‘Rationalization’ of Dutch areal development

An institutional change or a temporary phenomenon?

Bachelor thesis Geography, planning and environment
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August, 2017
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Summary
Central in this thesis are the concepts of rationalization of areal development and institutional change. Rationalization is an internal reflection on municipal policy with regard to areal development. The concepts was introduced when one noticed the financial crisis had its impact on spatial planning. Many projects could not be realized and the conclusion was that municipal policies were partly responsible for that.

Two elements of rationalization are supposed to solve the planning related problems stakeholders encountered. The first element is deregulation. The expectation was that too many regulations delayed the planning process and caused additional costs. Another part is a cultural change which should have influence on the interactions between different stakeholders. This partly suits the already existing tendency of a shifting role of the government: from active to facilitative. This leaves more space for other stakeholders, but asks them to reconsider their way of working with each other.

Both elements can be put in a more abstract, scientific framework, shaped by the institutional theory. Deregulation, namely, corresponds with formal institutional change. Formal institutions are all matters that are embedded in a juridical system, e.g. the Dutch Act on Spatial Planning. The other element, cultural change, matches informal institutional change. Informal institutions are the non-written social patterns that evolve over time. They are being determined by repeated behavior. Examples are for instance taboos and etiquette.

Institutional change can be achieved through the process of institutionalization wherein certain new behavior again solidifies into structures. That brings us to the main question of this thesis and also to the link between rationalization and institutionalization: Is rationalization of Dutch areal development an actual institutional change or just a temporary phenomenon? If one wants to speak of a successful institutional change, path dependency, the idea the past decisions affect the decisions made in the present, should be breached. One has to let go of the old-fashioned way of working and be open minded in order to let the initiated change succeed. Path dependency forms the barrier for institutional change.

Breaching path dependency, therefore, can be considered to be a criterion that needs to be met. This approach determined the further course of this research. To be able to answer the main question, I designed an ‘institutional change checklist’ with 5 criteria that have to be met before one could speak of an actual institutional change instead of a temporary phenomenon. Next to breaching path dependency, the presence of a momentum and a target group adjusted approach and changes both on the formal and informal level are the criteria that complete the checklist. The checklist has an abstract character and is not specifically focused on rationalization, but more on changes in general that possibly qualify for the title ‘institutional change’.

Concluding, the underlying literature study, provided an instrument to ‘measure’ institutional change and the elaboration of the main concepts of this thesis, namely: institutionalization and institutional change, which both can be divided in formal and informal aspects and finally path dependency. In order to study those abstract concepts, concretizing was needed. (Sub-)aspects of institutionalization and institutional change for instance are the amount of local regulations, changed policies, the role of the government compared to the role of other stakeholders and the scale of projects. Those are the ‘measurable’ elements of the broader concepts. Path dependency is especially characterized by people and policies and manifested in uncriticized expertise or hierarchy or uncriticized regulations.

The concretizing of the concepts played a role in the practical part of the research. I chose a case study to be the research design, due to its capability of finding a certain depth.
On the other side, by performing a multiple case study in combination with literature research, the possibility to generalize remained. I organized four interviews in four different municipalities with experience with rationalization. The concrete aspects were valuable, because they were the link between the abstract literature and the practical interview questions. The municipalities I chose, were Ede, Breda, Kampen and Delft. I chose these municipalities, because they all had certain characteristics that seemed to be useful for this study. Examples of those characteristics are for instance a focus on deregulation, a project-based approach or a process-based approach.

The depth research and the ability to generalize were guaranteed by working in two steps: the hierarchic method. In the first phase all cases were analyzed as if they were independent cases. In the next phase I combined the findings and I looked for shared concepts and conclusions. The pilot study in the municipality of Ede was especially characterized by a large number of involved parties. Three developing companies were involved, next to the local authorities and the end users (through interest groups). Rationalization was seen as a way to start up some projects that had stagnated during the financial crisis. Due to the involvement of several parties, rationalization in this pilot study mostly included ‘the human factor’, especially a culture change was required and deregulation played only a small role. Striking was that path dependency especially played a role in the attitude of the market players which preferred to work in ways they were used to. The municipality, on the other hand, suggested that the market players would get more freedom, but also more responsibilities. Getting that right, was the major challenge in the cultural change. Expectation management played a big role in that change: tasks and deadlines had to be arranged before the start of the building process. Afterwards, the municipality thought this could have been done better. Practically, for the rationalization process in Ede, one especially looked for ways to bring competing parties together, involving end users and finding the product they wish for.

So far, rationalization has not been perpetuated in Ede. It did find its way through the way of working, but there are still few projects that show similarities with the pilot study. In some situations, the municipality might even consider working the ‘old-fashioned way’. On the other hand, new legislation can create space to implement the ideas of rationalization.

In Breda, the situation was as follows: a big area could not be developed for a period of ten years and temporary initiatives were wanted. Luckily, several entrepreneurs were interested in using the land of the municipality. A ‘light’ loan agreement was set up and rather few criteria were set. The local authorities pretended that there were no rules at all. Only two concepts, safety and accordance with the neighbors, had to be guaranteed. Only to avoid discussions, the municipality decided to keep on granting certain permits. The pilot study in Breda greatly corresponded with the shift towards organic development: the government was orientated differently and the collaboration of other stakeholders should result in a dynamic situation on the assigned location. Administratively, Breda also knew an interesting way of working: the division of the process in three phases. The first phases, as mentioned before, was about starting without regulations and just waiting to see how it would turn out. The second phase is the development of a plan about the collaboration between the stakeholders in the next ten years. The last phase was about perpetuating the experiences from the pilot study. Therefore an environment plan is being developed.

In the municipality of Kampen, rationalization was initially focused on deregulation, formal institutional change. Characterizing for this pilot study was the work they did in preparation to the upcoming Law on Planning and Environment. The municipality had to deal with a project where there was a lack of willingness to invest.
The local authorities decided to combine deregulation with a cultural change. In a way, both formal and informal institutional change was aimed for. Initially, especially politicians thought that deregulation would be the solution for the stagnated processes. However, from conversations with stakeholders, the conclusion was drawn that it was not the rules on their own that caused problems. More difficult was the communication of the regulations. One of the goals was to raise awareness of the upcoming Law on Planning and Environment. One could state that the process has been successful since awareness has been raised. On the other hand, one is still not completely satisfied, because the cultural shift has not been completed yet and it is still easy to fall back on path dependent structures. Confidence has to grow so that one is sure that people will ignore the regulation reflex (immediately making regulations when something went wrong). However, the local authorities do give this change a couple of years to be completed. Next to that, not only municipalities have to rationalize, but the provinces and the national government as well, according to the authorities in Kampen.

The last pilot study was carried out in Delft, where they were already busy with deregulation. One of the problems they dealt with, was the accumulation of (contradictory) demands and wishes. That made the planning process unclear for stakeholders with delays and additional costs as results. An internal reflection under the name rationalization was the solution for the municipality. Unfeasible and unnecessary regulations were removed, after making a cultural change: inviting more stakeholders and changing the role of the municipality in the planning process. Interesting was the authorities’ attitude towards demands and wishes. Both had to be separated in order to be clear to other stakeholders. The demands derived from a couple of main concepts such as durability. It has always been the municipality’s opinion that rationalization should not affect the existing ambitions. Path dependency, did not play a major role in this municipality, at least not that much in the people who are currently working in this organization. Due to the openness of the employees, the cultural change that is a part of rationalization has not been that impressive. In the future, this municipality will use elements from rationalization, but it also requests more flexibility from higher governmental levels.

Concluding, many municipalities turned out to be wrong about certain things. They made some wrong assumptions about the wishes of end users and about their attitude towards regulations. The rationalization process helped in drawing the right conclusions. Although the cases differed a bit, most of them were rather successful, although they still expect some authorities to fall back into old habits when the situation asks for it or if there is uncertainty. The main conclusion was that rationalization should not (only) mean deregulation, but especially a cultural change that results in better communication between the increased amount of stakeholders. That is supposed to achieve rationalization’s goal to speed up the planning process. On the other hand, deregulation does play a role, but it is rather an instrument than a goal. The main instrument for achieving better communication turned out to be confidence and clear agreements, e.g. proper expectation management. In the end, rationalization seemed to be a right process to prepare stakeholders for the upcoming Law on Planning and Environment and to guide them through the shift towards organic development.

In the conclusion of this thesis, I used the institutional change checklist twice to assess the information from the interviews, because it turned out that there was a difference between the current results and the results in the near future. In the next years, some things will change and that will be beneficial for rationalization as being an institutional change. Especially by installing a new law, rationalization will get a more formal institutional changing aspect. Besides, the awareness is already created, but a cultural change takes about three years according to some of the interviewees.
Therefore, rationalization will also score better on informal aspects in the future. Therefore, the hypothesis of this thesis is partly confirmed. Right now, some learned lessons have to be implemented, but rationalization definitely is a potential institutional change.
1. Introduction
This thesis is about spatial planning in the Netherlands and about an important trend of the last couple of years. The world has known an economic crisis since 2008. The Netherlands experienced an increase of vacancy of buildings in city centers since that time. In 2014 17% of the Dutch office space and 9% of the Dutch retail space were vacant (PBL, 2014). In some cases, some temporary meaning has been given to the empty buildings. Unfortunately, not every real estate got a new, improvised, meaning. This is partly due to the fact that laws in the Netherlands have been too bureaucratic (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2013). One bureaucratic problem in Dutch areal development are the great amount of different laws that make planning rather difficult. A solution is being worked on at the moment, in the shape of a new planning law (Omgevingswet) which integrates environment and planning laws into a better understandable and coherent whole. Next to that, local actors in areal development have to deal with rules set by the local authorities. The national government does not oblige the local authorities to implement these rules, they are additional to the national laws and change from region to region. Especially the smaller developers experience problems because of these additional rules. Rationalization is proposed to be a solution. These two examples of problems, caused by bureaucracy form the base of the demarcation of my research. I do not focus on the new planning law, but rather on the trend of rationalization and its ability to initiate institutional change instead of being just a temporary initiative.

1.1 Tendencies in areal development
This introduction about the economic crisis and the caused situation of vacancy in Dutch city centers brings us to closer to the theme of this thesis. The solutions for the problems are part of movements way bigger than concrete measures themselves. Dutch spatial planning, namely, is innovative by nature and nowadays there are two main discourse changes. First of all, one could say that bottom-up planning, in comparison to top-down planning is growing in popularity. Nowadays in Dutch areal development, municipalities play a more facilitating role (Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben, 2016). In the past municipalities tended to purchase land to develop it themselves. Nowadays more actors are involved and risks are spread. Next to that, the Dutch planning tradition is shifting towards more clarity (Van der Cammen, De Klerk, Dekker, Witsen, 2012). In this thesis I focus on the second discourse trend that brings me to a couple of terms or concepts that echo through my entire research. I refer to the shift to clarity as rationalization (of the Dutch areal development process).

1.2 Rationalization
This is an interpretation of the Dutch word ‘ontslakking’. This word can be interpreted in two ways. One could see it as some sort of detox treatment, but also as a way of removing the delaying factors in areal development. ‘Slak’ is the Dutch word for snail and it is now spatial planners’ task to get rid of the delaying elements (snails) in the planning process. Practically that means a new way of conducting the planning process that is less focused on details and less project-based (De Hoog & Pennings, 2015). Rationalization, as mentioned before is especially a method to remove bureaucracy on the local level. With rationalization, the initiators make an attempt to reduce bureaucracy by removing rules that are not strictly necessary for planning (E. Van der Krabben, personal communication, 09-06-2017).
Therefore one could conclude that it has been the intention to focus on municipal rules, on the formal institutions (institutions will be explained in sections 2 and 3). The appointed team of experts assumed the delay within developing processes was mostly caused by formal institutional aspects which resulted in rationalization with an orientation on the bureaucracy of municipal regulations.

An example is the parking rules local governments set when it comes to developing new real estate. In some (outdated) municipal regulations is concluded that when developers build new real estate, a certain amount of parking places should be constructed as well. This raises complaints of the local developers, since, nowadays, less people tend to drive cars anymore and don’t need to park them close to their houses. Bigger and more wealthy developing companies can take additional costs of constructing parking facilities for granted. However, the smaller companies have difficulties with paying these additional amounts of money and can therefore not compete with bigger companies.

This thesis, first of all, strives to obtain a full understanding of this concept. Institutionalization is another important concept in this thesis. Since rationalization is a relatively new phenomenon, it is interesting to see if one could speak of a temporary trend or an actual institutional change.

Institutionalization gives this thesis its scientific character, due to the abstraction of the term. Simplified the term means integration or implementation, when we are talking about changes in the habits and rules of spatial planning. Therefore, this integrational concept is an interesting way to evaluate the rationalization in Dutch areal development.

1.3 Goal
In essence, in this research I aim to assess the ability of rationalization to actuate institutional change. Important for that assessment is to fully understand the concepts of institutional change that leads to institutionalization. Therefore the main goal of this thesis is to research rationalization and to achieve that goal by constructing a clear overview of evaluation criteria that help to distinguish institutionalized processes or laws from not or less institutionalized processes or laws. Literature study helps the definition and the orientation on possible criteria. Case studies contribute to the elaboration and testing of the criteria. So, the literature review especially helps to create the background of this thesis by elaborating the concepts of institutional change and institutionalization.

The practical part of the study, the case study design helps to go deeper into the concept of rationalization by researching the practical impact of it.

In the end, the goal is to display a scheme that states the differences between less and more institutionalized processes and/ or laws which helps to assess the institutionalization of rationalization of Dutch areal development. My inspiration to make such a scheme comes from an article of Buitelaar et al. (2016). It discussed the institutionalization of ‘spontaneous organic urban development’ and concluded with a clear scheme.

1.4 Questions
The goal of my thesis leads logically to a main question. In order to assess the degree of institutionalization, when it comes to rationalization of Dutch areal development, it is necessary to answer the following (main) question:

Is rationalization of Dutch areal development an actual institutional change or just a temporary phenomenon?
The concept of institutional change plays an important role in the answering of the main question. Assisting is one sub-question that derives from the literature study. The sub-question is:

*Which criteria determine the ability of laws or processes to actuate institutional change and to lead to institutionalization?*

Since this question will contribute to the construction of an evaluation scheme, it is an efficient question. In the end it will enable me to evaluate rationalization of the Dutch areal development process and therefore it logically derives from the goal of this thesis. The sub-question is significantly steering, because it shows clearly that further on, the creation of an evaluation instrument is required.

Concepts such as rationalization and institutionalization play the role of a link between the questions. This research is rather focused on planning practice than on planning theories. The sub-question logically derives from the idea that a general model of institutionalization can be used in many different cases, such as rationalization. Therefore it is necessary to assess the degree of institutionalization in order to evaluate the ability of rationalization to actuate initial change.

Unfortunately, rationalization is a relatively new concept and not evaluated that much yet. Although practical information suits spatial planning, I think more research can be done to the development of abstract concepts. Those are more flexible and fit the uncertainties spatial planners have to deal with. I see a gap in research done to this subject, because it can be extended with work that helps making the research more sustainable and more usable in different situations.

**1.5 Relevance**

What makes this thesis socially relevant, is the contribution to the analysis and the evaluation of rationalization. This thesis should teach policy makers and planners more about the effectivity of measures taken in order to smoothen the planning process.

In concern to the societal relevance it is also important to note the discussion about delaying factors in areal development and the foundation of a team of experts. The two form the background for this thesis. This thesis should contribute to the existing literature by checking whether the institutional changes in the rationalization program are institutionalized. Because of the focus on the abstract concept of institutionalization, this thesis also knows a scientific relevance. This research is based on spatial planning in the Netherlands especially there, this thesis is relevant due to the shift towards bottom-up planning. Institutionalization is a broad concept and be used to evaluate planning policy in different situations. In order to evaluate planning discourses or to compose planning theories, one should consider using the concept of institutionalization as a framework or spine of research processes.

Scientifically this thesis is supposed to contribute to the existing work of researchers on institutional change and on spatial processes. Examples of existing articles are Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben (2016) which elaborates the institutionalization of organic urban development, Dembski & Salet (2009) and Buitelaar, Lagendijk & Jacobs (2007) which discusses institutional change and finally articles about institutionalization, e.g. Waterhout (2008) and Buitelaar, Galle & Sorel (2010). Combining those elements is a main element of this thesis, whereas rationalization has been given the role of a case study. This thesis is scientifically relevant since it combines few combined concepts such as rationalization and institutionalization.
1.6 Reading guide

In chapter 2, the introduction, the purpose, the subject and the added value of this thesis have been elaborated. Next to that, the central questions of this thesis have been explained. Chapter 2 is the literature review wherein the tendencies of Dutch areal planning are introduced.

Subsequently, in the theoretical framework, the institutional theory and its relation to this research topic is examined. That chapter also includes the conceptual model and the elaboration of the main concepts of this thesis and their interrelations.

Chapter 4 includes the data section, wherein the methodology is elaborated, next to the operationalization of the, in earlier chapters introduced, concepts. The operationalization results in a series of interview topics. Feedback to the main concepts, the research questions and the goal of the research should give a proper overview on the text.

The previous chapters form the theoretical part of this thesis. The following chapters are designated to the analysis of the conducted case studies and matching interviews. This thesis will be finished by an overall conclusion with answers on the main and sub-question, recommendations and a discussion of the research process. In the annex you will find the interview guide.
2. Literature review

Since three concepts, tendencies in Dutch areal development, rationalization and institutionalization play an important role in forming the structure of this research, some elaboration and a review of existing literature on these subjects is required. The first two concepts, the tendencies and rationalization, will be discussed in this section of the thesis. Later on, in the theoretical framework and the research strategy sections, institutionalization will be explained and put into practice through the operationalization.

My intention has been to collect as many different sources as possible. Therefore, both scientific as non-scientific articles are being reviewed in the following chapter. In reality, it turned out that existing literature on rationalization is especially based on consultancy reports. There is less scientific material on the institutionalization of spatial processes. Nonetheless, to improve the validity of this research, I have been looking for articles on a broad spectrum with possible conflicting arguments.

2.1 Tendencies Dutch areal development

In order to fully understand the importance of rationalization within areal development, an overview of the most important tendencies in the Dutch areal development is required.

Rationalization is one of the current trends in the Netherlands and its spatial planning but there is more going on, the last couple of years. Another trend is the changing role of governments, municipalities in particular, when it comes to land development. Nowadays, governmental organs shift from an active role towards a more facilitating role. This shift and its outcome will be explained later on in this literature review.

