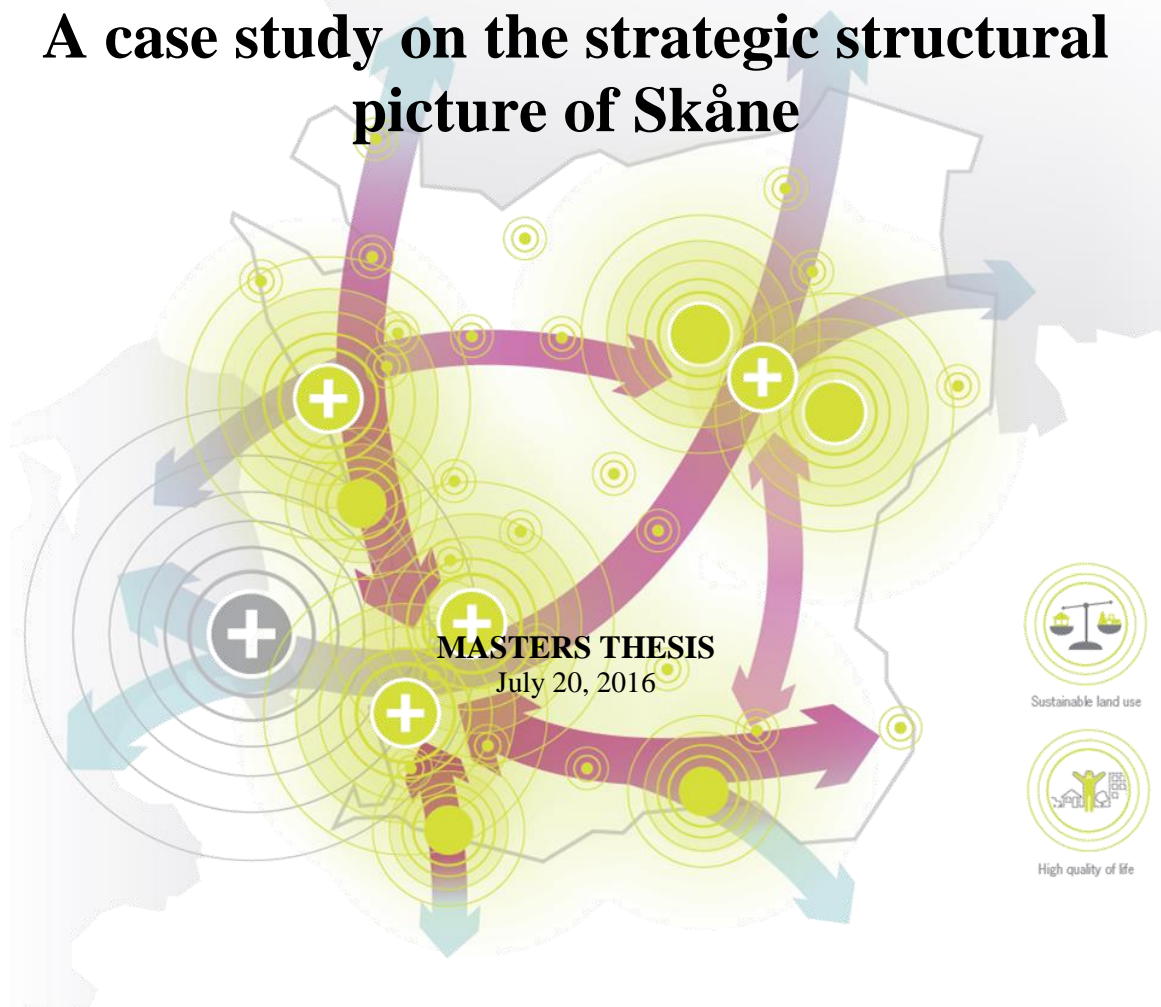


Regional Spatial Planning for Coordination:

A case study on the strategic structural picture of Skåne



Sustainable land use



High quality of life

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Abstract

Giving a spatial structure to the regional development strategies in order to achieve a balanced use of lands and resources for a more sustainable development is not a straightforward task for the regions in Sweden. The reason is the planning monopoly of the municipalities and lack of planning power at the regional level based on the Planning and Building Act. Therefore, using a strategic spatial planning process as a coordination process is a controversial issue in the Swedish planning system. This thesis is dedicated to a case study (Structural picture of Skåne) in order to achieve a better and deeper understanding of the various aspects of such process. This purpose has been followed through collecting quantitative data (semi structured interviews and documents) and analyzing them according to a conceptual framework. The findings demonstrate that in order to meta-governing the network of municipalities in a region, strategic spatial planning process includes meta-governance mechanisms (network design, network framing and network management).

The network design mechanism is heavily depends on the legitimacy of the spatial planning process and the initiator (here Region Skåne) is required to increase this legitimacy by working on different aspects of legitimacy. The network framing is to interactively build a consensus among all the actors by developing a common vision for the region and concretize it through common strategies. The scenarios for the future of the region must be developed through discussions and joint interpretation of the facts and analysis rather than being made merely by technical spatial analysis. Otherwise, making the strategies would face lots of misunderstandings, ambiguities and oppositions. Finally, since a complete consensus is not possible, questions and disagreements always exist. In addition, the weaker actors (municipalities) which have limitations and barriers to implement the strategies or put themselves in line with them need constant support from the stronger actors and the Region. Hence, the strategic spatial planning calls for a continuous discussion and support in order to manage the network of municipalities and keep the created picture alive in the background of their comprehensive plans.

Part I: Research Foundation

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Background and Problem Statement

The improved availability of transportation and increased human tendency to move across great distances means that more planning issues have implications across municipal boundaries and require inter-municipal and regional cooperation. Several regions in Sweden have responded to this challenge by increasing planning efforts at the regional level. The three metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Gothenberg and South-West of Skåne have led the way and has worked for several years with what is called the Spatial Structural Picture (Boverket, 2011). This structural pictures clarify the regional context by bringing together and report the physical structures between municipalities and their relevance to the regional development.

In these metropolitan regions, several regional councils and provincial governments started work on spatial perspective and vision of their territory in the context of regional strategic planning (Boverket, 2011). Coordination of municipalities' comprehensive plans as a necessary condition for regional sustainable development has been a politically controversial and technically important planning issue in Sweden (Boverket, 2014). The legitimacy and effectiveness of regional spatial planning (hence RSP) as a tool to translate the regional development programmes (hence RUPs) into an understandable and usable language for the municipalities has gained attention in recent years (Ibid). It has received even more attention recently due to a government proposal to address the problem of housing provision and sustainable development through mandating regional spatial planning for all the regions in Sweden (Bostadsplaneringskommittén, 2015).

Through a broad investigation, Housing Planning Committee (Bostadsplaneringskommittén) concludes that municipalities' comprehensive plans solely do not serve the present demands of the housing market and sustainable development due to their limited strategic perspectives and lack of coordination between themselves and between housing plans and other sectoral plans (e.g. transportation, infrastructure, public transportation, etc.) (ibid). As a suggestion, the committee argues that a "regional spatial planning" is necessary to coordinate the local comprehensive plans, integrate their visions and strategies and converge them towards sustainable development (Ibid). However, the question is how regional spatial planning is able to coordinate comprehensive plans of autonomus municipalities while they have planning monopoly and regional level has no planning dominance and authority.

1.2. Research Objectives and Questions

Given the aforementioned background and problem statement, this research aims to understand how regional spatial planning in Swedish planning system with its unique features can serve as a mechanism to coordinate autonomous municipalities' comprehensive plans in favor of regional development. That is to say the objective of this research is to reveal those dimensions of regional spatial planning which their strength or weaknesses can stimulate or challenge the coordination in practice. Thus, to follow this aim, this research is going to answer the following research questions:

How has the process to make 'Structural Picture of Skåne' been a coordination process in order to coordinate the municipalities' comprehensive plans?

In order to answer this broad research question, the research is supported with the following sub-questions to achieve a better grasp on the topic:

- Which actors have been involved in the process of making Structural Picture of Skåne? How have they been organized and structured?
- What are the phases and stages which has shaped the structural picture of Skåne?
- What focal points have demonstrate the coordination endeavor in this process?
- What are the main challenges while coordinating actors through regional spatial planning?

1.3. Societal and Scientific Relevance

"... 'coordination' has become one of the central issues in contemporary public management discourse, both for academia and for practitioners." (Læg Reid, Sarapuu, Rykkja, & Randma-Liiv, 2015, p. 928)

This research is socially relevant since the Swedish government has passed a proposal to address the housing problems and sustainable development through mandating regional spatial planning for all the regions in Sweden. However, it is not a straight forward task in Sweden due to the planning monopoly of the municipalities. The municipalities in a region must be coordinated with each other and with the regional authorities in order to prepare a regional plan and implement it. For regions to deal with the potential challenges and difficulties regarding coordination through regional spatial planning, it is useful to understand the planning processes which the pioneer regions have been through and possibly take some lessons to make more effective regional spatial plans.

As Læg Reid et al. (2015, p.934) mention in the special issue of Public Management Review dealing with coordination in the public sector, theoretically vertical coordination between different administrative levels deserve more attention from the perspective of coordination mechanisms and resources that can be used and the feasibility of their combinations. Hence, the scientific relevance and contribution of this research is presented through a new conceptual framework which is built based on this idea that in a nonhierarchical planning system, coordination of the autonomous municipalities is a meta-governance process

which can be implemented through an interactive spatial strategic planning initiative as a coordination mechanism.

1.4. *Structure of the Research*

To answer the research questions, a theoretical framework is provided in Chapter 2. It serves as a lens to study the case and keep my focus on the relevant factors; Chapter 3 illustrates the strategy and design of the research. Chapter 4 provides a description of the institutional structure of the Skåne and an overview of the process that results in Structural picture of Skåne in order to disclose the contextual considerations of the research. Chapter 5 digs into the planning process of Skåne region by making use of empirically collected data. Finally, Chapter 6 summarizes the findings, present some policy recommendations and some suggestions for further researches. Altogether, this research structure should provide a coherent picture and help to identify the challenges and unique characteristics of Skåne strategic planning process.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Section 2.1 critically reviews the three different theoretical approaches to the concept of coordination (hierarchical, market and network) and their relations with three different but interconnected strands of (public administration, organizational and planning). Section 2.2 puts these theoretical approaches in the context of the research problem in order to demonstrate which one is compatible with it. Then it discusses the meta-governance as the network coordination mechanism and introduces its respective instruments as the foundation for the conceptual framework of this research. Section 2.3 illustrates components of strategic spatial planning and its key dimensions as a coordination process. Finally, section 2.4 provides the conceptual framework of this research which demonstrates the correspondence between key components of strategic spatial planning and the instruments of meta-governance in order to introduce their interfaces as the focal point used in analysis.

2.1. Coordination in Different Theoretical Contexts

To learn and analyze empirically how coordination takes place, Pedersen and her colleagues (2011) suggest focusing on the public governance literature and different strands of theories within this domain which have their different perceptions of the coordination as a concept. According to them, public administration, organization, and planning theories have the most considerable contribution to our understanding of this concept. However, all three strands have developed over time, and their perception of coordination has changed significantly. More importantly, they have significant overlaps with each other which enable a researcher to combine them and build the appropriate conceptual model for his or her particular research question.

Although there are important differences between the theoretical developments within the three strands above, they describe a general transformation in the theoretical understanding of coordination. The literature on public governance in general traditionally analyzes two different forms of coordination; vertical and horizontal. The former is the adjustment that different actors at different administrative levels (national, regional, and local) make due to their hierarchical relationships while the latter reflects mutual adjustments among the various actors without being part of a formal hierarchy (Glasson and Marshall, 2007). However, recent constructivist neo-institutionalism approaches [provide REF] deviate from this approach towards coordination and highlight that instead of a pre-given or designed process for coordination, the coordination in most cases is an endogenously produced norm, which is constructed in and through the public governance initiatives through an interactive and interpretive process. Hence, constructivist neo-institutionalism approach tends to challenge the traditional distinction between vertical and horizontal coordination and indicates that coordination is driven by all sorts of asymmetrical power relations between the involved actors. Accordingly, the most recent theories in all the three strands emphasize on the interaction and communication as the primary mechanisms to achieve a coordinated collective decision or

action which is embedded in its context of space and time (Pedersen, Sehested, and Sørensen, 2011).

In public administration theory, these recent developments offer the concept of meta-governance within the network governance theory (Pedersen et al., 2011). Meta-governance calls for a new form of soft hierarchical coordination to govern networks of interdependent but autonomous actors which due to the high level of autonomy and lack of hierarchical relationships, do not effectively and efficiently cooperate with each other (Sørensen and Torfing, 2009). This form of coordination depends on soft and/or interactive forms of regulation that rely on an ongoing communication and negotiation between legitimate and resourceful public authorities and all the relevant stakeholders (Torfing, Peters, Pierre, and Sørensen, 2012; Peterson et al., 2011; Sørensen, 2012).

