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RISE
Regional Integrated Strategies in Europe

Targeted Analysis 2013/2/11

ANNEX 7: Extended Tool-Kit, 15/7/2012

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With generous contributions from the research team

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1.0   THE RISE TOOLKIT

The regional planning situations in Europe are characterized by a high complexity and variations in governance and planning situations. There are important differences in legal constitutions, in political situation, in cultural norms and values which are reflected in formal and informal institutions and behavior in the planning fields. The same variation we find in our case study areas. Therefore one single best practice of making regional integrated strategy does not exist: It depends on the context. All new methods and tools for reasons of transferability (see chapter 2) have to be contextualized, interpreted and adjusted to a specific planning situation.

The toolkit will present a range of operational models, questions and recommendations that can be used as inspiration for learning elaboration of a regional integrated strategy in its individual context.

The toolkit deals literally with the three letters of the RIS: The **R**egion, **I**ntegration and **S**trategies. Each section concludes with a number of operational questions which practitioners may use to get a clearer picture of what they are aiming at when developing a RIS for their region. A toolkit is not a box with ready-made instruments how to develop a RIS but only to get a clearer picture of what questions should be answered in the process towards a RIS.

2.0   THE REGION

The concept 'region' is ambiguous, 'soft' delimited cultural, economic or functional territorial coherencies as well as 'hard' constitutionally defined administrative and political territories. In regional strategies soft as well as hard delimited regions are addressed. The point of departure is the regional council or other regional statutory cooperational bodies, administratively and politically responsible for developing regional strategies. However, in formulation of strategies, the administrative regions realize that often broader economic and functional regional settings are needed for the formulation of strategies building upon the drivers and issues of e.g. business clusters, functional relations, cultural identities or potentials for future regional development. The broader conceptualisation of the regional, is thus at stake. The plethora of regional strategic cooperation in the Randstad offers a prime example. This plethora is mainly caused by the fact that the official regions at the intermediate level (the provinces) do not match the (Randstad) areas showing high degrees of functional integration, but also because integrative strategy competences are spread over different actors and administrative levels. Figure 1 shows the variety of overlapping territories of administrations and governmental cooperation bodies.

The Regional Development Strategy of Zealand Region illustrates how the regional council extended the administratively defined Zealand Region into a variety of policy territories, each relevant for a focused topical strategy in cooperation with neighbouring regions (see figure 11).
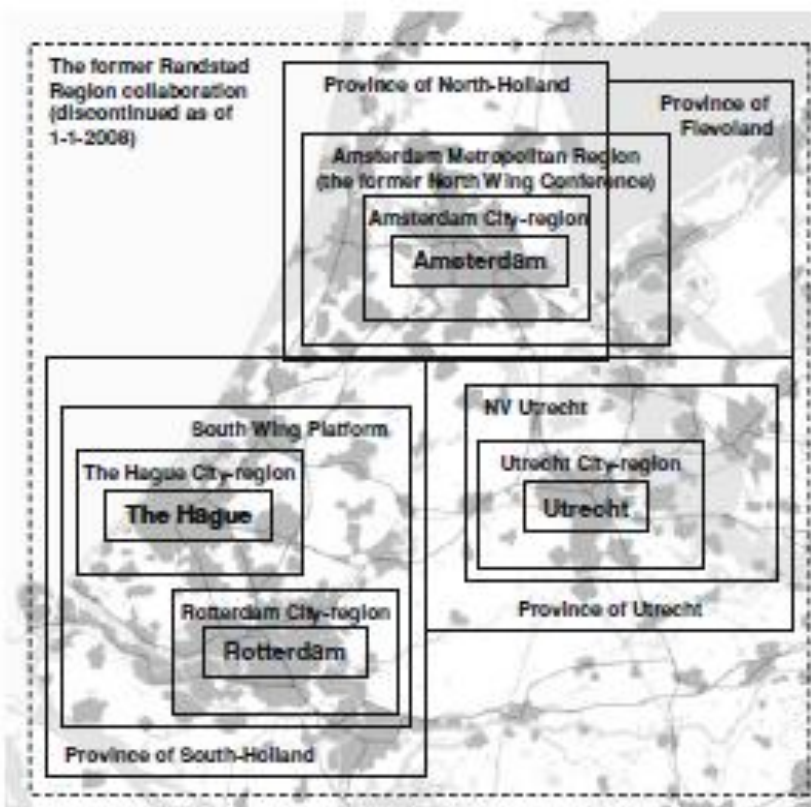
Figure 1: The variety of overlapping policy territories identified for the Randstad Region

As discussed in the Main Report, the governance consolidation of administrative regions differs widely – from pluralistic sub-regional to unified regional regions (see figure 2). Even more, the governance consolidation in the extended policy territories differs and is generally characterized by a lower degree of governance consolidation.

The diversity of regional settings offers a diversity of options for regional policy integration. The strong consolidated region is supposed to be better positioned for conducting regional integrated strategies (figure 2, position 1), whereas the weakly consolidated region is supposed to be left with few means for conducting regional integrated strategies (figure 2, position 2). If a unified region was not able to conduct regional integrated strategies (figure 2, position 3), it is supposed to have powers to improve the situation. It is only a question of internal management. Finally, regional integrated strategies have been developed in pluralistic settings facilitated by the growing concern for pluri-centric coordination (figure 2, position 4).

The interesting situation occurs in situation 2, when the region in question wants to improve policy integration. Two alternatives are available. On the one hand, the regional authority could try to consolidate the regional governance framework by institutional means (arrow 2-1). On the other hand, the regional authority could take as point of departure the pluralistic setting

regional, national, local, private and public agencies and try to make them act more jointly within the idea of an integrated regional strategy (arrow 2-4).

		REGIONAL POLICY INTEGRATION		
		Small	Medium	Large
REGIONAL GOVERNANCE CONSOLIDATION	Unified Regional	3		1
	Bifurcated Sub-regional			
	Pluralistic Sub-regional	2		4

Figure 2: How to improve regional strategy integration?

In the section below, we shall discuss further, the meaning and tools for policy integration, focusing upon arrow 2-4 rather than arrow 2-1. This is because coordination and integration usually are to be found in pluralistic sub-regional settings rather than unified regional settings, since 1) the re-arrangement of administrative regions and competences is in most countries very difficult to realize and since 2) there will always be a mismatch between any administrative division and territorial patterns of functional integration.

