradictions occur when policies impede or undo each other's work, in either their implementation or in their consequences. Consistencies occur where policies enhance and re-enforce each other's work in their implementation or consequences. Policy integration concerns the degree to which consistencies are actively being harnessed and contradictions actively removed by policy-makers. It is the result of intentional efforts by policy-makers to minimise inconsistency between policies and to maximise consistency and synergy. Questions that arise in reference to the integration of the different strategies within regions concern the following dimensions:

1. The performance of any specific regional policy intervention (sectoral or thematic) depends:
 - a) upon its own **intrinsic** qualities (i.e. ability to achieve goals within its own domain of operation);
 - b) upon its **extrinsic** qualities (i.e. consistency with other policies that are being pursued at the same time in the same area).

The research outlined here, in its focus upon the integration of different policies within particular regions, is concerned primarily with the second, extrinsic, dimension of effectiveness – the effectiveness of a set of policies

taken in aggregate, and the degree to which the effectiveness of each individual policy enhances or diminishes the effectiveness of other policies taken together. That is to say, it considers not merely the coexistence of policies, or their mutual acknowledgement, or the involvement of a range of stakeholders, but also the degrees of their consistency – the absence of ‘allergy’, the achievement of ‘synergy’. The intrinsic qualities and effectiveness of a policy cannot be separated from its extrinsic qualities, because the way in which contradictions or consistencies between different policies will operate is through the performance of each policy considered by itself. Although these are analytically distinct, the extrinsic dimension of performance therefore impinges directly upon, and is reflected within, the intrinsic.

2. It is recognised that integration is difficult to achieve, and that it will in all likelihood take time to establish. Questions that arise in reference to the integration of the different strategies within regions concern the following dimensions of integration:

a) How well do policy-makers in different agencies and at different level understand the *intrinsic performance* of any specific policy measure? This concerns the methodologies that policy-makers have put in place to *measure* and *feed-back* the intrinsic performance of policies (e.g. in terms of inputs, outputs and outcomes from the different strands of policy in different thematic areas considered separately). The complexity of this issue should not be underestimated. There is, for example, a difference between the money spent, service delivered, outcome achieved, and the impact that results for a policy. These differences depend upon the impact of factors that may reduce the net ‘additionality’ achieved by the policy conduct. Such factors include *leakage* effects (when the intervention benefits other areas or groups than those that were targeted); *deadweight* (when the same things would have happened without the intervention and its expenditure); *displacement or substitution* (when the things that happen are simply moved from somewhere else, producing churn with no net gain). On the positive side of the performance equation, however, would be *multiplier* effects (where the benefits from the policy intervention increase as expenditure flows through a series of transactions within the economy). In the present context, it should be stressed, however, that one set of factors which affect the net additionality of each policy is the degree of consistency between coexisting policies.

b) The next question concerns how well policy-makers consider, and understand the degree to which different policy strands (e.g. those concerning *economic growth, environment and climate change, transportation, business needs, social and health*) interact with one another, enhance or diminish and the nature of this interaction? This concerns the methodologies that are in place to identify and measure overlapping policies, measure interaction – mutual *consistency* and *synergy* (in their inputs, outputs and outcomes) between different policy strands in different thematic areas. The establishment of such methodologies is however likely to be constrained by the institutional

and territorial environment, and by frequency of change in structures or personnel, as described above.

- c) This leads on to the next question – to what degree have the main interacting policy strands been brought together within the same strategic framework, and have any crucially interacting strands been left or separated out? In the absence of a governance framework, it will be difficult or even impossible to bring all the relevant policies into practical consideration. By strategic framework here we mean principally the strategy-making, implementing and reviewing cycle, but this relates to the organisational framework such as agencies, alliances partnerships or networks. Where there are several RISs within a region (as will often be the case) this concerns the leadership amongst agencies sponsoring each RIS and the extent of coordination between agencies. Once again this will be constrained by the establishment of procedures, territorial identities, and the trust upon which these are based.
- d) How committed are policy-makers to strengthening integration? How well are they building towards – planning for and addressing – the enhancement of policy integration over time? This concerns their identification of interacting policies, establishing *communications* between the managers of the different thematic policies within and between RISs around the achievement of their mutual consistency and synergy. It also concerns the managerial and political procedures and cycles that are in place to enhance integration, the attentiveness of the strategic coordination process to the need to build towards greater integration over the course of several policy/management/budget cycles.
- e) How much progress have policy-makers made in strengthening horizontal and vertical integration? This concerns the *responsiveness* and *mutual adjustment* of the proponents of different policy themes in the light of feed-back, the efforts made to overcome obstacles, over time. It may also concern the degree of institutional and territorial alignment, and the level of trust that has been established. Again this concerns internal and external integration within/between agencies sponsoring RISs, and it involves established the time-lines for the development of this integration in each region. For vertical integration, the degree of progress will concern the willingness of government at different levels to negotiate and reach agreement.
- f) The ability to achieve policy integration is affected by the degree of territorial and institutional alignment which exists between the agencies involved. Where agencies share **common territorial boundaries** then it will be easier to aggregate the data they collect (on problems and on interventions) in a comparable form, and it will be easier to allocate resources in a concerted manner. Where they share a **common point of binding authority**, it will be easier to resolve disagreements over the ‘diagnosis’ and ‘treatment’ of overlapping problems. But of course there are degrees of territorial and institutional alignment. There may

be territorial boundaries held in common without agencies being fully coterminous, and the absence of shared boundaries may be overcome by skilful data-manipulation or political coalition-building. Where there is a plurality of overlapping agencies and territorial units involved in the delivery of different policies or services, however, then it will require more effort to establish and implement measures to improve consistency. But if a network or partnership meets regularly and has clear leadership then this meeting can provide a common point of authority, although perhaps less binding than a shared political or managerial lead. The network may produce results that are more effective because more attuned to the interests of a variety of stakeholder.

- g) The degree to which the network or partnership can act as a binding point of authority will depend upon the establishment of shared procedures, and upon the establishment of trust between participants, both of which take time. It may also depend upon the degree to which the territories concerned have been able to establish – between agencies and amongst the wider public – a recognised identity as a place. Where there is frequent structural, organisational and personnel changes, it will be difficult to build up the level of mutual understanding and trust, the administrative systems required and the sense of place identity, to achieve a shared approach to integration. One way to undermine regional strategy-development is to routinely change the structure and personnel of governance. On the other hand, where there is **structural continuity**, and territorially-based agencies have been cooperating over several years, on a consistent territorial basis, they may have created the relationships, procedures and place-identities to enable coordination of policies to occur smoothly, and on a more inclusive basis.

