POLYNET Regional Report

Action 3.1/3.2

POLICY RESPONSE ANALYSIS AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY ACTION IN THE RANDSTAD HOLLAND

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the report

Previous work in the POLYNET project has produced a wealth of information on: a) the spatial and functional characteristics of Northwest Europe’s major city-regions; and b) how advanced producer services firms organise their activities in space under conditions of globalisation. This report intends to clarify the policy implications of the changing spatial relations associated with the globalising service economy and to understand governmental organisations’ reactions to the challenge of organising and guiding growth in a polycentric urban region such as the Randstad. Confrontation of the two brings to light the possible mismatch between actual trends on the one hand and current policy strategies on the other, so producing an idea of the key issues that are not yet attended to.

1.2 Methodology

In order to achieve these objectives we have carried out a systematic analysis of current national, regional and local policy strategies regarding the (spatial) development of the Randstad. Here, our main interest was in finding out how official policies (at the national, regional and local levels) attempt to guide and control growth and how they address the issues that were put forward by business representatives in an earlier stage (see the action 2.1 regional report on the Randstad).

Spatial structures, economic development and connectivity are the key subjects of the POLYNET project. Our policy analysis has therefore focussed on policy documents dealing with these issues. At the same time, it was clear from the beginning that our analysis should extend to policy documents drawn up by national, regional and by local authorities. In the Netherlands, national policies tend to provide the overall policy framework (long-term goals, general strategies) and may include views on the development of our Mega City-Regions (MCRs) vis-à-vis other regions in the respective national and international contexts. Regional policies, in turn, may disclose the most explicit and detailed policy views on our MCRs, although this may vary between the regions significantly (some MCRs may be recognised as such in regional policy while others may not). Finally, the policy statements of key local players (e.g. main urban centres) provide important insights in the ways these constituent actors position themselves in their wider regional, national and even international contexts. The policy views of this group are crucial not only because of the fact that real planning powers are often located at the local level, but also because the MCR as a planning and governance project stands a change only if local actors are willing to identify with the concept. It is essential therefore that the three key issues (spatial planning, economic development and connectivity) are analysed at the three spatial levels identified, with the exception of connectivity at the local level (local authorities usually have a relatively small say in supra-local connectivity issues). An overview of the documents analysed can be found in Appendix 1.

In addition to this, policymakers were also consulted in a more direct manner by means of two so-called Police Focus Group meetings. The first meeting was held in September 2004, prior to the start of the policy analysis phase. Its function was to share early research results, provoke some first policy reactions and to set the agenda for later stages. The second meeting took place in May 2005 and was entirely devoted to discussing the policy implications of the research findings. For both meetings a wide range of local, regional and national policymakers were invited, not only from the standard governmental organisations (i.e. ministries, provinces and municipalities) but also from regional cooperative platforms, chambers of commerce, and other influential regional stakeholders.
1.3 Structure of the report

From here, the report divides into four sections. Section 2 presents the results of the policy documents analysis. Section 3 reports on the Policy Focus Group meetings. Section 4 draws conclusions and section 5, finally, lists the remaining key policy issues for the Mega City-Region of the Randstad.
2. Analysis of policy frameworks for the Randstad Holland

2.1 Spatial planning and development

National spatial policy
The National Spatial Strategy (Nota Ruimte) is the most important document on spatial planning in the Netherlands. Published in 2004, it contains the national government’s current views on the spatial development of the Netherlands and defines the most important objectives associated with that development. The National Spatial Strategy sets out national spatial policy up until 2020 while the long-term aspects cover the period 2020-2030. The document is drawn up by the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM) in co-operation with the Ministries of Agriculture (LNV), Transport (V&W), and Economic Affairs (EZ).

In short, the National Spatial Strategy aims to strengthen the international competitive position of the Netherlands; to promote strong cities and a vibrant, dynamic countryside; to secure and develop important national and international spatial values; and to ensure public safety. It identifies a so-called National Spatial Structure that is made up of, among other elements, national urban networks (6), economic core areas (13), main ports (2) and major transport axes (see Figure 1). In terms of growth control, the idea is to concentrate future urban and economic development within the designated urban networks and economic core areas, so as to lower pressure on other areas and make the most of the infrastructure and facilities that are already or shortly will become available in the core areas. Within the urban networks, an important share of the new functions (dwellings, offices, business parks, etc.) will have to be realised within so-called ‘concentration zones’, as to strengthen the existing cities. The urban networks are also supposed to function as frameworks or platforms for coordination and cooperation between municipalities, regional authorities and other relevant stakeholders, both on short-term, practical spatial issues and on long-term, strategic issues such as the development of complementary economic profiles between cities.

![Figure 1: National Spatial Structure as presented in the National Spatial Strategy (source: Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment et al.)](image-url)
Still in the same National Spatial Strategy, the Randstad Holland (formerly known as the Randstad or Deltametropolis) is conceptualised as a single, coherent urban network – the largest of the country. The network is further divided into three economic core areas (the ‘North-wing’, the ‘South-wing’ and the ‘Utrecht region’) and, right in the middle of those, the still highly appreciated ‘Green Heart’. In terms of delineation, the economic core areas correspond rather well with the travel-to-work areas identified earlier in the POLYNET project.

The Randstad Holland is (quite rightly) presented as the economic, social, political and cultural heart of the Netherlands. It is valued for its diversity of functions, profiles and landscapes, and its dispersed, polycentric spatial structure is celebrated as a feature that sets the region apart from many other European metropolises. The government’s main objective for the Randstad is to strengthen its international competitive position. It is considered to be the Dutch region that is best equipped to compete with other metropolitan regions in the world for mobile economic resources and foreign investments and, as such, should have an important part in getting off the Dutch economy again after several years of stagnation. The main strategy proposed is to make better use of the economic, cultural and spatial diversity that is inherent to the region and to allow the region to cater for its own growth and development (instead of guiding growth to other parts of the country).

**Regional perspectives**

The national government’s spatial strategy for the Randstad Holland is partly based upon and, as a consequence, to a large extent corresponds with the regional development perspective formulated by the twelve local and regional authorities that co-operate in an administrative regional network known as Regio Randstad. An important difference is that the united Randstad authorities are more explicit and ambitious in their pursuit of a metropolitan transformation of the Randstad region. Their starting point is that none of the individual cities and city-regions is large enough to compete with the most powerful of European metropolitan regions and that it needs a coherent Randstad region made up of a number of complementary, specialised and well-interconnected city-regions to do so. While the Randstad authorities acknowledge the opportunities that result from the diversified, polycentric regional make-up, they simultaneously observe that the scattered metropolis does not offer the same ‘points of excellence’ and ‘quality of place’ as ‘real’ metropolises such as London, Paris and Frankfurt do. The Randstad authorities consider the Randstad to be a latent metropolis only that needs to be made the subject of a vigorous metropolitan development strategy to be brought to flourish. The national government on the other hand is less explicit about its position and ambitions with respect to the metropolitan status of the Randstad.