Striking is the fact that both tendencies started after 2008. In that year the financial crisis reached a peak. One could say that the financial crisis is a trigger, as described by Hall & Taylor (1996) that initiates an institutional change. The crisis created the momentum for change of thoughts.

First of all, the crisis had some financial effects on the work of the Dutch municipalities. They used to make large-scale comprehensive plans that clearly stated the expected amount of time and costs. The problem with this way of working occurred when the demand for the areal developments projects decreased as a result of the crisis.

Secondly, small developing stakeholders were badly affected by the additional rules (which form the snails of the planning process), the municipalities set. The companies couldn’t oversee the additional expenses. Especially this second problem asks for a solution that reduces bureaucracy, since that not only delays the planning process but also increases the costs. This also explains the importance of rationalization as an institutional change.

The next two chapters discuss the current tendencies in Dutch areal development. Rationalization will be approached, both as a tendency and as an abstract concept. The changing role of the government will be discussed as a tendency in order to add some context to the concept of rationalization and to maintain a difference between two elementary forms of institutions, formal and informal, which will be discussed in the section ‘Institutionalization’. In short they display the difference between social patterns influenced by rules and social patterns influenced by interactions and habits. With this section I aim to inform about the exact situation, the importance of the tendencies (since they are solutions for problems originated from the crisis) and I will give an example of actual activities that happened to formalize rationalization.
2.1.1 Rationalization (changing formal institutions)

I aim to evaluate rationalization of Dutch land development in this thesis and find out whether rationalization is just something new and fancy or an actual institutional change. This section could more or less be considered as the link between the background of the thesis and the theoretical framework of this thesis, which consists of a conceptual model and a hypothesis.

As mentioned before, the financial crisis of 2008 is a trigger of the rationalization-movement in the Netherlands. In my view, that is an important link between the concepts rationalization and institutional change. Apparently something that significant happened, that Dutch spatial planners have decided that a change of the Dutch planning culture was needed. Suitable, in that case, is a package of sustainable measures instead of temporarily changing the rules and returning to the old habits eventually.

In the ‘Rationalization’ (2.1.2. and 2.1.3.) section of this literature review I’ll argue that institutions could be divided in formal and informal ones (resp. written rules and everyday habits). Without deepening into the eventual scheme of institutionalization, I think some progress in both forms of institutions should be made, in order to be speak of institutionalization.

De Hoog & Pennings (2015) argue that rationalization amongst others consists of a change in policy. The existing planning laws should be changed and become more flexible. In practice, rules concerning land development turned out to be rather rigid and bureaucratic. This is not only due to the fragmented character of the planning legislation on national level, but also and especially to the surplus of unnecessary rules on local level.

Pilot-studies, for instance in Wekerom and Breda, were only temporary, but did show some nice results. In those pilots entrepreneurs were offered to come up with certain initiatives with less or no rules (see frame 2.1.3. for an elaboration of the examples). De Zeeuw et al. (2013), even more than De Hoog, pleads for a change of the formal institutions.

However, literature also shows the importance of informal institutional change. Pentland (2014) and De Hoog et al. (2015) especially emphasize an institutional change, given shape by changed relations between involved actors. An example: municipalities have had a dominant role in Dutch land development, now they are playing a more facilitating role and let private parties join. De Zeeuw adds that, when it comes to rationalization, one should also (re)consider the amount of cooperators in a case. I will further elaborate this tendency in the next section, since it could be seen as a part of rationalization, but also of the changing role of the government because of the social aspects of it.

In the next section I can state that rationalization is especially considered to be a process of formal institutional change, although some informal institutions may be changed during the process. However, I focus on rationalization as an initiator of formal institutional change, since the informal institutional change is covered in the research on the tendency of the changing role of the local government. This will be discussed in section 2.1.4.

In this section I have tried to use the existing literature to make the first steps in combining the concepts of rationalization and institutional change and I have tried to start the process of assessing the potential of rationalization to be an actual institutional change. Eventually, the Institutional theory section and the operationalization will put this data in to practice.
2.1.2 Rationalization (as a concept)

Now rationalization as a tendency in the Dutch spatial planning is explained above, it is time to dig deeper into the actual solutions suggested to solve the problems that arose in the financial crisis. The concept of institutionalization will be discussed further on, but first I will focus on rationalization.

As mentioned before, rationalization is about making the planning process faster and less expensive by getting rid of the ‘snails’, the unnecessary elements of the additional local planning legislation. That is why this process is called ‘ontslakken’ in Dutch. In this thesis I investigate the concepts of institutionalization and rationalization and I search for a link between them. Pentland (2014) for instance explains the relation between the two concepts. In the rationalization process one should shift from static to dynamic social norms. Those social norms correspond with the concept of planning culture as Buitelaar et al. (2011) describes (see literature review on institutionalization). So in the rationalization process the way actors deal with spatial planning changes.

First of all it is important to understand why rationalization of Dutch areal development is needed anyway. Most researchers agree on the same reasons. De Hoog et al. (2015) sees big trends such as globalization and the financial crisis of 2008 as initiators of a problem that needs to be answered with rationalization. De Zeeuw et al. (2013) completes the thought by stating that because of those trends the demand of retail and office space decreased.

Both researches agree on the fact that ambitions from the pre-crisis period are not feasible anymore and change in behavior is required. An example from De Hoog et al. (2015) is that in better times, many rules were made to make big areal development possible. However, nowadays those rules are not helpful anymore, but considered to be obstacles for spatial planning instead. De Hoog et al. (2015) and De Zeeuw et al. (2013) seem to agree on most subjects and next to that De Hoog et al. (2015) has a link with Pentland (2014) by arguing a change in approach, in the form of making policy more flexible and changing the relation between actors, is needed. This clearly says something about social norms in spatial planning, because the municipalities have a history of being dominant in the process. In the future they will be playing a facilitating role and initiators of projects will get a bigger role. De Zeeuw (2013) confirms this last change in the division of roles. That research adds that within municipalities a higher governmental level is recommended to get rid of sectoral approaches of planning projects. A sectoral approach is one of the slowing factors in spatial planning. A justification of assumptions is found in De Hoog (2015). Some practical examples prove the working effect of rationalization. Examples are Wekerom and Breda, both Dutch cities where respectively entrepreneurs had to deal with less rules and where even all rules were removed. Many reports discuss policy on the national level, but some of the reports on the pilot studies zoom in and actually show the problem on a local scale. There, especially the small real estate companies have difficulties competing with other companies since they cannot pay the costs of all the additional municipal rules. The lack of money and the surplus of local rules also manifest themselves in an extended planning procedure. Rationalization should be the solution for that, with its goal to reduce bureaucracy and its mean of removing unnecessary rules.

I have now mentioned some similarities between existing researches, but those researches do not agree on all aspects. De Hoog et al. especially emphasizes the informal institutions (certain habits and work practices). The article considers those institutions to be the most delaying. However, De Zeeuw argues that the emphasis needs to be more on the formal institutions (policies, rules) instead of the informal institutions.
That becomes clear by the examples De Zeeuw gives. Most important are the elimination of blueprint plans and a shift towards more global and flexible land-use plans. The capability of making contemporary policy choices is inherent to those plans. On the other hand De Zeeuw acknowledges the role of behavior in spatial planning. Moreover the articles speaks of a certain importance of public support. A more recent report (De Zeeuw, De Hoog & Franzen, 2015) confirms that smoother policy is more publicly supported.

I found another difference between existing reports in the opinion about the amount of (private) cooperators. Both reports of De Zeeuw argue that many private companies working together might cause indecision. De Hoog et al. (2015) actually argues that cooperation should be stimulated. As example she discusses a couple of developers in Wekerom who created plans and boosted public support by cooperation, while the municipality of Ede played a facilitating role.

2.1.3 Examples of rationalization
This section contains a couple of examples of rationalization practices, applied on pilot studies in the Netherlands. Therefore this section is meant to give an idea of which rules can be changed or applied in order to actuate formal institutional change, resulting in the rationalization of the Dutch areal development.

The first example comes from the village of Wekerom in the municipality of Ede, centrally located in the Netherlands. The pilot study performed in this area showed that change of the formal institutions of areal development (at least partly) was started by an internal element. Earlier plans showed that the discussed additional municipal rules could interrupt the implementation. Moreover, in many cases the municipal rules ‘killed’ the plans before juridical and environmental assessments could be done (De Hoog & Penning, 2015, p. 11). The plans turned out to be too expensive and their processes too long lasting. The municipality took these problems seriously and decided to, from then on, start pilot-studies with an internal stocktaking of its own policies. In that way first all unnecessary legislative elements were removed. The criterion is that rules should be removed if they do not serve an evident local interest (De Zeeuw et al. 2013).

In new plans, the municipality of Ede decided, that the initiators of a project together with the municipality would check the feasibility of the plan, leaving the legislation and rules disregarded. The result: an internal cleanup or rationalization before starting the actual planning process.

Secondly, the municipality of Breda, aimed to make the provision of building permits more efficient. It started with stating that most plans could be approved as long as they met two conditions. First of all, safety should be guaranteed and secondly the neighbors of the (re)developed areas should approve the plans. In order to meet the ultimate goal of a more efficient provision of building permits, without losing sight of the set conditions, the municipality invented a new concept. The concept was implemented in Havenkwartier (Harbor quarter). It was all about not just granting licenses to entrepreneurs to start their initiatives on the later to develop area, but making a loan agreement instead. In the agreement were included: the goal of the plan, the notice period and possible compensations. Another concept was implemented by the Municipalities of Woerden and Hoorn. It was rather innovative, but yet very simple. It is called the neighbor’s permit. It enabled people to declare that they would not disagree with the permit, applied by somebody, for instance their neighbor.
2.1.4 Changing role government in Dutch areal development

Next to rationalization, a changing role of local governments in the Netherlands is a tendency since 2008. The changing role is part of a bigger movement: an evolving way of performing land development. Since 2008 the Dutch planning culture is shifting from implementing large-scale comprehensive plans to organic urban development (Buitelaar et al., 2016).

In the comprehensive development, large scale plans are made for several years to come. In these plans, many different functions are combined. Examples of those functions are housing, recreation etc. (Buitelaar & Bregman, 2016). Also different actors, such as government and private companies, and financial streams are integrated.

But, because of the crisis, this way of conducting land policy lost its power. Especially the integration of several actors turned out to be infeasible due to the economic losses that were made and had to be covered by other actors (Buitelaar & Bregman, 2016). A new way of carrying out land policy was needed to reduce financial risks for governments and to meet citizens wishes more which leads to more sustainable cities (Buitelaar, Galle & Sorel, 2014).

Therefore, spatial planners and local authorities wish to develop space more organically. This ‘organic alternative’ is the new way of planning and consists of many different changes compared to the old way of conducting areal development. Organic development, for instance, is more focused on small scale projects and projects that are less rigid because of long term plans. The new plans are more process-orientated rather than project orientated (Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben, 2016). Figure (1) shows the categories in which organic development differs from integrated development. Next to the clear overview of this figure, it also is an inspiration for the scheme I wish to end up with, further on in my thesis.

![Figure (1): Integrated urban development and organic urban development. Source: Buitelaar & Bregman (2016).](image-url)
Within rationalization I rather found a focus on formal institutional-orientated changes, especially in the literature written under the guidance of De Zeeuw. So, in his view, rationalization can mainly be obtained by changing the rules. However, when it comes to the shift towards organic development, I especially notice the presence of informal institutional changes. As figure (1) shows, two of the improving points are the type of developer and the role of local authorities. In order to highlight the informal institutions, I'd like to focus on these two categories. Concerning the type of developer, Portugali (2000) states that an organic, or self-organizing city knows areal development, based on interactions between stakeholders that pursue their own interests which are not influenced by the government. This process is characterized by spontaneity. This makes way for smaller stakeholders in areal development.

So looking at the role of local authorities (in the Netherlands most of the time municipalities), organic development knows a facilitating government instead of an active one. Active land policy means that local authorities buy land, prepare it and subsequently sell it to actors, involved in property developing (Needham, 1997). Municipalities have worked like this for a long time.

The main pro-arguments were the ability to gain financial profit from the policy and besides, the ability to get a grip on the production of space (Buitelaar, Lagendijk, Jacobs, 2007). That Dutch municipalities have been active the last years, becomes clear in Groetelaers (2004): in the period of 1995 till 2005 68% of all homes were the result of active land policy. Unfortunately, due to the crisis in 2008, the demand for those houses decreased and municipalities made significant losses and were forced to change their policies (Buitelaar & Bregman, 2016). Organic development, was a good solution, because it changed the role of municipalities and created the possibility to divide financial risks over multiple parties.

Concluding, organic development is (informal) institutional change, due to the change in the way several actors within areal development interact: the role of the municipalities has become smaller, the influence of smaller stakeholders has increased and the interaction between them all has gotten more spontaneous.

Looking back on the existing literature on this concept, institutionalization of spatial planning, I conclude that only few scientific researches exist. Many of the sources are reports of the initiative of rationalization and reports of the first experiences. It is a shame since rationalization as a process has been investigated in the past, in education and health care for instance (Van Mierlo, 1990; Giard 2010). It is striking that one is not very pleased with rationalization, due to the lack of details and the standardization. In fields such as education and health care a more detailed and personal approach is favorable.

The fact that the spatial rationalization is relatively new plays a role. Most of the time authors agree, but in some cases small contradictions exist. That is especially interesting when one considers the fact that there is only a small group of people working on this subject. Some of the authors contradict each other in details, but they work together in other publications wherein they provide a more consistent message.

Finally I would like to add that this thesis is required, because the currently existing literature on rationalization lacks a scientific character. So with this thesis I do not only intend to research the definition of rationalization, since that has already been done. I rather combine it with the more abstract concept of institutionalization in order to give the concept of rationalization a more scientific character. Also that approach contributes to the scientific value of this particular thesis and the link between the concepts helps to achieve the goal of this thesis, which is to make an evaluation tool. The tool itself will be the main part of the operationalization, since it is the tool to put the theory on institutionalization, as elaborated in the next section, in to practice.
3. Theoretical framework
This theoretical framework mainly focuses on the concept of institutionalization. Here I attempt to explain what institutionalization exactly is, how it arises, what several scientists have written about it before and eventually how this concept relates to this research (conceptual model) and to the planning practice (operationalization).

This section is based on an elaboration of the institutional theory. This theory adds the requested abstraction to this thesis. As I will later describe, institutional change, an important part of the institutional theory, leads to institutionalization. The last concept is keystone to the operationalization.

3.1 Institutions
Laws and Hajer (2006) state that all actions of people not just happen, but that they take place in a certain social and historical context. That context is determined by institutions, the human-made structures concerning human interaction. These institutions, according to Dembski and Salet (2009) are patterns of social rules. They could be described as the collective actions in a world of individual choices (Dembski & Salet, 2009, p. 615). The relation between institutions and actors works in two directions. Policy is not only institutionalized in local practices, local practices also find their way into policy (Buitelaar et al., 2011, p. 940; Buitelaar et al., 2016).

A closer look on the concept of institutions however, also requires the acknowledgement of a dichotomy. There is a difference between formal and informal institutions (Buitelaar et al., 2016). Institutions are not always as concrete as laws and rules. One considers all matters embedded in a judicial system, such as the Dutch Act on Spatial Planning (Wet Ruimtelijke Ordening), to be formal institutions. Amongst informal institutions, there are for instance taboos and etiquette. The informal institutions don’t just exit, they need time to evolve. They develop as certain behavior is being repeated (routine) resulting in social patterns (Zijderveld, 2000). Arts and Leroy (2003, p. 31) state that institutionalization is a process “in which fluid behavior gradually solidifies into structures, which subsequently structure the behavior of actors.” Dembski & Salet (2009) actually give institutionalization a less solid definition. The behavioral part of the definition by Arts and Leroy says something about the measurement of change in informal institutions. An example of an informal institution within my field of science is the (Dutch) planning culture or tradition: a collection of actions that are repeated by the government, planners, private actors and participating civilians and their attitudes regarding each other roles (Sanyal, 2005). All of that can also be considered as the discourse concerning spatial planning (Buitelaar et al., 2011, p. 930). According to Buitelaar & Bregman (2016. p. 1283) not only the actors, but also their decisions when it comes to ends and ways of working, are part of the planning culture. Other examples of informal institutions are the (specific) use of language and lifestyle (Dembski & Salet, 2009).

Eventually, one could discover a certain pattern in the existing literature in this field of science. All researches seem to have a social background. This is pretty obvious for social scientists. After opening the researches with a social introduction, the concept of institutionalization is used to find a link between social practices and spatial planning. I think the existing literature concerning the last part (generalization of institutionalization) can be more elaborated. This thesis discusses that topic later on.

Important questions are: how do certain planning policies integrate? Why does the institutionalization take time? And moreover: when is policy fully institutionalized? According to Buitelaar et al. (2011) this has to do with congruence.
When there are few similarities in thinking between policies and institutions, one could speak of a poorly institutionalized law. A law should be able to change institutions and behavior by having the right incentive. However, this motivation cannot be generalized and differs from situation to situation. On the other hand, there must be ways to evaluate institutionalization, since it is such a general concept. One would think that the concept is versatile and subject to some sort of evaluation.

Throughout the existing definitions (amongst others the one by Arts and Leroy, 2003), one could say that institutions, the social structures, are rather unchangeable, although that could be necessary in order to let legislation reach its full potential. Weber (1976) however, states that institutions are not just (social) patterns, but more the chance of the validation of patterns, since those need to be approved over and over again. Concerning the definition of institutions, Weber has a different opinion than many others by giving institutions a less fixed character.

3.2 Institutional change

It turned out that not all scientists agree with each other when it comes to institutions. I have, when it comes to institutional change, positioned me on the side of Weber, since I thought his approach of institutions could be contributing to the evaluation of the ability of rationalization to be an institutional change.

However, the literature concerning institutional change showed some different opinions. The next section shows that. I think at least a couple of assumptions are important. Firstly that institutional change is an actual change of institutions, formal or informal and secondly that the institutional change has succeeded when it becomes clear that a certain path dependency has been breached and besides that institutional change eventually leads to institutionalization wherein changed institutions settle again (Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben, 2016).

3.3 Definition path dependency

Simply, path dependency means that what happened before will affect what happens on a later point of time (Sewell, 1996). According to Djelic and Quack (2007, p. 161-162) it is a little more nuanced: “... path dependency characterizes historical sequences in which contingent events set institutional patterns with deterministic properties into motion.”