In organization theory, this interactive approach received in the form of inter-organizational coordination through storytelling and narration. Narrative theory views storytelling as a particularly forceful form of communication that illustrates how interaction and meaning are emerging through the telling of stories (Pedersen et al., 2011; Brown, Colville & Pye, 2014). Later, I explain this concept in more detail as one of the mechanisms to exercise meta-governance.

Finally, in the strand of planning theory, relational strategic spatial planning theory (Healey, 1996; Healey, 2007) focus on the interactive strategic spatial planning (ISSP) practices that aim to give some direction and coordinate activities on a broader scale through the framing of shared-meanings.

The question of this research has two theoretical aspects. On the one hand, it concerns coordination of the operationally autonomous but functionally interdependent municipalities in a region which from a theoretical perspective this resembles a meta-governance situation. Therefore, the conceptual foundation of this research would be meta-governance and its mechanisms. On the other hand, this research investigates how coordination emerges through regional spatial planning. As previously mentioned, the most recent approach towards coordination in spatial planning is ISSP. Thus, a descriptive conceptual framework is developed through provided to display the way that meta-governance mechanisms are materialized within the ISSP process.

2.2. Governance Networks and Meta-Governance

As previously mentioned governance networks are made of horizontal connections between interdependent but operationally autonomous actors who interact through negotiations within a relatively institutionalized framework. Different forms of these networks exist regarding emergence, formality, openness and fragmentation. Moreover, the actors in the networks can be from different institutional categories. Some networks are formed within public organizations (intra-organizational), between public organizations (joined-up government), or between public and private actors (policy networks). Due to this variety in the form of governance network, we can also expect different functions. Some networks facilitate cooperation through knowledge sharing while others aim to enhance coordination to maximize

joint efforts or facilitate collaboration through the joint definition and solution of emerging problems and challenges (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007). These are ideal aims for governance networks and as Sørensen and Torfing (2009) state they may not reach these desired results since governance networks are not inherently efficient and effective. Their performance depends on the societal, institutional and political contexts that determine their form and functioning. To maximize the effectiveness and efficiency and minimize the probable problems of these networks, Sørensen and Torfing (2009) emphasize the importance of and strategic meta-governance.

From this point of view, meta-governance provides a new form of the soft and quasi-hierarchical process of governing governance networks which due to the high level of autonomy of actors and lack of formal or mandatory relationships between them do not effectively and efficiently cooperate with each other. This form of coordination depends on soft and interactive forms of regulation that rely on an ongoing communication and negotiation between legitimate and resourceful public authorities and all the relevant stakeholders (Torfing, Peters, Pierre, and Sørensen, 2012; Pederson et al, 2011; Sørensen, 2012). As Torfing and his colleagues (2012) explain in their book, meta-governors initiate, facilitate, and manage interactive governance processes, but they also seek to influence the content of the interactive governance arenas and aim to lead the policy processes in a certain direction. However, where they cannot do so through top-down commands, they have to rely on different soft and subtle mechanisms that aim to shape and influence governance arenas indirectly.

Although different conceptualizations of meta-governance exist in the literature, the governance theorists do not define this concept precisely to answer how meta-governance is to be carried out. What we can find is a fragmented plurality of toolkits for regulating governance networks that are suggested by various theorists. Nevertheless, the majority of the suggested tools and instruments fall into four distinct ways in which meta-governance may be exercised (Sørensen, 2006; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). In the rest of this section, these four ways are briefly explained.

a) Network Design

Meta-governor seeks to increase efficient cooperation between the autonomous actors or between fragmented smaller self-governed networks which their fragmented activities might have negative impact on the meta-governor's purpose. For this purpose, meta-governor design a new institutional arena through identifying the crucial actors with probable significant contributions and convene them around a clearly defined policy objective for a win-win situation (Sørensen, 2006; Torfing, Peters, Pierre & Sørensen, 2012).

However, to be able to mobilize these identified key actors, the meta-governor needs active support and acknowledgment from them and Schuman (1995) believes that this support, consenting and commitment of the actors to the network demands a high threshold of legitimacy. Although, the process of institutional design might commence in a fragile and weak level of legitimacy, Sørensen and Torfing (2009) discuss that the institutional design, if appropriate, might increase the legitimacy of governance process and keep the actors motivated and committed.

Schuman (1995, p.574) defines legitimacy as “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions”. He explains that organizations seek legitimacy for different reasons and these aims have significant impact on the types of legitimacy they need to focus on. Depends on whether they simply want to have acquiescence or they look for active support and continuous intervention of other actors, they need to manage different types of legitimacy. The followings are three main types of legitimacy acknowledged by Schuman (1995) in the inter-organizational networks.

Pragmatic legitimacy

This type of legitimacy is the support that other actors acknowledge for what an organization is doing because they believe it provides specific favourable values (Exchange legitimacy) or because they see it as being responsive to their larger interests (Influence legitimacy). A less rational but still important alternative form of pragmatic legitimacy (Dispositional legitimacy) assumes a personified characteristic for organizations and through that actors or audiences accord legitimacy to those organizations that have their best interests at heart and possess positive humanistic features such as honesty, trustworthy and wisdom (Schuman, 1995).

Moral legitimacy

In contrast with the pragmatic legitimacy, moral legitimacy rests on the social benefits of an initiative and the judgments about whether the activity is "the right thing to do" rather than self-interest of involved actors. Hence, this type of legitimacy reflects the actors' socially constructed value system. In general, actors grant moral legitimacy through one of the three following evaluations; evaluations of outputs and consequences of the initiative, evaluations of techniques, routines and procedures applied to conduct the initiative, and evaluations of the structure of the initiator organization. An organization become structurally legitimate because other actors think “it is the right organization for the job”; this sense of rightness has more to do with organizational identity than with demonstrations of organizational competence (ibid).

Cognitive legitimacy

Cognitive legitimacy is based on either comprehensibility or taken-for-granted cognition of the leading organization. The former is the availability of a model which makes the activity of organization predictable, meaningful, and inviting for other involved actors. The latter is the availability of formal institutional supports which make the activities of some organizations taken-for-granted and unquestionable. Since this type of legitimacy is the most powerful and the least fragile one, organizations try to institutionalize their activities for more stability and easier support collection (ibid).

Moreover, Sørensen and Torfing (2009) remark that the legitimacy management of the meta-governance process should be completed by an appropriate design of the procedures for negotiation, discussion and cooperation will enhance the effectiveness of governance process because it can lower the transaction cost of networking and therefore encourage the actors to become and stay part of the network.

b) Network Framing

To ensure coordination, alignment and creating strong interdependencies between the actors in a governance network, the meta-governor frame the arena for the interactions. Meta-governor seeks to manipulate the political goals, fiscal conditions, legal basis of the networks or to discursively construct new policy storylines in order to convince the actors that there is an urgent need for coordination, cooperation and joint action. By framing the interests, images of relations, perceptions of the past and visions of possible futures for actors, meta-governor provides a shared vision and make a common sense about the problem in hand and shape a new images of rational behaviour (Sørensen, 2006; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009).

Sørensen (2006) emphasizes that meta-governance might be exercised either through the structuring of a more or less smooth process of aggregating pre-given and often conflicting interests into a unitary and legitimate governance outcomes or by shaping these interests through the formation of the meanings and identities that constitute the self-governing actors.

c) Network Management

To lower the transaction cost of networking, it is necessary to manage tensions and conflicts between actors and empower particular (marginalized) actors through providing different kinds of material and immaterial inputs and resources as support and facilitation. The meta-governor can reduce destructive tensions and conflicts through agenda-setting, the initiation of joint fact-finding, and the facilitation of cross-frame learning to ensure that all relevant information is circulated to all of the network participants in a clear and accessible form. To empower actors, the meta-governor should help marginalized or weak actors to organize themselves, and fund learning by providing courses, seminars, workshops and conferences and by inviting guest speakers to network meetings. This form of meta-governance is hands-on in the sense that the supportive and facilitating meta-governor interacts directly with the self-governing actors though not participate in the negotiations within the network. Any objectives of the meta-governor should be put aside for the purpose of this form of meta-governance is simply to promote activities performed by a specific group of actors (Sørensen, 2006; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009).

d) Network Participation

In some cases, to obtain influence on the outcome of self-governance, meta-governor endeavors to influence the policy agenda of the governance network through direct participation. It means that the meta-governor should become one actor among the others who negotiate collective solutions to shared problems without any authoritative position (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). This may seem a non-assertive way of meta-governing while one may see it more assertive than the other mechanisms since in this situation the meta-governor penetrates in the network and influences the agenda and content of the governance.

However, the four way above are generic and non-exclusive. They find a specialized form and get particularized subject to the governance issues and the conditions of the

governance networks. Accordingly, next section aims to illustrate how these mechanisms are specified and specialized in the context of strategic spatial planning.

2.3. Interactive Strategic Spatial Planning (ISSP)

Pedersen and her colleagues (2011) illustrate how planning theory has changed over time and how a bottom-up and praxis-based planning paradigm has taken over the traditional top-down planning practices. The traditional planning theories understood coordination as a vertical and top-down process carrying out by planners and experts in order to prepare comprehensive plans while the neoconservative perspective of planning practices focused on the potential benefits of bottom-up and praxis forms of planning that include situated interaction between public authorities and stakeholders. This interactive approach was a fruit of the development of collaborative and communicative perspective in the planning theory, which in addition to instrumental rationality emphasize on the communicative rationality. Glasson and Marshall (2007) point out that interactive planning theories advocate the careful construction of shared arenas for open and honest dialogues, leading to the making of concerted storylines for areas, which can then form the basis for durable shared strategies. Hence, collaborative planning theory emphasizes how coordination is provided through a strategic selection, facilitation, and creation of communicative dialogues that link together top-down and bottom-up coordination (Pedersen et al., 2011).

Also, since the early 90s, the reinforcement of the interests in environmental issues and sustainable development increased the concerns about rapid and random developments (whether market-based or due to fragmented, bottom-up and praxis planning actions). This led to re-emphasis on the need for an overall, long-term and more coordinated strategic frameworks and perspectives for cities, city-regions, and regions. This means that the governance networks of these territories need a meta-governance to coordinate the fragmented developments and projects and reduce the counterproductive inconsistencies. According to the literature of strategic spatial planning (Albrechts 2004; Albrechts ,2010; Albrechts ,2012; Healey,1996; Healey, 2007) recent developments in the planning theory focus on a transformative form of strategic spatial planning that aims to give some kind of direction to the praxis planning initiatives and coordinate them on a broader scale through interactions, dialogues and framing of shared-meanings. Ziafati (2015) believes that this interactive and collaborative strategic planning instead of focusing on post-draft strategy consultation relies on local knowledge of the stakeholders in preparing the draft and coordinates them through consensus building.

It is worth mentioning that consensus building through ISSP gains impact through the rhetorical act of promoting a specific image of the current condition and future of the territory and through the framing of a shared-meaning. The core element of the coordination in a relational strategic planning is shaping such images through strategy-making and make sure that they are internalized by as many actors as possible (Healey, 1997; Healey, 2007; Pedersen et al., 2011).

Strategy-making is a complex mechanism and to understand it, we need to deconstruct it. Healey (1997) acknowledges four key components for strategy making through which we

can review the existing institutional structure of how ideas and routines are organized and how things are being done. These focal points are: initiators, stakeholders and arenas; routines and styles of discussion; making policy discourses; and maintaining consensus. The rest of this section elaborates these four dimensions according to Healey (1997; 2006).

a) Initiators, Stakeholders, and Arenas

Strategy-making is an exercise which starts among some actors and in a specific arena. Actors include the initiator (which can be one entity or a group of actors) and stakeholders. Initiators open up the strategy-making process by institutional design and explore who has an interest in the issue in hand and where the discussion might take place (Healey, 1997). This institutional design in the planning enterprises include establishing inter-organizational networks, creating new organizations or transforming existing ones, and formulating incentives and constraints in the form of laws, regulations, and resources to develop and implement policies, programs, projects and plans (Alexander, 2005).

The cracks in the institutional situation and power relations lead some actors to recognize that there is a need to reflect on what is going on and what they and other actors are doing. Those actors who have the capacity to recognize these cracks and find the opportunity to take initiative can mobilize networks around the idea of an effort in strategy-making. Thus, initiators are not necessarily in formal leadership positions but are merely those with the capacity to see and articulate to others a strategic possibility (Healey, 1997).

Although, initiators prefer to start the process in a formal arena created by political, administrative and legal systems which easily give legitimacy to the strategy-making process, sometimes such formal arenas do not exist or may be dominated by particular ways of thinking and ways of organizing which constrains development of the new ideas. To overcome this barrier, in many cases strategic spatial planning starts from an informal institutional context designed in a way that increase the legitimacy of strategic spatial planning (Ibid).