**Local concerns**

The views and (metropolitan) objectives voiced by the Regio Randstad are fully endorsed by the four largest cities of the Randstad. In their joint manifesto *De stad in de wereld, de wereld in de stad* [the city in the world, the world in the city] the cities unambiguously position themselves as complementary nodes in what is to become an integrated, coherent global city at the Randstad level. At the same time, however, each of the cities realizes that it is part of smaller, functionally

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1 This is an administrative co-operation between the provinces of North-Holland, South-Holland, Utrecht and Flevoland; the cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht; and the city-regions of Greater Amsterd (Regionaal Orgaan Amsterdam), Greater Rotterdam (Stadsregio Rotterdam), Greater The Hague (Stadsgewest Haaglanden) and Greater Utrecht (Bestuur Regio Utrecht). Its mission is to strengthen the international competitive position and to improve the quality of life in the Randstad. It should not be confused with the Vereniging Deltametropool [Deltametropolis Association], which is another vehicle for exchange and co-operation at the Randstad level with a mission that is largely compatible with that of the Regio Randstad. The cities and the majority of the provinces listed above participate in the Deltametropolis Association as well.
more relevant spatial entities as well. They all face typical urban problems (e.g. lack of space for
development, homogenous housing stocks, unbalanced labour markets, etc.) and they know that
they depend on their direct surroundings (and thus the cooperation of neighbouring local
authorities) if they want to address these problems. In the urban development plans of the
individual cities there is, therefore, considerable attention for relationships and interdependencies
at the level of city-regions (i.e. Greater Amsterdam, Greater Rotterdam, Greater The Hague and
Greater Utrecht) and, on top of that, at the level of the Randstad wings (i.e. North-wing and
South-wing). Typically, a larger Randstad city defines itself as a centre/community in its own
right, as the centre of a functionally coherent city-region, as a constituent part of either the
North-wing or the South-wing (except for Utrecht) and as an important node of the Randstad.
The ‘network city’ model (a smaller-scale, more functionally informed variant to the urban
network model) is a frequently used base for many urban development plans. Within this multi-
layered context, the cities are keen to distinguish themselves on the basis of their ‘unique’
characteristics, even though none of them, in harmony with the Dutch propensity for
maintaining equalitarian relationships, likes to present itself as the region’s ‘first city’. At the same
time, however, there is also considerable overlap in terms of the objectives they pursue, as we will
see in the next sections.
2.2 Economic Development, Skills, Regulation

National economic development policy
The economic agenda of the National Spatial Strategy is taken further by the Ministry of Economic Affairs in a policy paper called *Peiken in de Delta* [Peaks in the Delta]. It presents economic development perspectives for specific regions in the Netherlands, with a strong focus on the urban networks and economic core areas identified in the National Spatial Strategy. This area-based approach complements the national government’s more generic economic policy, which is mainly concerned with reducing the administrative burden for entrepreneurs, the fiscal climate and the general functioning of the labour market.

The main philosophy underlying Peaks in the Delta is that the national economy is better served by taking advantage of the comparative advantages of regions rather than by seeking balance through the support of the weaker regions only. The country is therefore divided into six parts, each of which has a specific economic profile and a specific set of problems and development opportunities (see Figure 2). The promotion of theme-based knowledge-intensive clusters (‘valleys’) is key to the development of the majority of the regions. The north should capitalise upon its energy exploitation activities (‘EnergyValley’), the east should further develop its emerging food, health and technology clusters (Food Valley, Health Valley and Technology Valley) and the southeast, in co-operation with German and Belgian border regions, should try to become one of Europe’s hotspots for hi-tech, knowledge intensive industries and research facilities.

![Figure 2: Economic development priorities according to ‘Peaks in the Delta’](source: Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004, p. 10).
In ‘Peaks in the Delta’, the Randstad is again divided into a northern wing (this time including the Utrecht region) and a southern wing. The economic profiles, problems and perspectives between the two differ greatly. The North-wing, with its diversified, services oriented economy, has done particularly well over the past decade or so and has developed into the country’s prime centre for internationally oriented business activities. From a national perspective it is considered to be critically important to further strengthen the region’s international business profile, its high value added logistics services and its position as an international tourist attraction. In this, a crucial role is set aside for Schiphol airport (to secure global connectivity) and the emerging prime office location Amsterdam Zuidas [South axis]. But also the intra-regional transport connections (notably Amsterdam-Almere), the national transport function of Utrecht and the interaction between the region’s knowledge institutes and the business community (which is presently underdeveloped) call for serious attention.

The economic development of the South-wing, on the other hand, offers more cause for concern. The region has been performing significantly below the national average during the better part of the past decade(s) and compared to the North-wing its production structure and labour force are less well adjusted to the demands of the post-industrial era. Whereas for the North-wing it more or less suffices to channel ongoing economic dynamics, the South-wing needs a more far-reaching, transformational approach in order to be helped. The main quest, therefore, is for a ‘new economic élan’: a clear break with the somewhat problematic, industrial image that bothers the region (or at least significant parts thereof) now. According to ‘Peaks in the Delta’, the region’s best chance is to encourage the development of services oriented economies around the region’s currently most prominent (international) functions. These include – of course – the port of Rotterdam, but also the still growing number of ‘international peace and justice’ functions in The Hague and the emerging life sciences cluster in Leiden. In addition, the region should try harder to capitalise upon its impressive knowledge potential. It is home to three universities and a large number of public and private knowledge/research institutes, and its R&D expenditures are within the Dutch context second only to those in the province of Noord-Brabant (higher, thus, than in the North-wing). And, as in the North-wing, it is again the interaction between the knowledge institutes and the business community that needs improvement. The transformations of both the Rotterdam and The Hague Central Station areas (encouraged by the coming of the High-Speed Train) are to become a boon for the region’s image and attractiveness for (international) business services and highly educated professionals.

