

# Benchmarking study of crossborder Transport development in Helsinki-Tallinn vs. Öresund Region

## Final report

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Benchmarking study of cross-border transport development in Helsinki-Tallinn versus Öresund

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# Table of content

TABLE OF CONTENT	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. CONCEPTS AND METHODOLOGY	6
2.1 Concepts – Crossborder planning	6
2.2 Methodology	9
3. DESCRIPTION OF CROSSBORDER REGIONS	10
3.1 Öresund	10
3.1.1 Description - The Öresund Region	10
3.1.2 Drivers of Integration	11
3.1.3 Governance	12
3.1.4 Technical collaboration	12
3.1.5 Regionalisation of transport systems	13
3.1.6 Financing principles	15
3.1.7 The Öresund Committee	15
3.1.8 Knowledge Platforms – Reinforcing the region	17
3.1.9 Formal Platforms for collaboration – focus on the users of transport	18
3.1.10 Crossborder Infrastructure Assets	19
3.1.11 Assessment of governance mechanisms	19
3.1.12 Overview of key features	20
3.1.13 New challenges	22
3.2 Helsinki-Tallinn	23
3.2.1 Description	23
3.2.2 Drivers of Integration	24
3.2.3 Governance	27
3.2.4 Unclear visions for the region	27
3.2.5 Shifting commitments - Return to project-based collaboration	28
3.2.6 Technical collaboration	29
3.2.7 From formal platforms to broader collaboration	29
3.2.8 Assessment of governance mechanisms	31
3.2.9 Comparative Assessment of governance mechanisms: The Öresund region versus Helsinki-Tallinn	33
RECOMMENDATIONS	37
ANNEX A: ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	40

## 1. Introduction

This report is the final deliverable for the project, “Benchmark study of crossborder transport development in Helsinki-Tallinn versus Öresund.”

The Helsinki-Tallinn region and the Öresund region are key cross-border regions that are fundamental to the advancement of economic development and European priorities of the Baltic Sea region and beyond. They are also key opportunities for the regions themselves, as further investment in local and connecting infrastructure can open up new opportunities for local business, either through increased cross-border activities or the broadening of market reach. As is demonstrated by the case of the Öresund region, the hard and soft infrastructure that define a region are driven by and then consequently reinforce economic integration. Economic and transport integration led the collaboration, and then political and administrative reforms were developed to solve specific problems that arose.

A key difference between the Öresund region and the Helsinki-Tallinn region is that in the Öresund region, there is a fixed link. Regional governance institutions have been created based on first managing the hard infrastructure and then subsequently to reinforce and facilitate the economic return on the investment. As one Öresund region interview participant stated, when asked how the Helsinki-Tallinn region can create stronger crossborder transport planning systems, stated: “Build a bridge together... then you will have no choice but figure it out.” A number of innovative solutions have been developed in the Öresund region. Yet these were not planned for in the original agreement to establish a bridge. As the creation of a fixed link drove regional integration, decision-makers realised that development needed to occur beyond the hard infrastructure. These innovative solutions were not planned in advance. They are the product of a pragmatic approach to solving specific problems. But, in aggregate, the repeated interactions of Swedish and Danish stakeholders, at all levels, have supported the development of solutions-oriented, flexible, and long-term collaborative mechanisms.

The starting point for the Helsinki-Tallinn collaboration would be to create such flexible mechanisms, focusing at first on highly practical, solutions-oriented opportunities for collaboration. The Danes and the Swedes started collaboration by solving small technical challenges and then overlaid a larger governance structure that remains committed to solving specific challenges but then building upon each successive collaboration with stronger regional integration. Some of the areas of collaboration are limited to small, informal interactions of a very technical nature, but these are often the small areas of improvement that facilitate better integration. The regional governance model that has been built up was generated partly by design but largely out of necessity.

It is up to the local network of actors to actually deliver the necessary hard as well as soft infrastructure required to advance these political and economic objectives. Political decision-

makers are best suited from making larger political decisions, while collaboration often occurs at a lower, more functional level. These multi-stakeholder, crossborder initiatives vary significantly from the traditional approach of top-down government, requiring a 'horizontal' approach away from 'government' and towards 'governance' of the regions. This is because authority is distributed in crossborder initiatives, limiting the extent to which any single actor can implement its objectives. A shift to a horizontal system of governance implies a new range of issues to be resolved and a new system of tools to do so, including networking, economic incentives, collaboration, and dialogue.

Lessons can be learned from the experiences in various crossborder planning initiatives, especially in terms of structuring the new governance approaches. Experience shows that platforms are required for effective governance. Governance platforms move far beyond mere opportunistic partnerships in transport planning, though these types of ad hoc partnerships do occur in more established regions, as is demonstrated by the Öresund case. The political processes that drove infrastructure planning in the Öresund region have been reinforced by the larger political project of creating a cross-border mega-region that is linked to large-scale planning processes at the national, regional, and European levels. Meanwhile, the Helsinki-Tallinn region does not have a comparable fixed link in place to drive collaboration. Nonetheless, the lessons learned from the two decades of experience in the Öresund region can help inform, inspire, and support the Helsinki-Tallinn partnership as it moves forward with larger and more ambitious planning processes.

This project reports on the **descriptive** aspects of the governance mechanisms in both regions. These descriptive aspects have been used to frame an **assessment** of the governance mechanisms.

## 2. Concepts and methodology

### 2.1 CONCEPTS – CROSSBORDER PLANNING

Crossborder cooperation in transport planning is an intricate and multi-level system, with a number of European planning processes driving the increased focus on the integration of previously separate regions. New regions are beginning to emerge as infrastructure, economic development, and advances in technology link previously separate regions. Yet national barriers exist and therefore it has been found to be necessary to create cross-border institutions in addition to the physical transport links. Hard infrastructure needs to be complemented by a set of soft infrastructure of modernized governance structures.

The main needs for additional governance mechanisms included technical coordination to limit hindrances to the free flow of goods and passengers, increasing the return on investment for infrastructure.

The concepts of the **EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region** emphasise coordination of national transport policies and actions to ensure a harmonised transnational development of the transport system. It goes beyond the hard infrastructure and focuses on the broader theme of governance. The **BSR TransGovernance** project is making progress in supporting this focus, by studying and disseminating good practices in crossborder cooperation in transport. The present report stems directly from the work to define, describe, and disseminate good practice information.

The first publication to emerge from the project, *“Implementation constraints for past strategic transport initiatives,”*<sup>1</sup> highlighted the structural constraints under which decision-makers operate. Even with good intentions and well-developed plans, joint collaboration can be limited due to structural factors that are outside the control of decision-makers themselves. This structural aspect is magnified in cross-border planning due to a lack of alignment between the structures of different states. However, the experiences of similar corridor projects also suggest that some of these constraints can be overcome **by early involvement of stakeholders, the development of functional networks, and the involvement of the national level.** Moreover, there is a need to establish a common understanding of problems and share **new learning** as collaboration develops. The document recommends **identifying actors** and encouraging early involvement.

A second document, *“Multi-Level Governance: A European Experience and key success factors for transport corridors and transborder integration areas,”*<sup>2</sup> further developed the ideas of the emergence of a new, multilevel approach to governance, moving away from the idea that states are ver-

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.transgovernance.eu/media/322628/bsr\\_transgov\\_task\\_3\\_1\\_final\\_9\\_apr\\_2013.pdf](http://www.transgovernance.eu/media/322628/bsr_transgov_task_3_1_final_9_apr_2013.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.transgovernance.eu/media/322637/bsr\\_transgov\\_task\\_3\\_2\\_final\\_9\\_apr\\_2013.pdf](http://www.transgovernance.eu/media/322637/bsr_transgov_task_3_2_final_9_apr_2013.pdf)

tical systems of command and control. Based on a large study of successful cross-border governance projects, a series of lessons learned has emerged.

### **Approaches for optimising transport planning and development across borders – Lessons Learned**

A number of approaches were identified as approaches that could be disseminated to other crossborder planning processes. These include:

- setting a vision
- establishing solid personal contacts and relations among top-level decision-makers;
- identification of relevant public and private stakeholders and needs for knowledge and best practice exchange;
- regular multilateral working sessions in various setups (high-level groups, coordination and technical working sessions, best-practice seminars
- involving representatives of EU level institutions (e.g. TEN-T coordinators) for topical guidance and support in setting a dialogue with national level authorities;
- establishing of a stakeholder platform composed of representatives of all parties;
- developing and adoption of a binding cooperation framework
- consistent presentation of the shared strategic goals across governance tiers and towards national priority programmes/plans of the involved countries
- developing specific projects eligible for EU-funding and supporting preparation of real-life business cases stimulating the interest of strategic market players
- launching of expert platforms/observatories to supervise the technical preparation of projects/investments and optimisation of final solutions (e.g. in case of critical cross-border and environmentally sensitive sections).

Source: Task 3.2. Report: MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE A European experience and key success factors for transport corridors and transborder integration areas

The report concludes that there is a need to build up effective multi-level governance systems in European in general but in the Baltic region in particular. The need for this collaboration includes a number of internal economic reasons for improving trade but the overall patterns of European integration have created a framework in which the collaboration takes place.

The shift to a horizontal system of governance implies a new range of issues that need to be resolved and a new system of tools to do so, including networking, economic incentives, col-

laboration, and dialogue. Some successful examples of crossborder collaboration have been identified and a number of key principles are beginning to be understood. Essentially, there is a need to shift from ‘*government*’ to ‘*governance*’ in the approach to cross-border work. The new instruments under this conceptual shift include:

- Networking
- Economic incentives
- Collaboration
- Dialogue

This multilevel system of governance is characterised by a number of collaborative mechanisms but also a series of incentives that can push some stakeholders into competing positions. Collaboration is required by a number of actors in broad range of domains.

