

The effects of governance on liveability in shrinking cities and regions

An exploratory case study of Dordrecht, Leeuwarden, and Zwolle

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"We cannot solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

Albert Einstein

Preface

I began this research with an interest for spatial development, shrinkage, and its impact on the community and its citizens. Not solely because of the fact that my parents live in an area that is facing this phenomenon for quite a while now, but also due the educational journey I had over the last years. Starting at the faculty of Technology, Policy and Management, where my enthusiasm about multi-actor complex systems was fed, the minor at the faculty of Architecture about the identity of an area, followed by the foundation of the so-called B&R Dispuut (a small group of people who organise events for the Building and Spatial development specialisation of TPM), and finally the master Construction Management and Engineering where the complexity of construction projects and its influence on society triggered me to approach the things happening around us from another point of view.

During my research the complexity of the subject struck me. Especially during the interviews I spoke with a lot of people who were working on the subject of liveability in (shrinking) urban areas on a day-to-day base, who were all looking for a better understanding. I hope that, with my research, I helped to make the concept of regional governance a bit clearer, how tiny this bit might be.

This brings me to the first people who were essential when conducting this study: my interviewees. Thank you all for your time and knowledge, and highly interesting conversations we had. I really enjoyed travelling through the Netherlands, seeing places I had never seen and meeting people whom I had never met.

A big shout out to my colleagues at AT Osborne who introduced me to my interviewees. Special thanks to Maurits, who not only contacted several interviewees but also listened to some of my thought regarding this study. I also would like to thank all other colleagues at AT Osborne, for the interesting conversations and just plain fun times.

While I do not want this preface to become one big list of people that I am grateful, I will keep it short. The guidance of my graduation committee helped me with this process; especially the brainstorm sessions with Janbart and Alexander kept me going, thank you. Gerben, Noud, David, Merel, Emma, Maaïke, Emily, Jan-Wouter, Mark, Hanna, Jesse and Naomi, I am grateful for all the times you listened to my “thesis talk” and the support you gave me. Special thanks to my parents who supported me, especially during the last months.

At the end of the research I am still highly intrigued by governance between cities and regions, and I am curious how regional governance will develop over the coming years. So one more time: I hope that, with my research, I helped to make the concept of regional governance a bit clearer, how tiny this bit might be.

Lotte Cornel
December 2017, Rotterdam

Summary

Different areas in the Netherlands are facing population and economic decline, a trend often described as “shrinkage”. The effects of this phenomenon can be numerous and municipalities in shrinking areas are looking for ways of dealing with this phenomenon.

When facing this trend of decline in an urban area, a region (an area that is bigger than the city itself, and also includes different surrounding municipalities) could respond in different ways; trivialize, counter, accept, and utilize (Hospers, 2014). When accepting or utilizing shrinkage, a municipality is expected to do something. One of the often-mentioned possibilities is regional collaboration between different public, semi-public and private parties. However, looking at the contemporary academic literature it is unclear what the effects of different forms of collaboration are on the liveability of the region and what forms would suit best.

Research question, objective and methodology

The research objective is as follows: *Exploring different forms of regional collaboration and their influence on maintaining and creating liveability in selected shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands.*

This brings me to the following research question: *How can cities and regions collaborate in order to maintain and create liveability in selected shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?*

Defining liveability

In order to answer the research question, a clear definition of liveability is essential. This study was focused on the “hard” physical-environmental factors solely, due to the background of the researcher. The definition used for liveability is: the degree of available and accessible utilities, in which utilities range from stores to educational institutes and hospitals.

Used methodology

This is an exploratory case study analysing three case studies, using the Governance Assessment Tool (GAT) as an analytical framework. The GAT is developed to systematically describe five elements of governance in a specific situation/context (De Boer & Bressers, 2011).

Dimension	Main question
Actors in the policy network	Is the network complete and how is the interaction defined?
Levels and scales	How does the network function, looking at the different levels and scales involved?
Problem perception and objectives	What are different problem perceptions and objectives of the different involved actors?
Responsibilities and resources	How is the distribution of responsibilities and resources?
Strategy and instruments	How are the strategies and instruments connected/mingled?

Table 1 Overview of the five dimensions of the GAT after (Gana & Hoppe, 2017)

Research design

In order to gain a better understanding of forms of collaborating and their effects on liveability, three case studies were conducted. The case studies involved several interviews with people from different public and private organisations and desk research. The selected case studies are Dordrecht, Leeuwarden, Zwolle and their surrounding areas.

The case study selection criteria are as follows:

1. The urban area includes a (large) city, which is not per se shrinking.
2. The urban area includes surrounding municipalities, in which shrinkage is or was recently present.
3. There are initiatives on different levels in order to coop with the shrinkage.

Empirical research was conducted, to analyse the used governance structures and policy instruments, and their effects on liveability in the urban area. ATLAS.ti (a qualitative data analysis and research software) was used to process the documents and create an overview of supportive or contradicting results within the cases. For this study, a total of 19 interviews were conducted, with 22 people.

Comparison of the effects on liveability

The three cases that are looked at are located in the Netherlands and contain a variety of population and economic decline. For each case study, multiple interviews have been conducted. For example: with someone of the municipality of the central city, a surrounding municipality, the province, and a private organisation that is involved in the region. This gave an elaborative insight into the different involved actors, their organisations and the effects on liveability in the area. Semi-structured interviews were held, with questions based on the five dimensions of the GAT.

When looking at the effects of liveability in the three cases, the form of collaboration in Leeuwarden and surrounding area seems to have the most effect on the availability and accessibility of the area. That region has the biggest focus on liveability dividing and maintaining utilities and creating a more accessible area. The other two cases proved themselves on achieving infrastructural improvement, but have less focus and achievements in terms of availability of utilities. In the case of Zwolle, this lays mainly in the fact that the region has a focus on improving economically, in which accessibility is also important. In Drechtsteden the municipalities miss willingness to work for one common agenda, resulting in fewer achievements utility wise.

Conclusion; three forms of collaboration

This study was conducted in order to answer the following research question:

How can cities and regions collaborate in order to maintain and create liveability in selected shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?

Three forms of governance are conducted from the case studies:

1. Regional collaboration through a regional government

This form is expected to work well when mainly public parties are involved, using a top down approach. Limited sense of urgency and drive could still lead to certain results, using

one regional fund. The Province takes mainly a hierarchical role and when necessary a more equal role.

2. Regional collaboration guided by an external regional organisation

This form is expected to work in an area with a high sense of urgency and drive in multiple levels of society; both (semi-) public and private parties are actively involved in the region, maintaining a bottom-up approach. In line with this bottom-up approach, the Province has the role of an equal partner.

3. Regional collaboration based on coalitions of the willing

This form is expected to work in an area with a high drive for change; both (semi-) public and private parties are actively involved in the region. Companies and educational institutes are actively involved, but citizens not. This form does not work on an individual level (citizens), while this would make things highly complicated due to the amount of involved parties, but on a higher (economic) level. The Province takes both a hierarchical role and a more equal role.

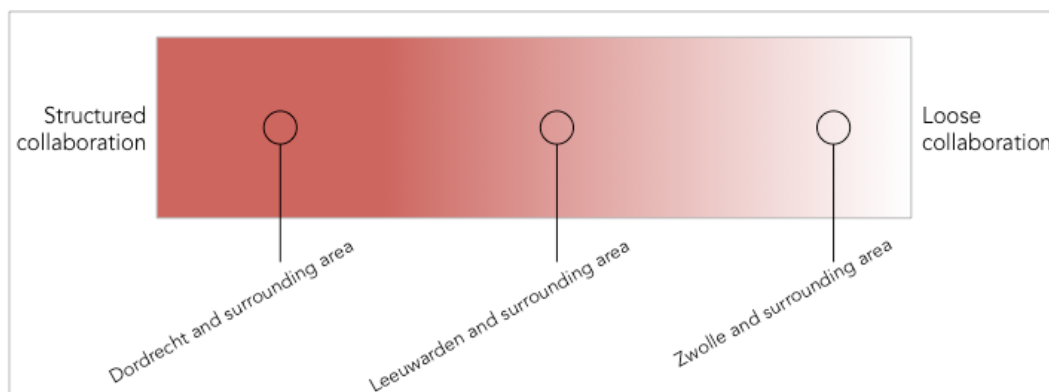


Figure 1 Different form of regional governance

Effects on liveability per form of governance

Speaking about maintaining and creating liveability, all three forms are applicable. When the goal of the regional collaboration is to increase the accessibility of and within the area, all three forms are suitable. In case of creating or maintain utilities, the second form seems best; the external, regional organisation has enough leverage and is able to keep the regional goal in mind, instead of aiming for achieving local goals. Surprisingly, the first and third form falls short of decisiveness: the regional government because of its extra governmental layer and the latter because of the loose form of collaborating.

Limitations of the research

The main limitations are linked to the fact that it was a case study. For this study three cases have been looked at, more cases could give a more reliable outcome. The characteristics formed by analysing the cases have not been tested with other cases; therefore a real generalisation could not be made. Also, a certain amount of interviews were conducted, more interviews could lead to an even more comprehensive view.

Academic discussion

In the beginning of this thesis, a knowledge-gap was defined: *for regional collaboration network governance seems the best option. However, it is yet unclear how this regional collaboration could work in practice.*

From the case studies and literature, it became clear that different (governmental) institutions are also looking for a way to set up regional collaboration (Hospers, 2014; Rocak et al., 2016; Schmidt, 2009). This study gave insights into different forms of collaboration and their pro's and cons.

Hospers (2010, 2014) defined four plausible strategies to respond to urban shrinkage: 1) trivialize, 2) counter, 3) accept and 4) utilize. In the case of Leeuwarden they clearly accepted shrinkage and are looking for ways to keep the availability and accessibility of utilities at a required level. In the case of Drechtsteden it differs per party how they respond to shrinkage, for example the board of Drechtsteden seems to trivialize it, while Dordrecht is trying to counter it by actively working on attracting higher educated citizens. In line with expectation, when using Hospers' theory, the policy on liveability is limited in this area. However, in the case of Zwolle some actors trivialize shrinkage, but the region is able to effect liveability in the area by looking at the region from an economic perspective. This is not in line with Hospers' theory, but shows that stating a different, more accepted, regional goal could also lead to improvement of liveability in the area. However, this thought is only based on the case of Zwolle and is an interesting hypothesis for future research.

Recommendations for future research

This research has been explorative in terms of regional collaboration in urban areas. Although a view is developed on different forms of governance, the effects of these forms are only studied within the three cases. In order to develop more general applicable forms of governance, more cases should be studied.

My research created insight into three different regional collaborations in the Netherlands; all areas concerned various forms of population and economic decline, and their effect on the availability and accessibility of utilities. However, there are still a lot of unanswered questions. For further research I would recommend looking at:

- Link between economic development and availability and accessibility of utilities.
- Role of a big city and province in regional collaboration: what are their responsibilities and what effects do they have on a region?
- Availability and accessibility of utilities is not the only aspect of liveability, this was a chosen limitation of this research, what is the effect of regional collaboration on other aspects of liveability like safety?
- What could be the effect of, deliberately, choosing a different regional goal than accepting shrinkage, on the liveability of the area?

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1. Introducing the problem and research question

When I visited my parent's place in a rural town in central Limburg in the spring of 2017, I noticed a large number of houses that were for sale and a closed down electronics shop. I experienced a feeling of desolation. Yet, in a city nearby, a designer outlet centre (for clothing, lifestyle and entertainment) is attracting visitors from the surrounding area and Germany. A vital discussion was going on whether or not a train station should be located in the municipality to which the rural town belongs. It emphasized a growing need for a connection between and accessibility of city and region. Next to the apparent physical change in the rural area, also a demographic change was clearly visible in the streets; the number of mobility scooters for elderly was high and I saw only a handful of young adults. I wondered if and how this trend will continue and how this area will develop in the near future. Will it still be an area that is attractive to live in and what will be done in order to keep it liveable?

The situation mentioned above is one of the many examples of a changing population and economy in areas in the Netherlands. It resembles dynamics between rural towns and city centres in which among others facilities (schools, hospitals, museums, cinemas, etcetera) and public transportation are shared. There has been a shift from national steering, to more local steering (decentralization) in the social domain, in which municipalities became responsible for youth welfare, participation in the labour market and societal support¹ (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2016). However, some choices within the social domain (about for example accessibility of an area or spread of health institutes) cannot be made within the border of one municipality and a more regional approach is applicable.

This introduction is written to create context concerning shrinkage, liveability and the difficulties evolving around collaboration in a region. Starting with examples of shrinkage throughout Europe and a short literature study, in order to show the multidimensionality of the phenomenon shrinkage. By creating context, the real issue becomes clearer, which leads to a problem definition. At the end of this chapter, my research questions are introduced.

1.1 Examples of shrinkage in different parts of Europe

In order to create context concerning the matter in question, three examples of shrinkage in different areas in Europe are discussed. The examples give more insight into the concept of shrinkage and its complexity, the divergent development of shrinkage, and possible measures to reduce the effects of shrinkage.

1.1.1 Shrinkage in North Denmark

Aalborg is the fourth largest city in Denmark and the only large city in a region that is facing demographic decline (Lorentzen, 2012). The other municipalities in the region experience different difficulties: from economic decline, due to industrial restructuring, to a high unemployment rate and a low level of education. To counter these matters, the individual municipalities separately developed individual approaches based on the experience

¹ Translated from Dutch: *Jeugdwet, Participatiewet en Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning*

economy². Application of the experience economy should attract new business, develop new industries and create attraction. Most municipalities focused on three local developments:

- enhancing the quality of the environment to attract new citizens;
- expansion of tourism leading to increased employment;
- industrial diversification.

The fact that they have the same focus resulted in a difficult situation in which the individual municipalities in the region (except for Aalborg) were all too small to compete on population, tourism and business (Lorentzen, 2012). Important is the concluding idea of Lorentzen (2012): combined efforts, or cooperation, on major projects can lead to more achievement. The experience economy could succeed in attracting citizens, tourism and businesses although a more direct approach is justified according to Lorentzen (2012).

1.1.2 Peripheralisation in Germany

Lang (2012) considers the multidimensionality of shrinkage and the concomitant spatial processes as peripheralisation. This is a concept that is also well known in multiple regions in Germany. The peripheral regions not only face population decrease but often also economic decrease due to a decline of traditional industries. This makes it harder for the peripheral regions to find a place in the competitive economy, resulting in dependency and with that unbalanced power relations (Lang, 2012). One of the trends is focusing more and more on prosperous centres and metropolitan areas (centralization), resulting in further population and economic decline of certain municipalities in these regions. An important side effect is the reduction (in quality and/or quantity) of infrastructure and services, which leads to losses of facilities (stores, health care, etcetera) and accessibility problems in the peripheral regions (Lang, 2012).

For example: in Leipzig, major actors in the housing sector, public planners, real estate organisations and banks, acknowledged that action was needed, in order to deal with population decline. Under pressure of these actors, the topic was put on the political agenda, resulting in the following change in the federal funding program: public money became available for demolition and upgrading of buildings and setting up integrated plans (Bernt et al., 2014). Since the majority of actors were active in the housing sector, money was mostly spent in the housing sector, and less attention was paid to i.e. infrastructure or social projects. Later on, public and private investments were made to attract new (big) business, like BMW and Porsche manufacturing, and large office complexes were developed (Rink, Haase, Grossmann, Couch, & Cocks, 2012). Besides, investments were made to attract big events like the EXPO, which was mainly subsidized by the national government of Germany and funding programmes of the European Union such as EFRE, URBAN II or Objective One (Rink et al., 2012).

1.1.3 Urban decline in England

During the second half of the 20th century, England faced a somewhat similar process of urban shrinkage as Germany. They experienced an economic decline due to the abandonment of (heavy) industries (Haase, Bernt, Großmann, Mykhnenko, & Rink, 2013; Rink et al., 2012). This deindustrialisation was visible in cities including Liverpool,

² Experience economy: reinterpretation and development of welfare services from a customer perspective (Lorentzen, 2012).

Manchester, and Birmingham. Combined with suburbanisation the inner cities faced numerous difficulties, among them abandonment of housing and social deterioration and decay (Haase et al., 2013). Additionally, the (local) community had to deal with unemployment, local finances, surplus social infrastructure, social stability and maintenance of urban property value (Bernt et al., 2014). Eventually, the population experienced re-growth, partly because of a natural change in population and partly because of more top-down approaches: housing refurbishment, neighbourhood improvement, economic regeneration initiatives, which were funded by public money (Rink et al., 2012).

The above three subsections show that different countries in Europe have faced or face some kind of shrinkage. However, the reasons for, as well the ways of dealing with, differ. Roughly two types are distinguished: shrinkage due to sudden deindustrialization and shrinkage due to a simple decline in population.

Also, different actions have been noticed; in the case of Leipzig and England, a clear top-down and subsidised approach has been chosen. While in Denmark the community as a whole played a bigger role.

1.2 Shrinkage in contemporary literature

As shown in section 1.1, the phenomenon "shrinkage" is visible in different parts of the world, from more rural to urban environments. It is a concept that has developed quickly the last decades and becomes more relevant every day. Not only is it diverse in its form, like pointed out in section 1.1, but also in its complexity (Haase et al., 2013). This diversity and complexity results in different definitions and an unclear overview of causes and impacts.

1.2.1 Shrinkage in general

According to Hospers (2010), you can distinguish two types of shrinkage: hard shrinkage and soft shrinkage. Hard shrinkage is more focused on the clear decline in population, the increasing number of houses that are for sale, a decreasing price of housing, etcetera; all obvious spatial-physical effects. On the other hand, there are "soft" effects: the changing social structures. This idea is shared by Rocak, Hospers, and Reverda (2016) who mention the different changing aspects of the shrinking area; not only physically (infrastructure, vacant buildings), ecologically and economically, but also socially. These viewpoints differ from the viewpoint of Dam, Groot, and Verwest (2006), who identify shrinkage as *demographic shrinkage* only. Demographic shrinkage is defined by three indicators (Dam et al., 2006):

1. amount of inhabitants/households;
2. demographic structure in terms of age and ethnicity and;
3. the composition of households in terms of size, phase of life and income.

However, Dam et al. (2006) distinguish effects of demographic and socioeconomic shrinkage and mention selective shrinkage as a cause for a changing economic development. Selective shrinkage means that only a specific type of household will migrate to another place, while other households stay in the same area (Dam et al., 2006; Martinez-Fernandez, Kubo, Noya, & Weyman, 2012). Taking among others these viewpoints into account, a definitive definition is generated in Chapter 2.

1.2.2 Urban shrinkage; affecting more than the city only

The aforementioned definitions relate to shrinkage in general, however scientific literature on *urban shrinkage* is available in abundance. Urban shrinkage is not limited to the city centre but is defined by an urban area that includes "part of a city, an entire metropolitan area or a town" (Martinez-Fernandez, Audirac, Fol, & Cunningham-Sabot, 2012, p. 214). It is defined by the impact of both structural demographic and economic decline, which result in considerable social effects (Martinez-Fernandez, Audirac, et al., 2012). Another viewpoint is given by Sousa and Pinho (2015), they see shrinkage as a pattern of urban development, taking population and spatial development into account. They understand it as a process that could have been started with spatial shrinkage, caused by different reasons (decline of population, economic decline, importance of the area). Wiechmann (2009) on the other hand refers to urban shrinkage as solely a process of population decline in a densely populated area, which relates to the mentioned definition of shrinkage given by Dam et al. (2006).

1.2.3 Shrinkage as a regional problem

Shrinkage can occur in a single municipality, while it appears to have an effect on a bigger area. Competition between municipalities in such an area works counterproductive in the case of dealing with shrinkage like shown in the example of Denmark. The multi-layered problems that are involved with or caused by shrinkage complicate it even more (Lang, 2012). According to PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (*Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving*) (Eck, Dam, Groot, & Jong, 2013) recent demographic developments lead to e.g.:

1. changing perspective on spatial development: from a growth-oriented planning to a shrinkage-based planning or a more uncertain type of planning;
2. different availability of/need for facilities;
3. changing working population: sometimes cause for a shortage of labourers in certain sectors, vacant office space, etcetera, and;
4. more differences between regions.

The examples of Denmark and Germany show that a regional approach could be preferred over a local one. Hospers (2010) agrees that a regional approach would overcome the plausible competition between municipalities in a region that is facing shrinkage. The study of (Bulder, 2017) adds that shrinkage should be looked at as a regional problem (an environment in which different layers of government and private actors work together) crossing municipalities' boundaries. Bulder (2017, pp. 25-26) states "Citizens and companies do not pay much attention to administrative boundaries, and look across municipal borders. More utilities have a supra-local function (...) Medium-sized cities should collaborate with other cities and towns in the region and start the development from complete city to complete region."³

As sections 1.1 - 1.3 show, shrinkage is a complex, and multidimensional problem. The influence of the phenomenon goes beyond population and economic decline only; it has

³ Translated from: Burgers en bedrijven trekken zich over het algemeen weinig aan van bestuurlijke grenzen en kijken automatisch over de gemeentegrens. Steeds meer voorzieningen hebben een bovenlokale functie (...). Middelgrote steden kunnen daarom beter de samenwerking zoeken met steden en dorpen in de regio en zo een ontwikkeling inzetten van een complete stad naar een complete regio.)

also consequences for e.g. the spatial environment, social conditions and working environment (Haase et al., 2013; Lang, 2012; Lorentzen, 2012; Rocak et al., 2016). Different scholars (Bulder, 2017; Hospers, 2010) state that city and region should collaborate in order to handle the effects of shrinkage.

1.3. Problem definition: a regional task

The matter of (urban) shrinkage is gaining more attention since the economic crisis of 2008 (Bernt et al., 2014; Couch & Cocks, 2013; Elzerman & Bontje, 2015; Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2016). Because of the expected changing population (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2016) and the fact that regional governance is still a challenge, it should continue to be a point of interest. Although different private parties and governmental bodies are working together, the cumulative problems of shrinkage need a more intergovernmental approach (Crooy, 2015b; Krikke, Haartsen, Hooimeijer, & Waveren, 2014).

A regional approach is recommended in different studies, but limited knowledge is available about how regional governance and policy would work (Crooy, 2015b; Hospers, 2010; Krikke et al., 2014; Stumpel & Heurkens, 2014). In some practical examples a regional approach is tested in a pilot case (Couch & Cocks, 2010; Crooy, 2015b; Elzerman & Bontje, 2015; Lorentzen, 2012; Stumpel & Heurkens, 2014), however, there is limited scientific literature about governance and policy in such a regional approach. For this thesis, a focus on the Netherlands is chosen. This is translated into the following problem statement:

It is clear what shrinkage is but it is unclear what, and how, forms of governance and policy instruments can add to liveability in a shrinking urban area in the Netherlands.

To conclude, shrinkage is a complex phenomenon that currently has an impact in multiple parts of Europe. Shrinkage has multiple causes: from population decline to economic decline, causing different changes in build, - social, - and economic environment (Martinez-Fernandez, Audirac, et al., 2012; Rocak et al., 2016). While a local approach will relocate issues and because shrinkage also influences a bigger area, researchers agree that the phenomenon should be handled through regional governance (Crooy, 2015a; Elzerman & Bontje, 2015; Hospers, 2014).

As discussed in the previous paragraphs, shrinkage is thoroughly discussed in scientific literature, only little is known about how regional collaboration affects this liveability and what forms of governance would add to the liveability. In the case of the Netherlands, it is unclear how regions can be governed. While regions/areas (multiple joint municipalities) are in between two governmental "powers": the municipality and the province. Regional governance and the influence on spatial liveability in the Netherlands is, therefore, the main subject of this thesis.

1.4 Research objective and questions

In section 1.3 a problem was defined: *it is clear what shrinkage is but it is unclear what, and how, forms of governance and policy instruments can add to liveability in a shrinking urban area in the Netherlands.*

In this section, the research that is executed to find a solution to this problem is described. Starting with the research objective, followed by the research questions.

1.4.1 Research objective

This research is conducted in order to contribute to the knowledge about governance structures and their effect on creating a satisfactory level of liveability in shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands. The research objective is based on the above mentioned problem statement and is stated as follows:

Exploring different forms of regional collaboration and their influence on maintaining and creating liveability in selected shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands.

The internal goal of this study is to gain more knowledge about different forms of governance and their effects on the liveability in areas, and how to keep liveability at a satisfactory level. In order to achieve this internal goal, three sub-goals are determined.

These sub-goals are:

- To determine which spatial conditions contribute to liveability in shrinking urban areas.
- To create an overview of plausible governance structures and policy instrument to manage shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands.
- To generate lessons learned from three selected cases, both positive and negative.

1.4.2 Research questions and objective

This research is conducted in order to find a solution for the stated problem; *it is clear what shrinkage is but it is unclear what, and how, forms of governance and policy instruments can add to liveability in a shrinking urban area in the Netherlands.* The problem statement is rewritten in the main research question:

How can cities and regions collaborate in order to maintain and create liveability in selected shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?

The main research question cannot be answered directly. In order to create a better understanding of the problem and plausible solutions, the following sub questions are formulated:

- i. What is the definition of liveable in shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?
- ii. Which spatial conditions influence the satisfactory liveability of shrinking areas?
- iii. What are positive and negative lessons learned from regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?
- iv. With the answers to questions i, ii and iii in mind; what are plausible forms of governance and what are effective policy instruments in order to create and sustain a satisfactory level of liveability?
- v. What are the effects of governance and policies to cope with shrinkage, when reflecting on the positive and negative lessons learned from the selected case studies?

1.4.3 Answering the questions

Sub question i. and iii are answered by using existing literature and by performing desk research. The third sub question is answered by using literature and desk research and semi-structured interviews. Sub question iv., concerning the currently used forms of governance and policy instruments, is deducted from case studies. Case studies give interesting insights in how things should or should not be handled on a governance level. Sub question 5 could be answered in two different manners: qualitative and quantitative, while the answer will show causal relations between two items that can be stated in numbers. Issues with quantitative research methods for this research are the availability and quality of data concerning liveability in a region. Therefore it was chosen to use a qualitative research methodology, as that would provide more refined and specific insights into regional governance and their effects on liveability.

Research question	Research method
1. What is the definition of liveable in selected shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?	Literature and desk research
2. Which spatial conditions add to the satisfactory liveability of shrinking areas?	Literature and desk research
3. What are positive and negative lessons learned from regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?	Literature and desk research Case studies
4. With the answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 in mind; what are plausible forms of governance and what are effective policy instruments in order to create and sustain a satisfactory level of liveability?	Literature and desk research Case studies
5. What are the effects of governance and policies to cope with shrinkage, when reflecting on the positive and negative lessons learned from the selected case studies?	Case studies

Table 2 Overview of research questions

1.5 Conclusion

There is relatively little knowledge on how a regional approach to governance and policy should be defined in order to cope with urban shrinkage. The goal of this study is to find a partial solution for a bigger problem, trying to gain insights into how governance can influence the effects of shrinkage in an urban area. By conducting this study an answer is found to the question:

How can city and region collaborate in order to maintain and create liveability in selected (shrinking) urban areas in the Netherlands?

