The participating government: Shifting boundaries in collaborative spatial planning of urban regions

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Abstract

This article identifies two alternative collaborative spatial planning discourses: a leading government with societal participation and self-governance by societal actors with government participation. It shows how the boundary between the roles of governments and societal actors in collaboration discourses is shifting, but also how both collaborative planning discourses exist alongside each other in two Dutch urban regions: Eindhoven Region and Parkstad Limburg. In both regions, these alternative discourses on role division in collaborative planning are similar, even though Eindhoven is a growing region in which the local and regional governments collaborate intensively with companies, and Parkstad Limburg is a shrinking region that more actively involves citizens. The article concludes with reflections on the need to manage boundaries in collaborative planning.

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Introduction

In collaborative spatial planning, governmental actors collaborate on spatial development in various ways with a wide range of stakeholders (Faehnle and Tyrväinen, 2013; Healey, 2006; Innés and Booher, 1999). This implies multiple boundaries between the roles of various collaborating actors, which need to be recognised and managed (Emerson et al., 2012; Leino, 2012). The boundary between the role of government and the role of societal actors in collaborative planning is not clear-cut, but is shifting and often contested (Rhodes, 1996). Current drivers for shifts in roles of government in planning are processes of devolution of competences from central states to lower tiers of government, as well as to private actors, which is accelerated by the current economic crisis and diminishing governmental budgets (Roodbol-Mekkes et al., 2012). A changing role of government implies a changing role of society and vice versa (Roberts, 2004). Defining and developing these roles, that is, managing the boundary, is therefore an important aspect of collaborative planning.

Although most publications take an initiating and decision-making role of government in collaboration for granted (e.g. Ansell and Gash, 2008), some authors envision a continuum of increasing citizen involvement and responsibility in public governance, ultimately leading to citizen control and government as 'subject' (Arnstein, 1969; Vigoda, 2002). In this article, we explore collaborative planning discourses in which the boundary between the roles of government and society is shifting towards a more distinct role for societal actors. In these discourses, (regional and local) governments participate in spatial initiatives from citizens and companies, who have in such cases a leading and determining role in the use and management of spaces.

Much literature is concerned with the normative, Habermasian roots of collaborative planning and consensus-seeking in collaborations (e.g. Brand and Gaffikin, 2007; Innes and Booher, 2015; Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger, 1998). Instead of as a prescriptive concept of how collaborative planning should be practiced, we take collaborative planning as a descriptive concept and analyse the boundary between the roles of governmental and societal actors in collaborative planning discourses. Those societal actors may be citizens as well as companies. In addition, most collaborative planning examples in the literature focus on interactions with citizens at the (very) local level (Leino, 2012; Parker and Street, 2015; Raco and Flint, 2001; Roy, 2015; Sorensen and Sagaris, 2010). There has been less attention in research for collaborative planning at the regional level and for involving citizens in strategic planning, while strategic planning at the regional level is gaining importance (Albrechts, 2013; Brand and Gaffikin, 2007; Hughes and Pincetl, 2014; Innes et al., 2011). In this article, we look at collaborative discourses related to strategic regional planning – with ties to local practices.

It has not yet been studied if and how the boundary between roles of governmental and societal actors in collaborative planning is influenced by varying paths of urban-regional development. Regional development paths such as growth or shrinkage determine spatial dynamics and enable or limit governmental action (Kempenaar et al., 2016; Wiechmann and Bontje, 2015). For that reason, we presume that regional development paths have an impact on strategic planning as well as on the collaborative discourse (Hospers, 2014; Sousa and Pinho, 2013). We therefore explore regional collaborative planning discourses in regions with different development paths.

Based on the above, our research question is: *what are discourses on the boundary between the roles of government and societal actors in collaborative planning?* In the next sections, we present the conceptual framework of boundaries in collaborative planning and collaborative

planning discourses, followed by our research methods. Then we present the findings of our research in two case study regions in the Netherlands. Based on our findings, we demonstrate in the discussion how regional development paths do and do not influence regional collaborative planning discourses, and how the boundary between the role of government and societal actors in collaborative planning is and is not shifted.

Conceptual framework

Shifting boundaries in collaborative planning

Collaborative planning is one of the fields of collaborative governance (Emerson et al., 2012). In addition to these, various concepts are in use to describe policy making together with stakeholders. Some depart from the perspective of governmental actors, such as network governance (Hajer and Zonneveld, 2000; Salet and Woltjer, 2009), co-governance (Kooiman, 2003), soft spaces (Allmendinger and Haughton, 2009), public–private partnerships (Edelenbos and Teisman, 2008; Priemus, 2002) and deliberative governance (Healey, 2012). Other concepts depart from the perspective of societal stakeholders, such as citizen participation (Raco and Flint, 2001; Roberts, 2004; Sorensen and Sagaris, 2010), citizen involvement (Taylor, 2000), coproduction (Albrechts, 2013; Ostrom, 1996; Watson, 2014) and self-organisation (Van Dam et al., 2014). In this article, we conceive of collaborative planning as one coin with a governmental and a non-governmental (i.e. societal) side. This is in line with the cross-boundary characteristics of collaborative governance as described by Emerson et al. (2012). In their definition, collaborative governance encompasses 'the processes and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across the boundaries of public agencies, levels of government, and/or the public, private and civic spheres in order to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished' (p. 2). Collaborative planning comes in various shapes, at various scales, with different stakeholder constellations, reasons to collaborate and institutional arrangements (Emerson et al., 2012).

Collaborative planning is a way to make spatial planning a more inclusive endeavour (Healey, 1997; Innés and Booher, 1999). However, attempts to collaborate have not always succeeded in that purpose. Strategic spatial planning at the regional level often involves collaboration of governmental actors with companies because of economic development issues (Olesen, 2014; Zanon, 2013). However, a privileged position of companies over citizens and civil society groups in collaboration and deliberation is often criticised for democratic deficit (Mäntysalo et al., 2014; Roy, 2015; Skelcher et al., 2005). On the other hand, collaborative processes that do involve these stakeholders are not free from difficulties either. Attempts to involve stakeholders may result in a limited and unbalanced group of people who are willing to participate, while others cannot be reached (Nienhuis et al., 2011). Moreover, efforts to reach consensus may ignore the existence of 'power play' in planning processes and may even be used to 'tame' stakeholder groups because the scope and the rules of the game are defined by the government officials (Flyvbjerg, 1998; Sorensen and Sagaris, 2010; Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger, 1998). Rather than doing away with participation because of such difficulties, Sorensen and Sagaris (2010) propose that citizens are well-equipped to organise their own participation processes, and therefore should receive more responsibility in collaborative processes. More responsibility for citizens in collaboration implies a boundary shift in the direction of citizens in the lead (Vigoda, 2002).