Regional perspectives
The united Randstad authorities have developed their own economic strategy as well. In this strategy, the main focus is on the level of the Randstad as a whole: the level that is hardly touched upon in ‘Peaks in the Delta’ by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. They underscore the usefulness of dealing with particular issues at the level of city-regions (e.g. greater Amsterdam, greater Rotterdam) and Randstad-wings (i.e. North-wing and South-wing), but emphasize that in order for the Randstad to really enter the ‘premier league’ of European metropolitan regions (or Mega City-Regions), it is necessary to start working from a Randstad-wide perspective as well.

The Randstad authorities note that the Randstad in terms of economic magnitude, diversity and external connectivity measures up to other metropolitan regions in North West Europe, but that the scattered, polycentric layout hampers the coming about of similarly high levels of intra-regional interaction. This is considered to be a serious disadvantage as it undermines the support (critical mass) for various types of facilities (e.g. infrastructure, cultural functions) and limits the spatial scope of markets (e.g. the labour market, the housing market, input and output markets for firms). The metropolitan potential and the economies of scale and scope that are inherent to the region, so they argue, remain unused.

The economic strategy proposed by the Randstad authorities therefore aims at strengthening spatial-economic coherence in the Randstad region (referred to as the
‘metropolitan strategy’) while simultaneously safeguarding the region’s external connectivity (referred to as the main port strategy). The expectation is that if travel times within the Randstad could be cut by 50 percent, the entire area could start to function as a single functional urban region or a real metropolis. Markets would be enlarged and become more diverse, economies of scale would increase and the interaction between all kinds of economic agents and knowledge institutes would become more intense, hence fostering the innovative capacity of the region. The Randstad-wide introduction of state-of-the-art fibre optic networks and broadband access would contribute to this aim as well. An additional favourable effect could be that the imminent development gap between the North-wing and the South-wing gets overcome: by significantly improving the interrelationships between north and south the stagnating south may be able to follow in the wake of the dynamic north.

Reduction of travel times and, hence, strengthening of intraregional relationships, according to the Randstad authorities, can be realised through introducing a stronger hierarchy in the infrastructure and transportation networks. At the moment all major infrastructure networks are simultaneously used by locally, regionally and supra-regionally bound traffic alike. It is anticipated that traffic can be handled more efficiently and eventually quicker if the different flows are separated from each other (e.g. after the example of the separation between normal and high-speed-trains). Priority should be given to direct, reliable and quick connections between and among the region’s largest cities and international connectors (airports, sea ports, high-speed-train stations), both for car and for public transport, and to safeguarding and improving the external connectivity of the region. Figure 3 presents the visual expression of the Randstad economic strategy.


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2 The economic strategy of the Randstad authorities also extends to topics such as the functioning of housing and labour markets, the fiscal climate and many others, but for reasons of conciseness these are not discussed here.
Local strategies

While the four largest cities of the Randstad are among those responsible for the joint Randstad Holland Economic Strategy discussed above, each of them also has its own economic strategy. Within these strategies, the cities build upon their own strengths, address their own challenges and develop their own priorities and action programmes. Most strategies do make reference to the fact that there exists a larger spatial-economic framework called Randstad Holland (or Deltametropolis, depending on the time of writing), but at the same time do not show much evidence of inter-city coordination. None of the city strategies refers to the strategies of any of the other cities, for example, in an attempt to identify the complementary aspects of the cities’ production structures and/or the development objectives.

Generally speaking, the cities seem to have a sound understanding of the key characteristics of their local economies. The use of SWOT analyses is widespread and most cities also have developed a clear idea about the spatial scope of their key sectors and clusters (see Figure 4 for an example). In addition, there is ample attention for the ‘soft’ factors that influence the functioning of local economies, such as the organising capacity of the local and regional community, the role of local educational institutes (not only universities but also institutes that cater to the less highly skilled segments of the labour market), city marketing, the promotion of entrepreneurial spirit among graduates and the question how to attract highly skilled and talented people to the cities.

Catering to the needs of the (emerging) ‘knowledge economy’ is a key objective of any of the four cities. All want to enlarge the share of knowledge intensive activities in their local economies and encourage the interaction between educational and knowledge institutes on the one hand and the economic community on the other hand. For Utrecht and Amsterdam this is mainly a matter of building upon existing strengths while for Rotterdam and The Hague it is more of addressing a serious challenge.

Another common desire among the four cities is to strengthen their international profiles. In this, the cities show themselves to be quite realistic in the sense that they limit their international aspirations to those themes and sectors the scope of which already is (latently)
international. Amsterdam emphasises its status as a global tourist, business and transportation/communications centre while Rotterdam aims to further capitalise upon the global function of its port (‘a European city with a World-class port’). The slogan of the new (yet provisional) spatial vision for The Hague reads: ‘The Hague, World city on the Sea’, to illustrate the far-reaching ambitions of this ‘International capital of Peace and Justice’. And even Utrecht, the smallest of the lot with 275,000 inhabitants, aspires to international fame by presenting itself as the country’s prime location (together with Amsterdam) for (inter)national (head)offices. A salient detail is that Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht tend to see a close relationship between their international ambitions and the necessity to co-operate at the level of the Randstad, while Amsterdam appears to be more self-confident and does not refer to the Randstad in this respect at all.

In terms of sectoral strategies, the cities primarily tend to build upon their past and present strengths. The main strategy seems to push existing activities into more knowledge-intensive and service-oriented directions. Advanced producer services and medical sciences/technologies figure most prominently in the cities’ economic strategies (see Table 1). In principle, both sectors are broad enough to allow for the promotion and development of complementary profiles between the cities, but clear intentions in encouraging such complementarity cannot be read from the documents.

Table 1: Key sectoral priorities by city (source: various city economic strategy reports)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amsterdam</th>
<th>Rotterdam</th>
<th>The Hague</th>
<th>Utrecht</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICT &amp; new media</td>
<td>Port related industries</td>
<td>Services and institutes catering to the national and international governmental functions</td>
<td>Advanced producer services &amp; ICT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced producer services</td>
<td>Advanced producer services and knowledge institutes</td>
<td>Telecommunications &amp; multimedia</td>
<td>Medical services and technologies (incl. life-sciences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life-sciences and medical technologies</td>
<td>Medical sciences and technologies</td>
<td>Tourism, conferencing, culture and shopping</td>
<td>Tourism, conferencing, culture, shopping and education (‘hospitality’ cluster)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and conferencing</td>
<td>Creative industries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial activities</td>
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<td>Port-related activities</td>
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<td>Schiphol airport</td>
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2.3 Transport, Accessibility, E-connectivity

National transport policy

Reliable transport connections and good accessibility, especially the generally perceived and regretted lack thereof, are the subjects of ongoing debate in the Netherlands. The key policy document that is supposed to deal with these issues is the national ‘Report on Mobility’ (Nota Mobiliteit), which is published by the Ministry of Transport, Public Works & Water Management. The department’s priority is to improve the accessibility of the economic core areas of the country, which of course include the Randstad and its two mainports: Schiphol airport and the port of Rotterdam. Whereas transport policy in the Netherlands has long been aimed at reducing car traffic and promoting a modal shift from private to public transport, latest insights are: a) that reducing mobility is a thorny issue; b) that mobility – from a social and an economic perspective – is essentially a good thing; and c) that it is better therefore to facilitate the (growing) demand for transport and mobility as efficient as possible, for example by means of smart spatial policies, advanced, ICT-based traffic management measures (including road pricing) and physical expansion of road capacity.