Taken together these represent the main operational dimension of policy-integration and form part of the focus for the data collection and analysis outlined elsewhere.

The level of policy integration in a region can be measured by using a scale or ladder of integration, of the following sort, with 1) being completely ignorant about it, and 6) the most policy-integration. The six steps in the ladder are described as follows:

- 1) **Ignorance.** The lowest level of integration here is *not* the absence of interaction, but the ignorance of this interaction – whether consistency or contradiction – and the absence of efforts to manage this interactions, on the part of policy-makers. The invisibility of consistencies or contradictions may reflect the absence of a wider policy-review process – policy-scanning – including the absence of contact and discussion between policy-makers in different but adjacent fields. This represents the base-line of zero policy integration.
- 2) **Policy-scanning.** The first positive level of policy integration is the concern to identify possible policy interactions through policy-scanning and

exchange of information between policy-makers. Through this review process an initial list of candidate policy interventions can be identified that may interact with one another, although the nature (positive or negative) and degree of these interactions will remain to be determined. Policy-scanning can of course be more or less thorough and intensive, and information can be exchanged at different levels and different intervals.

- 3) **Evaluation of interactions.** Building upon the awareness of possible policy-interactions, and contact between the policy-makers, the next step in the movement towards greater policy integration is to evaluate these interactions amongst candidate policies. The measurement of interactions can be pursued through a combination of research and performance review, and should estimate their size and direction. This may be a complex process, will probably need to be on-going (given the frequency of policy and contextual change), and should narrow the field of interesting interactions down to a manageable number, and probably enable the focus to narrow down upon policy contradictions.
- 4) **Negotiated redesign.** Having identified certain policy-contradictions as significant targets for policy-integration, the next step is to work to minimise contradictions and to improve the consistency of policies with one another. This consistency may be achieved through various aspects of policy-redesign, in the nature and scope and delivery of the policy as an instrument. These design or redesign decisions will need to be negotiated between policy-makers, and may be expressed in a shared strategic framework, which will reflect agreements reached over objectives and priorities.
- 5) **Embedding.** Maximum integration can only be achieved gradually, when the efforts towards integration have been pursued over a period of time, have shown up areas of contradiction and conflict, measured and addressed these, and built up trust between participants. The interaction of policies is a perennial issue, and where achievements have been made in bringing greater consistency through policy-integration, then the mechanisms listed above should be built into institutional practices and procedures as ongoing practices.
- 6) **Institutional and territorial alignment.** There may however be recurrent difficulties and sticking points in the identification and removal of policy-contradictions, and the mutual alignment of interacting policies. In these circumstances, the realignment of institutional and territorial frameworks may be necessary, producing a common point of binding authority, greater territorial coterminosity, and arbitration procedures for building trust and resolving differences.

This ladder suggests ideal types of regions. When attempting to position a region on this ladder, the entirety of regional integrative strategies has to be evaluated on its merits. In a region as the Randstad there is an abundance of regional integrative strategies. Many of them presuppose other integrative

strategies or build upon these. Some aspects which are mentioned in the six steps of the ladder might be less visible in one strategy compared to another. A good example is the MIRT territorial agenda which is based on existing policy, and therefore does not aim at embedding it in society. The ladder is presented as an evaluative tool, but needs to be used in a reflective – not absolute – way.

8.0 THE TOOLKIT

Regional planning in Europe is characterized by high levels of complexity and variations in governance systems. There are for example important differences in legal constitutions, in political situation, in cultural values which are reflected in institutions and practices in the planning fields. Therefore there is no one single best practice for producing regional integrated strategy. All new methods and tools have to be contextualized, interpreted and adjusted to a specific planning situation. This toolkit deals literally with the three letters of the RIS: The Region, Integration and Strategies.

8.1 The region

The concept 'region' embraces 'soft' territories of cultural, economic or functional coherencies as well as 'hard' bordered administrative and political territories. In regional strategies soft as well as hard regions are addressed. The governance of regional strategy-making may be organized at the regional level, or devolved to a duality or a plurality of sub-regional territories, or raised up to the national level, or some combination of these.

		REGIONAL POLICY INTEGRATION		
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
REGIONAL GOVERNANCE CONSOLIDATION	Nationally centralised			
	Regional centralised	3		1
	Sub-regional bifurcated			
	Sub-regional pluralistic	2		4

Figure 2: How to improve regional strategy integration?

There may be a relationship between *regional governance consolidation* and *regional integrative strategy preparation*. It may be, for example, that the

consolidation of regional governance at the regional level will generally simplify regional integrative strategy preparation, making this more feasible by bringing it within the scope of a single agency of governance and a single authority structure. But it is also possible to argue the converse – that the less consolidation there is at the regional level, the more sub-regional governance agencies will want to cooperate – or compete – with one another by putting forward alternative templates for regional integration. In the toolkit, the two options are discussed.

It is emphasised that generally, the regional governance in West Europe has developed from a centralised hierarchical coordination executed by a single regional agency towards pluralistic governance. This new pluralistic arrangement may be more difficult to monitor, but it is also perhaps more conducive to joint action and strategies based upon networking between agencies in their own interest. In a complex and fluid economic environment it is also likely that multiple, overlapping geometries will be better suited to the territorial and sectoral integration of policies. The causal relationships here are unlikely to be straightforward, and if regional governance is to be achieved from the cooperation of sub-regional agencies, it will take time and effort to build up the trust that is required. Pressure from central government may also help to make this happen. If the agencies in a region want to improve policy integration, then two alternatives are available:

- a) On the one hand, the regional authorities could try to consolidate the regional governance framework by institutional means (arrow 2-1 in the above figure).
- b) On the other hand, the regional authorities could take as point of departure the pluralistic setting of agencies and try to make these act more jointly within the idea of an integrated regional strategy (arrow 2-4).

Turning from the theoretical to the practical situation, we suggest the following operational questions to be considered:

Operational questions – the region

- *Is our RIS region defined by administrative boundaries or functional relations?*
- *Where does it fit in the typology?*
- *Are you focusing upon consolidation of regional governance or regional strategy integration?*

8.2 Integration

Aspects of integrations: degree and scope

Degrees of integration are represented in figure 3 below. ‘Hierarchical integration’ (left) is about creating a comprehensive ordering of policies and initiatives. ‘Loosely coupled integration’ (centre) involves the search for an overall vision or framework that multiple actors and projects can relate to without a full integration of all elements and policies. Finally, ‘partial integration’ (right) involves different groupings of strategies playing in concert

with one another based upon mutual interests and familiarity with regional concerns. The means of integration vary in accordance with the degree of integration that is sought, from the 'hardest' administrative means (left) to the 'softest' means such as story-telling and joint visioning (right).