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?*

3.0   INTEGRATION

Aspects of integrations: degree and scope

In this study it has been convenient to distinguish between the strength of integration and what kind of activities are being integrated.

Degrees of integration are imaged in figure 3. The first image represents full and hierarchical integration to create a comprehensive ordering of policies and initiatives. Different strategies are kept in line with an overall strategy and subordinated according to each other. In Zealand Region, the first Regional Development Strategy (RIS) operated from this idea of integration in the effort to make the Regional Development Strategy the highest ranking strategy in the region.

Similarly the RIS's in Västerbotten are established within a policy framework stretching vertically from the EU level to the regional level.
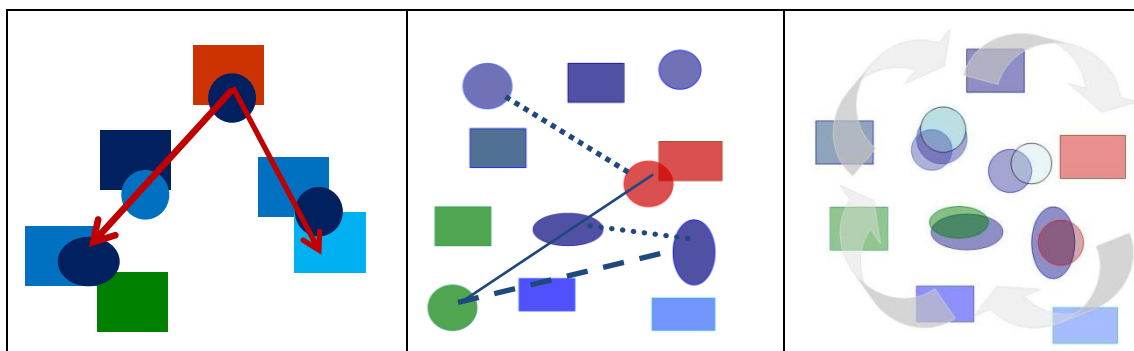
Figure 3: Degrees of integration: From left to right. Hierarchical integration. Loosely coupled integration. Partial integration: making strategies work in concert ('Family-sizing').

'Loosely coupled integration' visualised in the second image, is characterised by 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. The notion of loosely coupled strategies describes the situation. In region Zealand the planning department still strives for this form of integration while the politicians' ambitions are more concerned with the last image of family-zising.

Finally, 'partial integration' is established through making different groupings of strategies play in concert based upon mutual interests and familiarity with regional concern. Families of strategies are formed. The means of integration vary in accordance with the degree of integration, from the 'hardest' administrative means (left) to the 'softest' means such as story telling and joint visioning. From this position, a RIS is a dynamic document, not a final product. It is unfinished business illustrating a contemporary "resting" between competing concepts, understandings and interest in regional development. The Dutch case of the MIRT territorial agenda combines elements of type 2 and type 3. In the context of type 2 the MIRT territorial agenda adds a new layer based on loosely coupled existing plan and policy frameworks. The territorial agendas can also be seen as a new plan in the middle of figure 3.

Policy integration deals with different issues in regional development and the question is next *what the RIS is supposed to integrate?*

In the case studies we found useful to distinguish between sectoral, territorial and organisational integration, cf. figure 4.

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

Figure 4: Different elements of integration

Most of the cases operate with *sector integration* of different policy domains and their associated actors within a given territory and *territorial integration* of public policy domains between different territories. Especially, when regional strategies are conducted by the administratively defined regions, 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.
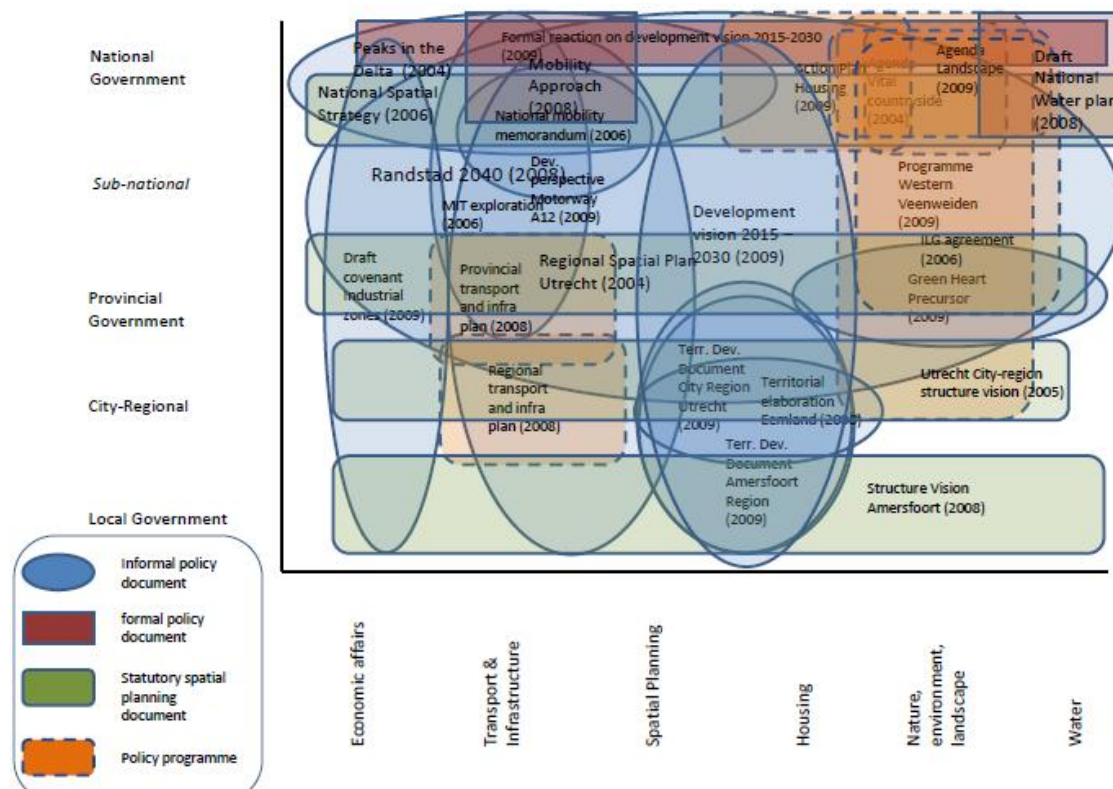
Figure 5: Overview of policy documents feeding into the MIRT Territorial Agenda Utrecht

One should notice that changing the perspective of policy integration may be a crucial tool of strategy making, e.g. during a learning process. As for example, in the first Regional Development Strategy, Zealand Region operated with sector and territorial integration, whereas the second Regional

Development Strategy changed focus to organizational integration and the policy problem perspective, e.g. integration about climate and education.