Initiating leadership is an important driver in collaborative processes, but the leading initiator does not need to be a governmental organisation (Emerson et al., 2012). In her conception of collaborative planning, Healey (2006: 288) includes the possibility that non-governmental actors perform a part of the governing through initiative and – within frames – decision making. Such self-governance is most likely to take care of collective values when certain conditions are met, including recognition by the government of the right to self-organise (Ostrom, 1990, 1999, 2009). In other words, governments have a role in protecting the boundary of self-governance. Healey sees this role of government in relation to self-governance as 'framing' and as 'enabling, facilitating, encouraging diversity in styles of organising' (Healey, 2006, p. 289; see also Sorensen and Sagaris, 2010). Defining and redefining the boundary dividing the roles of self-governance and formal government, as well as the choice of collaboration partners, are forms of boundary management in collaborative planning.

In collaborative spatial planning, managing the boundary between government and non-government is a core challenge in which all participating actors are involved (Emerson et al., 2012; Healey, 2012; Madanipour, 2006; Owen et al., 2007). This boundary, and in particular the framing and shifting of roles and responsibilities, is a discursive construct shaping and shaped in planning practice.

Collaborative planning discourses

Collaborative planning represents a field of discourse with diverging views (Innes and Booher, 2015). Before we can explore diverging discourses on complementary roles of governmental and societal actors in collaborative planning, we first need to clarify how we approach discourse. Discourse analysis is a broad field of theory and research, with various conceptions of what discourse is and how it could be studied (Gill, 2000; Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Arts and Buizer (2009) distinguish four main perspectives ranging from a narrow to a broad understanding of discourse: discourse as text, discourse as deliberation, discourse as frame and discourse as social practice. We depart from the latter perspective, which is based on the Foucauldian idea that discourse constitutes practice, moreover, discourse formation *is* practice (Foucault, 1972; Sharp and Richardson, 2001). In this line of thinking, discourse has been defined as 'an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices' (Hajer and Versteeg, 2005). The entwinement of discourse and practice is also recognised by Healey in her book on collaborative planning when she defines a 'policy discourse' as 'a system of meaning embodied in a strategy for action' (Healey, 2006: 277).

Skelcher et al. (2005) illustrate how discourses 'supply and limit action strategies and the range of possible behaviours' (p. 577) in collaborations. They analyse how partnership discourses structure the institutional design of partnerships and identify a managerialist, a consociational and a participatory discourse shaping respectively agency, club and polity type partnerships. An agency partnership implements government policy, a club partnership aims for mutual benefits of elite members, and polity partnerships aim for community participation and deliberation. The 'this is how we do it' in these partnerships, including division of roles, is defined by discourse; at the same time these partnerships are places where that specific discourse is reproduced.

Hence, we take a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis. Because of our focus on boundary shifts, we are interested in the alternatives or discursive subgroups (Foucault, 1972, pp. 65–66, 149–156) within the collaborative planning discourse referring to the boundary between roles of government and societal actors.

Research methods

To study the discourse and discursive subgroups on the boundary between the roles of governmental and societal actors we used a case study approach. We selected two regions in the Netherlands with different development paths: Eindhoven Region as an example of economic and demographic growth and Parkstad Limburg as an example of economic and demographic decline (Figure 1). Both regions have developed spatial strategies with an emphasis on collaboration (BD, 2011; Parkstad, 2009, 2013).

When studying discourse, one needs to search for statements relevant to the research objective. Discourse is formed by groups of actors, at specific sites, by means of various types of oral, written and visual language (Foucault, 1972). However, these actors, sites and types of language are not clear beforehand, when studying collaborative planning discourses. Policy documents and official political meetings may not be the places to find emerging collaborative planning discourses, especially not a discursive subgroup that shifts the boundary between the roles of governmental and societal actors towards more
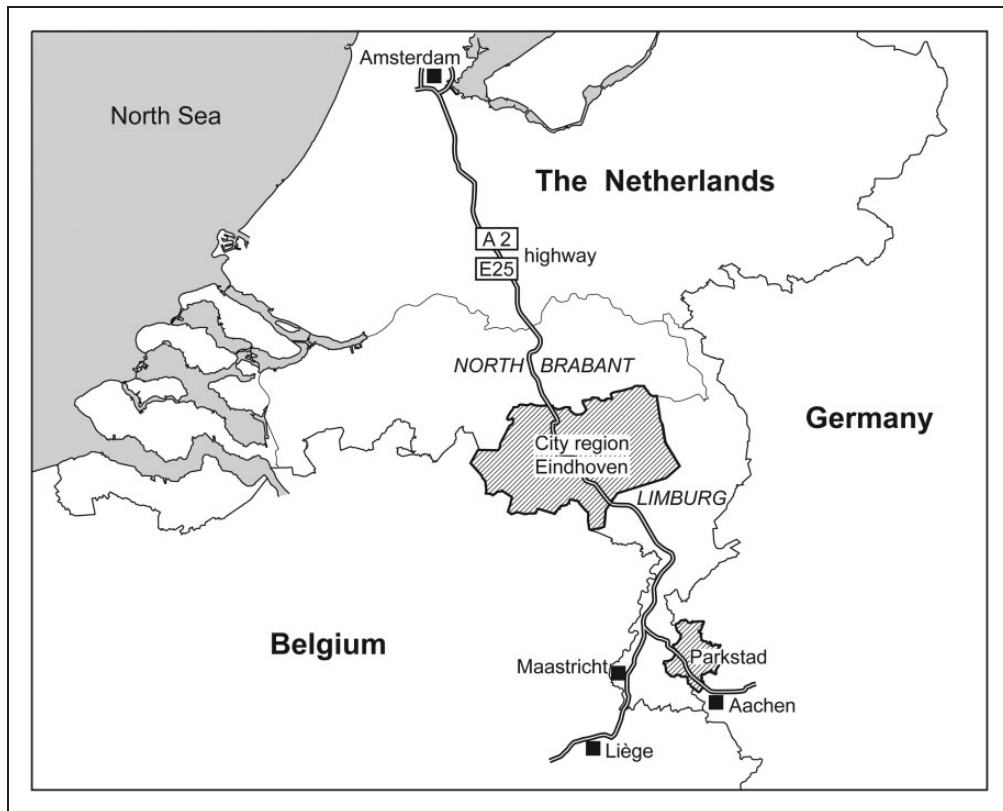

Figure 1. Location of case study regions in the Netherlands.