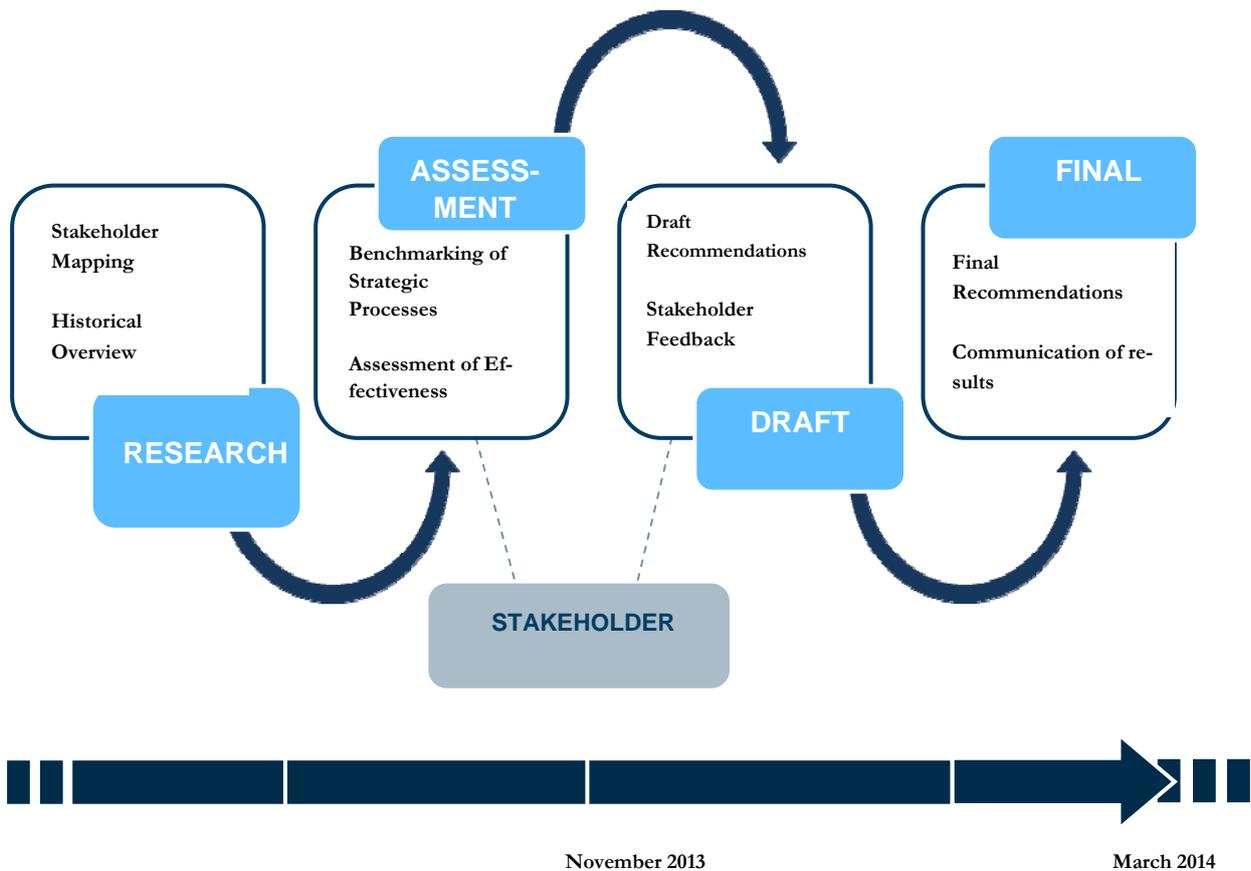
This complex system is amplified because of the multinational governance model involved in crossborder transport planning. In many cases, there is a lack of alignment between the decision-making structures of the countries involved. Even across the Nordic countries, with a long history of collaboration and similar governance structures, there is an array of subsystems employed to govern transport planning. Decision-making is often highly complex under these conditions.

The work of the present project, therefore, is to identify and assess the governance mechanisms that underpin successful coordination, especially instruments that support the effective collaboration across borders in areas where traditional top-down government approaches do not apply. This focus on governance is not an easy concept to adopt in practice, as has been outlined. Yet these concepts are important to this present project, especially the successful way in which the new governance mechanisms have merged onto a traditionally top-down field such as transport planning.

As will be demonstrated, the Öresund region has successfully adopted many of the key success factors identified in the European experience, while the Helsinki-Tallinn region has not fully implemented many of the success factors that have been shown to produce effective cross-border governance of transport corridors. There is thus a significant opportunity for improvement in the Helsinki-Tallinn region based on the experiences of the Öresund region. This report aims to identify some of the areas in which progress has been made and outline strategies for replicating some of the successful examples in cross-border transport development.

## 2.2 METHODOLOGY

Oxford Research has based this study on a straight-forward approach to the project, culminating in a final report on the historical development of the Öresund region and the Helsinki-Tallinn region, a stakeholder mapping, and an assessment of the effectiveness of approaches to manage various planning dimensions. The project was implemented in four distinct yet interrelated phases.



## 3. Description of Crossborder Regions

This section provides a description of each region, focusing primarily on the historical development of the governance mechanisms that support crossborder transport planning.

### 3.1 ÖRESUND

The purpose of this section is to provide a basic definition and description of the main characteristics of the Öresund region, especially those features that contribute to a benchmarking of the region against the Helsinki-Tallinn region.

The Öresund region is a well developed cross-border region that incorporates significant collaboration projects and coordination bodies to plan and operate the integrated transport system, with dedicated agencies to operate the bridge (The Öresund Bridge Consortium), a harmonization of railway systems, and joint purchase and operation of Öresund trains, and joint ownership and operation of Copenhagen Malmö Port.

Reinforcing this functional collaboration, the region benefits from regional institutions that assist in aligning various components of the region to work together, address outstanding issues, and articulate a vision for the region. The Öresund Committee is the main body responsible for the regional function. Without traditional levers of policy development, the Öresund Committee is a good example of a new ‘governance’ agency that uses non-traditional policy instruments such as networking, platforms for collaboration, information, and observatory functions.

#### 3.1.1 Description - The Öresund Region

The Öresund region is a cross border region that includes parts of eastern Denmark and Southern Sweden. The ‘Öresund’ itself, from which the region derives its name, is a narrow body of water separating the Danish island of Zealand from Scania, the southernmost region of Sweden. The sound follows the Northeastern shoreline of Zealand, ranging from 4 kilometers across at the northern border between Elsinore and Helsingborg to 16 kilometers at the southern part that forms the natural divide between Danish capital Copenhagen and Malmö, the second largest city-region in Sweden. Together, the population of this aggregated region is 3.7 million people – a quarter of Denmark’s and Sweden’s joint population.

The first agreement between Denmark and Sweden was reached as late as 1991, where the plan for a bridge connecting Copenhagen, Copenhagen Airport, and Malmö was agreed upon. **Öresundsbro Konsortet** (The Öresund Bridge Consortium), the bridge company set to own and administer the bridge, was established and thereafter owned half by the company A/S Öresund and half by *Svensk-danska Broförbindelsen*, under the Danish state and Swedish state respectively.

The Öresund Bridge is the longest combined road and rail bridge in Europe, and connects two major metropolitan areas: those of the Danish capital city of Copenhagen and the major Swedish city of Malmö. Furthermore, the Öresund Bridge connects the road and rail networks of Scandinavia with those of Central and Western Europe. Around 11 million passengers per year and an average of 19,000 vehicles a day cross the Öresund Bridge.

This agreement to establish the Öresundsbro Konsortiet was not straight forward and is a shining example of the governance innovation that allowed for the successful development of a large infrastructure project. Being a bi-national agreement, it involved Denmark and Sweden pooling authority and de-politicising the development process while creating new governance structures to increase the return on investment and facilitate larger regional development objectives.

### 3.1.2 Drivers of Integration

The Öresund Bridge is broadly accepted as the most significant investment for the emergence of a region across the Öresund. In a historical perspective, the joint efforts in the area towards regional economical development are fairly recent. A confluence of factors supported the decision to begin construction of one of the Northern Europe's largest infrastructure projects.

Each side of the region has its own vision that is advanced through integration, both for internal reasons but also for broader international globalisation. For **Sweden**, one of the major driver is to create a common traffic and transport system, which essentially applies to the whole of southern Sweden, being that the trains run all the way to Gothenburg, Kalmar, and Karlskrona. The centre-periphery issue is very relevant, as for southern Sweden, Copenhagen is closer than Stockholm and much of the focus is on the availability of services such as the airport, which serves the southern part of Sweden as much as it does the capital region in which it is located. An important factor in this is the closer connection to the major airport in Copenhagen. In **Denmark**, economic factors provide the key value proposition for constructing the bridge. In the 1980s, both Copenhagen and Malmö were undergoing periods of economic stagnation, with historically high unemployment and slow growth. Denmark was particularly intent on developing regions around Copenhagen to create new demand for housing.

These internal factors were reinforced by **international political integration**, mainly driven by both an increased in Nordic cooperation since the 1950s but also increasing European participation, especially with Sweden's ascension to the European Union in 1995, helped to bring the two sides together. Both Sweden and Denmark saw the fixed link connection as an opportunity to increase integration across the Nordic countries and with the wider European system.

Malmö functions as a labour reserve for Copenhagen, especially as many young Swedes work in the service industries in Denmark. Both companies and citizens of the region will gain

from the crossborder development. A larger labour market means more jobs to choose from but is also positive for companies. The offering of cultural and spare time activities also increases as well as their customer supply. From the Swedish side, neighbouring municipalities are also content and realise that the development of Malmö is central also for their development, while larger regional development plans are occurring in Denmark, such as the recent investment in tourist infrastructure in the Copenhagen region, such as in Elsinore.

The creation of a region also allows the Copenhagen and Malmö regions to pool resources and increase the international appeal of the wider Öresund region, which is crucial given the international competition for talent and investment. A recent example of the appeal of regional approaches is the network of universities in Lund, Malmö, Copenhagen and Roskilde. The research facilities ESS and MAX IV being built in Lund can be regarded as a result of this increased integration, as the new facilities draw on the entire regional workforce and research infrastructure.