Path dependency is influenced by a hegemonic discourse. The discourse consists of the way people think and write about a certain subject (see example of path dependency in Dutch areal development). The discourse can be affected in two ways: by a stream of reflection or by external social developments (Buitelaar, Lagendijk, Jacobs, 2007). The reflection means that one internally and critically looks at certain processes, e.g. areal development. Externally, social developments, such as public dissatisfaction with a subject, could put institutional change on the political agenda.
3.4 Path dependency of (Dutch) areal development

Buitelaar et al. also give an example of path dependency in Dutch areal development: the earlier discussed active land policy. Since the Second World War, the Dutch government has played an active role in location development. This was supported by the overall discourse of active state involvement that emerged at that time. This discourse has survived several other tendencies such as the large-scale privatization in the 1980’s.

I personally liked this example, because on the one hand it clearly showed why active land policy is maintained by path dependency, but on the other hand it showed that it is possible to break through path dependency, also in the rather institutionalized Dutch planning culture (CEC, 1997; Alterman, 2001). That is because we now see that local authorities start to play a more facilitating role.

3.5 Origin and driving forces institutional change

After forming the assumption that institutions actually can change and are not per se fixated, it was time to research the origins of institutional change and the way it works. While looking for a connection between institutionalization and rationalization, I have come across more possible reasons for institutional change. Some of the existing articles contain a part about how this change could grow. According to Weber (1976) institutions are the chance that certain social patterns get validated. Subsequently concluding from that, I could state that one should try to reduce that chance. Symbolic markers, such as metaphors and landmarks could play an important role in forming that institutional change (Dembski & Salet, 2009). The same researchers state that patterns of behavior can change if the institutions are openly contested. The article however states that the process of institutional change runs rather gradually. This is in contradiction with Hall & Taylor (1996). According to their article an abrupt crisis is the best trigger for institutional change (Buitelaar, Lagendijk & Jacobs, 2007). Buitelaar & Bregman (2016) approve this opinion on institutional change. They state that any crisis, such as the financial crisis of 2008, can create momentum for institutional change. There are three important conditions to create a momentum. Those are: the presence of a significant societal problem, political solutions at hand, e.g. redesign and finally, the “political endorsement and action”. In case of the existence of these three concepts, institutional change can be initiated (Kingdon, 1995).

I found the recurring role that the financial crisis of 2008 played rather interesting, since it seems to be a link between two important concepts of this thesis, rationalization and institutionalization. Informal institutions could namely be changed on purpose. This intentional, institutional change can arise when the momentum can be used to attempt to strengthen effectiveness of certain institutions (Buitelaar, Lagendijk & Jacobs, 2007, p. 895). This pursuit of effectiveness is an important part of rationalization (De Zeeuw et al., 2013). Buitelaar et al., however state that a driving force for institutional change could both be internal (within the policy-making organ) and external (societal influence).

In his thesis (2008) Waterhout joins Buitelaar et al. (2005) concerning the crisis as a momentum for institutional change and discusses the existence of several origins of institutional change. Three origins exist, Waterhout argues. Institutional change could be intentional, just as Buitelaar et al. mentioned. Another possibility is a gradual evolution, wherein the institutions adapt to societal changes. That corresponds with Weber’s idea of non-fixated, but rather adapting institutions. Waterhout’s final driving force of institutional change is ‘an accident’, an unexpected situation such as the financial crisis. Waterhout also states that institutions are formed by three factors: rules, resources and ideas.
Later on in this research, these factors can contribute to the scheme of criteria of institutionalization. Anyway according to Buitelaar, Lagendijk & Jacobs (2007) history influences formal institutions. Somehow history finds its way through policy decisions made nowadays. This corresponds with Dembski & Salet (2009) who discuss the durable nature and the path dependency of institutions. Notable is the addition that institutional development can be triggered by the desire for increased efficiency. I argue that this is the case with rationalization, since it is meant to make the planning process quicker and easier (Buitelaar et al., 2007).

The link between institutionalization and rationalization brings me to the part where I want this thesis to contribute to the existing literature on the subject of institutionalization of spatial planning. I think institutionalization plays an important role in the existing literature. Especially Buitelaar et al. (2005, 2010, 2011, 2016) and Healey (1992) discuss (Dutch) spatial planning from an institutional point of view. Despite that, the existing literature shows a gap when it comes to evaluation of institutionalization and the question: what makes policy less or more institutionalized? This thesis should enrich the existing literature. Buitelaar is in many publications on track by looking at spatial practices through ‘institutional eyes’, this thesis hopefully helps by constructing an instrument that is more general and usable in even more practical situations. In that way a research gap will be closed as this thesis can contribute to the completion of the concept of institutionalization in spatial planning. Not a study either on institutionalization or rationalization will be a great contribution to our field of science. Rather the link between both makes the biggest step forward. However, a close look at institutionalization in spatial planning will help to operationalize the used concepts in order to create the intended scheme for institutionalized laws.

The literature review lead to my research question by elaborating the most important concepts, institutionalization and rationalization. But also important is the possibility for gap-spotting that plays a role in question-making. The existing literature provides a limited amount of scientific material on the institutionalization of the processes, which are part of rationalization. Also many sources seem to show certain similarities instead of continuing discussions on each other’s statements. On the other hand that creates opportunities for gap-spotting and that is why my thesis departs from a gap in the existing literature: the lack of research to the institutionalization of rationalization.

### 3.6 Conceptual model

The next section is about the key concepts of this thesis and the way they relate to each other. The literature review and the first part of the theoretical framework were focused on elaborating the particular concepts. The contribution of this section to the thesis is the addition of the dimensions of the key concepts and the relations between them. The latter helps to develop the hypothesis that needs to be assessed in the practical part of the research.

#### 3.6.1. Variables

There are a couple of main concepts or variables in this research. Those concepts all derive from the earlier chapters. The first two key concepts are institutional change and path dependency. These are interesting concepts, because they play a central role in the main purpose of this research. Besides that, they are related to each other. It turned out that institutional change is the way to break through path dependency, for instance within areal development (Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben, 2017).
In order to clearly display the relations between this thesis’ key concepts, it is important to zoom in on the concepts themselves. Based on the institutional theory I took a look at the concept of institutional change. In the context of this research, the dichotomy, formal and informal institutions mattered a lot. Not only because this dichotomy helped to completely understand the content of institutional change, but moreover because it fitted the current tendencies in the Dutch areal development (the changing role of the government and the introduction of rationalization). When it came to path dependency the influence of a hegemonic discourse on it turned out to be important (Buitelaar, Lagendijk & Jacobs, 2007). Social patterns affected by historic sequences are in short the definition of the result of path dependency (Djelic & Quack, 2007). Therefore, the connection between the concepts of institutional change and path dependency especially manifests itself in the form of social patterns. Both path dependency and institutional change form institutions (institutionalization), but path dependency is more conservative and about maintaining the status quo, whereas institutional change, alters the institutional design.

The concept ‘institutionalization’ for that reason is a new part of the conceptual model. Firstly, via institutionalization, institutional change breaks through path dependency. Also path dependency influences the institutionalized patterns by maintaining them. This means that institutionalization is both an influenced key concept by path dependency and institutional change and an intervening variable. The relation between path dependency and institutionalization also works in two ways. History decides current social patterns, but the settlement of institutions also maintains a certain status quo. Globally, the information above lead to this model:

![Figure (2): global conceptual model](image)

**3.6.2. Dimensions**

In this section the elements of the global conceptual model will be explained further by mentioning the variables and the dimensions. Both elements make it easier to turn the abstract concepts into measureable concepts.

Formal and informal institutions are the dimensions of the variable institutional change. As mentioned earlier the difference between formal and informal institutions, has been of great importance in the literature review. Interesting, was the way both rationalization and the tendency of the changing role of the Dutch government in areal development suited that difference quite well.

Apparently rationalization focused more on the formal side of institutional change by reviewing the rules on areal development. According to broad range of articles and reports, especially the removal of unnecessary, local rules played an important role in the process of rationalization. The changing role of local authorities as a tendency within Dutch areal development suited the informal institutional change better.
Informal institutions are particularly characterized by social patterns such as the way of communicating and the relations between several stakeholders. Taking in a more facilitative role, the local authorities put themselves in another position in comparison to real estate developers. The effect is that the government does not have such a dominant role anymore in areal development.

Institutionalization looks a lot like institutional change, but it goes a little further. Institutionalization is the result of institutional change, if the new or changed institutions settle again and form new social patterns that are being repeated over and over again (Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben, 2016). Because of the similarities between institutional change and institutionalization the role of formal and informal institutions as dimensions more or less stays the same. Summarizing, in the context of this thesis, one could argue that institutionalization is a rather general, additional variable (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007, p. 310-311). Institutional change on the other hand is more specific and rather a key concept, centrally positioned in the conceptual model.

The last main concept in the model is path dependency. Path dependency can occur in private and in public sectors. In the conceptual model, only the latter is stated, because I focused on municipalities. An example of path dependency in areal development is active land policy. A reason for maintaining the status quo might be the influence of experienced civil servants who continue their way of working. This forms a barrier and therefore path dependency has a negative influence on institutional change.

After demonstrating the difference between institutional change and institutionalization in the conceptual model zooming in on institutional change again is the next step. In order to fully understand the key concepts of this research I based my work with the conceptual model on the method of Verschuren and Doorewaard (2007). This method divides the main concepts into smaller entities: dimensions, aspects and (eventual) sub-aspects.

While writing the literature review a few dimensions fitting institutional change, it turned out that formal and informal institutions were the two most important dimensions. Zooming in on the theoretical framework lead me to the concepts of rationalization as the aspect of formal institutional change. As explained before, rationalization mainly focused on changing and removing local planning rules. Rationalization can be divided into several sub-aspects. For instance: the amount of local rules additional to national policy, changed course of the policy, the amount of restrictions and the time it takes to receive a license for a planning initiative. Informal institutions consist of the aspect of the changing role of the government (section 2.1.4). The sub-aspects are the role of the government, the role of the other stakeholders, the hierarchy of all the stakeholders (division of financial risks etc.) and the scale of the projects. Bringing all the concepts, dimensions and (sub)aspects together, the result is this provisional scheme:
### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Sub-aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Institutional change   | 1. Formal institutional change                                               | Rationalization   | 1. Amount of local rules  
2. Changed course of local policy  
3. Waiting time for license |
|                        | 2. Informal institutional change                                            | Facilitative      | 1. Role government  
2. Role other stakeholders  
3. Hierarchy  
4. Scale of the project |
| Path dependency        | Public sector                                                              | People            | Uncriticized expertise  
Uncriticized way of working  
Unreflected rules |
|                        |                                                                           | Policy            |                                                                            |

**Figure (3): Variables, dimensions, aspects and sub-aspects. Source: Verschuren, & Doorewaard, 2007.**

#### 3.6.3 Final conceptual model

Since reality is more complex than only the key concepts of institutional change and path dependency, expansion of the conceptual model is required. Besides, the formation of the conceptual model seems to be the element in making this thesis with the greatest iterative character. Therefore improvements have been added. There are more concepts and factors that play a role. The next section discusses those and their exact role within the conceptual model.

Institutionalization of certain behavior leads to social patterns and structures. These patterns are so-called institutions and can be divided in formal and informal institutions. Within this thesis, the examples of those are respectively additional, local planning rules and active land policy.

Those formal and informal institutions have a positive influence on path dependency. When behavior is determined by long-lasting patterns, one could speak of a certain path dependency. Institutions influence path dependency, since one tends to behave as everybody has done in the past. The relation works in two ways: because of path dependency a status quo will be maintained and the current institutions will not be questioned.

However, institutional change does question the institutions and aims for breaching the path dependency. Institutional change can cause the path dependency to break in multiple ways, by changing the hegemonic discourse, directly and indirectly. The hegemonic discourse, e.g. great government influence, shapes the path dependency. This however has not been the focus of this thesis and is therefore not as important as the relation between path dependency on institutional change. The direct influence of the key concepts is as follows: not ‘behaving’ according to the current institutions anymore simply breaks through the path dependency, because the social patterns do not determine the current behavior anymore. The indirect connection is more complicated.
Institutional change breaches path dependency, but it takes a longer time, since new behavior needs time to turn into social patterns (instead of being just temporary). This process is called institutionalization and therefore the connection between institutional change and path dependency is indirect: through institutionalization, institutional change influences path dependency. Concluding, this means that institutions are the ‘instrument’ of institutional change to breach path dependency, but they will eventually lead to a similar situation. A situation wherein patterns determine decisions made in the present. New formal and informal institutions are respectively: rationalization and a facilitative role of the government.

In the next model, the previous information is included. This display is the final conceptual model of this thesis:
Figure (4): Conceptual model
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Sub-aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Institutionalization (institutionalized) | Formal institutions | Local, additional planning rules | 1. Amount of local rules  
2. Changed course of local policy  
3. Waiting time for license |
|                               | Informal institutions | Active land policy               | 1. Role government  
2. Role other stakeholders  
3. Hierarchy  
4. Scale of the project |
| Institutional change          | Formal institutions | Rationalization                  | 1. Amount of local rules  
2. Changed course of local policy  
3. Waiting time for license |
|                               | Informal institutions | Facilitating government          | 1. Role government  
2. Role other stakeholders  
3. Hierarchy  
4. Scale of the project |
| Path Dependency               | Public sector       | People                            | Uncriticized expertise  
Uncriticized way of working  
Unreflected rules |
|                               |                     | Policy                            |                                                                            |

*Figure (5): Variables, dimensions, aspects and sub-aspects-II. Source: Verschuren, & Doorewaard, 2007.*
3.7 Hypothesis
Now that the key concepts and the relations between them are explained, it is time to formulate the appropriate hypothesis. The hypothesis is the assumption that will be assessed. The hypothesis will find its way through the practical part of the research. The research strategy is meant to examine the hypothesis. The operationalization is the basis for the assessment of the hypothesis, the eventual case studies will be performed in order to examine the hypothesis and the data analysis will lead to the conclusion.

The hypothesis of this research, to be examined on the next part of this thesis, is as follows: Rationalization is an institutional change and is, through institutionalization, able to break through path dependency in the Dutch areal development. In this hypothesis, all the key concepts are included. Besides, the hypothesis is logical product from the literature review since it derives from the relations between the key concepts.

3.8 Theoretical conclusion
In the theoretical framework I discussed the abstract concept of institutionalization. I have made the first step in answering the question: can rationalization breach the path dependency of Dutch areal development? My provisional idea is that institutions can be changed, although they look rather rigid. In my framework it looked like path dependency could be breached and the facilitating role of the Dutch government was an example of that. Both internal as external factors could play a role. I wrote the framework keeping in mind the main question of this thesis: Is rationalization of Dutch areal development an actual institutional change or just a temporary phenomenon? Therefore this framework is part of the introduction to the answer to that main question. It requires a set of criteria that separate institutionalized processes from temporary phenomena. Those criteria will be collected and displayed in the next section ‘Research strategy’, since it is the main part of the operationalization of institutionalization. This thesis now pursues with the practical questions, such as: how to operationalize the used concepts and how to conduct the research (data method, collection and analysis)?

4. Methodology
This section describes the choices made in the research and the arguments in favor of them. First, several research strategies will be discussed and the choice for one in particular will be justified. The chosen research strategy determines the course of the following part of this thesis. Therefore it defines the methods of data collection and analysis, which will also be discussed in this section.

4.1 Research strategy

Desk research is a research strategy of reflecting existing research materials. Through literature study it aims to look at existing data from a different perspective. This method is time efficient and abundant data are available to do a proper literature research. Unfortunately this research strategy had to be rejected for my thesis. First of all, I wanted to go further search deeper than just a reflection of existing data. The lack of direct contact with the research entity made this strategy furthermore inappropriate. I wanted aimed to have a look at the practices of rationalization. Finally, the information resulting from a desk research is rather one-sided. In the literature review of this thesis, I tried to approach the subjects from different angles.
Surveys are characterized by their broad design and their ability to create results that are easy to generalize. Next to that, surveys are a good mean to express certain findings in numbers (quantifying). An advantage of surveys is the great amount of available literature and computer programs such as SPSS. However, this research strategy was not suitable for this research. I aimed for more depth than surveys could offer. Besides I wanted to choose my respondents instead of taking a random sample.

Experiments are recognizable for their set up. They consist of a test group and a control group. Next to that, they are characterized by randomness and the lack of external influences, for instance social-economic influences can hardly be measured. In experiments, scientists try to simulate a certain situation. In general experiments know a high internal validity, but a weak external validity. That was a reason for me to reject this research strategy, since I wanted to make a scheme that fitted more than one case. The lack of actual information (experiments are just simulations), was another reason for the rejection. Another characteristic of experiments is the repetition. This was the only part that seemed suitable for this research, because an extra check on the long term could provide more certainty.

Grounded theories have an explorative character and compare several concepts. They have a rather theoretic nature. Therefore, they might seem quite complex, which is not always appreciated by the respondents.

That convinced me to question grounded theory as the main research strategy for this thesis, since I wanted to contribute to the evaluation of rationalization. The result should be something useful for the people involved in rationalization processes. An advantage of grounded theories is that they are created on the base of information from practices instead of on the base of associative thoughts (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007, p. 200).

The last research strategy seemed to be the most appropriate for this thesis. Case studies enable the researcher to reach a certain depth that surveys, for instance, cannot provide. This depth research perfectly suits social and cultural subjects. Case studies are normally carried out with a small number of research entities. In order to reach this certain depth, several research methods are used, in many case studies. The result is detailed and holistic view on the research object. The weaker external validity is not particularly conducive for this research, but the great acceptance by the respondents makes it easier to take the cons for granted.

4.2 Data collection

Since the goal of this thesis is to evaluate the effectiveness of rationalization as an institutional change, doing research based on case studies seems to be appropriate. The reason for that is that before one could measure certain criteria of institutionalization, one should know what the process exactly looks like. Case studies can help to provide a detailed image of which elements of rationalization meet the criteria of institutional change, but will also give some general and abstract information, due to the abstract concepts that will be used to compare the cases (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007, p. 187).

The boundaries of the cases will be set in time and space. Only Dutch projects of rationalization will be taken in account. Next to that, only projects that started since the start of the rationalization movement will be used. Any project that has some of the rationalization characteristics but is older, will be excluded. I focus on accessible cases, as discussed in in the work of the Actieteam Ontslakkning (Zeeuw et al., 2013). Those cases are based on actual pilot studies in the Netherlands. I will chose 4 cases, such as most researchers do (Creswell, 2013).
The chosen case studies investigate rationalization, institutional change and path dependency in the pilot studies of: Wekerom, Breda, Kampen and Delft. Both Wekerom and Breda have been discussed before in this thesis. The rationalization is in these municipalities very interesting, because of the focus on local additional rules, the formal institutions. Delft is interesting because of the focus on both formal and informal institutions. Both deregulation and a reflection on the planning culture were performed. Moreover, these three pilot studies are interesting due to their timing of activity. They belong to the second tranche of rationalization (started in September/October 2013 and already finished).