The answer to this question is presented in this Masters' thesis. The thesis outline is as follows: in Chapter 2 a literature review is given in order to create academic context, in Chapter 3 the theoretical and analytical framework are introduced. By executing three case studies positive and negative lessons are deducted about the effects of governance on maintaining and creating liveability. The case study research design is presented in Chapter 4, followed by case study analyses in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6 the cases are compared and possible forms of regional governance are presented. Conclusions are drawn in Chapter 7, followed by the discussion (section 7.2 - 7.5) and recommendations (section 7.6).

2. Governance of shrinkage in urban regions

In the first chapter the subject of this study was introduced: governance of shrinking urban areas in The Netherlands. In this chapter, insight is given in the current literature about the subject of shrinkage and governance. In this review not only Dutch academic literature has been taken into account, but also international academic literature has been looked at. Starting with the conceptualisation of shrinkage and the reasons for shrinkage (section 2.1). Current governance and policies in shrinking urban areas are discussed in section 2.2. In section 2.3 sub questions i.: “*What is the definition of liveable in shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?*” and ii. “*Which spatial conditions influence the satisfactory liveability of shrinking areas?*” are answered.

2.1 Shrinkage in the Netherlands and other parts of Europe

Multiple scholars have researched the concept of shrinkage, the reasons for shrinkage and the consequences of shrinkage, in different areas (Bernt et al., 2014; Haase, Rink, Grossmann, Bernt, & Mykhnenko, 2014; Hospers, 2014; Lang, 2012; Martinez-Fernandez, Kubo, et al., 2012). However, different scholars use different definitions for the same phenomenon (Haase et al., 2014). In section 2.1, these differences are discussed and a conceptualisation of urban shrinkage is made.

2.1.1 Conceptualisation of the phenomenon “shrinkage”

A lot is written about the phenomenon shrinkage, also known as decline, decay or population loss. The latter indicates one process, the decrease of population, while the others are more open to different interpretations. These different interpretations are compared in a literature study and summed up in Appendix A. Remarkably, there are two main streams with a different context: urban shrinkage and shrinkage. The difference between them is of importance and will be discussed integrally in the following paragraphs.

Starting with a simple definition of shrinkage: the decrease in population. Different researchers write about a decreasing population, for explaining multiple concepts, which Bernt et al. (2014) analysed in their article. They sum up a few scholars that define a shrinking city as a loss of population, in which some address a specific percentage of decrease. It is clear that no consensus is found. Also, Couch and Cocks (2013) define shrinking cities as cities that are or were facing depopulation. Guimarães, Nunes, Barreira, and Panagopoulos (2016) see shrinkage as a pure decline in population as well. However, they recognize also different reasons for the decline, making it a more complex process.

Haase et al. (2013) on the one hand link a shrinking city not to just a loss of population, but to a *considerable and constant* loss of population in an urban area. On the other hand they plea for a more pragmatic and application-oriented definition, in which the phenomenon also includes the causes and consequences of shrinkage (Haase et al., 2013). Haase et al. (2013) as well state that the focus should not be one sole process, but more on the diversity of the concept of shrinkage. However, the bottom line of the process is still population decrease. Sousa and Pinho (2015) follow this statement by making the remark

that a shrinking city in a broad, common sense “is a city that is losing population”. Despite that, they also recognize the multiple layers and effects of the phenomena shrinkage.

This leads to the following more excessive definition of shrinkage: a declining population, economy and importance of the area, a phenomenon that can affect multiple types of areas: regions, metropolitan areas, cities or parts of cities (Sousa & Pinho, 2015). Haase et al. (2013) also use a more excessive definition of shrinkage, in which the spatial aspect is taken into account. They see the phenomenon of shrinkage as a result of a combination of different drivers (relating to economic decline, demographic and political change) at different spatial levels (from global to regional), generating a decline on a local scale. Although both mention a spatial aspect, both aspects are not similar in use; however, they are not mutually exhaustive or collectively exclusive. Other scholars also see shrinkage as a more complex process but do not define the spatial aspect that strongly.

Lang (2012) considers shrinkage as a process that is linked to urban decline: “loss of density and intensity of use in demographic, economic and physical assets”. According to Hospers (2010), you can distinguish two types of shrinkage: hard shrinkage and soft shrinkage. Hard shrinkage is more focused on the clear decline in population, the increasing number of houses that are for sale, for a decreasing price, etcetera; all obvious spatial-physical effects. On the other hand, there are "soft" effects: the changing social structures. This idea is followed by Rocak et al. (2016) who mention the different changing aspects of the shrinking area; not only physically (infrastructure, vacant buildings), ecologically and economically, but also socially.

Like discussed above, three main streams in defining the concept of shrinkage are found in literature. The conceptualization of shrinkage differs in complexity and comprehensiveness; from straightforward "population decline" to "a process linked to urban decline, with a loss of density and intensity". This is represented by the figure of a pyramid (Figure 2). Starting at the top of the pyramid with the least complex and demarcated definition of shrinkage: population decline/loss/shrinkage, causing a demographic change. Secondly, the area dependence is added, given a more complex view on the phenomenon through adding the aspect of the involved area. The most complex view states that shrinkage is not only about population decline in a certain area, but it emphasises the complexity of the process by adding other drivers; economic downturn, employment change, social and physical problems.

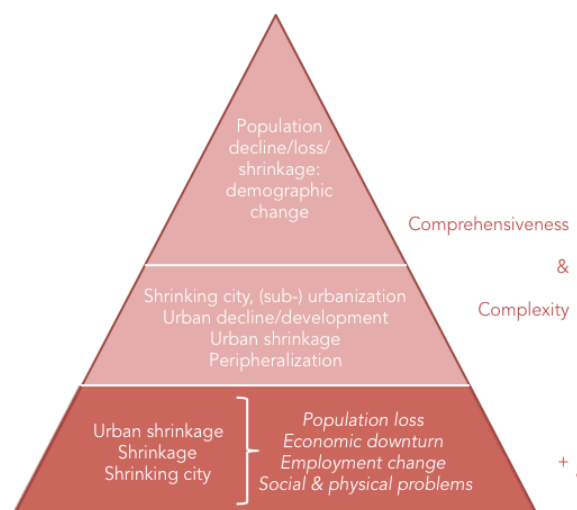


Figure 2 Conceptualization of shrinkage

From top to bottom the conceptualization of shrinkage becomes more comprehensive. The top layer gives a demarcated conceptualization of shrinkage, resulting in acknowledgement of causal relations with other elements (like economy and policy), but remaining unclear in the definition of its causes and effects. In the final layer the concept becomes more complex (i.e. it is not just a decline of population), yet the embedding of the concept in a broader context becomes clearer. Although it is clear that there is no universally accepted definition of shrinkage (Bernt et al., 2014), more and more researchers agree to use a more broad and comprehensive conceptualization like stated in the bottom layer (Cortese, Haase, Grossmann, & Ticha, 2014; Elzerman & Bontje, 2015; Haase et al., 2013; Lang, 2012; Martinez-Fernandez, Kubo, et al., 2012).

For this thesis, the broader definition is maintained for the above-mentioned reasons of comprehensiveness: shrinkage is conceptualized as a result of both economic and demographic decline, causing a change in social, spatial and economic structures (Figure 2).

2.1.2 Reasons for shrinkage

Couch and Cocks (2013) give three main explanations for population decline in urban areas; firstly, the natural dynamics of a city (urbanisation, suburbanisation, disurbanisation, reurbanisation) in which suburbanisation is seen as a cause, followed by immigration out of the city. Secondly, the decline can arise from demographic changes, like a decreasing birth rate or a natural disaster. Lastly, urban shrinkage is caused by economic development that is distributed unevenly between regional and urban areas, followed by a change in population of both areas. Not only urban areas face a decline of population, but also more rural areas in Europe. However, most is written about current spatial planning policies in cities (Dreijerink, Noort, & Kortman, 2012; Lorentzen, 2012) and more generic about the causal relation of shrinkage between periphery and urban areas (Hospers, 2010).

At the same time, other scholars only state two main reasons for shrinkage in non-urban areas in Europe. On the one hand, there is a simple movement of citizens from rural areas to more urban areas, leading to shrinkage in some areas and growth in other (urban) areas, like shown in Figure 3⁴ (Hospers, 2010; Rocak et al., 2016). On the other hand, a combination of ageing and a decreasing birth rate results in a shrinking population, without taking immigration from other countries into account (Hospers, 2010). Although the overall world population is still increasing, the average growth rate has been in decline for a few decades (Martinez-Fernandez, Kubo, et al., 2012). The decrease of birth-rate is a trend in Europe since the twenty-first century (Derks, Hovens, & Klinkers, 2006).

Looking at the stated explanations, one could say that they all include two dynamics:

1. General demographic changes, mainly because of a decreasing birth rate and an ageing population;
2. Local demographic changes due to movement of people (urbanisation), caused by various (economic) reasons.

Figure 3 represents the dynamics of demographic change between two municipalities.

⁴ Figure after Afbeelding 1 in (Hospers, 2010)

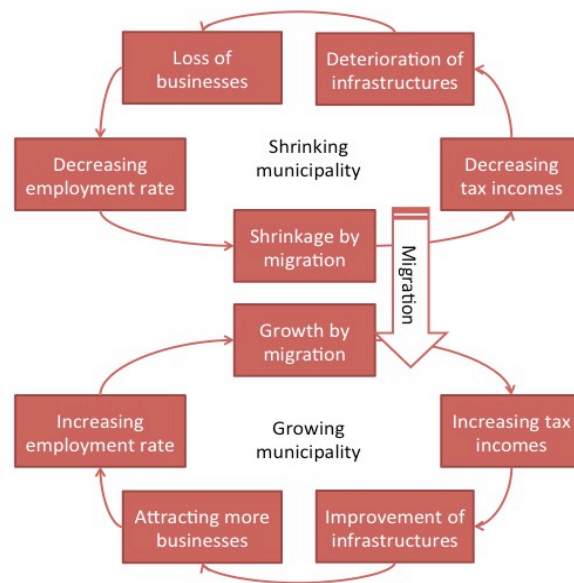


Figure 3 Causal relation of migration between two municipalities, figure after Hospers (2010)

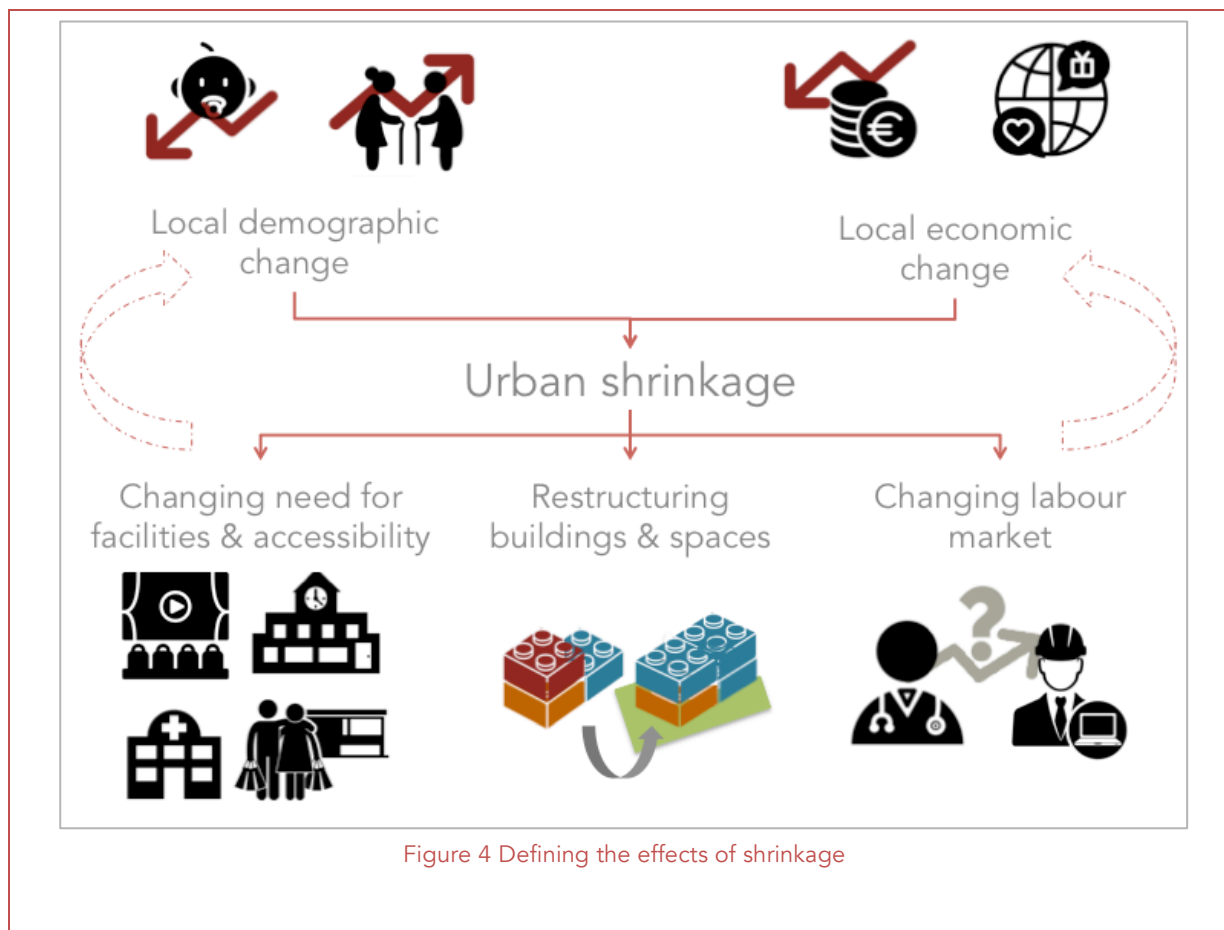
2.1.3 Consequences of shrinkage

This process of shrinkage is affecting parts of Europe in a growing severe way (Kabisch, Haase, & Haase, 2006), causing population decline in certain areas, vacancy of housing-stock, unused commercial and residential areas (Kabisch et al., 2006). On a large scale the shrinking and ageing population cause growing public expenditures, in order to take care of the population of over 65 years old (Martinez-Fernandez, Kubo, et al., 2012). Eventually, this will lead to a more limited economic growth.

Consequently, less money will be available for other projects (i.e. infrastructure projects). Not only because more money is needed for the ageing population, but also because there is a decreasing population that pays taxes. On local scale available money for infrastructure, local safety and urban development will decrease. Together with a plausible migration of skilled and talented people and businesses to urbanized regions (Martinez-Fernandez, Kubo, et al., 2012), shrinkage can cause a negative spiral.

In summary, shrinkage is defined as a local demographic and economic change, caused by various things (i.e. ageing population, decreased birth rate, changing economy). On a longer term it leads to (like shown in Figure 4):

1. a changing need for facilities and accessibility;
2. restructuring buildings and spaces and;
3. a changing labour market.



2.2 Governance and policies in shrinking areas

In section 2.1 the definition of shrinkage and its possible effects are discussed. In this section, the governmental reaction to the phenomenon in different European countries is elaborated on. Different policy strategies are introduced and discussed.

2.2.1 Governance structures with regard to shrinkage

In Germany different types of government have different planning levels and with that different legal bases (Schmidt, 2009). Federations work on spatial planning on the level of the federation, with regards to the spatial planning act. The state plans on the “Landesplanung” or country level and the municipalities are working on a local level, with the Federal Building Code as legal basis (Schmidt, 2009). However, the local plans have to be in line with the plans higher in order. Although this hierarchical system seems to block inter-municipal collaboration, while the municipalities are limited by their borders, since the change of the planning act in '98 it became easy for specific areas (region, municipalities) to collaborate and create regional spatial plans (Schmidt, 2009).

Another example of merging local governments in order to generate urban development can be found in Denmark. In 2007 several Danish municipalities were merged to develop regional strategies (Lorentzen, 2012). Here, the merged local governments are tasked with the development of a strategy to create i.e. business development, urban expansion and infrastructure (Lorentzen, 2012). By merging smaller municipalities, they gained force to create and implement a growth strategy.

However, in the Netherlands, most municipalities are trying to tackle the effects of shrinkage locally. According to Elzerman and Bontje (2015), the municipal government is the proper government to deal with shrinkage but in close cooperation with the region and the province. However, it should be taken into account that different municipalities will be each-others' competitors in countering shrinkage (Hospers, 2010).

Although in the past most governments and societies were resistant to accepting shrinkage and were still growth-oriented, nowadays political and societal acceptance of shrinkage is growing (Elzerman & Bontje, 2015). With this, the perception towards shrinkage is also changing; governments realise that growth is not always possible and policy should be focussed on generating a stable, liveable environment.

2.2.2 Different policy strategies

Hospers (2010, 2014) defined four plausible strategies to respond to urban shrinkage:

1. trivialize;
2. counter;
3. accept;
4. utilize.

Out of these four strategies, accepting shrinkage, and with that improve the quality of life in the shrinking area, seems the best option (Hospers, 2014). Hospers (2014) argues that trivializing shrinkage is not a wise policy because the population prediction is quite accurate.

Countering shrinkage will not solve the problem for three reasons:

1. Creating a unique city or region brand, in order to attract new businesses and people, is rather hard.
2. Cities and regions are aiming at the same target, creating competition and relocating the problem and.
3. People and businesses are not eager to move far away, resulting in only local movements.

Utilizing shrinkage has the advantage of being future-oriented and stimulating the local entrepreneurial spirit, however, there are also a lot of cases in which this policy failed (Hospers, 2014). More and more shrinking cities look for ways to deal with the effects of shrinkage and to stabilize population by improving the quality of the living environment, also called accepting shrinkage (Hospers, 2014). Accepting shrinkage is according to multiple scholars (Hospers, 2014; Johnson, Hollander, & Hallulli, 2014; Rhodes, 1996) the most suitable and sustainable way of dealing with the phenomenon.

Nevertheless, different policies are used in different countries throughout Europe. For example, in France, there are so-called ghost towns that are just left "on their own". Also, it seems unknown what the effects of policies and/or governance structures can be on the level of liveability in shrinking areas.

2.3 Defining liveability

In section 2.1 the definition of shrinkage is given, and in section 2.2 different governmental reactions are shown. As stated in 2.2.2, increasingly shrinking cities are looking for ways to deal with the effects of shrinkage, in other words: how to improve or maintain liveability. But, what is meant by liveability? In this section, the term "liveability" is defined, answering the first question: *What is the definition of liveable in selected shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?*

Liveability is a broad term, used in many ways, for many occasions. Leefbaarometer uses the definition (translated from Dutch)⁵: "Liveability is the degree in which the environment suits the demands and wishes of the people of that environment" (Leidelmeijer et al., n.d., p. 9). They take five dimensions into account: housing, inhabitants, safety, utilities and physical environment (Leidelmeijer et al., n.d.), a clear combination of "soft" social factors and "hard" physical and environmental factors. Reasons for a decrease of liveability in shrinking areas in the Netherlands are mentioned by Bulder (2017, p. 21)⁶:

- closed utilities,
- vacancy,
- maintenance backlog of buildings and gardens,
- nuisance and decreased social contacts.

This research was focused on the "hard" physical-environmental factors solely, due to the background of the researcher. The definition used for liveability is: the degree of available and accessible utilities.

The following sub questions were answered:

i. *What is the definition of liveable in shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?*

When looking at liveability in urban areas in the Netherlands it soon became clear that the perception of liveability depends on multiple criteria, like Leidelmeijer et al. (n.d.) state in their report for Leefbaarometer, "Liveability is the degree in which the environment suits the demands and wishes of the people of that environment". These demands and wishes are further translated into five dimensions: housing, inhabitants, safety, utilities and physical environment (Leidelmeijer et al., n.d.). The perception of liveable concerns all these dimensions. However, in this thesis liveability is defined as the degree of available and accessible utilities, in which utilities range from stores to educational institutes and hospitals.

ii. *Which spatial conditions add to the satisfactory liveability of shrinking areas?*

Like earlier stated, mainly the accessibility and availability of utilities are of importance. Furthermore, the availability of nature in the surrounding area is evaluated highly, just as low environmental nuisance (Leidelmeijer et al., n.d.). Maintained buildings and gardens also add to the liveability of shrinking urban areas.

2.4 Conclusion

Different definitions of shrinkage are discussed, and for this thesis, a broad definition is used. Shrinkage is defined as a result of both economic and demographic change, causing a change in social, spatial and economic structures. Economic and demographic change can

⁵ Translated from Dutch definition: "Leefbaarheid is de mate waarin de omgeving aansluit bij de eisen en wensen die er door de mens aan worden gesteld."

⁶ Translated from: de redenen (...) voor de verminderde leefbaarheid zijn het sluiten van voorzieningen, leegstand en achterstallig onderhoud aan panden en tuinen, overlast en de afname van sociale contacten.

cause a change in required housing and labour and a different need for availability and accessibility of utilities. The definition used for liveability is: the degree of available and accessible utilities.

For this thesis, a focus is chosen on the more hard effects of this change, and less on the softer, social effects. The focus is on the "hard" physical-environmental factors solely, due to the background of the researcher. The definition used for liveability is: the degree of available and accessible utilities.

In order to deal with shrinkage, different types of policy are identified. According to Hospers (2010), the most suitable way of dealing with shrinkage is accepting it. In this thesis regional governance of a changing demographic and economic environment is looked at. Different governance structures across Europe are defined and it seems interesting to look at it from a (network) governance perspective. While not only governments should take part in governance, but also companies and citizens of the area, especially when looking at it from a more economic view.

3. Theoretical and analytical framework

When looking at the subject of regional governance in urban shrinking areas (as introduced in Chapter 1 and further elaborated on in Chapter 2), it is important to notice the difference between government and governance. In section 3.1 the difference between governance and government is explained, and three different types of governance are explored and linked to the conducted research. In sections 3.2 till 3.4 the Governance Assessment Tool (GAT) is introduced and discussed.

3.1 Government and governance in general

In Chapter 2 governmental reactions in different areas are discussed, however, this study is focussed on governance and not government. In this section firstly the difference between government and governance is elaborated (section 3.1.1) and three main types of governance are introduced (section 3.1.2).

3.1.1 *Government versus governance*

Government can be defined as the literal group of people with the authority to govern; it also can be defined as the system governing a country or a place (Oxford Dictionaries, 2017). According to Bevir (2012, p. 3) "government refers to political institutions", adding to the definition by Oxford Dictionaries (2017). A well-known trend is an increasing transition from government to governance, in which several scholars see governance as interaction between government and society (Bressers, 2009; Kooiman, 1993; Rhodes, 1996). This trend was initiated when governments began to use markets and networks as instruments of public governance, after a "crisis of faith" in bureaucracy during the 1960's and 70's (Bevir, 2012, pp. 58-59). In this period public bureaucracies were more and more seen as ineffective and unresponsive to citizens, therefore the public sector reformed, changing public management, contracting-out, using public-private partnerships, etcetera; creating a shift from government to governance.

3.1.2 *Hierarchical, market and network governance*

A lot is written about the different types of governance, their definition and mechanisms (Bevir, 2012; de Bruijn & Heuvelhof, 2002; Sørensen et al., 2007). Although different scholars use different definitions of governance, one could roughly state that governance is a directed influence of societal processes (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000). Theoretically speaking, "governance is the process of governing" (Bevir, 2012, p. 2); the process of decision-making and ruling in a society (Bevir, 2012). This is not only a process executed by government organisations but also of corporations and other organisations. Bevir (2012, p. 1) states that governance refers to: "all processes of governing, whether undertaken by a government, market, or network, whether over a family, tribe, formal or informal organization, or territory, and whether through laws, norms, power, or language. Governance differs from government in that it focuses less on the state and its institutions, and more on social practice and activities".

Three different types that are often mentioned in governance literature are:

- hierarchical governance;
- market governance;

- network governance.

However, these are not the only forms of governance. Bevir (2009) discusses 50 key concepts of governance, still not covering all concepts relevant to governance. While above mentioned three forms are used to describe governance “as a specific term, to describe changes in the nature and role of the state following the public sector reforms...led to a shift from a hierarchical bureaucracy towards a greater use of markets, quasi-markets, and networks, especially in the delivery of public services” (Bevir, 2012, p. 3).

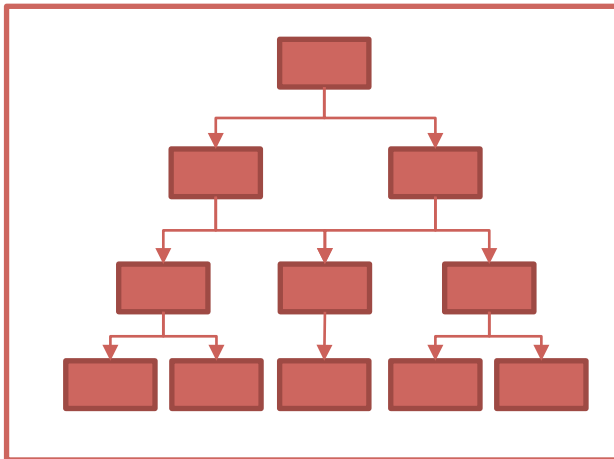


Figure 5 Hierarchical governance

Hierarchical governance is the way a traditional top-down government is organised. It is structured; the division of power and responsibilities is clear (Bevir, 2012, p. 21). The central authority makes a decision and the lower parties act upon the made decision like depicted in Figure 5. Each higher unit exercised command and control over the unit(s) directly underneath (Bevir, 2012, p. 18).

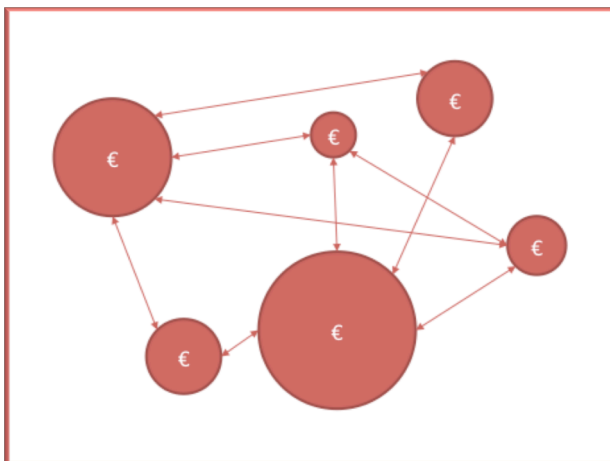


Figure 6 Market governance

Market governance or economic governance is a way of coping with situations from an economic perspective, with different market players from different sizes, like shown in Figure 6. Market governance was expected to give a boost to innovation, and with that efficiency and effectiveness. Another advantage is that markets can provide coordination, without a central authority (Bevir, 2012, p. 25).