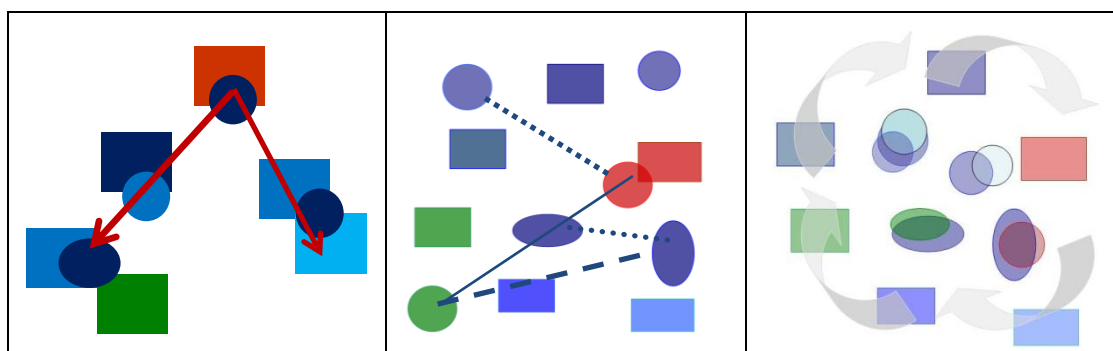


Figure 3: Making strategies work in concert ('Family-sizing'): from left to right. Hierarchical integration. Loosely coupled integration. Partial integration..

As noted earlier the need for integration arises in policies concerning sectors, territories, and organisations, as illustrated by figure 4.

Scope of integration	Objects of integration
<i>Sectoral integration</i> of different sectors and their agencies within a territory	Integrating policies
<i>Territorial integration</i> of a public policy domain between two or more territories (horizontal) and or policy levels (vertical)	Integrating actors
<i>Organisational integration</i> in order to facilitate a strategy and/or operational decision	Facilitating strategies

Figure 4: Scopes of integration

As noted earlier the need for integration arises in policies concerning sectors, territories, and organisations. Most of the case studies concern *sectoral integration* of different policy domains within a given territory, and *territorial integration* of public policy domains between different territories. Especially, when regional strategies are governed at the regional level, by administrative regions, both sector integration and territorial integration is at stake. When strategy making is taking place in extended policy territories, it is likely that the system perspective changes to *organisation integration*, focusing upon goals, strategies and visions. To clarify what kind of integration is at stake, one should consider:

Operational questions- integration

- *What degree of integration is relevant (figure 3)?*
- *What is the scope of integration (figure 4)*
 - *Sectoral within a territory?*
 - *Topical across territories or across political levels?*
 - *Organisational between actors?*

The governance framework of integration

The governance of regional strategy may be nationally centralised, regionally centralised, sub-regionally bifurcated or sub-regionally pluralistic (as defined above). The idea of a unified and all-encompassing RIS is associated with hierarchical planning approaches, where a single regional authority has the resources and competences for making regional strategies. Strategies in this situation typically focus on sector and territorial integration. In most European Countries there has however been a turn away from the centralised to the pluralistic regional governance pattern. Pluralistic governance is fragmented, characterised by several actors possessing the authority to make strategies at the regional level without a clear ordering of the strategies and with overlapping competences (figure 5).

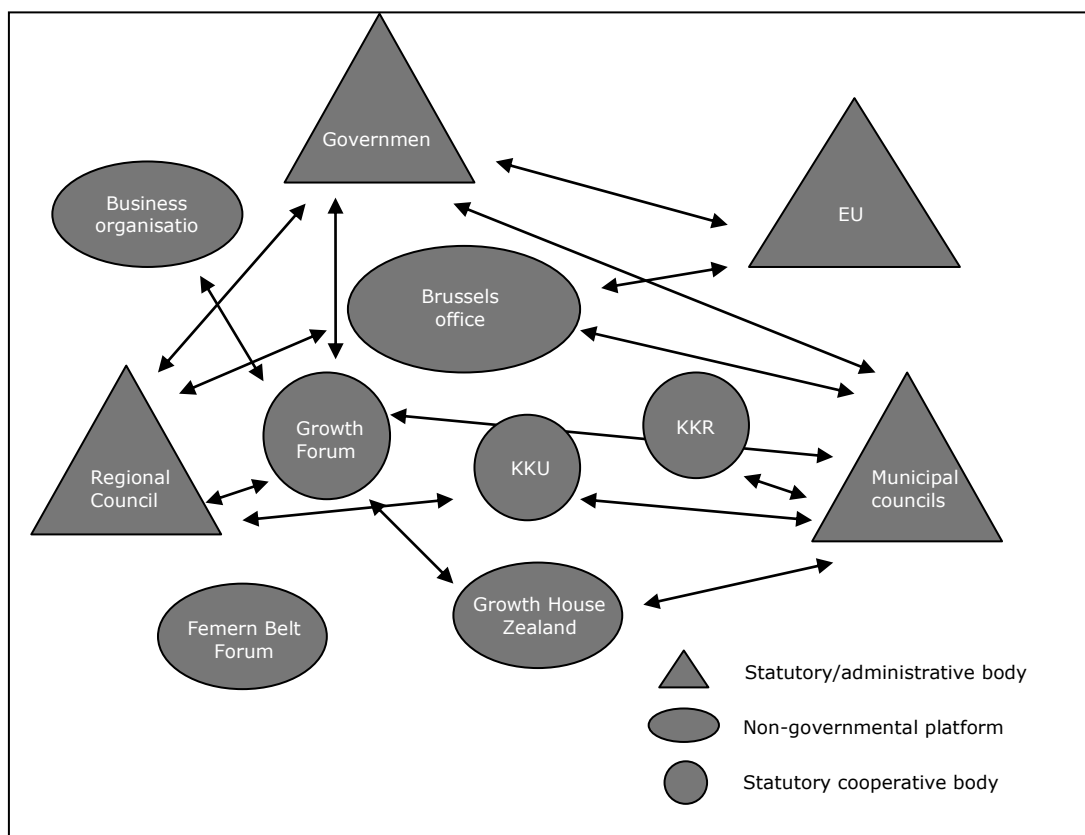


Figure 5: Pluricentric regional governance system. Zeeland Region. KKU is a political coordination council between region and municipalities. KKR is a political coordination council between municipalities.

The different governance situations, the *nationally centralized, regionally centralized, sub-regionally bifurcated, sub-regionally pluralistic* establish different conditions for making a RIS; and the tools and methods differ accordingly. Within pluralistic governance, it is relevant to distinguish between two different types, as revealed by the stakeholder regions (figure 6):

Type 1 (vertical pluralistic governance): formed by public authorities focused on coordination of decision making between non-intersecting general-purpose and hierarchical ordered territorial jurisdictions.