#### 3.1.3 Governance

The increased development of the region as a cross-border region, both in terms of transport structures but also broader integration efforts, has led to and required the development of governance innovations. The governance of the region has developed over two decades into a patchwork of functional collaborative practices, informal groups, ad hoc committees, and permanent bodies that assist in supporting collaboration in transport planning and regional integration.

#### 3.1.4 Technical collaboration

The technical issues of creating a cross-border system have generated the need to collaborate and coordinate. These interactions have created a number of new mechanisms to promote the smooth interplay among stakeholders and ensure appropriate conditions. It is very important to note that the Danish and Swedish systems have recognised the need to internal changes in structure to allow for more flexibility and a simpler interface with their neighbours. National transport authorities in the region have created new mechanisms to address these issues with technical working groups called **special purpose vehicles**.

The special purpose vehicles are pooled expert technical personnel from both countries set together in teams to solve a set number of very detailed problems in institutionalized settings. Such vehicles are currently at work in the Femern Belt Connection, a tunnel to 3connect Denmark and Germany due in 2021. From the Danish side, 75 experts with technical problems like safety (in road, rail, and tunnel), railway, road network and voltage have been lent from various ministries and agencies to this specific special purpose vehicle. The Special Purpose Vehicles are pooled platforms for expertise and decision-making agencies

### *Cooperation in developing Technical Standards*

Establishing a physical link between Denmark and Sweden, and thereby a link between Northern Europe and Scandinavia, provided some technical difficulties that were solved through the pragmatic development of coordinating mechanisms.

An example of technical issues is the power supply. The bridge is electrically powered from both sides of the sound, providing a reliable power supply. The rail link is connected the Danish 25 kV/50Hz electrical system on the bridge, automatically shifting to the Swedish 25V/161/3Hz system on Lernacken Station in Sweden. Very practical technical and engineering solutions were applied. Moreover, the information systems on the rail link are linked to different systems, these shifting through a specially designed ATC system shifting component on the artificial island of Peberholm in the middle of the sound.

The fixed link also provided some coordination at a higher level, as the Danish and Swedish emergency authorities had to collaborate on joint plan of action in the case of emergencies on the bridge. This has required the involvement of police services, fire brigades, SOS alarm, and traffic governance centrals from both states. Together they have produced a plan of action, and authorities from both sides will respond in case of a emergency on the bridge. On either side they hold authority of their respective territories.

The Danish and Swedish railway operators have also cooperated in a significant manner in order to synchronize the differing railway services. Areas like security and signaling have been harmonized, concluding by a joint purchase of the operator of the Öresund railway service, a regional institution rather than two separate national systems.

As the cooperation is very technical and pragmatic nature, a problem does, however, exist with the legislative efforts. The legislative body is based on two different levels in Denmark and Sweden which makes the legislative efforts more complex.

The legislative body in the Swedish part of the Öresund Regions for public transport is the Region Skåne, whereas the legislative body is on the national government level in Denmark. Similarly, responsibility for train traffic in the Swedish part of the Öresund region is also at the Region Skåne and with the Ministry of Transport in Denmark. This has contributed to the fact that there is no formal cooperation on the legislative efforts in the region. There is however the above mentioned pragmatic culture enabling ad-hoc decisions to be taken when a common view procures.

#### **3.1.5 Regionalisation of transport systems**

Cooperation on traffic in the region occurs between the regional level in Sweden, Skånetrafiken, and the national level in Denmark, led by the Danish Ministry of Transport. While

this lack of alignment has caused some issues in terms of the capacity to commit to long-term planning, the two sides have developed a series of formal and informal practices to overcome any lack of structural alignment. They have joint meetings on both the managerial and the operational level.

One example is a pre-scheduled meetings at regular intervals, along with ad hoc contact. At the Danish and Swedish Transport Ministries, for example, an annual meeting plan with official meeting every six months take place to ensure that contact is maintained, but more meetings are scheduled if needed, based on the types of activities that require interaction.

There is a pragmatic technical cooperation on a coordinated level in the Öresund Region as the Danish and Swedish authorized transport coordinators are in regular contact in their daily work. This is an institutionalized part of the work in transport coordination and the cultural, language and geographical barriers are not visible within the coordinative effort on transport in the Öresund Region. The Danish and Swedish Ministries of transport have official meetings every six months, but holds them more often if need be.

*Close contact on operative level*

The close cooperation between Swedish and Danish transport operative agencies was exemplified when a freight train malfunctioned on a single rail connection in the Southern Jutland. Because the incident happened on a part of the connection serviced by a single rail it effectively jammed the whole rail flow from the German border across the Öresund into the southern Swedish rail network.

The Danish and Swedish railway operative agencies were in contact as soon as the malfunction was observed to establish the consequences for the rail service in both states. This quick response was a result of years of day-to-day contact between the operative agencies and a trustful relationship.

The close contact and good communication patterns proved very valuable when problems were encountered on the rail service.

Small, though significant, technical coordination issues have been resolved through functional networks that cooperated pragmatically. However, based on these interactions, a larger political process of region building has emerged, reinforced by regional institutions capable of planning large-scale infrastructure projects.

The collaboration on technical transport issues has thus been very positive with regard to the Öresund Bridge. This is in part a product of a very pragmatic relationship between traffic authorities on both sides of the strait. The Danish and Swedish government transport authorities collaborate on international matters, European integration and on issues in the Baltic Sea on all levels from day-to-day issues to higher political level questions. It can be said in on a

general note that strategic level of the cooperative efforts in the Öresund region is more informal, where as the operational level is more formal.

### 3.1.6 Financing principles

The focus on a joint effort continues today with the agreement on 50/50 representatives in the consortium from Denmark and Sweden together with a shifting chairmanship. This secures a broad political support from both countries which is regarded as crucial in order to start on a project with a budget time-scale of 30+ years.

The Öresundbro Konsortiet is established as a public-private company earning revenue through fares on the bridges users. The consortium borrowed the upfront costs to establish the bridge – which amounted to EUR 1.98 billion – and then financed the long-term borrowing against future fare revenues. The consortium is active in advertising and promotion of the bridge in order to increase the traffic and ultimately increase revenues.

It was a crucial political point that the bridge would not ultimately be financed by taxpayers money, as this would present the politicians with the problem of explaining why Swedes living anywhere else than the southernmost part and Danes living in the western part should pay for a bridge they were never to use. As there would be problems presenting the bridge as a national investment, it was instead perceived as a regional more than a national matter.

### 3.1.7 The Öresund Committee

Full-scale institution-building did not start until the agreement on the new bridge. The Bridge was the starting point – and recognized as the critical investment – to the development of the Öresund region. To this aim the cross-border political platform **The Öresund Committee** was established by the Danish and Swedish national state in 1993. The committee defends the interest of the Öresund region in front the Danish and Swedish parliaments, as well as in front of the EU in Brussels, and work to boost integration between the regions citizens, primarily by enhancing culture and work life. They are collaborating with organizations on Scandinavian, Nordic and EU level regarding cross-border issues.

The Öresund Committee consists of 12 members each of them contributing one political nominee to the board. The members are regions, municipalities, cities and councils on either side of the Öresund region. The 12 members are split in six Danish and six Swedish which is very deliberate in order to maintain an equal balance on the board. The financing principles are based on proportional representation of population. The members finance the committee with a contribution depending on the number of inhabitants in the regional organization.

## Managing Issues

### Structuring and Brokering Barriers to regional integration

The Öresund Committee functions as a broker of issues. The most current publication of the brochure, **33 Obstacles, Challenges, and Opportunities** is a summary of how to manage the diverse number of issues related to crossborder integration. At present, there is a new list of 45 obstacles, as 17 issues have already been solved. The publications are making challenges and the progress visible, which helps to provide a structure for the overall work while demonstrating success.

Members of the secretariat will identify issues, identify who is affected by them, and identify who is responsible for them. The Öresund Committee secretariat will then try to understand all the various decisions that are required to address the problem, and will instigate a working group composed of various agencies, tasked with the single objective of solving the identified issue. A number of key lessons can be drawn from this experience:

- Need to have a institution dedicated to locate and solve problems in the integration of the region, and it needs to be flexible enough to collaborate with stakeholders at all level while maintaining enough prestige to ensure collaboration from various parties.
- The institution should also look for allies to cooperate in presenting problems to the ministries. Connect the issue to a specific group affected by the barrier, and be as specific as possible about what the problem is and why it needs to be addressed. Use individual examples of “suffering” – people affected badly by current obstacles for integration, as a way of making the problem more tangible for people.
- Issues need to be classified and simplified Classify them into legal, technical, or other types of obstacles. Without structured classification of issues, the barriers seem too daunting and progress will be too unfocused and scattered, or else the situation will appear to be ‘hopeless’
- Never give up – patience is critical and obstacles take time to lift. Therefore, be strategic in choosing which problems to solve first. It is best to get a few ‘quick wins’ and then build up on the basis of success rather than trying to take on the major problems right away. The Öresund Committee limits themselves to 1 problem per year per working group, with a maximum of 4 working groups per year.
- Respect difference between two countries. It will not work if one part plays the leading role. This needs to be reflected in terms of an equal number of delegates in committees.
- Celebrate success. Any progress needs to be identified so that it becomes part of the story of successful collaboration.

See Report here: [http://www.Öresundskomiteen.org/download/arbetsmarknad/33-an\\_EN\\_web.pdf](http://www.Öresundskomiteen.org/download/arbetsmarknad/33-an_EN_web.pdf)

The Öresund Committee has a **budget to spend on projects**, which greatly enhances its scope. The committee administers the EUR 44 million funding received from the Interreg IIA and Interreg IIIA structural funds from the European Union, resulting from the Commission’s inclusion of the Orestaden fixed link in the Trans-European transport Networks (TEN). These funds are channeled through to various networks, organizations and companies working for an integrated Orestad region. These include the Öresund Science Region, Öresund Institute and Örestad University, Öresund Media Platform, and Öresund Film Festival, as well as several cluster platforms in the region.