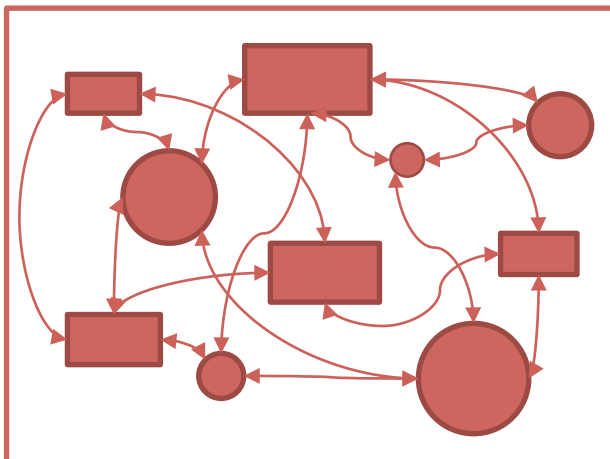


Figure 7 Network governance

Network governance is a way of governing with different involved parties; public, semi-public, and private parties. Depicted by different shapes and sizes in Figure 7. It differs from hierarchical governance, while the different involved parties are seen as equals and no central authority is present. It differs from markets, while actors build long-term relationships based on trust and diplomacy, rather than prices (Bevir, 2012, p. 27). A network is mostly based on shared goals, trust and interdependencies.

Differences lay mostly in the division of power and resources, extent of hierarchy and decision-making process. Looking at the stated issue, governance shifted mostly from hierarchic to market to a more network structure. This shift was partly an unintended consequence of the earlier stated public reform (Bevir, 2012, p. 67), and partly created by the second wave of reforms, to "overcome the deficiencies of both old bureaucratic structures and new market-related processes" (Bevir, 2012, p. 67).

Like Sørensen et al. (2007, p. 3) state: "The formulation and implementation of public policy increasingly take place in and through interactive forms of governance involving a plurality of public, semi-public and private actors. (...) The state still plays a key role in local, national and transnational policy processes, but the state is to an increasing extent '**de-governmentalized**' as it no longer monopolizes the governing of the **well-being** of the **population**". Top-down governing, through planning, programmed action and detailed regulations is losing its grip, the new ideas of pluricentric governance based on trust, negotiation and interdependence are taking over (Sørensen et al., 2007); emphasizing the shift from plain hierarchic governance to a more network structure.

3.2 Analytical framework: Governance Assessment Tool

For this thesis, the Governance Assessment Tool (GAT) is used as an analytical framework. The foundation of the GAT and its current use are discussed in this chapter. First discussing the development of the tool and its foundation, followed by an elaboration of the framework itself, and ending with a short view of how it is connected to this research.

3.2.1 History of the Governance Assessment Tool

A well-known trend is an increasing transition from government to governance, in which several scholars see governance as interaction between government and society (Bressers, 2009; Kooiman, 1993; Rhodes, 1996). However, analysis and definition of a governance system, or network system, is not yet matured. The GAT is a tool with roots in the Contextual Interaction Theory of Bressers (2007), which tries to get a grip on assessing governance of a certain environment (Bressers, 2007, 2009; De Boer & Bressers, 2011). This theory is used to create more insight in a multi-level and multi-actor process, which will be further elaborated on in this paragraph. What this theory implies and how the GAT is linked to theory is discussed in following two sub paragraphs.

3.2.2 Contextual Interaction Theory

The Contextual Interaction Theory states that interaction is essential within a process while creating relationships between different phenomena (De Boer & Bressers, 2011). The process is defined as the evolution of multiple inputs in something new and different. In the case of this theory, it is not, for example, a mechanical or chemical process, but a process executed by activities and actors (humans / (part of) organizations) that interact; interaction processes. The concept is depicted in a simple drawing (Figure 8), made after figure 16 in De Boer and Bressers (2011).

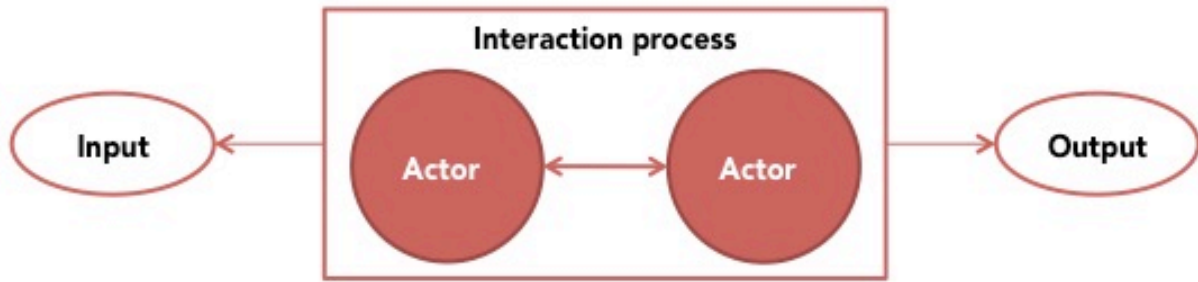


Figure 8 Simple model of an interaction process after figure 16 of Boer and Bressers (2011, p.61)

When using Contextual Interaction Theory, social interaction processes are the central beginning of the analyses. While these processes are closely linked to the actors and their activities, the influences of these processes are linked to the key characteristics of the involved actors (De Boer & Bressers, 2011). These characteristics can differ per actor and are divided into three main perspectives: motives, cognition and resources. However, these three key characteristics are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive. Motives are the driving force of their actions, cognition is defined as information that they see as truthful and resources are the elements that provide capacity and power for the actor (Bressers, 2009).

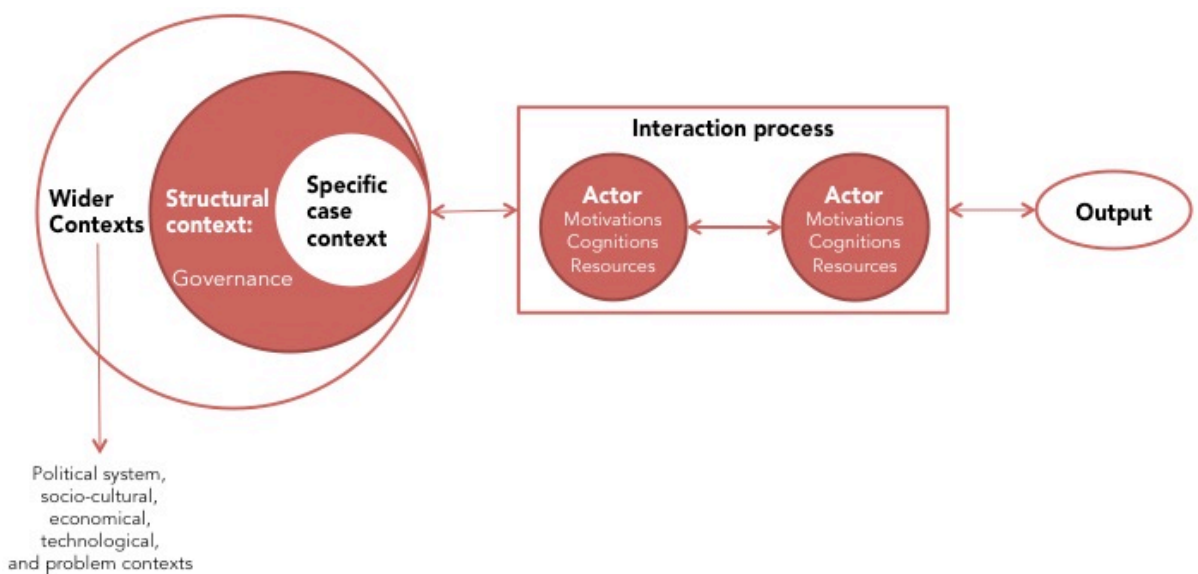


Figure 9 Interaction processes and their multiple layered contexts, after Fig. 3.2 of Bressers, Bressers, Kuks, and Larrue (2016, p. 48)

The theory can thus be used to systematically analyse a multiple layered context, with different actors, processes, policies and goals (Bressers, 2009; Bressers et al., 2016; De Boer & Bressers, 2011). A useful way of gaining more understanding of a process in which different actors are involved, with different opinions, goals, resources and power.

3.2.3 Governance Assessment Tool as a continuation of the Contextual Interaction Theory

Bressers (2007) discerns a distinction between five elements in a model of governance, namely:

1. Actors in the policy network.
2. Levels and scales of governance.
3. Problem perception and policy objectives.

4. Responsibilities and resources for implementation.
5. Strategy and instruments.

These five elements are the base of the Governance Assessment Tool. The GAT is developed in order to create a framework to describe the above-mentioned five elements, as an addition to the Contextual Interaction Theory (Bressers, 2009).

3.3 Governance Assessment Tool: describing a structural context

The Governance Assessment Tool is relatively new and not (yet) abundantly used. Thus far only a few researchers applied the tool, let alone used it in the context of urban shrinkage. Due to the limited (known) use, also limited material is available. As described in 3.2.3 Governance Assessment Tool as a continuation of the Contextual Interaction Theory, the GAT is developed to systematically describe five elements of governance in a specific situation/context (De Boer & Bressers, 2011; Gana & Hoppe, 2017). In this paragraph, these five dimensions are discussed and the criteria of the GAT are explained.

3.3.1 Five dimensions of the Governance Assessment Tool

The five dimensions as mentioned earlier give insights into the dynamics of the governance context (the structural context). The first dimension describes the different actors (both public and private) involved; important is the question if every party is involved that has an interest (one way or another) in the case. Linked to this aspect are the different levels and scales (different levels of public and private organizations) of the governance context, to describe how it functions. Different views on the problem and on the objectives can lead to difficulties, therefore it is important to make this dimension clear. The fourth dimension, responsibilities and resources, gives insight into different responsibilities and resources that are used in order to achieve stated objectives. Finally, it is important to understand which strategy and instruments are used, creating insights into the differences and similarities within the strategy and instruments. If strategies of different actors work against each other, it could be a cause for an increase in, for example, efficiency. In Table 3 an overview of main questions per dimension is given, in Appendix C it is further elaborated on.

Dimension	Main question
Actors in the policy network	Is the network complete and how is the interaction defined?
Levels and scales	How does the governance context function, looking at the different levels and scales involved?
Problem perception and objectives	What are different problem perceptions and objectives of the different involved actors?
Responsibilities and resources	How is the distribution of responsibilities and resources?
Strategy and instruments	How are the strategies and instruments connected/mingled?

Table 3 Overview of the five dimensions of the GAT after (Gana & Hoppe, 2017)

3.3.2. Criteria of the Governance Assessment Tool

In the GAT all dimensions are evaluated on four criteria: extent, coherence, flexibility and intensity. These criteria are used to indicate to what extent the five dimensions of

governance "contribute to a stimulating rather than restrictive governance context" (Bressers et al., 2016, p. 53). The five dimensions evaluated on these four criteria give insights into possible hinder the case could experience. In table 2 these criteria are described in one main question.

Criterion	Main question
Coherence	Are the elements supportive or incompatible with each other?
Extent	Covers it all aspects of the dimension?
Flexibility	How open are the dimensions; are changes permitted during the project?
Intensity	How persistent are chosen changes?

Table 4 Criteria of GAT dimensions and their main question

3.4 Use of the Governance Assessment Tool for shrinking urban areas

Looking at the problem description as stated in Chapters 1 and 2, I determined that shrinkage in urban areas should be looked at from a (network) governance perspective. Not only are different layers of government involved, also different private actors play a significant role in the process. However, limited knowledge is available in the academic literature about how governance would work in the specific case of shrinking urban areas.

In practice, different forms of collaboration are used to govern these areas, in this study three cases were analysed to gain more insights in forms of governance and their effect on liveability of the area.

The Governance Assessment Tool is used in the multi-complex environment of the cases to create a better understanding of the used form of governance and its weaknesses. The tool itself is divided into five main dimensions and four criteria, creating a 5x4 matrix like shown in Table 5. The criteria are evaluated using a three-step scale: minimal, medium and maximal.

Criterion \ Dimension	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Actors in the policy network				
Levels and scales				
Problem perception and goal				
Responsibilities and resources				
Strategy and instruments				

Minimal
 Medium
 Maximal

Table 5 GAT matrix; five dimensions and four criteria

3.5 Conclusion

A trend from hierarchical, to market, to network governance is established. While "the state still plays a key role in local, national and transnational policy processes, but the state is to an increasing extent 'de-governmentalized' as it no longer monopolizes the governing

of the **well-being** of the **population**” (Sørensen et al., 2007, p. 3), different forms of governance are currently found.

Like stated in Chapter 2, regional governance of a changing demographic and economic environment is explored in this study. The Governance Assessment Tool is used to analyse the used form of governance in three shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands. The GAT is based on the Contextual Interaction Model of Bressers (2009) and can be used in cases in which a multi-level and multi-actor process is involved. In Chapter 4 the case study research design is discussed and the three selected shrinking urban areas are presented.

4. Case study research design

In this chapter, the research design and methodology used for answering the (sub) questions are discussed. While the study has explored forms of governance, policy instruments, and their effect on liveability in urban areas, it is an explorative study and qualitative research is therefore sufficient. Three case studies were used to answer sub questions iii - v:

- iii. What are positive and negative lessons learned from regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?
- iv. With the answers to questions i, ii and iii in mind; what are plausible forms of governance and what are effective policy instruments in order to create and sustain a satisfactory level of liveability?
- v. What are the effects of governance and policies to coop with shrinkage, looking at the positive and negative lessons learned from the selected case studies?

The qualitative research is based on a case study research design, which is presented in this chapter. First, the used selection criteria are presented, followed by stating how the data was collected and analysed.

4.1 Case study selection criteria

An urban area is an area that contains a city and surrounding area like stated in section 1.2.2. The surrounding area is connected with the city, while the city is part of the daily urban system of the area. The selection criteria are based on the definition of "urban area" and the stated research questions; it is required that regional initiatives concerning liveability are present in order to answer research questions (iii-v).

The case study selection criteria are as follows:

4. The urban area includes a (large) city, which is not per se shrinking.
5. The urban area includes surrounding municipalities, in which shrinkage is or was recently present.
6. There are initiatives on different levels in order to coop with the shrinkage.

To be able to make a comparison between the three case studies it is important that all cases meet these three criteria. However, the extent of shrinkage can differ. A difference in shrinkage could even give interesting insights. The three selected cases are: Dordrecht, Leeuwarden, Zwolle and their surrounding areas.

First I looked at the population (past) population and economic development of the Netherlands and the presence of a larger city. Although other areas in the Netherlands are facing a stronger decline in population and economy, like Southern Limburg or Zeeland, to me it was important to look at other, not standard, cases. Secondly, the "Proeftuinen" project (pilot projects initiated by the national government) of the national government suits the third selection criterion perfectly. Areas with municipalities that faced shrinkage and were part of a Proeftuin were closer looked at. Finally, three areas were selected, like mentioned in the beginning of this section: Dordrecht, Leeuwarden, Zwolle and their surrounding areas. In Chapter 5 the demographic and economic changes in these areas and their initiatives to coop with shrinkage are elaborated on.

4.2 Data collection through semi-structured interviews

For this research data was collected through desk research and several interviews. In order to gain a sufficient amount of data, and to be able to make a comparison, three case studies and interviews with the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations were conducted. In the following section, the way of collecting data is elaborated on.

4.2.1 Selection of the interviewees

Semi-structured interviews are conducted to gain insights about regional collaboration and its effect on liveability in the three selected areas. In order to get an overall perspective of the cases different actors are interviewed, both private and public. Table 6 gives an overview of the conducted interviews per case, and the function of the interviewees, in which red indicates that no interview with that specific actor was held.

Case \ Actor	Dordrecht	Leeuwarden	Zwolle
Municipality - city	1. Program manager spatial planning 2. Policy advisor housing	1. Director city development 2. Policy advisor housing and sustainability	Management advisor, position of Zwolle in Zwolle Region
Municipality - surrounding area	Department head environmental development	Policy advisor Demography and liveability, and program manager DDFK	Policy advisor regional collaboration
Province	Past head of regional account Drechtsteden		Strategist, long-term projects. Part of the Proeftuin (pilot project)
Private organisation		Advising citizens in projects about liveability, sustainability and democracy.	Manager Marketing Oost, focus on economic power of Zwolle Region
Regional organisation		1. Program manager ANNO 2. Secretary City region Leeuwarden	Secretary Zwolle Region

Table 6 Overview of conducted interviews per case

When selecting the interviewees it was important to me that they were actively involved in projects regarding liveability or shrinkage and/or regional collaboration. Interviewees were (firstly) found on my own and AT Osborne's professional network, later on, people I came in contact with suggested other possible interviewees. This way my interviewees were persons with the required knowledge and experience regarding the topic of this thesis.

As shown in Table 6, not all actors were interviewed. This was because of multiple reasons: in the case of Drechtsteden, no response came after having contact with a regional organisation and no private organisation that focused on liveability in the area was found. In the case of the Province of Fryslân, the province could not find a suitable person. Eventually, someone who was working closely with the province was recommended, with whom I already scheduled an interview.

Next, to the case interviews, I also conducted interviews with employees of the national government, working for the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. These interviews allowed me to gain a better understanding of regional collaboration in the Netherlands and the perspective of the national government. In total, I conducted 19 interviews, with a total of 22 people.

4.2.2 Preparing, conducting and processing the interviews

In preparation for the interview, I sent the interviewees a general description of my research. While I conducted a semi-structured interview, I developed a guideline of questions that are linked to the five dimensions of the GAT (like discussed in section 3.3.1). While it was impossible to process all questions like stated in Appendix C, a focus was determined per person depending on the information that was still needed, and their role within the area.

I visited the interviewees in their offices when conducting the interviews, simultaneously creating an opportunity to visit the places of my case studies. One interview was conducted via FaceTime/Skype. With approval of the interviewees, all interviews were recorded. During the interview questions were asked, using the earlier mentioned guideline (which can be found in Appendix C), often evolving in a conversation instead of a standard question-answer interview. On average, an interview took one hour, with outliers of 40 minutes and 90 minutes.

After conducting the interviews, the recording was used to translate it into an interview transcript. It is not a full transcript, but an overview of the main findings per subject and quotes. The summary was sent to the interviewee like discussed during the interview. If the interviewee had feedback, this feedback was processed and a new summary was sent. If the interviewee did not reply or replied with approval, the document was not edited.

A pilot interview was conducted, in order to test my line of questioning (Yin, 1994) and conducting an interview. This first interview was held with an employee of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. This was a safe choice because I had several interviews with employees of this Ministry and therefore enough opportunities to adjust and ask further questions.

For each case study also desk research is conducted, in order to gain a better understanding of the (executed) projects, liveability in the area and the regional collaboration over time.

4.2.3 Desk research: collecting information from policy and research documents

Next, to the conducted interviews information was also collected via policy and research documents. While all three performed a so-called "Proeftuin"⁷ the project, the reports of these projects and the national report ("Maak Verschil") were used as resource. Used documents about the specific cases were:

- "Agenda Netwerk Noordoost" (ANNO, Agenda Network North East) overview of projects;
- ANNO report;
- History of collaboration in Drechtsteden (2 documents);
- Agenda of growth Drechtsteden (literal translation);
- "Kracht van Oost" (Power of the East) report;
- Housing plan report;
- Provincial plan report on liveability or spatial policy;
- "Proeftuin" reports.

⁷ Pilot projects initiated by the Dutch National Government, follow-up on the report "Maak verschil" (Studiegroep Openbaar Bestuur, 2016), all pilot projects were aiming at developing an economic regional governance program.

Data was used in order to describe the extent of shrinkage per case. For the case of Leeuwarden clear data concerning liveability of the area was provided via Leefbaarometer. The following data was collected:

- population change over time per region/municipality;
- economic development per region/municipality;
- Leefbaarometer / liveability per municipality.

4.3 Data analysis using the Governance Assessment Tool

The Governance Assessment Tool is used to analyse the different forms of governance of the three case studies. In order to do so, all documents and interviews are processed using ATLAS.ti. What ATLAS.ti is and how GAT is used as an analytical framework is discussed in the following two sections.

4.3.1 ATLAS.ti: software as a tool for qualitative data analysis

ATLAS.ti is a Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) program, a tool for supporting the process of qualitative data analysis (Friese, 2014). Wrongfully made assumptions are that CAQDAS is a methodology and a researcher performs its analysis solely by using the software (MacMillan & Koenig, 2004). ATLAS.ti is a tool and the software itself does not perform any data analysis, a researcher still has to analyse and interpret the data.

However, ATLAS.ti is good tool for organizing a great amount of data. While coding of and creating relations between documents used for the case studies, a more transparent and replicable process is executed (Hwang, 2008).

4.3.2 ATLAS.ti and GAT combined for analysis

The Governance Assessment Tool is a way to analyse possible hinder in governance. In order to create a better view of how regional collaboration can be organised to maintain liveability three cases are analysed and compared. For this comparison, interviews and other (policy and report) documents are used, as stated in section 4.2.

As stated in section 4.3.1, documents were coded using ATLAS.ti. In this research, the summaries of the interviews, and the other documents are uploaded in ATLAS.ti. Per case study, a new project was created in ATLAS.ti were the documents belonging to that case were imported and coded. During the process of coding, the following codes were used:

	Code group	Code subgroup
Dimension	Levels and scales	Hierarchical relation
		Equal relation
		Dependence
		Independence
		Change over time
	Actors in the policy network	Initiator
		Beneficiary
		Affected
		Mediating
		Willing
		Unwilling
		Change over time

	Problem perception and goals	Shared goal Private goal Achieved objective Change over time
	Strategy and instruments	Finance Law Sharing manpower Sharing knowledge Change over time
	Responsibilities and resources	Legal authority Finance Transparency Thrust Change over time
Criterion	Extent	Minimal / medium / maximal
	Coherence	Minimal / medium / maximal
	Flexibility	Minimal / medium / maximal
	Intensity	Minimal / medium / maximal
General	Effect on liveability	Availability of utility Accessibility of utility
	Positive lesson learned	
	Negative lesson learned	

Table 7 Overview of the used codes in ATLAS.ti

While using these codes and their sub codes, it was easy to philtre all gathered information. Except for the general codes, all codes are based on the dimensions and criteria of the GAT. After coding the documents ATLAS.ti was used for subtracting the right information for each part of the model. In ATLAS.ti it is possible to create links between documents, which gave a clear overview of documents and actors that supported or contradicted each other. Using these same codes for the three cases and the interviews with the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, made it possible to efficiently analyse and compare using the GAT.

Conclusion

Empirical research was conducted, to analyse the used governance structures and policy instruments, and their effects on liveability in the urban area. ATLAS.ti was used to code the used documents and create an overview of supportive or contradicting results within the cases. The dimensions and criteria of GAT and some general emerging codes were used. Three cases were analysed and an overall view of the national government was created. For this thesis, a total of 19 interviews were conducted, with 22 people.

5. Three case studies: Dordrecht, Leeuwarden and Zwolle

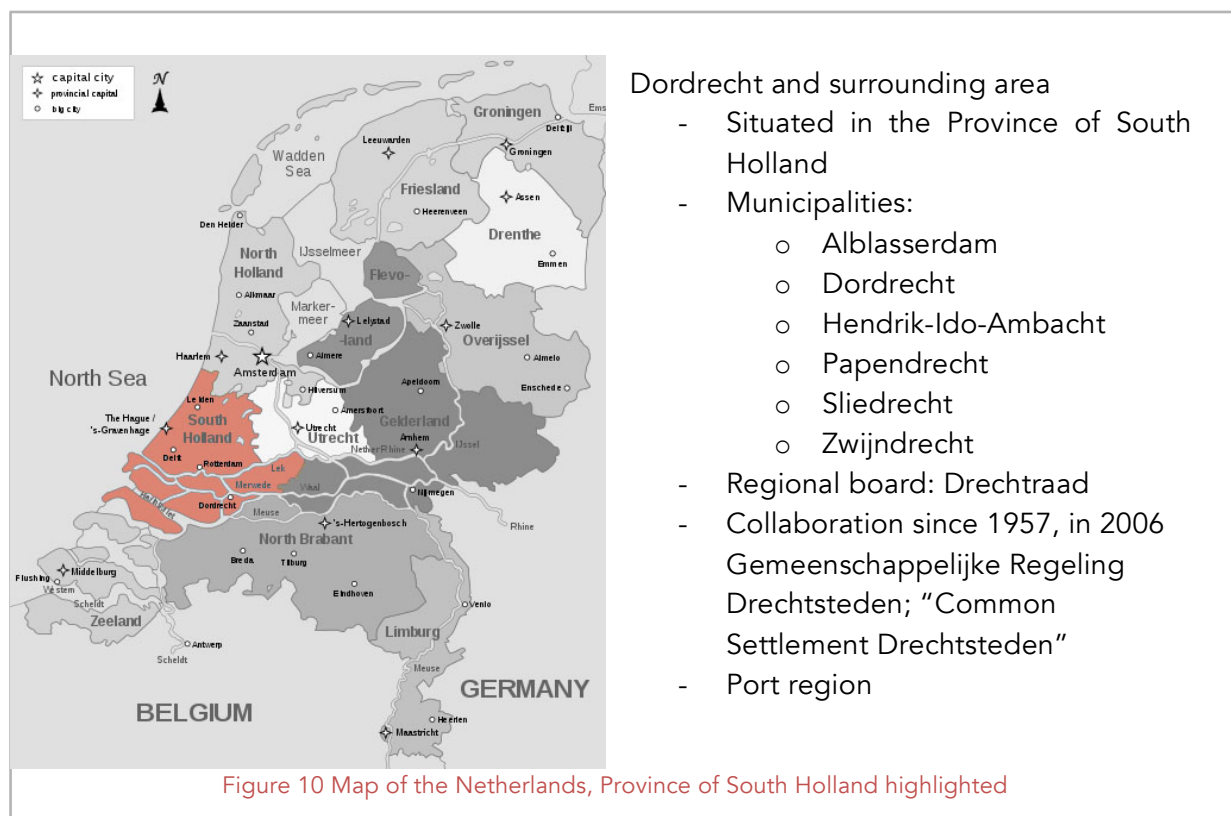
In Chapter four the case study design is presented and the selection of three cases (Dordrecht, Leeuwarden, Zwolle and their surrounding areas) are discussed. In this chapter, the studies of these cases are presented and analysed. An answer is given to sub question iii: *What are positive and negative lessons learned from regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?*

Each case study starts with a general description about the involved parties, the organisation structure, demographic and economic changes in the area, and the main projects executed and instruments used in order to add to the liveability of the area. Secondly the governance of the case is analysed using the GAT. Concluding with the effects of the regional governance on the liveability of the area and case specific elements that stand out. After the three cases the viewpoint of the national government concerning regional collaboration is taken into account.

5.1 Case study Dordrecht and surrounding area

The first case is the case of Dordrecht and its surrounding area. Dordrecht is situated in the province of South Holland, with Rotterdam and Breda as nearby cities. The surrounding municipalities are scattered along the river and together they have a collaboration that is called Drechtsteden. At the moment it consists of six municipalities in total and the so-called Drechttraad directs the regional collaboration.

In this section, a general description is given, including demographic and economic change, the governance structure, and initiatives with regard to liveability. This section is followed by an analysis using the GAT.