The Dutch MIRT territorial agenda combines elements of sectoral integration and territorial integration. There are no elements of organisational integration. Figure 5 reveals an example of overlapping sectoral documents (cross sectoral integration) from overlapping administrative and cooperative levels (vertical integration).

In order to clarify what kind of integration is at stake, one should consider

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Operational questions- integration
- *What degree of integration is relevant (figure 4)?*
- *What is the scope of integration (figure 5)*
    - *Sectoral within a territory?*
    - *Topical across territories or across political levels?*
    - *Organisational between actors?*
- *Is it feasible to change level or scope of integration?*
    - *Inclusion of strategies or sectors that formerly was left out?*

The governance framework of integration

The case studies show clearly that the regional governance framework is important for the possibility and success of making a RIS.

The idea of a full blown overall and all-encompassing RIS relates to former hierarchical planning situations where a single regional authority had the formal powers, competences and responsibilities for making regional strategies. Strategies in this situation typically focused on sector and territorial integration. Figure 6 illustrates such a hierarchical system in Denmark in the 1970th just after regional planning was made obligatory.
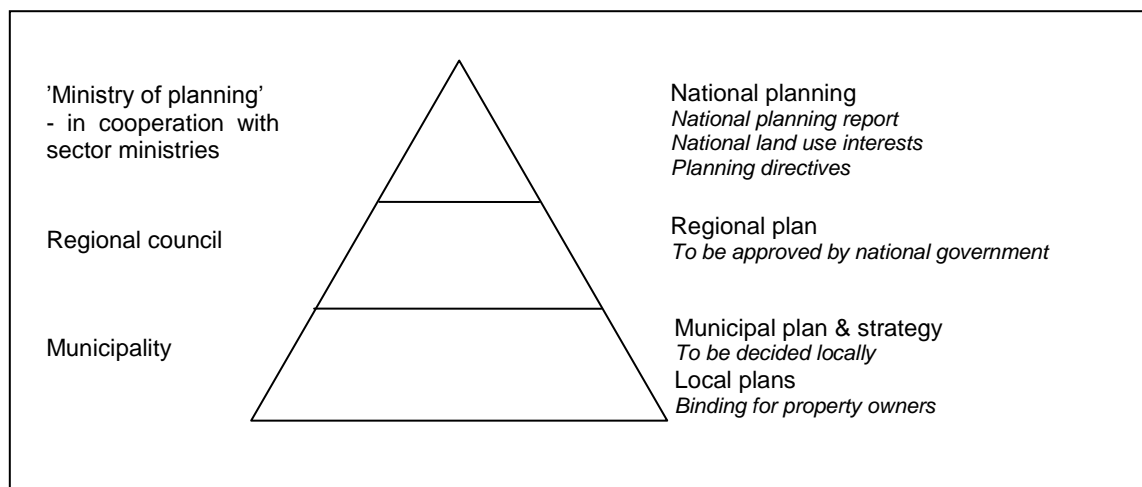
Figure 6: Hierarchical regional governance system. The case of Denmark before 2007.

For each of the three tiers, the plans covered the entire land of jurisdiction, increasingly detailed in hierarchical order - from national guidelines and planning directives, via regional plans to municipal and local plans. Gradually, the system was deregulated. But a major change came in 2007 with the latest structural reform resulting in a fragmented and non-hierarchic planning situation at the regional level.

The 2008 Dutch Spatial Planning Act also resulted in a less hierarchical planning system. In present Dutch planning practice there is a clear distinction between the type of policy issues to be addressed by each level of government. For instance the concentration of urbanisation is an issue to be decided on by the province and no longer by central government as well as the province.

Thus, usually, the regional governance situation is fragmented, characterised by several actors possessing the authority to make strategies at the regional level without a hierarchical ordering of the strategies and with overlapping competences. In the case of Zealand Region one regional authority prepares a Business Development Strategy, whereas another prepares a Regional Development Strategy. Responsibilities for making strategies are formally spread on several public and public/private authorities (Figure 7).
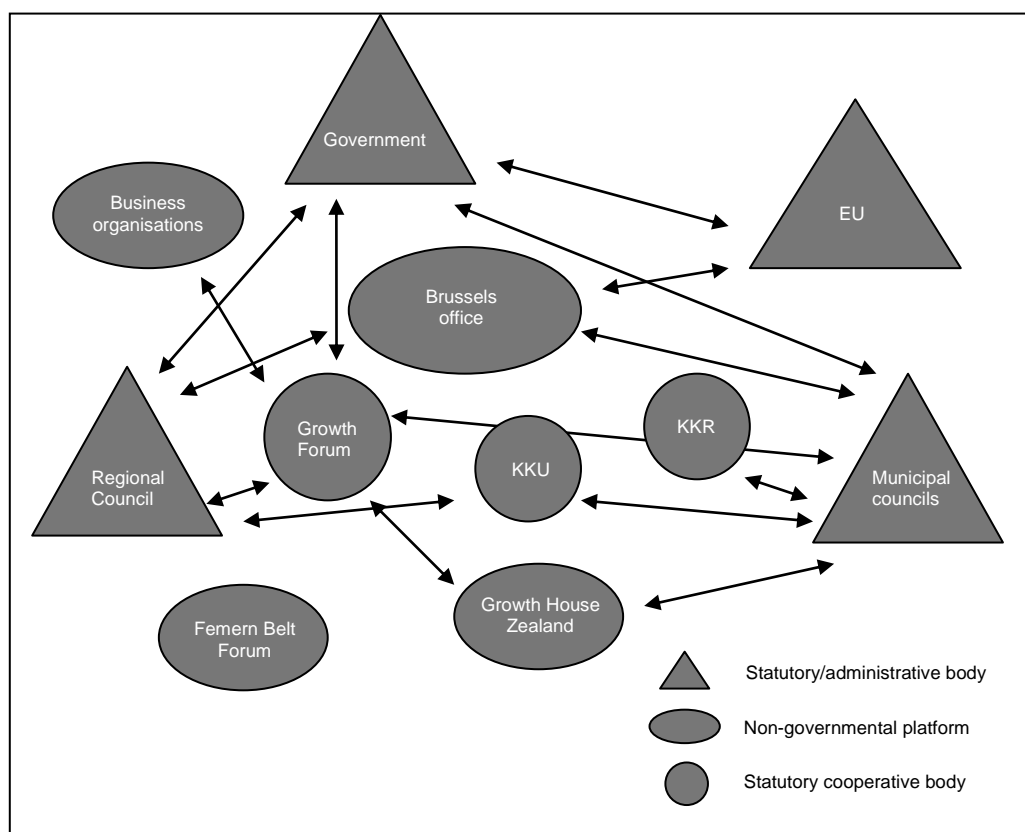
Figure 7: Pluri-centric regional governance system. Zealand Region. KKU is a coordination council between region and municipalities. KKR is a coordination council between municipalities.