### 3.1.8 Knowledge Platforms – Reinforcing the region

Beyond the Öresund Committee, a number of additional agencies and bodies have been developed that assist in supporting the integration of the region and collaboration on such things as transport planning. The **Öresund Institute**, created in 2002, is working for the integration of the region into a common market in a Nordic and European context through border-crossing analytical work, fact-finding and debate regarding political economy policy issues. It thus aims to provide a foundation for the work of the Öresund Committee as well as other public and private actors. The members of the Institute are public authorities, corporations, organizations and universities. The institute is financed primarily through membership fees, although the institute was previously financed through the EU funds administered by the Öresund Committee. While this institute is not a governing body, it is nonetheless a key part of the **governance framework** in that it assists in disseminating good practice and knowledge of the region.

#### Creating a Vision for the region

Key stakeholders in the Öresund region were very clear that a vision is required for the region, and serves as an independent support mechanism to allow people to collaborate. National ministries down to functional experts know that collaboration towards an integrated Öresund region is a part of their daily jobs. The Öresund Committee, the Öresund Institute, and ÖresundDirect all support the articulation of a clear narrative related to the region, and are leading voices in communicating the vision. But many additional agencies take their mandate from the idea of creating an integrated region, allowing them to feel secure in collaboration. Some features are worth highlighting include:

- ***The vision helps to remove internal obstacles*** – the presence of a vision will help to remind stakeholders that collaboration is necessary
- ***Be outspoken about what should be achieved*** – the vision needs to be constantly articulated and communicated, and should be sufficiently ambitious enough that many different stakeholders can get behind it
- ***Creating an overarching narrative for ‘why’ we need to collaborate*** – there needs to be a value proposition for the region, such as an economic need that is filled by the regional integration efforts, such as the need to compete globally or improve access to larger transport corridors.
- ***Enable a mandate for day-to-day interactions*** – takes a load off of the political system to deal with collaboration, as not all issues need to be moved up the political system before action can be taken
- ***Generate long term roadmap*** – allows for required actions and remaining barriers to be identified
- ***Institutionalise this vision*** – Öresund Committee, Öresund Institute, and a number of additional platforms exist to remind people of the vision and keep the dialogue going. The institution should have sufficient autonomy to initiate conversations but should have close enough linkages that it can bring together the proper stakeholder.

### 3.1.9 Formal Platforms for collaboration – focus on the users of transport

While not directly part of the transport system, the successful creation of a regional governance system requires a focus on the users of the system. **ÖresundDirekt** functions as a platform for collaboration, an initiative under the Öresund Committee, to help private and professionals with cross-border tax, commuting, housing, and work related issues. ÖresundDirekt consists of an information office in Malmö and a web page managed by an office in Copenhagen. The synchronized link between Denmark and Sweden is considered to have had a significant effect on the labour and housing market as well as changing the mindset of commuters from both sides.

ÖresundDirekt functions as a platform for different governmental agencies competencies and problems reported by public and private sectors. ÖresundDirekt is consensus-driven. It consists of a steering group and a working group and has the vision: 'to make it as easy as possible to exploit the potentials on the other side of the sound.' The governance of the system includes a number of components:

- Steering group responsible for budget and strategy, meets once a year
- Working group coordinate the work, consists of representatives from different agencies, meets 4-5 times a year
  - The region Skåne
  - County administrative board of Skåne
  - Insurance agency
  - Labour market officials

Interview of the agency representatives suggest that the success of the initiative is that the agencies can apply their own mission to the work, as long as it contributes to the vision of exploiting the advantages of the cross-border region. It also helps that the agencies can implement their own goals and ambitions to their work, within the vision of making cross-border living/working easier. This makes it very easy for the agencies to work together, as they are also working for themselves. The relationships are very much built on trust. This is eased because it is government agencies involved and they are all working with the same overarching vision.

Another highly successful feature is that the employees in ÖresundDirekt also rotate between ÖresundDirekt and their home agency. This way knowledge is shared across institutions and keeps all organizations on the same page regarding the specific issues.

**Örestat** is another database feeding of the activity in Öresund. It is a statistical web portal offering key numbers on demographics with emphasis on number of commuters, citizens living across the Sound, and type and location of employment. It works as a foundation for demographic research in Öresund and has supported regional planning on both sides of the border.

With the integration of Copenhagen and Malmö into one region, the Öresund holds one of the highest densities of well-educated workers in the Nordic countries, as well as a high

number of university platforms. The **Öresund University Network**, which closed in 2012, have through 15 years initiated, facilitated and administered cooperative projects between 15 universities in the region, among them the larger Scandinavian universities in Lund and Copenhagen. The network also collaborated with the private sector and – among others – facilitated the network **Öresund Food**, a cluster platform for the producers, logistic partners and researchers in food in the Öresund region. However, these initiatives were discontinued. Öresund Food closed down in 2010, and the Öresund University Network in 2012.

### 3.1.10 Crossborder Infrastructure Assets

The merging of Danish and Swedish institutions following the construction of the Öresund Bridge has increased cross-border interaction and created a genuine cross-border region. Most significant is the merging of the port of Copenhagen and the port of Malmö in the world's first merging of ports from two different states into one single company; the **Copenhagen Malmö Port**. A concrete example is that when the bridge was established, there was worry for what would happen to the respective ports, whether they would outcompete each other. However, the problem was solved by joining the ports into one company. This joint port has become an important hub for Toyota and other car brands. It is an example of turning a threat into something positive.

With the bridge standing, the time of traditional ferry transport across the sound had ended and the joint port focused instead on servicing the 100 million consumers in the Baltic Sea region. The **Danish and Swedish Post service** merged as well in 2009 in a strategic move to compete with private post services as the national monopoly on letters were set to expire in 2011. **In Copenhagen Airport**, almost 90 % of the traffic today is international, while of the competing Nordic airports have around 40-50 % domestic traffic. The catchment area covers most of Denmark and all of Southern Sweden, which accounts for 40 % of the entire population of Sweden<sup>3</sup>.

### 3.1.11 Assessment of governance mechanisms

The early collaboration led to large-scale regional institutions that have nearly fully integrated their transport planning. Local transport systems feed into the Öresund transport system while companies have embraced the regional model by reorganizing internally to operate in a more efficient way, taking advantage of lower property rates and the access to a large market and highly-educated, skilled workforce.

Ultimately, the Öresund case is an example of overall successful implementation of cross-border cooperation. A number of companies, both private sector and those that include a

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<sup>3</sup> STRING (2012): Bottlenecks in the infrastructure between Scandinavia and Central Europe.

number of public shareholders, have fully become Öresund-focused by distributing functions around the region while maintaining an entirely regional focus. Pragmatic and ad-hoc cooperation on all aspects of traffic development from technical solutions to governance have showed their worth in making the Öresund Region an integrated region.

#### 3.1.12 Overview of key features

At the level of governance, the Öresund model incorporates several features that enhance collaboration have lead to effective crossborder coordination and collaboration in transport development. The main success is that it brings together a **multilevel governance model** with collaboration at several levels (national, regions and municipalities) and **functional cooperation at the practical level**, even without formal mandates to cooperate. Functional experts, those working with technical, legal, regulatory, or other aspect of planning have stated that the overall vision is clear and provides them with a mandate to collaborate.

Some of the stakeholders interviewed believe it will be easier for Helsinki and Tallinn to bring cross-border issues to the national level because of two capitals. On the national level in Sweden the central ministries are the ministries of business and of finance. The Danish side often has an easier time with advocacy work since the national government is located to the same place.

The collaboration occurs through a blend of formal and informal contact, which is mediated through working groups that are tied to single agencies but which are supported through **semi-permanent collaboration platforms** that are used for solving specific issues, but the platform is tied to permanent bodies, such as the Öresund Committee, which can maintain momentum even after a working group has disbanded.

While functional networks and working groups are important, a key point that has been made is that while national authorities do not solve all the problems, the major barriers require the involvement of national governments. There is thus a need to assist issues to move up from a functional level to a broader forum. In this capacity, the Öresund Committee has been working to increase linkages to new levels of government and to serve as an **observatory of issues**, identifying and tracking progress in a number of fields and serving as a constant reminder of Öresund-specific issues. The Öresund Committee serves as an agency to institutionalise the vision of a region, which needs to be articulated. It also provides a **platform for governance networks** and serves as a structure for maintaining organisational memory even after working groups have ceased their work. Single issue committees are effective for solving single issues, as they allow people to focus on the issue at a simple level and work towards solving it.

A key feature of the Öresund system is a **de-politicisation of decision-making**. A primary means is through systems for pooling authority, such as the Öresund Bridge Committee and the Copenhagen Malmö Port. Day-to-day decisions about operations are taken out of the political sphere, meaning that the authority of both countries is pooled at an arm's length

which limits the amount of opportunities for using any difficult decision for political reasons.

Finally, the Öresund Committee has a clear role to play, but the perception of its role does not always match its actual function. In essence, the Öresund Committee performs the following:

- Functions as a clearing house for issues
- Clear mandate to identify issues and funnel them towards decision-makers
- Anchor for the various governance networks
- Observatory - Platform for sharing information and documenting issues
- Maintains and independent capacity to carry out studies

**There are limitations to the extent that the Öresund Committee can act.** These limitations are not negative; rather, they are simply the boundaries that limit the range of undertakings the Committee can hope to achieve. The most important is that it is not a de facto regional planning mechanism. Rather, its strength lies in its capacity to act as a platform for other planning processes. Nonetheless, several examples have been pointed out in exploratory interviews and will be further examined in the assessment interviews:

- Mandate remains unclear
- Does not set the vision, only articulates it
- Sidestepped on important matters
- Dependence on individual politicians

There are several examples of areas of transport planning where the structures do not align. Some examples include:

- Public transit – Region Scania in Sweden but Ministry of Transport in Denmark. Relies on an ad hoc culture
- Vejdirektoratet and Trikverket –no formalised cooperation
- Ten-year planning horizons in Sweden, while in Denmark planning is more ad hoc
- Municipal involvement in employment issues in Denmark, with greater centralisation in Sweden and a single point of contact.
- Labour market rules are handled by the region in Sweden (ie. Region Skåne) but by the Municipalities in Denmark (the ‘jobcentrer’). This makes it hard to make joint decisions on labour market issues as there are a lot of actors involved, and because the municipalities and the region are on different strategic levels.