To keep things moving both within and to/from the Randstad and its mainports is, as mentioned, one of the key policy concerns shared by the Ministry, local and regional authorities and the business community alike. As far as road transport is concerned, priority is given to the
country’s main transport corridors A2, A4 and A12 (the so-called ‘triple A’ corridors). These constitute the main thoroughfares within the Randstad and function as key links between the Randstad and the RheinRuhr (A12), Antwerp-Brussels (A4) and Eindhoven-Maastricht (A2) (see Figure 5). A variety of tailor made interventions (incl. expansion of road capacity, separation of traffic flows, traffic management measures) must make sure that especially the reliability (rather than speed) of transport will increase in the years to come.

![Figure 5: Overview of main road corridors including the ‘triple-A’ corridors (source: Ministry of Transport, Public Works & Water Management, 2004, p. 37, adapted)](image)

Next to this, public transport is still highly valued for its good performance – compared to car transport – in terms of efficiency, safety and sustainability. Especially in the for Dutch standards densely populated Randstad area the conditions (and prospects) for running a (cost-)efficient public transport system are relatively favourable. Various projects and plans aimed at the expansion and upgrading of the rail infrastructure system are already being carried out or will be carried out in the next couple of years. They include the construction of the High-Speed-Train (HST) connection from Amsterdam to Brussels, the doubling of the number of tracks between Amsterdam and Utrecht and the construction of the Hanzelijn between Lelystad and Zwolle (to reduce the travel time between the Randstad and the northern part of the country). New rail
infrastructure projects at the national level are not anticipated, apart from a study into the possibility for another, more direct connection between the Randstad and the northern provinces of the country (the so-called Zuiderzeelijn, see also Figure 6). Quite remarkable is the fact that there will be no dedicated HST track between the Randstad and the RheinRuhr area. Trains between Amsterdam and Frankfurt (via Düsseldorf and Cologne) will continue to use existing, normal tracks, which will be only slightly adjusted in places. The idea for the years to come is to increase the capacity of railway networks and the reliability of train services by investing in maintenance and replacement of outworn materials and facilities.

Regional concerns
At the regional level, ambitions appear to be higher. As noted above, the Randstad authorities champion the reduction of travel times within the Randstad by 50 percent to increase the spatial-functional coherence in the region. A key element of their plans used to be a circular transrapid system connecting the major centres of the Randstad (the so-called Rondje Randstad). Lack of (national government) support, however, has pushed this idea to the background in recent years.
While the Randstad authorities acknowledge that safeguarding accessibility at the level of the Randstad wings is key to processing the bulk of daily transport flows (especially commuting), they also continue to stress the importance of taking into consideration the level of the Randstad as a whole in the design of transport policies, something they claim the national government falls short of. At the moment (May 2005), the joint Randstad authorities are in the process of drafting their own strategic vision on an integrated, multi-scalar transport system for the internal and external accessibility and connectivity of the Randstad region, but the fact that this process is already taking much longer than anticipated, suggests that dealing with transport at the scale of the Randstad is a more thorny issue than expected.

Local and regional projects
Slightly to moderately more successful are the local and regional authorities attempts to improve public transport systems at the level of the individual city-regions or ‘network cities’ (10-40 km radius). In the Amsterdam region, a concept called Regionet forms the framework for a number of new, high-quality public transport connections including the ‘North-South’ underground service in Amsterdam (under construction) and the so-called Zuidtangent, a direct bus shuttle service, partly via dedicated infrastructure, between Haarlem, Haarlemmermeer/Schiphol, Amstelveen and Amsterdam Zuidoost (possibly extended to the new housing development IJburg). In the Utrecht region, existing rail infrastructure is used to develop a regional, fine-meshed train system that interconnects existing and new housing projects and employment centres around and between the cities of Utrecht and Amersfoort. This system should be in operation in 2015. In the South-wing of the Randstad, finally, ambitions run highest. Here, three partly interconnected projects are being prepared (see also Figure 7): RandstadRail (a light rail network between Rotterdam, The Hague and Zoetermeer), the Rijn-Gouwelijn (a light rail connection between Gouda, Leiden and the North Sea coast), and Stedenbaan Zuidvleugel. The latter is a regional train and urban development concept that uses existing rail infrastructure for a high-frequency regional train service system and stimulates urban development around the train stations. The listed projects and programmes illustrate local and regional authorities’ (understandable and justifiable) preoccupancy with the management of traffic flows within their own Functional Urban Regions.
Airports
Schiphol Airport, number four in Europe, is widely considered to be of great importance for the Dutch economy. Its excellent choice of European and global destinations contributes greatly to the attractiveness of the Netherlands (notably the Amsterdam region) for foreign companies and it adds to the international mobility of many Dutch companies. Its future position and network connectivity, however, is far from secure, especially since the recent merger between Air France and Schiphol’s ‘home carrier’ KLM. National spatial and transport policy aims at securing and possibly strengthening Schiphol’s position as one of Europe’s key airports. In its surroundings, new housing developments are halted to avoid further aggravation of conflicts between air traffic and local residents and, as mentioned, keeping the airport accessible over land is one of the key priorities of the national Report on Mobility.

Some regional airports have done particularly well over the past decade or so, at least partly due to the rise of low-cost carriers that prefer to operate from them. Rotterdam Airport, for example, intends to distinguish itself as a prime European business airport, catering to the Rotterdam/The Hague business and political communities. Policy responsibility for the regional airports is going to be decentralized to the provincial level.