Table 1. Organisational background interviewees.

	Number of interviewees	Number of interviews	Interviews in Eindhoven Region	Interviews in Parkstad Limburg
National government (I&M)	3	1	—	—
Provincial government	5	4	2	2
City region organisation	3	3	1	2
Water board	2	2	2	—
Municipality	8	8	4	4
Businesses (stakeholders)	4	4	1	3
Civil society NGO	1	1	1	—
Consultant/architect	1	1	—	1
Housing corporation	1	1	—	1
Total	**28**	**25**	**11**	**13**

self-governance. Therefore, next to reviewing the main regional policy documents on spatial planning in the case studies, we chose to put the main weight of our research on interviews with planning officials of local and regional governments. We supposed that they would be involved in collaborative planning discourse formation, including a possible discursive subgroup with a bigger role for societal actors. We made an inventory of the stakeholder network involved in spatial planning in each region by means of an internet search. From this network analysis and through snowballing, we identified key stakeholders for interviews about regional spatial planning.

In 2013, we interviewed 28 stakeholders with local, regional, provincial and national governments, as well as some representatives of non-governmental organisations and companies that were indicated as key actors by governmental interviewees (Table 1). The interviews included two group interviews. We used a semi-structured interview approach with questions regarding the regional planning issues, actor networks and strategies. The interviews also allowed us to check whether our selection of policy documents was accurate. The in total 25 interviews of 1.5–2 hours were recorded and transcribed for an interpretative analysis (Miles and Hubeman, 2013). We used two methods for coding the complete text. First we performed a rough analysis through colour-coding, labelling references to issues, actors and strategies. After that we performed a more detailed content analysis with the aid of ATLAS-ti software. Three of the authors were involved in the interviewing as well as the analysis. While most of the interviews and the coding were done individually, we coded by means of a joint protocol. We coded each other's interviews and regularly discussed the outcomes. After coding, we analysed the dataset by means of queries to answer our research question. We focussed on the composition of the collaborative network, the issues of this collaboration, and the roles of governmental and societal actors. The thus created selection of quotations was categorised again ('bottom-up') for a more fine-grained understanding of the discourse. In order to find out how the collaborative planning discourses worked out in a specific situation, in each of the case study regions we analysed a topical planning example that was often mentioned by interviewees as a good practice of collaborative planning in their region.

Introduction of the cases

In the Netherlands, the regional level, with provinces, municipalities, and until very recently also city regions, has become the most important setting for making integrated spatial
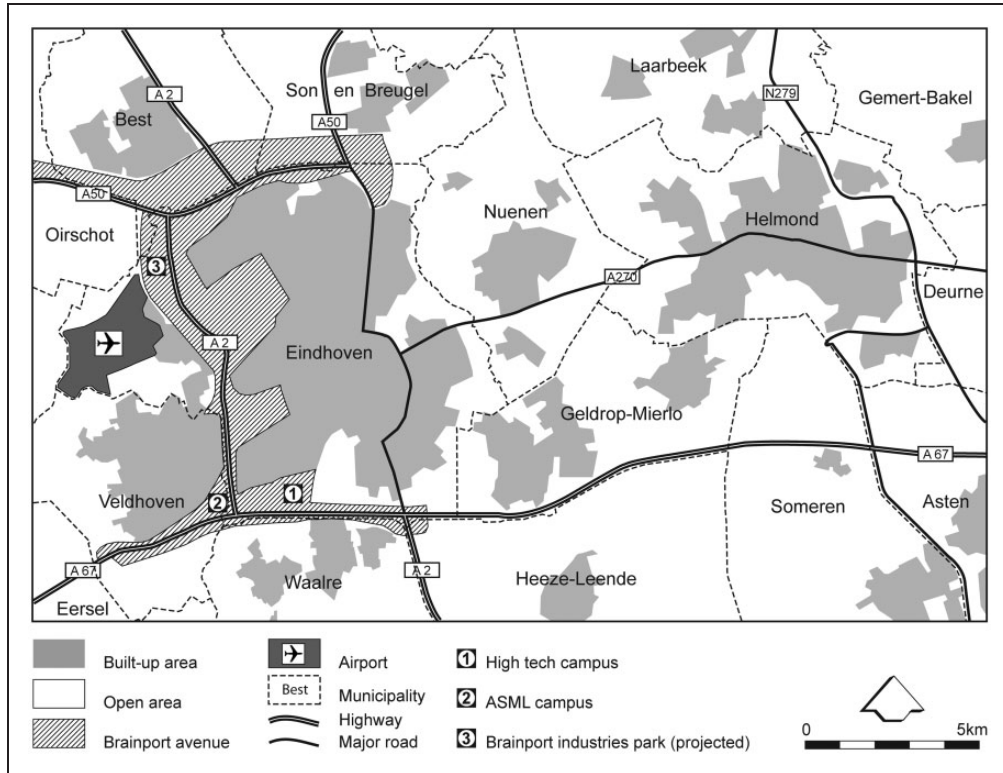
Figure 2. Map of Eindhoven Region.

strategies (Nadav, 2010; Van der Cammen and De Klerk, 2012). The city regional authorities, including those of Eindhoven Region and Parkstad Limburg, used to have a formal position in the development of regional spatial strategies. However, they lost their formal status in 2014. This termination, combined with devolution of planning competences from the state to the provinces and other changes in the planning system (Roodbol-Mekkes and van den Brink, 2015; Roodbol-Mekkes et al., 2012), has induced uncertainty regarding the division of responsibilities between actors in collaborative planning. This uncertainty is strengthened by a national and public debate about the role of government and society in governance (Hajer, 2011; Van der Steen et al., 2014; VNG, 2012; WRR, 2012).