However, *ad hoc* partnerships can **overcome issues related to alignment**, but requires a clear mandate for enabling these informal contacts. The responsibility for infrastructure and transports lie on the national government in Denmark. More precisely, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of transportation. Furthermore, since Copenhagen is the capital, the local traffic system is very much integrated with the whole national system. **New governance mechanisms have therefore been created as much within each country as they have across the countries.** The new platforms support long-term relationships that can be connected again to address future issues. Finally, the group dynamics and processes can be repli-

cated so that there is a starting point for work, rather than needing to re-establish structures for work.

#### **3.1.13 New challenges**

Perceived capacity issues and continued issues related rules and regulations will lay the foundation for future work in the region. The capacity problems are due to the fact that there is only one fixed link with two train tracks and one road. Traffic has increased continuously since the year 2000, with the exception of a decline in road transports as an effect of the economic crisis. While it appears that a broad consensus exists, there is a debate in the Öresund region over the future of the transport system, with several proposals for future development. Infrastructure is crucial and continues to be the most important. Debate exists over a new metro line to Malmö or a fixed link, Helsingborg-Helsingör alternative.

As regards rules and regulations, further integration is essential. There are several administrative barriers such as solving problems of sick pay and parental leave for persons working on one side but living on the other. These and other barriers are often the responsibility of the national level. The fact that the different countries have different currencies is a barrier which has varying effects. The Danish crown follows the euro. When it was strong a considerable group of Danes moved to Sweden and commuted back to Denmark to work. An effect which has now mostly disappeared as the currency lost in value to the Swedish crown.

## 3.2 HELSINKI-TALLINN

Helsinki and Tallinn have had a long history of connectivity, but the past decade has seen a dramatic rise in crossborder activity. Some of the activity has occurred through economic incentives while other activity is encouraged through improvements to infrastructure. In any case, Tallinn and Helsinki interrelations have developed to the level where a common vision is needed and will act as a catalyst and framework for cooperation between local, regional and national authorities and private sector. As the H-TTransPlan report correctly questions: who should do this or lead the process? Compared to the governance structure of the Öresund region, the Helsinki-Tallinn region displays very few of the cross-border platforms, governance mechanisms, or 'soft' aspects that have made the Öresund region a relative success, such as collaboration to ease the integration of the region.

While the H-TTransPlan project showed that both sides (Tallinn and Helsinki) are interested in cooperation, the interviews with Estonian and Finnish stakeholders suggest that Helsinki acted the more active partner. Some of the stakeholders suggested this is due to the greater capacity for Helsinki to act, both in terms of financial resources and institutional structures that provide the City of Helsinki with more authority than Tallinn. Other suggested that there was closer alignment between the interests of the Finnish national authorities and the City of Helsinki officials than is the case in Estonia. Finally, some of the stakeholders on both the Finnish and Estonian side suggested that the Finnish side has more to gain in the longer term through collaboration than the Estonian side. The Finnish business community is interested in better access to major markets in Europe while policymakers are interested in greater regional integration as part of broader Baltic Sea Region collaboration. Interviews with the Estonian stakeholders suggest that neither the business community nor the higher levels of government are as actively interested as their Finnish counterparts, while Estonian policymaking structures are more difficult to manage than in Finland, and decisions can sometimes be reversed.

### 3.2.1 Description

The Helsinki-Tallinn region includes the capital regions of Finland and Estonia, separated by the 65 km-wide Gulf of Finland. Helsinki and Tallinn have mainly been connected by sea, with the good connections by passenger ferry. Ferry travel is by far the most popular mode of transportation joining the two halves of the region, with as much as 93 percent of all trips by ferry.

There is significant volume of crossborder traffic. The number of one-way trips on vessels was 7.35 million and over 1 million passenger cars were carried over the Gulf of Finland in 2011, according to the H-TTransPlan. The volume of crossing is significant. The Tallinn-Helsinki route now has four operators: Tallink (59%), Viking Line (24% market share), Eck-erö Line (12%), and with a smaller share Linda Line, which travels seasonally. Ferry travel from the center of Helsinki to the center of Tallinn have improved in recent years, both in

terms of the time of journey, the consistency of travel time, and number of crossings. Even in the absence of a fixed link, there is significant passenger flow across the Gulf.

The precise delimitation of the region varies. The formal cooperation through Euregio included Uusimaa County in Finland and Harju County in Estonia, which constitute the extended metropolitan regions of the two capitals. One important feature of the crossborder region is that it includes the two capital city regions of Finland and Estonia, which are the most densely populated regions in their respective countries, and the source for most of the economic activity in the respective countries. For example, Helsinki region accounts for around 16% of its national population and 36% of total Finnish GDP, while the Tallinn region represents a proportionately larger economic impact, with 39% of population and 61% of Estonia's GDP.<sup>4</sup>

While there is some symmetry in terms of the relative weight of population and economic activity within the respective countries, the two cities are not similar to each other in size or economic development. With a population of 1.5 million on the Finnish side, and less than half a million on the Estonian side, Helsinki is the larger of the two. Moreover, while Estonia is catching up with an average annual growth rate of around 5% over the past decade, its economic performance trails Finland, with GDP per capita of the Tallinn area only 60% that of the Helsinki region.<sup>5</sup> The Finnish capital has also had success in international branding efforts, ranking highly in such scales as the Soft Power Index.<sup>6</sup>

### 3.2.2 Drivers of Integration

Tallinn and Helsinki had historically been key trading partners, serving as key links in a Baltic Sea network of business connections. The connections were limited during the period in which Estonia was part of the Soviet Union. In 1991, when the Republic of Estonia was re-established, several Nordic and European partners opened formal links to Estonia, and economic interactions increased slowly. Closer economic and cultural interactions rose significantly in 2004, triggered by Estonian accession to the EU and the adoption of the Euro by both countries.

Both cities appear to gain from the cross-border regional development. For Estonia, the integration would likely be the driving force for economic development as it provides new market opportunities, business expansions to the Nordic market, more jobs, through which the money comes to Estonia. For Finland, access to the European market is becoming and will increasingly be paramount to longer-term plans for growth. Ultimately, economic inter-

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<sup>4</sup> Data for 2009 from the OECD Regional Database.

<sup>5</sup> OECD Report

<sup>6</sup> Monocle Magazine and the UK-based Institute of Government publishes an annual survey based on a quantification of global influence through branding, creativity, as well as traditional quality of life indexes. Finland ranks highly, coming in at 13<sup>th</sup> in 2012. Estonia did not rank in the top 40.

<http://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/new-persuaders-iii>

ests create natural pressures for integration, which drives and is reinforced by investments in the transport infrastructure in a mutually reinforcing cycle.

These economic interests also lay the foundation for the ‘value proposition’ for greater collaboration in transport planning, potentially complemented by greater regional integration. However, as mentioned earlier, there are multiple potential ‘futures’ for the region, which depend on the nature of collaboration and the willingness of local and national stakeholders to identify, articulate, and build a vision for the region. As in the Öresund Region, the drivers of integration influence collaboration and can (and should) be used as a political resource to guide further work.

### **Labour market**

The labour markets in Tallinn and Finland are highly complementary. In general, several studies have confirmed that much of the crossborder commuter traffic is made up of workers from Estonia traveling to work in Finland to benefit from higher wage levels in a variety of sectors, notably the service sector. On the other hand, Finnish nationals travel to Estonia for short-term tourism and to take advantage of price differentials for goods and services. Consequently, both Helsinki and Tallinn clearly benefit from each other. Language ties support the mobility of workers, as the Finnish and Estonian languages are very close, with approximately 60% of the words being mutually intelligible.

While Estonia managed to reduce its unemployment rate between 2000 and 2008, the unemployment rate doubled with the onset of the 2008 economic downturn, which accelerated interest in crossborder work. According to the initial results highlighted in the H-TTTransPlan, the economic flows connected with cross-border work are significantly bigger than those of tourism. It has been estimated that the gross earnings of people from the Harju region (of which Tallinn is part) working in Helsinki (both residents and short-time workers) were about 300–400M€ in 2011. Approximately one half of the sum is earned by residents in Helsinki moved from Tallinn and a half by temporary workers who are residents in Tallinn.

### **Tourism**

The impact of Finnish tourists for the local economy in Tallinn is significant. The tourism and money flow to Estonia, mainly the Harju region, has quadrupled in ten years while the growth has been smaller in the other direction. According to the initial results highlighted in the H-TTTransPlan, the Tallinn tourist industry benefits significantly from Finnish tourists. A significant share comes from Helsinki. The total spent by tourists was about EUR 260 million in 2011. Finnish tourists’ share of all tourists in Tallinn is approximately 60%, meaning that while tourism has become a big industry in Tallinn, the contribution of tourists from Helsinki makes a significantly greater share than the connection to any other country.

Tourists from the Estonian side are also very important. This includes both leisure visits and family visits. Indeed, the money flow from Estonian tourists to Helsinki is approximately EUR 80 million, of which the share of Tallinn residents is estimated to be about 60%.

#### **Crossborder Business**

According to the H-TTTransPlan, fast and reliable connections year round on the Helsinki-Tallinn route increased business opportunities on both sides of the Gulf. This reinforced the existing price differentials but also helped to bring together local markets on both sides of the Gulf.