E-connectivity
The Netherlands is well connected to the Internet and with the Amsterdam Internet Exchange (AMS-IX), it has the second largest Internet hub of Europe after London. In addition, Dutch households and firms are among the best-connected and most frequent users of E-based applications of all European countries. At various levels, the authorities try to further advance the provision and use of state-of-the-art ICT infrastructure and applications. While ‘the market’ already pushes developments forward with quite some speed, some local authorities aspire to more even. Amsterdam and The Hague, for example, intend to connect each and every household and firm within their cities to fibre optic networks, and Rotterdam has similar ambitions.

2.4 Housing and Environment
Housing strategy
Traditionally, housing has been one of the national government’s policy fields through which it could direct spatial development. To a certain extent, this is still the case, even though planning responsibilities are being decentralised to the regional and local levels. Current policy (as defined in the National Spatial Strategy) allows regions to cater for their own housing needs. The National Spatial Strategy therefore basically mirrors the local and regional ambitions and plans.

For the entire Randstad, it is estimated that between 2010 and 2030 there is a need for 360,000 to 440,000 new dwellings. The aim (imposed by the national government) is to realise 40 percent of these within existing urban areas. The rest will be built outside the existing urban areas, but these green field developments will be linked as much as possible to the cities and to existing traffic and transport services and facilities.

The demand for new housing locations is largest in the North-wing of the Randstad. However, as the result of, amongst others, the presence of Schiphol Airport, the space that is potentially available for new residential areas is quite limited here. The main search area for suitable locations is in the axis that runs from Haarlemmermeer, via Amsterdam to Almere. Especially Almere will expand significantly. Between 2010 and 2030 some 40,000 new homes will be added to the predominantly suburban housing stock. In result, the new town will grow to approximately 300,000 inhabitants in 2030, so becoming the fifth major population centre of the Randstad. Amsterdam is supposed to add 50,000 houses to its stock (to be realised within city limits) and in and around Haarlemmermeer space for another 10,000 to 20,000 dwellings is
expected to be available. In qualitative terms, demand is especially great for high quality and high-density urban environments on the one hand and low-density, green residential environments on the other. The area south of Haarlem offers the nicest opportunities for the latter. But as elsewhere where conditions are favourable for realising exclusive, green residential environments, it will be a great challenge (and struggle) to find a balance between development needs and environmental concerns.

In the South-wing of the Randstad, there is a stronger emphasis on realising new housing developments through transformation, revitalization and redevelopment, especially near existing stations and infrastructure (the *Stedenbaan* concept). Rotterdam and The Hague have a particularly great interest in upgrading and expanding their housing stocks, as they really need to become more successful in tying middle and higher income households to their cities. A possible major green field development will be located in the Zuidplaspolder, in between Rotterdam, Zoetermeer and Gouda. The former marine aviation camp Valkenburg (near Leiden) is another one.

In the Utrecht region, finally, the idea is to enlarge the housing stock with 32,000 new dwellings between 2010 and 2030. The green field locations Rijnenburg (near Utrecht) and Vathorst (near Amersfoort) will accommodate a large share of these, but the restructuring and transformation of existing urban areas will create space for new houses as well. The Utrecht region, through its centrality and attractive environs, offers one of the most popular living environments of the Netherlands and demand for housing is correspondingly great. The local and regional authorities therefore anticipate that in the long run the possibilities for meeting this demand will subside and they hence seek the co-operation of nearby Almere and the province of Flevoland to find a solution.

**Environmental concerns and the Green Heart**

The Randstad's scattered spatial layout allows for the survival of several environmentally and culturally valuable areas within its boundaries. These are of different magnitude and enjoy various degrees of protection. Basically, there are four different categories to be found within the Randstad area. In order of protective status these are: EU Birds and Habitats Directive areas and Nature Protection Act areas (highest order); areas that belong to the so-called National Ecological Network; World Heritage Sites; and National Landscapes (lowest order).

The Green Heart is the largest among them and, at least in the world of planners, the most famous. In the National Spatial Strategy it has the status of a National Landscape but it includes World Heritage Sites and parts that belong to the National Ecological Network and to the EU Birds and Habitats Directives as well. The area has long been subject of a rather restrictive planning policy and as such has continued to function as a formidable buffer against the ‘metropolitanisation’ of the Randstad region. In result, the area still has by far the lowest population density of the entire Randstad region, but at the same time it is under constant pressure of development as well. Policy attitudes towards the area seem to be gradually changing now. The National Spatial Strategy champions a more development-oriented approach, in order to do better justice to the (potential) economic vitality of the area. This means that in particular zones and places small-scale urban and economic development will be allowed (‘transformation zones’, see Figure 8). Large-scale urbanisation, however, officially remains unwanted. The recreational, cultural and nature qualities of the area, as well as its (flood) water storage capacity are still very much central to the Green Heart policy.
2.5 Cross-thematic issues: governance

The question of how to organise effective regional governance in the Randstad area and parts thereof is a recurrent one in the Dutch context. The needs are clear and acknowledged and calls for the establishment of a full-grown metropolitan authority for the Randstad have been made on several occasions. Within the current Dutch politico-administrative constellation, however, such a development is widely perceived to be a mission impossible. Fragmentation is therefore still the key word in any description of the administrative landscape of the Randstad, although admittedly, local and regional actors lately really seem to be opening up to different forms of cooperation in order to get things done (or at least discussed).

The Randstad is presently divided between about 175 municipalities and 4 provinces. Since the mid-1990s there exists an institutionalised form of cooperation between the four largest cities and their surrounding municipalities (city-regions). The four largest cities, the respective city-regions and the four provinces since 2002 formally cooperate with each other in a platform that is called Regio Randstad. Next to this, more or less informal platforms for cooperation exist at an intermediate level. The Administrative Platform for the South-wing, The North-wing Conference and the Administrative Platform for the Green Heart are among the most interesting for this discussion (see Figure 9).
The National Spatial Strategy aims to decentralise a large number of tasks and responsibilities to lower tiers of government. It proclaims that the national government more than before only wishes to be involved in spatial planning if it concerns issues of national interest, leaving all other issues to the provinces, the city-regions and the municipalities. Because many of these issues do not remain confined to one municipality, city-region or province, local and regional authorities are encouraged to seek cooperation. The predefined urban networks (see section 2.1) are presented as to constitute the proper frameworks for doing so. The local authorities that are part of an urban network are expected to develop long-term agreements, for example on the distribution of cultural, health care and educational services within the network, on infrastructure issues and the accommodation of economic activities and on the development of distinctive urban profiles within the networks. The urban networks as such, however, are not intended to evolve into a fully-fledged fourth administrative layer. Additional objectives are to make better use of the possibilities offered by public-private partnerships and to improve the horizontal coordination within the various layers of government (i.e. coordination between departments).