Eindhoven Region

Eindhoven Region centres around the city of Eindhoven, with Helmond as second important town (Figure 2). Since the 1920s, growth of Philips – today a multinational in electronics and high tech – spurred population growth in and around Eindhoven. In the 1990s, in response to low tide economic development, a group of 'captains of industry' decided to seek collaboration with the regional governments in active branding and development of the region. Even though Philips relocated its headquarters from Eindhoven to Amsterdam in 1998, economic conditions in the region have recovered and a cluster of various high tech companies has developed, including multinational in chip equipment manufacturing ASML and a number of large Philips divisions. The high tech sector has spurred employment in
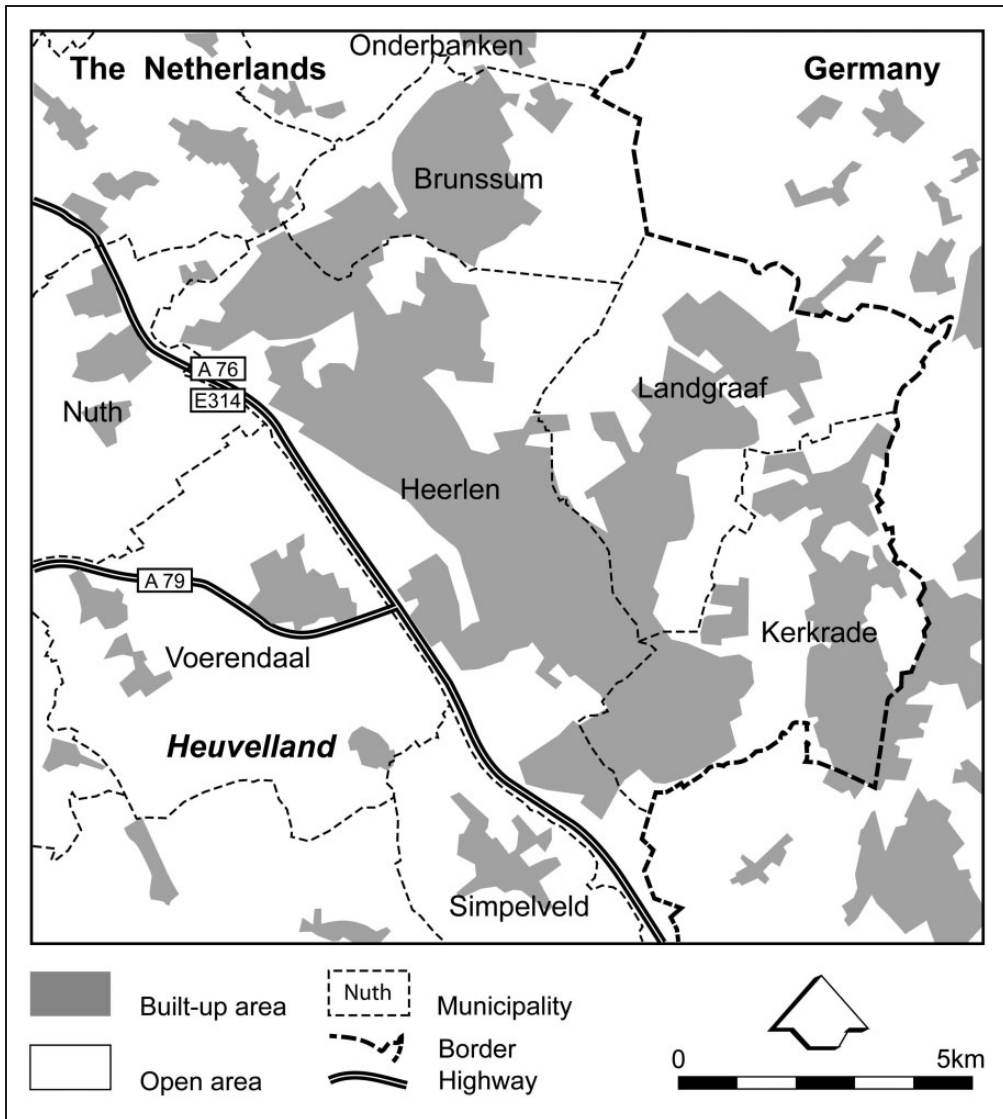
Figure 3. Map of Parkstad Limburg.

high tech, but also in other private and public services sectors. Between 1995 and the start of the 2008 recession, yearly employment growth averaged at 2.8 percent, 1.1 percent point higher than the national average. Employment in the high tech cluster remains high, and activities related to this cluster rank among the most productive in the country (Groot and Groot, 2016). Population growth continued: the total population of the region increased from 303,000 in 2000 to 332,000 in 2012 and the region is expected to continue its growth during the decades to come (PBL, 2013).

The region's 21 urban and rural municipalities collaborate in *Samenwerkingsverband Regio Eindhoven* (SRE). This regional authority has supported the so-called 'triple helix', a network of captains of industry, local governors and chief staff members of knowledge institutes. This network develops and promotes the regional strategy, which aims to

strengthen the development of the high tech sector in the region (Fernández-Maldonado and Romein, 2010; Kooij et al., 2014; Van den Berg and Otgaar, 2012).

Parkstad Limburg

Heerlen is the main city in Parkstad Limburg (Figure 3). Parkstad Limburg quickly urbanised in the first half of the 20th century because of its mining industry. In 1965, the average disposable household income in Heerlen was 104 percent of the national average (CBS, 2014). Since the mines closed in the 1960s and 1970s, the region has faced demographic decline and economic hardship. The average disposable household income has dropped to just 82 percent of the national average, the lowest of all Dutch regions (CBS, 2014). To compensate the mine closures, several large public institutions, such as Statistics Netherlands, were partially moved from The Hague to Parkstad. The low regional variety in public sector wages masks very low wage levels in other parts of the local economy (Groot and Groot, 2016). Many parts of Parkstad are among the areas with the lowest wages and productivity in the Netherlands (Groot and Groot, 2016). Wage levels of higher educated workers are between 10 and 25 percent lower compared to the national average. Such large wage differences impose strong incentives for the higher educated to leave Parkstad.