The fact that they are finished increases the chance of a proper evaluation and now we can also see if the results of the pilot studies are included in more recent plans.

The pilot study in the municipality of Kampen is a little more recent, but still very interesting due to its direct link with the new Law on Planning and Environment that is about to be installed in the Netherlands. The new law will probably go in effect in 2018 or 2019 and is strongly dependent on rationalization. After all, making planning rules and processes more quicker, cheaper and easier to understand is the main goal of the new Law on Planning and Environment. At all municipalities semi-structured interviews will give the required information. The questions are included in the annex. In every municipality, the same questions will be posed, except for those questions that arise in the semi-structured setting. The interviewees are the project managers that were responsible for the projects that were part of the pilot studies. Those people should be able to provide information about the administrative setting of the governments, the path dependency, delaying factors in the planning process, the reasons for rationalization, the actual taken measures and finally, the results of the measures.

Creswell (2013) argues that a researcher can use certain themes or criteria to compare cases. In the end one should be able to make conclusions that are applicable for all cases (Stake, 1995). The cases will provide some general information about rationalization. The scheme that displays the criteria of institutional change (operationalization, section 4.3.2) is a matching example, because it consists of multiple criteria that can be used to evaluate different cases.

The comparison of the cases will be done according to the hierarchic method (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007). This is one of the methods that can be used to carry out a case study research, including multiple cases. This method consists of two phases. In the first phase, the individual cases are being researched as if they are independent cases. It takes until the second phase, to start analyzing. In this phase, all similarities and differences are being looked at. The researcher attempts to explain them. As mentioned before in this section, a higher scientific level is reached, when the same abstract concepts are used in the comparison of the different cases. Since Yin (2003) and Creswell (2013) argue that researchers of case studies should aim to use multiple data collection methods, I do so as well. In order to obtain information, interviews will be held with the project managers of a couple of rationalization projects in the Netherlands. The interviews will be so called semi-structured interviews.

This technique contributes to objectivity, but next to that it creates a nice environment where the interviewee can speak freely and where the researcher has the possibility to alter the questions while interviewing.

Besides the interviews, a literature study will be performed. Especially in order to be able to understand the formal institutions, literature study can be useful. Land-use plans can tell about the way projects are approached. For instance a globally structured plan suits rationalization more than a very detailed one.
4.3 Data analysis

As I mentioned in the previous section, the data analysis will go according to the second phase of the hierarchic method. In order to be able to provide some abstract and general information, the same abstract concepts are used. The operationalization, plays an important role in that. In the operationalization some of the most important elements of institutional change are included. Those will help to compare and interpret the rough data from the case studies.

So, the main part of analyzing the cases will be to find any patterns that the cases share. The cases are used to go in to depth about the exact features of institutionalized rationalization of Dutch areal development. However, by evaluating them based on the same criteria or categories, a more general evaluation should be the end result. Yin (2003) advises to look for certain themes that manifest themselves in several cases. Yin (2003) proposes this cross-case research that evaluates several cases with an approach based on a couple criteria. The analysis of this thesis also works that way.

Yin argues that case studies are not the best methods to generalize. This might be considered as a shortcoming of my choice of method. However, my research meets the requirement to increase external validity by using multiple cases and by revert to the continuously used categories and concepts. Next to that, the conclusions might be stronger, due to the consistence of conclusions in varied circumstances (Yin, 2003, p. 53). In that case, this method of case studies is appropriate for my thesis, since I aim to make a generalizing scheme.

The concept of institutionalization plays an important role in the analysis. Not only for the framework of the research, but also for the data analysis, institutionalization is like a spine. All collected data will be analyzed with this question in mind: what does this data say about the institutions in areal development right now and what about the process of rationalization as an institutional change?

Criteria that play a role in evaluating the rationalization process, need proper operationalization. In the end I will look at features such as: adapted policies, removed rules and possible changes in the ease of the municipalities to grant planning permissions.

4.3.1 Sub-question: Which criteria determine the ability of laws or processes to actuate institutional change and to lead to institutionalization?

All the preparing work, such as the theoretical framework and the literature review have resulted in the operationalization (4.3.2) of the variables of this research topic. However, one should not forget that the whole should be approached more abstractly in order to make the model useful in other situations. I would like to start with explaining the abstract concept. It turned out that many of the variables have quite practical and planning-oriented manifestations. Nonetheless, some of the elements show abstract roots. Those roots are the abstract concepts that are part of institutional change.

Some of them could be considered as the conditions for institutional change, others more as the main elements or distinctions and finally the effects. Combining and displaying these concepts results in a checklist.

The checklist can be used by those, researchers, who want to evaluate an institutionalizing process and by those, people working in planning organizations, who ask themselves whether it is the right time to take an initiative and which elements or actions should be included in the initiative with a view to set up a successful institutional change. In the figure below, the checklist with the abstract concepts is displayed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional change: checklist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presence of:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Momentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment for target group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Possible improvement in institutions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reaching goal:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaching path dependency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure (6): Checklist institutional change. Source icons: www.freepik.com*

Momentum stands for the right time to start an initiative as mentioned by Buitelaar, Lagendijk & Jacobs (2007). A set of happenings, external social influences or internal reflections, can lead to the right moment to come up with an idea for institutional change.

The adjustment for specific groups comes from the idea of Dembski & Salet (2009). In their article, they name the importance of symbolism as condition for institutional change. Used symbols should be adjusted on a specific target group such as civil servants, investors or inhabitants of a to be re-developed place. This is important, since institutional change is greatly influenced by social mobilization.

The distinction between formal and informal institutions is central in this thesis. Not only in planning but also in other policy fields, both formal and informal institutions determine the policies. Earlier on I argued that both forms of institutions probably need to be changed in order to get an optimal outcome.

In a recent discussion (18-05-2017) Merle Pijlman of the rationalization team stated that in rationalization the ratio of 80/20 (80% informal and 20% formal institutional change) is required in order to get the best results (Redactie Actieteam Ontslakken, 2017). In other policy fields this ratio might be different.

Finally an indicator that institutional change has occurred, is the deviation from or the breaching of path dependency. As mentioned before in the conceptual model, path dependency forms a barrier for institutional change and should therefore be broken through.
4.3.2 Operationalization

Operationalization is the tool that helps assessing the ability of rationalization to initiate institutional change instead of being just evanescent. Operationalization consists of the concept intuitional change and its indicators. These indicators describe how an abstract concept such as institutional change can be observed in reality. Especially the articles of Buitelaar, Lagendijk & Jacobs (2007), Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben (2016) and Waterhout (2008) have been contributing to the formation of a set of indicators. The result is a set of criteria which, on their turn, form the basis for the interviews in the case studies.

In designating indicators and operationalizing three elements are of interest. First there is a couple of conditions which a phenomenon should meet, before it could qualify as appropriate to actuate institutional change. Next, the dichotomy (formal and informal institutions) keeps on playing an important role. Finally, there is a couple of indicators or categories which determine if a phenomenon could be considered to be an institutional change.

As mentioned before, the operationalization is the basis for the interview questions. Every single aspect of the operationalization as mentioned above plays a role in forming that basis.

Looking at the conditions to meet in order to qualify as appropriate to initiate institutional change, three of them form the final model of operationalization.

At first, one should be able to speak of a certain momentum (Buitelaar, Lagendijk & Jacobs, 2007). This momentum could have been caused both by internal reflection of the planning process and by external societal influences (crises and such) that force policy makers to reconsider the role of formal and informal institutions in their way of working.

Secondly, symbolism is important, because institutional change needs to initiate social mobilization in order to be successful (Dembski & Salet, 2009). Therefore the language of the movement should be adjusted to the relevant social group, in the case of this thesis I mean policy-makers and other stakeholders.

Thirdly institutional change breaks through path dependency (Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben, 2016). Conditional in that case are the presence of a hegemonic discourse that determines the path dependency, such as active state involvement (Buitelaar, Lagendijk & Jacobs, 2007) and one or several institutional problems that require institutional change, such as small stakeholders not being able to deal to pay the costs that come with additional local planning rules.

Subsequently the difference between formal and informal institutions have played a significant role in this thesis and will therefore be the most important dichotomy in the operationalization. These institutions correspond with the “institutional problems that require institutional change” as mentioned above.

Finally, the indicators of the rationalization and the changing role of the government, as being institutional changes, are important to measure the concepts in reality. As became clear in the literature review and in the theoretical framework in this thesis, informal institutions represent the governmental shift from an active role to a more facilitative role. Informal institutions stand for local rules and rationalization.

When it comes to the informal institutions, two indicators are important: the developer type and the role of the municipality. Both indicators originate from the scheme that displays the difference between integrated planning and organic planning (figure X in the literature review). Buitelaar, Grommen and Van der Krabben (2016) explains the indicators as following: there are five different types of developers responsible for real estate development.
The municipality, housing associations, real estate developers, investors and end users. The presence of one or more of these stakeholders and their relations determine the informal institutions. Especially the role of the municipality tells us a lot about the facilitative role of the government as an institutional change, since it is considered to be institutionalized. The different roles (in order from old institutions to institutional change) are (Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben, 2016, p. 9) the active government (responsible for land development and for real estate development), public private ownership wherein multiple parties carry out the areal development and finally the facilitative government (private parties perform the development and the government takes no risks at all). This shows that the willingness to pay is an important factor (Waterhout, 2008). This willingness to take risks could be decreased in case of financial crises.

Since the new role of the government already turned out to be institutionalized, it is rather an example for the operationalization of the institutionalization of rationalization than an object that needs to be examined itself.

Rationalization knows a couple of indicators that show the degree of institutionalization of the phenomenon. One could think of the number of practices (Buitelaar et al., 2016). Organic areal development showed that an increasing number of practices proves that there is institutional change going on. Another indicator is predictability of behavior. When formal institutions change behavior in a way that the behavior becomes predictable again, one could speak of institutionalization. Finally there is the actual change of formal institutions consisting of new, changed or removed planning rules. Not without a reason the main idea of this thesis is to investigate if rationalization is an actual formal institutional change and not simply a temporary phenomenon.
Figure (7): Operationalization.

Formal Institutions

- Actual changed rules
- Predictability behavior
- Number of practices
- Role of municipality
- Developer type

Informal Institutions

- Public sector

Institutional change

- Breaching path dependency
- Adjusted for relevant group

Momentum

Conditions

Goal
4.3.3 Interview questions and their explanation

Now the concepts of this thesis are elaborated, it is time to combine them with a couple of interview questions. As mentioned before all case studies include an interview with a project manager of the pilot study. The interview should help to answer the main question of this research: *Is rationalization of Dutch areal development an actual institutional change or just a temporary phenomenon?* All the concepts that are included in the operationalization are a relevant factor in the answer to that question. Therefore I decided to use the elements of the figure (7) ‘Operationalization’ as reference for my interview questions. Thus the interview questions are based on 5 elements of institutional change, according to figure (6): Checklist institutional change. The elements are presence of momentum and target group specific adjustment, formal institutions, informal institutions and the breaching of path dependency. In the next section, the interview questions and their relation to the elements of institutional change are elaborated. The actual list of questions is included in the annex.

**Presence of momentum:** this concept is not very difficult to measure. The easiest way to measure it is to simply ask for the concrete problems that required rationalization in the municipalities. Subsequently is asked for the presence of a certain shock event, a momentum and the influence of those on the subsequent actions would be a logical next step. Another specific element is the Law on Planning and Environment, which is about to be installed. One could ask if the new law influenced the decision to participate in the rationalization pilot studies.

**Presence of target group specific adjustment:** this is a bit more difficult to measure, but the semi-structured interview approach helps getting a proper answer. Instead of asking for concrete symbols, one could ask for more abstract and qualitative concepts. Examples are asking for the way the interviewees' attention was triggered and how rationalization or the participation in pilot studies was promoted.

**(In)formal institutions:** in this case it is appropriate to ask for specific measures taken. The question is: what kind of rationalization has taken place? Important in that case is to ask how the rationalization actions exactly solves the problems that were earlier mentioned. Secondly it is interesting not only to focus on the pilot study, but also on the period thereafter. It is interesting to see if policy-making or area development changed after the pilot study. Informal institutions can be measured by asking about the involved stakeholders and the interactions between them. Another very interesting question asks for an opinion on quotes such as: “informal institutional change (rather cultural) determines rationalization for 80%, formal institutional change (deregulation) for 20%” and "Without participation of provinces, the national government and the European Union, rationalization is pointless."

**Breaching path dependency:** in this section I am especially curious if the areal development in the chosen municipalities has been criticized before. I am also interested in the role of expertise and the attitude towards additional planning rules. This could be a controversial element of the interview, since it makes it easy to point out the ones that are responsible for the delay in the planning procedures. To avoid that, and to comfort the interviewee, I tried to search the delaying elements in areal development together with the interviewee. Finally he or she can help me assessing the role of path dependency. A logical question would be: could you state that path dependency in planning forms a barrier for institutional change?
4.4 Validity
Validity tells us something about the quality of the research, about quality concerning the measurements and about the quality of the generalization. Therefore we divide validity into two elements: internal validity and external validity. In order to make a research valid, the researcher should take some measures to prove that he or she did everything to improve the quality of the research.

Looking at the internal validity I acknowledge the fact that the case study has not been very comprehensive. In every case I visited one person to interview him or her. On the other hand I tried to improve the internal validity by not only carrying out the interviews but also by reading the relevant documents. As mentioned before the use of several sources improves the quality of the case study. In this case the internal validity improved, since the information from the interviews could be verified by the data from other documents and vice versa. So initially the internal validity did not seem to be outstanding due to the small amount of interviewees and the rather low degree of diversity amongst them. On my turn, I improved the internal validity by not only focusing on the interviews but also on the context which was constructed by literature on the discussed topics.

Normally, according to Yin (2003), four cases is enough, but to generalize and to say something about all rationalization cases in the Netherlands, one could imagine that this amount is rather small. There are some difference between the cases (see section 5.2), but I purposely chose them for their shared elements. This improved my capability to use the data from the cases to say something about rationalization in the Netherlands in general. One should remember that the conclusions of this research (section 6) are my interpretations and should therefore be interpreted as speculations.
5. Analysis
As mentioned earlier this thesis includes a multiple case study. 4 cases have been chosen and interviews have been carried out in all of them. In this chapter I communicate the results of the interviews. All case analyzes have the same character. Some general information about the pilot studies will be discussed, together with some examples of taken measures in the rationalization process.

5.1 Data from the cases
In the method section I elaborated the data analysis method. I chose to make use of the hierarchic method (Verschuren & Doorewaard , 2007). The method basically boils down to the following: the hierarchic method consists of two phases, the first treats the cases as if they are single case studies. The second phase combines the outcomes of the first phase and tries to find abstract conclusions by linking them to certain abstract concepts or theories. In the case of this thesis, the cases will be discussed as if they are single rationalization pilot studies before they will be combined by linking them to the checklist of institutional change (and its elements: the presence of momentum and target group specific adjustment, formal institutions, informal institutions and the breaching of path dependency).

5.1.1 Ede (interview on 13-07-2017)
The municipality of Ede is a relatively big municipality in the Netherlands and consists of several small villages. Amongst them is the village of Wekerom:

![Image of Wekerom]

**Figure (9): Rationalization in Wekerom. Source: Hoog, W. de; Pennings, R. and Born, H.; Procap; Feijtel, J. (eds.). (2015).**

For the research to the pilot study of Wekerom I contacted the municipality of Ede and ended up with an interview with the project manager who was responsible for the rationalization process in Wekerom at the time, Jan Hauke Mens. This project manager played an important role in bringing together a relatively high amount of involved parties, namely: the municipality, several developing parties and the end users of the project in Wekerom.

The cause for the interest in taking part in the pilot study of rationalization is the experience of one of the civil servants who simply heard about the idea and subsequently discussed it with his colleagues. The financial crisis did have its effect on the projects the municipality of Ede was dealing with at that moment, some of the processes went really slow. Since the 90’s the development of the village of Wekerom had stagnated. The idea was that rationalization could be the instrument to make those processes run faster again.

Mr. Mens argues that one should not really speak about problems in the municipality, but more about possibilities to improve the planning processes. In the end he said it has been “the human factor” that brought about the curiosity for rationalization because: “if you do not create support level to look at projects differently, you could better stop”. Concluding we could say that rationalization in Wekerom was rather a part of improving the policy of the municipality than a way to solve specific problems in the village. From the start on the pilot study has been a project that should offer some general lessons.

Certainly the financial crisis has played a role as some sort of shock event. Mr. Mens however emphasizes the idea of a momentum for change. According to him the municipality had to deal with the economy, while it saw the society change: “…society orientates differently and that requires a different attitude of the local authorities.”

‘Promoting’ rationalization amongst the civil servants and the management of the spatial planning department has not been a major issue in Ede. On the other hand a remarkable piece of symbolism has occurred. At some point one of the employees printed all the documents an initiator of a development plan should read.
The end result was a pile of paper of approximately 80 centimeters! This brings us to one of the goals of the municipality: bring back the amount of zoning plans and policy papers. An example of that is the shift from 71 to 4 policy papers. I consider this to be a change in the formal atmosphere. The problem the municipality faced was the difference in perception of the employees. Some welcomed the new way of looking at the planning process, others had more difficulties with that. After that three developing companies were involved. Also amongst them were people who had to get used to "changing roles and responsibilities". This, contrarily to the amount of rules, boils down to a changing informal setting.

The process, with the municipality and the developing parties included, went as following: in December 2013 the process started with the initiative of a civil servant and a new established project group. The message was rather clear: we are going to rationalize, are you in? Striking was that it took half a year, "especially for the market players", to get used to the new roles all stakeholders played. Their first question was if the municipality’s urban architect could be included. However, "then we would get back into the old mode". “Normally, the market players always seem to have an attitude towards the municipality: “they always know best”. Therefore we thought: “they will pleasantly surprise us.” Finally in July 2014 the market players offered a joint vision of one page. This prototype was not satisfying immediately, but after some assistance of the municipality the following was agreed on: the developing companies would work together and one of them even bought some building rights of another one. The result was a more logical division of organizations over the western and the eastern part of the village.

"That was the first step towards easier negotiations." In December of the same year the meeting for inhabitants was organized (see the example on the next page).