After receiving some basic supports and attention, the initiators have to mobilize other actors and so decide about whom to get involved, where to meet and how to conduct the discussions. These choices can heavily affect the legitimacy of the process and its effectiveness to coordinate all the influential actors around the strategies. ISSP essentially is an all-inclusive process which means all the stakeholders involve in the planning process (Ziafati, 2015). However, as Healey (1997) points out, there is no unbiased way of recognizing all the stakeholders and a less possibility of working objectively with those who have involved.

b) Routines and styles of discussion

When the initial settings for strategy-making are made the content and style of discussions should be determined. This is also another part of network design through which a meta-governor lowers the transaction costs of networking. It is not only about identifying and describing current processes and issues but also the strategic planners need to explore what these issues mean to different actors. It also means recognizing the differences between stakeholders and the variety of conditions that influence their quality of engagement. Healey

(1997) highlights three aspects of this operation which are important and need particular attention.

First is the style of the discussions. This is not only about ensuring that every actor has a voice because voices may be easily ignored or misheard. The conditions of the meetings and arenas may make it difficult for some actors to speak out. The procedure of discussion for strategy making often is a presumed routine which is embedded in the culture of communities and organizations. Therefore, the arrangement of the meetings, who speaks when and how and how the discussion would be concluded are pre-determined and prearranged. While ISSP as Healey (1997) sees it, includes active discussion of actors for choosing a style of discussion before starting the discussions about the content of the strategy.

Even within a comfortable arena, participants still might have difficulty to understand each other. This is due to their different technical and cultural languages that make various understandings, interpretation and expression styles (Ibid). Different Technical and cultural languages form different rationalities and frames of reference. Therefore, one issue, image or statement may make sense for some while has no meaning for the others. Some participants might be familiar with the language of statistical or consequence analysis while others are more accustomed to the language of values, beliefs, rights or feelings. The challenge for strategic argumentation is to accept them all but to recognize that translation between them is a complex and delicate task.

The third aspect concerns representation and the quality of enrollment. The participants in the strategy-making discussions are representatives of stakeholder communities. Their quality of participation and level of active involvement depends on the extent to which their reference community has the enthusiasm to have a voice in developing the strategic discourse. However, being actively involved is not the only way to influence the results. Those representatives, who engage in the meetings and events but do not speak out, can have their impacts on the discussion through informal talks with others and even through their non-verbal language. Furthermore, even being absent from the events does not mean losing the opportunity to impact the result. Present representatives may address not present members of their community in their conversations in order to legitimate their view or to ground a point. Therefore, being absent from the meetings does not mean being absent from the discussions.

c) Making policy discourses

When the interactive arena is shaped, and open discussions proceed, a boiling pot of stories will emerge which includes ideas, feelings, expectations, needs and also positions about presented facts, values, consequences and power relations. Healey (1997) explains that in traditional and rational approach, planners make sense by reducing the stories of actors into a point and taken-for-granted knowledge and combine it with other points in the black-box of analytical framework of spatial planning. However, in a more interactive and discursive form of strategic planning, this analysis is not an abstract technical process but an active social operation of sorting and filtering through argumentations, persuasions, and consensus building. This process is not just a technical matter but involves power, values, rights, and legitimacy.

Accordingly, similar to network framing in meta-governance, to coordinate and make an alignment between the actors in the discussion, a framing process is necessary to provide a frame of reference for further filtering of the stories. Healey (2006) believes that a strategic frame is an inspiring and persuasive vision which generate a new discourse with supportive storylines and metaphors. It is noticeable that Healey points out that “a strategy with such framing capacity is thus potentially a very powerful governance instrument” (Healey, 2006, p 189).

Strategic frames can be created in different ways subject to the institutional context and the preconditions. Nevertheless, Healey (2006) classifies these different methods into three different ways by which a strategic frame (vision) emerge:

1. Challenging a well-established frame in a direct discursive struggle
2. Evolution of a well-established frame by continual adjustment, co-alignment and reconsolidation.
3. Discovering emergent potentialities and conditions and creating the conditions to encourage such recognitions and evolution of respective strategic framing.

The first and the second take place when politicians or planners, introduce some strategic ideas to start the discussion, and use formal consultation procedures merely to let other stakeholders scrutinize and reflect on the robustness and validity of these pre-established strategies. Nevertheless, in the third method, all the stakeholder together create a new policy discourse as the frame and shared-system of meaning. They make the storyline through reaching some degree of agreement and collective imagination about the major issues, purposes of action, possible courses of actions, their consequences and the way to assess them (Healey, 1997).

It worth noticing that development of the consensual strategic vision through any of these ways requires a selective simplification of the perceptions, problems and interests happen. Thus, as Healey (1997) mentions, like any other stories, some benefits while others may suffer or have significant disagreements. However, in ISSP process, this is acknowledged that a strong storyline provides legitimate reasons for ignoring some evidence, some values and some claims for policy attention. To avoid this danger, a cautious policy-making exercise needs to open the possibilities for both evaluation and invention of alternatives before allowing a preferred discourse gain momentum and does not give room to other alternatives.

d) Maintaining the consensus

A strategic policy discourse needs to be open to continual reflexive critique since any agreement upon it will always disadvantage some and changes always are on the way. Healey (1997) believes that to ensure this openness, the agreement has to become formalized through the hard infrastructure of institutional design combined with soft infrastructures. It means that although existing political and legal institutions might provide appropriate processes to monitor the agreement, in the beginning, actors should agree upon how challenges and disagreements will be addressed and who has the right to challenge the consensus. It then ensures stakeholders

about how the agreement will be formalized and maintained, and how the strategic ideas and processes will be monitored over time.

In rationalist methodology, monitoring is a complementary stage for planning and implementation. It focuses on the changes in the context and their implications for the strategy, and on whether specified policy objectives were being achieved. However, in ISSP a reflexive critique of the strategic policy discourse needs to investigate whether a strategy and its storyline still make sense or a new storyline has emerged over time. To do so, a regular review should be combined by the rights to challenge in order to avoid leaving the review task in the hand of particular stakeholders who may have a strong interest in a particular interpretation of the strategy.

2.4. Analytical Framework: Meta-governance Instruments in Strategic Spatial Planning

Coordination in this research is considered a process of meta-governance because the regional level seeks to coordinate planning activities of autonomous municipalities and their self-governed networks in favor of regional development. This meta-governance partly has been implemented through a strategic spatial planning endeavor. Hence, the aim of this research is to critically analyze how this meta-governance concept has been exercised through regional strategic spatial planning. For this purpose, this research adopts a conceptual framework which shows the correspondence between coordination through meta-governance and coordination through SSP.

The idea is that the meta-governance instruments are combined with SSP in one package and labeled as ISSP. Therefore, interfaces, commonalities and links between meta-governance instruments and main dimensions of SSP are extracted (see Table 1) and will be used as the focal points to critically describe the process of making Structural Picture of Skåne.

It is worth reminding that network participation as one the meta-governance instruments is to use the other three mechanisms in a participatory style. It means to exercise meta-governance without any authority while being one of the actors, meta-governor negotiates and discusses the solutions and try to influence the agenda and result of the governance process. In this research the whole planning process is considered a network participation since due to the institutional context of the research problem, Region Skåne does not have any authority for spatial planning and take part in the network of municipalities in order to influence their agenda and activities.

As discussed in sections above, network design instrument which includes institutional design and procedural design for cooperation of autonomous actors is conducted based on a primary level of legitimacy and contributes to increase the legitimacy of the governance process. Similarly, the first two dimensions of ISSP are respectively about institutional design for planning, and the style and quality of discussion procedures. Thus, these two dimensions together materialize the network design instrument of meta-governance in an ISSP process.

Therefore, the initiator in the planning process resembles a meta-governor who aims to establish a legitimate arena for spatial planning.

Table 1. Analytical framework of the research- correspondences between meta-governance instruments and ISSP’s dimensions (source: author’s own)

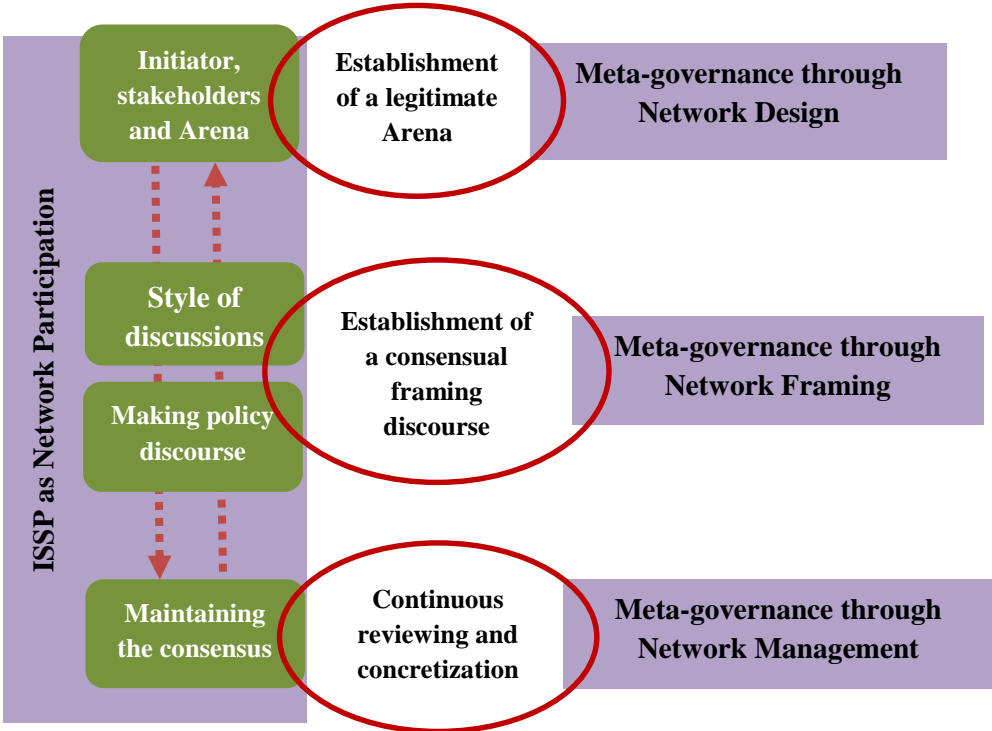
		Meta-governance Instruments		
		Network Design	Network Framing	Network Management
Four Dimensions of Interactive Strategic Spatial Planning	Initiator, Stakeholders and Institutional Arenas	Institutional Design for a legitimate strategic spatial planning		
	Routines and Styles of Discussion		Establishment of a consensual spatial policy discourse	
	Framing and Filtering		Establishment of a consensual spatial policy discourse	
	Maintaining the Consensus		Continuous adaptation and concretization of strategies due to reflective critiques	

The second focal point emerge when comparing network framing instrument with making the policy discourse in SSP. To coordinate the actors in a governance network without interfering directly in their autonomous affairs, meta-governor can frame their activities and decisions through shaping a shared image and a common perception of the mission of the network. Discursive construction or manipulation of the overall goal of the network and making sense of what the network is all about put the actors in the same page and ensure that their independent decisions and activities would be in line with the purpose of the meta-governor. Likewise, for strategy making in ISSP, a policy discourse with its single storyline is established through discussions and negotiations. This storyline provide justifications for sorting out the opinions of actors. Hence, the establishment of a consensual spatial policy discourse which the strategies are built upon mirrors the network framing instrument of meta-governance.

Finally, another instrument that meta-governor uses to coordinate the actors is to support the weak and marginalized actors to catch up with the mainstream and to reduce the tensions and conflicts (Sørensen, 2006; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). In ISSP these marginalized actors are those stakeholders who have been disadvantaged because of the selecting and filtering process. Although, when the consensus is built the majority of the actors agree upon the strategies, however, this agreement is based on a “general understanding” (Healey, 1997, p280) of the strategic approach. This is the nature of strategies which are broad and multi-dimensional to allow each stakeholder to have their own interpretation. However, later when it comes the time for more concretization of the strategies, conflicts, ambiguities, questions and disagreements come to light due to what Healey (1997, p. 280) calls “interpretive drifts” or changes in conditions. Hence, to keep the consensus alive these voices have to be heard in an

open and reflexive arena and stakeholders should possess the right to challenge the consensus. This means that to keep the consensus via hearing and supporting the disadvantaged and marginalized actors, some forms of network management is exercised though not only by a meta-governor but also by the whole network being open to reflexive critiques and continuous reviews.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for coordination through Interactive Spatial Strategic Planning (Source: Author)



Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology

In this chapter, section 3.1 provides an overview of the ontology, epistemology and the rationale for the case study research strategy utilized in the research. Section 3.2 discusses the rationale for a case study approach and the selection of the case. Section 3.3 explains the selection of materials for qualitative analysis and the identification of interviewees. Section 3.4 explains how the qualitative analysis was applied and how it evolved over the course of the research. Finally, Section 3.5 presents the limitations of the research and how these were mitigated where possible.

