

Summary

Executive summary

The Local Context Area (LCA) in question covers the Brabant study case. This LCA contains a SWOT analysis identifying the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the Brabant area. Based on these findings, two hypotheses of innovative actions have been identified, namely:

1. The development of a (ICT-based and virtual) network between independent transport companies will increase the efficiency of transport operations and thus will decrease the (financial and social) costs of, for instance, trips with not fully loaded trucks. Exchanging freights will therefore be a sustainable development in the Brabant road freight transport sector.
2. The growing percentage of elderly employees is a big problem in the whole of the Netherlands and in particular in the province of Northern Brabant. Young people are moving to or have chosen to work in other provinces like for example Zuid-Holland. In the western provinces there is a greater choice of educational institutions and there are more interesting jobs available especially for younger, well-educated people. To keep or to regain the position of being a #young# province, Northern-Brabant has to become a sustainable area where there are enough opportunities for young people to develop themselves.

The hypotheses of innovative action are the starting points for further actions in the District Logistics Analysis (DLA).

Based on the questionnaires, publicly accessible publications and NEA's own data, the main indicators of the SDL-SQM framework on the Brabant case have been completed.

Not all the SDL-SQM framework parameters have been used this due to the fact that not all these parameters are relevant or appropriate for the area of Northern-Brabant. The final selection of the criteria is based on results of the communication with the project partners.

Regional profile

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Northern-Brabant can be observed from the perspective of Sustainable District Logistics, which provides an indication using the regional profile. The regional profile contains 32 different components, which reflect the different aspects of the SDL. These 32 components are divided into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The so-called SWOT analysis provides a better understanding of the environment.

Orientation

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Threats	Opportunities
The environmental dimension	●●●●	●●●	●●	●●●●●●
The economic dimension	●●●	●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●
The socio-cultural dimension	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●●
Equity between individuals	●●●	●●●	●●	
Equity between territories	●●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●
Equity between generations	●●●	●●●	●●	●●●
Diversity	●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
Networking and partnership	●●●●●	●●●●	●●●	●●●●
Participation	●●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●

Social Potential

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Threats	Opportunities
Perception of a variety of development approaches	●●●●	●●●●	●●●	●●●
Entrepreneurial creativity and innovation	●●●	●●●●	●●●	●●●
Enrichment of the local Knowledge to create a cohesive multicultural environment	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●●
Social cohesion	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●

Dynamics

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Threats	Opportunities
Enhancing problem understanding	●●●	●●●●		

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Threats	Opportunities
Negotiation and co-decision	●●●			
Creation of a shared vision	●●●●	●●●●		

Regional Perspective

Section 3 sums up essential elements of the Brabant region. For each dimension a number of recommendations have been made and possible ideas suggested for a regional strategy of innovative action in the field of sustainable district logistics. Based on the INNESTO SDL/SWOT-analysis and these elements, a selection has been made based on their importance in each dimension of Orientations, Social Potential and Dynamics. This is listed below.

Selected aspects of Orientation

01 Environment

- Multimodal transport hubs
- Large rural areas
- Presence of inland waterways
- Presence of natural reserves

02 Economy

- Good use of labour
- Good climate for investing
- Much export
- Strong transport & logistics sector
- Good accessibility of Brabant from Rotterdam and Antwerp

04 Social equity (between individuals)

- Good public transportation network

05 Inter-local equity (between territories)

- Good location with harbors Rotterdam and Antwerp and hinterland Germany
- Fair distribution of industry activities in Brabant
- Cooperation with other provinces in IncoDelta

Selected aspects of Social Potentials

- Good public transportation network

P1 Perception of a variety of development approaches

- Interaction/cooperation between province, branche organizations and municipalities in spatial policy
- High level of entrepreneurship
- Innovative entrepreneurship is stimulated when sustainable and space-saving
- International perspective on economical ecology
- Emphasis on sustainability in new infrastructure

P2 creativity and innovation in an entrepreneurial culture

- High level of entrepreneurship
- Increased mobility in small country-municipalities by innovative small-scale modes of public transport
- International perspective and border-crossing economical and ecological relations
- Ritts-programme Brabant: stimulates innovation

P4 Openness to enrich own culture and enhance multicultural cohesion

- Social engagement
- Equal share of foreign migration absorbed by the Netherlands
- Dynamic and competitive environment
- Ambition to preserve diversity, identities of landscape and culture-historical values

P11 Social cohesion

- Strong social and political network
- Social engagement
- Equal share of immigration absorbed compared to NL
- Restructuring of disadvantaged areas
- Employment has grown with 11,5% in 1997-2001, in 2001 increase of 5000 jobs
- Strong engagement of business
- Unemployment in 2001 is only 2 %
- Expectation of unemployment growing slightly
- Stimulate re-integration of women, immigrants, commuters, not-working elderly and partly disabled
- Attractive living environment
- Regional co-operation

Selected aspects of Dynamics

D1 Enhancing problem understanding

- Well-educated population
- Excellent education and health care
- International perspective on economics ecologies
- In 2000 a regional debate was organized, 250 participants from the region
- Tradition in regional co-operation
- Existence of political networks, platforms, action programmes in regional perspective
- ICT services, knowledge and research companies account for 2% of total employment
- "Social Economic Co-operation" (SES)/ Centre of commerce research in efficient spatial planning
- Creation of Index centre Mid- and West-Brabant in order to bring together knowledge and business

D3 Negotiation and co-decision

- Interaction/cooperation between province, branch organizations and municipalities in spatial policy
- Strong political and social network
- In 2000 a regional debate was organized, 250 participants from the region
- Tradition in regional co-operation
- Existence of political networks, platforms, action programmes in regional perspective
- Region-wide restructuring projects for industrial areas