Type II (horizontal pluralistic governance) formed by private actors and public authorities in a complex and fluid patchwork of innumerable, overlapping jurisdictions centred around particular tasks or policy problems.

In order to clarify the interplay between the governance situation and the scope for integration we suggest considering the questions below:

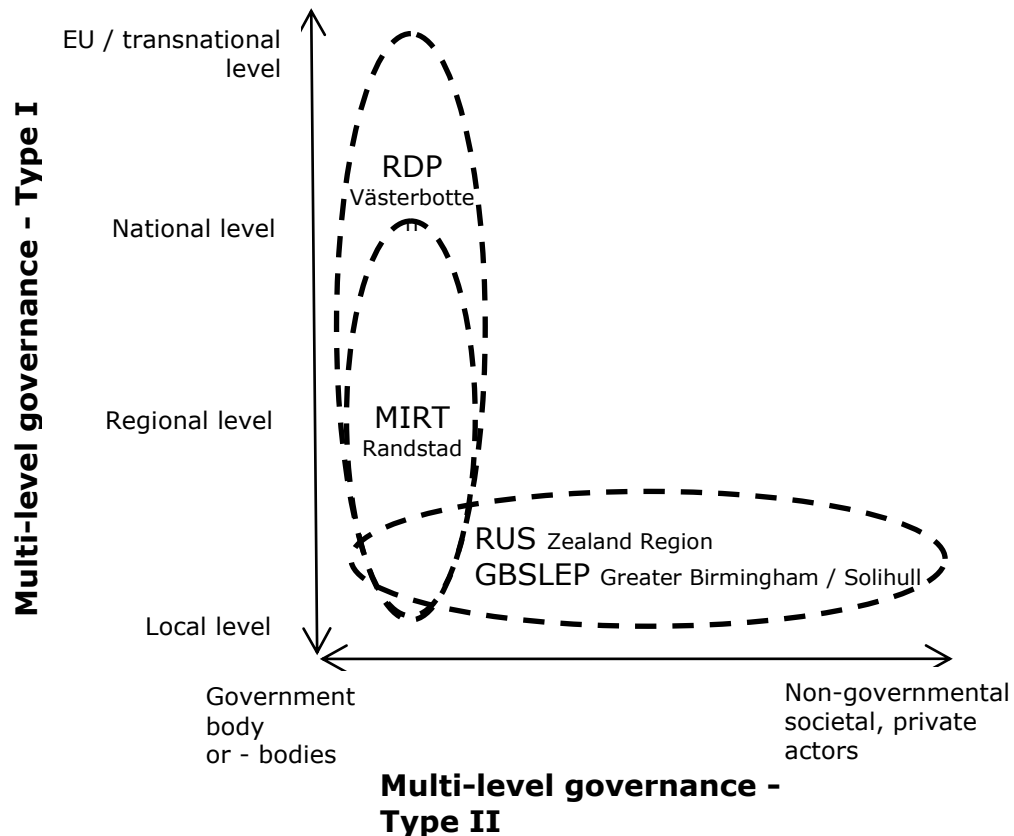


Figure 6: Multi-level governance matrix – Type I and Type II. The example of the MIRT Territorial Agenda, Zealand Region development strategy (RUS), Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) and Västerbotten Regional Development Program (RDP)

Operational questions – governance situation:

- Which kind of governance system predominates in the region – nationally centralized, regionally centralized, sub-regionally bifurcated, sub-regionally pluralistic?
- Does this governance system accord with type I or II?
- Is it possible to subordinate other regional strategies? Or is it more convenient to work towards loosely coupled strategies or family-sizing?
- What are the interdependencies between regional actors?
- What is the history of collaboration and strategy making?
- What are the main challenges in relation to policy integration in our governance situation?

Integration through collaboration and sense-making

In order to deal with the challenges of integration in a pluralistic governance system, further consideration of the relations between actors is needed. In a pluralistic situation, a strategy obtains its power from the networking, communication and negotiation between important actors. The model below illustrates important elements in the movement towards integration through collaboration (figure 7).

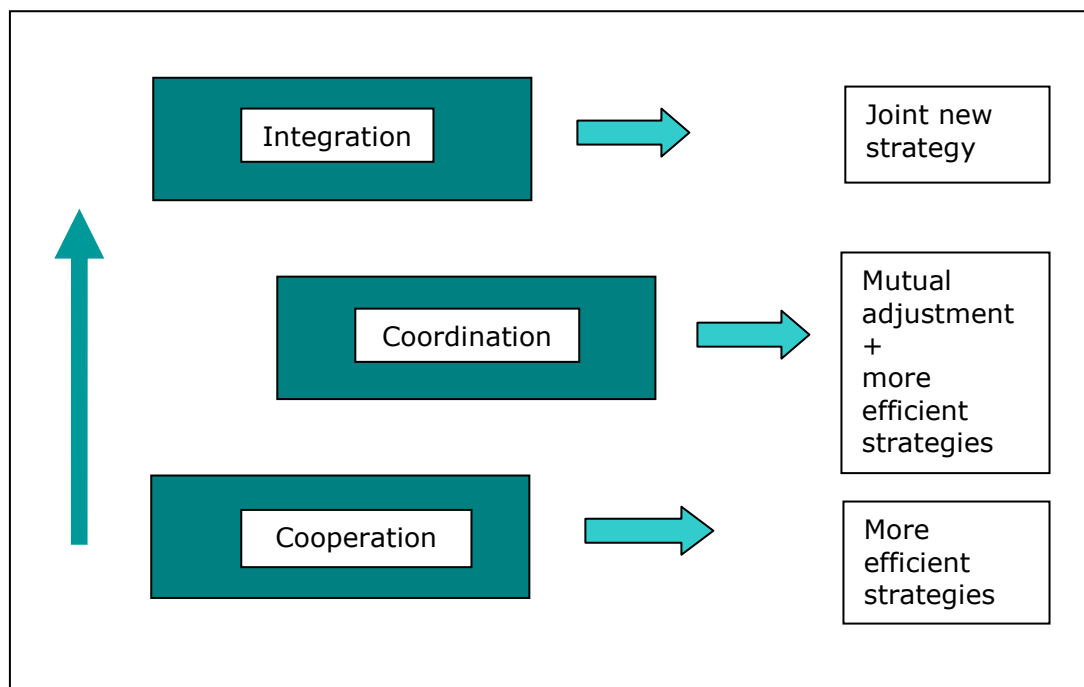


Figure 7: Key concepts of integration; revised from Stead & Meijers 2009

Cooperation between key regional actors is essential to move upwards in the model towards coordination or integration. Cooperation is about collaboration based on interdependency between actors. The purpose at the lowest level is to achieve some form of adjustment in sector policies in order to make these more efficient. When cooperation achieves *coordination*, the outcome of strategies is understood, and there is mutual adjustment to avoid allergy and to maximise synergy.