The Randstad has an abundance of integrative strategies at regional level, addressed from different sectors and by different territorial groupings. Integration takes place via overlapping policy networks such as the Randstad wings and the WGR-plus regions. The membership of the policy networks overlaps. The integration is therefore not plan-led and there is also no ambition to strive after one overall RIS. RISs are the result of a dynamic process. Trust is a necessary condition and this is brought about by the fact that actors within networks meet each other frequently and – via the MIRT process – even on a regular basis.

In the four stakeholder regions, very different governance systems are represented. Västerbotton is the one case still operating within a fairly simple and hierarchical governance system. Even though a large number of actors are involved in policy making and implementation, there is one body officially responsible for regional development in the region, a region that is solidly defined since hundreds of years. The Randstad, the West Midlands and the Zealand cases are dominated by a highly pluri-centric governance situation.
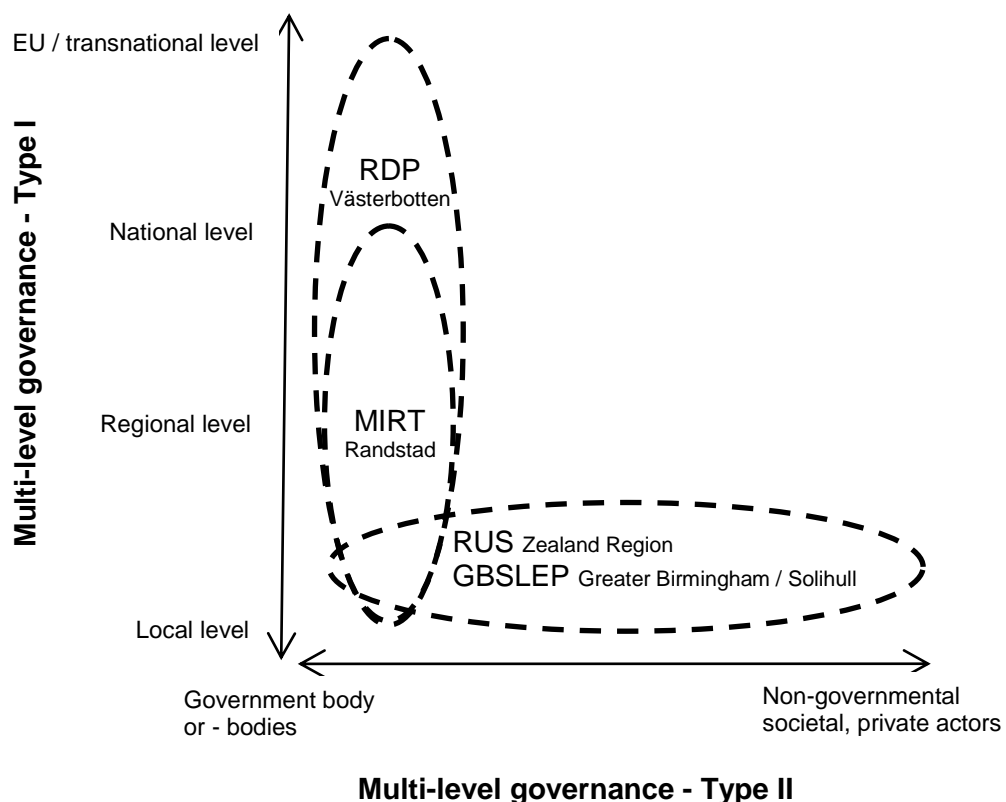
Figure 8: Matrix on multi-level governance Type I and Type II. The example of the MIRT Territorial Agenda, Zealand Region development strategy (RUS), Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Paternhip (GBSLEP) and Västerbotten Regional Development Program (RDP)

The two different governance situations, the monocentric and the pluricentric, establish almost opposite conditions for making a RIS; and the tools and

methods have to differ accordingly. In Zealand Region the first Regional Development Strategy was made as if the governance situation was still hierarchical and the regional authority still in a higher position towards the municipalities and it not only failed to be implemented. But also, it created a lot of conflicts between the regional actors not accepting the region as an authority.

But as shown in figure 2 we have several cases of pluricentric subnational governance situations setting up framing the possibilities and success of making a RIS. In Figure 8, the RIS of the four stakeholder regions are positioned on a matrix of multi-*level* and multi*actor* governance in order to illustrate the diversity in a pluricentric and complex governance situation influencing on the strategy making. Two types of pluricentric governance can be presented:

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

Type II (horizontal pluricentric 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:

Operational questions – governance situation:
- *Which kind of governance system is the RIS region part of – monocentric or pluricentric and is it like type 1 or 2?*
    - *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

Policy integration at the regional level is increased by close relations between key regional actors. This might of course be explained by the fact that most of our case studies develop a RIS in a pluri-centric governance situation where collaboration is essential for the results – no one has the complete and full authority to make a fully integrated strategy. There are strong interdependencies between the actors. It doesn't mean that the different actors accept or realize this interdependency; but still the success of the strategy and its implementation potentials depend on others to follow the strategy. Thus, a strategy obtains its power from the networking,

communication and negotiation between important regional and local actors as part and result of the strategic work.

The model below (Figure 9) illustrates important elements in the movement towards integration through collaboration.