5.1.1 Demographic and economic change in Drechtsteden

Drechtsteden experienced both economic and demographic change over the past years. Like shown in Figure 11, the population in Dordrecht and Zwijndrecht declined over a period of 16 years (2000-2016), and the other municipalities faced a minor increase. Graph 1 presents an overview of the development of Drechtsteden population during the same time frame. It shows that the total population decreased in 2004-2007 and the prognosis that it will decline in 2016. During the first period of shrinkage negative migration was a big cause and in 2016 it is more a combination of migration and a decrease in natural growth. Graph 1 and Graph 2 give an overview per municipality of the past population development. When looking at the prognosis of population development, remarkably Hendrik-Ido-Ambacht is expecting quite some increase in population, while Dordrecht seems to stabilize. Alblasserdam, Papendrecht and Zwijndrecht population prognoses are slightly negative like shown in Graph 2. Although the numbers are not emerging as in other parts of the country, the difference with other urban areas in the Province of South-Holland is quite big.

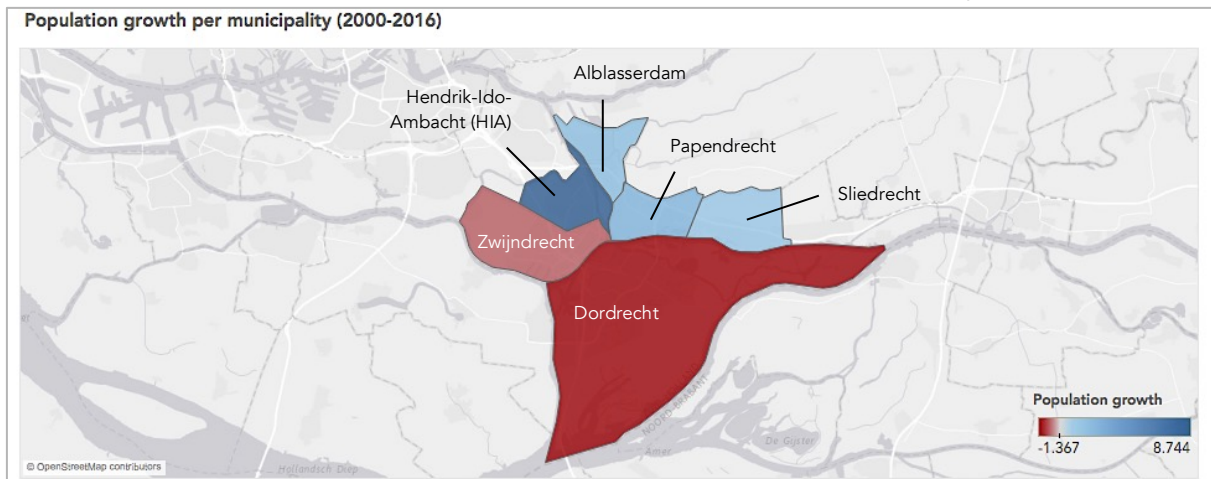
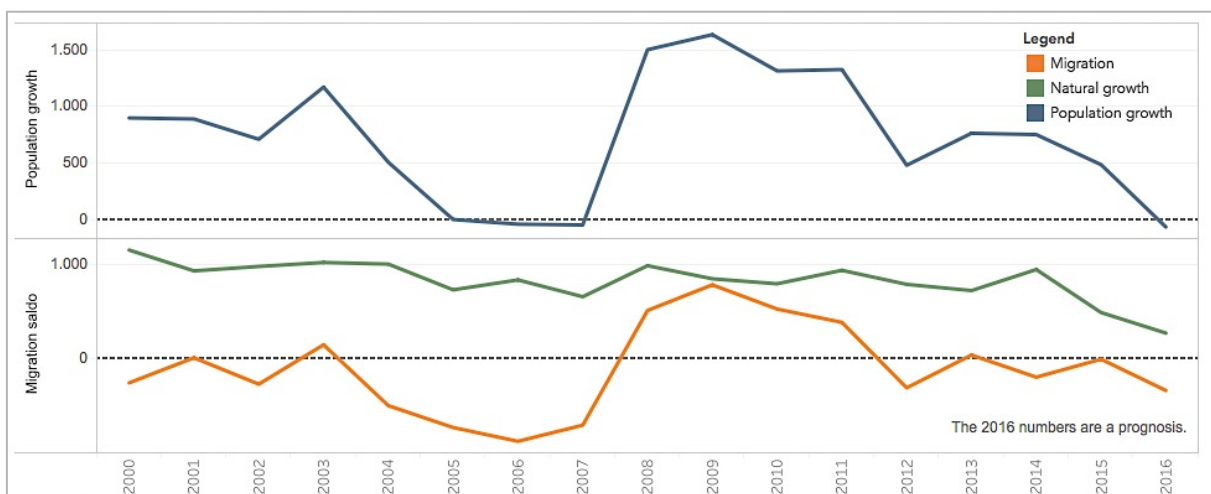
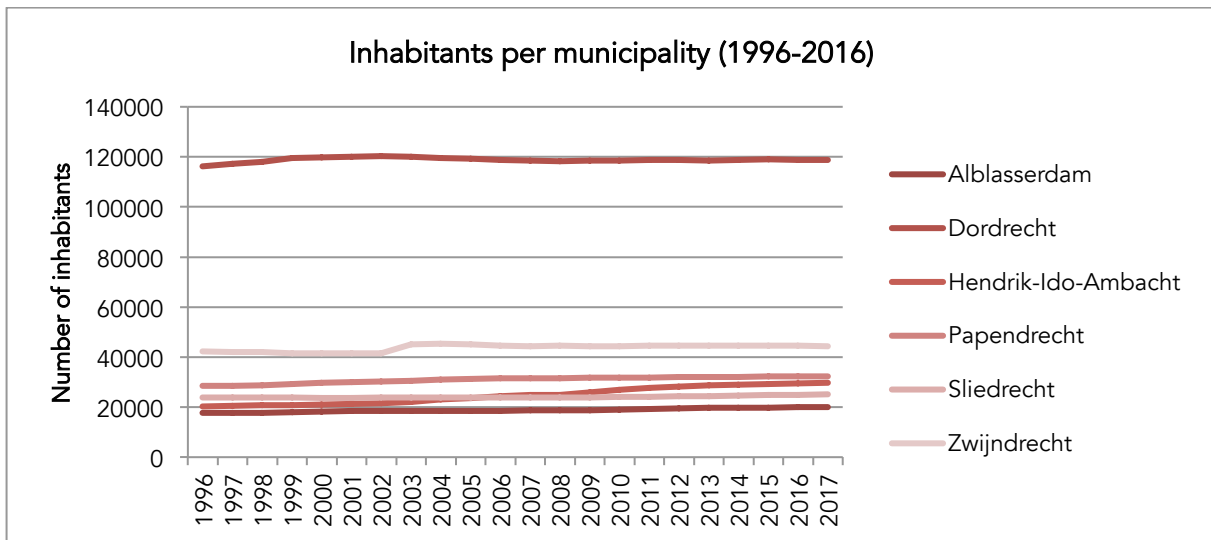


Figure 11 Population growth in Drechtsteden (2000-2016), map after OneStreetMap contributors, retrieved from (Provincie Zuid-Holland, 2017)

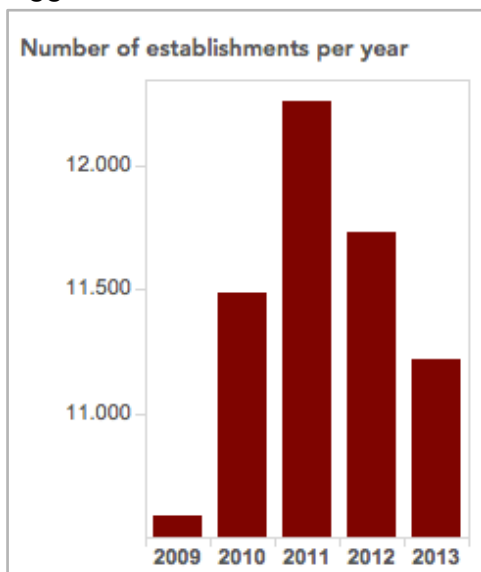


Graph 1 Population development Drechtsteden (2000-2016), used source for image: (Provincie Zuid-Holland, 2017)

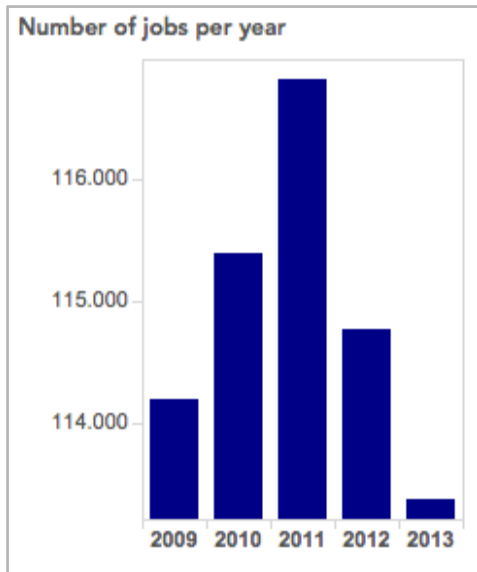


Graph 2 Number of inhabitants per municipality (1996-2017), data retrieved from (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2017a)

Drechtsteden experienced economic decline due to a shrinking industry, a decrease of higher educated people/people with a high income and the increase of elderly. The effect of shrinkage is seen in the fact that different businesses left the area and stores got closed. Looking at Graph 3 and Graph 4 the number of establishments/businesses and jobs have been decreasing thoroughly from 2011 on. Figure 12 shows clearly that most of the jobs are in Dordrecht, followed by Zwijndrecht. From the retrieved interviews it became clear that the last few years different municipalities within Drechtsteden faced economic difficulties. Like Kerklaan (personal communication, 14 September 2017) stated, the manufacturing industry is changing and companies of the maritime industry are looking in other areas of the world for their production. A decreasing industry is not the only issue in the area, but also the decrease of accessibility by train. The quantity of trains that stop at Dordrecht Station has been cut back, resulting in a decrease of accessibility of both Dordrecht as the bigger area of Drechtsteden.



Graph 3 Number of establishments (2009-2013) in Drechtsteden (Provincie Zuid-Holland, 2016)



Graph 4 Number of jobs per year (2009-2013) in Drechtsteden (Provincie Zuid-Holland, 2016)

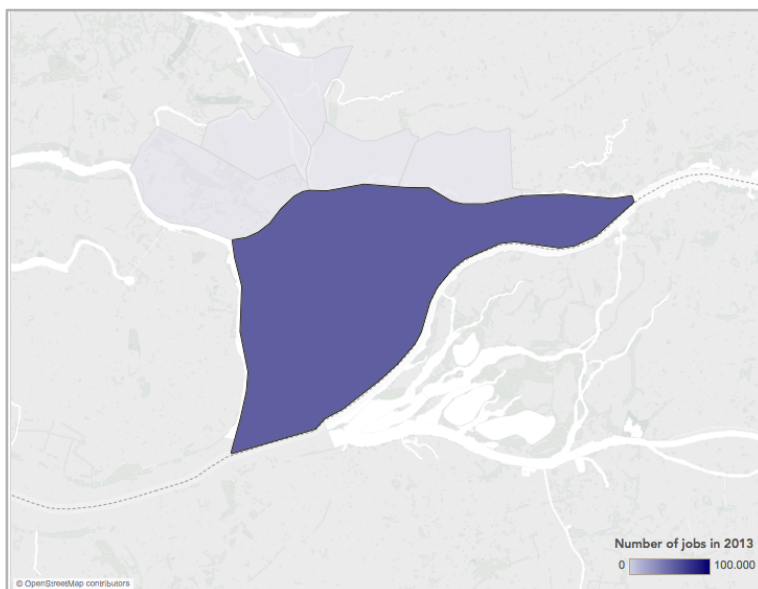


Figure 12 Spread of jobs in Drechtsteden (2013), image after OpenStreetMap, data retrieved from (Provincie Zuid-Holland, 2016)

5.1.2 Drechtsteden as a governmental organisation

For the case of Dordrecht and surrounding area a currently existing collaboration is analysed. This collaboration exists for multiple years and is the only Common Settlement (in Dutch: Gemeentelijke Regeling Drechtsteden) known in the Netherlands. This makes the regional collaboration an extra layer in the house of Thorbecke: a regional government. The following image gives an overview of how Drechtsteden is organised.

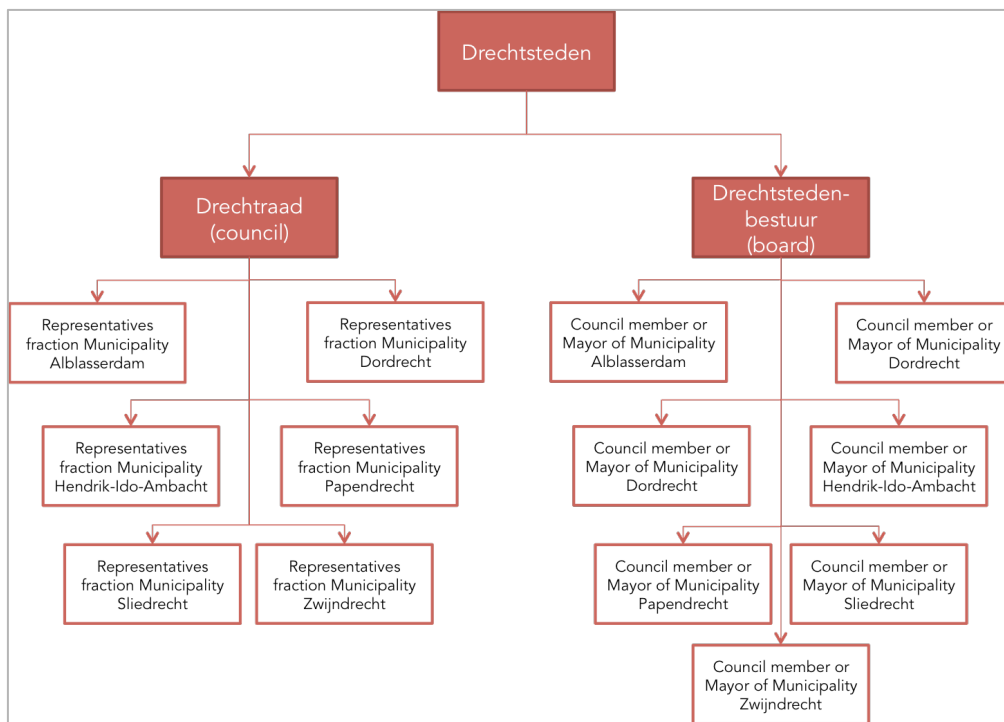


Figure 13 Organisation diagram of Drechtsteden

Like shown in the above figure, Drechtsteden has its own council and board. The Drechttraad (council of Drechtsteden) consists of representatives from the different fractions in the six municipalities. The weight of the vote of each representative is in ratio with the number of votes the party of the representative had during the election of the municipality's council (Drechtsteden, n.d.). The Drechtsteden council is a representative assembly, because of the weighing of votes of the different representatives. The board of Drechtsteden consists of one council member and/or the mayor of each municipality.

5.1.3 Network of Drechtsteden

The network looked at consists of both (semi-) public and private parties. The public parties are: the Province of South Holland, the common settlement Drechtsteden and the six municipalities. Semi-public institutions that are involved are for example public transportation organisations and housing corporations. Next to those parties, also private parties are involved i.e.: educational institutions, sports facilitators, health institutions and citizens. However, the discussed form of governance mostly involves (semi-) public parties; private parties and citizens are limited involved in the decision-making process. An overview of the network and the relations between different actors is given in Figure 14 the relations are further discussed in Appendix E.3.

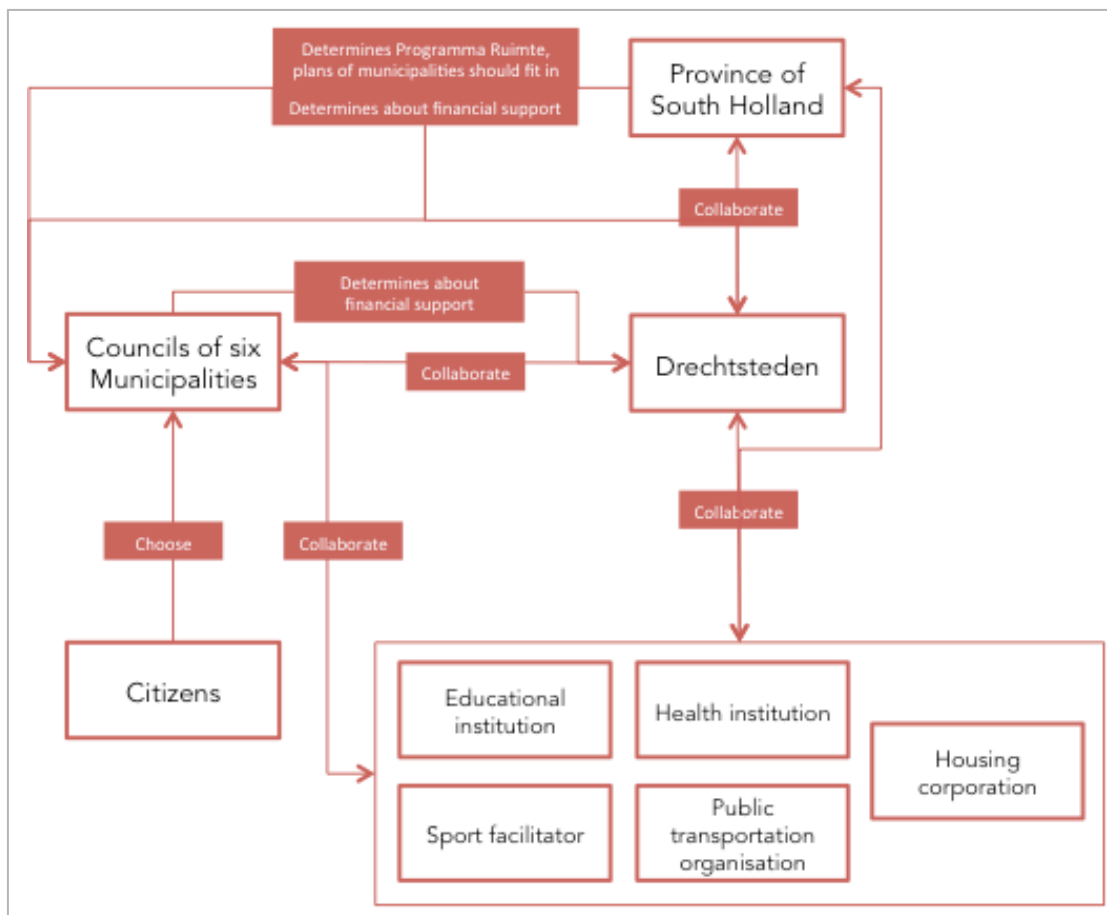


Figure 14 Network of Drechtsteden

5.1.4 Initiatives with regard to liveability in Drechtsteden

For more than 20 years Drechtsteden exists, but it has changed over time (Wijk, 2014). Looking at the collaboration during the past 20 years, it becomes clear that Drechtsteden has worked a lot on organisational aspects; they created a shared service centrum for all the municipalities in the area, a social service for the region and combined taxes for the whole area. These are all projects without real policy, themes that are in need of policy decision making and finance are more difficult to discuss within the region (Bezemer, 08 September 2017, Personal communication). These organisational projects do not have a direct effect on the liveability that is looked at in this thesis, however there are also other projects within Drechtsteden that have had an impact. These are discussed in the following paragraph.

Main projects

The power of the regional collaboration lays in organising regional tasks, for which the municipalities solely are too small. Successful execution of these tasks can mainly be found in (public) transportation and infrastructure issues.

Their main strategy is to increase economy and population: they have a growth-oriented strategy. An aligned strategy is to improve the liveability of neighbourhoods and attract different types of household. Drechtsteden tries to develop different types of housing and other utilities in one neighbourhood. This makes accessibility really important; businesses are attracted to accessible areas.

Concrete projects concern improving the accessibility of and within the area. The waterbus initiative makes it easier to go from one shore to the other and stops at the different towns that are part of Drechtsteden, Kinderdijk and Rotterdam. Drechtsteden lobbied as a region for the construction of A15 and A16, a main road that improves the accessibility with the rest of the Randstad. Improvement of the public transportation is worked on, through working with one total concession instead of different concessions for different areas and different types of transportation (Bezemer, 08 September 2017, Personal communication).

A project to improve the availability of utilities is the "Energiehuis", a place for cultural and social activities (Wijk, 2014). The development of housing on a former factory terrain is another well-known project. Both are projects of "Manden Maken", a regional initiative with projects concerning social development, economy, housing and environment, and accessibility (Drechtsteden, 2006).⁸

Instruments

Drechtsteden as a region is able to gain subsidy the sole municipalities would not be able to get, not only subsidy from the Province, but also National subsidies and European subsidies.

The Province is able to combine municipalities into one if accepted by the Chambers, however, it is an instrument they did not use. Another legal authority of the province is the accepting of the housing policy of the region. They have to approve of the amount and types of houses the region/municipalities are planning to develop or demolish. The Province also shares knowledge with the municipalities and guides in discussions about regional subjects (Kerklaan, 14 September 2017, Personal communication).

Conclusion

Dordrecht and surrounding municipalities form the only region under a common settlement, creating an extra governmental layer. The regional organisation is very effective on an organisational level and infrastructural projects.

Effects on liveability

Looking at the effects of the regional governance Drehtsteden on liveability (defined as availability and accessibility of utilities), the following can be concluded:

- The Waterbus project increased the liveability by *increasing accessibility* of the different towns of Drehtsteden, by creating a connection over water.
- Because of the regional collaboration the public transportation is covered in one concession, instead of different concessions per type of transportation, creating improved connection between the different types of transportation and with that *increasing accessibility* of utilities.
- The connection with two main roads (A15 and A16) is improved, as part of "Manden Maken".
- In terms of increasing availability of utilities, two examples show that this form of governance did not succeed: both developments of a theatre and a swimming pool were not put through because the region was not decisive and willing enough in terms of localisation.

⁸ Manden Maken, translated: Making baskets

- One succeeded project is the so-called “Energiehuis”, Energy house. Energiehuis is a regional cultural centre in a historic building, creating an extra cultural utility in the region and financed by the region and the Province.

Policy instruments

Different instruments are used in order to maintain liveability in the area: financial instruments (for example EU subsidy), regulation of urban planning and sharing of knowledge.

5.2 Analysis using the Governance Assessment Tool – Dordrecht

The case of Drechtsteden is introduced in 5.1, the demographic and economic changes, governance structure and initiatives regarding liveability are discussed. In this part, the case is evaluated on the five dimensions of the GAT, each evaluated by means of the four given criteria. An explanation of the score for the criteria is found in Appendix E.3. In the conclusion of 5.2, an answer is given to sub question iii (*What are positive and negative lessons learned of regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?*) for the case of Dordrecht.

5.2.1 Actors in the policy network

In the network of Dordrecht and surrounding area a lot of different actors are involved, not only public actors but also private. The dimension *Actors in the policy network* is discussed in this section.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Affected/Beneficiary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The social-economical position of Drechtsteden is weak, the level of utilities and housing could be better, therefore people with higher income leave the region and the lower incomes stay (Intergemeentelijk Kenniscentrum, 2009). The region and municipalities are in this case affected actors. - The effect of the regional collaboration in terms of transportation and development of the water bank area is clear, also for the inhabitants (Apperloo, 14 August 2017, Personal communication). |
| Central | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dordrecht sees itself as a central municipality and acts accordingly, it often takes initiative in executing regional tasks (Bezemer, 08 September 2017, Personal communication; Korteweg, 12 September 2017, Personal communication) - By some governmental organisation Dordrecht is not seen as the centre city, by others it is (Kerklaan, 14 September 2017, Personal communication; Korteweg, 12 September 2017, Personal communication; Laak, 22 August 2017, Personal communication). Dordrecht is clearly the biggest municipality in the area, not only in terms of population but also in jobs and utilities. However, there is no agreement about the central role of Dordrecht and how they have more influence in decision-making, looking at housing, and spread of utilities (stores, movie theatres, et cetera). |

- Initiator/mediator
- The role of the Province was creating boundaries, framing and assessing. Currently, it is changing to a more partner-like role, where they are a part of the network, of a joint cooperation, and where they have to facilitate.
 - Same as above (at central) mentioned: Dordrecht is often initiator; not only by actively participating, but also financially is Dordrecht initiator in putting money on the table (Korteweg, 12 September 2017, Personal communication).
- Willing/unwilling
- Like earlier stated, the collaboration on the organisational side of the region is going well. They successfully merged certain organisational aspects of the six municipalities.
 - Looking at the planning, distributing and development of housing, the different municipalities are not willing to give in. Money is playing a big part in this issue, municipalities are not eager to give up a potential source of income. Adding to this: the region agreed upon a regional housing vision, but are currently writing execution plans locally. By this, the parties are able to choose for their own good, instead of the regional good.

“We asked the question: “Are you willing to grant other municipalities housing, at the expenses of your own housing?”, only one municipality answered yes (..) all other kept their mouth shut.”⁹ (Anja Kerkelaan, 14 September 2017).

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Actors in the policy network				

5.2.2 Levels and scales

- Dependence /independence
- When Drechtsteden initially started they had a clear regional program and goal, with a stated budget. The dependence in that time was high; they wanted to execute the projects and the different municipalities needed each other in order to succeed.
 - Looking at the housing, the different parties have a certain dependency. The region has to develop a regional plan and the housing corporations are dependent on that plan.
 - Nowadays there are less common goals, this combined with the transition in local politics: an uprising of local parties who are more critical in terms of regional collaboration (change in the level of trust), gives a less stable relation between region and municipalities.

“There used to be more trust in the Region, what they wrote down was more accepted”¹⁰ (Paul Bezemer, 08 september 2017), in which they refers to board of

⁹ Translated from: “Bent u bereid om een andere gemeente woningen te gunnen ten koste van uzelf? 1 gemeente zei ja (..) alle anderen hielden hun mond dicht”

Drechtsteden.

Equal/hierarchical relation

- Province has depended on the situation a hierarchical or equal relationship with the region. For example, the Province is able to reject the housing development plan of the region and municipalities. However, for some other subject the Province tries taking the role of an equal partner.
- The collaboration in Dordrecht is more of a governmental based collaboration, in which other parties are only involved in a market-based relationship.
- A difficulty is that the regional board can make a decision about a certain project and the execution of the project, while at the same time it has not the needed financial resources. This way the board forces local governments to pay for decisions that are made on a regional level.

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Levels and scales				

5.2.3 Problem perception and goal

Shared/private goal

- Coherence depends on the subject; more businesswise subjects are easily put in collaboration. For example accessibility / public transportation is seen as a shared goal, all municipalities and Drechtsteden want to improve the accessibility within and to the region. Policy is often translated in a private goal, especially when it has a big financial aspect

Problem perception

- In terms of problem perception, one could state there is no real sense of urgency. The issues concerning the effects of shrinkage (availability and accessibility of utilities) are seen as minor. This is because of the fact that lot utilities are still nearby, because of the closeness of Rotterdam and Breda.
- Drechtsteden developed a regional housing vision and is working on the distribution of resources and responsibilities, they agreed upon the fact that a certain number of houses should be built, the location and types are still unknown.