The most elevated kind of collaboration, *integration*, is formed by the management and linking of actors, organisations and networks across sectoral, territorial and other boundaries using the synergy to make a new joint strategy. Close collaboration between stakeholders on the basis of trust is crucial. The following are important issues to enhance integration:

- The development of a common understanding and appreciation of integration, which has to be recreated continuously.
- A positive attitude and culture in the administrative and political system towards cross-actor and cross-sector cooperation.
- The opportunity to gain or retain resources is a driver for collaboration and integration.

- Networking between all the different actors is essential. This involves selecting the right actors to be involved, designing and facilitation network cooperation and framing the cooperative activities.
- Rules and procedures for cooperation and integration should be developed in the course of this networking, between those involved.

In order to enhance policy integration the following operational questions on collaboration and sense-making should be considered:

Operational questions – collaboration and sense-making

- *What trustful collaborations have been established in the RIS region?*
- *How can relations be established, mobilised, facilitated and framed to work towards a common goal and strategy?*
- *How can the necessity of collaboration and a common meaning and understanding about regional issues be formed through story-telling and discursive framing?*
- *How can new linkages be established between networks and strategies to stress the multidimensional aspect of regional space?*
- *How can networks and collaborations connect to formal political institutions to legitimize the strategy?*
- *How can different conflicting interests, values and perspectives be transformed into consensus about the regional development?*
- *How can we make sure that all partners benefit from the integration and collaboration?*

8.3 Strategies

From the questions about the region and integration we turn to the question of strategies. What is a strategy? Strategic planning developed along with the needs to substitute former rational managerial planning instruments suited for operating in relatively 'safe' and predictable environments by new instruments capable for coping with uncertainties and unpredictable environments, needs for cooperation and needs for re-imagining the identities of a city or region. A model for strategic planning is the 'strategic circle' (figure 8). It shows the *key elements for consideration and learning processes* of the strategic agents, e.g. a city or region: (1) the outer world of the territory, (2) the role of the city or economic functioning area, (3) visions for the future for the city or economic functioning area and (4) the stakeholders sharing the vision. The four elements are located in circular order to avoid linear reasoning. They are related to each other under four headings: Functional position, opportunities, joint visioning and spatial positioning.

Functional position – role and outside world

In the strategic analysis, the role of a city or a region is seen as changing in an external world, when new divisions of labour between territories develop, caused e.g. by regional enlargement or globalisation of economic and functional relations. Re-imagining a city, urban region or wider territory is important for the translation into priorities for area investment, conservation

measures, strategic infrastructure investments and principles of land use regulation.

Search for potentials

The search for local unique development potentials and comparative advantages has come into the fore along with a shift of focus from problem-solving to searching for new roles and visions. At the national and EU levels, plans have been substituted by development perspectives building upon 'growth corridors', 'development zones', 'clusters', 'cooperation areas' and other concepts exposing territorial potentials rather than territorial problems.

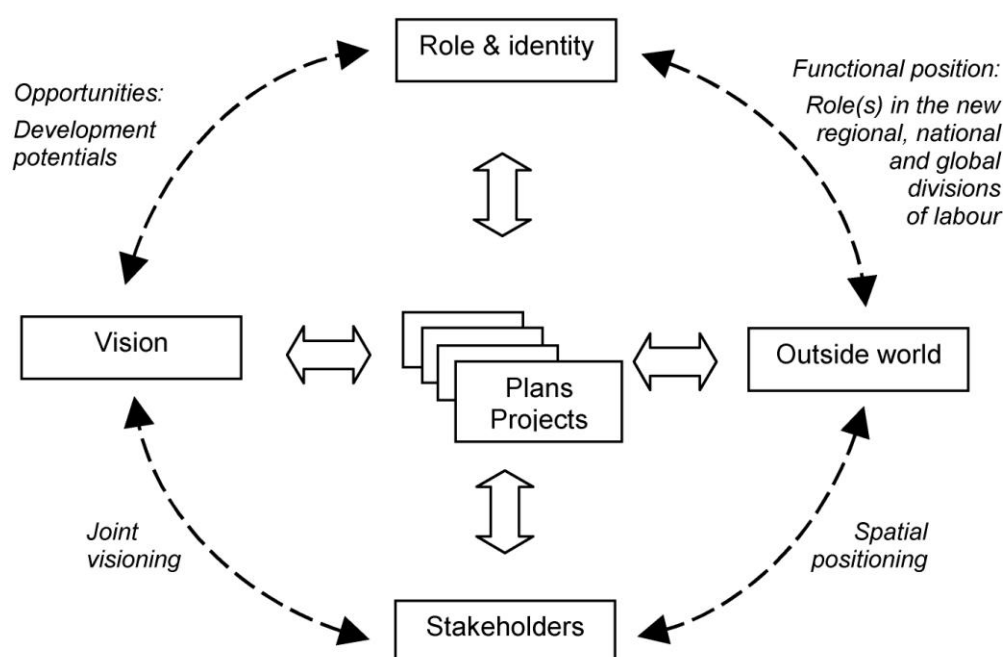


Figure 8: The strategic circle elaborated from Groth (2011)

Search for visions

Territorial strategies depend crucially upon collaboration between stakeholders sharing joint visions for the future. Visions and images for the future produce new frameworks for action and redefine social and economic limits and political and administrative boundaries. Therefore story-telling and vision campaigns are important instruments for mobilising and forming working consensus among stakeholders.

Spatial positioning

In the process between stakeholders and the outside world spatial positioning is a most important tool for "identifying opportunities, comparative advantages and possibilities on the basis of which new links and relationships could be developed and strategic policies formulated" (Williams 1996). Spatial positioning reveals new geographical settings of optional stakeholder formation in relation with shared policy interests. The mobilisation of stakeholders is not restricted by administrative boundaries, as Figure 9 shows. On the contrary, mobilising stakeholders is an act of forming or reproducing territories.