3.1. Epistemology, Ontology and Rationale for a Qualitative Research Strategy

This research does not address one real world phenomenon. Instead, it considers the existence of multiple and relative realities due to the different interpretations, understandings and stories of the actors who involved in the planning process. Hence, this research epistemologically follows an interpretative approach. As Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2011, p.116) believe this methodological paradigm encourage the researcher to understand the differences between humans in their role as social actors. In practice, this research collects and analyses the different ideas of the regional and local planners who at least represent two different perspective from two different level of planning.

This epistemological consideration leads this research to choose the social constructionism as its ontological approach because the same as interpretivism, Bryman (2008) explains this ontological paradigm supports the exploration of different versions of one social phenomenon instead of outlining one single reality.

Table 2. Fundamental difference between the quantitative and qualitative research strategies (Source: Bryman, 2008, p. 22)

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Principal orientation to the role of theory in relation to research	Deductive; testing of theory	Inductive; generation of theory
Epistemological orientation	Natural science model, in particular positivism	Interpretivism
Ontological orientation	Objectivism	Constructionism

In addition, the choice of the methodological paradigms is directly related to the research strategy and therefore to the research design and methods used to collect and analyze the data. As Bryman (2008, p.22) illustrates a qualitative research is consistent with the chosen epistemological and ontological approach.

3.2. Case Study Approach and Case Study Selection

According to Yin (2008) to make an extensive and in-depth description of how or why a phenomenon works or exists, a case study is a convenient method to take. Referring to the purpose of this research, to deeply understand the way regional spatial planning can be an effective mechanism to coordinate fragmented and autonomous municipalities, it seems logical to study some cases from the specific context which the research problem is entrenched. Therefore, it is worthy to study and review the experiences of those regions in Sweden which already have passed the way and have regional spatial plans to see how their planning practices have dealt with the issue of coordinating municipalities. Thus, the strategy of this research is a descriptive case study. Tobin (2010) points out that a descriptive case study reveals patterns and connections about theoretical constructs, to advance theory development.

A few regions in Sweden (Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Skåne) already have some forms of regional spatial planning; from a strategic structural plan (Skåne) to a more concrete regional land use plan (Stockholm). However, due to practical reasons and limitations such as time and financial issues, studying all the three regions is not achievable in a master thesis. Skåne has been chosen as the case for three reasons. First, its specific conditions make the results of the study more applicable for other regions in Sweden. Stockholm region has a legal competence to make a regional plan for the Stockholm urban-region while Skåne like many other regions in Sweden has no legally legitimate regional planning organization. Second, this case is a famous case between planners in Sweden (personal conversations) as a good example of coordination and cooperation in regional planning. Finally, Skåne is close to the place I live and traveling to the region and collecting information through interviews are more feasible.

3.3. Qualitative Data Collection

Data collection for this research has been designed in two different procedures in terms of the two main research questions. To answer the first question which needs to study the institutional structure of Skåne and planning process which led to Skåne Structure Picture, the main data and information used are secondary data provided in the official publications of Region Skåne and the web content of the official websites of relevant public administration bodies including Region Skåne, County administration board of Skåne, The Scania's Association of Local Authorities (Skåne kommunförbundet), association of for corners of Skåne. Two exploratory personal conversations with planners from Region Skåne have been conducted to receive complementary information and the broader picture.

In order to follow the coordination instruments in the planning process to answer the second research question, both primary and secondary data is used with the dominance of primary data resources. The official publications of Region Skåne include eighteen thematic studies (TemaPMs) in the form of a knowledgebase to back up five official reports which include the "Strategies for the Polycentric Skåne" as the output of the planning process. Despite the huge amount of information provided in these forms, detail information about the process and dialogues are missed and in many parts are vague.

After the exploratory conversations with the involved actors, it is become clear to me that main actors have been the Region Skåne (organization) and 33 municipalities of Skåne region. To receive reflections and complementary perspectives three elite semi-structured interviews are conducted with three main people from Region Skåne heavily involved in the planning process.

Table 3. Interviews with the planners from Region Skåne who involved directly in the process of structural picture of Skåne

Interviewees from Region Skåne	Position	Code for referring in the text
Moa Åhnberg	Spatial Planner	R1
Inger Sellers	Spatial Planner	R2
Therese Andersson	Project Leader	R3

In addition, ten elite semi-structured interviews is conducted with planners from ten municipalities from the four corners of Skåne who have participated in the planning process as representatives of their respective municipalities at the administrative level. Selection process started with recognition of the four corners of Skåne and the municipalities which are the members of each corner. Since the bigger cities in each corner had the leading role of the corner in the process, they have been chosen deliberately. However, from the north-west Helsingborg and from the south-west Ystad did not accept to participate in an interview. Then to have a broader picture and a more comprehend story several requests has been sent to all the smaller municipalities in each corner. Finally, eight municipalities answered positively to these request which are listed in the table 4.

Table 4. Interviews with the planners from the municipalities who involved directly in the process of structural picture of Skåne

Municipality	Date of the interview	Code for referring in the text
Vellinge (South-West)	03.21.2015	M1
Klippan (North-West)	03.21.2015	M2
Skurup (South-East)	03.21.2015	M3
Lomma(South-West)	03.22.2015	M4
Orkelljunga (North-West)	03.29.2015	M5
Perstorp(North-East)	03.24.2015	M6
Höör (South-West)	03.29.2015	M7
Malmö (South-West)	04.04.2015	M8
Kristianstad (North-East)	03.24.2015	M9
Tomellila (South-East)	04.27.2015	M10

Since some of the interviewees preferred to be unknown, the identity of all the interviewees has been preserved. The reason not to mention the position of interviewees is that there is only one person with such position in the municipality and the identity of the interviewee would be disclosed.

For interviews at each level, two different interview guides (Appendix 1) including open and thematic questions are prepared with the questions tailored to the required information from each level.

Furthermore, although huge amount of required information is acquired from the interviews to triangulate data resources this research also uses some written comments of municipalities on the draft version of structural picture and two evaluation study that have been done by consultancy companies in different stages of the process.

3.4. Qualitative Data Analysis

The unit of analysis in this research is a planning process. According to Flick (2014) to discover and describe issues in the field or structures and processes in routines and practices qualitative data analysis is an appropriate method. Often, qualitative data analysis combines overviews, condensation or summaries with approaches of a detailed analysis such as elaboration of categories, hermeneutic interpretations or identified structures. Qualitative content analysis is conducted to systematically describe and analyze the qualitative data collected in the data collection phase. This section demonstrates how the aforementioned collected data has been managed, organized and analyzed, and how the findings have been interpreted.

The process of data analysis started with managing the large volume of data in a meaningful way. This process is to find significant patterns and make a framework for using the essence of what the data reveal given the purpose of the study. The conceptual framework (presented in chapter 2) has been the climax in this process. The data have been categorized in terms of the categories that have made up the conceptual framework. Thus, the initial codes have been assigned to relevant contents through a constant process of open coding which led to the final coding schema. This coding schema is included in Appendix 2.

3.5. Limitations of the research

The limitations of the research can be addressed from two different aspects; the limitations of the method and the practical limitations. The former limitations are some general drawbacks of the qualitative research methods. According to Bryman (2008) this methods are perceived as subjective and rely mainly on the researcher's personal opinion and orientations. This makes the study difficult to replicate and in case of being a single case study even more difficult for generalization. The latter, however, are more specific to the nature of each research. For this thesis, two main practical barrier has limited the research. The first obstacle for this research was the language. While the research was in English, Sweden does not have English language as its official. Consequently, the research was limited to the available sources in English and some translations of the documents from Swedish to English. The translation took a long time since the researcher has no knowledge of the Swedish language. This also has had negative impact on the quality and depth of the interviews. Many potential interviewees refused to have an interview in English. Moreover, those interviewees who accepted the request had significant problems to communicate in English and explain the details.

The second practical limitation of this research exists due to the long process of making structural picture of Skåne. The process started in 2005 and achieved its main results from 2011 to 2014. Most of the interviewees from the municipalities could not remember the details of the meetings. Their opinions have been affected by the long process and it is almost impossible to find out their approach in the beginning of the process and their main stories. Moreover, since the process includes discussions in two levels of political and administrative, it was more convenient to have the interviewees from the both levels. However, due to this lengthy process the politicians have been replaced several times and it is not easy to make contact with them. Therefore, this research is limited to the idea of the planners and civil servants from the regional and local level.

Part II: Case Study

Regional Structural Picture of Skåne

Chapter 4

Introduction of the case study

In this chapter, section 4.1 provides an overview of the public administration and planning structure of Skåne region. Section 4.2 discusses the background of regional spatial planning in the Skåne region and the overall process which has resulted in the Structural Picture of Skåne (Strukturbild för Skåne).

4.1. Institutional Structure of Skåne Region

What we call Skåne region today as an administrative region emerged in November 1998 when three county council of Malmö city, Malmöhus County and Kristianstad County merged (Lind, 2010) and shaped the single self-governing regional council of “Region Skåne”. However, Lind (2010) report that the formation of one single region has not been smooth. During some interviews with informants it became clear that history has played a crucial role in this lengthy process of formation of the region. The informants emphasize past difficulties to reach agreement between the different regional parts of Skåne. The difference in economic structure, cultural characteristics and parochialism were highlighted as important factors to understand the background of Skåne. One of the informants summarizes this background and the difficulties in a single sentence: “A Skåne’s mile, called one kilometer in the Swedish scale” which points out to the mental distance between different parts of Skåne. Lind (2010) mentions several examples of failed attempts for cooperation between cities and organizations in the old counties of Malmöhus County and Kristianstad County as well as between them.

Despite all the obstacles and problems, Region Skåne emerged and is funded by regional taxes and has 149 members who are directly elected by the inhabitants of Skåne (Region Skåne, 2016). According to the website of Region Skåne (ibid) this organization is responsible for healthcare, public transport, business development, culture, infrastructure, social planning and environmental and climate-related issues in Skåne.

In addition, Region Skåne has a permanent mission from the government to coordinate regional development issues and and prepare Regional Development Programmes (RUPs) for Skåne which outlines the vision, overall objectives and strategies for the regional development. Region Skåne's role is to coordinate the work of the regional development strategy, to act as a motivator and unifying force for regional development, but also to be an actor in some of the implementation efforts. Several goals and measures in Skåne RUP are directly linked to developing consensus around regional development, spatial planning, and municipal comprehensive plans (Utveckling Skåne, 2016).

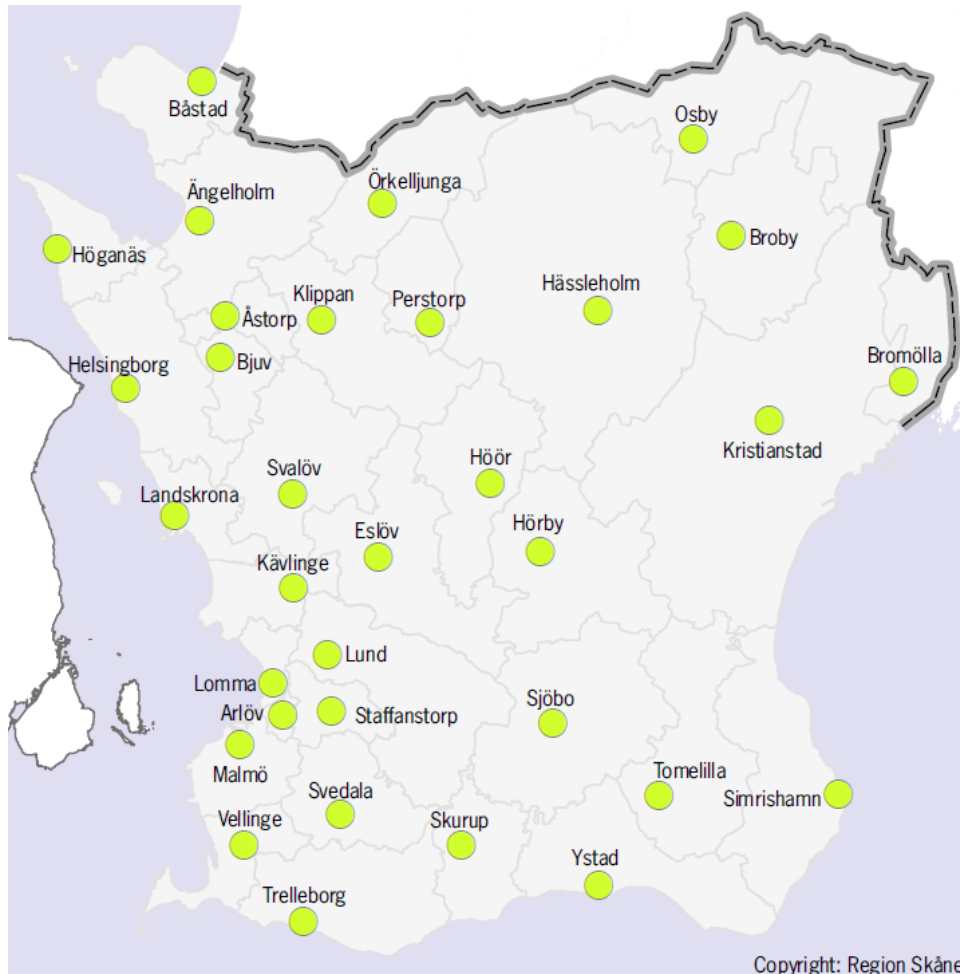
Moreover, County Administrative Board of Skåne (Länsstyrelsen Skånes) is another administrative body representing the central state and national level in the region. Its mission is taking responsibility for the social structure, protecting the environment and investing in rural

areas. The goal is to do the best for Skåne and contribute to good living conditions and sustainable development, so that the natural and cultural values, environmental protection, rural development and society are built on good grounds and from a gender equality perspective (Länsstyrelsen Skånes, 2016). Regional development used to be the task of County Administrative Board of Skåne but Region Skåne took over (Lind, 2010). However, as mentioned in Chapter 1 right now there is no legally legitimate regional spatial planning entity.