Population decline in Parkstad has been substantial. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of inhabitants fell from 218,000 to 204,000 (a decrease of 6.4 percent), a trend that is expected to continue for the next decades (PBL, 2013). Currently, the decline leads to vacancies in housing and retail, which is particularly visible in certain neighbourhoods and town centres. Prices of comparable housing are already between 25 and 50 percent below the national average, and are also low compared to other parts of Zuid Limburg.

The regional authority, in which the eight urban and rural municipalities of Parkstad collaborate, has played an important role to get shrinkage accepted by the municipalities, and to develop joint strategies to cope with its consequences (Elzerman and Bontje, 2013; Verwest, 2011).

Results: Regional collaborative planning discourses

Issues and actors in Eindhoven Region and Parkstad Limburg

Collaboration in Eindhoven Region is aimed at promoting the high tech economy and regional competitiveness. This issue in turn determines the composition of the collaborative planning network. Competitiveness of the region, branded as 'Brainport' and 'smartest region in the world', is to be strengthened through knowledge and innovation, and by attracting 'knowledge workers'. According to this discourse, conditions for competitiveness are knowledge exchange between companies and research institutes, high quality of the living and working environment, and good accessibility. Strategies of local and regional governments align with this discourse:

> When you look at the development of Eindhoven, it is about high tech and attracting people from elsewhere. It is about the smartest region. Those people need to live somewhere and they need an attractive environment. And we think that with water and green space we can make an attractive environment to allure those people (Water board official).

Good accessibility, as condition for competitiveness, has guided planning efforts to focus on the main roads and highways around Eindhoven, the airport and railway connections. The zone along the highway around Eindhoven is named 'Brainport Avenue'. Here, a chain of 'campuses' is to be developed to provide well accessible and high quality surroundings to

high tech companies, inspired by the already established High Tech Campus and ASML Campus (Figure 2).

Not one actor dominates the planning arena in Brainport Eindhoven and there is a widely shared conviction that 'no government can do it alone'. Until its termination, the regional authority SRE had a central position in the extensive network of governments, companies, public–private partnerships, research institutes, and – at the local level – citizen groups. Large high tech companies, such as multinationals ASML and Philips, are influential actors in spatial development. Innovative small and medium enterprises (SME's) in the high tech sector are also seen as important and take part in deliberations about strategic plans. The local and regional governments take a facilitating attitude towards spatial initiatives from high tech companies, because this is seen as contributing to the economy of the region:

> Governance in the context of the Brainport strategy means collaboration between companies, knowledge institutes and governments . . . in which companies have a steering role . . . (BD, 2011, p. 211).

Actors deliberate to reach consensus about goals, strategies and spatial solutions and collaborate in aligning instruments and resources to reach joint ambitions in spatial development. The collaboration in the network is intensive and the deliberation platforms are numerous, to such an extent that smaller municipalities claim to lack capacity to 'show up everywhere' (Official of Son en Breugel Municipality).

In Parkstad Limburg, the conviction is widely shared that demographic decline, ageing of the population and high vacancy rates are the most pressing planning issues. The poor economic and employment situation is seen as closely related to shrinkage and hindering the region's recovery. Shrinkage provides a strong incentive for the municipalities to collaborate. Without collaboration they fear that each municipality would build to attract inhabitants from the other municipalities, leading to even more vacancy. The city region co-ordinated the composition of the joint Reconstruction Strategy (*Herstructureringsvisie*) (Parkstad, 2009), in which the municipalities agreed where to aim for intensification and where for extensification of neighbourhoods, including targets for numbers of houses to be demolished and built. As a city-regional board member summarised:

> Demography relates one to one to the reconstruction of your residential areas. That means that on balance you need to demolish more, rebuild less.

In addition, the municipalities of Parkstad have intensified collaboration with the housing corporations. The semi-public housing corporations own most of the rental houses in the region. Municipalities and housing corporations work out joint strategies for reconstruction of neighbourhoods with vacancy and for re-use and management of empty sites. The province of Limburg is an important funding and regulating partner. In the Housing regulation for Zuid Limburg (*Verordening Wonen Zuid-Limburg*) of 2013, the province forbids municipalities to approve building plans if not at least the same number of houses is being demolished. This regulating role of the province is appreciated by the municipalities, because it prevents free-riding and imposes collaboration.

In addition to the more traditional and top-down planning approaches such as the Reconstruction Strategy and zoning, governmental actors in Parkstad feel the need to experiment with new forms of collaboration to deal with shrinkage. This includes involvement of citizens and SME's in the spatial development of the region:

> Citizens are as important as companies, governments and societal partners in the coming about of the new Parkstad region (Parkstad, 2013: 13).

Broad involvement of stakeholders is the core of the IBA Parkstad strategy, which is described in the *Planning examples* section.

Alternative boundaries: Leading or participating government

In our analysis of alternative discourses on the division of roles between governmental and societal actors, we found little difference between the case study regions. In this section, we therefore only differentiate between the regions when relevant. In both Eindhoven Region and Parkstad Limburg, the role of government in spatial planning and the division of responsibilities between governments and non-governmental actors are major topics of discussion. Stakeholders relate this to uncertainty about the division of roles between governments caused by recent changes in the Dutch planning system (see Introduction of the cases section). Important reasons to collaborate with other governments are the economic crisis and public budget cuts. Such limitations in financial resources, combined with the absence of dynamics in the construction sector (in Parkstad: shrinkage) are reasons to collaborate with citizens and companies, and to take a more inviting attitude as governments towards bottom-up initiatives and entrepreneurship.

Stakeholders still consider the basic role of government in spatial planning to be safeguarding public values such as protecting nature, and maintaining the quality of water and the landscape. Governments should make frames and rules, maintain them, and develop future-oriented strategies and spatial solutions. Several provincial and municipal officials stress that the government – that is particularly their own tier – has a leading role in initiating and orchestrating spatial development. Some government officials however, especially in Parkstad Limburg, envision a more modest, process-supporting role. Process roles of government are: being the central connector in the actor networks, facilitating initiatives of others, being a co-creator and organising the process of listening to stakeholders. In sum, governments have both a rule-making and a process facilitating role in spatial development.

