A Policy Learning Platform peer review

Tuesday 15 and Wednesday 16 October 2024

Final Report

Region Heide, Germany, October 2024

Presentation of the Region of Heide, Germany, and the motivation for conducting the peer review

Situated on the edge of the Hamburg metropolitan area and in the heart of Dithmarschen, Region Heide has distinctive qualities as an economic and commercial centre on the one hand and as a residential and recreational area on the other. The region - consisting of the city of Heide and the eleven neighbouring municipalities - is a leading economic area on the west coast of Schleswig-Holstein. Decisive factors include the good national transport connections, a differentiated commercial structure, and a wide range of educational and social facilities. The city of Heide and the surrounding municipalities complement each other with their respective strengths: while Heide is the centre for employment, shopping and services, the surrounding area offers space for agriculture, energy production and recreational activities.

We are currently facing the challenges of attracting a gigafactory as well as the energy transition (hydrogen economy) and the associated tasks. The Heide region is facing a huge transformation process. Around 37,000 inhabitants currently live in the region and an increase of around 12,000 people is expected.

A regional transformation is taking place at various levels:

- Technical transformation
- Transport transformation
- Social transformation
- Cultural transformation
- Landscape transformation
- Infrastructural transformation

The existing urban-environment concept (SUK) between the city of Heide and the 11 surrounding municipalities created a basis for cooperation in the region since 2013. The concept was the basis for establishing the region and the Entwicklungsagentur, which has the task of implementing the defined objectives and topics of the SUK and acting as an office.

While the settlement of Northvolt and the possible neighbouring settlements, as well as the HYSCALE100 project, initially formulate the immediate job requirements, it can be assumed that there will also be an increased influx of families. According to a study on updating the SUK, population growth of around 12,000 people is assumed in the medium term, which corresponds to an increase of 30%.

With the support of the participants, we would like to work on ideas and solutions for our region and develop a structure for the next steps.

Political challenge: Difficulties in overcoming this challenge in the coming years

By this, we currently assume that we are faced with the following tasks:

- Establishment of clear, local project management to solve the transformation processes on all levels
- Clear definition of roles and tasks for all those involved
- A significant increase in personnel requirements for local implementation
- Support services from external service providers

List of Participants

In the context of the peer review meeting, key stakeholders of the region's ecosystem were invited and participated. Below is the list of participants.

Peers		
First and last name	Organisation	Position
David Lidström	City of Skellefteå, Sweden	Financial and strategic development cooperations
Joaquin Crespo	Regional Development Agency of Aragon, Aragon, Spain	Project & Policy Manager
Laurent de Pessemier	Economic, social, and environmental Regional Council, Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes, France	Study Manager
Radek Michalski	City of Wroclaw, Poland	Director of the Wroclaw City Brand Department
Sven Tobreluts	Association of Municipalities of Tartu County, Tartu County, Estonia	CEO

Region Heide and stakeholders		
First and last name	Organisation	Position
Esther Beeg	Region Heide	Fundings & Settlements
Martin Eckhard	Region Heide	Fundings & Project development
Dirk Burmeister	Region Heide	Chairman / CEO
Kay Teckenburg	Region Heide	Deputy Chairman Land and infrastructure development
Leif Ampting	Region Heide	Central services and finances
Björn Jörgensen	Amt KLG Heider Umland	Chief Administrative Officer
Petra Tautorat	Amt KLG Heider Umland	Building and Local Development
Oliver Schmidt-Gutzat	City of Heide	Mayor of Heide
Andreas Wojta	City of Heide	Building authority management
Erk Ulich	Kreis Dithmarschen	Department of construction, nature conservation and regional development
Birte Weber	Kreis Dithmarschen	Department of construction, nature conservation and regional development
Thilo Kuhn	Staatskanzlei SH	Departmental Coordination Economy, Transport, Labor, Technology and Tourism
Thomas Bultjer	IHK Flensburg	Head of Dithmarschen office
Andreas Hein	Region Heide	Chairman of the Board of Directors
Martina Hummel-Manzau	Egw Wirtschaftsförderung	Economic development

Interreg Europe		
First and last name	Organisation	Position
Thorsten Kohlisch	Policy Learning Platform	Lead Manager
Marc Pattinson	Policy Learning Platform	Thematic Expert Smarter
Arnault Morisson	Policy Learning Platform	Thematic Expert Smarter

Recommendations

There are already many positive conditions for shaping the right governance agreement for piloting the regional transformation in the Heide region. Thanks to its position as the centre of the energy transition and the green hydrogen projects, as well as the existing urban-rural concept, there is a good basis and broad acceptance of the transformation.