The presence of three developing organizations (De Bunte, Koopmans, Arcea) is quite characteristic for this case. This requires a good division of roles and optimal collaboration. The municipality aimed for loosening her grip on the areal development and therefore decided to ask the three developers for a proposition: “minimal requirements, maximal freedom.” Important for the establishment of such a collaboration is characterized by “expectation management” that elaborates the details about the different roles of the stakeholders and the deadlines. Otherwise, true rationalization is not possible. In the end a couple of formal institutions should change, but: “rationalization consists of 80% of informal institutional change.”

This provided freedom meant that the local authorities did not determine which kind of dwellings had to be built. The only requirement was an existing guideline for all the villages around the city of Ede. At least one third of the houses should be in the lower segment, social housing. The developers could therefore decide about the parceling and the phasing. Practically the local authorities simply located a “yellow area” where the developers, together, came up with developing plans. In this yellow area developers created units of approximately ten houses. “Sets of 10 houses are easier to sell than sets of forty or fifty.”

Although speeding up the process of the planning process was one of the main goals, another advantage occurred soon. The local authorities expressed their confidence in the market players and that turned out to be a good choice. The market players could obviously find a more suitable product for the demand of the end users. The municipality had focused on social housing, but the market apparently asked for detached houses, dwellings in the higher segment. In the end this way of working brings supply closer to demand. In Wekerom there are already waiting lists of 20 or 30 people per phase.
Example:
How did the market players adjust their product to the demand of the end users? In the municipality of Ede a rather simple but effective way of figuring out what the end users wanted was carried out. The inhabitants of Wekerom were represented in an association, a meeting was organized to listen to them. All that was needed was good promotion in the form of invitations and flyers, a couple of big panels and green and red stickers. The interested people were simply asked to express what kind of houses they were looking for. Examples of the dilemmas were: the size of the houses, the presence of a garage, traditional or modern architecture, detached houses, 100m², 200m². People put the green stickers at the types of houses they preferred. This turned out to be a good way to approach the people. The end result was the ultimate proof: the adjusted products sold pretty easily. For the municipality, this approach was new and refreshing. As mentioned before the municipality had focused on social housing in the past, but in reality the market demanded a whole other kind of housing projects. "You think you know what the people want, but their demand is now actually visualized."

Concluding one could say that the municipality of Ede had to deal with a very special pilot study due to the great amount of developers in one case. Letting them decide how the program of the areal development should look like is somewhat innovative and corresponds with the idea that rationalization would largely consist of a cultural change, a change of the informal institutions.

Next to elaborating the actual measures taken by the stakeholders, I also asked for those elements that are commonly rationalized, but not in this case. Mens gave some examples. Firstly the municipality prepared the land for building. Initially, the municipality's idea was that the market parties would do this work, assuming that they would account for all the elements of the development. The market parties however stated that preparing land was not their core business and that put the local authorities in the position where they had been before. Although they called themselves a facilitating government, they still took responsibility for preparing the land for the building projects.

Earlier on I discussed the parking rules, part of the local additional planning rules. This could be a typical policy element to rationalize. However, the municipality decided to keep on accounting for the parking rules. At first the local authorities wanted to give a lot of freedom to the market parties, but at this point they wanted to organize the facilities themselves. The reason for that was quite simple: "we receive phone calls with complains about parking facilities for instance." Nowadays, as mentioned before in this thesis, these parking rules do cost developers additional money, although they are not matched with the actual demand. The forecast is that households will own less cars in the future, though "this might be in fifty or sixty years, but we have to think of the next five or ten years."

In the future the municipality of Ede has no rationalization-projects planned. In another development-project in Ede (Kazerneterreinen) more flexibility and more room is offered to market parties. "This is not integrated in our way of working, but one thing is clear: the municipality is not per definition the one who decides what locations should look like anymore as such. This is due to the luxury of having a staff which opens up for new ways of looking at their own work."

The open-minded staff is, according to Mens, the best way to prevent policy to be too much determined by path dependency. That is why the municipality of Ede was not full of path dependent decisions. On the other hand this municipality is somewhat unique in dealing with the staff.
The municipality makes sure that the organization is ‘fresh’ and all the people are on the right place. This attitude did result in some personnel swaps or even in some resignations. But amongst the developing companies, Mens spotted quite a big desire for sticking to the earlier agreed rights and responsibilities.

It has been hard to talk about building claims, since in the end the subject of the discussions was money. However “if you want to let go, let everything go.” That was the motto during the rationalization. Because so many parties were involved, everybody had to reconsider his role and the mutual agreements “… that were made ten years ago”. Changing has not always been easy, but by adjusting your approach to the target group the whole process becomes smoother.

Striking was Mens’ idea about flexibility now the financial crisis is ending. Assuming that the crisis demanded flexibility it could be possible that local authorities decide to take back their grip on areal development. Mens stated that a favorable economic situation could use some flexibility as well, because people can get a mortgage more easily. Therefore developers are screaming for the preparation of land, so that they can start building. “That speed might be more necessary than it was during the crisis. Frustrating is that it becomes hard for the municipalities to deal with that pace.” If Ede will continue with similar projects they do not expect that much support of the national government or the European Union. "As a municipality we have to deal with frameworks such as Natura-2000. It would be nice if policy on a higher level became a little more flexible, but even without that, there is still enough work to do for the local authorities.” And in that case, if similar projects will be planned, the municipality will take even more distance from the development and it will leave more room for the market parties. Afterwards Mens noticed that the municipality still was too much present. That problem could be solved by formulating the different roles and responsibilities even clearer at the start of the project.
5.1.2 Breda (interview on 17-07-2017)

In Breda I interviewed Daniëlle Dictus. She was responsible for the rationalization process in her municipality. In her work she especially focuses on contacting developers in order to create an overview on which projects can be realized in the municipality. Breda is another interesting example of how a municipality can reconsider its own policy. This municipality has decided to take some drastic action in order to clear the way for a couple of temporary initiatives in the harbor area (Havenkwartier).

Promoting rationalization amongst the local authorities was not a big issue in Breda. In order to let people feel more safe one decided to not make a big deal out of it. Internally it was very important that at somebody 'sacrificed him or herself'. Somebody had to lead the transition although it was a risky situation, because the project could fail. "If you do not want to take risk, you should not let go the regulations. In that case you should secure everything in zoning plans, just like we used to do." Symbolism played a small role in the promotion, especially in the shape of metaphors.

Havenkwartier is a part of the railway zone of Breda. Area development for that entire region was planned and the Havenkwartier should have turned into a residential area but due to the municipality's vision and programs, a harbor island (Haveneiland) in the Havenkwartier could not be developed until 2023. This process started around 2007-2008, the financial crisis, and the conclusion was drawn in 2013, which resulted in a plan for the next ten years. Inspiring for this plan was the shift towards organic areal development. The municipality wished for a temporary function of the Haveneiland. It turned out, in order to realize a temporary setting on the island, that the local zoning plans had a delaying effect on the planning process.

Therefore, as mentioned before, the municipality of Breda decided to take some drastic measures. It decided to let go as many rules as possible and to set only two criteria to all new initiatives on the Haveneiland, which at that point was called a “transformation area”. That title for the area is quite obvious, if you think of the transformation management that should be carried out in the period from 2013 to 2023. This management aims for increasing this area's value, socially, economically and culturally. "When the area has increased its value, it is ready for areal development". The municipality focused on bringing dynamics to the area and on giving the area more publicity. The 'old-fashioned' zoning plans did not seem to be the right solution. "Those are static instruments and we desire a dynamic area."
In order to achieve those goals, the local authorities provided a large asphalted area to a few local initiatives: a skate hall, a city beach and boat dock. Some of the initiators had already asked the local authorities permission to use the area before. Important detail: the area was and is still owned by the municipality. The initiators are allowed to use it. Because of the initiative of nongovernmental organizations or even civilians, the municipality wanted to create a dynamic environment. The local authorities subsequently decided to bring the initiators together and there the process of realization started. First of all they applied for European subsidy. Secondly the municipality felt the urge to assess the initiatives. They encountered some problems: a regular zoning plan was not appropriate, due to the dynamic character of the situation. Even the initiators themselves did not have a clear idea of the end product and there were no elaborated plans. Because of that the local authorities were not able to assess any plans in the context of a zoning plan. Besides, a zoning plan requires decent research to the intended entrepreneurs and their initiatives. "That would take another two years without any plans being realized." Dictus considered this to be the cause for Breda’s participation in the pilot studies.

Finally the local authorities suggested to pretend if there were no rules at all. That resulted in some funny discussions. For example: a lawyer once said that a city beach was not possible. A civil servant replied: "It is possible, have a look for yourself. They dumped sand and they built some furniture." That is the difference between reality and formality. As mentioned before there were only two criteria: safety should be guaranteed and the initiative should be carried out in accordance with the neighbors. It also became clear that metaphors played a role in the rationalization process of Breda. One of the about the two criteria: "it is just like sex, you should do it safe and in accordance with the other."

These two criteria might be two of the main characterizing elements of rationalization in Breda and the project of Haveneiland. When it comes to guaranteeing safety, the following has happened: a scan was made by a company that specializes in safety checks. That company showed the local authorities a couple of elements that could be adjusted in order to increase the social or construction safety. Cleaning also played a role in the safety scan. Initially the municipality did not see the link between cleaning and safety, but it turned out a cleaner environment made people feel more free. That consult formed the base for the initiatives.

Later on one zoomed in on crowd management, which was discussed with those who signed the loan agreement (the entrepreneurs behind the initiative such as the city beach). Jointly a norm of 1000 people was set, because that seemed to be a controllable amount of people on the event site. Eventually this norm was not secured in a plan by the municipality, but there is a plan in process that should elaborate all the agreements. Practically, the agreement works in quite an informal way, since entrepreneurs can always call the municipality if they have questions about safety.

Secondly came the criterion that the initiatives should be in accordance with the neighbors. Important there was the facilitating role of the municipality: people had to be brought together. The reason for that was the great diversity of visitors. The boat deck especially attracted "rich people who like to be on the water during the weekend" and the skate hall especially attracted "urban art guys with their caps backwards." The municipality organized meetings where all the initiators could meet up and discuss their opinions on each other’s plans and responsibilities. A difficulty in the process was formed by the different paces of the stakeholders. One of the initiators was already building, while another was still thinking about the realization of his plan. The local authorities were used to using a ‘checklist’. First they made an appointment with an initiator and then they made a contract. Different steps of the process were included in the project and therefore the authorities knew what and when to assess.
In this case the municipality of Breda has chosen a different approach with three steps. The first step: “just start, we will see what happens.” The second phase included the process of developing a plan on collaboration in the next 10 years, based on experiences. The last phase, the current one, was all about: “How can we perpetuate this all in a zoning plan or a similar document?” At the moment the local authorities are working on a plan, but there is no document yet.

At the start of the process the exact role of the government was not really clear. Basically the municipality just dropped some of the responsibilities, according to Dictus. She also stated: “A withdrawing government is not the right term, different orientated government is the term I use often.” In this pilot study the local authorities did not disappear, but they did dare to make distinctions. “With one project it is easier to drop responsibilities than with another one, because of the lack of confidence.” For instance at the skate hall, the municipality decided to send a contractor for the construction of one of the floors. The organization behind the skate hall knows many volunteers and the municipality did not wish to put such a responsibility in the hands of the volunteers. The choice between dropping responsibilities or not is partly based on the subjective feeling the civil servants get.

It turned out that confidence played a big role in the process of rationalization. Initiatives could only work if the municipality was confident about the passion of the initiators to create something good.

Next, the municipality trusted the initiators and their capability to find products that met the demand of the end users in a better way. The civil servants would have never come up with a city beach or a skate hall. “The proof that the products meet their demand is the waiting list for the boat dock and the crowded skate hall.”

Bringing supply closer to demand has not been the main goal of this project. Moreover “rationalization is a mean and not a goal in its own.” As stated before, the goal was simply to carry out place making and to create dynamics in an empty area.

Zooming in on rationalization, Dictus stated that she could not tell about the exact ratio between formal and informal institutional change, but: “the one cannot do without the other. Deregulation only arises if one dares to look differently to regulations.”

When it came to path dependency, Dictus was quite clear: one should give room to leave known patterns. “That causes friction and consumes the most energy.” An example of giving room, at a low and very practical level, was a story of two employees in one of the municipal districts. In the past they were used to observe the district and discuss their observations with the residents in order to actuate changes. Nowadays they are no initiators anymore, the responsibility lies with the residents. If they have any ideas, the municipality will facilitate meetings and gathers the stakeholders.

It is all about having the right people in the right place. According to Dictus, path dependency is not being boosted by people who work (too) long in the same place. The same two employees as in the previous example ”... will retire soon, but they still have a very accurate idea what the new working methods contain.” On the other hand young people with a fresh look on the policies are always welcome.

The key to breaching path dependency, as Dictus stated, is ownership: do people feel responsible for their own environment? That was the approach of the municipality of Breda: “the floor is yours, as are the responsibilities.” This requires a great confidence in each other and in each other’s courage and enthusiasm: “the key to institutional change and rationalization in the end is confidence.”
At some points the local authorities, on purpose, chose to stay in charge and to maintain some regulations. Examples of that are the ban on housing in the area, a decision based on the feeling that housing would not combine with the already granted catering permits. Those permits were an example of not rationalized elements of the areal development of Haveneiland. The municipality decided to grant permits to prevent the owners of bars and restaurants outside the island to start a discussion. An example of an element of the catering permit was the presence of separated men and woman restrooms.

Besides this project there have not been any projects titled ‘rationalization’ in Breda, there is a new way of thinking and working though. A similar project that has been carried out is Breda Begroot (Breda Budgets) which looks for ways to hand over parts of the municipal budget to the districts. For instance the residents can take initiative and claim: “we could maintain that park ourselves, we would rather like to use the money for something else.”

The rationalization process has not found its way through new planning documents yet, but this will change. The municipality is working on a new environment planned for as soon as the new Law on Planning and Environment is set. That law has a very rationalized character. Interesting about Breda is that the local authorities chose to divide their project into three phases and that the last phase is about securing the experiences formally in documents. Currently Breda is more in “a transition phase, which might take three or four years”, because “we would like to loosen up, but we do not know how. In that situation people tend to relapse into their old habits.”

Dictus liked the dynamics of the process, although she once said: “I will not do it the same way again, it is so ad hoc and the different phases are not detailed enough.” On the other hand she recognizes bits of rationalization in the new Law on Planning and Environment. That proves that this is the new way of working.

In the end the project has succeeded, since the goal was place making and bring dynamics into the area. “The social safety has increased and people often visit the place.” This was exactly where the municipality aimed for: “whatever initiatives want to settle there, they should attract visitors.” In the end “rationalization might be more about a change of the mindset than a deregulation, because deregulation is only the effect of the different mindset.”

Concluding, the local authorities of Breda would like to be involved in similar projects, just as lessons for themselves and as a preparation for ‘the new way of performing areal development’. Creative think played a role in this pilot study. In order to stimulate creative thinking, Dictus would like to invite more people to be involved from the start to initiate an actual change. In the future she would state from the start that safety and accordance with the neighbors is important and that the first question should be: if we want meet those two criteria, which regulations are necessary? This perfectly summarizes the idea behind rationalization: removing the delaying, unnecessary elements of areal development.

Due to the extended room for municipal policies within the new Law on Planning and Environment, there will be more possibilities to rationalize. The frame within the municipality can act and rationalize will increase. Therefore, Dictus does not agree with the quote that rationalization is useless without participation of the provinces, the national government and the European Union. However, she stated: “the EU was involved, because we simply needed financial support.”

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment was skeptical, but: “if you start small, other municipalities and institutes will follow, these pilot studies are incentives (for creative thinking in concern to areal development).”
Example:
The municipality of Breda has worked with several initiatives. One of them was Belcrum Beach. Initiator of this project was Stichting Braak!, hoping to bring a beach experience to Haveneiland. This organization already had experience in creating a beach and was therefore interested in the free space in the harbor area.

Characterizing for this project is the municipality’s desire to be as little dominant as possible. This already became clear in the first meeting between the local authorities, Stichting Braak! and other initiators.

At the end of 2012 a collective plan was made, but it quickly turned out that the existing regulations and procedures would not permit the creation of a city beach. Breda’s solution: after some discussions the municipality decided to drop all the rules! A scenario on the beach could be: a ball rolls away, a child follows it and ends up in the water. "Who is responsible? A child can swim or there is parental supervision. The Netherlands has water and beaches and there are no fences around those." Mrs. Dictus especially noticed the sense of responsibility amongst her colleagues during the process. "Colleagues feel very responsible for what happens in the city, what is being realized and also for what could go wrong." Therefore only two criteria were set. First of all at any initiative safety should be guaranteed and besides that all projects should be built in accordance with all stakeholders. In 2013 Belcrum Beach was realized.

As mentioned trusting the other stakeholders has been the key to success in the rationalization process. This confidence is required to distribute responsibilities. Two sessions with all stakeholders represented, formed a solid base for confidence. In those sessions rationalization, responsibilities and distribution of risks were discussed. Characterizing for the great degree of trust was the contract that was signed in the end. It was a so called 'light agreement' that did not include too much details. Even without the details, the stakeholders started the project, confident that the other parties would take their responsibilities. The municipality only facilitated and informed.
5.1.3 Kampen (interview on 20-07-2017)

Figure (11): City of Kampen. Source: https://stad.kampen.nl/nl/nieuws.html

The third case I would like to discuss is the pilot study of the municipality of Kampen. This case caught my eye because of its initial focus on deregulation, the formal institutional change and moreover, its effort to learn about the new Law on Planning and Environment and to practice with a new way of performing areal development.

In the context of this case I had an interview with Sybren Koopmans, policy developer at the municipality of Kampen. Next to his ‘daily tasks’ he also was the secretary of an internal team that was responsible for the rationalization.

The project that team was accountable for, was the rationalization of the development of Stationskwartier (Railway district). In the period of 2008-2009 this area was about to be developed to become a residential area. It was a case of a public-private partnership with the unfortunate situation of the financial crisis: the project had difficulties starting. It resulted in an informal institutional problem: the lack of willingness to invest. The concept of rationalization was brought to the municipality by one of the civil servants who once visited a session where rationalization was the main topic.

Remarkable for this project is the combination of both deregulation and a cultural change: both formal and informal institutional changes. With that combination the pilot study in Kampen was rather unique and "... a little strange", since something similar only happened in Dordrecht before. Initially "the municipality’s perception was that the solution for the difficult project was deregulation. The conclusion: change is more about the collaboration than about the regulation and the plans." The cause for the rationalization project was the question: "could our policy be easier?" Especially amongst politicians there was a feeling that regulations delayed the areal development. In the end rationalization in Kampen was rather on the level of municipal policy than on single project level. The idea that rationalization is 80% of informal institutional change and 20% of formal institutional change is correct, according to Koopmans.