Circular not linear

Strategic reasoning differs from rational reasoning in several aspects. Rational reasoning takes for granted the decision maker, the branch or sector of operation and the tools of the decision maker. Rational reasoning set up goals as fix-points for the development of an optimal planning solution. Strategic planning differs from this paradigm. Strategic planning may start at the initiative of some decision maker. But the decision maker is searching for stakeholders. He doesn't operate with fixed goals. Due to changed circumstances in the outer world he looks for new meaning and identities of the territory he acts from, i.e. the city or the region. If he operated from a certain branch or sector, he is prepared to go beyond the borders. Thus, the strategic planning process doesn't start and end, it is a process constantly iterating between observations of the outer world, re-imagination of the local territorial identity, visioning new futures in cooperation with stakeholders and the general public and searching potentials in new functional territories.

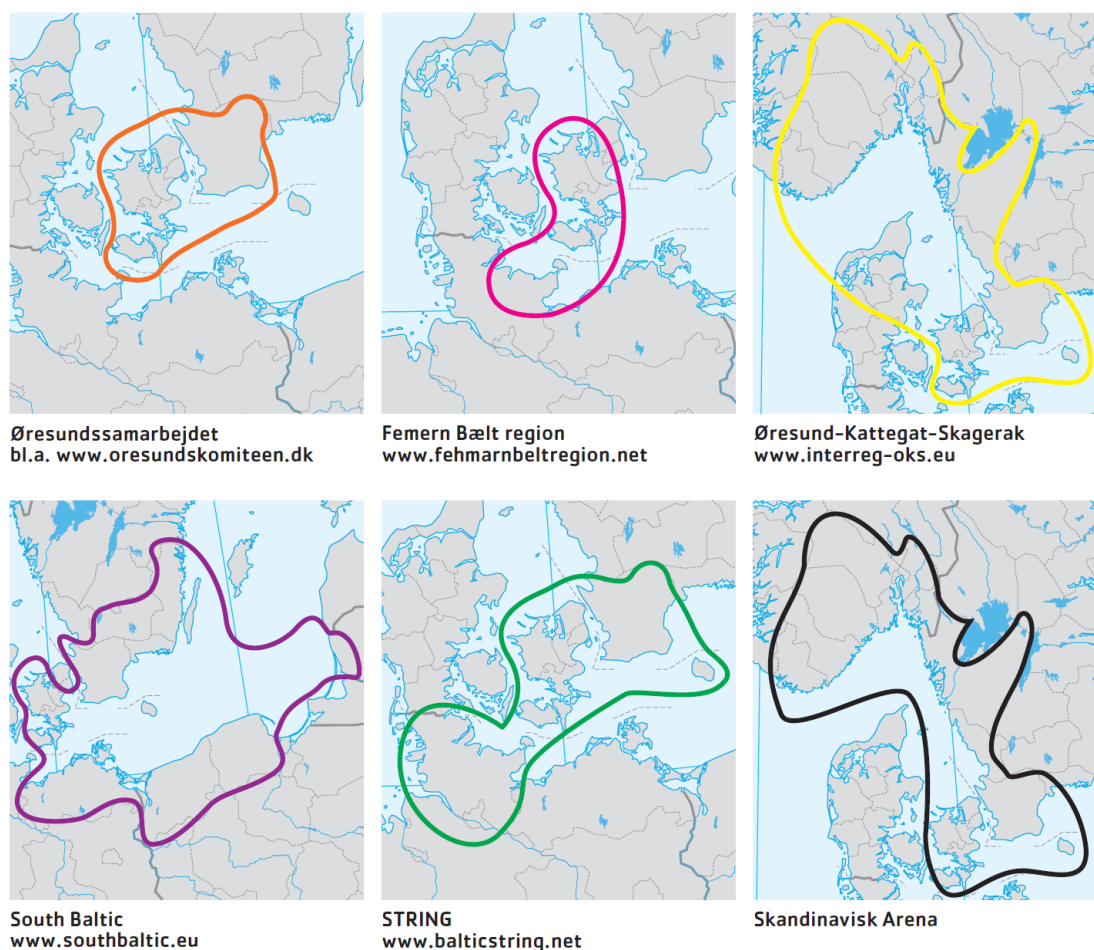


Figure 9: The variety of overlapping policy territories identified by Zealand Region

Linking strategies and projects

The case studies reveal a great attention on linking regional strategies and concrete actions and projects in the territory. In line with the circular strategic reasoning, the links between strategies and concrete actions are reciprocal. Strategic reasoning opens up for projects and actions and – the other way round – concrete initiatives are often step-stones for strategic reasoning.

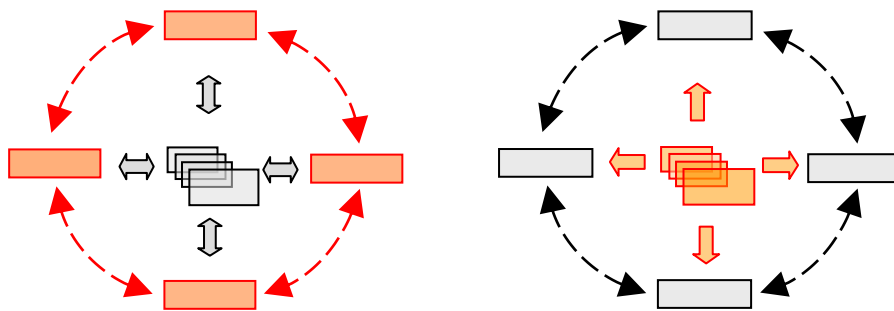


Figure 10: Strategy-driven implementation and project-driven strategy-making.

Strategy-driven projects and actions

Most regional governing actors are expecting that projects and concrete actions are the outcome of strategic reasoning. Therefore, efforts on setting up indicators measuring the outcomes of strategies are often seen at all levels of strategy making, from EU strategies to regional strategies. It should be noticed, however, that in practice political decision-making usually requires stepwise decisions. Thus, setting up a strategy, usually doesn't include the realisation of concrete projects. New decision making has to take place for authorising the concrete action. At this moment, when politicians realise the concrete impacts of the strategy, they often ask for adjustments of the entire strategy or the project. These stepwise decisions further processes of continuously iterative adjustments.

Project-driven strategies

The strategic planning process doesn't have to start with reasoning. Very often, concrete projects tabled by an investor, a developer or funding programmes kick-off the strategic process. A prime example is the Dutch MIRT programmes. These national programmes offer value added over existing local policies. Referring to the strategic circle, the coordination of plans and projects by the stakeholders in the light of a vision for regional future is in focus as illustrated by figure 11.