Likewise, stakeholders define multiple roles for societal actors. On the one hand, societal actors can participate in plan-making deliberations and give responses to government ideas. On the other hand, societal actors can take initiatives in making plans themselves, and take a leading role in the development and management of spaces. Based on our findings, we conceptualise two discursive subgroups of complementary roles of governmental and societal actors in collaborative spatial planning: a leading government with participation of societal actors, and self-governance by societal actors with a participating government (Figure 4).

In case of a ***leading government***, it is the government who invites parties to the table. These parties can be other governments, business representatives, environmental NGO's, or citizens. For regional and provincial authorities, deliberation with business representatives is common practice. Interaction with citizens is primarily seen as the responsibility of the municipalities, although the intention to involve citizens is repeatedly expressed by officials of other governmental bodies as well. Involving citizens in plan making has benefits: it creates societal support for the plans, results in fewer legal procedures because of objections, and it improves the quality of the plan because of the situational knowledge of citizens. As a board member from a Limburgian housing corporation explained:

> You should always strive for... arranging a good mix between professional and experiential expertise.... People who live, learn, work and die somewhere (well, not the last group) can say equally relevant things. And you should organize that well from the first moment.

	Role of government	Role of societal actors

Initiative and governance by government	**Leading government**
	• Government invites parties to the table
	• Involving citizens:
	  ○ creates support for plans (PL)
	  ○ creates engagement (PL)
	  ○ results in fewer legal procedures (ER)
	  ○ improves the quality of the plan
		Participation of societal actors
		• Inventory of wishes
		• Involvement in design
		• Deliberation
		• Reaction to government plans
		• Citizen participation, company collaboration

Initiative and governance by societal actors	**Participating government** • Invites, seduces, activates, challenges actors to take initiative • Facilitates, stimulates, supports, cooperates in case of initiatives • Provides subsidies, manpower, advise, guidance through procedures • Checks what comes along (ER)	**Self-governance by societal actors** • Idea, plan making • Layout, (re-)construction • Management, exploitation • Self-organisation and entrepreneurship • Citizens as well as companies

Figure 4. Collaborative planning discourses: leading government with participation of societal actors, compared to self-governance by societal actors with government participation. ER: Eindhoven Region; PL: Parkstad Limburg.

However, a few municipal and provincial officials are also cautious about citizen participation. According to them, the government should not raise too many expectations with citizens. In some strategic planning processes at the provincial level, citizens are purposely not involved and sparsely informed, because they are not expected to be sufficiently interested or affected.

In case of a leading government, the ***participation of societal actors*** can take various forms. There is the traditional (and legal) possibility for citizens and other societal actors to react on government plans. In addition, citizens, companies and NGO's can be involved in earlier stages of plan making in the form of inventory of societal wishes and participation in spatial design. In both regions there is regular deliberation with citizens or their NGO's on spatial issues. In Parkstad Limburg, there are good experiences with involving artists as facilitators of citizen participation in the development of public spaces. In Eindhoven, the municipality involves the umbrella of local environmental groups *Trefpunt Groen Eindhoven* (TGE) on a regular basis:

> TGE is challenged to join in thinking and designing in an early stage, . . . so we never see each other in court any more . . . and that is pleasant for everybody and you get more results in the city (Official of Eindhoven Municipality).

The discourse puts the emphasis on deliberation with companies and citizen participation. In Parkstad Limburg direct citizen involvement is aimed at, while all references to participation from Eindhoven concern NGO's that represent citizen's interests. Despite the positive notions on citizen participation, governmental as well as non-governmental stakeholders doubt the motivation of citizens to participate. Some say that most citizens are not interested in being involved, or only raise their voice if they object to government plans.

According to the discourse of ***self-governance by societal actors***, (groups of) companies or citizens can self-organise and take initiative for spatial development. Such initiatives can

involve generating the idea, the plan making, re-arrangement of the site and its management. It requires mental ownership, entrepreneurship and self-organisation with initiators:

> An example, we are going to grow vegetables on a one ha sports field . . . , after three years there is still more talking than action. I said once, give me € 2,000 and I will just start, I will plant something and will take care of the maintenance, and I will try to involve people (Urban farmer, Heerlen).

However, examples of such self-governance are still scarce:

> There are too few [citizen initiatives], but they are there. The layer of engaged citizens that really set up things is still too thin (Official of Heerlen Municipality).

The counterpart of self-governing societal actors is a ***participating government***. A participating government takes a responsive and facilitating attitude towards initiatives of others in spatial development. As one official stated:

> Whatever we do, there should be a demand, and we try to give all stakeholders a role as much as possible. Without us making up beforehand: this is how we will do it, and what is your opinion? And that means for green space for instance, that we invite parties to re-arrange, maintain and manage this area without our commissioning. But they will get room to do it, and we will no longer have the costs (Official of Eindhoven Municipality).

Such a government invites or challenges others to take initiative. It does not predefine land use, but merely checks if societal initiatives comply with the rules. Moreover, a participating government facilitates and supports such societal initiatives. This can take the form of moral support, technical advice, and guidance through formal procedures, as well as support through manpower (government officials spending time on private projects) and subsidies. Although interviewees express extensive and detailed ideas about the participating government, some say that governments find it difficult to adapt to such a new role and that they know few examples as yet:

> The government wants to, but at the same time finds it very hard, because it is not always responsive to . . . solistic proposals from societal actors. But now, because of crisis and shrinkage, we are almost forced to much more align with players in the field. And for the government this means creating conditions rather than issuing ordinances (Official of Brabant province).

To illustrate the collaborative planning discourse of self-governance by societal actors with a participating government, in the next section we discuss a planning example from each case study region: Brainport Industries Park in Eindhoven Region and the IBA initiative in Parkstad Limburg.