The upcoming Law on Planning and Environment and the tendency in “zoning plan-land” to make more global zoning plans both formed the cause for the civil servants to think different about the way they performed areal development. Combined with the financial crisis in 2008 a momentum for change was created. "Both a cultural shift and deregulation were combined, in order to raise awareness of the upcoming new Law on Planning and Environment and its implementation on policy-making level." In essence the new Law on Planning and Environment focusses on less policy, rationalization and better integration of regulations. Combining formal and informal institutional changes was the best way to raise awareness and to prepare people for the upcoming new law.
This did not happen at one specific moment, but it developed over time: “The question whether local authorities should use more global zoning plans had already been asked before.”

Example:
What became clear in Kampen, is that rationalization has a strong cultural element. In order to change regulations one should be able to create a new mindset and raising awareness of upcoming events or changes plays an important role in that. But how does one bring rationalization to the attention? In Kampen the team responsible for rationalization came up with a unique solution: a week designated to disruption wherein commotion was the effect, the team hoped for. Nobody, not the civil servants, not the direction, knew about the initiative. In that specific week the team introduced a new, unnecessary, rule every day with the goal to find out how those would affect the involved employees. Examples were: rules on the stairs, clean desk policies, clocking out at smoking breaks and standing meetings. The commotion was achieved and at some point the rationalization team even received a letter from the Works Council with the question what was happening. As explained: nobody was informed in advance. The week was ended with a discussion led by professor De Zeeuw (head of the national rationalization expert team). In that meeting one discussed which regulations were in the way of a smooth planning process. The municipality also acted in a rather vulnerable way to get as much constructive criticism and therefore the authorities asked the opinion of amongst others: developers, architects, neighborhood associations, entrepreneurs and other interested groups.

The conversations with the stakeholders led to a couple conclusions: some were predictable and easy to implement, others were rather surprising. The surprising conclusion was that not only the regulations were the delaying elements in areal development, but the communication of them. Rather than asking itself which rules were necessary and which were not, the municipality should have asked the question: how does the municipality deal with the rules and how does it communicate them to those involved? “Some of the interest groups stated that some of the rules might have been even stricter. However, being a municipality, you should be able to explain the regulations, because if people understand the rules, they will be willing to comply with them.” Summarizing, Koopmans called the conclusion of the pilot study “communication, communication, communication”.

The local authorities in Kampen did critically review their policy and also on the formal institutional spectrum, some (minor) changes were made. The pilot study was in light of the upcoming Law on Planning and Environment and therefore the authorities asked themselves (about the current policy): “Do we still want to use this policy when there is a new law or environmental plan?”

In the end this resulted in the removal of 21 out of 83 policy papers. The criterion is basically whether regulations are still up-to-date or not. “Despite that” Koopmans stated: “… initiating a new culture has been the added value of this trajectory.” Besides that some elements were purposely not rationalized. To prevent individuals or parties to end up in discussions about their freedom to determine the quality of their buildings, and that freedom of their neighbors or others. One conclusion of the pilot study was: “we think people always prefer to have less rules, but somewhere people like to be at least a little in control.”

A difficulty in making a culture shift is the human side of the story. By removing regulations, “you take away some of the certainty of your colleagues.”
For instance: “people might think that they become useless if their policies are being removed.”

In the end, one of the keys to a proper informal institutional change is participation. Another key is trust in each other. In order to make rationalization durable one needs to trust that removing regulations is the best thing, especially with those regulations that seem to be more valuable than others. Then one should trust each other in not making new rules again if something goes wrong in the future, trust each other in ignoring the “regulation reflex”. Koopmans could imagine that the municipality in some future cases could decide to work in the old fashioned way: “if there are several developers interested in a location, the municipality could acknowledge the scarcity and decide to lay up claims on the spatial quality.”

About the end results of the rationalization process Koopmans is not entirely satisfied yet: “in fact rationalization meant: implementing the new Law on Planning and Environment... We had a look at possible changes and made people aware of them... The awareness is there, but the culture shift has not yet fully found its way through our policies and our way of working.”

Subsequently path dependency does play a role in municipalities. “There is an aging government. Some regulations have started, but there are already comments, adjustments and amendments. People already affect the conservation of the key assumptions of the process.”

The path dependent attitude has also found its way through current projects. “This is old school thinking: lately we indicated a project location. Being aware of the upcoming Law on Planning and Environment we would only set some conditions. But after all we ended up with six pages of conditions. Next to that, the conditions are multi-interpretable.” So, there's still some work to do, especially in the informal way, “... but cultural change needs time.”

Thus the local authorities are busy with their plan to perpetuate their work from the pilot study in a more permanent way. Under the temporary Crisis and Recovery Act, in anticipation on the Law on Planning and Environment, some municipalities can set up an Environmental Plan, wherein they can arrange more than in the 'old fashioned' zoning plans. In that way the municipality has already succeeded to give rationalization a place in the future policies. “By dealing with it all at once, the chance of breaching path dependency grows.”

In the future some assistance of the province Overijssel might be helpful: “rationalization is about saying 'yes, unless', but due to not-rationalized provincial policies, we have to say 'no' too much.” An example of that is the ‘ladder durable urbanization’ which basically boils down to the obligation to justify the building plans for residential areas. Municipalities have to be able to show that there is enough demand for new housing. On the local level this can cause problems if somebody wants to build a house and is not allowed to do that due to lack of plan capacity.

Concluding: Kampen clearly approached rationalization in both a formal as in an informal way in order to prepare for the upcoming Law on Planning and Environment. The cultural change seems to be the major challenge. First of all it plays the biggest role in the institutional change (80%), but it also the element with a significant human element. Amongst the civil servants there is a feeling like: “the last Spatial Planning Act has been introduced in 2008 and we finally know how to work with it and now it is already time for another change.”
5.1.4 Delft (interview on 27-07-2017)

In Delft I interviewed José Meijboom. She is a project manager and works on areal development for the municipality of Delft. She was responsible for the project ‘Nieuw Delft’ (New Delft). It is a project that includes the development of the railway zone which on its turn includes the building of a new residential area, named the Coendersbuurt. Amongst others characterizing for this pilot study is that the municipality of Delft was already working on deregulation and “steering on goals instead of on solutions” before the concept of rationalization was introduced, let alone implemented. The problem in the development was that the municipality set too many different requirements, wishes and ambitions that intertwined where they should have been separated. “The situation becomes hard when you have to cope with contradictory demands, because they result in delay, discussions and additional costs.” In order to speed up the development and to smoothen the process the local authorities had to ask themselves a couple of questions: “is the plan feasible and what is the main purpose of it?” Important in answering those questions is prioritizing. “In the past, it has been our wish to involve multiple locations in our projects, now we have to choose only one or a small amount of locations, because some initiatives are just not as good as you expect them to be.” In order to prioritize, a cultural change is needed within the municipality of Delft. That’s why rationalization is mostly “an internal reflection”. It found its way into our organization through a civil servant who got inspired at a meeting designated to the concept.

Although the local authorities were already busy with critically reflecting their way of working (shifting towards more global zoning plans and separating requirements from wishes), especially the latter, separating wishes from demands, was a central issue: “…demands are fixed and people cannot avoid them. Wishes, on the other hand, are more like ambitions that have to potential to make things more beautiful.” Rationalization has especially played a role as an extra motivation to critically approach the existing way of working.
Together with the financial crisis, a window for change was created. “The upcoming Law on Planning and Environment did not really play a role in that momentum. It was too far ahead.” It did not have any influence on the origin of rationalization in Delft. On Delft’s areal development in the future it might have some influence when it comes to the perpetuation of the experiences of the pilot study.

Within the municipal organization, not that much problems were encountered when it comes to initiating a big change, such as rationalization. “Everybody started to consider rationalization to be a nice challenge.” According to Meijboom, in this field of science you have to reflect and change continually. Both the content of policies as the way you execute the policies must adapt to certain changes. “The reflection is not a trajectory that you start and end. In fact, you are never done.” Every imaginable stakeholder was involved: developers, residents, potential buyers of houses in the Coendersbuurt and the city council. Informal sessions were organized where questions such as ‘how will we deal with global zoning plans and can everybody keep up with the changes?’ played a central role. Both formal and informal institutional change were discussed for that matter. An appointed team scanned the entire municipal policy, in order to get an overview of all the regulations. Examples were given to illustrate the problem the municipality was dealing with. Their conclusion was that many regulations are being made, but none are being removed. “So, actually there are rules that nobody follows and there are rules which nobody knows they exist.”

Meijboom stated that it is important to reconsider all the accumulating demands of the municipality. The way the municipality approaches projects has changed since the pilot study. “In the past, the municipality started (together with another party) and then all of a sudden requirements piled up.” What changed in the pilot study, quite a characteristic feature of the project, was that the land property came back to the municipality. Initially the plan was to develop the railway zone in a developing combination, some sort of public-private partnership. An example of the strategy of the local authorities in the Coendersbuurt (in the railway zone) was the introduction of parcel passports (kavelpaspoorten) and this strategy was integrated in the rationalization approach. The idea behind these passports was to avoid ambiguities at the end of the development. In earlier developments additional elements could have been added while the project was already running, something that should be avoided in the future, Meijboom stated. “End users were quite directly involved in the process and therefore the conditions were set accurately in those passports.”

To develop the railway zone, the local authorities in Delft decided to organize a contest wherein developers could compete with each other in creating the best plan for the region. Three companies participated and worked on a solution that would be resistant to future market changes, a solution that would be easy to phase and a plan that could be speeded up or delayed if that would be necessary. Those were the criteria the municipality set for the plans. “Eventually, one plan was chosen and implemented in the comprehensive development plan, in a rather abstract way.” The winning plan was too detailed to be considered global. The comprehensive plan was meant to assess the program, the amount of houses, parking facilities and the finances of the development, but “…that would be the old-fashioned way to make zoning plans.” A map that only showed only the essence was created, the parcel passports provided the required conditions. The details in the parcel passports are included under civil law. Thus, people can use the opportunity to refuse to obey the rules, “…but since the municipality still has the land property, it will only provide the land if a plan meets the contractual agreements.” One thing is clear: the agreements and conditions are the same for everybody: “It does not matter if you are an investor, a private individual or a developer.
It has been difficult to find an appropriate and understandable way to write down the conditions for these different stakeholders, but in the end it pays off, because it sets the conditions clear from the start.” In her demands the municipality of Delft organized certain criterions around a couple of main concepts. One of them is durability: “one of the demands for instance, is that facilities for natural gas may not be realized.”

Looking at the roles the different stakeholders played in the pilot study Delft showed some surprising results. As mentioned in this thesis (section 2.1.4) the last couple of years the Dutch government has (partly) pulled back from areal development to reduce the risk of financial losses. But in this case the role of the municipality was still rather active. The municipality had the land property and was the developing party. On the other hand the local authorities especially focused on involving others in a better way by proposing inventories to the end users. Half of the people concerned wanted to buy a house from a developer and so a project developer was involved as well. Amongst other things they were responsible for building the parking garage, since the majority wanted parking facilities to be located at one place. The municipality has been quite active by owning the land ad selling it to those who come with plans that are approved by the municipality itself. This is remarkable for a rationalized project, but on the other hand: “… the municipality also works in a facilitative way, but that happens in other projects.”

The concepts such as durability were maintained, because “… rationalization should not cause a situation wherein we have to lower our ambitions. It should create a situation in which we are more able to separate essential and additional matters.” It is also the reason why the municipality did not rationalize certain elements, on purpose. Parking regulations, the best example of additional local rules, were changed in this area. They were set up with a view on the future car use of people. In the new residential area there is space for custom-made parking facilities. “You could also build no parking spots at all. In the past, that was unthinkable, because every plan had to meet certain standards, like: every house needed one or two parking spots.” This also gives the end-user something to think about because: “if you do not build a parking spot, the municipality will not give you a permit to park in the street.” This created a sense of responsibility at the potential buyers.

Something else that changed under the process of rationalization was the way of assessing the quality of plans. Particular individuals can go to the supervisor or the city architect. “If there has been a good conversation, the formal quality assessment has already been introduced. In that way people will not be surprised during the assessment and is the process way smoother.” That the process, more than deregulation, plays a big role in rationalization becomes clear with a quote of the new city architect: “Quality is not arranged by rules, but by the process.” What he meant to say here was that it was important to have the right people at the right place. Meijboom agreed that rationalization is more about a cultural change than about deregulation. She thought the 80% of cultural change and 20% of deregulation were quite accurate percentages. Eventually she added that the cultural change influences the deregulation because: “the people who have to initiate the deregulation process, have to change their way of working first.”

The focus on a smooth, uninterrupted planning process found its way through the rationalization process in Delft. The internal reflection, the evaluation of the practical implementation of the regulations was important for that. “We used to be surprised when all of a sudden regulations were established, but nowadays our input is asked first.” Since the pilot study there has been a better understanding of the problems of the current policy and a better way to find solutions.
"The financial crisis had an enormous impact on the municipality of Delft. The municipality was almost placed under legal restraint of the province Zuid-Holland. Therefore, a project such as rationalization was required, both our management and the society wanted it, but eventually the trajectory has been considered to be an opportunity and now it even generates revenues, I suppose." Unfortunately sometimes the urge to fall back into old habits is present. "For instance there is a big housing program coming up which includes major investments. Maybe we want to steer on economic profit and on certain quality standards."

According to Meijboom path dependency does play a role in hindering institutional change. However, she claimed path dependency has not played a big role in the municipality of Delft. "Of course path dependency is maintained by certain people due to their knowledge and by certain (economic) situations. If the directors worked in one way, that way will persist. A new time, or new directors, an external influence, could open a window for change. The reason for the minimal role of path dependency in Delft is because of the openness and honesty in the organization." Concluding: external influences can be from significant value when it comes to breaching path dependency amongst the local authorities. Unfortunately the exchange of thoughts with externals (people from other departments or organizations) has decreased since the crisis.

As mentioned there is a small chance that civil servants will fulfill their tasks the old-fashioned way again, for instance in the situation of scarcity on the market and the resulting opportunity to set new quality standards. "We do not only want to focus on buying and selling land, but rather on achieving our ambitions on in the field of spatial quality, durability and social goals."

So far, an environment plan has not yet been made yet, although the Crisis and Recovery Act does allow to do that. In the future, however, something like that will be created, but "... it will be more focused on the new Law on Planning and Environment." In the meantime the municipality did work hard on a their participation approach, wherein they looked for (new) ways to involve stakeholders in a newly designed process. This was an example of a more recent development that occurred after the pilot study.

In the future the local authorities of Delft expect the province of Zuid-Holland to rationalize their policy a bit further. "Their ordinance on spatial planning is to detailed. We get to many comments on our zoning plans, which I think is not the provincial concern." A main goal of rationalization is to speed up the planning process, but "... if we want to realize something that is in conflict with the province, we need special permits and those only delay the process."

The pilot study in Delft has been more process than project based and was built on the fundament that was already there due to the efforts of the local authorities to reflect on their policies. We encountered no big surprises in the results, while a better way of involving stakeholders was developed. Within their own organization, apart from the planning process, there were no signs of delaying factors such as path dependency noted.
Example:

An example of the influence of the pilot study in Delft is Green Village, which is a project that contains some rationalization elements. It is a product of a collaboration between the Technical University of Delft, the Ministry of Infrastructure & Environment and the municipality of Delft. Green Village is an area where durable innovations can be tested, on the campus of the Technical University of Delft. The experimented technologies are meant to serve the working and living environment. Such an innovative region requires space to develop and that is where rationalization comes in handy. This is a project ahead of the upcoming Law on Planning and Environment.

In this case an environment plan will replace the zoning plans because the old plans do not permit some of the innovations. Subsequently it is possible to build without a permit, which makes the process a lot quicker and more adaptive to any developments.

Other stakeholders than the municipality play a major role in this project and this project is therefore also an example of the elaboration of the participation approach of the local authorities. They invite end users to participate actively in creating a plan or vision for the future. The public opinion is assessed in interactive meetings. The local authorities even gave this approach a name: Delfts Doen (Doing Delft-like). Two main concepts of assessment are safety and a clean environment, just like durability and social standards (Gemeente Delft, 2017).
5.2 Comparison

All pilot studies had some characteristics that attracted me, because of their significance for this particular research. Initially I chose them, because they all seemed to have a focus on deregulation, which would correspond with the formal institutional changes I discussed earlier in my thesis. The cases seem to differ more from each other than I initially expected. Despite that they were still eligible for the checklist of institutional change which will be discussed in the overall conclusion of this thesis (section 6). Some of the differences between the cases were: the start of rationalization (Delft for instance was already busy with similar actions), the focus of the pilot study (project-based or policy-based) and the way rationalization became more permanent.

In this section the comparison of the cases will be discussed. I started by analyzing the cases as if they were independent. Here, their similarities will be discussed in the shape of a couple main, shared concepts. In order to get there I marked some quotes and some sentences from the case analysis. I matched the colors of all cases with the same quotes and combined quotes from several cases under shared concepts. I first combined the quotes and then I chose suiting titles for the concepts. The figure in which all quotes are collected can be found in the annex. In this section I only discuss the outcomes of the shared concepts.

5.2.1 Beforehand: causes and initiatives

Momentum for change definitely had to occur in the municipalities before they could start with the rationalization of their policies. Clearly the society was changing and a new approach to areal development was required. The fact that a new Law on Planning and Environment was coming made rationalization a suitable option to practice with a new way of working, but that was not a fact in every municipality. One thing was clear: where a changing society was a cause for change, the financial crisis of 2008 was the reason to start reflecting on the municipalities’ policies.

Remarkable is that rather few concrete problems, apart from troubles with starting up projects, were named. It seemed like it has been the attitude of the municipalities to consider rationalization as a challenge, more than a difficult change. That was why it was not very clear from the start of the deregulation if an informal institutional change would be beneficial. Throughout all departments questions such as ‘could our policy be easier?’ were arising. The focus was finding unnecessary regulations and contradictory rules with the final goal of speeding up the planning process.

Although it was known that not every civil servant was waiting for a policy change, no big promotional events were organized, with a few exceptions. Only small examples were given, in order to raise awareness on the inefficiency of the existing regulations concerning areal development. On the other hand an introduction to the topic was required to establish a certain movement. The change took benefit from a high support level, created by the overall sense that civil servants in this discipline have to be able to handle change continuously.