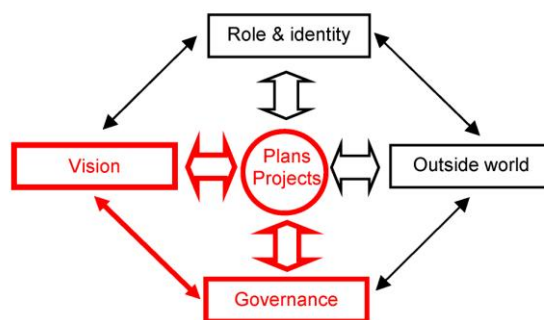


Figure 11. The MIRT Territorial Agenda

Strategic profiles

The strategic circle reveals an ideal process. In executing strategic planning in practice, emphasis is laid upon different elements, resulting in different profiles of strategic planning. Thus, the elements of the strategic circle should

be applied in accordance with the needs of specific situation, as indicated by figure 12.

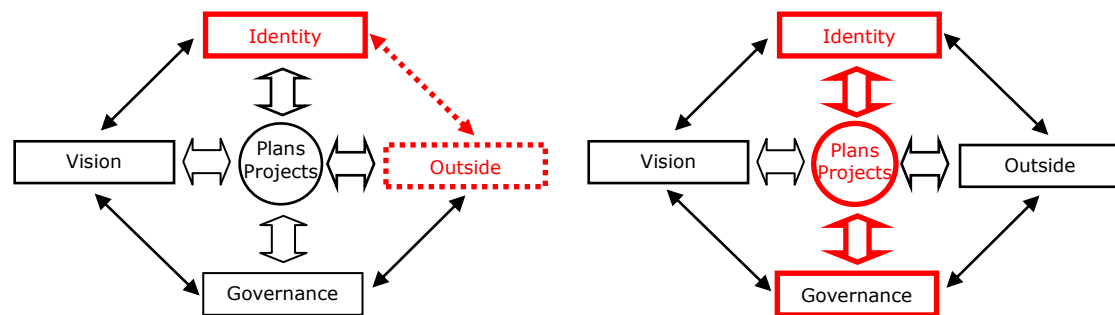


Figure 12: Strategic profiles, two examples. Left: identity-driven strategy. It was used by a region in order to clarify the new identity following from a recent administrative reform. **Right: cooperation-driven strategy.** It was used by a governmental and non-governmental regional authorities and organisation as part of maturing governance process.

Operational questions – strategy

- *Are the relations with the outside world threatening or promising new roles of the region in a national or global division of labour?*
- *Is there a need or prospects in re-imagining the regional identity?*
- *What are the regional potentials for strengthening the role or identity of the region taking into account the vision for the future?*
- *Has a vision for the future of the region been elaborated jointly with regional stakeholders?*
- *Which economic, functional or strategic territories, other than the administrative regional territory, are ripe with opportunities for new strategies jointly with stakeholders outside the region?*
- *Are there currently large plans or projects (decided or in the pipe-line) that could form the driver of a new regional strategy?*

8.4 Checklists

In the annex an extended version of the tool-kit, illustrated by examples from the RISE stakeholder regions, is presented. Besides examples, the extended tool-kit includes a ‘ladder of integration’ and checklists on level of integration, regional situation and integration and strategic reasoning.

9.0 CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

In this concluding Chapter, we summarise some of the general lessons for policy makers concerning RIS formulation and implementation. These observations are taken from the experience of RIS formulation and implementation in the four RISE case study regions – and from the discussions that have taken place in and around the development of the RIS ToolKit. It has not been our intention to provide a prescriptive ‘recipe book’ for policy makers, and other stakeholders involved in the formulation and implementation of Regional Integrated Strategies. We recognise that territorial policy making is neither a wholly rational, nor even an easy ‘linear’ activity – rather policy making and policy implementation are complicated and multi-

dimensional *political-relational-technical* activities that are highly influenced by 'context'. The many useful practice ideas and methods contained in the RIS ToolKit provide a good general guide for policy makers and practitioners. It is clear that in 'operationalising' the RIS Toolkit, significant account will need to be taken of the differing regional contexts across the EU.

What the RISE project did

The RISE study group - the stakeholders in the four case study areas together with the four research institutions - have worked intensively over a period of 18 months to improve our understanding of RIS processes. To summarise the study process:

- A number of 'steering' meetings have been held at key points throughout the project to review progress and exchange RIS knowledge and experience. These 'learning' sessions have involved both researchers and stakeholders from the four RIS regions;
- Each research institution has organised workshops in their case region where the RISE research findings have been discussed; these events have allowed both stakeholders and researchers to develop a common understanding of the nature of the integrative strategy-making process(es) underway in their own region;
- During these regional workshops, the findings from the other regional case studies have been presented and discussed;
- The many insights that have emerged from the debates and discussions in these workshops have been used as the building blocks for the RIS Toolkit;
- Throughout this process, draft RISE reports – including the case study reports - have been shared with the stakeholders, and other interested parties within the case study areas, for comments and validation.

What are the general lessons concerning RIS formulation and implementation?

Where EU sub-national spatial planning and development are concerned, policy formulation and implementation activities now involve many different public sector, third sector and private sector entities operating across different territorial scales. RIS stakeholders may have very different political agendas, as well as different resources and technical capacities. At the regional (and sub-regional) scale, and from a broad leadership and management perspective, this increasingly means promoting *trust, collaborative working, more ready sharing of knowledge and information, and the pooling of resources* over an extended period of time; combined with a focus on identifying and exploiting new *territorial interdependencies*; and a willingness to stimulate and embed the next generation of spatial policy innovation(s) that are required to address the interrelated challenges of economic growth, employment, continuing demographic change, energy sustainability and territorial cohesion. The practitioner insights that have emerged from the four RISE case studies concerning the 'strategic conduct' and 'strategic analysis' features of RISs (discussed above in the main body of this report) suggest that there are a number of *perennial* aspects of policy formulation and implementation that should inform RIS approaches more generally. At the

most basic level, RIS approaches - whilst needing to take account of the wider socio-economic development context (regional, national and global) – should be:

- Tailored to the particular and distinctive economic, social and environmental needs of different regions; and at different times and in different locations within the region;
- Aware of the particular and distinctive possibilities and constraints of differing regional leadership and governance arrangements, and the available financial, technical and human resources, across the regions of the twenty-seven EU Member States.

We can also imagine that ‘effective’ RIS formulation and implementation activities, should be informed, 1) by the latest policy-related insights drawn from theoretical sources (for example, in relation to the relevance of *adaptive* and *flexible* approaches to integrative working, and their explanations); and 2) by the learning that can be derived from ‘good’ regional and sub-regional policy experiences from around the globe. As a very general ‘rule of thumb’ – RIS formulation and implementation should also be underpinned by the following thinking. A RIS approach should involve:

Pluralistic and Inclusive Governance

Policy integration at the regional level takes place in a political and administrative environment which is becoming ever more complex. For practitioners, operating in this complicated and more shared and interdependent RIS world is not easy. What comes out of the four RISE regional case studies is that there are different ways to respond to governance challenges. It is important to note, however, that there are some important overall lessons evident (albeit with some case variation) across the four RISE cases:

- No one individual or organisation alone makes a successful regional integrated strategy;
- ‘Effective’ RIS formulation and implementation will be the product of highly collaborative inter-organisational working that is characterised by an atmosphere of genuine openness and accountability;
- Beyond the immediate stakeholders, policy makers will need to gather, analyse and incorporate the views and needs of other interested parties including businesses, local communities, minorities, the disabled, older people.