Planning examples

Initiator of Brainport Industries Park (also known as the Brainport Innovation Campus) is Brainport Industries, a co-operative of approximately 80 SME's in Eindhoven Region with activities that are closely related to high tech multinational ASML. These SME's aim to develop a campus within Brainport Avenue (Figure 2) on which they can be situated closely to each other, share facilities, be flexible in housing, and continue to innovate through co-operation and knowledge exchange. The envisioned publicly accessible, high quality, green environment near to the highway would give them exposure in their markets and support from politicians and citizens. The co-operative aims to design, construct and manage the campus area, including the public green space.

Because this market initiative suits the Brainport Strategy, local and regional governments give it full support (Eindhoven, 2013). The provincial development organisation (*Brabantse Ontwikkelings Maatschappij* – BOM) facilitates the initiative by providing the manpower needed to organise the planning process. In addition, the province considers investing in the joint facilities on the campus terrain. Officials of the municipality of Eindhoven support the political lobby of the co-operative at the provincial and municipal level with argumentation and make sure that the legal zoning procedures go smoothly. For the municipality, such a large role for private actors is a new situation:

> We are now at the turning point that the initiative...has gone to Brainport Industries....Brainport Industries will come with a business case,...which clarifies which role we need to take here. So, Brainport Industries makes the move now. So the roles have been turned around completely (Official of Eindhoven Municipality).

The municipality is willing to take a step back, for instance with less detailed prescriptions in the zoning plan. However, the interviewed official considers making an additional contract with Brainport Industries about the layout and management of the area, to make sure that the good intentions about accessible green space will indeed become reality (Eindhoven, 2013).

In Parkstad Limburg, the city region initiated IBA Parkstad 2013–2020 as a platform to search for new forms of collaboration in spatial development:

> Parkstad...is the first urban region in the Netherlands that is dealing with demographic decline....This development leads to altogether new questions, and we are used to thinking in growth only. At some point in that search there was this idea of someone within Parkstad Region who said: wait, an IBA could maybe help us in that search! (Official of Limburg Province).

The regional authority was inspired by the German IBA's (*Internationale Bau Ausstellung*) which gave new *Schwung* to several German regions (Raines, 2011). IBA Parkstad is intended as a series of bottom-up projects that will form an exhibition in 2020. Projects are to be found by means of an 'open call' for societal actors with ideas for redevelopment of sites:

> Maybe there are inhabitants with an idea to do something with that vacant building or with those empty spaces that have been there for a while, or will appear. And try to motivate, to facilitate that through IBA, by which you put people into their own strength (City-regional board member and alderman).

Not every project will receive the IBA label: a project should fit in one of the themes related to renewable energy, re-use of sites and materials, and temporary land use. Initiators will need to make a business plan and a strategy for involving citizens. Being accepted as an IBA project gives exposure, recognition and access to an innovative network and to subsidies. Additional strategies are also aimed at collaborative planning: 'IBA Forum' as a platform for open deliberation with citizen involvement about the future of the region, 'IBA School' for exchange and learning between the projects, and 'IBA Event' for dissemination in the region and beyond (Parkstad, 2013).

IBA Parkstad as a whole would mean exposure and positive attention for the region as well as a way to restore hope, pride and entrepreneurship. IBA Parkstad is not only envisioned to yield good ideas for redevelopment of empty sites and vacant buildings, it should also help local governments to experiment with new ways of governance. Depending on initiatives from citizens and SME's means that the municipality has less control over

outcomes. This uncertainty requires a new way of thinking and working. To create organisational space for this part of the search, a public–private organisation is founded for IBA, at some distance from the 'slow and bureaucratic' existing institutions.

Discussion

The regions of Eindhoven and Parkstad Limburg have different development paths and related issues. Planning efforts in growing Eindhoven serve the region's competitive position in the high tech economy. The efforts in Parkstad Limburg serve to accommodate shrinkage and reduce vacancy. Related to the different development paths, the governments in the regions collaborate with different actor groups. Companies have a very prominent role in the development of spatial strategies in Eindhoven Region, while in Parkstad companies have a more modest role. In contrast, citizen participation is absent in the strategic regional planning arena of Eindhoven (although prominent at the local level). Parkstad Limburg however is developing a more pro-active and positive attitude towards involvement of citizens as part of the regional strategy. Hence, we can conclude that Eindhoven Region represents a more 'corporatist' and Parkstad Limburg a more 'inclusionary' example of collaborative planning (Healey, 2006: 235, 237) (Figure 5). Skelcher et al. (2005) would use the words 'consociational' and 'participatory', respectively. In the cases, the collaborative discourses are related to the regional development paths and these discourses 'limit and supply' the composition of the actor network involved in collaboration (c.f. Skelcher et al., 2005). The focus on citizen
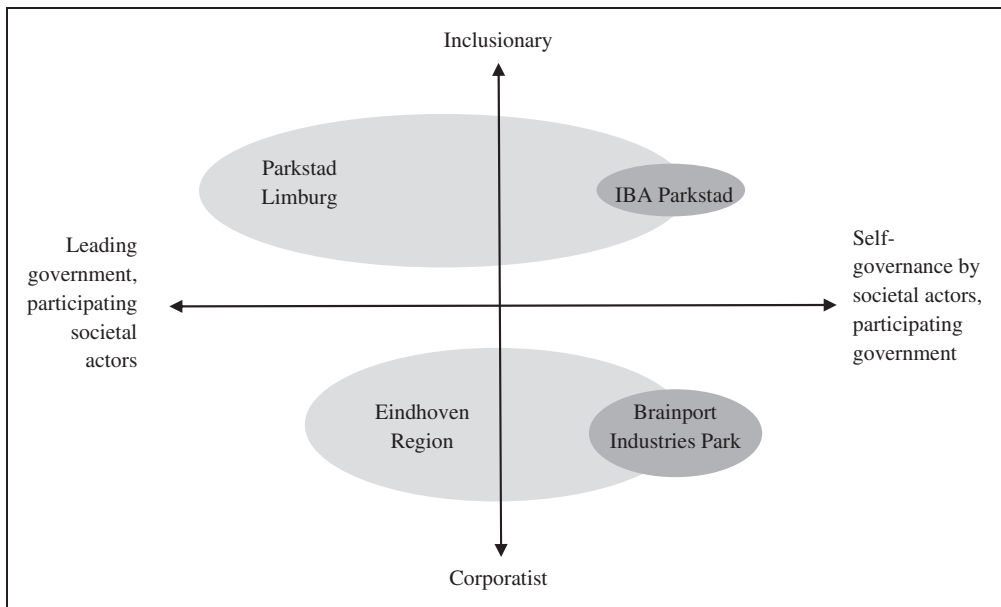

Figure 5. Framework for categorising collaborative planning discourses combining an axis from a leading to a participating government, with an axis from inclusionary to closed network/corporatist type of collaboration. In both regions, we found the leading government as well as the participating government discourse. However, Eindhoven Region has a corporatist, and Parkstad Limburg a more inclusionary discourse.

engagement in Parkstad Limburg is in line with Hospers (2014), who suggests that capacity-building of citizens is a key policy strategy in cities with shrinkage.