5.2.2 Process: formal and informal institutional change

It looked as if rationalization was seen as a process, not as goal, rather a way to achieve the goal. Rationalization was designated to the transformation of policies or regions. However, rationalization has been more process based than project based. The way several municipalities dealt with the transformation differed a bit, but in the end it became clear that all of them looked for a way to practice with new methods and then found a way to perpetuate the findings.

Another similarity was the use of just a couple conditions or concepts.
In order to act as a facilitative government, the local authorities wanted to set less criteria to initiatives. Nonetheless some of their ambitions remained and those manifested themselves in a couple of broad criteria such as standards concerning durability, safety and social support. Details were mostly omitted and only the essence remained.

Characterizing for the pilot studies is the participation of more (new) stakeholders. From investors to end users: all were asked to contribute to proper spatial solutions. Some formal institutional changes have been made, quite some unnecessary policy papers have been removed. Despite that, rationalization seemed to be based on informal institutional change. The informal institutional change has been good for 80% of the entire transformation. Besides the other 20% was influenced by the cultural change.

The cultural change was required to build a proper collaboration between the many stakeholders. The new collaboration meant changed roles, but also changed responsibilities and that was something that demanded some time to institutionalize in the way of performing areal development. By directly involving end users a great feeling of responsibility was created. In some cases that was exactly what the local authorities hoped for. Most of the time the stakeholders were involved, simply by organizing meetings where opinions were shared.

Important in creating a new collaboration was the expectation management. This one of the first steps in every project: at the start from the project, everybody had to know what the others expected from them and which deadlines were set. Adjusting the information to the different involved groups helped making the process clearer. The municipality gratefully used the expertise of the market players. Those were capable of predicting the market and they could provide a product that better met the wishes of the end users. Remarkable was that this was not an initial goal of the rationalization process.

The local authorities had to re-orientate themselves and change roles. Eventually most of them did not disappear from the field but finally dared to make some distinctions: which initiatives were allowed and which not? Moreover, wishes were separated from demands. Also separations were made between essential and additional matters. Therefore the process of rationalization could also be seen as a process of prioritizing.

Only feasible and clear regulations got priority. Others were removed. Next to that questions about the policies were asked: is this policy still up-to-date and will we still use it at the time the new Law on Planning and Environment has been installed? Confidence grew, confidence in each other’s capability of removing all unnecessary regulations, even if those regulations seemed to be very valuable. Some elements were deliberately not rationalized. In all cases the argument was that the local authorities wanted to avoid possible discussions between them and civilians or that arguments between neighbors or competitors would be avoided.

5.2.3 Path dependency: barrier for institutional change?

Path dependency does play a role in municipalities, but it has not been an element of rationalization. In some municipalities one acknowledges the role of path dependency, caused by the aging civil servants. If people have worked on the same job for a long time, their expertise and way of working might find a way through the organization. Therefore, rationalized municipalities have not focused on older employees but rather on putting the right people in the right place. The whole process of putting people in the right place and forcing them to let go of certain paths is an exhausting effort, but that is just what the cultural change (80% of rationalization) is about. If that process would not take place, the chance of areal development getting stuck in its own path dependency, would occur.
On the other hand many municipalities have not experienced that many problems because of path dependency caused by long active employees. Openness and honesty have played a big role in that. The significance of bringing new people and experiences has been confirmed in several municipalities. The internal problems in concern to path dependency might not be that big and external influence might be the best solution. Remarkable is the presence of path dependent decisions amongst the other stakeholders in the planning process. New responsibilities have been difficult for the market players and caused a desire to fall back in their old roles. Confidence played an important role in breaching path dependency: one should trust each other to refuse the regulation reflex. Despite the fact that path dependency has not been maintained by people that much, in many municipalities one is still afraid that old habits might return. The transformation phase might take another couple of years and within that time uncertainty will keep on making people tend to perform areal development the old-fashioned way again. Especially in cases of scarcity on the market, in case of several interested developers, municipalities might see opportunities and again set more criteria to the quality instead of letting other stakeholders collaborate and determine the final product.

5.2.4 Afterwards: conclusions and future lessons

A number of conclusions could be drawn from the rationalization pilot studies. Quite soon, some recurring concepts manifested themselves. In a collaboration such as the one initiated by rationalization, confidence is from great importance. Enthusiasm played a role, but confidence was the final key to institutional change. A second conclusion was rather surprising. Where some municipalities had the perception that deregulation would be the best solution for the existing problems, collaboration and the communication of regulations, seemed to be more appropriate. Many regulations have been unclear or contradictory. It turned out that civilians and initiators do not as such desire less rules, they prefer clear rules. Another conclusion was that other stakeholders were needed more than expected. The market players played a big role and end users by expressing their wishes as well. The later experience was that municipalities still 'did too much', although they just intended to act in a facilitative way. Because all pilot studies were experiments, one did not exactly know what they started. In future projects local authorities will involve the stakeholders even earlier and discuss the expectation management more deliberately. That will ensure that the municipalities will not be accountable for too many tasks.

Rationalization will play a role in future areal development, because the demand for new houses, and therefore the demand for a quick development process grows simultaneously with the growing economy. Some help of higher governmental levels is needed in the future. Municipalities have experienced too much trouble from provincial and/or national regulations that frustrated a successful rationalization process. On the other hand the new Law on Planning and Environment already promises to leave the municipalities a little more space to rationalize their policies. Therefore that new law is the main perpetuation of the experiences of the pilot studies. However, it might still take one or a couple of years before the law will finally be implemented. In the meantime some municipalities have already developed some global plans to give rationalization a more permanent character. Some were focused on the entire environment, others more on the participation of stakeholders. Unfortunately this does not apply to all municipalities that were involved in the national rationalization pilot study.
Rationalization has not completely found its way through policies and working cultures. The awareness is there though.
6. Conclusion

Before I answer the main question, I will discuss some of the main findings from the practical implementation of rationalization. First of all it became clear that rationalization is mostly a cultural change and not so much a process of deregulation, although I expected the opposite when I started this research. On the other hand, in many municipalities the relation between the two was acknowledged: the cultural change influenced the deregulation process, simply because the policy makers had to change their mindset before they understood the significance of a change in policy.

If I put rationalization on a timescale, it clearly links the financial crisis and the upcoming Law on Planning and Environment. This means we are talking about the approximate period from 2008 to 2019, if the new law will indeed be introduced. In a way rationalization has been introduced to practice with the upcoming effects from the new Law on Planning and Environment. But also rationalization partly determines the content and the implementation of the new law, since the experiences from the pilot studies will be taken into account.

The cultural change seemed to have been triggered especially by courage, enthusiasm, confidence in each other and sense of responsibility. At the same time these characteristics seemed to be the best way to avoid or breach path dependency. The cultural change has not led to many problems, only amongst some of the civil servants a sense of aversion to change occurred. That might be a trigger for path dependency.

Striking was the misperception of reality by the municipalities. At some points municipalities had not estimated the situation on the market or the attitude of end users in relation to the amount of regulations. Better communication was more appreciated than deregulation.

Another special characteristic was the way in which local authorities still found ways to maintain their ambitions, while they were working with rationalized procedures. In most cases the authorities found ways to set as few criteria as possible. In order to guarantee a certain quality they held on to certain values or concepts, such as durability and safety. Those concepts were the base for certain conditions. Land property gave municipalities the power to carry out such a policy. Besides the fact that the local authorities held on to certain values, many of them still felt the urge to plan the ‘old-fashioned way’. Rationalization, for that matter, has not entirely been completed yet. On the other hand, some legal documents are already made and a new law is coming in order to perpetuate the new way of working.

Now I will answer the main question: *Is rationalization of Dutch areal development an actual institutional change or just a temporary phenomenon?* The answer is based on the assessment of the information from the interviews on the basis of the institutional change checklist I made. The checklist is based on the institutional theory from the theoretical part of this thesis.

Initially I thought that one checklist would be clear and sufficient. During the research I had to alter it a few times and due to the outcome of the interviews even more nuances were required. Therefore I changed my approach. I have decided to fill in two checklists. One for the current situation and one for the future, that is the moment the new Law on Planning and Environment will be installed. This distinction is important, because otherwise the checklist, and with that the conclusion, would not be accurate enough. In that case I should have come up with certain percentages that would show to which extent certain criteria from the checklist would have been met. Since this is a qualitative research, it would have been hard to come up with accurate percentages. The result would only have been arbitrary.
On the next pages you will find the completed checklists with an explanation.
In the end I state that rationalization currently is not an institutional change yet. The first steps have been made, but the success is not comprehensive enough yet. Especially the cultural change needs time to be completed. The question whether rationalization has been successful might have to be answered with no. On the other hand, it has got a great potential. The near future will tell whether all goals of rationalization can be realized.
However, the question of thesis is not how successful rationalization has been. The question is: Is rationalization of Dutch areal development an actual institutional change or just a temporary phenomenon? The answer on the first part of the question is: right now, rationalization has not fully institutionalized yet. It is more at the level of raising awareness, experimenting and fine tuning. But due to its great potential both formal and informal institutes will change. In the future rationalization will be a completely institutionalized concept. That brings us at the second part of the question, is it a temporary phenomenon and will we lapse into old habits? In some municipalities one is afraid that old-fashioned thinking will persist for a while. However, I think the new Law on Planning and Environment will force all stakeholders to change their attitude. Automatically, processes like rationalization filter organizations: those who cannot or do not want to keep up with the changes, are no longer valuable. Fortunately there is an overall feeling that people in this work have to be adaptive and open for change all the time.
Concluding, rationalization is a potential institutional change that needs improvement on both formal and informal aspects, but mostly on informal ones in order to complete the institutionalization.
### Institutional change: Checklist 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presence of:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Momentum</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>One could clearly speak of a momentum. A changing society, a different orientating municipality, the financial crisis and an upcoming law created the window for change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjustment for target group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rationalization clearly involves more people than areal development did in the past. To make rationalization an institutional change good and group-specific communication is required: communication is even one of the main elements of rationalization.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible improvement in institutions</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal aspects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Formally, rationalization has not reached a broad result. It seems like some municipalities are waiting for a new law, before they change their formal institutions. Also rationalization did not seem to focus on deregulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Informal aspects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>This element of institutional change is the most tricky of them all, when it comes to rationalization. On the one side: awareness has been raised and a new way of working has been introduced. The relations between stakeholders have changed and therefore one could speak of informal institutional change. On the other hand, is this the most important aspect of rationalization and the element of which local authorities state that has not been completed yet.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>Reaching goal:</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breaching path dependency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>This criterion is met, since path dependency has not been a great barrier for rationalization. Solutions such as confidence and responsibility have been suggested.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure (12): Institutional change checklist in 2017.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Institutional change:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Checklist near future (from the moment of introduction of the new Law on Planning and Environment)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presence of:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Momentum</td>
<td>This criterion will not differ that much from the current situation. Added will be one or several years of experience with rationalization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment for target group</td>
<td>There are examples of municipalities and their studies to stakeholders participation. I expect those studies to pay off in a way that they will bring stakeholders nearer to the practice of areal development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Possible improvement in institutions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal aspects</td>
<td>This aspect has additional value in relation to the current situation. Rationalization will find its way through the new Law on Planning and Environment. Therefore rationalization will get a permanent character, on paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal aspects</td>
<td>Cultural change is a process that needs time. I think the regulation reflex will disappear in the future, because of the completion of the cultural change and the arrival of new personnel. The new way of working will be installed by introducing the new law and by the lessons the participation stakeholders learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reaching goal:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaching path dependency</td>
<td>A new law automatically chooses another path than the one taken before, especially when it comes to rationalization. Rationalization reflects on people's own policies. It forces them to not take policies for granted which results in path independent decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure (13): Institutional change checklist near future.*
My prediction is that rationalization will be completed in the near future. One should not forget that the pilot studies were the first steps. I would like to attend the local authorities, because according to my experience, civil servants tend to make path dependent decisions. In order to achieve the results of the future checklist, local authorities should stay alert. In the next section I propose some ideas and recommendations that should help the municipalities in institutionalizing rationalization. Throughout the data collection and analysis I aimed to provide the highest possible internal and external validity. I did not interview all stakeholders, but combined several sources which improved the accuracy of the data analysis. The assumption that my conclusions could just be considered as speculations based on my interpretations must be denied on the fact that the choice for similar case studies has improved the ability to generalize. To finish my conclusions, I would like to come back on the scientific contribution of this thesis. I found a specific gap in the existing literature: the combination of concepts such as rationalization and institutionalization in Dutch areal development. In my research I have looked at the spatial processes of rationalization as institutional change. In the final two figures I discussed the institutionalization of rationalization and I even discussed its potential. Therefore, I did ‘get in to the gap’ by finding the data I wanted. Still some elements need further investigation. Those will be discussed in section 8, the discussion.
7. Recommendations

My first recommendation should help to improve the rationalization process, when it comes to clarity and the division of roles. In future projects expectation management should be the first step and something to be taken seriously. Only in a couple municipalities one focused on this type of management. However in many municipalities one complained that the role of the municipality still was too big or that changes in the division of roles had to be made while the project was already running. Such adjustments take time and make the planning process less efficient, the exact opposite of what rationalization intends.

My second recommendation is that civil servants should focus on refusing the regulation reflex. Still the feeling to be in control dominates too much. I suggest that local authorities write their policies on the base of a couple of concepts or standards, just in order to set a minimum amount of criteria. In that case organic development can occur. That process is way smoother than a process wherein initiators have to meet a great amount of criteria which might even be contradictory or unclear in some way.

Another advise is directed to the governments on higher levels, provincial and national. It turned out that higher governmental policies were in conflict with municipal policies. The local authorities understand that they are the ones to give policies a more practical character, but their practical aims are hindered by some outdated, non-rationalized and too detailed ordinances. Since the new Law on Planning and Environment will leave the municipalities even more space to rationalize, it might be clever to meet each other and to find solutions for the conflicts.

My final advise is as following: complete the institutionalization of rationalization, but do not take the end result for granted. Although they are not very rigid, institutions still have the tendency to take a permanent shape. This would only increase the chance on a new path dependency. In that case a new barrier for fresh ideas is being built. Rationalization’s durability should lay in its flexibility, its capability of adapting to new circumstances and to the openness of all stakeholders. One should not forget, that this way of performing areal development could easily ‘get stuck’ again if it is not completely developed and if it is not reflected on so now and then. We also use to think that the active role of the government was the best thing, therefore it survived privatizations. Make rationalization work in a durable way, but do not stick to it if change is required in the future.
8. Discussion

In this section my reflection on the way the study and the writing process is elaborated. Many things went according to plan, such as the snowball-effect of the literature search and the hierarchic method of the data analysis. However some improvements could have been there and next to that, some gaps stay open for future researchers who would like to dive into the subject of (institutionalization of) rationalization.

First of all I need to mention that writing this thesis took longer than expected, due to certain circumstances. I do not think this is a very big issue, but it did affect my focus on the subject. If I had worked on this thesis constantly instead of with a break, my train of thought would not have been interrupted. Throughout this process I learned that a constant ‘work flow’ is recommended in order to get the optimal result.

Secondly I was recommended to interview some market players as well, instead of only the project managers of the municipalities. Due to the lack of time and my specific focus on the municipalities and their policies, this was not possible. It does leave a gap for other researchers. A possibility would be to investigate the market players’ attitude towards the changing society, the less active role of the local authorities and the rise of more (smaller) stakeholders and their influence on the planning process.

Finally, the 80%/20% quote (informal institutional change/formal institutional change) was added quite late into my writing process. I presume it did not really affect my research, because I paid attention to both forms of institutional change, not to their mutual relation. If this concept had been added earlier, I would have paid more attention to that aspect. This also gives an opportunity for future researches. They could perform a research wherein they assess the hypothesis that rationalization for 80% consists of informal institutional change and only for 20% of formal institutional change or a research wherein they examine if some of the categories from the checklist play a bigger role than others.
9. References


10. List of figures

*Figure (1):* Integrated urban development and organic urban development. Source: Buitelaar & Bregman (2016).

*Figure (2):* Global conceptual model

*Figure (3):* Variables, dimensions, aspects and sub-aspects. Source: Verschuren, & Doorewaard, 2007.

*Figure (4):* Conceptual model

*Figure (5):* Variables, dimensions, aspects and sub-aspects-II. Source: Verschuren, & Doorewaard, 2007.

*Figure (6):* Operationalization.

*Figure (7):* Checklist institutional change. Source icons: www.freepik.com

*Figure (8):* Municipalities Breda, Ede, Kampen and Delft. Source: http://www.warmtenetwerk.nl/serviceprofile/view/150; www.twitter.com; http://kampen.zonnekaart.nl/CMS/Contact; https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stcrt-2017-24091.html (N.D.)

*Figure (9):* Rationalization in Wekerom. Source: Hoog, W. de; Pennings, R. and Born, H.; Procap; Feijtel, J. (eds.). (2015).

*Figure (10):* City of Kampen. Source: https://stad.kampen.nl/nl/nieuws.html

*Figure (11):* Coendersbuurt in Delft. Source: http://slimhus.nl/2014/03/slimhus-in-de-coendersbuurt-in-delft/

*Figure (12):* Institutional change checklist in 2017.

*Figure (13):* Institutional change checklist near future.
11. Annex

11.1 Interview questions

1. Questions about the reason for/ origin of the initiative

Which problems did the municipality face and which processes have had an influence on the decision to start with rationalization?

Could one speak of certain shock event and a momentum for change? How did that go and what was the exact role/ influence of the momentum on the subsequent actions?

Was the initiative for rationalization taken by people from your municipality or from 'objective' individuals or organizations?

To which extent does the new legislation on planning and environment play a role in this pilot?

2. Questions about institutional change

What kind of rationalization has taken place? Could you give examples of actual changed formal institutions in the pilot study? How do the solutions solve the problems you earlier mentioned?

And, in projects after the pilot study? Do you know how many projects are carried out with this rationalized character?

⇒ Could you name some and tell about the rules that were used or removed in order to rationalize the project? ⇒ What are the effects?

⇒ But, I assume decisions have been made. Some elements were rationalized, some not. Which elements were not deregulated and why?

Buitelaar, Grommen and Van der Krabben (2016) explains the indicators of informal institutional change as following: there are five different types of developers responsible for real estate development. The municipality, housing associations, real estate developers, investors and end users.

Which stakeholders are involved in the pilot study and which roles do they play?

Is the municipality satisfied with that way of working? What could be changed for similar projects in the future?

The last couple of questions were about formal and informal institutions. Please give your opinion about the next quotes:

⇒ Informal institutional change (rather cultural) determines rationalization for 80%, formal institutional change (deregulation) for 20%.