D4 Creation of a shared vision

- Interaction/cooperation between province, branch organizations and municipalities in spatial policy
- Strong social engagement
- Strong political and social network
- In 2000 a regional debate was organized, 250 participants from the region
- Existence of political networks, platforms, action programmes in regional perspective
- Professional freight transport is increasing by internationalisation, outsourcing and order-directed production
- Scale of operations and co-operation in transport is increasing
- Region-wide restructuring projects for industrial areas
- Region-wide agreements on youth-care
- Region-wide agreements on youth-care

Main hypotheses of alternative options

1st hypothesis

Correlation between the SDL aspects

D3 Negotiation and co-decision

D4 Creation of a shared vision

O1 Environment

O2 Economy

P1 Perception of a variety of development approaches

P2 Creativity and innovation in an entrepreneurial culture

Short description

The development of a virtual network (the Virtual Transport Company; VTC) of mainly independent transport companies, including intermodal node service providers, will increase the efficiency of transport and will decrease the social costs caused, for instance, by not fully utilized loading capacity per trip. Exchanging freights will therefore be a strong support to the further sustainable development of the Brabant transport sector.

Expected results.

- Reduction of number of trips will result in:
 - Reduction of traffic noise.
 - Reduction of emission of pollutants.
 - Reduction of congestion.
 - Reduction of traffic accidents and thus of traffic casualties.
 - Demands for additional (road) infrastructure.
- Reduction of (transport) costs because of higher utilization of the loading capacity of the transport unit.
- Development of a #Virtual transport company# (VTC), in which independent transport companies (including all modes of transport and including intermodal transshipment providers) virtually merge into a single multimodal transport company. In this way, economies of scale can be reached and the mode of transport will be selected with the lowest (financial and, hopefully, environmental) cost.

This scale of economies can be reached by the fact that, when fully loaded, the bigger (in loading capacity) the transport vehicle is, the better (= the more sustainable) the cargo will be transported. The result of this virtual company, therefore, will be that the transport sector in the province of North Brabant, has the potential to become more sustainable.
- Further utilization of the central geographical position of the North Brabant area.
- Further strengthening of the competitive position in (sustainable, multimodal and intermodal) transport solutions with respect to the new members of the EU (Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, etc.).

Financial and organisational measures

- Setting up of a "Code of Conduct" for participants in the "Virtual Transport Company" (incl. statutory regulations).
- Investments in a supra-company logistic system by means of an Internet connection between the participating independent transport companies and thus, in fact, creating the VTC.
- In relation to, and, after the first practical experiences of the VTC, investments in infrastructure to optimize the use and the accessibility of intermodal nodes and industrial areas in Northern Brabant.
- Co-ordinations of several initiatives, partly originating from local initiatives, to follow criteria of economic and environmental sustainable development (e.g. waste management plans, reports on transport and infrastructure development, environment plans).

2nd hypothesis

Correlation between the SDL aspects

D1 Enhancing problem understanding

O1 Environment

O4 Social equity (between individuals)

O5 Inter-local equity (between territories)

P4 Openness to enrich own culture and enhance multicultural cohesion.

P11 Social cohesion.

Short description

The growing percentage of elderly (working) people is believed to be a major problem in the whole of the Netherlands and in particular in the province of Northern Brabant. Younger people are moving to or working in other provinces like for example the province of Zuid-Holland (with the city of Rotterdam, the harbor Europoort and the governmental head quarters in the city of the Hague being the main attractions). In the province of Zuid-Holland there is a greater choice in education institutions and also, with regard to leisure-time, there is much more going on for young people living in the cities. For Northern Brabant to become a sustainable area this tendency must be stopped. The growing percentage of elderly people and the number of young people leaving the Province will result in a shortage of the work force. This shortage will prevent the Brabant area to develop into a recognized Province in the transport sector in Europe or the whole world and will put a diminution into action. To

prevent this from happening the position of Brabant as a "young" province must be regained. In order to achieve this, Northern-Brabant has to upgrade her position as a sustainable area where ample opportunities are available for young people to develop themselves.

Expected results

- Attraction of more business with opportunities that appeal to the interest of young people.
- Attraction of more well-educated young people by stimulating the settlement of companies with "cutting edge technology".
- Attraction of more specialized (transport) people.
- The extended use of public transport by young people
- Young people are important for the future. When the elderly people are going into retirement younger people are needed, among others, as financial resources for old-age pensions. When the majority of the young people leave Northern Brabant the elderly people may find themselves in a position of social exclusion and isolation and, possibly even in a situation of financial distress. This conclusion may also be upheld with regard to immigrants from less developed countries and to handicapped people.
- Another important point to note is the need to reduce the growing individualization, in fact: growing social isolation of a substantial part, of the inhabitants of Northern Brabant. The purpose of this element is to reduce (the danger of) social exclusion of minorities, especially in economically less fortunate times.
- Brabant has, in relation to the more western provinces, a large agriculture sector. Many agriculture companies face, apart from difficult times economically, the problem of succession. Sons and daughters of farmers don't want to take over the farms, because they don't see much future in this business. Through a sustainable development programme staying in the agriculture sector should be stimulated, resulting in a more sustainable agriculture environment.

Financial and organizational measure.

- Investments in education programmes for the elderly and young people. For example reintegration programmes and transition training.
- Investment in social welfare for example, pension funds.
- Investments in opportunities, such as entertainment, in cities and villages for the people who live there. These investments could help to persuade people to stay in the Brabant region and not move to other provinces.
- Programmes and projects for positive action in favour of women, the elderly, immigrants and disabled. To help this people into the labour market, with education and decision-making.