Cooperation between key actors at regional level is essential to move upwards in the model towards integration. Cooperation is about sharing of knowledge, information, power and resources and about collaboration based on interdependency and trust. The purpose at this lowest level of collaboration is to get some form of adjustment and make sector policies more efficient
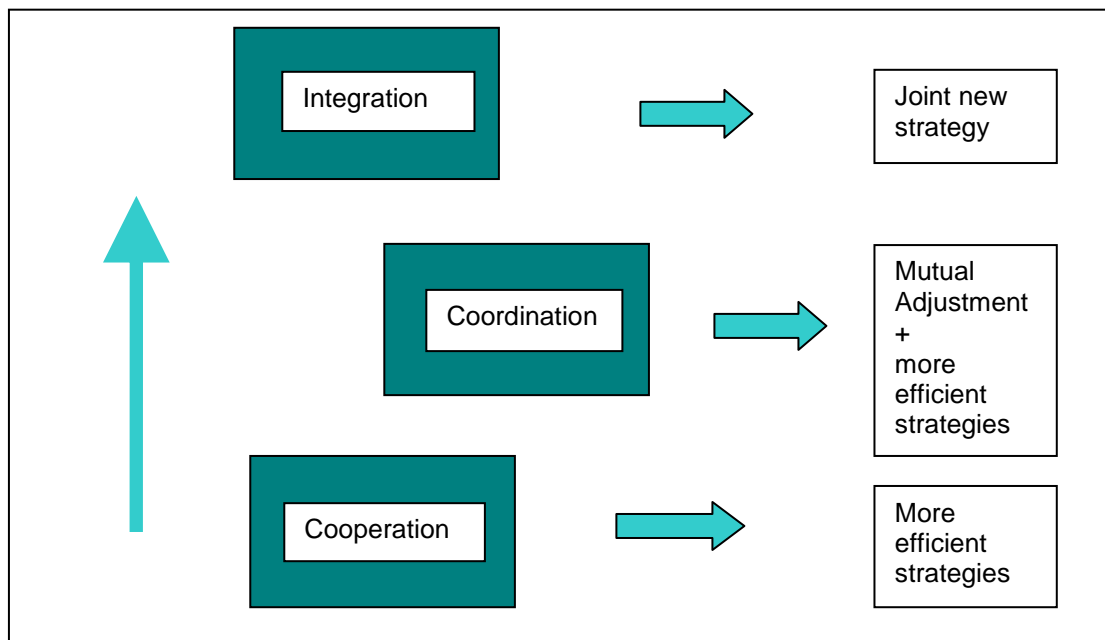
Figure 9: Revised model from Stead & Meijers 2009, relations between key concepts of integration.

Cooperation rises to *coordination*, when focus is on the outcome of strategies, i.e. mutual adjustments of projects, avoidance of redundancies, contradictions and gaps between strategies. At this level of collaboration, more efficient sector strategies are looked for, i.e. strategies sharing goals and "problem-solutions" close to the goals and solutions of the RIS and ripe for *mutual* adjustments between the RIS and the sector strategies. In this case established relations through earlier collaboration are important for achieving the goal of mutual adjustment.

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 and interdependent actors developing trust and mutual confidence is crucial.

In the case of Zealand region we saw a situation of strategy adjustment and coordination in the process of the first Regional Development Strategy (RIS) which did not result in any ownership besides in the regional administration

and no implementation in practice. During the preparation of the second Regional Development Strategy, the process came much closer to policy integration; and a much more trustful collaboration between a larger group of regional actors took place.

The Randstad case on the MIRT territorial agenda is an example of effective coordination: There is no development of joint policies and there is no organisational integration. However, an effective adjustment of sectoral policies took place.

In Västerbotton a joint strategy is made, building on historic close and good relations between key actors in the region.

In the case studies, the common understanding of the necessity of a regional strategy and the ownership to the strategy among diverse regional actors has been found essential to realise integrated (and not only adjusted) strategies. In fragmented governance situations the regional actors have to realize the necessity of collaboration and of following a strategy otherwise there might not be any result of the strategy. Most actors enter collaboration out of self-interest and they have to go through a process where they develop a common idea of where "we" are going and where they get some benefit out of participating.

The following are important issues to enhance integration:
- Common problem-solution images, stressing interdependencies of the parties.
- A positive attitude and culture in the administrative and political system towards cross actor and sector cooperation.
- Making explicit the gain in resources for all actors, stressing that strong as well as weak actors will profit.
- Link-making between all actors - in formal as well as informal networks creating opportunities for connecting (family-size) each of their individual solutions and strategies. Selecting the key actors to be involved is part of the link-making work.
- Finally, the setting up rules and procedures for cooperation in collaboration with the actors in order to develop a broad ownership to the process and results.

In the UK case we saw some speculation of whether private business would stay in the LED cooperation if they had no influence and could not see the purpose. In the Danish case of the Growth Forum the private sector could not see the purpose in the first period of strategy making but by changing the focus on meetings from "bureaucratic management of administrative cases" to discussions of growth related issues relevant to all parties and by introducing networking between the actors also in a broader sense the private sector found the Forum interesting and new ideas and collaborations occurred between e.g. the education sector and private business.

In Zealand Region most of the work during the second Regional Development Strategy (RIS) process was characterised by link-making and consensus

making work in order to connect actors, organisations and institutions in the strategy process. New competences in network management and consensus making developed accordingly in the regional administration.

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?*

1.3 STRATEGIES

In this third section of the RIS toolkit, we shall turn from the questions about the region and integration 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. Managerial planning systems and practice was suited for monitoring of growth. Something different was asked for, when restructuring and competition in regional and global divisions of labour came to into the fore. The new tool was strategic planning.

A model for strategic planning is shown in figure 10.

The strategic circle 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.
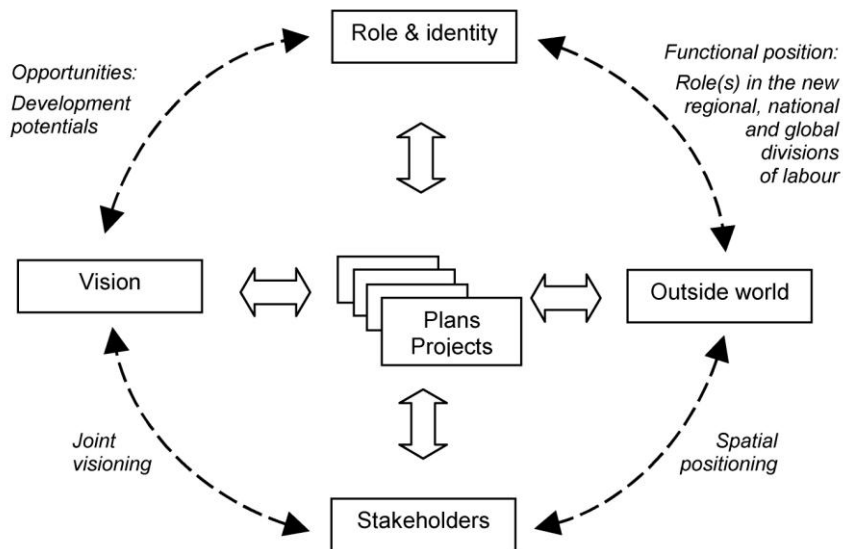
Figure 10: The strategic circle elaborated from Groth 2011