The Helsinki-Tallinn route is a major thoroughfare for Finnish goods to European markets. During the period 2002–2010, the volume of the seaborne cargo traffic between Finland and Estonia has increased significantly while the trend of the trade volume between Finland and Estonia has remained nearly constant. This indicates that the route via Estonia is increasingly used in the Finnish foreign trade. Because the ports of Helsinki and Tallinn are the main ports in the cargo traffic between Finland and Estonia, the role of the Helsinki-Tallinn route as a sea leg in the hinterland connections of Finland has increased, according to studies carried out for the H-TTTransPlan. About 2/3 of trucks were destined or originated from Estonia and rest 1/3 travelled to or from further south than Estonia.

Yet Estonia is a large market for Finnish companies to establish operations. A total of 4,319 enterprises in Estonia are owned by companies originating in Finland. According to interviews carried out as part of the H-TTTransPlan, Finnish enterprises consider the Estonian market to be an extension of their home market, with the production capacity serving other regions in addition to the local consumers. This study found that enterprises with Finnish interests have integrated well into the Estonian economy, operating in the same sector as in their home market.

Another issue is the **sulphur directive**, which comes into effect next year, and which is expected to result in a significant increase in traffic between Helsinki and Tallinn. While ships previously tended to go directly from Helsinki to Germany, the sulphur directive will work in favour of transport to Estonia, as companies minimize direct sea transport and shift cargo traffic from Finland to Estonia, from where it moves on to Europe by land transport. Sea transport will become more expensive by at least a third. This is reinforced by the attention and planning generated by the Rail Baltica project, especially the attention from the Finnish side.

#### **Transport improvements**

The main priorities for the city of Helsinki and Tallinn regarding crossborder transport include the further development of the ports as well as the connections of the ports to the broader transport system. In order to connect Helsinki and Tallinn further, the ports need to be developed. This is reflected in the current investment project to enlarge the ferry terminal at the Western Harbour. The port of Vuosaari will be connected better to public transportation, as it also serves as port for passengers who do not need to travel through the center of Helsinki.

### 3.2.3 Governance

In contrast to the Öresund region, the cross-border area of Helsinki-Tallinn includes the wider capital area on each side. This creates close relationships with national governments and institutions and can assist in lifting the crossborder regional planning onto the national political discussion. At the local level, however, there has been inconsistency in the relationship. Many of the stakeholders interviewed for this project state that there is greater consistency on the side of the Finnish planning, including integration between the national levels, authorities at the local level, and the business community, while there has been greater debate within the Estonian community of stakeholders, with less consensus between the local representatives, the state authorities, and the business community. This is especially the case between local and national decision-makers. As some interview participants from the Estonian side explained, plans and strategies developed at the local level can be reversed quite quickly by the national level, while business interests are frequently unsure of the value that closer integration with Finland would bring.

The primary objective of the current collaboration appears to be to collaborate on joint funding applications from European sources; however, there appears to be early signs that broader collaboration at a less formal level is starting. There is a very clear understanding of the difference between project-based relationships versus a deeper twin city or deeply integrated region. In the scenario planning for the H-TTransPlan, one of the two axes used to project future scenarios was based on the motivation and capability of local partners to create an integrated regional model. The vision could be narrower (with a focus only on transport projects) or wider (the forming of the twin-city region).

As it stands now, based on the analysis on this report, it appears that without greater institutional development, the narrower vision is the most likely scenario. This is made clear in the analysis of the governance mechanisms in the Helsinki-Tallinn region on their own, and is especially clear once compared to the structures that have been used to promote collaboration in the Öresund region.

### 3.2.4 Unclear visions for the region

In the opinion of stakeholders on both sides of the Gulf of Finland, there is no one single vision. The idea of H-TTransPlan scenarios<sup>7</sup> was narrower or wider cooperation. Narrower cooperation is associated with transport projects, such as Rail Baltica or a fixed linked. Another, more comprehensive vision is to develop the Twin City. This follows on several planning initiatives: Opportunities for Cooperation between Estonia and Finland 2008<sup>7</sup>, Twin-city in making,<sup>8</sup> Gulf of Finland Growth Triangle (2004), and several others.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://valitsus.ee/UserFiles/valitsus/en/government-office/growth-and-jobs/cooperation-between-estonia-and-finland/Opportunities\\_for\\_Cooperation\\_between\\_Estonia\\_Finland2008.pdf](http://valitsus.ee/UserFiles/valitsus/en/government-office/growth-and-jobs/cooperation-between-estonia-and-finland/Opportunities_for_Cooperation_between_Estonia_Finland2008.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.euregio-heltal.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/twin\\_city\\_publication3.pdf](http://www.euregio-heltal.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/twin_city_publication3.pdf)

Finland is logistically an island nation, and the connection with Central Europe is a priority. Finland has had active participation in projects such as Rail Baltica Growth Corridor, and it appears rather clear to many of the stakeholders that Finland has been articulating a transport-focused vision, with strong connections to central Europe. However, there appears to be less drive on the Estonian side in terms of the benefits, beyond greater access to employment opportunities in Finland. Indeed, the Estonian interview participants stated that business interests in Estonia did not always align with the views of the public-sector actors, and there is continued shifting of priorities between the national and local level stakeholders.

#### 3.2.5 Shifting commitments - Return to project-based collaboration

The collaboration between the Helsinki and Tallinn appear to be firmly project-based, such as the Rail Baltica Growth Corridor (RBGC), which provides the institutional platform for further development of railway connections on the Baltic region. The Finnish side appears to have a stronger commitment to long-term planning, while the Estonian interview participants suggest that the same level of planning does not appear to be as firm in Estonia. Beyond project-based collaboration, the Estonian stakeholders generally agree that there is a lack of stakeholder collaboration associated with the common infrastructure and wider issues of regional integration.

Indeed, one of the few bi-national institutions working with crossborder integration, Euregio, has been discontinued after a decade of work. Indeed, formal cross-border activities started with the establishment of the **Euregio Helsinki Tallinn (HelTal)**, as an informal network in 1999 and a formal body in 2003. The cross-border cooperation is institutionalised through a coordination body. Euregio HelTal has functioned for the enhancement of cross-border integration between Helsinki region and Tallinn. This organisation had political representatives in the management board, civil servants in the secretariat and office in Tallinn. It functioned as a non-profit association of five local authorities:

- City of Helsinki
- City of Tallinn
- Uusimaa Regional Council
- Union of Harju County Municipalities
- Republic of Estonia, represented by the Harju County Government

It performed two functions:

1. it acted as a political discussion platform
2. it initiated and followed up on cross-border and inter-regional projects and networking according to priorities.

The association appointed *ad hoc* working groups to deal with priority issues as diverse as:

- information society
- rescue operations
- vocational education

- training and science twin-city
- feasibility of a cross-Gulf tunnel

Of note, the final point included an issue that is at the heart of crossborder transport planning. Moreover, the **H-TTTransPlan project**, which produced an extensive amount of information and strategic direction, was one of the final projects carried out by Euregio before it ended operations.

The cooperation strengthened during the H-TTTransPlan project, especially for the two port authorities, when Tallinn and Helsinki harbours met and found necessary to cooperate in terms of new container terminal capacities and their locations. Currently, Tallinn and Helsinki harbours have developed a working group that has successfully attracted joint financing for a European TEN-T Motorways of the Sea project. The partners have collaborated to develop projects, especially European programmes for container terminals. The port collaboration has been a strong legacy generated from the collaboration.

A number of additional sources of support exist. This includes European crossborder collaboration programmes, as well as EURES cooperation on labour mobility.

### 3.2.6 Technical collaboration

According to the H-TTTransPlan, there is recognition that there is still a lot of work to do in developing technical and specialist level collaboration on the content of twin-city urban development, and on transport system integration especially. Some Estonian stakeholders believed that that Helsinki's spatial planning experience could be replicated in Tallinn, but then it turns out that it is not possible, because the systems are too different. The Finns have a much stronger role in the city planning than the Estonians do, and technical collaboration has not been as smooth. Some on the Finnish side attributes this to a lack of planning culture on the Estonian side, while the Estonian stakeholders point to limited consensus at various levels, and between the public and private sectors.

### 3.2.7 From formal platforms to broader collaboration

In the preparatory discussions for the H-TTTransPlan, it was recognised that the lack of common information-sharing platform between Helsinki and Tallinn could lead to difficulties. Neither officials nor other actors could access relevant documents, contacts and sources. One proposed solution was to restructure the Knowledge Platform database and develop it onto a Decision Support System.

One of the Estonian stakeholders described the participation as very much focused on achieving specific project objectives: "During the project we had several working groups, but now when the project is over, as far as I know there is no working group. A positive and biggest achievement in this project was the start of strategic cooperation between the Port of Tallinn and Port of Helsinki, but very little beyond that." Another stakeholder stated: "The surprise was that Tallinn and Helsinki city planners did not know each other; they had to introduce themselves and explain the state of the urban planning, i.e. over a long period of

time no cooperation and change of contacts had taken place. Herein, it is important for the continuation of the topic that both city's top officers and specialists would continue regular cooperation.”

Yet plans for continued collaboration have been generated. The recently-produced *Roadmap to Helsinki-Tallinn transport system – Integrated transport and city planning* approach represents a pragmatic way of collaborating to create a series of required actions of cities' own actions and such actions which should be carried out either jointly or in close coordinated manner. A number of specific actions are outlined in Helsinki and in Tallinn, with the political process within each city responsible for carrying out the action, with varying levels of national, regional, or local participation. Two specific pragmatic actions will be carried out jointly:

- Integrated ferry and public transport tickets and improved information on public transport service for ferry passengers.
- Interoperability of public transport cards in the capital regions.

Beyond this, a number of interoperability plans have been launched and have been identified in the exploratory research. The assessment questions will focus on the effectiveness of these projects, though it is difficult to identify the status of the initiatives.