The spatial development of the Randstad is considered to be an issue of national interest. National government therefore intends to continue to be involved and seek active coordination with local and regional authorities and other types of stakeholders. At the level of the Randstad itself, the national government coordinates its policy and investments priorities with the authorities that are united in the Regio Randstad. Agreements on the actual implementation of plans and projects will be made between the national government and the local and regional authorities concerned. Within the Randstad, three areas are identified that need extra care in this respect and, hence, will be made the subject of a special approach. These are the North-wing, the South-wing and the Green Heart. The various projects and developments that are planned for these regions will be jointly weighed and fine-tuned in so-called ‘project envelopes’ (a new instrument in support of an integrated development approach) and coordinated between the
national government and various coalitions of local and regional authorities and possibly other stakeholders (e.g. Schiphol Airport).

It is too early to judge if this decentralised, integrated project and area oriented approach is going to bring back the much desired dash and thoroughness in the implementation of spatial policy. Many local and regional authorities and co-operative arrangements still have to prove that they are up to the job. Nevertheless, most of them show themselves happy with the newly obtained responsibilities, and also the various Randstad authorities, at least for the eye of the camera, appear eager to get started. With the cooperative structures in place (see again Figure 9), the latter especially should be able to make a flying start.
3. Outcomes of the Policy Focus Group meetings

Not surprisingly, the issues that currently dominate the Dutch spatial policy debate in general also featured largely in the two Policy Focus Group meetings that were held in the course of the project (one in September 2004, the other one in May 2005). The scale issue appeared particularly intriguing, especially in relationship to the question how to establish effective governance arrangements. National government's inclination to carefully redirect attention away from the Randstad as a whole and towards smaller entities such as the North-wing, the South-wing and the Green Heart was received with mixed feelings by the participants. Some clearly disapproved and feared that the consequent lack of coherence in planning and development will eventually produce sub-optimal solutions to the Randstad’s actual problems and undermine the region’s metropolitan development potential. Others, on the other hand, tended to agree with the national government's policy and argued that functional relationships are much stronger within each of the Randstad wings and that it makes sense therefore to focus spatial policy and the search for meaningful spatial investment projects on these smaller entities as well.

The concerns voiced by the business service firms interviewed within the framework of the POLYNET project did not come as a big surprise to the participants in the Policy Focus Group meetings. The issues (1. the (declining) quality and (limited) flexibility of labour; 2. poor intra-regional accessibility (congested motorways and restrictive parking regulations); 3. the Dutch fiscal and regulatory climate becoming less competitive; 4. lack of determination and resolution in (spatial) politics; and 5. the relatively poor housing conditions and quality of life in the western part of the Randstad) are well-known issues, especially the ones with a clear spatial connotation, and in one way or the other addressed in current policy debates. At the same time, they are also among the most troublesome (spatial) policy issues, for which easy solutions do not exist (except perhaps the parking regulations issue). The question therefore arose to what extent the perceived disadvantages are really hampering the operations and performance of the APS firms and to which degree the conditions in the Randstad are better or worse than in other North West European metropolitan regions. In spite of the increasing popularity of international benchmark studies and transnational research projects such as POLYNET, a clear understanding of regional (spatial) differences and their impacts on the performance of economic actors is still lacking. Such knowledge would be of extreme value to policymakers and other stakeholders as it would make clear to them whether they should really take a problem such as congestion seriously (and do everything in their power to tackle it) or just accept it as an internationally shared fact of life and perhaps even as a symbol of the region’s economic success.

It was also argued that in order to address specific issues such as the poor possibilities for realising really nice, up-market housing projects in green environs, it necessary to apply a healthy dose of 'out of the box thinking'. Policy discussions on the role and perspectives for the Randstad and the search directions for particular problems tend to be very much framed and narrowed by the doctrines and motto’s that have come to dominate after more than 40 years of ‘planning for the Randstad’. Sometimes it is necessary to let go of them and explore possible solutions and scenario’s that are otherwise inconceivable. To explore the possibilities for realising the so much sought after luxury housing projects in the leafy coastal zone could be an example of this.

Creative ideas are also needed to address another emerging issue: the growing gap between the North-wing and the South-wing of the Randstad. The North-wing, in economic terms has performed particularly well the past decade or so while the pace of development in the South-wing has been significantly slower. Much of this can be related to the economic structure of the areas, with the economy of the North-wing having a traditional orientation towards trade and services and the South-wing depending strongly on port-related industries and governmental services. The problem, however, goes deeper than that, as there are also quite marked differences in the education level of the labour force (in favour of the North-wing) and in the popularity of
the areas as living environments (again in favour of the North-wing, if we accept house prices as a reliable indicator). Awareness about this issue among policymakers at different levels is growing, as we have seen in previous sections, but at the same time people take care not to over-emphasise its gravity as well. Yet it is clear that while policymakers in the North-wing only need to make the best of the tailwinds that the region enjoys (at least for the time being), their South-wing colleagues face a much bigger challenge. The question is to what extent the regions may be of use to each other. As yet, the scope for that seems to be limited. In the booming second half of the 1990s the North-wing economy tended to spill over in an easterly direction rather than in a southerly, and it is doubtful if such market driven developments can be easily steered into a different direction. Moreover, during the interviews with APS firms we heard more stories from South-wing based firms considering or having considered the idea to relocate to the North-wing than the other way round. This makes one wonder about the possible effects of a significant further strengthening of spatial coherence through improvement of transport facilities as proposed by the cooperating Randstad authorities. Without doubt it will add to effective mass and diversity of the Randstad and enlarge market opportunities for many, but its effects on the (somewhat distorted) balance between the North-wing and the South-wing are less clear. It may work out well, with South-wing firms seizing the opportunities offered and setting in motion a successful transformation of the South-wing economy, but the opposite may happen as well, with North-wing firms getting hold of the larger piece of the cake and the North-wing economy as a whole reinforcing its dominant position.