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 develops caused by e.g. regional enlargement or globalisation of economic and functional relations. Re-imagine 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 (Healy, 2004 p. 46, emhasis added). In the Västerbotten region, links and interdependencies with policies outside Västerbotten and Sweden are considered, e.g. the Baltic Sea Strategy, climate change and climate strategies, including the search for bio-energy. Chinas demand for ore and steel could affect the mining industry, and the role of the business sector is considered to develop new positions in the global value chain of production.

Zealand Region turns its focus to the prospects of the forthcoming Fehmarnbelt connection, including a revitalisation of the neighbourships of Berlin and Hamburg. Thus, it became a goal of the regional development strategy to develop the region as an international hub in the new meso-regional geography and to become a 'bridge builder' between Berlin, Hamburg, Copenhagen the Oresund region.

All three visions of the MIRT territorial agendas in the Randstad aim at strengthening the international competitiveness of the Randstad. Projects and programmes resulting from these agendas thus have to contribute to this: a shared understanding of what is internationally relevant is crucial.

Search for potentials

In the last decade or two, the search for unique local 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. "Strategic plans

have proven to be altogether powerful instruments, for the rediscovery and redefinition of local potential and new synergies" (Sartorio, 2005 p. 35 emphasis added). 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.

The case study of Västerbotten region includes considerations on potentials within the local economic sectors, forestry, mining, renewable energy industries, creative industries and ICT business. The potentials relate to the development outside the region, e.g. the aforementioned Chinese need for ore and global needs for renewable energy resources. In Region Zeeland, there is a focus on overcoming the problems of a divided region. Instead of talking about of spatial and social diversities as problems of unevenness, the region speaks about potentials of cooperation across diversities. In the business development strategy, the Region Zeeland Growth Forum emphasises regional potentials within Pharma/ medico, cleantech/ energy/environment, food production and processing and tourism.
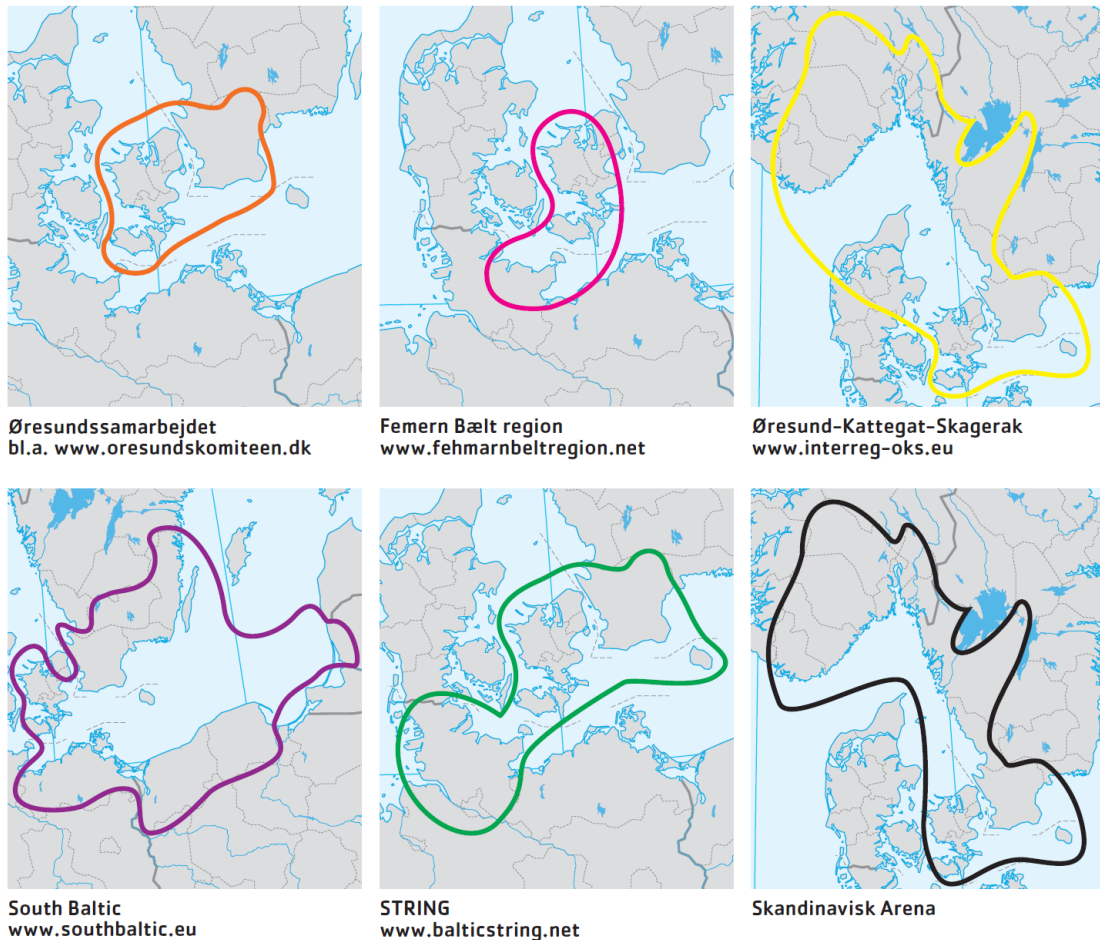
Search for visions

Territorial strategies depend crucially upon collaboration between stakeholders sharing or developing 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 as suggested by Sartorio (Sartorio, 2005 p. 36). Therefore story telling and vision campaigns are important instruments for mobilising and forming working consensus among stakeholders. The use of visioning in the four case study regions is, however, not outspoken. However, in Zealand Region the first years of the regional authority was used to forming a common identity and vision generally focusing upon the bridge-building role taking it a step further into a vision of improving people's competencies by cooperation between all kinds of regional knowledge institutions and private companies. We will elaborate on that below.

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. In Figure 11 Zeeland Region identifies six different and overlapping policy territories (Region Sjælland, 2008).