It should be noted that Skåne region has a complicated and multi-level public administration structure with controversial characteristics when it comes to spatial planning. The region is comprised of 33 municipalities which as mentioned before like every other municipalities in Sweden have a high level of autonomy and planning monopoly. Nevertheless, the municipalities have realized the importance of cooperation and shaped sub-regional cooperation committees in the four corners of Skåne. These bottom-up cooperation networks are:

- Southeast Skåne Committee of Cooperation (SÖSK) which is a cooperative body between municipalities Simrishamn, Sjöbo, Tomelilla and Ystad. SÖSK's role is to coordinate, advise and give recommendation to these municipalities in different common issues and has the following purposes;
 - To underline interests of southeast Skåne in discussions with regional, national and international level
 - To discuss joint municipality matters (Sydöstra Skånes Samarbetskommitté, 2016)
- Northeast Skåne with Kristanstad+Hässleholm as growth engine is a collaboration network between municipalities of Bromölla, Hässleholm, Hörby, Kristianstad, Osby and Östra Göinge in north eastern part of Skåne. Their focus is on growth and raising the employment opportunities. Although each municipality is working on these issues separately, in many development issues they have recognized that they are stronger together, not least when they speak with one voice regionally and nationally (Skåne Nordost, 2016).
- "Family Helsingborg" in the north-west corner, is collaboration between the municipalities of Bjuv, Båstad, Helsingborg, Höganäs, Klippan, Landskrona, Perstorp, Svalöv, Åstorp, Ängelholm and Örkelljunga. Their cooperation in its current form has been going on since the 1990s and from January 2016 they entered a new cooperation agreement to continue their cooperation under the name of Family Helsingborg as a brand with new vision and tasks. Working areas are mainly infrastructure, business, learning, openness and inclusion, and the environmental issues. The mission of the cooperation is to work for growth, efficiency and development of municipalities and to pursue common issues for the benefit of this region (Familjen Helsingborg, 2016)

Figure 2. 33 municipalities in Skåne. (Source: p 36. Flerkärnighet i Skåne)



- Finally, in the south-west of Skåne, the Malmö-Lund Region is a body for political cooperation led by the municipal leaderships in Burlöv, Eslöv, Höör, Kävlinge, Lomma, Lund, Malmö, Staffanstorps, Svedala, Trelleborg and Vellinge. There are three priority areas for their cooperation:
 - Physical Planning and Infrastructure
 - Employment and education issues
 - Business Issues

The aims are: 1) to provide an arena for cooperation between municipalities on strategic development issues and deepen cooperation in practical cooperation issues; 2) To work in order to make Malmö-Lund metropolitan region becomes accepted as the dominant growth engine in Skåne, and thereby strengthen Malmö-Lund region's role as a regional player; 3) To work for the Malmö-Lund region's interests in a regional and national perspective; 4) Promote Malmö-Lund region's strengths as part of Skåne, the Öresund region and the Baltic Sea region; and 5) Increase cooperation and exchanges with other actors and organizations regionally, nationally and internationally (Malmö-Lund Regionen, 2016).

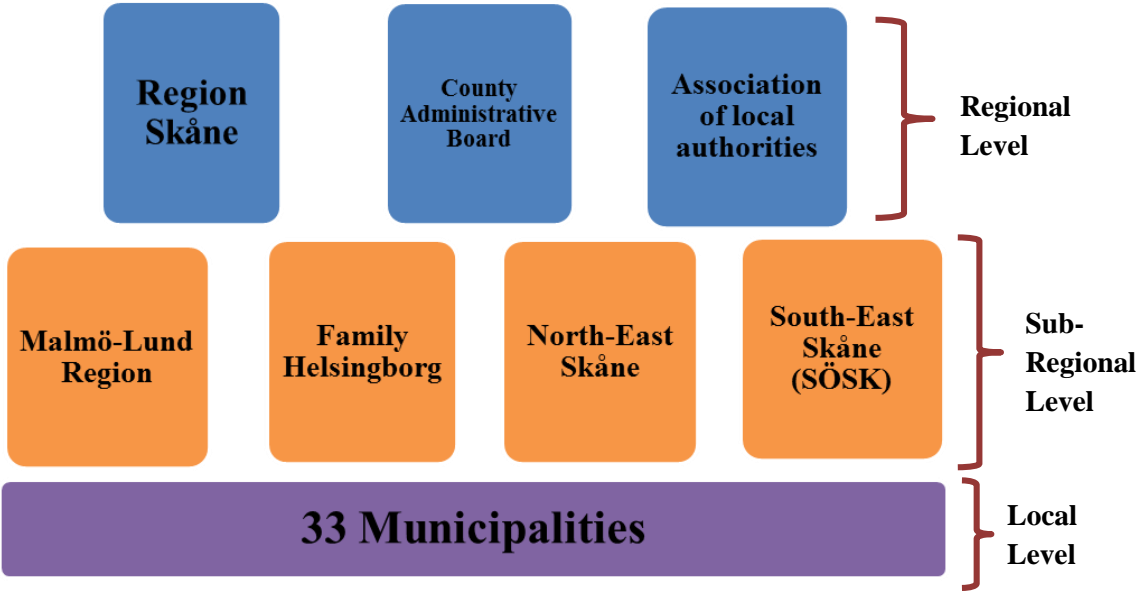
Beside these sub-regional cooperation committees in four corners of Skåne, another public organization is The Scania's Association of Local Authorities (Kommunförbundet Skåne) which works to coordinate, cooperate, build networks and inspire the members to use their joint strength. Among other things, this is done through mutual learning. The Association

of municipalities' main target audience is all those involved in municipal activities, both elected officials and employees (Kommunförbundet Skåne A, 2016). Their activities can be summarized under four main headings:

- Safeguarding and supporting the development of local authority self-governance
- Monitoring the local authorities' interests within all areas of activity
- Promoting interaction between local authorities
- Assisting local authorities in the development of their activities (Kommunförbundet Skåne B, 2016).

All these bodies are bottom-up attempts of municipalities to cooperate and solve their common problems which exceed their borders. The structure of public administration in Skåne is summarized in Figure 2.

Figure 3. Public administration structure of Skåne. Source: Author



4.2. Structural Picture of Skåne: Overview of the Process

Referring back to the pervious section, in Skåne regional planning in general is divided between two levels. One is the regional level which concerns about issues in the administrative region and the other level is sub-regional level with self-governed inter-municipal cooperation as the four corners of Skåne. The endeavour for regional planning at the administrative level resulted in Structural picture of SKåne and the corners have or are making their own regional structural pictures.

In such institutional arena, Region Skåne took the initiative for a strategic spatial planning focused on the regional scale which is part of the regional development work in Skåne. Region Skåne realized a gap in the planning structure of the region which causes some of the challenges facing development of Skåne and makes barriers on the way to achieve regional

development goals. To be more precise, the Region observed that there is a lack of land for business establishments in some of Skåne's municipalities, while in others there is vacant land (Interviewee R1). Jonung, Wintzell & Holmström (2011) explain that several municipalities expressed a desire for a deeper dialogue about land for establishment of companies. Therefore, a task to study the relationship between land use and access to existing and planned transport infrastructure was defined to create an overview of how land use is today and how the relationship between land use and transport infrastructure could be improved.

The work started as the project “Land use, accessibility and polycentric local structure-Structural Picture of Skåne” in 2005 which was financed by the European Regional Development Fund (Andersson, Åhnberg, Sellers, Hellsten, Sörvik & Utzon-Frank, 2013). The overall aim of the project was to strengthen Skåne's development and attractiveness regarding their spatial aspects. The goal was to create a cohesive knowledge bank for municipalities and businesses about available land for business establishments and housing with good commuting conditions (Jonug et al., 2011; Andersson et al., 2013).

The project was organized in three main groups: A political steering committee, the project management group (also known as project secretariat) and a reference group. The political steering committee consists of members of the Regional Growth Committee (Regionala tillväxtnämndens) presidium and two representatives from each corners of Skåne. All the steps had to be checked with and confirmed by this group of politicians before any further action. The reference group consists of representatives from the county administrative board, the association of local authorities, universities, business associations, etc. The reference group met a few times a year to provide input to the project. The project management group consist of experts and planners from Region Skåne working with the planners and civil servants from the municipalities (Jonug et al., 2011).

The project's purpose and goals have materialized through making a knowledge base consisting of 16 thematic studies (TemaPM) and 5 reports. The first report came out in 2006 and this phase of the project took almost 6 years (2006-2012). Via active discussions within Structural Picture of Skåne, a common knowledge base regarding the region's physical structures that cross municipal boundaries has been compiled (Andersson et al., 2013).

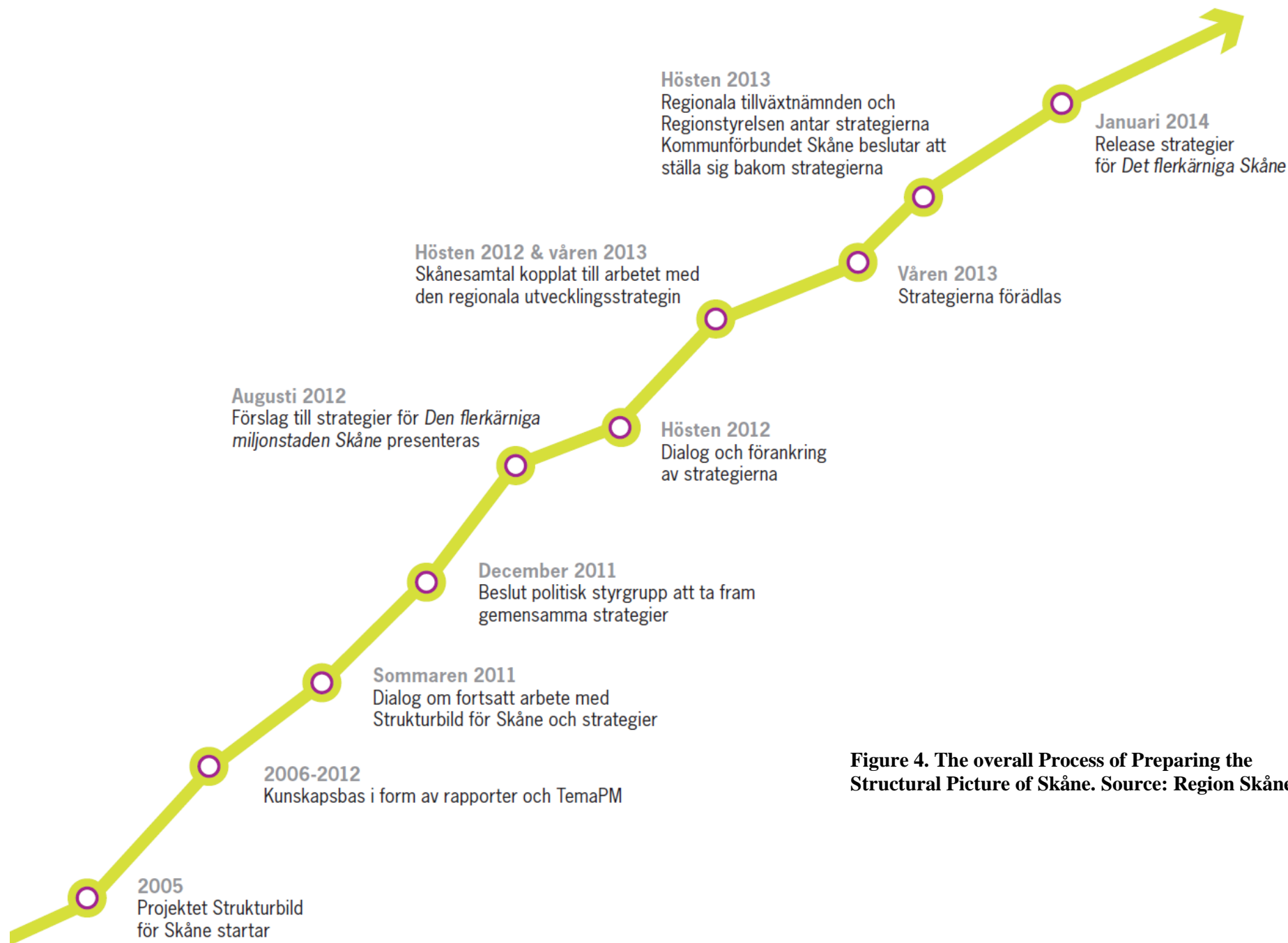


Figure 4. The overall Process of Preparing the Structural Picture of Skåne. Source: Region Skåne