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Problem perception and goal				

¹⁰ Vertaling van: "Er was meer vertrouwen in de regio, er werd meer geaccepteerd wat daar (door het Drechtstedenbestuur) gewoon werd opgeschreven"

5.2.4 Responsibilities and resources

Some about the division of responsibilities and resources is touched upon in Appendix E.2.4. In this paragraph a brief review is given, using the criteria of the Governmental Assessment Tool.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Financial | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently: 1€ per inhabitant from the municipalities plus subsidies (provincial, national and European) depending on the project. - At the start, they had a clear budget for the project regarding the water banks and the waterbus. |
| Legal authority
Responsibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Province has to approve the housing plan. - Currently is it for some parties unclear how the responsibilities are distributed, especially with the themes of housing and utilities. - History points out that when clear goals and projects were set the distribution of responsibilities went well. Theoretically, the local authorities and regional authorities have their own responsibilities, however, in practice this is not always clear. Where does a responsibility start and end, for example with utilities? |

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Responsibilities and resources				

5.2.5 Strategy and instruments

Most of the division of responsibilities and resources is touched upon in Appendix E.2.4. In this paragraph a brief review is given, using the criteria of the Governmental Assessment Tool.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Regulative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Province uses its regulative instruments to approve /disapprove the housing plan and the development of a business area. - Financial support from the province and the National government is an important instrument. |
| Sharing
manpower/knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing manpower and knowledge is a (limited) used instrument. - Collaboration in order to achieve more in terms of development of infrastructure. |

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Strategy and instruments				

Conclusion

Drechtsteden has a unique way of collaborating; the municipalities developed a regional organisation that functions under a common settlement. This worked really well when there was a clearly stated goal, project and budget (respectively Drechtoeverproject and Manden Maken). It also was a great success in terms of combining practical organisations like a service centre. Nowadays the region misses decisiveness when it comes to projects concerning housing and utilities, but it is still very effective in infrastructural and public transportation project.

To conclude, for the case of Drechtsteden positive and negative lessons learned are drawn to answer sub question iii:

What are positive and negative lessons learned from regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?

Negative lessons learned:

- Limited flexibility within *Levels and scales*, while the regional governance is organised as an extra governmental layer, also the main focus is on public parties.
- Extra governmental layer slows down processes (minimal score on *coherence and intensity* looking at *Levels and scales*), and experienced a decrease in trust.
- Content should be leading, not the way of organising (*Problem perception and goal*).
- Competition of a big city nearby, like Rotterdam or Breda, causes less of an urgency to act and is difficult in terms of distributing utilities.
- Municipalities are not willing to give in, on the subject of housing (difficult subject because of the clear financial part; minimal *coherence* on *Responsibilities and resources*), they do not think as one region on this part (limited *coherence*).

Positive lessons learned:

- Transportation issues are solved due to the regional collaboration.
- Subsidy is easier to gain when a (bigger) region requests it.
- *Actors* are more used to collaborate this makes collaboration more standard.
- Different services can be easily combined in such an organisation, which leads to an increase of efficiency (improvement of more behind the scenes issues, not visible for the inhabitant and a limited effect on liveability).

Dimension \ Criterion	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity	
Actors in the policy network	Minimal	Medium	Maximal	Medium	Minimal
Levels and scales	Minimal	Medium	Maximal	Medium	Medium
Problem perception and goal	Minimal	Medium	Maximal	Medium	Maximal
Responsibilities and resources	Minimal	Medium	Maximal	Medium	Medium
Strategy and instruments	Minimal	Medium	Maximal	Medium	Maximal

5.3 Case study Leeuwarden and surrounding area

The second case discussed, it the case of Leeuwarden and surrounding area. This region is situated in a Northern province of the Netherlands: province of Friesland, better known as Fryslân in the local (Frisian) language. Leeuwarden is the capital of the province and is surrounded by many smaller villages. The surrounding area that is taken into account for this research is bigger then only adjoining municipalities is also includes region NO Fryslân (North Eastern Friesland).

In this section, a general description is given, including demographic and economic change, the governance structure, and initiatives with regard to liveability. Followed by an analysis of the case of Leeuwarden using the GAT.



Figure 15 Map of the Netherlands, Province of Friesland highlighted

5.3.1 Demographic and economic change in Leeuwarden and surrounding area

In terms of demographic change one can say that the surrounding area of Leeuwarden is and will be facing decline (see Figure 16 and Appendix F). However, the city of Leeuwarden was growing during the last years (see Appendix F). The prognosis is that Leeuwarden will have a positive growth in the future like shown in Appendix F and Figure 16 (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2012, 2017b). Looking at the tables of population change, based on CBS data (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2012, 2017b), municipalities in the surrounding area are not only facing a declining population but also an ageing population (see Appendix F).

Economically the province of Fryslân had an increasing GNP (gross national product) per inhabitant over 2010-2013, quite similar to the national increase. The GNP per inhabitant in Fryslân is structurally lower than the average GNP per inhabitant nationally. In 2013 it was expected that the GNP would decrease in 2015 (28134 vs. 28282 in 2014) in Fryslân, while it

would increase nationally. This trend is shown in Appendix F, the numbers are not per municipality because this information was not available for me. However, one can expect that the province as a whole could be a good reflection of the area in terms of GNP.

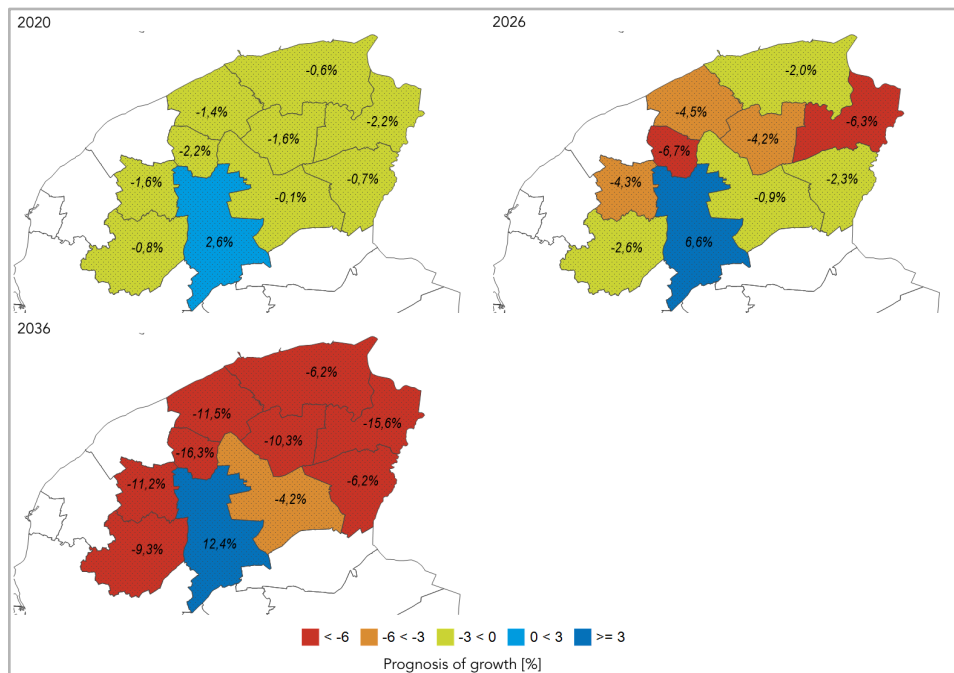


Figure 16 Prognosis of growth in Leeuwarden and surrounding area

Recently the area of North Eastern Friesland is declared a “shrinkage region”, and North West Friesland an “anticipate region” a label made by the national government that shows that the demographic and economic change has their attention (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2016).

5.3.2 Liveability in Leeuwarden and surrounding area

Leefbaarometer, a tool developed by the national government, measures the liveability level in Leeuwarden and surrounding area. Three dimensions are interesting for this case study:

1. housing,
2. physical environment,
3. and utilities.

These three are shortly discussed and a conclusion about liveability in Leeuwarden and surrounding area is given.

Housing

Housing is a dimension made out of different aspects that are related to the state of housing in an area. The indicators are the year of construction, dominant type of housing in area, type of housing (i.e. detached housing, townhouse), size of dwelling and type of property (social rental, normal rental, owner-occupied) (Leidelmeijer, Marlet, Ponds, Schulenberg, & Woerkens, 2015). Data is available about two years: 2012 and 2014. Three municipalities score a lot lower than the average national score: Achtkarspelen, Dantumadiel and Tytsjerksteradiel. Menameradiel scores fairly higher and the rest fluctuate around the national average.

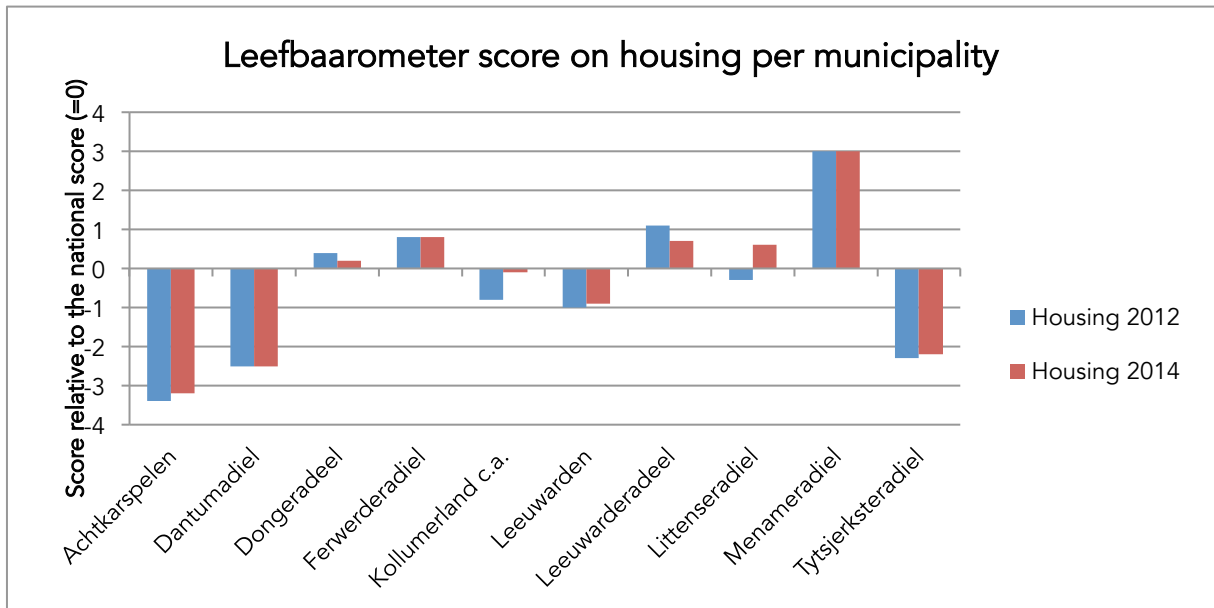


Table 8 Leefbaarometer score on housing, data retrieved from Leefbaarometer (2014)

Physical environment

Leefbaarometer (2015) named 26 indicators to score the physical environment. Indicators for the non-direct living environment are linked to the location and its closeness to certain terrains (woods, park, lakes, sea, et cetera). Indicators concerning the direct environment are split up in "satisfiers" and "dissatisfiers". Satisfiers are elements that are valued positively to have nearby, for example, monuments, gathering places, green areas, and waters. Dissatisfiers are valued negative, and can be seen as different sources for nuisance: i.e. wind turbines, noise nuisance, accessibility in terms of infrastructure (road, railway), nearby industrial area, dense urban area or risk of flood/earthquake.

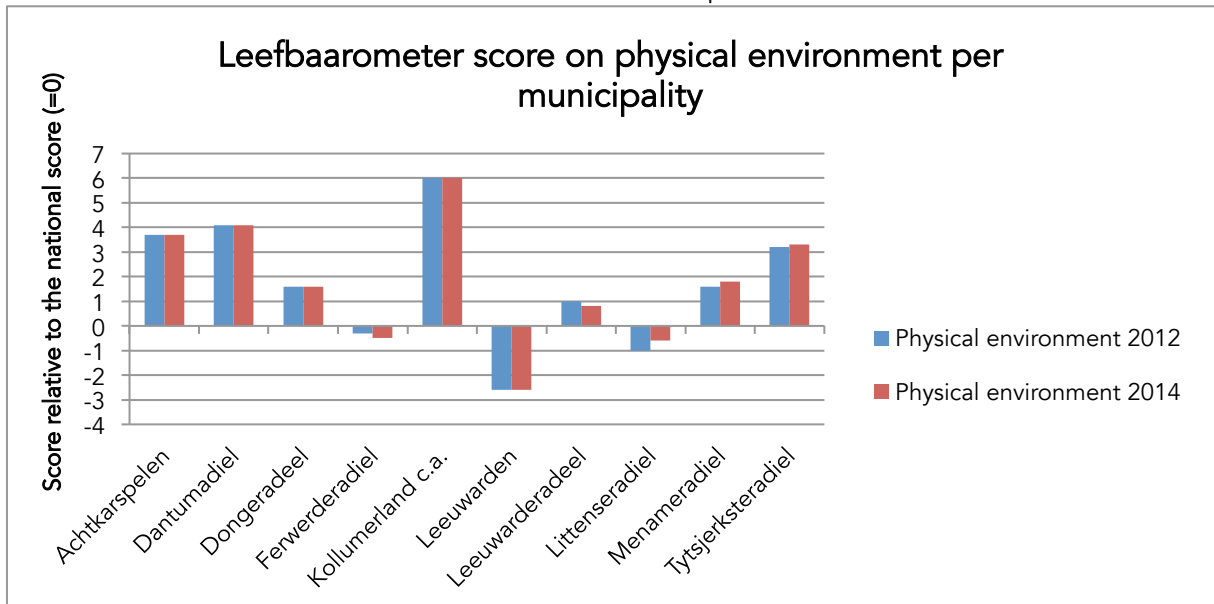


Table 9 Leefbaarometer score on Physical Environment, data retrieved from Leefbaarometer (2014)

The case scores relatively high on physical environment, only Ferwerderadiel, Leeuwarden and Littenseradiel have a negative score relative to the national score. Leeuwarden has the highest negative score and the surrounding area scores relatively good (Leefbaarometer,

2014). The change between 2012 and 2014 is limited in most cases and therefore not interesting enough for this research.

Utilities

The dimension Utilities contains the availability and accessibility of certain utilities. Roughly the utilities can be divided in utilities for accessibility (station, high way), care (GP, hospital), education, cafes and restaurants, shops, culture (library, podia) and sports (Leidelmeijer et al., 2015). Remarkably only Leeuwarden scores higher relative to the national score and all other municipalities score lower. The change over time, like shown in the table, is relatively small.

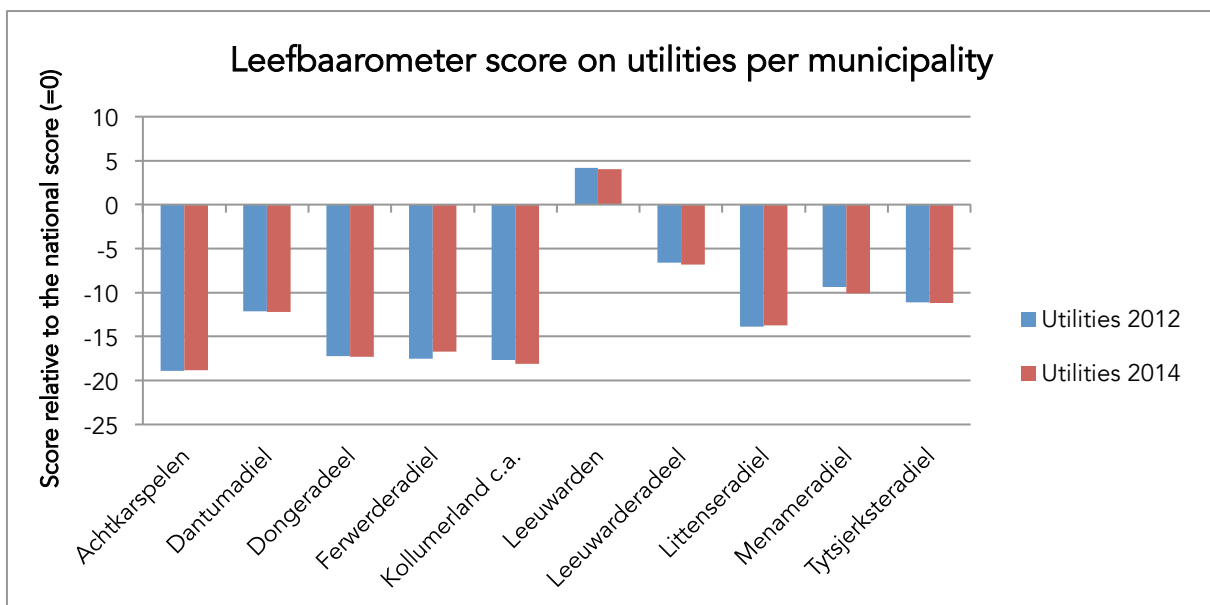


Table 10 Leefbaarometer score on Utilities, data retrieved from Leefbaarometer (2014)

5.3.3 Organisational structure

In this area, two main organisations are involved in the regional collaboration: ANNO and Stadsregio Leeuwarden / City region Leeuwarden. The two organisations are structured differently; ANNO is an external organisation, acting independently from all municipalities, formed by 5 persons. ANNO is no legal entity and is financed by the different municipalities and the Province of Fryslân. City region Leeuwarden consists of a secretarial and administrative committee and three employees. City region Leeuwarden has a covenant as a starting point and ANNO has recently signed the first Region Deal (Regiodeal), a statement of intent.

ANNO is highly theme-structured and creates support by having every task led by one civil servant and one administrative worker from two different municipalities. The main task of the team ANNO is to make sure the regional tasks are kept in mind, while the executing power lays more with the concerned parties.

City region Leeuwarden, on the other hand, has a more administrative structure, in which the mayors of the six municipalities advice on policy and regional plans. From an interview with Alan Laws, secretary of City region Leeuwarden became apparent that they try to think and organize in themes instead of structures, but that in practice it was difficult. The following two figures Figure 17 and 18) depict the structure of both organisations.

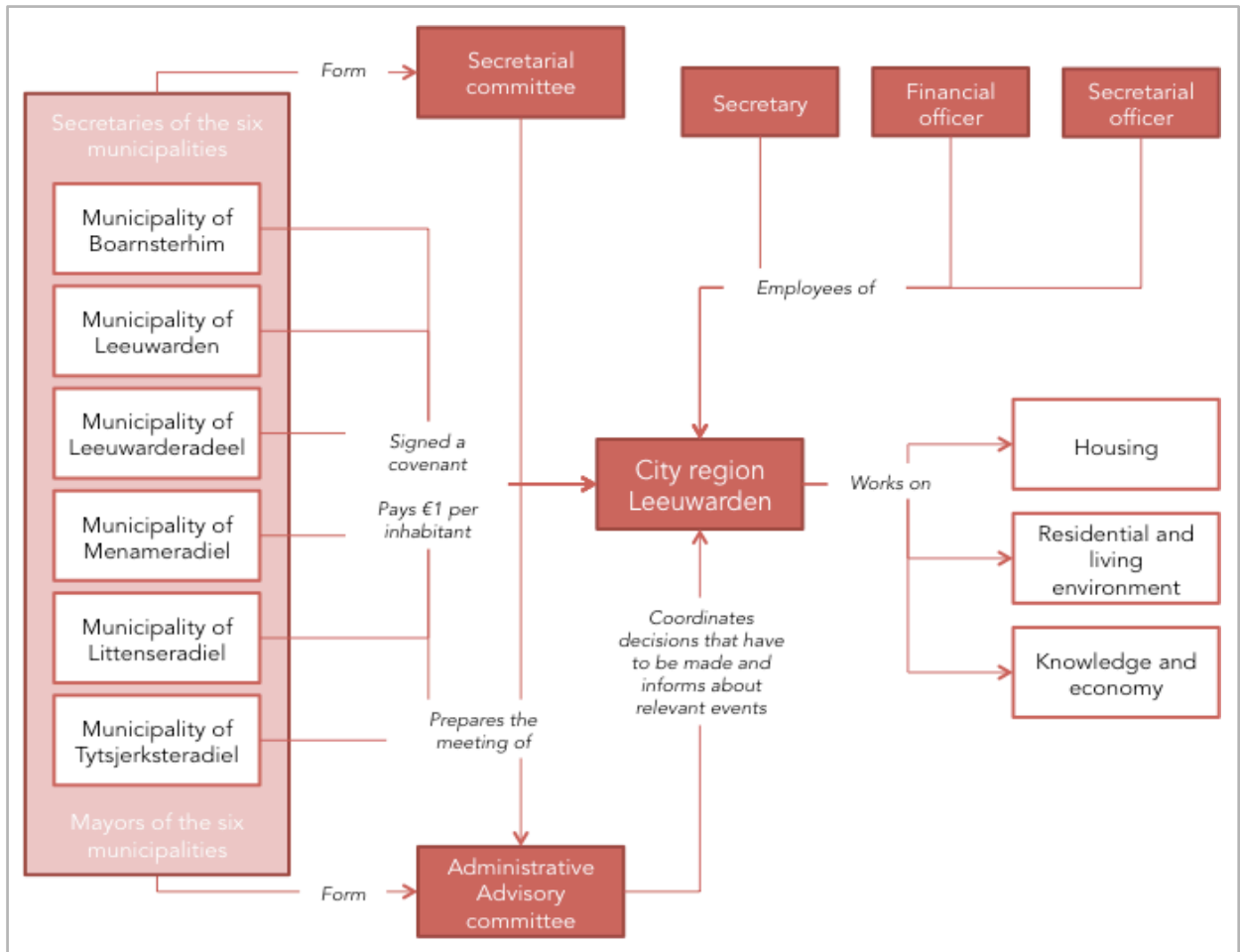


Figure 17 Organisation of City region Leeuwarden and surrounding area

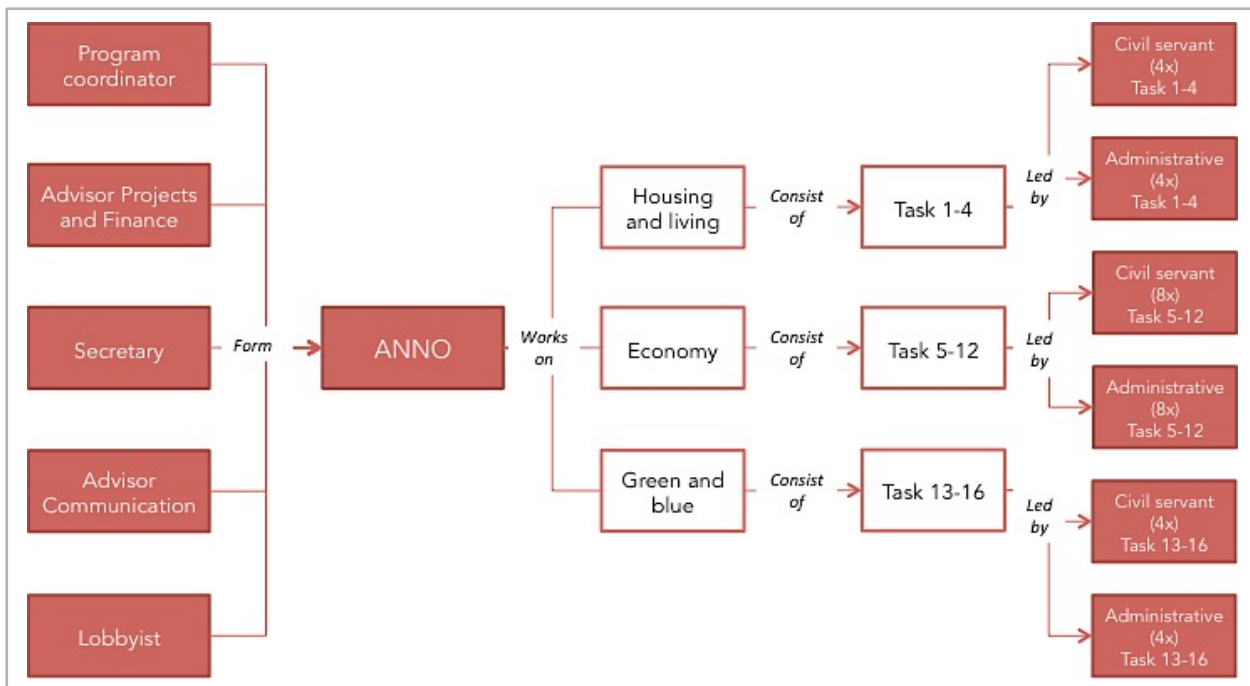


Figure 18 Organisation of ANNO

As stated by Siepie de Groot (23 August 2017, Personal communication), ANNO tries to collaborate as much as possible on themes, instead of creating structures. The three themes are divided into 16 different tasks in total. Each total has its own task leaders: a civil servant and an administrative worker, both from different municipalities. The tasks are found in Appendix F.

However, the case of interest is not about the two areas separate but concerns the collaboration in the area as a whole. Figure 19 depicts the two areas and its collaboration. Not only do they have a literal common ground, municipality Tytsjerksteradiel, but they also have shared interest and some sort of regional collaboration.

The current collaboration between City region Leeuwarden and ANNO is mainly on regional themes. Themes that affect a bigger area than their "own" area, like housing, education and care. This collaboration is not put down in a contract and is mainly a voluntary collaboration in which the municipalities find each other on certain topics. A clear example is education, NO Fryslân benefits of different levels of education in the near area and realizes that it is not possible to have their own higher education (higher education or university). Another example is collaboration through sharing of knowledge, in which Leeuwarden has developed knowledge and a concept for care and shares this with the surrounding area, not only the City region but also the ANNO area (Janssen, 12 September 2017, Personal communication, Personal communication).