The examples of figure 11 illustrate how important policy networks extend beyond the geography of the constitutional administrative region. The Øresund cooperation (upper left) attaches Zealand Region with the Capital region and Skåne in Sweden. The Fehmarn Belt cooperation (upper mid) attaches Zealand Region with the northernmost part of Germany in joining effort on the planning, construction and profiting upon the forthcoming new

bridge or tunnel connection between Germany and Denmark. Prior the the Fehmarn Belt cooperation, the STRING cooperation (lower mid) between Region Skåne, the Copenhagen Captial Region, Zealand Region, Schleswig-Holstein and the City of Hamburg aimed at the promotion of the political decision of the Fehmarn Belt connection. After the decision on the new fixed connection the cooperation between the STRING partners changed focus towards promoting regional development and green growth in the corridor stretching from the Öresund Region to Hamburg. The South Baltic program (low left) is an EU based program fostering cooperation between municipalities in Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden.

Øresundssamarbejdet
bl.a. www.oresundskomiteen.dk

Femern Bælt region
www.fehmarnbeltregion.net

Øresund–Kattegat–Skagerak
www.interreg-oks.eu

South Baltic
www.southbaltic.eu

STRING
www.balticstring.net

Skandinavisk Arena

Figure 11: The variety of overlapping policy territories identified by Zealand Region

Figure 11 illustrates that mobilising stakeholders is not restricted by administrative boundaries. On the contrary, mobilising stakeholders is an act of forming territories. A most prime example is stated by the case study of Västerbotten. At the entry of the EU, the region organised a partnership with the northern-most regions of Norway and Finland for the forming of a strategy for widening the structural funds criteria to include the special situation of - not necessarily poor - but sparsely populated regions. From this new geographical positioning of the 'Northern Sparsely Populated Areas' (NSPA), the regions successfully managed to persuade the EU commission to set up a new 'Northern dimension' of the EU regional policy programme. Other

regional settings emphasised by Västerbotten region are The Barents Region, Europe Forum Northern Sweden, the E12 Corridor, the coastal region and the LEADER areas. Spatial positioning doesn't imply the erosion of administrative borders. Rather crossing administrative borders are at stake by cooperation agreements and strategic partnerships.

In the Randstad case study the overarching Randstad MIRT policy document (*Blik op de Randstad*) positions the Randstad within a wider context. The individual territorial agendas depart from that. Two of the three covering the South Wing of the Randstad and the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area position themselves as metropolitan areas.

The label metropolitan reflects an understanding of the competitive position of these two Randstad regions within the wider European and global context. Only urban areas of a certain size and economic weight deserve the label 'metropolitan'.

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.

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, however, reciprocal. Thus, strategic reasoning opens up for projects and actions and – the other way round – concrete initiatives are often step-stones for strategic reasoning. In Zealand Region, the decision between the Danish and German Governments on the Femarhn project has greatly influenced strategy making in Zealand Region. Figure 12 illustrates the reciprocal relation between strategic reasoning and concrete plans and projects.

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.
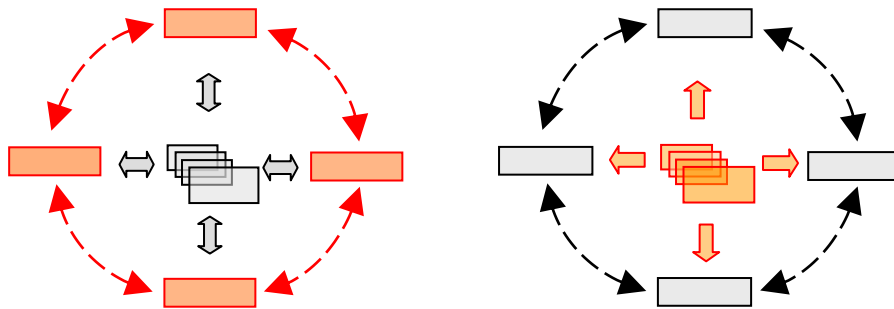
Figure 12: Strategy-driven implementation and project-driven strategies.

The political concern for implementation was reported by all case-studies. In the Dutch Spatial Planning Act of 2008 spatial strategies must include a chapter on implementation. But also, local politicians show a vivid interest in the outcome of strategies. Thus, Zealand Growth Forum, developed a system of output and input indcators for keeping a focus on outcomes. The Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP is still too young to report outcomes. The key concern at this early moment of the LEP is how to find 'implementation levers' strong enough to facilitate a growth oriented strategy in the area. The LEPs are established without any economic instruments. They thus have to rely upon 'influence' of the participating individuals, enterprises and organisations. Some respondents voiced anxiety "that the private sector partners would lose interest in the project, if business and investment wins were not forth coming over the short to medium term." Worth noticing is that networking with strategic partners in it self are seen as an outcome, as voiced by members of the Zealand Growth Forum.

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.

Thus, it was noticed by one of the respondents of the Västerbotten case study that "there have always existed various shifting co-operations in Västerbotten, but the EU Structural funds have been an essential injection into a more formalised co-operation process". A most important example of a project driven strategy is the MIRT strategy examined by the Randstad case study. MIRT is an acronym for a national investment Programme for Infrastructure, Spatial Development and Transportation developed and executed jointly by the government and the eight Dutch regions covering the entire country. The idea of the regional MIRT programmes is to adjust investments in infrastructure and transport within a common vision for the regional development.

The case study reports a general acknowledgement that in combining existing policies, MIRT programmes contribute by adding value over existing policies. Since the point of departure is existing policies, this type of strategy making is restricted to a limited amount of stakeholders, i.e. professionals from the government and regions dealing with spatial development and traffic and transport investments. In turn, the predefined policy-focus also "makes it easier to reach consensus with regard to the overall vision, objectives and ambition of the document." 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. This is illustrated the Randstad case study in Figure 13.
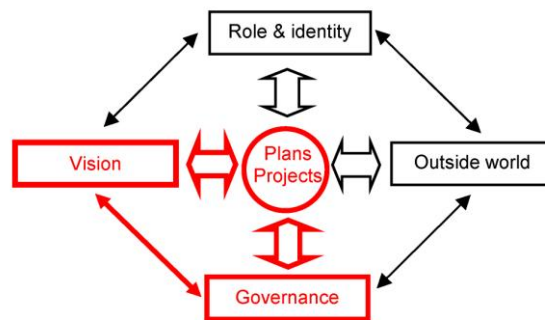