A final issue that was discussed at length during the Policy Focus Group meetings concerned governance and administrative cooperation. It was observed that the willingness to cooperate among local and regional authorities in the Randstad has increased substantially during the past decade or so, witness the wide palette of cooperative platforms, networks and conferences that has emerged (see also Section 2.5). However, there were also voices of concern, for instance about the abundance of cooperative arrangements currently in existence and the modest nature of the tangible results they tend to produce. The latter, according to some, may indicate that the cross-regional issues of the Randstad are not urgent enough to give rise to effective action. The absence of effective leadership may be another cause. Still there are fine examples of effective cooperation as well, the inter-municipal coordination of housing programmes in a number of city-regions being among them. A general rule seems to be that cooperation is easier realised and eventually more effective in its results if the issues at stake are more urgent and concrete and if the objectives of the cooperating actors are more in line with market developments. With the latter it is meant that spatial dynamics are often induced and directed by the demand and preferences of firms and households. It is such forces, for example, that cause the dynamics and the pressure on space in the corridor between Rotterdam and Antwerp and that eventually turned the South-axis [Zuid-as] into Amsterdam’s major new office location rather than the banks of the IJ [IJ-oevers]. Such demand-generated spatial dynamics produce new functional relationships and dependencies between places and, as such, may create new needs for cooperation. It was argued repeatedly during the Policy Focus Group meetings that it could be much more fruitful for public actors to focus their attention to such ‘demand-driven’ cases than to waste energy in projects that do not attempt to address issues and developments that find resonance in society. The next question is of course, to what extent ‘the Randstad’ meets these requirements. Is ‘planning for a metropolitan development of the Randstad’ a project that connects to the needs and ideas of its inhabitants as well? The considerable private sector support for the Deltametropolis Association (organised in a foundation called ‘Friends of the Deltametropolis’) certainly would seem to point into this direction.
4. Conclusions of the Policy Response Analysis

The Dutch spatial policymaking scene seems to be going through a period of almost unprecedented unanimity. There is a widespread sense of urgency as regards the need to get the faltering Dutch economy up and running again and spatial planning is seen as one of the policy fields through which the rescue operation can be shaped. Pressure is even high enough as to have spurred on the four ministries that produce spatially relevant policies to closely coordinate their activities and strategies (which is not a matter of course in Dutch policymaking). The extent to which this joint approach will make itself felt when the broad policy strategies outlined in the various white papers are further refined and implemented remains to be seen. Experience learns that the walls between policy departments and divisions tend to crumble only very slowly, but one never knows.

The weight of matters also calls for excellent coordination between the various administrative tiers. Within the Randstad, coordination between the local and the regional levels seems to have improved considerably during the past five years or so. This does not mean that everything works equally smoothly and that the cooperating authorities achieve one success after another, but many of the arrangements established are proving to be quite durable affairs now and they are excellent vehicles for building trust and developing a common understanding of regions’ spatial development problems and challenges. In contrast, relationships between the national authorities on the one hand and the local and regional authorities on the other have recently experienced a less fruitful period. The turbulent start of the new millennium in the Netherlands with two cabinets falling shortly after one another, for example saw a two-year standstill in the periodical consultation between the national government and the local and regional authorities united in the Regio Randstad. The meetings between the two have now been resumed, but given the fact that the years of upheaval have pushed to the forefront so many new faces, new views and new ways of communicating, it may take some time before routines and trust levels are back at their old standards again. The national government’s desire to decentralise tasks and responsibilities may help to streamline coordination between the tiers as it may be expected to reduce the dependency of local and regional authorities on national government’s consent. A crucial provision is, of course, that the transfer of tasks and responsibilities is accompanied by adequate financial transfers as well.

In terms of content, current spatial, economic and transport policies at different levels generally seem to be based on a rather sound understanding of the facts and dynamics on the ground. Of course, interpretations and interests between and among departments and administrative tiers do differ to some degree, and also the solutions and strategies that are proposed in consequence are not always fully compatible, but on the whole there have been less unanimous times in Dutch spatial planning. Perhaps the most interesting difference in point of view seems to exist between the national government and the united Randstad authorities. While both share the opinion that it is notably the Randstad, as the motor of the Dutch of economy, that should be enabled to strengthen its international competitive position and, hence, to get the Dutch economy moving again, they advocate different spatial development strategies for the region. Whereas the national government assumes that the Randstad is best helped by strengthening its constituent parts (i.e. the North-wing, the South-wing and the Utrecht region) the Randstad authorities would rather make sure that the constituent parts come to function as one so as to make better use of the metropolitan potential that they consider to be inherent to the region.

POLYNET findings for the Randstad tend to provide support for both views. Analyses of travel-to-work patterns point out that the lion’s share of commuting indeed remains confined to the level of individual city-regions and the Randstad wings (see also the Action 1.1 report for the Randstad). And from the interviews with business services firms it has become clear that for a substantial share of the firms – that is above all the category of business service firms catering to
small- and medium sized firms – the same city-regions and ‘wings’ function as their main areas of operations as well (see the Action 2.1 report for the Randstad). However, the POLYNET analyses also indicate that for another category of issues the Randstad may indeed form a more meaningful level for analysis and policymaking. For business service firms that service larger companies and multinationals the entire Randstad constitutes a market. This is true in more than sense; as such firms tend to see the Randstad both as a rich and diversified pool of labour and as a major concentration of potential clients. Even though many of such firms for a variety of reasons prefer to be located in the Amsterdam region, it is the business potential offered by the Randstad as a whole that attracts them to the area (if they come from abroad) and that enables them to prosper and eventually become European or global players of their own (if they originate from the area itself). It is such findings that support the call for promoting market integration through travel time reduction as made by the Regio Randstad (see Section 2.2) and the claim made by the Deltametropolis Association that it are especially (the survival and strengthening of) the high-level, international functions of the Randstad that demand an integrated, metropolitan approach.

But from the interviews with business services firms and the subsequent discussions in the Policy Focus Group meetings it follows that it is not only about creating critical mass but also about maintaining quality. From the interviews, the image emerges that the Randstad, also from an international perspective, constitutes a rather rewarding market for advanced producer services (APS) providers. Its size (almost 7 million relatively well-to-do people and 350,000 firms) is large enough for many firms to earn a decent living and also its advanced, knowledge-intensive nature is an important asset. But at the same time, the Randstad in many respects is also a saturated market where the growth potential and the opportunities for realising significant cost-reductions are limited. Firms with growth ambitions either have to compete very hard on the Dutch market or expand their business overseas, and also firms that seek to save on costs are very much encouraged to look abroad. It is a well-developed market therefore, but it is unlikely that the strong growth experienced in the 1980s and 1990s will extend into the decades to come.