However, stakeholders on the Estonian side point to a lack of a permanent body to continue collaboration, and fear that without a focal point for collaboration, that progress will not continue. Stakeholders on both sides have been very proud of the project-based progress that has been made, and the clear improvements that have been made to the transport infrastructure. However, both sides are also unclear about next steps, processes, and procedures. Unlike the Öresund side, and emphasised by the Estonian side, there is a lack of ‘organisational memory’ or how to collaborate beyond projects.

### 3.2.8 Assessment of governance mechanisms

There is clear **instability of collaboration**. In many cases, collaboration appears to be driven largely by external project financing from European sources. In other cases, the approach has been to agree to a series of actions to be implemented separately without a continuous system of collaboration. The most obvious reflection of this instability is the discontinuation of the Euregio HelTal collaboration.

Cooperation and coordination thus appear to be **dependent on receiving external funding** without sustainable sources of local domestic financing. The main concern on the Estonian side is that the EUREGIO project has been suspended, and some of the stakeholders close to the process believe that the decision to discontinue EUREGIO was made by the officials on the Finnish side, even going so far as to say that the capacity of developing a broader cooperation network has been inhibited by political or personal reasons.

Yet some interviews reflect the **divergent views on attempts to move beyond project-based collaboration**. A number of Estonian interview participants point to a reluctance on the part of their Finnish counterparts to engage constructively in building collaboration mechanisms. However, even within the Estonian side, there were divergent views on the potential role of crossborder collaborative mechanisms. Some Estonian partners believe that such cooperation bodies provide more flexible ways to implement the ideas and have a wider approach from the funding as well as implementation of the activities side, such as employing special experts. Other Estonian stakeholders from the local level believe that actions decided through an international body would have more legitimacy than separate actions. In other words, the local representatives would have more success lobbying their own national government if priorities were set at an international/European level. Local interests tend to remain outside the scope of attention of national policy-makers.

There is also a difference in the **planning culture**. The H-TTransPlan pointed to a difference in planning culture between the Finnish and Estonian systems. In Estonia, decisions can change suddenly without extensive debate, weak local governments are unable to have their say even if they are interested in investing. Conversely, the Finnish planning process seems very long to Estonians due to numerous consultations. As was stated in the H-TTransPlan, “an Estonian would like to get it done quickly and see what happens.”

This is reinforced by different capacities for planning. Both the Finnish and Estonian stakeholders have pointed to a ‘Big Brother’ **mentality**, especially in transport planning but also in the wider integration of the region, though this appears to be shifting. In the 90s, Estonians were poor and Finns supported Estonian development. However, today the partnership is increasingly equal. Yet there is still a disparity in the financial resources each country is able to invest in the relationship.

Finland and Estonia are not equal partners in terms of financial capacity, but also in terms of **support from the national level**. The stakeholders from Tallinn state that they are often in a difficult position of not having the same support for planning as their counterparts in Helsinki. One Estonian stakeholder summarised it as a lack of alignment: “Our direct partner is

the Uusimaa Region, with whom we have similar functions. However, we are an extension of the state at the county level, but Uusimaa Region is the institution of local governing. Thus, our financing systems are completely different. Uusimaa is formed by the municipalities, who are also the owners, which means they are independent in their decisions. Harju county government, however, is dependent on state funding; we are not a totally independent organisation. For example, the county planning document in Finland is binding, but in Estonia only recommended.”<sup>9</sup> The City of Helsinki has decision-making power and more budget flexibility than the City of Tallinn. In Finland, the ports belong to the city where they are located, which allows for better integrated planning. In Estonia, the ports are state-owned. The City of Tallinn can control harbour activities only through negotiations. This has made it very difficult to co-operate. Some Estonian stakeholders felt that regional partnerships with Finnish counterparts provided the additional resource of attracting attention from Estonian national level stakeholders; by cooperating with Finland, local stakeholders gained an additional point for coordinating with their national counterparts, which would otherwise be more challenging.

Most importantly, there is a **lack of institutionalised vision** based on an unclear value proposition and regional identity. While some processes have resulted in planning documents, it is unclear who is in a position to function as an instigator of dialogue, provide platforms for collaboration, and serve as an observatory to identify barriers and match them to potential solutions.

- Is the TwinCity realistic? – Helsinki and Tallinn as an integrated region versus partners in transport planning
- Drivers of collaboration and/or integration – has the value proposition of a regional approach been made clear?
- Who benefits from the collaboration? Crossborder opportunities versus international corridor

The governance system has struggled to maintain collaboration beyond projects, and it is clear that there is a need for a central body with a more permanent standing that can help instigate a broader dialogue and **build trust among stakeholders through repeated interactions**. Although there have been several studies and planning processes, there continues to be a lack of common identity and vision for the region. This is reflected in the scenario planning exercise, where the current structure of project-based collaboration appears to be reinforced in the current approaches, while the lack of a common platform means that collaboration is not sustained.

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<sup>9</sup> Name has been anonymised.

### 3.2.9 Comparative Assessment of governance mechanisms: The Öresund region versus Helsinki-Tallinn

Lessons can be learned from the experiences in various crossborder planning initiatives, especially in terms of structuring the new governance approaches. Experience shows that platforms are required for effective governance approaches that move beyond partnerships in transport planning.

The political processes that drove infrastructure planning in the Öresund region have been reinforced by the larger political project of creating a cross-border mega-region that is linked to large-scale planning processes at the national, regional, and European levels. At the level of governance, the Öresund model incorporates several features that enhance collaboration have lead to effective crossborder coordination and collaboration in transport development.

The main success is that it brings together a multilevel governance model with collaboration at several levels (national, regions and municipalities) and functional cooperation at the practical level, even without formal mandates to cooperate.

The Öresund Committee has been working to increase linkages to new levels of government and to serve as an observatory of issues, identifying and tracking progress in a number of fields and serving as a constant reminder of Öresund-specific issues. The Öresund Committee serves as an agency to institutionalise the vision of a region, which needs to be articulated. It also provides a platform for governance networks and serves as a structure for maintaining organisational memory even after working groups have ceased their work. This is reinforced by a number of additional agencies, such as ÖresundDirekt and the Öresund Institute.

A key feature of the Öresund system is a de-politicisation of decision-making. A primary means is through systems for pooling authority, such as the Öresund Bridge Committee and the Copenhagen Malmo Port.

The Öresund system also shows that a series of sustained partnerships can overcome issues related to alignment, but requires a clear mandate for enabling these informal contacts. Interestingly, the interviews show that new governance mechanisms have been created as much within each country as they have across the countries, such as joint working groups and 'special purpose vehicles' to facilitate coordinated decision-making.

In the Helsinki-Tallinn region, cooperation and coordination appear to be dependent on receiving external funding. EUREGIO, which was an example of a cross-border platform that performed some of the important functions of crossborder collaboration, was recently disbanded after a period of infrequent activity, leaving little institutional development to support the region. Finland and Estonia are not equal partners in terms of financial capacity, but also in terms of support from the national level. This has made it very difficult to co-operate, especially in the absence of mechanisms for supporting institutional memory and pragmatic problem solving.

However, the most significant barrier is that there is a lack of institutionalised vision based on an unclear value proposition and regional identity for the Helsinki-Tallinn region. In other cases, the approach has been to agree to a series of actions to be implemented separately without a continuous system of collaboration. The most obvious reflection of this instability is the discontinuation of the Euregio HelTal collaboration.

With the exception of positive developments in the collaboration between the ports in Helsinki and Tallinn, the governance system has not been able to maintain collaboration beyond projects. It is clear that there is a need for a central body with a more permanent standing that can help instigate a broader dialogue and build trust among stakeholders through repeated interactions.

On the following page, the ‘good practices’ in regional collaboration are outlined and applied to the collaboration in both the Öresund region and the Helsinki-Tallinn region.

Good Practice Approach	Öresund	Helsinki-Tallinn
setting a vision	Set by regional and national politicians and articulated by various stand-alone bodies, such as the Öresund Committee.	Alignment between multiple levels on the Finnish side but continued lack of agreement on the Estonian side.
establishing solid personal contacts and relations among top-level decision-makers;	Frequent interactions through various bodies at the political level. These bodies are either 'inter-governmental' or 'representative' bodies that include members from both countries.	Some interactions between transport specialists and between political representatives at a high-level.
identification of relevant public and private stakeholders and needs for knowledge and best practice exchange;	Various working groups initiated and a clear platform for ongoing and 'episodic' collaboration.	Project-based collaboration has led to success, but based on availability of external financing. Few opportunities for knowledge exchange beyond EU projects.
regular multilateral working sessions in various setups (high-level groups, coordination and technical working sessions, best-practice seminars	Very well developed working groups, especially at the functional expert level, where specialists feel very safe in collaborating	Multilateral working groups on high-level matters, with mutual commitments to take action within own areas of decision-making
involving representatives of EU level institutions (e.g. TEN-T coordinators) for topical guidance and support in setting a dialogue with national level authorities;	Integration of some regional financing within Öresund Committee structure.	Successful application for TEN-T Motorway of the Sea programme
establishing of a stakeholder platform composed of	Extensive stakeholder platforms at the po-	Former EUREGIO body, but now dis-

Benchmarking study of cross-border Transport development

Helsinki-Tallinn vs. Öresund Region

representatives of all parties;	litical level, with strong administrative platforms at the local level (such as ÖresundDirekt)	banded.
developing and adoption of a binding cooperation framework	”pooling of authority’ approach very useful for long-term planning and cooperating. Some confusion over the extent to which cooperation through Öresund committee can result in binding agreements.	Some concerns on the Finnish side about the planning culture on the Estonian side, while a lack of institutional and financial capacity limits capacity of Estonians to create binding frameworks.
consistent presentation of the shared strategic goals across governance tiers and towards national priority programmes/plans of the involved countries	Several bodies have the capacity to articulate strategic goals, but national planning processes still dominate.	Some success in aligning Finnish planning, but greater range of stakeholders in Estonia.
developing specific projects eligible for EU-funding and supporting preparation of real-life business cases stimulating the interest of strategic market players	Successful application to EU financing	Successful application to EU financing
launching of expert platforms/observatories to supervise the technical preparation of projects/investments and optimisation of final solutions (e.g. in case of critical cross-border and environmentally sensitive sections).	Very strong observatory functions, both Öresund Committee and Öresund Institute, along with the Öresund MediaPlatform and ÖresundDirekt.	Lack of observatory function. Some successful project-based planning, such as Rail Baltica and H-TTansPlan.