During these thematic studies, analysis and their respective discussions with the municipalities, the project management group realized that based on the current trends and conditions different futures can be imagined for the Skåne. Although, the unique features of Skåne's spatial structure and its distinguishing polycentric characteristic was far more clear than before, different trends and comprehensive plans of municipalities could change this structure to other form. This stimulated the project management group to continue working with the spatial structure and connect it to RUP (Interviewee R3). In 2010, the second phase of Structural Picture of Skåne – Structural Picture 2.0 – was begun. This work resulted in four long-term scenarios of the spatial structure of Skåne. These are presented in the magazine “Structure Figure 2.0 - Dialogue on Skåne's development linked to physical structure”, as Spread out region with no core, Monocentric region, a region with few centers (Fåkärnig) and Polycentric region (Andersson and Åhnberg, 2012). The project management group discussed all the scenarios and their consequences with the municipalities and concluded that the polycentric region is the desirable structure for the future of the region (Interviewee R2 & R3).

The strategic objective of the Polycentric Skåne is concretized in five strategy areas (Andersson et al., 2013):

1. Invest in Skåne's growth engines and regional hubs and develop the polycentric urban structure
2. Enhance accessibility and bind Skåne together
3. Grow efficiently with a balanced and sustainable use of land
4. Create socially sustainable, attractive localities and environments that offer high quality of life
5. Strengthen Skåne's relations within the Öresund region, southern Sweden and the southern Baltic sea

These strategy areas have been formulated based on the knowledge base accumulated under Structural Picture of Skåne and is based on the continuous discussions held with and between Skåne's municipalities. “Statistical data and spatial analyses, as well as municipal comprehensive land-use plans and inter-municipal collaborations, together with the active discussion process have resulted in agreement on common strategies and joint responsibility for adopted positions.”(ibid, p. 12)

Structural Picture of Skåne became part of Region Skåne's normal operations in 2011, when the project management group received the confirmation of political steering group to continue working with the structural picture and concretize it through strategies with the Department for Planning and Urban Development heading the work. The aim was to continuously link the regional development planning with the municipalities' land-use planning (ibid).

Chapter 5

Meta-governance Instruments in Skåne's Regional Strategic Spatial Planning

In order to answer to the second research question, this chapter consists of three sections dedicated to the focal points which have been introduced in the conceptual framework of the research. This chapter is dedicated to show how the regional spatial strategic planning for Skåne contributes in coordinating the municipalities using meta-governance instruments.

5.1. Network Design: Establishment of a Legitimate Arena for Regional Spatial Planning

“Without a really legitimate leader, these discussions can not land on a concrete and practical decision or plan and that's the problem with Region Skåne and structural planning process.” (Interviewee M1)

As the initiator, Region Skåne identified municipalities as the crucial actors that their involvement is vital to conduct a legitimate regional spatial planning process. The focus was and is on the inclusion of all the municipalities because the main purpose for starting this spatial planning initiative has been to coordinate the comprehensive plans for a more efficient and balance use of land in favor of regional development. It means that those who are going to actually implement the strategies are the municipalities (Interviewee R1). Moreover, since they have planning monopoly, no one can force them to implement and consider these regional strategies in their planning affairs. Therefore, the only way to have a legitimate and effective regional spatial strategy is to make it through their involvement or at least to have their agreement upon it (Interviewees R2, R3 & M1).

Region Skåne has a reason for exclusion of private sector from the dialogue. They received the ideas and requirements of some big companies and businesses located in Skåne as part of making the knowledge base and consider them in strategy-making. Nevertheless, private sector was not directly involved in the strategy making dialogue because businesses prefer to be in contact with the municipalities to deal with their local issues such as land use, building permissions, infrastructure and environmental issues (Interviewee R3). Hence, Region Skåne assumed that what municipalities bring to the discussions include the ideas of the companies which are located or are going to locate there.

After identifying the key actors, Region Skåne invited the planners from municipalities to discuss the regional problems and current condition of the region in different themes. However, as explained in the previous chapter, to address regional spatial issues, Region Skåne does not have a taken-for-granted legitimacy to cognitively make the municipalities support the initiative. This did not seem as a problem when Region Skåne invited municipal planners for an all-inclusive dialogue during preparation of the knowledge base and TemaPMs. However, project management team realized that to be able to go further, Region Skåne need to informally

acquire some forms of legitimacy. Therefore, they invited the politicians of the municipalities to take part in the process and organized them in a political steering group. Confirmation of this steering group had been very important for Region Skåne to continue working with the structural picture and later with the strategies (Interviewee R2).

Nevertheless, since this cooperation is not a bottom-up and spontaneous network made by the municipalities themselves, some municipalities were and are skeptic about Region Skåne being the right organization to lead such spatial strategy making process. They don't question the competence of Region Skåne to conduct such process. This doubt has its roots in the existence of two other organizations at the regional level; Association of local authorities and County administrative board. Two of the interviewees mentioned that just the same as Gothenburg, this process could be conducted by the association of local authorities (Kommunförbundet) because it is built by the municipalities and "gets its legitimacy from the planning legitimacy of municipalities" (Interviewee M5) and "because regional planning includes a lot of local issues which are in the territory and competence of municipalities" (Interviewee M8).

In addition, county administrative board of Skåne is responsible to check all the comprehensive plans and discuss it with municipalities if there is any contrast with national interests. One interviewee mentioned that "they also have seminars and workshops to give a single view about Skåne as a region. So it seems there is a competition between county administrative board and Region Skåne about planning the region. Because the county administrative board has an official role to take care of national interest in the region, many of the issues which are discussed with the region are in their field of interest" (Interviewee M5).

The existence of these parallel regional organizations and the ambiguities in the Planning and Building Act (PBL) regarding regional planning reduce the structural legitimacy of the process. However, Region Skåne has attempted to increase the moral legitimacy of the structural picture by employing state-of-the-art of techniques and professional routines and procedures. To discuss the current situation of the region in different themes and issues, Region Skåne used numerous amounts of facts, figures and analytical maps provided by well-known consultancies. Through this kind of meetings, Region Skåne tried to gain a procedural legitimacy because these analyses are the accepted techniques and methods for planners to know the territory with its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Almost all the interviewees from the municipalities mentioned that technically Region Skåne "Have done a very good job". One of the interviewees from Region Skåne (R3) pointed out that after a while municipal planners started to ask "so what?" and asked us to say something about theses analysis, not just provide them with the facts but to have a position towards them to make a new arena for discussion. It means that for the planners in the municipalities, Region Skåne is procedurally legitimate to make a regional knowledge bank for spatial issues and based on that bring suggestions to the discussions.

Despite this fact that the structural picture of Skåne cognitively is not a taken for granted legitimate procedure and its structural legitimacy is under question, another aspect of its moral legitimacy helps Region Skåne to be able to design a network for meta-governing the

network of municipalities. The regional imbalanced use of lands in Skåne and lack of accessible lands to establish businesses and houses, and the need for a regional spatial strategy to achieve regional development goals could be the foundation of a moral legitimacy subject to fitting in the municipalities' system of values. For sure, discussing the consequences of not having a regional spatial strategy could be the starting point to increase moral legitimacy of regional planning for Skåne. This is not merely a technical issue. Planners in the municipalities might understand the consequences and the significance of the need for a regional plan, but it is the politicians who judge if it is socially valuable from their perspective. While Malmö (Interviewee M8) raises a fundamental question about the moral legitimacy of the structural picture of Skåne. "Is it necessary that these four corners of Skåne cooperate in planning? Because I don't think that Skåne has to be necessarily a functional region to have a plan for. It can be also that only functional regions should have their regional plan!", Lomma (Interviewee M4) explains that on the one hand, municipalities think about their own problems or at the best about their common problems with neighbor municipalities but not the problems that exist in the regional level and have negative effects and impacts on them. On the other hand, there are issues such as infrastructure or transportation which a regional plan for them is necessary. However, if it is up to the municipalities due to their very different ideas and interests coming to a final decision is very difficult if not impossible. Therefore, M4 believes that an entity from a higher level is required to coordinate them and sometimes takes the final decision.

In addition, Structural Picture of Skåne has been the first of its kind conducted by the county council (except Stockholm because of its especial and unique institutional situation). So there is no well-known and experienced model for that in Sweden to increase the cognitive legitimacy of this process. By structuring the political steering group in a way that includes representative municipalities from four corners' inter-municipalities networks, Region Skåne implied the recognition of a well-known model of cooperation. The interviewee from Vellinge municipality (M1) approved that having networks to check the overlaps of comprehensive plans in each corner of Skåne and the experiences with inter-municipalities associations for over 15 years in the four corners of Skåne made it "natural" for municipalities to participate in a process which is going to be the same as sitting with other municipalities and discuss issues which can not be solved in a lower scale of planning. Nevertheless, in the beginning for some municipalities "... it was not clear what they were about to do and what exactly would be the result. It was a lot of discussions about what they were going to do and about why and how." (Interviewee M9)

Regarding the pragmatic legitimacy of the process, on the one hand, almost all the municipalities believe that Region Skåne has their stake in the heart and wants to do something good for both the region and the municipalities. On the other hand, while some municipalities see their self-interest in this process (Interviewees M2, M4, M9 & M10), others (Interviewees M1, M3, M5, M8) are skeptic whether there are any exchange of interests and if structural picture has any benefit for them. Nevertheless, Region Skåne tried to persuade all the levels in the municipalities (Politicians, Heads of the municipalities and planners) that this process and its expected results do not threaten the planning monopoly of the municipalities but adding

something new that they can use in their planning initiatives and is good for all (Interviewee R2).

5.2. Network Framing: Establishment of a discursive consensual spatial strategy

As mentioned in chapter 4, the first phase of this process has been to prepare a knowledge base for the current condition of the Skåne in order to understand the current spatial structure of the region. The purpose has been to help the municipalities think regionally and put themselves in the regional perspective. Meanwhile, Region Skåne has been able to show that it is not about the region taking over municipal planning monopoly but to argue that a regional spatial work benefits everyone (Interviewee R2, R3).

The themes for the reports and TemaPMs determined through open round tables consisting of Region Skåne and municipalities where municipalities shared their questions and ambiguities about regional issues and workshops held later when Region Skåne discussed the themes and their respective analysis with the municipalities in more detail (Interviewee R2).

The second phase has been the development of scenarios and discussions about them to choose the vision. This part of the process is analyzed in two different layer of form and content of the discussions.

5.2.1. Routines and Styles of Discussion

According to the interviewees from the Region Skåne the scenarios have been discussed in many different meetings with both the politicians and planners from the municipalities (Interviewees R1, R2 & R3). Almost 13 political meetings were held with the planners and politicians from Region Skåne regional development committee (Regional utvecklingsnämnden) and politicians from in groups of three and each almost 3 hours long. The groups included small and big municipalities with the same issues from different corners of Skåne. The project manager had a presentation and then the politicians discussed the region Skåne perspective. It is important to note that at the end of each meeting the project manager from Region Skåne received the agreement of the majority to continue the process with the result of that meeting. In addition, the result of these meetings presented as a draft and based on that draft a big meeting held as a workshop with stations for each municipality and in two hours after presentation they could made their comments and put notes on it and discuss with each other and with region (Interviewees R1, M2).

After that they were asked to keep talking with the Region Skåne about the draft. Therefore, the project management team had many face to face and individual meetings with each municipalities. In addition, at the end of this period the municipalities had the opportunity to write back their final comments and ideas (Interviewee R2). After changes and internal discussions in the Region Skåne, another final meeting took place to discuss the small changes such as the name of the document (Interviewee R1).