Figure 13 The MIRT Territorial Agenda

Strategic profiles

The strategic circle reveals an ideal process. All elements appears as equally important. But of course, when strategies are executed in planning in practice, emphasis is laid upon some, rather than other 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 14. Figure 14 show two examples revealing the maturing of the strategy making in Zealand Region.
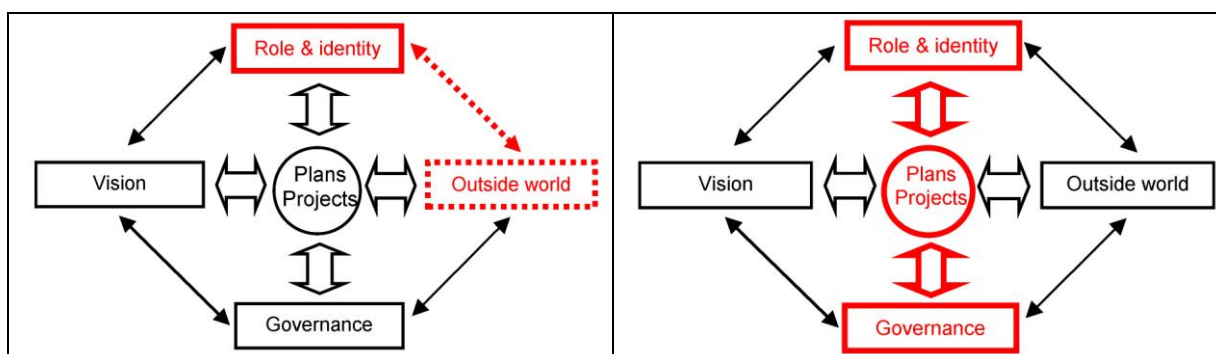

Figure 14: Strategic profiles, two examples. Left: identity-driven strategy. It was used by a region in order to clarify the new identity following from a recent administrative reform. Right: cooperation-driven strategy. It was used by a governmental and non-governmental regional authorities and organisation as part of maturing governance process.

5.0 RIS CHECKLIST

The concepts of **R**egional **I**ntegrated **S**trategies have been presented one by one along with operations questions and recommendation for achieving regional integrated strategies.

In what follows, we shall highlight the most important elements of the toolkit adding checklists for operational considerations.

Levels of integration

As a point of departure, the level of policy integration should be considered. For this purpose the 'ladder of integration' below is presented as a tool for measuring integration.

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 perfomance review, and should estimate their size and direction. This may be a complex process, will probably need to be on-going (given the frquency 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 perrenial issue, and where achievements have been made in bringing greater consistency through policy-intrgation, 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-contradicitions, 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 of integration 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. A large number of them presuppose other integrative strategies and consequently build upon these. Some aspects which are mentioned in the six steps of the ladder might be underexposed in one strategy compared to another. A good example is the MIRT territorial agenda which is based on existing policy and therefor does not aim at embedding it in society. While the ladder is a powerful tool at the same time some caution is needed: the ladder needs to be used in a reflective – not absolute – way.

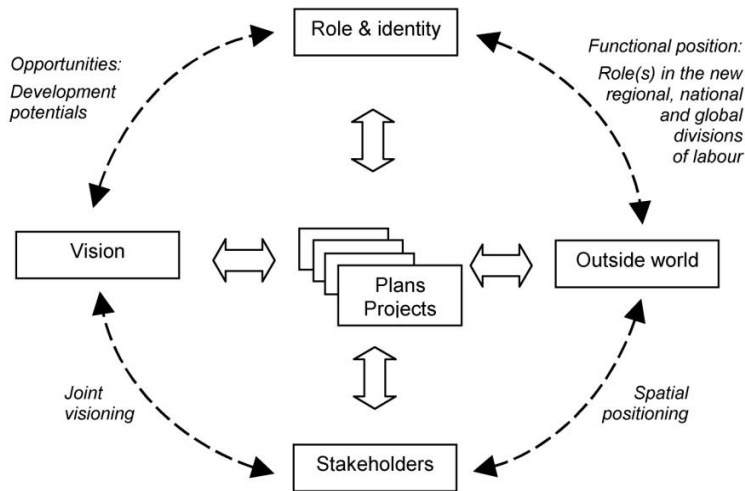| Checklist: LEVEL OF INTEGRATION		
Check-list indicator	Need for clarification? No: 1…Yes:10	Follow up actions? Describe
1. At what step (1,,,. 6) of the ladder is the regional strategy positioned?		
2. Is it possible or desirable to change the position?		

Figure 15: Checklist indicators - integration

Checklist: THE REGION & INTEGRATION

		REGIONAL STRATEGY INTEGRATION		
		Small	Medium	Large
REGIONAL GOVERNANCE CONSOLIDATION	Unified Regional	3		1
	Bifurcated Sub-regional			
	Pluralistic Sub-regional	2		4

Check-list indicator	Need for clarification? No: 1…Yes:10	Follow up actions? Describe
1. Is the RIS being developed in a unified or pluralistic (subregional – or extended regional) setting?		
2. The path towards integration must be clarified, i.e. governance consolidation or family-sizing.		
2. Is the key subject of integration sectoral: objects of integration must be clarified		
3. Is the key subject of integration territorial: stakeholders of integration must be clarified		
4. Is the key subject of integration organisational: visions and goals must be clarified		
5. Are there other plans or strategies directed towards policy integration that should be considered?		
6. Is the plan or strategy meant to bridge the gab between strategic and operational choises?		

Figure 16: Checklist indicators – regional context of integration

Checklist: STRATEGIC ANALYSIS AND CONDUCT

Check-list indicator	Need for clarification? No: 1…Yes:10	Follow up actions? Describe
1. Are the relations with the outside world threatening or promising new roles of the region in a national or global division of labour?		
2. Is there a need or prospects in reimagining the regional identity?		
3. What are the regional potentials for strengthening the role or identity of the region taking into account the vision for the future?		
4. Has a vision for the future of the region been elaborated jointly with regional stakeholders?		
5. Who are the key stakeholders of regional development?		
6. 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? (e.g. cooperation on infrastructure, cooperation on joint strategies, cross border cooperation)		
7. Are current plans and projects connected with regional strategies?		
8. Are there currently large plans or projects (decided or in the pipe-line) that could form the driver of a new regional strategy?		

Figure 17: Check-list indicators on strategic analysis

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