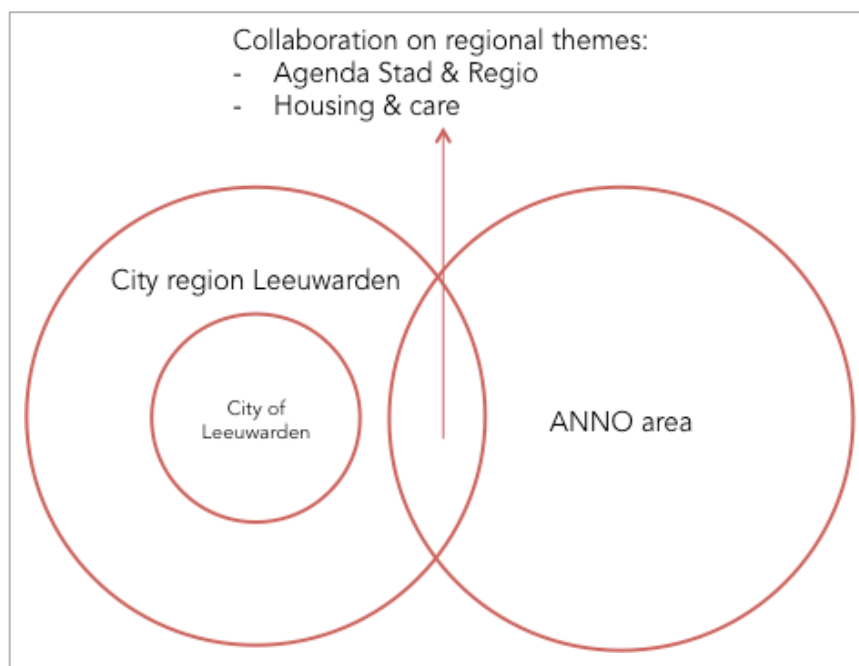


Figure 19 Collaboration between two areas

5.3.4 Initiatives with regard to liveability in Leeuwarden and surrounding area

In the case of Leeuwarden and surrounding area they are well aware of their (future) demographic change and how this can impact the liveability. This results in a well thought through organisation of ANNO and City region Leeuwarden. In order to maintain or create a liveable area (with the availability and accessibility of utilities as definition of liveability), multiple programs, policy instruments and measures are developed in the region. The main are identified and discussed in the following paragraphs.

Programs and projects

Like stated before both ANNO as City region Leeuwarden are working on different themes in order to create and maintain liveability in the area. Programs are developed in terms of these themes, for ANNO II 16 tasks (see above) are developed for now and the near future. With these programs, ANNO set directions for projects that they would perform as a network, with all involved municipalities.

ANNO I has already finished and the programs worked on are (Netwerk Noordoost, 2012):

- "Noordoost bereikbaar" (North East Accessible)
- "Noordoost Digitaal" (North East Digital)
- "Wonen en leven in Noordoost" (Living in North East)
- "Sterke Kernen" (Strong Centers)
- "Ruimtelijke infrastructuur voor bedrijven" (Spatial infrastructure for companies)
- "Duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling" (Sustainable area development)
- "Recreatie en toerisme" (Recreation and tourism)
- "Netwerk Noordoost bedrijven naar innovatie" (Companies Network North East; innovation)
- "Kansen voor wonen, zorg & zorgtoerisme" (Chances for living, care and care tourism)
- "Van onderwijs naar baan" (From education to work)
- "Duurzaam Noordoost" (Sustainable North East)
- "Samenwerking en organisatie" (Collaboration and organisation)
- "Programmafinanciering" (Program finance)
- "Regiomarketing" (Region marketing)

Policy instruments and measures

An often-used instrument is a subsidy, a few examples:

1. €40 million for ANNO I, from province and municipalities (Groot, 23 August 2017, Personal communication, Personal communication);
2. €3 million for increasing liveability in rural area (Gedeputeerde Staten van Fryslân, 2017);
3. In City Region Leeuwarden they have a contribution of €1 per inhabitant from all municipalities;
4. For ANNO II there is a contribution by Province and municipalities, for practical matters. Other expenses are determined per project and divided between the parties involved (Groot, 23 August 2017, Personal communication, Personal communication);
5. Financial support by Province of Fryslân for infrastructural projects.

Next to financial instruments, sharing of knowledge is also used to achieve the set goals. The municipality of Leeuwarden shares knowledge with the whole region, in order to help other municipalities with issues they already resolved. A known example is a way Leeuwarden dealt with tender offers from different healthcare organisations (Laws, 5 September 2017, Personal communication). Regionally the different parties are working on gaining knowledge about strategically dealing with vacant housing and other dwellings (Laws, 5 September 2017, Personal communication). Next to sharing knowledge, they also

share manpower on some intra-municipal projects, in which a civil servant of one municipality works on a similar project in another municipality within the region.

The role of the Province of Fryslân is quite dynamic; they see themselves not as a solely top-down governmental organisation. According to Marcella Janssen (Janssen, 12 September 2017, Personal communication), the province is an actual equal partner in the network, which delivers financial aid, advisory and counselling. Sometimes they use their regulative power, for example when a local sports facility wanted to renew its facilities the province stated that they only would give permission if the rest of the municipalities in the region agreed upon the plans. However, the interference, in this case, was rooted in agreements made within ANNO, which made it less of a unilateral decision. This is also a good example of one of the goals of the region; balancing utilities. The area is aware of the fact that they face demographic change and therefore they are not in need of extensive utilities in every municipality, they benefit from balancing utilities.

A future instrument is the new Omgevingswet, "Environment and planning act", in which integral problem solving is supported by the national government. Collaboration on themes is in line with integral problem solving (Laws, 5 September 2017, Personal communication), therefore the new act could enhance regional collaboration.

Main initiatives in order to maintain liveability

A lot is being done to maintain liveability in Leeuwarden and surrounding area. The main themes the region focuses on are: housing, knowledge and economy and environment (green and blue/living environment).

A part of improving the regional economy is improving the infrastructure within and with the region. An example is development of a mobility centre, which will improve the public transportation of the region by centrally organizing different types of transportation. This is especially interesting for inhabitants who are part of the so-called WMO (Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning or "social support act") because it will combine different modes of transportation throughout the whole region.

Another example is the area development project of Skûlenboarch, which improved the accessibility of an industrial area and combined this project with the development of a recreational area, sand extraction and improvement of a bridge.

Not only governmental ideas are executed in order to improve the accessibility of the region, but also bottom-up initiatives like the €1 transportation by an electric car. The idea came from inhabitants of the region and is currently running on volunteers. This bottom-up initiative is something typical for this area, where they value something called "Mienskip". Mienskip is a Friesian word, which goes further than just communal sense. If there is a project, carried out by the community and clearly sponsored by the community, the local government is willing to put in their part of the deal. It could be seen as a local form of Private Public Partnership.

In terms of housing and living environment there are multiple projects. An important one is a project that focuses on conserving community centres, which are highly valued by the inhabitants of the region (Janssen, 12 September 2017, Personal communication).

Construction of housing and arrangements with housing corporations are discussed regionally because as a region they want to prevent that too many houses are constructed, or that houses of the wrong type are being built.

Conclusion

Leeuwarden and surrounding area are facing demographic and economic change. Leeuwarden city was growing and is expected to keep on growing the coming years. However, all other municipalities in the selected area will face shrinkage or are already facing demographic shrinkage.

Three forms of regional collaboration are identified:

- ANNO, an external organization that has as the main task to make sure regional policy is developed and executed. A structured way of collaborating on themes, currently working on base of a Region deal.
- City region Leeuwarden, a covenant, a loose way of collaborating.
- Intra-area collaboration, which is not written down in any form. The collaboration takes place on themes that cross municipal and regional boundaries.

Effects on liveability, a few examples (elaborate list can be found in 5.3.4)

- Electric vehicle, 1€ a ride. Volunteers take shift to drive the vehicle, municipality of Leeuwarden paid for the vehicle; increasing accessibility.
- A regional choice was made for maintaining one library, instead of multiple. By maintaining only one library, this library has a bigger chance of survival: maintaining utilities.
- When looking at spread of utilities and financing of sport facilities, a clear regional goal is kept in mind. One of the towns had a good idea for improving their sport facilities, but they had to get support by the regional collaboration. While for the region it is important to have their own soccer facilities, they agreed on not creating one optimal sport facility.

“It is a good initiative, but with consequences for other towns in the area. If you create an optimal sport facility, (..) then there will be no financial investment in other accommodations in the area.” (Marcella Jansen, 12 September 2017, Personal communication).¹¹

- “Kenniswerkplaats” (literally translated: knowledge shop): an initiative to connect schools and employment, creating an extra utility.
- Preservation of community centres, these are highly appreciated by the locals and the regional policy is to maintain these centres.
- In terms of accessibility of utilities: the region created a mobility centre, which is able to connect different modes of transport and with that, increase the accessibility of utilities.
- The regional collaboration also lobbied for an extra high-speed train from Leeuwarden to Groningen, increasing the accessibility of the two cities and their utilities.

Policy instruments

Different parties use different instruments. The main instruments are subsidiary/financial, sharing knowledge and sharing manpower. The current policy is to act on and accept shrinkage and maintain liveability within the whole region. This is done by trying to improve the accessibility of the region, keep up a certain standard of utilities while spreading them

¹¹ Translated from: “Het is een heel mooi initiatief, maar dat heeft consequenties voor de dorpen om jullie heen. Als hier een optimale sportvoorziening komt voor voetbal (...) dan betekent dat er niet meer / ook geïnvesteerd wordt in nieuwe accommodatie in de dorpen daaromheen”.

throughout the whole region and by guiding the development of housing in such a way that it facilitates the future housing demands.

5.4 Analysis using the Governance Assessment Tool – Leeuwarden

The case of Leeuwarden and surrounding area is introduced in 5.3; the demographic and economic changes, governance structure and initiatives regarding liveability are discussed. In this part, the case is evaluated on the five dimensions of the GAT, each evaluated by means of the four given criteria. An explanation of the score for the criteria is found in Appendix F.3. In the conclusion of 5.4 an answer is given to sub question iii (*What are positive and negative lessons learned of regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?*) for the case of Leeuwarden.

5.4.1 Actors in the policy network

In the network of Leeuwarden and surrounding area a lot of different actors are involved, not only public actors but also private. The involved actors are enlisted and the dimension *Actors in the policy network* is discussed in the following paragraph.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Affected/Beneficiary | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Affected actors in the network are not common, but sometimes parties have to give up something for the greater good: the example of the sport facility, the library that cannot be in every small village and the fact that they should not “built for vacancy”, but control their housing and make sure it is sustainable for the ageing population- Leeuwarden municipality is in some ways affected by the movement of population from the surrounding area to the city. People who are in need of certain nearby utilities, people that cannot live in the surrounding area because of the limited public transportation (Haas & Deelstra, 24 July 2017, Personal communication)- Parties that benefit the project are involved in the project, in the case of ANNO projects (Groot, 23 August 2017, Personal communication), parties that are not interested will not join the project. A similar construct is found in City region Leeuwarden. |
| Central | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The city of Leeuwarden is sometimes, but not always, looked at as a central actor in the area. A lot of projects can be executed on local or (small) regional level, however in terms of economy, education and care, the role of a city is crucial.- The province, the regional organization ANNO and City region Leeuwarden sometimes have a more hierarchical role, the question is when a hierarchical structure is needed? (Haas & Deelstra, 24 July 2017, Personal communication) |
| Initiator/mediator | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A city like Leeuwarden is able to give some initiatives a boost (Laws, 5 September 2017, Personal communication).- Inhabitants and private organisations are also initiators; |

Leeuwarden and surrounding area have an eye for initiatives from citizens. Municipalities see a supporting role for themselves when inhabitants come up with such initiatives (Haas & Deelstra, 24 July 2017, Personal communication).

Willing/unwilling

- Task leaders from ANNO take initiative, and ANNO facilitates
- ANNO has a role as mediator, to keep the regional interest in mind and make sure that the municipalities work in line with the earlier stated tasks.
- Province of Fryslân sees herself as an equal partner, next to the tasks she has by law, an actor that is able to help when needed (Gedeputeerde Staten van Fryslân, 2017).
- Collaboration between the different regional organisations is really hard, because of all the administrative structures, if something has to be financed all involved municipalities have to make a decision about the payment (Laws, 5 September 2017, Personal communication).
- Parties within ANNO are willing to collaborate because of the economic and demographic urgency (Groot, 23 August 2017, Personal communication).

“Working together on content is easier, than trying to work together in general figuring out what the collaboration should look like.” (S. de Groot, 23 August 2017, Personal communication)¹² “If there is an added value in working together, content wise, you should do it.” (S. de Groot, 23 August 2017, Personal communication)¹³

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Actors in the policy network				

5.4.2 Levels and scales

The dimension *Levels and scales* describes the different levels of governmental parties involved and the different scales of cooperation and their dependencies. Two elements are specifically looked at: (in)dependence and type of relation: equal or hierarchical.

Dependence
/independence

- There is a clear dependency between the area and schools: the region needs fitting education for their inhabitant, businesses need correctly educated people and the schools need enough students.
- The urgency to work together, the dependency, made that the different municipalities in the ANNO area are willing to give up some things and work for a shared goal instead of an individual goal (Groot, 23 August 2017, Personal communication).

¹² Translated from: “Op inhoud is het veel makkelijker om elkaar te vinden, dan meer in het algemeen: hoe ziet de samenwerking eruit?”

¹³ Translated from: “Als op inhoud blijkt dat het meerwaarde heeft, dan moet je het vooral doen.”

“There is a sense of urgency to collaborate, they see each other as partners, which generates a solid base for collaboration.” (S. de Groot, 23 August 2017, Personal communication).¹⁴

Equal/hierarchical relation

- The relationship between government and society has been changing the past years, more has been organized and initiated bottom-up: citizens, entrepreneurs and their organisations are initiating more to add to liveability in their environment (Gedeputeerde Staten van Fryslân, 2017).
- A governmental organisation like DDFK spots a certain development and starts discussion with a village or other organisation to determine what should be the future perspective and how they can get there (Janssen, 12 September 2017, Personal communication).
- ANNO is looking for a way to “let go” as an organisation at a certain point, but to keep a certain level of interference. They do not want every municipality to become their own independent island that competes with other municipalities in the area (Groot, 23 August 2017, Personal communication). So, on the one hand, they are establishing an equal relation, while on the other hand they are the one who set ground rules.
- The Province keeps its provincial responsibilities and powers. This means that they do have a final say in some infrastructural projects, spread of certain utilities and development of housing /environmental programs.
- Although the Province of Fryslân has its provincial responsibilities and powers, the relation between the province and the region is equal according to Janssen (12 September 2017, Personal communication) and Startnotitie Leefbaarheid (Gedeputeerde Staten van Fryslân, 2017). The province gives the region its own responsibilities and puts itself as an equal partner.

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Levels and scales				

5.4.3 Problem perception and goal

Shared/private goal

- A clearly shared goal is to maintain liveability in the area as a whole; the city and surrounding area are mutually dependent in terms of economy and housing.

Problem perception

- The region as a whole has different issues than the city of

¹⁴ Translated from: gevoel van urgentie om met elkaar samen te werken, ze zijn partners van elkaar en zo voelen ze dat ook, dus dat is een fijne basis voor samenwerking.”

Leeuwarden. Where Leeuwarden is still growing in population, the surrounding area is facing or will face a declining population.

- Another difference between city and rural area is the fact that the inhabitants evaluate the living environment of the rural area much higher than the living area of Leeuwarden city (see Table 9).
- Yet the utilities in Leeuwarden city are rated much higher than the utilities in the rural area (see Table 10).
- Both experience the movement of inhabitants from rural areas to the city as something that is possibly negative; Leeuwarden has to take in a lot "weak" inhabitants and the surrounding area is losing inhabitant.

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Problem perception and goal				

5.4.4 Responsibilities and resources

Most about division of responsibilities and resources is touched upon in Appendix F.3. In this paragraph a brief review is given, using the criteria of the Governmental Assessment Tool.

- Financial
- City Region Leeuwarden has a contribution of €1 per inhabitant, further financial support is determined per project and is divided equally over the involved municipalities (without taking the size of the municipality into account).
 - ANNO I had a budget of 40 million €, subsidized by the province and municipalities.
 - For intra-regional collaboration (ANNO and City Region Leeuwarden) every municipality has to determine if they want to finance a certain project, there is not one budget.

"The strength of the City region is that we put money in collectively, grant each other things, work with short lines of communication and delegated low in the organisation" (A. Laws, 05 September 2017, Personal communication).¹⁵

- Legal authority
- The Province of Friesland is both a financial as a legal authority (Janssen, 12 September 2017, Personal communication), who can act by intervention of environmental plans.
- Responsibility
- The municipality is initially responsible for the development of a plan for spreading utilities; the province can intervene when needed (Leefbaarometer, 2014).

¹⁵ Translated from: "De kracht van de stadsregio is dat we geld in de pot gooien, we gunnen elkaar iets, hebben hele korte lijnen en er is laag in de organisatie gedelegeerd"

- ANNO has a clear division of responsibilities, by working in themes and tasks. The intra-regional collaboration has less of a clear division.

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Responsibilities and resources				

5.4.5 Strategy and instruments

Most of Strategy and instruments is touched upon in 5.3.4 Initiatives with regard to liveability in Leeuwarden and surrounding area. In this paragraph a brief review is given, using the criteria of the Governmental Assessment Tool.

The used strategy in the case of Leeuwarden and surrounding area is to accept shrinkage and maintain liveability. A part of the strategy is to increase tourism, in order to stimulate the economy and make sure that utilities, such as swimming pools, train stations, are used. This is done by, for example, improving the Wadden area, and improving the canals for sailing. Next to financial instruments, which are discussed above, there are also other instruments:

What kinds of policy instruments are used to maintain liveability in the region?

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Regulative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In means of accepting shrinkage, utilities and housing must be spread over the area and to fit the (future) inhabitants, so they have to be sustainable/life-resistant. Sometimes an authority, for example, the Province, has to act in order to make sure this spreading will happen. They act using their regulative power, in order to accept or reject certain environmental or housing plans. |
| Sharing manpower/knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing manpower is used in projects in which a municipality, often the city of Leeuwarden, already gained knowledge and experience and shares this by lending out an experienced co-worker. - Sharing knowledge only is used often, for example with developing a strategy concerning the vacancy of housing (Laws, 5 September 2017, Personal communication). - This also happens with the trajectory of tendering care, where Leeuwarden developed a concept and shared it with the other municipalities in the surrounding area (Haas & Deelstra, 24 July 2017, Personal communication; Janssen, 12 September 2017, Personal communication; Laws, 5 September 2017, Personal communication). - The Province hired an external organisation (Doarpswurk) for advising bottom-up initiatives that want to add to local liveability, sustainability and democratic innovation (Bijma, 23 August 2017, Personal communication). |

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Strategy and instruments				

Conclusion

ANNO and City region Leeuwarden separately can be seen as a functioning network. However, the cooperation between the city of Leeuwarden and the greater surrounding area (including the ANNO area) is somewhat lacking in coherence and intensity. Mainly the problem perception, use and gathering of resources and use of instruments differ between the different involved parties.

Positive and negative lessons learned from the case of Leeuwarden are drawn to answer sub question iii. *What are positive and negative lessons learned from regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?"*.

Positive lessons learned:

- ANNO went through a whole process to determine what their regional tasks would be. This process increased the awareness of and coherence on the current and future situation of the ANNO area, in terms of demographic decline and need for utilities (*Problem perception and goal*).
- Flexibility is a must, especially when working in a network with organisations and people from outside the region (*Actors in the policy network, Levels and scales*).
- ANNO as an independent, regional organisation makes commitment to and thinking of shared goals easier.
- Due to a feeling of urgency different parties, from different levels of government and private organisations, see each other as partners.
- Leeuwarden and surrounding area are in luck with the initiatives of the people, something that is part of the culture.
- City region Leeuwarden finds power in the fact that they all put money in for regional projects.
- Leeuwarden city is able to give a boost to certain subjects, due to its size and knowledge.
- A base of content instead of structure works better to get parties together and involved.

Negative lessons learned:

- Some things can better be executed by a private organisation than a governmental organisation, i.e. because of dealing with a momentum, need for quick decision-making.
- Collaboration between two regional organisations (intra-regional) is harder, mainly due to financial difficulties and administrative hustle.
- Different levels of collaboration: local, regional and intra-regional. Some subjects should not be discussed on another level because there is a lack of collaboration/willingness.

Dimension \ Criterion	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Actors in the policy network	Green	Green	Green	Orange
Levels and scales	Green	White	Green	Orange
Problem perception and goal	Orange	White	Green	Green
Responsibilities and resources	Orange	White	White	Orange
Strategy and instruments	Red	Green	Green	Green

5.5 Case study Zwolle and surrounding area

The third and final case is Zwolle Region, the largest region in terms of affiliated municipalities and provinces. The region is situated quite central and is part of four provinces: Drenthe, Flevoland, Gelderland and Overijssel (see) Region Zwolle consists of twenty municipalities and has a light form of collaboration.

In this section, a general description is given, including demographic and economic change, the governance structure, and initiatives with regard to liveability. Followed by an analysis of the case of Zwolle using the GAT.



Figure 20 Zwolle Region, 20 municipalities in four provinces



Figure 21 The four involved provinces: Drenthe, Flevoland, Gelderland and Overijssel

Zwolle Region consists of twenty municipalities, divided over four provinces:

- 1. Province of Drenthe**
 - De Wolden
 - Meppel
 - Westerveld
- 2. Province of Flevoland**
 - Dronten
 - Noordoostpolder
 - Urk
- 3. Province of Gelderland**
 - Elburg
 - Hattem
 - Heerde
 - Oldebroek
- 4. Province of Overijssel**
 - Dalfsen
 - Hardenberg
 - Kampen
 - Olst-Wijhe
 - Ommen
 - Raalte
 - Staphorst
 - Steenwijkerland
 - Zwartewaterland
 - Zwolle

The region has a flexible way of cooperating, not bound by a contract or common settlement. Zwolle Region is an organisation consisting of three employees, taking care of regional collaboration. The base of their collaboration is a Triple Helix: Government, Education and Businesses, in Dutch the so-called three O's (Overheid, Onderwijs en Ondernemers).

Zwolle Region is the most positive case when looking at demographic and economic change. Yet, there are differences between the city of Zwolle and the surrounding municipalities, which make it an interesting case to look at.

5.5.1 Demographic and economic change in Zwolle and surrounding area

Demographically the Region of Zwolle is growing, however some municipalities did face some decline or will face decline in the future. Table 4 and Table 5 in Appendix G give an overview of the (future) development of population of all twenty municipalities. Clearly a lot municipalities have an increasing population and are also facing an increase in the future, especially Zwolle is expected to grow thoroughly. However, some municipalities faced population decline in the past: Dronten, Heerde, Oldebroek, Ommen, Raalte, Steenwijkerland, Westerveld and De Wolden. It is also expected that Hardenberg, Noordoostpolder, Oldebroek, Raalte, Steenwijkerland, Westerveld, De Wolden and Zwartewaterland will face population decline in the future. Important to notice is that Oldebroek, Raalte, Steenwijkerland, Westerveld and De Wolden already faced population decline and is expected to shrink in the future.

Economically seen, Region Zwolle is doing very well. According to Atzema et al. (2016) the region has both a broadly educated population as a range of different sectors. In the report "Kracht van Oost" (Atzema et al., 2016), an overview of earnings per sector is given. It becomes clear that a lot of sectors are (slowly) growing (2002-2013): agriculture, service utilities, media & ICT, real estate and rental, business services, public administration, education, care and culture & recreation. However, other sectors have been shrinking (2002-2013): textile industry, wood & paper industry, built industry and retail & food service industry. There are also sectors that were shrinking between 2008 and 2013, but overall did not shrink (2002-2013): wholesale and logistics, chemical, metal industry, technological industry, furniture industry, nutrition industry and financial service (Atzema et al., 2016).

Shrinkage after 2008 was higher than the national average: -0,6% versus -0,2% per year. This due to an unfortunate composition of sectors: healthcare and retail are big, but deliver limited added value (economically). The fact that there is no specialisation of industry in the region is both an advantage as a disadvantage. On the one hand, it creates a lot of opportunities and is able to attract different (educated) people; on the other hand, embedment of a certain industry is therefore missing.

5.5.2 Liveability in Zwolle and surrounding area

Housing

Zwolle and surrounding area are seen as an attractive area to live in, due to the lower prices than in de Randstad for instance, and the amount of space there is available. Looking at Graph 8, Appendix G, clear decrease in value of real estate occurred during the economic crisis of 2008. The prognosis (2014-2016) looks promising: a small increase of value in the municipality of Dalfsen, Ommen and Zwolle is expected. It is important to notice that these data only considers the municipalities in the Province of Overijssel, so the other halves (ten municipalities lay within Overijssel, the other ten are spread over Flevoland, Drenthe and Gelderland) are not included in the graph.

Utilities

The provinces of Overijssel and Gelderland are weak in terms of urbanisation; there is not a

metropolitan city that is the centre of the daily urban system of the region. The provinces see themselves more of an agglomerate of small cities, in which the daily urban system is spread throughout the whole area.

Although there is a fine spread of middle and higher educated inhabitants, the area has no university or other academic institution. Yet, Region Zwolle has a highly productive knowledge-driven economy, based on a strong higher education and not on a university (Atzema et al., 2016).

The accessibility within the province of Overijssel and Gelderland is rated below average compared to competition (Atzema et al., 2016). However, a recent project (Zwolle Kampen Netwerkstad), had a goal to improve the accessibility of the area.

5.5.3 Organisational structure

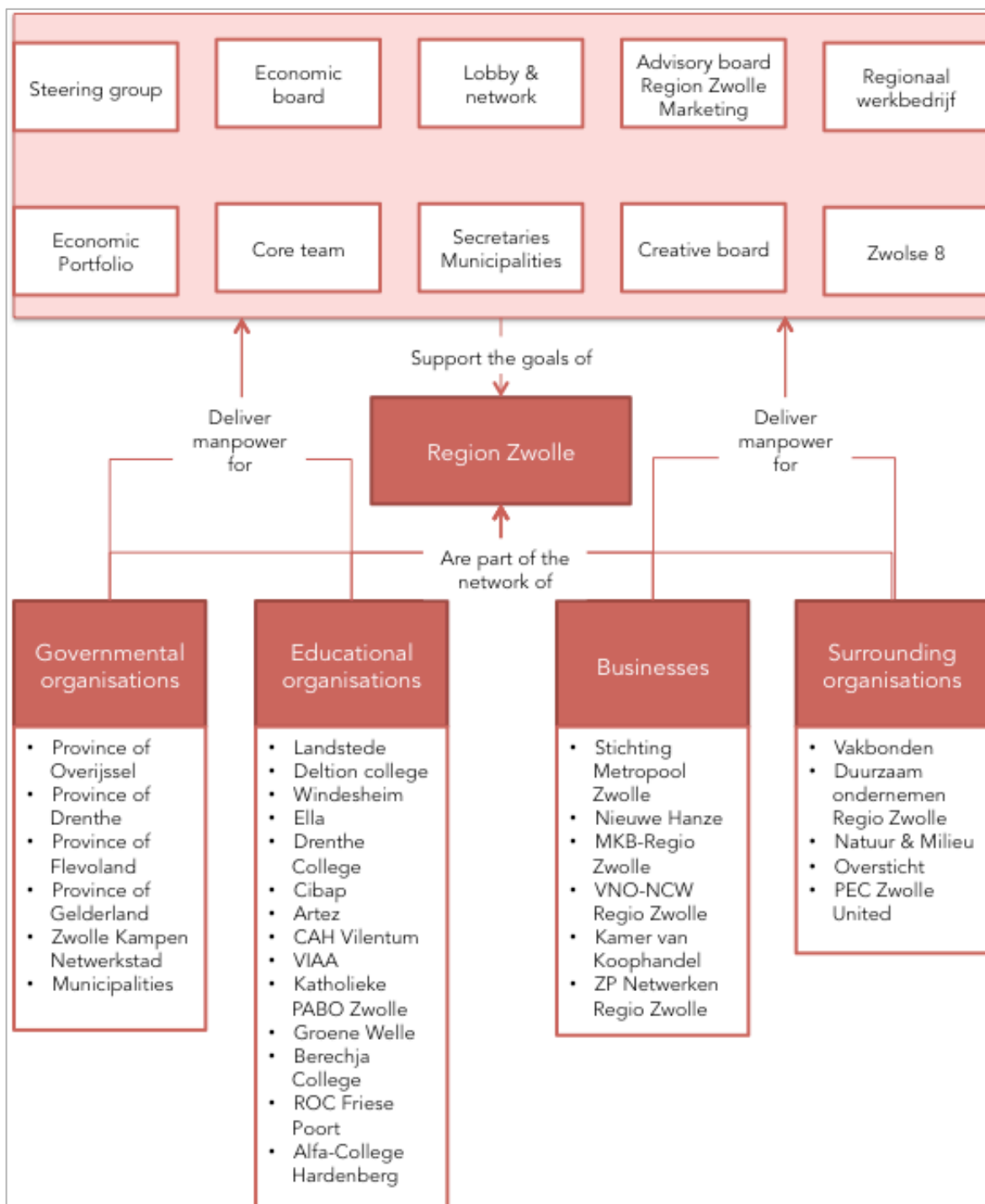


Figure 22 Overview of the organisation structure of Zwolle Region

Like stated earlier, Region Zwolle is a collaboration based on the triple helix: Government, Businesses and Education (Figure 13 and 15, Appendix G). They believe that they can improve the regional economy at best when collaborating with these three types of organisation. Sometimes they speak of the fourth type of actor: actors from the environment, an overview of the collaboration structure is given in Figure 22. The region itself is a small organisation with only a few FTE that organises the network and brings the parties together.