⇒ Without participation of provinces, the national government and the European Union, rationalization is pointless.

The different roles (in order from old institutions to institutional change) are (Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben, 2016, p. 9): the active government (responsible for land development and for real estate development), public private ownership (PPP) wherein multiple parties carry out the areal development and finally the facilitative government (private parties perform the development and the government takes no risks at all).
Which role has the municipality played in the pilot and which role does it want to play in the future?

Has that choice been included in official visions or documents of the municipality or is it more a global idea amongst the civil servants?

➔ And there are any other long-lasting effects of rationalization?

Rationalization was initially partly a response to the financial crisis and therefore the municipalities loosened up a bit. Nowadays, the crisis is over and developers are willing to invest more again. Do you think the municipality can and will get its grip on areal development back by installing new local rules?

3. Questions about path dependency of areal development in the municipality

Do you think the spatial policy has been subject to change before in the same degree as now with rationalization?

What influences the way this municipality implements its planning and environment policies?

➔ Does the presence of a certain expertise play a role?

Has the policy been criticized before?

➔ (How does that come? (that the policy has (not) been criticized))
➔ By who?
➔ About what?

An important goal of rationalization is speeding up the planning process. Do you think the presence of a certain discourse and the lack of critical thinking about it, is a reason for delay that rationalization should solve?

➔ And therefore, could you state that path dependency in planning forms a barrier for institutional change?

An important part of the local policy is a number of rules, added to national land policy. Could you tell me something about this municipality’s attitude towards those rules?

➔ Is this municipality known for adding relatively many rules to national planning and environmental policy in the shape of ordinances and zoning plans?

In case of several projects after the pilot:

Do you think, again, some sort of path dependency is building up and one could predict the behavior of the civil servants when it comes to new areal development?
11.2 Dutch translation of interview questions

1. Vragen over de reden voor/ oorsprong van het initiatief

Met welke problemen die om ontslakking vroegen werd de gemeente geconfronteerd en welke processen hebben invloed gehad op het besluit om te beginnen met ontslakken?

Kan men spreken van een ‘shock event’ en een momentum voor verandering? Hoe ging dat en wat is precies de invloed van het ‘shock event’ op de daaropvolgende acties?

Is het initiatief voor ontslakking genomen door mensen van binnen de gemeente of was er aandringen van ‘objectieve’ individuen of organisaties nodig?

In welke mate heeft de komst van de nieuwe omgevingswet de keuze om te gaan ontslakken bepaalt? Op welke manier komt de nieuwe omgevingswet (globaal) naar voren in de opzet van de pilotstudie?

2. Vragen over institutionele verandering

Wat voor soort ontslakken heeft er plaats gevonden? Kunt u een aantal voorbeelden geven van getroffen maatregelen in de pilotstudie? (met invloed zowel op formele als informele instituties)

En hoe lossen deze maatregelen precies de eerder besproken problemen op?

Weet u of er gelijksoortige projecten zijn uitgevoerd na het uitvoeren van de pilotstudie? Zo ja:

- Kunt u vertellen wat voor regels zijn gebruikt of juist verwijderd in deze projecten? Wat zijn de effecten?
- Er zijn ongetwijfeld besluiten genomen om bepaalde elementen wel te ontslakken/ dereguleren en andere niet. Welke elementen zijn juist niet ontslakt?

Uit mijn scriptie: “Buitelaar, Grommen and Van der Krabben (2016) explains the indicators of informal institutional change as following: there are five different types of developers responsible for real estate development. The municipality, housing associations, real estate developers, investors and end users.”

(De gemeente, woningbouwverenigingen, vastgoedontwikkelaars, investeerders en eindgebruikers)

Welke stakeholders hebben deelgenomen aan de pilotstudie en welke rollen namen zij in?

Is de gemeente tevreden met die manier van werken, die rolverdeling? Wat zou er nog veranderd kunnen worden in gelijksoortige projecten in de toekomst?

De laatste vragen gingen over formele en informele instituties. Wat is uw mening over de volgende stellingen:

- Informele institutionele verandering (werkcultuur) bepaalt voor 80% de ontslakking. Formele institutionele verandering (deregulering) voor 20%.
- Without participation of provinces, the national government and the European Union, rationalization is pointless. Zonder de deelname van provincies, het Rijk en de Europese Unie is ontslakken (op gemeentelijk niveau) zinloos.

Uit mijn scriptie: “The different roles (in order from old institutions to institutional change) are (Buitelaar, Grommen & Van der Krabben, 2016, p. 9): the active government (responsible for land
development and for real estate development), public private ownership (PPP) wherein multiple parties carry out the areal development and finally the facilitative government (private parties perform the development and the government takes no risks at all).”

(Actieve overheid, publiek-private samenwerking, faciliterende overheid)

Welke rol heeft de overheid gespeeld in de pilotstudie en welke rol wil zij spelen in de toekomst?

Is die keuze (voor die werkwijze) nu ook opgenomen in officiële documenten of visies of is het meer een idee dat heerst onder de ambtenaren?

➔ Zijn er nog andere langetermijneffecten van het ontslakken die de manier van werken op dit moment beïnvloeden?

Aanvankelijk kwam ontslakken als reactie op de financiële crisis en gemeente besloten daarom regels los te laten. Nu is de crisis zo goed als voorbij en zijn ontwikkelaars weer meer bereid om te investeren. Denkt u dat de gemeente haar grip op gebiedsontwikkeling kan en zal terugkrijgen door opnieuw lokale regels in te stellen?

3. Vragen over padafhankelijkheid in de gebiedsontwikkeling in de gemeente

Is het gemeentelijk ruimtelijk beleid eerder onderhevig geweest aan verandering van het zelfde kaliber als ontslakking?

Wat beïnvloedt de manier waarop de gemeente haar ruimtelijke beleid bepaalt en uitvoert?

➔ Speelt de aanwezigheid van bepaalde expertise daarin een rol? Is die expertise bijvoorbeeld een reden om het beleid niet aan te passen?

Is het ruimtelijk beleid eerder bekritiseerd en gebeurt dat vaak?

➔ Door wie?
➔ Waar gaat de kritiek in dat geval over
➔ Hoe komt het dat het beleid (niet) vaak wordt bekritiseerd?

Een belangrijk doel van ontslakken is het versnellen van de planprocedure. Denkt u dat een heersend discourse en het ontbreken van kritiek daarop één van de redenen is dat er vertragingen zijn ontstaan die verholpen moeten worden a.d.h.v. ontslakking?

➔ Kunt u, daarom, stellen dat padafhankelijkheid een barrière vormt voor institutionele verandering?

Een ander belangrijk onderdeel van lokaal beleid is het aantal regels dat wordt toegevoegd aan nationaal grondbeleid. Kunt u iets vertellen over de houding van de gemeente ten opzichte van deze extra regels?

➔ Staat de gemeente bekend om het toevoegen van relatief veel additionele regels in verordeningen en bestemmingsplannen?

In het geval van meerdere projecten na de pilotstudie:

Denkt u dat er opnieuw een soort padafhankelijkheid en voorspelbaar gedrag van ambtenaren zal ontstaan in gebiedsontwikkeling, ondanks dat er interne reflectie heeft plaats gevonden?
11.3 List of quotes and concepts
The quotes are marked as following: Breda, Ede, Kampen, Delft.

Beforehand: causes and initiatives
Promoting rationalization amongst the local authorities was not a big issue in Breda. Symbolism played a small role in the promotion
The financial crisis
Temporary function

The idea was that rationalization could be the instrument to make those processes run faster again.
One should not really speak about problems in the municipality, but more about possibilities to improve the planning processes
"If you do not create support level to look at projects differently, you could better stop"
rather a part of improving the policy of the municipality than a way to tackle specific problems in the village
"... society orientates differently and that requires a different attitude of the local authorities."
momentum for change

Printed all the documents an initiator of a development plan should read. The end result: a pile of paper of approximately 80 centimeters!
Some welcomed the new way of looking at the planning process, others had more difficulties with that
It was a case of a public-private partnership with the unfortunate situation of the financial crisis: the project had difficulties starting. It resulted in an informal institutional problem: the lack of willingness to invest.

The cause for the rationalization project was the question: “could our policy be easier?”
The municipality of Delft was already working on deregulation and "steering on goals instead of on solutions" before the concept of rationalization was introduced, let alone implemented.
"The situation becomes hard when you have to cope with contradictory demands, because they result in delay, discussions and additional costs."

Rationalization has especially played a role as an extra motivation to critically approach the existing way of working. Together with the financial crisis, a window for change was created.
"Everybody started to consider rationalization to be a nice challenge." According to Meijboom, in this field of science, you have to reflect and change continually.
a project such as rationalization was required, both our management and the society wanted it, but eventually the trajectory has been considered to be as an opportunity and now it even generates revenue

Process: formal and informal institutional change
Transformation management
Management aims for increasing this area's value, socially, economically and culturally
The area was and is still owned by the municipality.
Two criteria:
Facilitating role of the municipality
The municipality organized evenings where all the initiators could meet up and discuss their opinions on each other's plans and responsibilities.
The first step: "just start, we will see what happens." The second phase included the process of developing a plan on collaboration in the next 10 years, based on experiences. The last phase, the current one, was all about the question:
“How can we perpetuate this all in a zoning plan or a similar document?” At the moment the local authorities are working on a plan, but there is no document yet. In this pilot study, the local authorities did not disappear, but they did dare to make distinctions. The municipality trusted the initiators and their capability to find products that met the demand of the end users in a better way.

“Rationalization is a mean and not a goal in its own.”
Could not tell about the exact ratio between formal and informal institutional change, but: “the one cannot do without the other. Deregulation only arises if one dares to look differently to regulations.” At some points, the local authorities, on purpose, chose to stay in charge and to maintain some regulations.
The municipality decided to grant permits to prevent the owners of bars and restaurants outside the island to start a discussion.

“Rationalization might be more about a change of the mindset than a deregulation, because deregulation is only the effect of the different mindset.”
Relatively high amount of involved parties, namely: the municipality, several developing parties and the end users.

“The human factor”
“changing roles and responsibilities”
“especially for the market players”, to get used to the new roles all the stakeholders played.
This requires a good division of roles and optimal collaboration.
“minimal requirements, maximal freedom.”
Important for the establishment of such a collaboration is characterized by “expectation management” that elaborates the details about the different roles of the stakeholders and the deadlines.

In the end, a couple of formal institutions should change, but: “rationalization consists of 80% of informal institutional change.”
Although speeding up the process of the planning process was one of the main goals, another advantage occurred soon. The local authorities expressed their confidence in the market players and that turned out to be a good choice. The market players could namely find a more suitable product for the demand of the end users.

Changing has not always been easy, but by adjusting your approach to the target group, the whole process becomes smoother.
Remarkable for this project is the combination of both deregulation and a cultural change: both formal and informal institutional changes.
In the end, rationalization Kampen was rather on the level of municipal policy than on single project level.

“Both a cultural shift and deregulation were combined, in order to raise awareness of the upcoming new Law on Planning and Environment and its implementation on policy-making level.”

“Do we still want to use this policy when there is a new law or environmental plan?”
In the end, formally, the result was the removal of 21 policy papers, that was 21 out of 83. The criterion is basically whether regulations are still up-to-date or not. “Despite that” Koopmans stated: “… initiating a new culture has been the added value of this trajectory.”
Besides, some elements were purposely not rationalized. To prevent individuals or parties to end up in discussions
Difficult in making a culture shift is the human side of the story. By removing regulations, “you take away some of the certainty of your colleagues.” For instance: “people might think that they become useless of their policies are being removed.”

In the end, one of the keys to a proper informal institutional change is participation. Another key is trust in each other. In order to make rationalization durable, one need to trust that removing regulations is the best thing, especially with those regulations that seem to be more valuable than others.

Reconsider all the cumulating demands of the municipality.

“Is the plan feasible and what is the main purpose of it?” Important in answering those questions is prioritizing.

In order to prioritize, a cultural change is needed within the municipality of Delft. Therefore, Rationalization is mostly “an internal reflection”.

Separating wishes from demands, was a central issue.

Every imaginable stakeholder was involved: developers, residents, potential buyers of houses in the Coendersbuurt and the city council.

Avoid ambiguities at the end of the development. In earlier developments, additional elements could have been added while the project was already running, something that should be avoided in the future.

“End users were quite directly involved in the process and therefore the conditions were set accurately in those passports.”

A solution that would be resistant to future market changes, a solution that would be easy to phase and a plan that could be speeded up or delayed if that would be necessary. Those were the criteria the municipality set for the plans.

A map that only showed the essence was created.

One thing is clear: the agreements and conditions are the same for everybody: “It does not matter if you are an investor, a private individual or a developer. It has been difficult to find an appropriate and understandable way to write down the conditions for these different stakeholders, but in the end it pays off, because it sets the conditions clear from the start.”

The municipality had the land property and was the developing party. On the other hand, the local authorities especially focused on involving others in a better way. Therefore inventories have been held amongst the end users.

This created a sense of responsibility at the potential buyers:

“...rationalization should not cause a situation wherein we have to lower our ambitions. It should create a situation wherein we are better able to separate essential and additional matters.”

That the process, more than deregulation, plays a big role in rationalization, becomes clear with a quote of the new city architect: “Quality is not arranged by rules, but by the process.”

Cultural change influences the deregulation, because: “the people who have to initiate the deregulation process, have to change their way of working first.”

The focus on a smooth, uninterrupted planning process found its way through the rationalization process in Delft.

The pilot study in Delft has been more process than project based and was built on the fundament that was already there due to the efforts of the local authorities to reflect on their policies.
Path dependency: barrier for institutional change?

One should dare to let go of certain paths. “That causes friction and that costs the most energy.” It is all about having the right people in the right places. Path dependency is not being boosted by people who work (too) long in the same place. On the other hand, young people with a fresh look on the policies are always welcome. The key to breaching path dependency, as Dictus stated, is ownership: do people feel responsible for their own environment? “A transition phase, which might take three or four years”, because “we would like to loosen up, but we do not know how. In that situation, people tend to relapse into their old habits.” But, amongst the developing companies, Mens spotted quite a big desire for sticking to the earlier agreed rights and responsibilities. “If you want to let go, let everything go.” Next to that, one should trust each other in not making new rules again of something goes wrong in the future, trust each other in ignoring the “regulation reflex”. However, Koopmans could imagine that the municipality in some future cases could decide to work in the old fashioned way: “if there are several developers interested in a location, the municipality could acknowledge the scarcity and decide to lay up claims on the spatial quality.” Next to that, path dependency does play a role in municipalities. “There is an aging government. The last Spatial Planning Act has been introduced in 2008 and we finally know how to work with it and now it is already time for another change.” Some regulations have started, but there are already comments, adjustments and amendments. People already affect the conservation of the key assumptions of the process. “We would only set some conditions. But after all, we ended up with six pages of conditions.” So, there still some work to do, especially in the informal way, “... but cultural change needs time.” “By dealing with it, all at once, the chance of breaching path dependency grows.” Unfortunately, sometimes the urge to fall back into old habits is present... “Maybe we want to steer on economic profit and on certain quality standards.” “Of course, path dependency is maintained by certain people, due to their knowledge and by certain (economic) situations. If the directors worked in one way, that way will persist. A new time, or new directors, an external influence, could open a window for change.” The reason for the minimal role of path dependency in Delft is because of the openness and honesty in the organization.” Concluding, external influences can be from significant value when it comes to breaching path dependency amongst the local authorities. Unfortunately, the exchange of thoughts with externals (people from other departments or organizations) has decreased since the crisis. There is a small chance that civil servants will fulfill their tasks the old-fashioned way again, for instance in the situation of scarcity on the market and the resulting opportunity to set new quality standards. “We do not only want to focus on buying and selling land, but rather on achieving our ambitions on in the field of spatial quality, durability and social goals.”

Afterwards: conclusions and future lessons

Confidence played a big role in the process of rationalization. This requires a great confidence in each other and in each other’s courage and enthusiasm: “the key to institutional change and rationalization in the end is confidence.” So far, the rationalization process has not found its way through new planning documents. However, this will change. The municipality is working on a new environment planned next to
the new Law on Planning and Environment which is coming up. That law has a very rationalized character.

Due to the extended room for municipal policies within the new Law on Planning and Environment, there will be more possibilities to rationalize. The frame within the municipality can act and rationalize will increase.

The market parties, however, stated that preparing land was not their core business and that put the local authorities in the position where they had been before: although they called themselves a facilitating government, they still took responsibility for preparing the land for the building projects.

"this might be in fifty or sixty years, but we have to think of the next five or ten years."

"This is not integrated in our way of working, but one thing is clear: the municipality is not per definition the one who decides what locations should look like anymore. This is due to the luxury of having a staff which opens up for new ways of looking at their own work."

A favorable economic situation could use some flexibility as well, because people can get a mortgage more easily. Therefore developers are screaming for the preparation of land, so that they can start building. "That speed might be more necessary than it was during the crisis. It would be nice if policy on a higher level became a little more flexible, but even without that, there is still enough work to do for the local authorities."

Afterwards, Mens noticed that the municipality still was to present. That problem could be solved by formulating the different roles and responsibilities even clearer, at the start of the project.

"the municipality's perception was that the solution for the difficult project was deregulation. The conclusion: change is more about the collaboration than about the regulation and the plans."

The surprising conclusion was that the regulations alone were not the delaying elements in areal development, but the communication of them was.

How does the municipality deal with the rules and how does it communicate them to those involved?

So, one conclusion of the pilot study was: "we think people always prefer to have less rules, but somewhere people like to be at least a little in control."

The awareness is there, but the culture shift has not yet fully find its way through our policies and our way of working."

Under the temporary Crisis and Recovery Act, in anticipation on the Law on Planning and Environment, some municipalities can set up an Environmental Plan, wherein they can arrange more than in the 'old fashioned' zoning plans.

"rationalization is about saying 'yes, unless', but due to not-rationalized provincial policies, we have to say 'no' too much."

Their conclusion was that many regulations are being made, but none are being removed. "So, actually there are rules that nobody follows and there are rules which nobody knows they exist."

So far, an environment plan has not yet been made, although the Crisis and Recovery Act does allow to do that. In the future, however, something like that will be created, but "... it will be more focused on the new Law on Planning and Environment."

In the meantime, the municipality did work hard on a their participation approach, wherein they looked for (new) ways to involve stakeholders in a newly designed process.

In the future, the local authorities of Delft expect the province of Zuid-Holland to rationalize their policy a bit further. "Their ordinance on spatial planning is to detailed. We get to many comments on our zoning plans, which I think, is not the provincial concern."