## Recommendations

Ultimately, stakeholders in the Öresund region and the Helsinki-Tallinn region are concerned that a lack of political support is eroding the possibilities of better business and economic integration. While the regions are supported by dramatically different crossborder transport planning system, there is a common tension between the overall desire for closer interaction and the day-to-day challenges of regional integration.

The Öresund region is significantly more developed in terms of the hard and soft infrastructure that define a region. There is a fixed link. Regional governance institutions have been created. But the region has also started to address challenges that have not yet emerged as significant political issues in the Helsinki-Tallinn region. There are therefore opportunities for learning from the experiences of the Öresund region.

A number of innovative solutions have been developed in the Öresund region. Yet these were not planned for in the original agreement to establish a bridge. As the creation of a fixed link drove regional integration, the Danes and the Swedes realised that development needed to occur beyond the hard infrastructure. These innovative solutions were not planned in advance. They are the product of a pragmatic approach to solving specific problems. But, in aggregate, the repeated interactions of Swedish and Danish stakeholders, at all levels, have supported the development of solutions-oriented, flexible, and long-term collaborative mechanisms.

The starting point for the Helsinki-Tallinn collaboration would be to create such flexible mechanisms, focusing at first on highly practical, solutions-oriented opportunities for collaboration. The Danes and the Swedes started collaboration by solving small technical challenges and then overlaid a larger governance structure that remains committed to solving specific challenges but then building upon each successive collaboration with stronger regional integration. Some of the areas of collaboration are limited to small, informal interactions of a very technical nature, but these are often the small areas of improvement that facilitate better integration. As one Finnish stakeholder stated: “The cooperation should be driven more by economics and less by politics.”

The Recommendations focus on the gaps, as well as the strengths, of the crossborder transport systems in the two regions. Based on the successful model presented by the Öresund region, the recommendations are focused primarily on the lessons that could be adopted to replicate some of its successes. The recommendation are well-supported by the stakeholders interviewed.

- 1. Develop a crossborder agency based on an observatory function and issues clearing-house.** The agency needs sufficient prestige to initiate a dialogue among key stakeholders, especially those focused on crossborder transport planning at the technical level coupled with mechanisms to support broad collaboration. Based on the good practices in the Öresund, this agency requires strong links to both cities/states that make up the Helsinki-Tallinn region. It should be based on equal representation from both sides to ensure that it is not seen to be biased, or this would undermine the legitimacy of the institution.
- 2. Aim for ‘low hanging fruit’ or easy collaboration opportunities.** According to interviews on the Finnish and Estonian side, there were relatively positive outcomes stemming from the H-TTransPlan process. Issues were identified, studies were carried out, and a good platform for future collaboration was launched. The next step would be to demonstrate tangible outcomes. The lessons of the Öresund experience suggest that starting small is a key to success. Identify a limited set of small barriers and link the problems to the people who can potentially solve them. Do not be too ambitious in the earliest stages. Based on recent collaboration, there has been good trust built up. But this needs to be reinforced by some clear examples of success.
- 3. Create information platforms.** The Öresund region benefits from consolidated information platforms that allow for Öresund stakeholder to connect and obtain information, but then also supports the dissemination of information to individual citizens. The ÖresundDirekt example should be considered best practice in this field. It supports communication among partners but also allows employees from various agencies to be seconded into the working structure of the agency for a limited time, meaning that up-to-date information is shared through multiple channels. The ÖresundDirekt model is focused on labour market integration but could be tailored towards business-support agencies, transport planning, or tourism activities.
- 4. Create a platform for stakeholder meetings that is semi-independent from the stakeholders themselves.** The platform requires a permanent staff and long-term budget sources. Should support the long-term collaboration of various working groups, supplying administrative and technical assistance, through independent research, communication, and logistical services. The Öresund Committee serves this function in the Öresund region. This platform could be linked directly to the agency recommended in point #1, or it could function as a separate system. However, political leaders, local decision-makers, and the users of transport services need to be involved in identifying priorities. This could be reinforced by consolidate various cross-border programmes by linking them to a set of centralised bodies. Cross border spending should be structured in a strategic way to generate cumulative progress by avoiding directing resources into too many initiatives
- 5. Create informal working groups at the functional level.** The example of the relationship between the Danish and Swedish ministries of transport should be taken as good practice. Information meetings should be arranged between counterparts in transport-related areas on a pre-set

schedule, and should occur even if there is not a set project opportunity. This ensures that crossborder transport planning does not ‘fall off the agenda’ during periods of other activities. This also ensures that information can be shared easily when urgent cases arise. For specific projects where collaboration is needed, both partners should consider the use of ‘special purpose vehicles’ that integrate decision-making within the national structures, meaning that decisions can take place more efficiently by putting functional experts in the same place.

- 6. Identify the value proposition to stakeholders and turn this into a vision for the region.** Various stakeholder interests should be mapped, or based on direct dialogue with representative groups. The platforms recommended in point 1 and point 4 could serve this function. The drivers of integration should be identified and used as a political resource for aligning potential partners. Transport planning in the Öresund region is based on economic arguments, and collaboration happens because it serves the interests of the various stakeholders. Economic incentives need to be identified and articulated, and then reinforced. The information platform could also be supported by media platforms to support the diffusion of information to citizens. The example of the Öresund Media Platform is a good practice, functioning as a regional media source to support information flow and regional identity building.

## Annex A: Assessment Questions

### Assessment Questions

#### 1) Cooperation in the field of transport and infrastructure planning

One of the priorities for the project is to understand the formal and, more importantly, the practical mechanisms for collaborating across regions. There is a political narrative that does not always match the actual experience in practice. The description of the regional coordination system should be supplemented with assessment questions.

- How does decision-making and coordination work? (such as coordination on standards, legislation). Please provide an example of an issue that was solved or effectively addressed at a regional level.
- Are there any working groups, platforms for policy agreements, or committees that are involved in facilitating collaboration? Please provide a concrete example, and comment on how the group operates (formal versus informal? effective? Focused, broad?)
- In addition to government authorities, who are the stakeholders involved in coordination? Are the stakeholders sufficiently included?
- Do the institutional/governance structures align? Are there any difficulties in coordination due to specific differences in the two countries involved in cooperation?
- Is the relationship built on trust? Is yes, how has trust been developed? If no, what are the barriers to trust?

#### 2) Development of the region

Crossborder transport planning is embedded in regional integration. For successful hard infrastructure to generate a sufficient return on investment, new opportunities for the region need to be generated.

- In your opinion, is there a clear vision for the region?
- What are the driving forces behind cooperation? What are the priorities?
- Who gains from crossborder regional development? Is there an advantage to further development of an integrated region?

#### 3) Barriers

There are several barriers to effective coordination and regional integration, which limit the impact of better transport infrastructure.

- What are the barriers to coordination and further integration? What are the two biggest barriers, and who is responsible for them?
- Have any barriers been overcome? Please explain how
- What are the two or three potential improvements that would make the biggest impact?

#### **4) Outcome and impacts for transport planning**

We are looking for clear examples of crossborder planning and regional integration leading to positive impacts.

- Has coordination and further integration led to positive outcomes? Please provide examples of a concrete outcome that would not have been possible without crossborder cooperation.
- Is there a concrete example of someone benefiting from increased integration and better transport infrastructure? This could include a company being attracted to the area to access both markets, or an industry that gains from having access to a broader labour market.

#### **5) General**

This is an opportunity to comment on what works, what does not, and why.

- What are the key lessons learned in terms of crossborder transport planning? In other words, if you could give one or two pieces of advice to your colleagues working in other regions, what would you say?

## Annex B: Interview Participants

Interview Participants	
<b><u>Denmark</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finn Lauritzen – Öresund Committee</li> <li>• Jakob Svane - Confederation of Danish Industry</li> <li>• Jakob Karlshøj – Ministry of Transport</li> <li>• Johan Teidemann – Öresund Committee</li> <li>• Sanna Holmqvist – Öresund Bridge Consortium</li> <li>• Thomas Steffensen – ÖresundsDirect</li> </ul>
<b><u>Estonia</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dago Antov - Tallinn University of Technology</li> <li>• Jüri Kurba – City of Tallinn</li> <li>• Erik Terk - Tallinn University</li> <li>• Jüri Sakkeus - HTTransPlan research coordinator</li> <li>• Tavo Kikas - Ministry of Interior</li> <li>• Toivo Ninnas - Head of Supervisory board of Tallink Group</li> <li>• Erik Laidvee - Association of Port Operators</li> <li>• Karel Kose - Harju County Government</li> <li>• Anti Moppel – Ministry of Economic Affairs</li> </ul>
<b><u>Finland</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kimmo Mäki - CEO of Port of Helsinki</li> <li>• Aarno Martin - Project director Lappset Oy</li> <li>• Kristiina Helenius - CEO of American Chamber of Commerce of Finland</li> <li>• Lassi Hilska - Ministry of transportation and communications</li> <li>• Jussi Rautsi - Ministry of environment</li> <li>• Kari Juvas - Stella Group</li> </ul>
<b><u>Sweden</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sten Hansen – Region Scania</li> <li>• Rolf Elmer - Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (Svenskt Näringsliv)</li> <li>• Anders Olshov – Öresund Institute</li> <li>• Johan Röstin - CEO of Copenhagen Malmö Port</li> <li>• Klas Nydal- Head of research and investment Malmö</li> <li>• Gunnar Wolf, CEO of Öresundståg</li> <li>• Sven Tofvesson - managing strategist, Skåne Traffic Agency</li> </ul>



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