Zwolle Region is organised in a very loose manner: they do not have a common settlement or another type of agreement. They agreed on working together when needed: a so-called coalition of the willing. They did establish four themes that they are working on:

1. future agenda;
2. way of working – capacity;
3. involvement – people in the Region;
4. Responsiveness – financial.

5.5.4 Initiatives with regard to liveability in Zwolle and surrounding area

Zwolle and surrounding area are primarily focusing on achieving a better economic status. Therefore the region has five themes on which they collaborate:

- Economy;
- Mobility and accessibility;
- Economics of leisure: tourism and recreation;
- Lobby and networking;
- Business management / organizational management.

Programs and projects

The region consists of different coalitions that work on different projects. For example they joined a technology pact, to connect technological businesses with schools and pupils. The region developed a sector plan for the healthcare sector to deal with labour market issues due to decentralisation and reformation. A logistic expertise centrum was set-up: a platform to bundle all activities in transport and logistics, to share knowledge and manpower. And a "regional job company "Regionaal Werkbedrijf" was created, to give people who have distanced from the labour market a job opportunity. Next to this municipalities also try to improve the efficiency of their own organisation, by creating a shared-service centre.

Zwolle Region also introduced an economic board. The economic board is developed in order to add to the competitive position of the area. There are working on subjects that will lead to a higher economy and more employment opportunities. The economic board is also created from the triple helix idea, connecting government, education and entrepreneurs. Another aspect the region is looking at is their "brand": what is Zwolle Region? What makes is more or less attractive for (international) businesses and employees? Where can we leave a mark? This is executed by the organisation Marketing Oost.

Policy instruments and measures

Like stated earlier, Region Zwolle is based on a very loose way of collaboration. They work with a coalition of the willing, in order to make sure the right people are involved. For

financial instruments, they have a standard fee of €1 per inhabitant. Additional costs per project are determined and covered by the coalition that is working on the project. There is no further notice of used policy instruments.

Main initiatives in order to maintain liveability

In order to maintain liveability there is a focus on mobility and accessibility. Zwolle Region has currently not an issue with the number of utilities, however they are working on improvement of the infrastructure.

Conclusion

Zwolle Region is an economically thriving region, with a lot of different sectors. They are working together in order to improve their economic status and accessibility. The region consists of twenty municipalities, divided over four provinces.

The regional collaboration is mainly based on coalitions of the willing and has a small regional organisation (Regio Zwolle Bureau). The collaborations are based on the idea of triple helix: Government, Education and Businesses. It is their point of view that it is important that these three types of organisations work together in order to develop a sustainable economy.

Effects on liveability

Zwolle Region works on different projects, mostly focused on economic development. With that different themes are involved:

- Economy;
- Mobility and accessibility;
- Economics of leisure: tourism and recreation;
- Lobby and networking;
- Business management / organizational management.

The focus on economic development creates indirect effect on liveability. In order to develop a more attractive economic region the housing, infrastructure and business locations are developed: creating availability and accessibility of utilities. Examples are:

- improvement of the intersection at Raalte (A28);
- combining three ports, to avoid competition within the region and maintain one strong port.

Policy instruments

The main used instrument is financial aid. Furthermore the Region organizes gatherings in which the different municipalities come together, discuss and learn from each other.

5.6 Analysis using the Governance Assessment Tool - Zwolle

The case of Region Zwolle was introduced in 5.5; the demographic and economic changes, governance structure and initiatives regarding liveability are discussed. In this section, the case is evaluated on the five dimensions of the GAT, each evaluated by means of the four given criteria. An explanation of the score for the criteria is found in Appendix G. In the

conclusion of 5.6 an answer is given to sub question iii (*What are positive and negative lessons learned of regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?*) for the case of Zwolle.

5.6.1 Actors in the policy network

Region Zwolle is working with a broad range of different actors; from governmental organisations to education institutes to entrepreneurs (triple helix). However, there is no real collaboration with inhabitants of the area. The main thought that came back in multiple conversations was that in the end it is about people, independent from their official role, in the end, it is people who have to collaborate and have to grant the other parties something.

Affected/Beneficiary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Zwolle Region the network works from coalitions of the willing, so only parties are involved who are or want to be part of it. - Sometimes different municipalities have to grant each other something, for example, the case of localisation of the water board; one municipality got the office, the other the director. This process was not a positive experience, but in the end the regional goal was kept in mind.
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zwolle is seen as a central actor in the Region (Benschot, 31 August 2017, Personal communication; Breider & Praamstra, 28 August 2017, Personal communication; Voornveld, 5 September 2017, Personal communication). It is their strength that they made it such an open network, especially when taking into account that the region is divided over four provinces (Voornveld, 5 September 2017, Personal communication). - Zwolle tries to keep other municipalities as much as possible involved and tries not to take control over everything (Benschot, 31 August 2017, Personal communication; Breider & Praamstra, 28 August 2017, Personal communication; Voornveld, 5 September 2017, Personal communication). - Province of Overijssel takes the most central role, of all four provinces. They have the biggest share of municipalities in the region.
Initiator/mediator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are two types of municipalities in the region: active and passive ones. The active ones are actively involved and act accordingly, while the passive ones are waiting for things to happen and then decide to join or not (Breider & Praamstra, 28 August 2017, Personal communication; Molenaar, 31 August 2017, Personal communication). - The Provinces take-up mediating roles, when on a regional level no agreement are reached. For example if the municipalities fail to decide about the location of housing or industrial areas (Paris, 5 September 2017, Personal communication).

Willing/unwilling

- Due to the coalition of the willing, the willingness is high in this region. However, some municipalities are less involved than others.
- Within the region, there are sometimes issues with fulfilment of promises or timeliness of fulfilment, as a result of the loose way of collaborating.
- Cooperation on housing is difficult; municipalities are unwilling to cooperate because of the involved land and finances. The theme energy transition is also hard to arrange on a regional level instead of a local level, but it is unclear why (Breider & Praamstra, 28 August 2017, Personal communication).
- Not all provinces are (financially) equally involved. Flevoland, for example, is also looking at Metropool Amsterdam and is fully invested in that region.

“It is all about people, about people who can find each other and feel like they can pull of the task together.”¹⁶ (E. Breider, 28 August 2017, Personal communication)

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Actors in the policy network				

5.6.2 Levels and scales

The dimension *Levels and scales* describes the different levels of governmental parties involved and the different scales of cooperation and their dependencies. Two elements are specifically looked at: (in)dependence and type of relation: equal or hierarchical.

Dependence
/independence

- Like Dick Molenaar (31 August 2017, Personal communication) put; for Meppel there are three layers in which the municipality moves. The local layer, where they collaborate with one other municipality (Westerveld) to join forces. This collaboration focuses mainly on organisational efficiency and decisiveness. A sub-regional layer, collaboration with Westerveld and three municipalities in “de kop van Overijssel”, the head of Overijssel; this is an area in which inhabitants of the municipalities move around (like a daily urban system), creating a strong connection between the municipalities. And lastly a regional layer, which is interesting for cross-border topics: economical and social-economical issues.
- For certain lobbies, the region needs each other because the sole municipalities are too small to gain the win of certain

¹⁶ Translated from: “Het gaat om personen, het gaat erom dat mensen elkaar vinden en het gevoel bij elkaar hebben, hee met jou ga ik dit klusje wel klaren”

- Equal/hierarchical relation
- projects, mostly infrastructural.
 - The Provinces can take their hierarchical role in cases like regional housing plans.
 - When the Proeftuin started the Province of Overijssel clearly took a role as active partner in the region, instead of awaiting party (Paris, 5 September 2017, Personal communication).
 - Sometimes a bit decisiveness is lacking, this is where the provinces could take a more hierarchical role (Benschot, 31 August 2017, Personal communication).

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Levels and scales				

5.6.3 Problem perception and goal

The general perception of Zwolle Region is that they are willing to collaborate, preferably on a loose base, but are currently searching to what extent they can be decisive and act as a region, without losing their flexibility.

- Shared/private goal
- The main focus of the region is on the subject of economy. However, in order to improve the regional economy certain conditions have to be met, like housing, infrastructure, and business/industrial areas. Improvement of these conditions is a shared goal of the region.
 - There are mixed ideas about the function of the region and the working level. Some say the theme of economy is guiding, others think this is too minimal. Also, some subjects that are mentioned before should be part of a different type of layer (more local instead of regional, or on a bigger regional level than the current regional level).
 - Housing and, industrial / business areas are topics municipalities want to take care of by themselves, as mentioned earlier.
 - Within the region a different intensity of collaboration is noticed: some municipalities are less eager to join shared projects than others.
- Problem perception
- Content is guiding over structure. A project should start on base of shared content and not because certain administrative collaborations are agreed upon (Molenaar, 31 August 2017, Personal communication).

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Problem perception and goal				

5.6.4 Responsibilities and resources

- Financial
- Every municipality has to pay a mandatory fee of €1,- per inhabitant.
 - Per project, an additional payment of each participatory municipality is expected. In case these costs are too high, they look for a different way of adding value to the project (for example manpower or knowledge).
 - Only the Province of Drenthe gives an overall budget, the other provinces pay per project.
- Legal authority
- Locally are the municipalities the correct legal authority, everything cross-border the Province is (officially).
- Responsibility
- The Region has an issue with parties that do not act as promised or are not on time with delivering the promised work.

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Responsibilities and resources				

5.6.5 Strategy and instruments

Most of strategy and instruments is touched upon in G.2.4. In this paragraph a brief review is given, using the criteria of the Governmental Assessment Tool. The strategy of Zwolle Region is to grow, economically. In order to do so, they are working on some set themes like mobility and infrastructure. The growth strategy is based on a triple helix collaboration in which government, educational institutions and businesses work together to gain their goals.

- Regulative
- Province has regulative power over certain projects, when the region itself cannot come to an agreement (Paris, 5 September 2017, Personal communication).
- Sharing manpower/knowledge
- In case a municipality cannot comply with a financial demand, they are able to share manpower or knowledge instead.
 - Zwolle Region created "Kennispoort", an institution that focuses on innovative ability and stimulation of innovation. The institute gives advice to entrepreneurs and started on different themes like subsidy and international entrepreneurship (Breider & Praamstra, 28 August 2017, Personal communication).

	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Strategy and instruments				

Conclusion

Zwolle Region is a network organisation with multiple layers of government, educational institutions and other businesses. Zwolle Region organises its projects on base of a loose collaboration; a so-called coalition of the willing per project. This way of collaborating makes it possible for the involved actors to participate in projects that actually have their interest and are a beneficiary to them. The loose form of cooperation has also its downside, namely: in some situations, there is a lack of decisiveness, where a lot is being discussed, but no real action is taken or put on the agenda.

Positive and negative lessons learned from the case of Zwolle Region are drawn to answer sub question iii. *“What are positive and negative lessons learned of regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?”*.

Positive lessons learned:

- Different parties grant each other advantages; they are able to put aside their own goal for a bigger purpose (example Wehkamp, who was looking for a new location. They stayed within the region but transferred from one municipality to another. The municipalities made sure that employees could keep their jobs, by improving the accessibility of the route).
- The region is able to lobby as a region and get certain funding by doing so, mainly used for infrastructural projects: increasing the *accessibility* of the area.
- The Province of Overijssel sees itself as a partner of the region and thinks along decisions that have to be made. Yet, they see issues exceeding local borders as the responsibility of the Province, which indicates a more hierarchical view.
- The network has a solid base; people are familiar with each other and are therefore more willing to work together.

Negative lessons learned:

- The region sometimes misses urgency and decisiveness, causing fewer results than possible.
- The region is missing one, connecting, challenging agenda with a concrete goal.
- Some other regional agreements are made in another area, resulting in a problem with collaboration with the Zwolle Region.
- Not all parties are equally committed or are able to live up to their promises, due to the loose collaboration.
- Regional collaboration keeps being dependent on the people working in the Region.

Dimension \ Criterion	Coherence	Extent	Flexibility	Intensity
Actors in the policy network				
Levels and scales				
Problem perception and goal				

Responsibilities and resources				
Strategy and instruments				

5.7 Role of the national government

In section 5.1 – 5.6 all three cases are discussed and their governance method is analysed, by doing so an answer to sub question iii was given. Next to the local, regional and Provinces, the Dutch National government also plays a role in the three cases. In order to gain a complete view of regional governance, interviews with different employees of the national government (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations) are deducted.

The interviewees are all concerned with the collaboration between cities and their surrounding area. The national government is looked at apart from the case studies, while their overall role and instruments are most interesting. In this part the contribution of “het Rijk”, Dutch National Government, is described, giving an overview of policy instruments and measures, and a brief analysis using solely the dimensions of the Governance Assessment Tool. Positive and negative lessons are drawn and summarized in the conclusion.

5.7.1 General description of involvement of the national government

The national government is involved in creating a liveable environment, with enough utilities that are accessible and a strong economy. Looking at the stated issue recent projects guided by the Dutch government are the so-called “Proeftuinen”, pilot projects that were initiated as response to the report “Maak Verschil¹⁷”, Make a difference. The report focus was on regional economic challenges and the role of public administration (Studiegroep Openbaar Bestuur, 2016). The research was carried out by “Studiegroep Openbaar Bestuur”, and commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. Different public and private parties were involved in the research to make the recommendations carried out broadly. Six pilot projects were selected after multiple municipalities/regions pitched their ideas and all three cases in this research were part of a Proeftuin. The bases of the pilot projects came from the municipalities/regions and were not dictated by the national government. Within these pilot projects answers were sought for self-defined questions, all linked to improvement of the development of the regional economy.

5.7.2 Analysis using the Governance Assessment Tool

In this part the five dimensions of the Governance Assessment Tool are discussed briefly. No score is given to the dimensions, while the dimensions are solely used to give an overview of the involvement of the national government in the networks as discussed in the three cases.

Actors in the policy network

¹⁷ Studiegroep Openbaar Bestuur. (2016). *Maak Verschil - Krachtig inspelen op regionaal-economische opgaven*. Retrieved from Den Haag: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2016/03/15/rapport-maak-verschil>

The Dutch National government wants to include as much as parties as needed to gain better understanding of the form of governance. They are used to work with all these different parties and for the report they joined forces with academics, public and private parties in order to gain a broad view.

Levels and scales

The Dutch government experiences a movement in governance; from a hierarchical form they are heading towards a more network form. Currently they are searching for the role of the national government in such a network (Vries & Wouters, 28 July 2017, Personal communication Personal communication).

On a regional level a similar process is occurring, there is need for regional collaboration but in the opinion of the national government, there is no institution to guide is (Zwet, 13 September 2017, Personal communication Personal communication). As an employee of the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relation states, there is a classic power game between regions and provinces going on. However, sometimes a province should have more to say and sometimes a region, when working on base of themes instead of structures this could be solved (Jager, 24 August 2017, Personal communication Personal communication). In terms of scales: fusion of municipalities can give them more power (Jager, 24 August 2017, Personal communication Personal communication).

Problem perception and goal

Momentarily the national government sees that within the regions and municipalities it is easy to create ideas and vision, however there is a difficulty in making the ideas concrete; divide resources and responsibilities and execute the plan seems difficult. Creating a shared goal is necessary in order to get the different parties in line and willing to collaborate and execute plans.

Responsibilities and resources

Looking at the focus of this thesis, the national government has a clear role in spatial development: roughly said they develop an environmental vision, in which the Province has to fit her provincial environmental plan and the municipalities their municipal plan. The provinces have an environmental and economic role in this (Vries & Wouters, 28 July 2017, Personal communication Personal communication). The national government has also a role on the theme of liveability: good utilities as condition for a good economic structure (Zwet, 13 September 2017, Personal communication Personal communication). In the future this will change, due to the new Environmental and Planning Act, a vision will be developed in which there is more space for regional (intra-municipal) themes and collaboration (Jager, 24 August 2017, Personal communication Personal communication).

During the process of the pilot projects, the role of the national government was more to listen and to facilitate. As a starting point the initiative had to come from the regions. It became clear that different regions have different needs in term of the role of the national government, some regions asked for a lot of guidance and discussions, others were working more independently (Vries & Wouters, 28 July 2017, Personal communication Personal communication).

Strategy and instruments

Regional collaboration is a way of overcoming the fact that different municipalities want to maintain their own utilities and create competition in a region (Jager, 24 August 2017, Personal communication Personal communication). A strategy to organise such collaboration is to include it in the national political agenda, make it a problem, this creates possibilities and weight on the collaboration (Reniers, 24 August 2017, Personal communication Personal communication). The national government has multiple instruments for supporting the search for regional collaboration in order to maintain liveability:

- The Proeftuinen can be seen as instruments to take a step in the right direction.
- Regiodeal (deal that 42 parties signed, both private and public, declaring their intention to act as a region in order to maintain liveability and economic development in the are of NO Fryslân) is also an instrument, by signing it an intention is made official and they hope that therefore the decisiveness, urgency and involvements also improves.
- Capacity is a logical instrument for the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations (Vries & Wouters, 28 July 2017, Personal communication Personal communication):
 - o process budget to organise meetings;
 - o sharing manpower to share knowledge and experiences, the national government also oversees the bigger picture; they have knowledge of struggles/idea of other regions.
- Laws and regulations: they can adapt laws (when they cause hindrance) in order to create possibilities for a region (Vries & Wouters, 28 July 2017, Personal communication Personal communication).
- Financial support: Municipal and Provincial fund.

Conclusion

From the perspective of the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations a regional level is the right level of collaboration for improvement of regional economy and liveability. They realise it is still unknown which way of collaborating fits best, therefore, they introduced the pilot projects "Proeftuinen". A few positive and negative lessons learned from the deducted interviews are given.

Positive lessons learned:

- In case the urgency is high, bottom-up initiatives are executed in which the region plays a big part; regional collaboration is possible.
- By centralizing content instead of structure, public and private parties find it easier to join forces and go beyond their self-interest.

Negative lessons learned:

- Administrators find it difficult to make real decision, especially when it comes to division of tasks and money.
- In the end it is all about people, the people who are working on the collaboration can make a difference by being open for and willing to change.

Looking at the dimensions of the Governance Assessment Tool, a few additional comments can be made with regard to the dimension Strategy and Instruments. The Dutch

government has multiple instruments they can use to support regional collaboration. Next to financial support, an important one is sharing manpower and knowledge and the Regiodeal. They see a changing role, sliding in the direction of partner in certain circumstances, however the practical result of this change is still unclear. Nowadays it is a strategy to inform and support regional collaboration when possible, in order to increase regional economic development and liveability.

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter all three cases are described (section 5.1, 5.3, and 5.5) and assessed by use of the Governance Assessment Tool as an analytical framework (section 5.2, 5.4, and 5.6). Also the views of multiple employees of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations on regional governance are discussed (section 5.7). In the conclusions of section 5.2, 5.4, and 5.6 sub question iii is answered per case, in this section these answers are combined in one answer.

What are positive and negative lessons learned from regional collaboration, in terms of increasing or sustaining liveability?

Looking at the stated definition of liveability, increasing or sustaining liveability is linked to maintaining or creating availability and accessibility of utilities (see 2.3). In all three cases willingness for collaboration in terms of improvement of accessibility is shown.

In Drechtsteden the regional collaboration worked on the “waterbus”, together they lobbied for improvement of infrastructure (for example A15), resulting in an increased accessibility. In the surrounding area of Leeuwarden a central mobility centrum will be developed, as outcome of the regional collaboration. In Zwolle Region an example of working on the accessibility from a regional point of view is the lobby for improvement of “Knooppunt Raalte” (intersection at Raalte).

However, in terms of availability of utilities there were in Drechtsteden fewer success stories due to a lack of a regional goal and decisiveness. They did not act as a region on subjects like retail and (movie) theatres. In Leeuwarden both regional organisations are aware of the population development and changing needs for utilities, therefore they are acting actively to spread utilities accordingly. Zwolle Region is less focused on liveability on the level of citizens but is more focused on economic improvement. In this area spread of utilities is considered a municipal or intra-municipality task, instead of a task for Zwolle Region.

General notifications with regard to the cases

Interesting to notice was the fact that only in the case of Leeuwarden a focus was on improving liveability. From a governmental point of view the region was actively working on maintaining and spread utilities.

In the case of Zwolle the region is mainly focussed on growing economically, liveability seems a secondary subject. However, the focus on the regional economy also results in increasing liveability: the accessibility of the area is improved and certain areas are developed for leisure.

Drechtsteden once began as a regional board to improve the regional spatial planning, mainly focused on housing and spatial planning. Nowadays the regional

organisation includes combining municipal service centres and taxes. The different municipalities seem to be aware of a changing population and economy, but it looks like the drive and sense of urgency are not high enough to decide on projects in order to maintain liveability on a regional level.

6. Comparing results: three forms of collaboration

In Chapter 2 and 3 the phenomena of shrinkage, liveability and governance are discussed, answering sub question i. and ii. This knowledge was used in the descriptions and analyses of the three cases and gaining lessons learned (answer to sub question iii.), in Chapter 5. With this in mind a comparison was made of the three cases and a more general idea of the different forms of governance and their effects on liveability was formed. This chapter covers the comparison of the three cases (section 6.1), strengths and weaknesses of each case (section 6.2), and an overview of three possible forms of collaboration in a region, answering sub question iv and v (section 6.3). Concluding with insights for practice, and a process for regions looking for a way to collaborate (section 6.4).

6.1 Comparison of the three cases

In this section, a comparison of the three cases and their score on the GAT is discussed. This comparison created a better understanding of the forms of governance and their effects on liveability. Starting with general notifications, followed by a comparison per GAT dimension. The section is followed by an overview of the strength and weaknesses per case study (section 6.2).

6.1.1 General comparison: governance

In terms of governance, Dordrecht and surrounding area encounter the most hindrance. This is in line with expectations while they developed an extra layer of government, a regional board. This extra layer makes it a system that is closer to hierarchical governance instead of network governance. The main difficulties are found with coherence between parties, causing disagreement in term of dividing responsibilities and resources and strategy and instruments. An often-mentioned item is the fact that they still lack decisiveness when it comes to themes like housing, utilities.

Both cases of Zwolle and Leeuwarden encounter less hindrance, due to their type of organisation. In the case of Leeuwarden and surrounding area, it is clear that both regional organisations (ANNO and City region Leeuwarden) work with a content-oriented strategy, creating more coherence between parties. This differs clearly from Drechtsteden, in which strategy is built based upon structures instead of content.

Looking at the three cases a difference in governance scale is discovered: from a more hierarchical system to a total network system. These three forms are further elaborated on in section 6.3.

6.1.2 General comparison: effects on liveability

In terms of effects on liveability it became clear that Leeuwarden area has the most projects focussed on availability of utilities and accessibility of utilities. In the case of Zwolle Region and Drechtsteden projects were mainly found on increasing accessibility of the area, when taking the definition of liveability in account.

This relates to Zwolle Regions' goal of attracting economic activity: regional projects are executed to improve the economic situation. However, these economic focused projects affect indirectly liveability by improvement of accessibility of the area and in some cases availability of utilities (for example development of Kennispoort).

6.1.3 Comparison using the five dimensions of GAT

Actors in the policy network

The organisational structure of Drechtsteden makes the network less flexible than in the cases of Leeuwarden and Zwolle. Although the involved parties in Drechtsteden are used to working together, the interaction has been changing and municipal parties and the province are more critical concerning the collaboration. The Drechtsteden board gives also a certain negative intensity, in the case where they develop plans for which the municipalities have to pay as stated above. Drechtsteden includes mainly public parties, and cooperates when needed with semi-public and private parties (for example, with public transportation companies and housing corporations).

Leeuwarden and surrounding area, on the other hand, has a more flexible vision; two regional organisations are working on a base of content instead of structure and are able to find each other when needed. While the region is feeling a certain urgency to collaborate, they are also willing to collaborate and put aside municipal goals for the greater, regional goals. Leeuwarden is the only case in which citizens are actively involved in the regional development, and bottom-up initiatives are stimulated and supported.

Zwolle Region has a very loose way of collaboration, resulting in a great flexibility of the network in terms of actors. Sometimes being as loose also results in missing a shared agenda, which leads to less coherence.

When looking at the actors in the policy network the following differences stand out:

- Leeuwarden and surrounding area is the only region that actively involves citizens and stimulates bottom-up initiatives. This is embedded in their culture: the Frisian citizens are used to stick together, maintaining a community. There is even a Frisian word for: Mienskip¹⁸.
- In both Leeuwarden and Zwolle Region businesses and educational institutes are involved in regional decision-making.
- Drechtsteden acts mostly from a public viewpoint, this is in line with the developed regional government.
- The involved provinces have a different role in each case. In Leeuwarden the Province of Fryslân is positioned as an equal partner in the region, while in Drechtsteden and Zwolle Region the provinces switch between the roles of sparring partner and higher in order government.

Levels and scales

The looser structured network of Leeuwarden and Zwolle, based on content instead of structure, makes that they score better on Levels and scales than Drechtsteden. The created regional layer makes it inflexible and harder to move between levels and scales.

When looking at the maintained levels and scales the following differences stand out:

- Zwolle Region deals with four different provinces, resulting in a more complex collaboration; what are the roles of the different provinces, are they equally involved, et cetera? This differs from the other two cases, with only one Province.
- Zwolle Region consists of twenty municipalities; plausible this results in less

¹⁸ Mienskip is hard to translate, the feeling of belonging to a community is the most accurate translation.

coherence between different municipalities. In practice three layers in which municipalities act are found, within the region:

1. municipality itself;
2. municipality and adjoining municipalities;
3. Region Zwolle.