The policy implications from this are complex and multi-faceted. If the objective is to keep the Randstad as attractive as possible for APS firms (which is a sensible objective), the key may be in promoting the advanced, knowledge-intensive nature of the market – the Randstad as a learning region or a knowledge laboratory for advanced producer services – more than in anything else. This should not be translated directly in a call for the establishment of APS knowledge centres or research institutes (as is common in some other sectors), but rather in an attempt to make sure that the demand for services in the Randstad remains (at least) as sophisticated as it is today. The logic behind this is that knowledge development and innovations in advanced producer services are very much shaped and accomplished ‘on the job’, in the working relationships between APS firms and their customers. Difficult questions and challenging jobs force the APS firms involved to come up with cutting edge solutions time after time. Such firms then are able to remain on the forefront of (knowledge) developments in their specific fields and to play an important (knowledge-producing) role in the (global) networks they are part of.

Evidence from the Randstad interviews suggests that the Randstad economy at the moment produces a demand for services that is sophisticated enough not only to make this market worth operating in but also to enable Randstad-based APS firms to distinguish themselves quite strongly in the European and global networks they are part of. A significant share of this demand is produced by the relatively large number of multinationals that have their headquarters in the Randstad (some of which are APS providers themselves). These companies do not only produce a large amount of work for (other) APS firms, but are also relatively often involved in complex processes and transactions (e.g. mergers, take-overs, international expansion, large-scale reorganisations). These demand extreme inputs from the APS firms involved and are likely to produce new knowledge for them, and, if the job is finished successfully, add to their (international) prestige as well. Maintaining the Randstad’s position as an important advanced
producer services centre in (North West) Europe therefore for a large part comes down to making sure that the multinationals and other companies that produce this refined and high-level demand for services remain in the area.

The concerns with regard to the Randstad’s business climate of exactly these firms have not been recorded in the POLYNET research, but it seems reasonably safe to assume that they will not divert strongly from those voiced by the advanced producer services firms themselves. From the interviews we learned that the top-5 concerns of APS firms in the Randstad are about: 1) the (declining) quality and (limited) flexibility of labour; 2) poor intra-regional accessibility (congested motorways and restrictive parking regulations); 3) the Dutch fiscal and regulatory climate becoming less competitive; 4) lack of determination and resolution in (spatial) politics; and 5) the relatively poor housing conditions and quality of life in the western part of the Randstad. Most of these are well-known issues, especially the ones with a clear spatial connotation, and in one way or the other addressed in the current policy debate. At the same time, they are also among the most troublesome (spatial) policy issues, for which an easy way out does not exist.
5. Key Policy Issues for the Randstad Holland

1. How to keep the Randstad market as interesting as possible for the advanced of APS firms?
   Concentrate on the region’s quality as a ‘learning region’ or ‘knowledge laboratory’ for advanced producer services and hence make sure that demand for business services remains at least as sophisticated as it is today?

2. What to do about the growing gap between the North-wing and the South-wing of the Randstad?
   How serious should it be taken? And if it were to be addressed, what would be the better strategy: directing all (policy) energy to the lagging South-wing or trying to strengthen relationships between the two?

3. How to address the key concerns of APS firms:
   - the (declining) quality and (limited) flexibility of labour;
   - poor intra-regional accessibility (congested motorways and restrictive parking regulations);
   - the Dutch fiscal and regulatory climate becoming less competitive;
   - the lack of determination and resolution in (spatial) politics; and
   - the relatively poor housing conditions and quality of life in the western part of the Randstad.
   Current spatial, economic and transport policies are trying to address the majority of these issues already (others are beyond the sphere of influence of these policy fields), but how serious are these problems in the Randstad Holland compared to the situation in other Northwest European Mega-City-Regions?

4. How to increase the organising/governing capacity at the right spatial scale?
   The struggle about what is the proper scale for spatial intervention continues. Is it the Randstad or rather the ‘wings’, and who should be involved at which spatial level? The idea of making visions and coordinating strategies at the level of the Randstad while seeking to design concrete development strategies and to coordinate projects at the level of the Randstad wings and lower seems appealing, but what if the bottom-up forces keep on gaining strength while the national government continues to withdraw from the scene? Who, in such a scenario will be able to look after the interests of the entire Mega-City-Region called Randstad Holland?
Appendix 1: Overview of policy documents analysed

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<th>Organisation</th>
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<th>Year</th>
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Appendix 2: Overview of participants in the Policy Focus Group meetings

Participants in the first Policy Focus Group meeting (21 September 2004)
- Dr. L. Bertolini Universiteit van Amsterdam
- Prof. dr. J.P.L. Burgers Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam
- Prof. D. Frieling Vereniging Deltametropool
- H.J.Th van Herwaarden NS Commercie (Dutch Railways)
- E. Kuypers Regio Randstad
- A. Lengkeek Ministerie van OC&W
- M. Levelt Universiteit van Amsterdam
- K. Meester Provincie Utrecht
- C.A.M. Mensinga Gemeente Amstelveen
- T. Straatemeier Universiteit van Amsterdam
- J. den Uyl Ontwikkelenbedrijf Gemeente Amsterdam / NIROV
- F. Vermeijns Gemeente Haarlemmermeer
- S. Verschuuren Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening Amsterdam
- C. Wallet Ministerie van VROM
- Dr. L. Kapoen Universiteit van Amsterdam, Polynet team
- Prof. dr. R.C. Kloosterman Universiteit van Amsterdam, Polynet team (chair)
- B. Lambregts Universiteit van Amsterdam, Polynet team
- R. Röling Universiteit van Amsterdam, Polynet team
- M. van der Werff Universiteit van Amsterdam, Polynet team (minutes)

Participants in the second Policy Focus Group meeting (12 May 2005)
- Dr. L. Bertolini Universiteit van Amsterdam
- J. Molenaar Provincie Zuid-Holland
- J. de Boer Vereniging Deltametropool
- P. Oudega Regio Randstad
- M. de Haas Architectenbureau Micha de Haas
- M. Levelt Universiteit van Amsterdam
- N. Haran Universiteit van Amsterdam
- T. Verhoeven Provincie Zuid-Holland
- T. Straatemeier Universiteit van Amsterdam
- Dr. R. Ploeger Ontwikkelenbedrijf Gemeente Amsterdam
- Dr. M. Bontje Universiteit van Amsterdam
- M. van der Vliet Ministerie van VROM
- Prof. dr. R.C. Kloosterman Universiteit van Amsterdam, Polynet team (chair)
- B. Lambregts Universiteit van Amsterdam, Polynet team
- R. Röling Universiteit van Amsterdam, Polynet team (minutes)
- M. van der Werff Universiteit van Amsterdam, Polynet team