Nevertheless, according to Jonung, Wintzell and Holmström (2011) the attendance at the political meetings has been poor especially from the municipalities. It has also emphasized that the political steering committee has been too reactive instead of working more focused questions on a higher strategic level.

One of the interviewees from the region (R1) believes that because the region has no authority upon the municipalities, the decision to take part in the meetings is totally personal from the side of municipalities' politicians and if they think that a meeting is interesting, the relevant civil servants and the politician will participate or become more proactive in the meeting. Otherwise it is reasonable that they have other local priorities to allocate their time and human resource to them.

In addition, for the planners from some of the municipalities (specially the smaller ones), taking part in the meetings had just been part of their routine job to keep the connection with other municipalities and the region. They did not have any specific expectations and just participate to monitor and keep an eyes on the process (Interviewee M3). This implies that although this planning practice were not very serious for many municipalities since the result is not legally binding (Interviewee M5), many had been concern about the process and if something against their interest happen and it makes them reactive rather than proactive.

Another reason for not taking an active role in the discussion, as interviewee M4 explains, is that historically the emergence of the Skåne as a region 20-25 years ago, had been a political decision to make a united region through merging Malmö-hus and Kristianstad County. However, in deeper layers it is still divided and a single identity takes more time to emerge and be internalized by the municipalities in the four corner. This might be one of the reasons that some municipalities in the meetings had been very negative about the nature of a regional structural planning at this level. Interviewee M5 argues that although they have huge and expensive projects in their corner around Helsingborg, they never got enough financial support from the region because "... they put all their money for building railways in the Kristianstad-Hässelholm corner and this stimulate the competition between the corners." Such opinions shows that the corners' identities are stronger than a regional identity in the administrative level. Therefore, the municipalities prefer to focus on their corner as a region rather than the issues in a higher level.

The interviewee M1 adds that the bigger municipalities have difficulties to understand the significance of smaller municipalities' problems and it seems that the region also understand the language of bigger municipalities better than the small municipalities (Interviewee M10). The interviewee M1 states "...so far it is more about the bigger municipalities. For example they talk about super bike region while it is not an issue for smaller municipalities because we don't have the basic tools like the normal cycling ways yet". Some other municipalities have positive approaches that although sometimes the issues and topics of the meetings has not been directly related to the concerns of the smaller municipalities but they give the planners lots of new knowledge. Anyone who have had time and interest in the topic of the meetings took part and shared the new information and knowledge with others later in the municipality

(Interviewee M4 & M8). This approaches approve that the personal approach of a representative has a significant impact on the quality of the process and the dialogue.

Moreover, some municipalities found it difficult to communicate with the region because they have a different scale of thinking. Some people involved in the discussions and meetings had worked in both scale and their presence have been helpful to translate these two worlds for each other (Interviewee M1). So the quality of discussions beside all other factors were depended on the knowledge of people who were involved.

Despite these factors with negative impacts on the quality of discussions, the municipalities from all over the region more or less met each other in these arenas that the region prepared for them. These meetings helped them to recognize that other municipalities which are located farther away and not necessarily in their corner might have the same problems as they do. Out of these arenas, as a side effect, this caused a new frame for the network between the municipalities (or between the planners as personal networks) with the same issues to help out each other in their master plans in a more structured way and to reduce the mind distance between east and west side of the region (Interviewees M1, M3, M8, M9 & M10).

Beside all the endeavours to make a collaborative and cooperative arena to face the regional questions, if the amount of reports and publications and the number of meetings exceed the abilities and capabilities of the municipalities, it will have negative impact on the coordination process. Municipalities would have difficulties to follow the process properly and continuously. As the interviewee M1 mentions that “There have been many workshops and lots of reports and publications that maybe people just put them in their shelves...some planners might lost their interest because of the long process and long-time this work took and I can not see where and when we made the real conclusion”. Furthermore, interviewee M2 concludes that “... So for us the process became sort of a monologue from the region to us. They made a regional plan and we just made some comments on it. It is a good plan but we were not really part of it as they expected from the beginning.” Nevertheless, some other municipalities appreciate the high number of meetings and workshops because they were held in small groups and which let the participants speak out much easier than few but big meetings (Interviewee M10). These small and friendly meetings, however, might make it more difficult to speak out oppositions and disagreements for some participants (Interviewee M5) which of course depends on the personality of representatives.

5.2.2. Framing and Filtering

It has always been a common-sense and common-term used by planners that Skåne is a polycentric region. This concept has been promoted by ESPON for a long time. However, there were no discussion about its meaning and facts for Skåne before the structural picture of Skåne entered in a phase to develop strategies for the future. It worth mentioning that the planners from the municipalities asked Region Skåne not only bring them some facts but also say something about them and have some analysis to help them start a discussion (Interviewee R3). To discuss it with the municipalities and contextualize it for Skåne, Region Skåne developed four scenarios to make the arena ready for the discussion and present the idea of polycentricism to the municipalities (Interviewee R1).

As explained in the previous chapter, section 4.2, a consulting company studied the polycentricity of Skåne for almost two years using a model to predict different structures of the region based on different conditions. However, R1 mentions that while presenting the scenarios in the workshops, Region Skåne realized that they had gone too far without discussing it with the municipalities and particularly with the politicians.

The discussion that happened later, unexpectedly raised many different ideas and expectations of municipality since each municipality had its own picture and understanding of a polycentric Skåne. Due to the blurred and vague concept of polycentricity all the participants had agreed upon it because they could have their own interpretation. However, when Region Skåne presented the four scenarios to illustrate what they really mean by this concept and how the region would look in the future if they follow this picture, the municipalities expressed their disagreements and different stories "...specially when it is about transportation when there are a lot of money involved" (Interviewee R1)

To make a consensus and coordinate the municipalities a filtering process happened through argumentations, persuasions and negotiations. Although the process to develop the scenarios has been a technical process, filtering and selecting the stories of municipalities to concretize the dominant policy of polycentric Skåne as the frame of reference had been a discursive and interactive process. Through challenging and adjusting the well-established frame of polycentricism and adopt it to the various stories of the municipalities, Region Skåne and municipalities tried to reach a common sense and alignment.

From the Region's perspective this process has affected the way municipalities see each other. Therefore, the frame is the interdependency and different networks which exist and could emerge between the municipalities not only to have a better region but also to develop more efficiently as a municipality. The Region (Interviewees R1, R2 & R3) believe that the polycentric scenario demonstrated to and persuaded the municipalities that they all need those growth engines and regional hubs and the networks between them to work with each other.

Referring to this frame the municipalities presented their opinions and argumentations to make the Region lift them up and consider them in making the strategies and final picture. Interviewee M1 states that they tried to lift up the current problems such as the pressure on the roads and the commuting style of the region which is dominated by cars to discuss the solutions and lead the strategies towards them. Nevertheless, "these discussions were pushed away in the dialogue and not visualized in the structural picture. I think the picture and the conclusion which is published is not realistic and it is more romanticizing the reality, because it shows that all the hubs and nodes in the region are connected by public transportation (busses and railways) but it is very far from the reality". Interviewee M5 also points out that the south-east corner of Skåne has no good rail ways and busses, so by just saying that Ystad or Simrishamn are important for the region and not improving their current situation, the problem stay the same as today. Hence, some of the municipalities (Interviewees M5, M8 & M10) argue that the structural picture is not about controversial issues because the Region wants to avoid real tensions. So they just took issues that were not priorities and real problems of the municipalities and even the region. Interviewee M5 explains that the Region need to make a rhetoric about a

polycentric region which all the big cities have a role because there are politicians in this level who have vote from all over the Skåne and they have to say that all corners have their center and are important for the region. It is more a political issue rather than a planning conclusion. Because the reality is that at the moment all the big companies moving to Malmö and not to other cities which they call hubs.

Some small municipalities argued that they do not want to build more houses and develop all the lands they have because it destroy their skyline and parks and green areas. They discussed that if the impact of this polycentric vision is to distribute the growth and population to other parts of the region they agree with it otherwise if the result is more growth and population for the cities around the engines and hubs, this is not what they want (Interviewee M4).

Regarding the strategies, the first proposal of the strategies was prepared without any discussion because Region Skåne believed that “the strategies were not something new and had been already there in the material and reports and we just need to structure it.”(Interviewee R3). However, it turned out that the most controversial part of the process is determination of the strategies which imply the way to achieve the vision. Therefore, an extensive and ongoing discussion has taken place between the Region and municipalities.

Some of the municipalities had concerns and negotiated about putting all the investments in the growth engines and regional hubs and waiting for the spillover effects because “... the interdependency of municipalities is more complex than just say big municipalities must lead and we follow. It means that we don’t understand the interdependency. It is like have a relationship but only one side decide for the relationship which does not work...” (Interviewee M1) and they are not persuaded by the Region in the end.

Nevertheless, Malmö brought a different story to the discussions. They agree with a polycentric Skåne but stated that “... it does not mean that all the centers should be equal since Malmö is far bigger than the others and this is the reality” (Interviewee M8). Although, they could not participate in all the meetings but in those where they were present, they tried to show and explain the differences of Malmö with other big cities and its advantages and disadvantages. They also emphasized their view and position clearly in their comments on the drafts. This point did not passed the filter of the Region probably because of the previously mentioned political reasons. However, the cooperation with Copenhagen was also another point that Malmö emphasized in the meetings which is lifted up by the Region.

In the meetings, Kristianstad had a problem that Malmö-Lund and Helsingborg are considered as growth engines and they are considered as a regional hub (Interviewee R1). Interestingly, they have had a proactive role in the discourse especially at the political level to argue that Kristianstad can have a stronger role in the region as a growth engine. Through discussions and negotiations with the Region and Hässleholm, they could inject this point into the picture and strategies that Kristianstad-Hässleholm are able to play the same role as Malmö-Lund for the north-east corner of Skåne. They were also successful in bringing this idea to the discussion and add it to the picture that Skåne alone is not interesting for Kristianstad and they

want the Region to put the connection of Skåne to Blekinge and Småland in the picture which for Kristianstad are as important as Skåne (Interviewee M9).

Finally, an interesting case of selecting and filtering of stories is Trelleborg which were not recognized as a regional hub in the draft version 2011 based on the theoretical criteria. The Region did not have that much discussion with them directly back then but some other municipalities from the south-west corner had some ideas about Trelleborg. They probably had discussions between themselves and with Trelleborg because when the Region sent out the other version in 2013, Trelleborg stepped up and argued that they want to be a regional hub and a series of serious discussions started with them (Interviewee R1). Interviewee R3 explains that "... in the dialogue they nagged us to death and had good argumentations to persuade us that they should be recognized as a regional hub, mainly because of their international harbor. So they lifted up an issue that we did not have attention about it in the beginning".

These discussions have had a significant impact on the knowledge and attitude of the municipalities towards the region and each other. Most of the interviewees point out that the municipalities (specifically small municipalities) gained a new and coordinated regional perspective during this process. For example, before participating in this process they already knew that the growth of Malmö has some positive and negative impact on them. However, they didn't know about the impacts that other centers such as Lund, Trelleborg or Ystad could have on them and therefore currently they consider working with other centers and not only rely on Malmö.

Moreover, in some municipalities such as Vellinge (Interviewee M1) the municipality took the polycentricity as a model for their comprehensive planning to have territory with several well-connected centers. Also their connection with Malmö which is clarified and emphasized in the structural picture helped them to make different decisions about their transportation and roads. Based on this structural picture they planned to bring the railway down there to connect them on the one hand with the Oresund and Copenhagen and on the other hand with Stockholm and Northern Europe. Interviewee M1 emphasizes that the discussion about the importance of public transportation inspired them to put a significant amount of money and efforts on the projects related to improvement of public transportation which is reflected in their comprehensive plan. In addition, ecological issues that were discussed during the structural planning with the Region is reflected in their comprehensive plan by taking care of the farmlands.

Kristianstad (Interviewee M9) considers itself to be a growth engine in the future and it is reflected in their comprehensive plan which show that they need more housing areas, attraction of companies, stimulating the growth of their university in a regional scale and make a better public transportation to connect them with other corners and hubs. Nevertheless, for some municipalities (Interviewees M2 & M3) the connection between the planning tasks of the municipalities and the strategies is not technically clear and the structural plan merely play a framing role as a background for the strategic decisions of the municipalities.

To sum up, the polycentric Skåne evolved as the dominant frame of reference through further discussions with the municipalities after a purely technical process of making scenarios.