The other two cases are smaller in number of municipalities involved, resulting in less "bestuurlijke drukte", governmental hustle.

Problem perception and goals

All three cases are rethinking the stated problem and goals once every while, this makes them equally flexible. The region of Leeuwarden has a more difficult position when it comes to coherence because there are two regional organisations involved. However, they still find each other on certain intra-regional themes. Zwolle Region has a clearly stated goal that is backed by the triple helix, which makes it a strong dimension of the network. Within Drechtsteden some difficulties arose, due to a change in the political climate. Different parties are wondering about the effectiveness of the collaboration.

Looking at the problem perception there are quite some differences between the regions. This is not related to the GAT, however it is of importance for how the region acts.

- In the case of Leeuwarden a clear sense of urgency and drive for maintaining liveability in the area is noticed. Probably this region is ahead of the other regions in accepting shrinkage.
- In Zwolle Region shrinkage is not really accepted and there is no sense of urgency, because the region as a whole does not face shrinkage; only some towns in the region face a form of shrinkage. The goal of this region is therefore not on maintaining liveability, but on increasing economically.
- In Drechtsteden there is more or less a sense of urgency, while they are trying to attract more (higher educated) people and develop more housing. However, the sense of urgency is limited (it could also be phrased as a wish for something instead of urgency) and the drive for acting accordingly from a regional perspective is absent.

Responsibilities and resources

Responsibilities and resources is the dimension in which all three cases encounter hindrance from a network perspective. All three have a similar way of financing (a certain amount of money per inhabitant), and budgets per projects. Yet, all have difficulties with decisiveness as a network, in dividing responsibilities and resources.

Strategy and instruments

When looking at used strategies and instruments both Leeuwarden and Zwolle are using different tools to achieve their goal and are flexible with these tools. Dordrecht once faces difficulties in coherence and flexibility, mainly due to the institutionalized regional organisation.

6.2 Strengths and weaknesses per case

Per area strengths and weaknesses are collected, conducted from the case studies discussed in Chapter 5. Table 11 gives an overview of these strengths and weaknesses per case study, which are used as input for answering sub question iv. and v. in section 6.3.

Case study	Strengths and weaknesses
Dordrecht and surrounding area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisational collaboration; combined shared services, taxes et cetera - Collaboration on infrastructural projects and public transportation, great willingness on this subject - Due to a long history of collaboration, different parties find each other more easily
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The extra governmental layer makes the network less flexible and sometimes slows down the process - Structure is leading instead of content, a clear, regional, shared goal is currently lacking
Leeuwarden and surrounding area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration on content instead of structure, creating willingness and urgency among the different involved parties - An external organisation makes it easier to think and act from a regional perspective; no conflicting interests - Leeuwarden as central city is able to give a boost to certain subjects/projects - Collaboration on infrastructural projects and public transportation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration between two regional organisations is harder, mainly due to financial difficulties and administrative hustle
Zwolle and surrounding area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The region is able to lobby as a region and get certain funding by doing so, also good collaboration on infrastructural projects and public transportation - The Province of Overijssel sees itself as a partner of the region and thinks along decisions that have to be made - The network has a good base; people are familiar with each other and are therefore more willing to work together - Zwolle as central city is able to give a boost to certain subjects/projects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The region sometimes misses urgency and decisiveness, causing fewer results than possible - The region is missing one, connecting, challenging agenda with a concrete goal - Not all parties are equally committed or are able to live up to their promises, due to the loose collaboration

Table 11 Strength and weaknesses per area

6.3 Forms of collaboration

From the three case studies, three forms of regional collaboration are extracted. In section 6.2 the strengths and weaknesses of each case are given, which are used as input for determining three forms of collaboration. In this section an answer is given to the following sub questions:

iv. *What are plausible forms of governance and what are effective policy instruments in order to create and sustain a satisfactory level of liveability?*

v. *What are the effects of governance and policies to cope with shrinkage, when reflecting on the positive and negative lessons learned from the selected case studies?*

Starting by answering sub question iv.

6.3.1 Collaboration in three cases of shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands

All three cases are acting like a network, with the involvement of different parties, (mostly) working as equal partners within the region. However, the one case has a more structured collaboration than the other. Therefore it is concluded that within regional governance, different forms in term of structure can be found as shown in Figure 23:

1. Very structured collaboration, with a regional board that represents the different involved municipalities. This regional board is formed on bases of local government and does not involve private parties. Yet, they collaborate with private parties on certain projects.
2. A semi-structured collaboration, in which a regional organisation is leading regional decisions into the right direction. The regional organisation consults involved parties and looks at projects from a regional point of view. The actual collaboration includes both private and public parties and is loose in terms of a project; all parties are aiming for the same regional goal, however, if a project does not suit your area within the region you are able to keep out of the project.
3. A very loose form of collaboration, completely based on coalitions of the willing. In this case, both public as private parties will only join the project when they are "willing to collaborate". This option results in a real flexible network, and project in which only beneficiary parties are involved. The main disadvantage is that because of the loose structure a shared overall goal is missing.

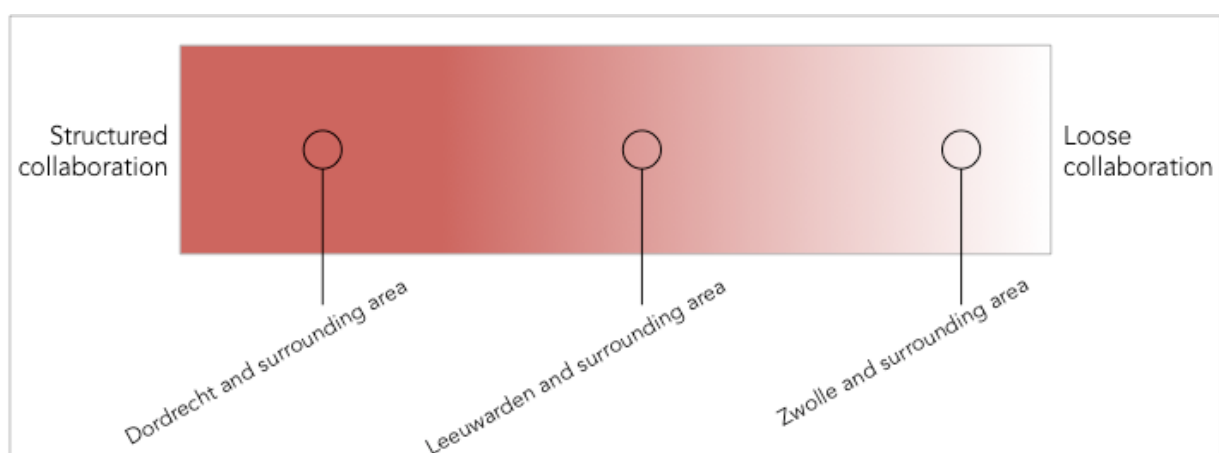


Figure 23 Different forms of collaboration within regional governance

These three forms of governance are few of the possibilities; let it be clear that other forms could be possible when looking at collaboration within a region.

6.3.2 Policy instruments in three cases of shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands

In terms of policy instruments, a lot is touched upon in the case analyses (section 5.2, 5.4, and 5.6). The main policy instruments that can influence liveability in a region (availability and accessibility of utilities) are listed below:

- Region deal, a way of addressing intentions as a whole region, developing a clearly stated common goal and increasing interest and responsibility of different involved parties.
- Facilitating meetings where knowledge can be shared.
- Adapting laws and regulation when needed in order to collaborate on a regional level.

6.3.3 Effects of governance and shrinkage policies per case

After determining three forms of governance an answer to sub question v. is given:

What are the effects of governance and policies of shrinkage, looking at the positive and negative lessons learned from the case studies?

All three forms of collaboration were able to execute an improved lobby for infrastructural projects and public transportation, resulting in increasing accessibility of utilities.

In the case of Leeuwarden and surrounding area regional goals were set and regional projects were executed, which lead to a policy concerning spread of utilities. This lead to an improvement in terms of availability of utilities; they created a system that is focussed on the regional demand of utilities, creating and maintaining utilities.

In the case of Dordrecht and surrounding area they are working on a regional housing plan, however, the plan will have local executers and it is currently unsure how the demand will be regionally spread. The "Energiehuis" is an example of creating a cultural spot; an extra utility for Drechtsteden.

In the case of Zwolle and surrounding area, the regional Kennispoort gives regional entrepreneurs the opportunity to find support and share knowledge. This is a way of strengthening the regional economy, and the Kennispoort can be seen as an extra utility.

Negative lessons learned in terms of governance is the fact that no agreement in terms of housing is found in the case of Dordrecht and it is hard to find agreement about localisation of cultural items, and industrial and business areas, the local goals are leading in these themes.

6.4 Regional governance in practice

Most of the case specific lessons learned are discussed in Chapter 5. In this part, general lessons learned about regional collaboration and their effect on liveability are briefly touched upon. Concluding with a process for regions looking for a way to collaborate.

Before being able to develop a basic decision-making process, it was necessary to state some generic characteristics per form of governance. In Chapter 5 and 6 different characteristics are found per case study, however not all are per se linked to a certain form of governance or will have an effect on liveability. In this section the characteristics per form of governance are looked at. Next to this, general notifications that are of importance for

regional collaboration are stated in 6.4.2. This section is concluded with a basic process that helps defining the best form of governance for certain characteristics.

6.4.1 Regional characteristics per form of governance

To answer the research question, "How can cities and regions collaborate in order to maintain and create liveability in selected shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?," it is important to deduct characteristics per form of governance. These characteristics are derived from the three case studies (section 6.3.1 and conclusions per case study in Chapter 5) and given in the following overview (see Table 12). It is important to notice, that it is a case study research based on three cases, and therefore complete generalization is impossible. The characteristics are selected using the principal of logical deduction. They have not been tested with other cases, which is recommended for further research.

Form of governance	Characteristic
Very structured collaboration (regional collaboration through a regional government)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mainly public parties involved - top down approach - limited sense of urgency - limited drive for change - Province takes both a hierarchical role as an equal sparring partner role - financial: one regional fund
Semi-structured collaboration (regional collaboration guided by an external regional organisation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - public, semi-public and private parties involved - bottom-up approach - clear sense of urgency - clear drive for change - Province takes role as equal partner - financial: regional fund + parties pay per project
Loose form of collaboration (regional collaboration based on coalitions of the willing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - public, semi-public and private parties involved - limited sense of urgency - drive for change - Province takes both a hierarchical role as an equal sparring partner role - financial: one regional fund + coalition of the willing pay per project

Table 12 Overview of characteristics per form of governance

6.4.3 Effects on liveability per form of governance

A very structured form of regional governance:

- Increasing availability of utilities by collaborating on infrastructural projects.
- In case a clear agenda and funding is determined, maintaining utilities is expected to be possible, however this was not shown in the case.

A semi-structured form of regional governance:

- Increasing availability of utilities by collaborating in infrastructural projects.
- Creating and maintaining utilities by regionally determining needs for utilities. Regional decision-making about new utilities, monitored by an external party, makes

it possible to decrease the competition between municipalities in the same region and focus on regional goals.

A very loose form of regional governance:

- Increasing availability of utilities by collaborating in infrastructural projects.
- In case the focus of the region is more on maintaining utilities, this form of governance is also expected to be suitable, however, this is not shown by the case.

6.4.3 General notifications with regard to regional collaboration

Next to the three deducted forms of governance and their characteristics, three general notes are worth mentioning when discussing regional collaboration.

It is all about people

One of the most heard comments during the interviews is that, in the end, it is all about people, trust, and faith in the collaboration. This is somewhat an unsatisfying comment, however, it is valuable. Dependence on people means that a regional collaboration has more chance of being successful when the right people are working together. It also means that investing in the regional relationships can make a difference.

Content over structure

Linked to this, it seems that collaborating on content is a better base for regional collaboration than working from a structural point of view. The link with the former point made is that people are more willing to collaborate when a clearly shared goal is established. This became clear in all three case studies: in the past, in Drechtsteden they had a common goal (improvement of the water banks and their environment), which led to a successful collaboration. Also in Leeuwarden and Zwolle, they are working in coalitions based on content, leading to same-minded cooperation and successful projects like Kennispoort and Mobiliteitscentrale.

Not one general solution

It became clear that there is not one general solution for regional collaboration. Different regions have different people, cultures, and history in working together. The Dutch government recognizes this and is looking for a way to cope with these differences. The general lesson learned is that the involved governments should be flexible in their role; sometimes they should be able to stand up and make a hard decision, while other moments they merely should listen and facilitate. In line with this thought, an external regional organisation can make a difference; such an organisation is able to look at the whole region and its needs, without falling for private set goals of different parties.

6.4.3 Process: from regional goals to regional collaboration

In case a region is looking for ways to collaborate in order to maintain or increase liveability in the urban area, aforementioned lessons learned are good to keep in mind. These lessons learned combined with the knowledge gained about the three deducted forms of governance, like stated in 6.4.1, are used in developing the following basic process:

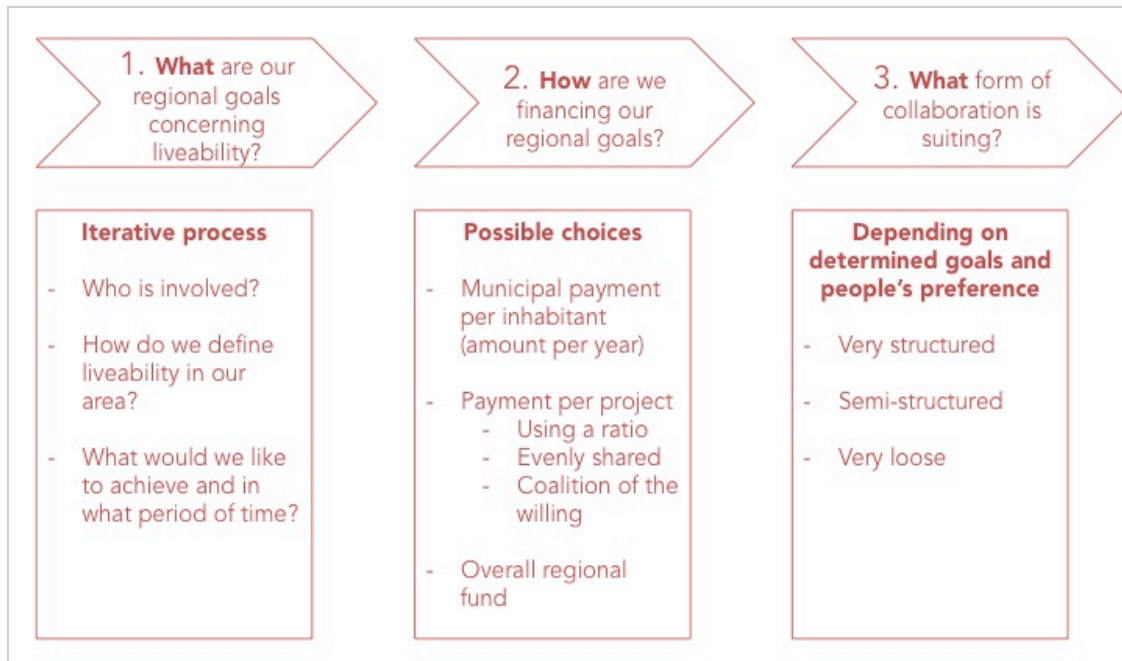


Figure 24 Basic decision-making process for regional governance

The first two steps of this process follow directly from the positive and negative lessons learned as discussed in Chapter 5. The final choice can be made based on the choices of step one and two and the characteristics of the region like stated in Table 12.

6.5 Conclusion

In Chapter 6 the different forms of regional governance are compared (section 6.1), Resulting in a scale of structure, in which three forms of governance are placed (section 6.3). Effects on liveability and used policy instruments per case are summarised, and used as base for a more general idea of regional governance. Per form of governance that is deducted from the cases, regional characteristics and effects on liveability are determined. This is the ground for a basic decision-making process as shown in Figure 23.

The main differences between the three forms of governance lay in the extent of applied structure, role of the Province, sense of urgency and drive, and type of involved parties. All three forms proved to be efficient for increasing accessibility of utilities, but only the semi-structured proved to be effective in maintaining or spreading utilities.

7. Conclusion, discussion, and recommendations

Like stated in the introduction of this thesis, different areas in European countries face a changing population and economy. These areas are facing a changing population and economy due to different phenomena: an aging population and decreasing birth rate, population movement to cities, and changing industries due to digitalisation. These changes lead to different needs in terms of utilities and accessibility, housing and spaces, and a changing labour market.

Liveability of the shrinking areas could negatively be influenced by this change, however research pointed out that accessibility and availability of utilities could increase liveability (Bulder, 2017). A regional approach in which (growing) city and shrinking areas collaborate to maintain liveability is seen as a possible solution (Bulder, 2017; Hospers, 2010). However, there is limited scientific literature about regional governance and its effect on liveability in city and region.

For this research, three case studies are executed, leading to a more comprehensive view on regional collaboration in shrinking urban areas. By analysing academic literature (Chapter 2), case studies, and a comparison of the cases (Chapter 5 and 6) an answer is given to the earlier stated research questions. In this chapter, the main research question is answered (section 7.1) and recommendations for further research are given (section 7.5). The analysed cases are reflected on in section 7.2, followed by limitations and added value of the research in section 7.3 and 7.4.

7.1 Liveability and regional governance in shrinking urban areas

This study was conducted in order to answer the following research question:

How can cities and regions collaborate in order to maintain and create liveability in selected shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands?

Like mentioned in 6.3 and the answer to sub question iv., three forms of governance are conducted from the case studies. These are not the only possible forms, but give an insight into found possibilities (like shown in Figure 23, section 6.3):

1. Regional collaboration through a regional government.
2. Regional collaboration guided by an external regional organisation.
3. Regional collaboration based on coalitions of the willing.

Generally speaking, these forms could fit best regions with different characteristics. It is important to mention that these forms are distracted from case studies only. While it was an exploratory case study, further research should be done in order to check the validity of this generalisation.

Regional collaboration through a regional government

This form is expected to work well when mainly public parties are involved, using a top down approach. Limited sense of urgency and drive could still lead to certain results, using one regional fund. The Province takes mainly a hierarchical role and when necessary a more equal role.

Regional collaboration guided by an external regional organisation

This form is expected to work in an area with a high sense of urgency and drive in multiple levels of society; both (semi-) public and private parties are actively involved in the region, maintaining a bottom-up approach. In line with this bottom-up approach, the Province has the role of an equal partner.

Regional collaboration based on coalitions of the willing

This form is expected to work in an area with a high drive for change; both (semi-) public and private parties are actively involved in the region. Companies and educational institutes are actively involved, but citizens not. This form does not work on an individual level (citizens), while this would make things highly complicated due to the amount of involved parties, but on a higher (economic) level. The Province takes both a hierarchical role and a more equal role.

Effects on liveability per form of governance

Speaking about maintaining and creating liveability, all three forms are applicable. When the goal of the regional collaboration is to increase the accessibility of and within the area, all three forms are suitable. In case of creating or maintain utilities, the second form seems best; the external, regional organisation has enough leverage and is able to keep the regional goal in mind, instead of aiming for achieving local goals. Surprisingly, the first and third form falls short of decisiveness: the regional government because of its extra governmental layer and the latter because of the loose form of collaborating.

7.2 Reflection on the cases

When conducting interviews and analysing the three cases, certain elements stood out to me as a researcher. In this section, these elements are briefly touched upon per case.

Dordrecht

The case of Drechtsteden was interesting because of their long-term collaboration as a region. However, limited data were available about the perceived liveability of the area. A lot is done in terms of accessibility of the area, but unfortunately, limited successful projects were found concerning availability and dividing of utilities. When Drechtsteden had clear stated goals and budget (like in the case of Drechtoeverproject¹⁹), they were successful in regional collaboration.

I found it remarkable how local-oriented, instead of regional-oriented, certain parties were. Despite their long history of collaboration, the different municipalities seem to seek for independent choices and were not willing to "give up" on their own local goals.

Furthermore it was interesting to notice that I could not get an interview with someone working at the regional government of Drechtsteden. First they did not identify themselves with the term of shrinkage and after further explanation, a reaction stayed out. This could be a sign of denial of shrinkage, in terms of possible responses to shrinkage like stated by Hospers (2014).

¹⁹ River bank project in Drechtsteden (Wijk, 2014)

Leeuwarden

Leeuwarden and surrounding area have a comprehensive data set, making it easy to determine the rate of utilities and its availability. Within the region the different parties feel certain urgency and willingness to work on increasing and maintaining the liveability, resulting in clear projects and achievements.

For me, this case was the most willing to collaborate, a real sense of “mienskip” (a Frisian word to describe the feeling of working together, like one community), was noticeable in all my conducted interviews. Strikingly, the Province of Fryslân was a real partner in the region, which was different with the other two cases.

In Leeuwarden and surrounding area the Frisian culture seems to have a positive effect on the bottom-up approach maintained by the regional collaboration. Citizens are willing to work for the region, in line with Mienskip, and have plenty of ideas to improve their living area. The high sense of urgency combined with this drive, makes that a lot of things are happening in the area.

Zwolle

Zwolle Region has a focus on strengthening the economy, which results in working on a more macro level (not the daily life of inhabitants and their perceived liveability) and fewer projects on the availability of utilities. Because of the fact that the region is located in four different provinces, finding consistent data was harder. Also, the policy decisions made on a provincial level were harder to determine.

To me, it looked like they were not accepting the fact that several municipalities in the area are facing a population decline. However, from an economic perspective, they are doing great, which in my opinion is something to be proud of. It seems like their collaboration is on a higher level than in the other cases; it is less about the individual citizens who are living there and more about the regional economy. Indirect the focus on economy also influences the liveability positively, so this is also an interesting strategy to keep in mind. By focussing on economic growth, a subject multiple parties easily relate to, creating a more liveable area, instead of focusing on shrinkage, which has a negative connotation, and not all parties are willing to see or accept.

7.3 Limitations of the research

In this section the limitations of this explorative study are briefly touched upon:

- The explorative study was conducted using a qualitative methodology. A more quantitative research could be able to determine more measurable relations, for example, the numerical relation between liveability and the number of utilities could have been determined using quantitative methods.
- For this research three cases are looked at, according to Yin (1994) four cases should be researched in order to make a good case for case comparison. The more cases, the more reliable the outcomes. However, while it is an explorative research, three cases were sufficient.
- The used definition of liveability is limited to the availability and accessibility of utilities.
- For an overall point of view, I limited my interviews to employees of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

- Per case, interviews were conducted with different parties. Although the urban areas consisted of multiple municipalities I only interviewed one employee of a municipality in the surrounding area. Possibly, other points of view would be detected when more municipalities were interviewed.
- The characteristics formed by analysing the cases have not been tested with other cases; therefore a real generalisation could not be made.

7.4 Academic discussion

In the beginning of this thesis, a knowledge-gap was defined: *for regional collaboration network governance seems the best option. However, it is yet unclear how this regional collaboration could work in practice.*

From the case studies and literature, it became clear that different (governmental) institutions are also looking for a way to set up regional collaboration (Hospers, 2014; Rocak et al., 2016; Schmidt, 2009). This study gave insights into different forms of collaboration and their pro's and cons. Although not one form of governance is applicable to all cases, three main lessons are learned:

- A common goal should be the base of collaboration; otherwise, actors will feel less of an urgency or interest to collaborate.
- Collaboration should be built on shared content, instead of structures. If different parties keep talking about the structure in which they work, it is harder to come to the execution of projects. The role of the national and provincial government is often flexible but should be facilitating the process of creating shared content.
- An external, regional organisation is able to keep the regional goal in mind and helps municipalities and other parties from working on a base of self-interest.

Hospers (2010, 2014) defined four plausible strategies to respond to urban shrinkage: 1) trivialize, 2) counter, 3) accept and 4) utilize. In the case of Leeuwarden they clearly accepted shrinkage and are looking for ways to keep the availability and accessibility of utilities at a required level. In the case of Drechtsteden it differs per party how they respond to shrinkage, for example the board of Drechtsteden seems to trivialize it, while Dordrecht is trying to counter it by actively working on attracting higher educated citizens. In line with expectation, when using Hospers' theory, the policy on liveability is limited in this area. However, in the case of Zwolle some actors trivialize shrinkage, but the region is able to effect liveability in the area by looking at the region from an economic perspective. This is not in line with Hospers' theory, but shows that stating a different, more accepted, regional goal could also lead to improvement of liveability in the area. However, this thought is only based on the case of Zwolle and is an interesting hypothesis for future research.

Three forms of regional governance were detected by the use of three case studies. No other academic study covered the points of view of different public, semi-public and private parties, concerning liveability in shrinking urban areas in the Netherlands.

The GAT was never used in the context of regional governance in shrinking urban areas. This method is relatively new in the academic literature and its limitations are yet to discovered. During this study the GAT was very useful in structurally analysing the governance in the cases. However, because of its great extent and limited relation to

liveability (this is only linked to problem perception and goal, and strategy and instruments) it was sometimes a bit too comprehensive. The comprehensiveness of the framework caused difficulties with keeping focus during the analysis phase of this research. When the GAT is should only be a part of the research, like in this research where it was not only about governance but also about effects on liveability, this problem could be overcome by answering a main question per dimension solely, instead of evaluating the dimension using the four criteria.

7.5 Recommendations for future research

This research has been exploratory in terms of regional collaboration in urban areas. Although a view is developed on different forms of governance, the effects of these forms are only studied within the three cases. In order to develop more general applicable forms of governance, more cases should be studied.

My research created insight into three different regional collaborations in the Netherlands; all areas concerned various forms of population and economic decline, and their effect on the availability and accessibility of utilities. However, there are still a lot of unanswered questions. For further research I would recommend looking at:

- Link between economic development and availability and accessibility of utilities.
- Availability and accessibility of utilities is not the only aspect of liveability, this was a chosen limitation of this research, what is the effect of regional collaboration on other aspects of liveability like safety?
- What could be the effect of, deliberately, choosing a different regional goal than accepting shrinkage, on the liveability of the area?

While conducting multiple interviews two developments that are expected to have an influence on regional governance were mentioned multiple times. Further additional research could be linked to these developments in practice. The first recently signed "*Regiodeal*", is a regional deal that stipulates the intention of forty-two, public and private, parties to collaborate in order to maintain liveability in the region. The effects of this deal are interesting to look at, once a few years have been passed. Furthermore, a new Environmental and Planning Act will become operative in 2021; the effects of this act on regions and regional governance could be interesting.

7.6 Recommendations for practitioners

When a region wants to create or maintain liveability in the area, and therefore create or maintain the accessibility and availability of utilities, it is advised to start with determining the involved parties, and a common goal. This process is probably iterative, while in the beginning maybe not all parties are involved. Hereby it is important to determine if the involved parties are only public parties, or also semi-public and private parties. Once a common goal is set and all parties are involved, the form of finance should be determined. At last, the form of governance should be determined. When determining the form of governance, it is important to analyse the characteristics of the area, like mentioned in section 6.4.

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