Despite the differences in development paths, planning issues and collaborating actors, the discourses on the role of government *vis a vis* the role of societal actors in spatial development are noticeably similar in both regions. The discursive subgroups of leading government with participating societal actors, and self-governing societal actors with a participating government do not differ much. This suggests that the development of discourses on the 'participating government' does not strongly relate to regional differences. We suspect that these differences are more linked to nation-wide influences such as budget cuts and the general discourse on the roles of government and societal initiative (Hajer, 2011; Van der Steen et al., 2014; VNG, 2012; WRR, 2012). Nevertheless, the discourse on self-governing societal actors and a participating government is in line with Vigoda's expectations (Vigoda, 2002). He described an 'evolutionary continuum of public administration – citizen interaction' and observed a shift in complementary roles of citizens and public administration from 'clients and managers', towards 'partners in collaboration'. The next stage, he foresaw, would be citizens as 'owners' and public administration as 'subject'. Vigoda did not elaborate on this next stage, although he saw it as 'an ideal type of democracy, one that must remain ideal but can never be implemented practically' (p. 583). He doubted whether citizens are willing or capable to take ownership, but our cases suggest that, in confined situations of collaboration, they may do so, and governments are willing to take on a 'subject' role.

Vigoda's doubts seem to be reflected in the disappointment of the interviewees about the actual extent of citizen initiative. However, the two planning examples illustrate that the discourse on the participating government *is* practice in both regions. IBA Parkstad in Parkstad Limburg is set up as a boundary organisation (Carr and Wilkinson, 2005; O'Mahony and Bechky, 2008) to manage the boundary between the local and regional governments and societal actors in collaborative planning. Strategies of IBA Parkstad, such as the open invitation to societal actors to propose innovative ideas and projects for (re)development of the region, belong to the participating government discourse. IBA Parkstad tries to facilitate a leading role for societal actors in spatial development, while being selective about which initiatives to support. Hence, the participating government is actively present and not passive or absent. This active attitude is also seen in the case of Brainport Industries Park. Local and regional governments follow the initiating leadership of the co-operative of SME's, and leave it to decide on layout and management, while supporting it in various ways. In this case, a contract between the co-operative and the municipality forms a boundary management tool.

The participating government does not fully replace the leading government: both roles are to be played by governmental organisations. Apparently, one and the same government can take either a more pro-active or a more facilitating role depending on the situation, such as the availability of initiatives from society. A participating government therefore needs to be adaptive: to actively manage the dynamic boundary between government and non-government in collaborations, and to adjust its strategies to, for instance, the self-governing capacities of the societal initiators.

The inclusionary aim of collaborative planning evokes the question of democratic legitimacy. Indeed, there are democratic risks attached to a more leading role for non-governmental actors in spatial planning, especially in its corporatist shape. These risks include problems with representation of voices and interests, clientelism and unequal distribution of power. Although officials of the municipality and the central government regard the absence of citizens in the strategic planning arena of Eindhoven Region as a

problem, the interviews do not reflect a thorough consideration of democratic opportunities and threats attached to the participating government. A participating government should find mechanisms to include the voice of the stakeholders other than the initiators, especially the unorganised ones, as well as to safeguard its own transparency in decision making (Healey, 2012; Mäntysalo et al., 2014).

Conclusions

> The co-operative, participating government. That's what it is about at the moment (Official of Netherlands Ministry of I&M).

Collaborative planning involves managing the boundary between the roles of governmental and societal actors in planning processes (Emerson et al., 2012). This boundary is not fixed and the roles may vary from a leading role for governmental actors to a leading role of (self-governing) societal actors. In situations of self-governance by societal actors in spatial planning, the framing role of the local or regional government (Healey, 2006: 289) has been conceptualised in this article as 'participating government'. What the role of a 'participating government' encompasses, was studied in Eindhoven Region and Parkstad Limburg, two urban regions in the South of the Netherlands. We conclude that in planning discourses, a discursive subgroup of collaborative planning is developing, in which non-governmental actors take a leading role. In addition, and next to the discourse on the 'participating government', there is a continuing discourse on the 'leading government', concerning situations in which the government takes the lead and societal actors participate. The participating government does not replace the leading government. One and the same government therefore can have multiple positions in collaboration processes, which can be confusing for the government as well as the collaborating partners. This means that adaptive and deliberate boundary management is needed in collaborations, by all actors involved, aimed at the definition and development of their own roles, as well as the interface between them. Indeed, in both regions, arrangements were designed to deal with the boundary between responsibilities of governmental and societal actors. In addition, the participating government needs to safeguard democratic processes, especially in situations with companies in the lead.

The alternative collaborative planning discourses on the leading and the participating government are noticeably similar in both regions, in spite of large differences in development paths. These different development paths have resulted in differences in major planning issues and types of actors involved in collaboration. In that sense, the development paths did influence the regional collaborative planning discourses. The regional discourses on a leading or participating government seem to be guided by national developments and discourses. Further research could consider how devolution 'from above' fosters or hinders the development of regionality in collaborative planning discourses.

Our Foucauldian approach to discourse was helpful in considering the entwinement of discourse and practice in collaborative planning, as well as the evolution of discursive subgroups. In this article we have identified an emerging collaborative planning discourse on self-governance by societal actors with a participating government. We suspect that an analysis of discussions in meetings of actors involved in specific projects and initiatives would enrich the understanding of that discourse. Further research would need to focus on studying those fragmented sites of discourse formation, as we may expect that the participating government is here to stay.

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