Those scenarios were developed to show if the municipalities and the Region do not work together and if they continue working as they have done so far, there would be no polycentric region in almost 20 years. Region Skåne (Interviewee R2) believes that they could demonstrate and prove that the scenario of polycentricity is the most sustainable in the long run. This has been acceptable as a vision but when it was concretized through strategies many municipalities did not persuade because there is no consequence analysis for the strategies and the proposed structure (Interviewee M7). Due to the extensive discussions around the strategies, selecting and filtering of the ideas and stories has been based on negotiation and persuasion. Although not all the points and stories have been acknowledged by Region Skåne, the municipalities recognize the limitations and the nature of such procedures. Interviewee M4 states “that’s the nature of this kind of works that you cooperate but the result sometimes is not the best for you but it is the best for the region as a whole”. Interviewee M10 points out that “it is because our points and ideas are about our problems in the municipal level but they have to look at the bigger scale. When the process is based on the discussion sometime you win sometimes not”. Interviewee M9 concludes “of course everyone is not satisfied with the result but at least we came to a conclusion and now we have a shared vision and picture of Skåne although with disagreement in details.”

5.3. Network Management: Continuous Adaptation and Concretization of Strategies

5.3.1. Confusions and Ambiguities

Although the Region has sent out various drafts of the structural picture and its strategies and the municipalities made many comments on them and discussed them in different meetings, since the municipalities have not signed anything to formally demonstrate their consensus (Interviewee R1 & R3) they probably do not agree with all the words written in the last version of structural plan and any conflicts or unanswered questions are probable. This statement from the Region shows that there are conflicts and misunderstandings between the municipalities themselves and with the Region. Interviewee R1 clarifies that “the *big municipalities think that we focus too much on the small municipalities and small municipalities feel that we don’t see them*”. To deal with these conflicts, Region Skåne keep working with the small and big municipalities and support them to fulfill their needs as much as possible. Reducing the conflicts and clarifying the ambiguities of the picture for them is one of the reasons that Region Skåne continues the dialogue and the discussion with the municipalities.

For example, interviewee M1 explains that the projects related to the structural picture are mostly big projects with funds and budget from the state. What makes them worry is with putting all the money into big projects such as high speed rail way, there would be no support of the small projects which are vital for the smaller municipalities. She mentions that due to the refugee crisis, the state has given the small municipalities like Vellinge a high load to provide places for them to live and it is much more difficult for a smaller municipalities do not have much apartments and it is mostly villas and family houses. So they should build everything almost from scratch and it cost a lot for them and take longer time comparing to bigger municipalities. This is an issue that expect to get support and help from the Region.

Besides this questions from small municipalities, Malmö has another problem which needs more discussions and negotiations with the Region. Interviewee M8 points out that Malmö contains the bulk of the population and has a very different structure from other big cities in the region. Therefore, they expect to see this difference reflected in the structural picture while in the current polycentric picture, Region Skåne has considered all the big cities in Skåne as equal.

Although, because of all the reports and the knowledge base that the Region has prepared "...it is taken for granted now that we should continue working with these structural picture and this knowledge base and the maps..." (Interviewee R2), the changes in political map through elections require the Region to continuously promote this process and its results to the new politicians in order to keep them motivated working with the structural picture.

Another reason is that with the raise of the new issues such as housing or refugee crisis or the demands from the central government (Interviewee R3), the Region have to continue working with municipalities according to the picture in different ways in order to translate it and interpret it regarding the new challenges.

5.3.2. Continuous concretization

"We don't discuss with municipalities about changes in the current picture but we work with them to concretize it and interpret it and all our other plans and projects are connected to this picture."(Interviewee R1)

As mentioned in Chapter 4, Structural Picture of Skåne became part of Region Skåne's normal operations in 2011 to continue working with the structural picture and concretize it through strategies and projects. The aim has been to continuously link the regional development planning with the municipalities' land-use planning. To deal with all those aforementioned questions and ambiguities, Region Skåne continue to work with the municipalities in different ways and all their tasks and projects are connected to this work. As interviewee R1 believes "Transforming from a project to a working process makes it possible to maintain these results otherwise after couple of years it will be gone. It takes time to institutionalize a relationship between municipalities and regional level." In order to describe this continuous concretization some examples are given by the interviewees from both regional and local level.

Interviewee R1 explains that Region Skåne currently works on the social dimensions of this physical plan and discuss it among themselves as well as with the municipalities. She emphasizes that "Somethings which later pop up or lifted up by partners, we try to work on them not by putting them in the document but through related projects and dialogues." An example is working with Hässleholm-Kristianstad to help them for a better cooperation and also working with the six municipalities in the north-west (Interviewee M5) to help them see what they can do according to this structural picture and also according to their sub-regional picture.

To deal with the questions and weaknesses regarding the transportation, for those municipalities which do not have train station to connect them to other municipalities, Region

works with them through developing a regional super bus concept. Based on this structural picture, Region Skåne invest on the small projects such as building railways for Lomma (Interviewee M4) or on the big projects such as the high speed train between the growth engines and regional hubs (Interviewees R1 & R3). Moreover, municipalities use the polycentric Skåne as their argumentation for asking for investment from Traficverket (for example for the rail way from Simirshamn to Ystad).

In addition, when the four corners of Skåne want to make their own sub-regional structural plans, they invite Region Skåne to help them as a consultant and support them to connect their plans with the other corners according to the structural picture (Interviewee R3). This means that besides the benefits of the inputs from the knowledgebase (Interviewees M1, M4), the four corners have continuous discussions and meetings with the Region to translate the structural picture to a local scale and “to make the abstract and general picture more meaningful” (Interviewee M8) or “to see what it means and what kind of projects we can have based on it” (Interviewee M9).

Furthermore, Region Skåne currently has started a discussion with the private sector for they were excluded and disadvantaged from the process. They are working on the lack of housing and private sector has become a very important actor and member of the network (Interviewee R3). This is another attempt to manage and improve the network of actors by involving an excluded stakeholder while communicating with them has not been traditionally in the agenda of Region Skåne.

Chapter 6

Conclusive Remarks and Policy Recommendations

This concluding chapter presents the research summary through the main findings for the research question. The section also aims to consider recommendations for coordinating autonomous municipalities in a nonhierarchical planning system through strategic regional spatial planning. It also includes suggestions for development of this research and opportunities for future research in this domain.

6.1. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to discuss those dimensions of an interactive strategic regional spatial planning by which Region Skåne as the entity responsible for regional development coordinates the autonomous municipalities in the Swedish non-hierarchical planning system.

According to the findings, in making the structural picture of Skåne as an strategic spatial plan for the region, Region Skåne has played the role of a meta-governor through designing, framing and managing a network of municipalities in order to coordinate self-governed networks of the four corners. Hence, the process to make this picture became a coordination process through implementation of meta-governance instruments. To design the network, Region Skåne had to build a legitimate arena which municipalities as the main actors with the planning monopoly acknowledge it and participate. For this purpose, Region Skåne has worked on some aspects of the three forms of legitimacy (cognitive, moral and pragmatic) to compensate those controversial aspects which limit the legitimacy of the structural picture of Skåne.

To frame the network, Region Skåne managed different routines and styles of discussion such as open round tables, workshops and individual meetings with the municipalities to involve all the municipalities and increase the quality and quantity of their participation. However, the latter depends on different factors such as personal attitude of the representatives, the misunderstandings or difficulties to understand each other due to different scales of problems and technical languages. Nevertheless, through this developed style of discussion, the policy discourse of polycentricism was promoted by Region Skåne via discussing the consequences of alternative scenarios. This dominant scenario evolved by means of continual adjustment, co-alignment and reconsolidation which produced five strategies.

While concretizing the strategies and define various projects based on them, conflicts and questions are raised by the municipalities which find them not in line with their interpretation of polycentric Skåne. Moreover, to work towards these strategies some municipalities have problems and limitations which need supports from the Region to take over them. Finally, there is a call for translating the strategies into sub-regional structural pictures in the four corners and comprehensive plans of the municipalities. These are some of the reasons

that cause a continuous working process with constant meetings and discussions to empower those actors who are weak to be connected to the strategies or shed light on the strategies for those who have questions and ambiguities.

6.2. Policy Recommendation

Initially the purpose of this thesis has been to find and understand those aspects of strategic spatial planning which have significant contribution in convert it into a coordination process. But this task turned out to be more complicated than expected and therefore the results of this study should attract the attention of the Swedish government, regional authorities and municipalities to the problems that prevent such regional spatial planning to become a coordination mechanism. To stimulate such discussion some recommendation is provided in this section.

First, as the findings of this research demonstrate the legitimacy of the regional spatial planning in Sweden is not very high especially when the responsible organization is not specified in the Planning and Building Act (PBL) and the plan itself is not legally binding. Hence, the first suggestion can be a revision of PBL to either officially introduce the County Council as the responsible body and the leader of the process or acknowledge the association of the municipalities as the leader and initiator and other regional authorities as consultants.

Second, the regional body which is acknowledged as the responsible entity to lead the planning process requires to increase the level of trust between itself and municipalities and also between different parts of the region which have no cooperation out of this planning arena. This can be done through a transparent start of the process via publishing an official document which eliminates the financial aspects of the project and clarifies the aims and goals of the process.

The starting point of the process is important since it has significant impacts on the attitude of the actors towards the initiator, each other and the process in general. Therefore, the last suggestion again is dedicated to this part of the process. Region Skåne has started the process by accumulate knowledge about the region and the municipalities were involved in this part of the process. However, analyzing the findings and providing scenarios out of the knowledgebase had been a merely technical procedure which is a significant oversight because this is exactly where the actors receive a cooperation sense expect the result to emerge from their stories rather than from black box of spatial or statistical analysis. Hence, if the initiator discusses the meanings of the findings regarding the aim and purpose of the process with the actors while preparing the knowledgebase the scenarios will be the output of a storytelling process rather than being the input of a persuasion process.

6.3. Further Researches

In fact, covering all the significant aspects of a planning process in one research is not possible. A research can be either an overview of the process which touching upon some focal points or it can focus on one or two aspects for a more in depth study. The current research is in the first category which is done with the hope that it would provoke more research and

contribute to the development of a new approach towards strategic spatial planning. It would be a good starting point for other researchers to work on each meta-governance instruments and their correspondence with the strategic spatial planning in separate studies. Moreover, this thesis focused only on the case study of Skåne while other regions in other Nordic countries with almost the same non-hierarchical planning system and powerful municipalities in planning can provide an opportunity for various comparative multi case studies.

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Appendix 1 Interview Questions

Interview with Region Skåne

1. Why did region Skåne decide to make a structural picture for the region?
2. Who were the main actors? Who did participate in the dialogue? Who have had the most effects on the process and result?
3. How was the form of this dialogue? Meetings, workshops, round tables, ...
4. How was the regional perspective of the actors?
5. Did you encounter very different ideas about how the development of the region should take place spatially?
6. How did the polycentric vision develop?
7. Who prepared the draft version of strategies? How?
8. Who did you discuss with about strategies? How were the discussions?
9. Have you had any challenge during the discussions and dialogues? What were the main challenges?
10. How was the agreement upon strategies shaped?
11. Do you continue working with the actors now? How?

Interview with Municipalities

As I mentioned in my email, our aim is to find a deeper understanding of the process that Skåne Region together with the municipalities has been through for making the Skåne Structural Picture.

1. What do you think about having a regional structural picture? Do you think it is necessary? What is its function in your opinion?
2. Have you had a regional perspective before engaging in the process to prepare Skåne Structural Picture?
3. How was your cooperation with other municipalities before this structural picture? How does this structural picture affect this cooperation? (Political, financial or organizational incentives to cooperate with others?)
4. How does Skåne Structural Picture affect your comprehensive planning? How do you consider it in your planning?
5. What is your opinion and position regarding polycentric vision of Skåne? What does it mean for your municipality to be part of this polycentric region?
6. What kind of issues and concerns did you shared with others in the meetings? Have you had specific expectations, opposition, or problem to negotiate with the region Skåne and other municipalities in the meetings?
7. How does region Skåne facilitate and support your cooperation with other municipalities through the Skåne Structural Picture?

To sum up:

Have you encountered any specific challenge during this process?

Appendix 2 Coding Scheme

Concepts	Inductive Open Codes	Definition
Network Design	1. Legitimacy (L)	Institutional, Political, Social and economic reasons which call for a regional spatial planning initiative
		Building or increasing the strategic, organizational and cognitive legitimacy of initiator
Network Framing	1. Design of the arena and procedures for participation (P)	Inclusion and exclusion of actors and biased or unbiased work with the actors
	2. Dominant policy discourse (DS)	The way initiator works with the actors and connect them together and the quality of participation
	3. Conclusion and final decision (C)	The way the dominant policy is shaped, discussed and the alternative storylines
Network Management	1. Confusions, ambiguities and tensions (T)	the way initiator select and filtered different ideas and perspectives and make conclusion
	2. Concretization (Con)	Any disagreement, misunderstanding and tension about the consensus between stakeholders and the way they reflect it
	3. Support (S)	The way the initiator keep working with the stakeholders to maintain the consensus and concretize it in more detail
	4. Circulation of information (I)	