In order to develop, and embed, a pluralistic and inclusive approach to tackling complex RIS challenges, communication and transparency is essential and are at the heart of 21st century spatial planning and economic development policy.

Total policy integration is an ideal that is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve – but it should remain an important strategic RIS aspiration. In terms of

ensuring that a good degree of policy integration is taking place across a given territory the following priorities for policy makers are suggested:

- Ensure that **sectoral integration** is occurring in its two sub-forms, and hence; 1) is there evidence, for example, of good levels of integration between different but interdependent policy 'silos'? This type of cross-sectoral integration may occur at different administrative and spatial scales; and 2) is there evidence of good levels of stakeholder integration across the public, private and voluntary sector?
- Ensure that **territorial integration** is occurring. Is there, for example, good evidence of a 'joined-up' approach to spatial policy (in terms of spatial policy formulation and implementation activities) between neighbouring territories?;
- Ensure that **organizational integration** is occurring. Is there evidence, for example, of good levels of meaningful collaborative working occurring between stakeholders? This means that policy makers must pay attention to strategic integration (for the alignment of linked strategies, programmes and initiatives); and operational integration (for the alignment of related delivery mechanisms), including 'joining-up' (strategic) spatial visions, objectives and spatial concepts on the one hand - and 'joining-up' operational decision-making (for the overview and management of 'real' investments on the ground) on the other hand.

Whilst good 'soft' relations between stakeholders are important, integrative working does sometimes require some 'hard' incentive. The RIS Toolkit sets out how the good governance of policy formulation and implementation can provide this.

Learning-Oriented Approach

In all four RISE cases, although again with some local case variation, we see stakeholders that consider their RIS to be an ongoing learning process – where an important body of regionally relevant (theoretical and practical) knowledge on spatial planning and development is being continually developed and exploited over time. Consequently, where we find the RIS process operating 'at its best':

- Stakeholders are looking to create an 'ambience' in the RIS environment that will encourage *collaborative learning to occur*;
- Policy making involves *the mobilisation of inclusive, cross-functional and cross-disciplinary approaches to learning and innovation* that are driving the processes of continuing RIS adaptation and renewal over time;
- By encouraging the interactive learning that underpins the co-design and co-implementing activities of RIS's, stakeholders are trying together to surface innovative policy solutions;
- Stakeholders are working at sharing knowledge across all levels of the RIS process (so across territorial, organisational and sectoral boundaries; and are making attempts to facilitate open and non-prejudicial dialogue between diverse stakeholders).

In the context of regional development in Europe, an effective RIS is likely to demonstrate:

- A thorough grasp of the unique identity, functioning and needs of the area;
- An understanding of how these characteristics (physical, economic, social, cultural, environmental, political, institutional and so on) can be harnessed, capitalised upon, transformed and strengthened;
- For the purposes of 'continuing improvement' - a keenness to evaluate policy performance and policy outcomes and without prejudice.

Vision and Potential

RIS policy makers must avoid becoming overly inward-looking. Whilst regions and sub-regions clearly matter a great deal - it is important to place an understanding of the potential for regional spatial policy innovation(s) within a 'bigger' understanding of wider competitive trends and related policy innovation(s) emerging at national and international scales. The regional and the global are interdependent – albeit that different types of 'regional-global' interdependencies will play through different EU territories. Evidence-based 'visioning' is important – a RIS is concerned with accommodating and exploiting the conditions of change over the medium to longer term. However, too many 'visions' are likely to be unhelpful from the operational perspective. It may be necessary at times for the RIS leadership to ensure a 'deliberate simplification' of longer term agendas if they are to motivate, and make sense, to those tasked with the 'everyday' delivery of policy on the ground. Finally, policy makers should hold on to the idea that a regional integrative strategy is not a final plan, but a dynamic process that 'blends' both current needs and future potential – and it must be able to adapt to wider changes in the global economy, society and environment. Integrative working is, and perhaps forever must be, a 'work in progress'.

Further Research

The RISE project suggests that two key conditions for the achievement of integration between regional policies are the form of regional governance, and the nature of the regional policy coordination processes. Governance structures can be organised to promote or to inhibit policy-coordination processes. It is possible to argue that pluralistic regional governance offers greater opportunities for the redefinition of territories and for the flexible inclusion of different stakeholders. But it is also possible to argue that this makes policy-coordination and strategy integration much more difficult to accomplish. At a more technical level, research questions also arise regarding the techniques that can most usefully be used to measure the interaction between policies, and the harmonised of these around certain priorities.

GLOSSARY

DEMIFER	Demographic and Migratory Flows affecting European Regions and Cities
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESPON	European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion
EU	European Union
FOCI	Future Orientation for Cities
FP7	Framework Programme 7
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GISCO	Geographical Information System of the Commission
GBSLEP	Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership
IBU-Öresund	Infrastruktur og Byudvikling i Øresundsregionen
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KKR	Kommunernes kontaktråd (Local Government Contact Council) NL
KKU	Kontaktudvalget (The Contact Committee)
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
MIRT	Meerjarenprogramma Infrastructuur, Ruimte en Transport (The Dutch national long-term programme for infrastructure, territory and transportation)
MIT	Meerjarenprogramma Infrastructuur en Transport (The (former) Dutch national long-term programme for infrastructure and transportation)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSPA	Northern Sparsely Populated Areas
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPS	Purchasing Power Standard
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RERISK	Regions at Risk of Energy Poverty
RIS	Regional Integrated Strategies
RISE	Regional Integrated Strategies in Europe
RTP	Regionalt Tillväxtprogram (Regional Growth Programme)
RUP	Regional Development Plan in Denmark
RUP	Regional Development Programme in Sweden
RUS	Regional Development Strategy in Sweden
TEDI	Territorial Diversity
UK	United Kingdom
WGR	Wet Gemeenschappelijke Regelingen (Dutch Law on municipal cooperation)
WGR-plus region	Enforced cooperation between municipalities with a number of explicitly defined competences which 'normal' WGR bodies cannot have in the field of spatial planning, housing, traffic and transport, economic affairs and environment. The cooperation is based on the Law on municipal cooperation.

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