The **key issues and challenges** identified in the first part of the workshop are:

- There are many stakeholders
- Who is responsible? (e.g. topics such as schools are divided up in terms of local responsibility)
- Each stakeholder has their own regional responsibilities and each stakeholder thinks within their own regional boundaries
- Very small local structures
- Who has to finance and make advance payments?
- How many people are needed?
- How much time is needed? How long will the process take?
- What actual impact can the establishment/transition be expected to have?

The Heide region is at the centre of the energy transition and the development of green hydrogen in the European Union. The existing urban-environmental concept (SUK) between the city of Heide and the 11 neighbouring municipalities has created a basis for cooperation in the region since 2013. Today the formal and informal governance arrangements (steering group, informal meetings, etc.) are already in place with stakeholders which are willing to work together and there is a willingness to involve a wide range of stakeholders in the Heide transformation. Efforts have been made to create an overall positive attitude towards the game-changing developments that the region is embarking on. However, leadership, shared responsibilities, commitment from those involved and a shared vision for the future are still needed.

One Central solution approach is to define a "Region Heide Joint Declaration" a shared vision of the future**:**

Who?

- Heide and 11 Municipalities, Amt KLG Heider Umland, District Dithmarschen, West Coast District.
- 51 stakeholders and more... important to have leaders from the industry.
- Mobilise support from the State of Schleswig-Holstein.

Format

- Simple and motivational language to speak to as many people as possible.
- 2-step approach – "internal" purpose to align regional stakeholders followed by "external" outreach and cross-regional formalisation (Region Heide – Schleswig-Holstein – Hamburg and beyond)
- Communicate on the website and institutional networks.

Objectives

- To act fast, to have a simple and common message, to make it public that we are ready, to connect with other stakeholders from the region and other regions (i.e. Hamburg).
- To build complementarities with other regions.
- To gain international visibility.
- To engage civil society and businesses alike.
- To talk to people and their agendas (find ways to personalise the main messages).
- To share the success of Region Heide and make them part of the success story.

Leadership - who is preparing this joint declaration?

Regional development agency for the first draft then Heide, district Dithmarschen and Amt KLG Heider Umland.

Declaration as catalyser of a shared vision of the future

Large initiatives as catalyser for transformation

Project Management Office (PMO)

Face of the project

Who?

Regional development agency. CEO business-led or elected-led. Leader of the project will gain lot of expertise either for business or political careers.

Where?

In Heide.

Broker – coordinator - fixer

Someone communicating with other stakeholders and NorthVolt, the voice of the stakeholders?

Tasks

Clear mapping of responsibilities, principle of subsidiarity: who should take which role

Capacity to engage with EU initiatives

- Have persons with knowledge on EU initiatives and funds.
- Have visibility in Brussels (through EU initiatives and Schleswig-Holstein)
- Learn by doing (Interreg Europe projects)
- To align local stakeholder groups around your initiative in cooperation agreements.
- Host events (in Kiel) with European Commission participation to increase visibility.

Communication

Clear communication – PMO or steering groups?

Thematic working groups

The number of working groups must reflect needs, have working groups on the most important issues, show results and quick wins to cement stakeholders' engagement.

- Have working groups with set objectives and have a clear timeline.
- Working group on EU funds and initiatives.

KPI and monitoring - targets

- Define early and communicate yearly on the progress of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Impact report and assessment when participating in events.

International visibility

International advisory board – yearly international workshop? Sister cities?

Establishing the Governance Framework

Central Coordinating Body

- Composed of representatives from all 11 municipalities
- Sets the strategic vision for transformation
- Orchestration – ensures inclusive and transparent decision-making

Legal and Accountability Framework

- Clear legal boundaries to avoid jurisdictional conflicts
- Regular Progress Monitoring
- Accountability Mechanismus

Facilitating Partnerships

Inter-Municipal Collaboration

- Joint task forces for housing, energy, infrastructure municipalities
- Shared service agreements to pool resources efficiently

Stakeholder engagement - citizens

- Engage and empower citizens to co-create a common vision of the future (Vision 2030) – Region Heide Joint Declaration as catalyser to initiate visioning discussions
- Public forums, surveys, and workshops for co-designing the transformation.
- Keep informing and engaging citizens with events on NorthVolt, hydrogen, vocational centre, water...
- Inform people and elected persons on the importance and size of the transformation (hydrogen) not only for the economy but also on the landscape.

Stakeholder engagement – existing business and industry

- Advisory council with business, academic, and civil society leaders.
- Events, matchmakings, NorthVolt connect with business.
- Address labour mobility transfer issues.
- Engage students and West Coast Applied University, Kiel, Hamburg, to create startups – for instance, hackathons to respond to local challenges (for instance - housing, transportation, schools) - public procurement

Monitoring stakeholders' engagement and satisfaction

New citizen and business engagement

Business engagement

Soft landing support for private investments in infrastructures, factories, housing...

Students and vocational schools

- Attracting students and future workers to upskill or reskill.
- Attracting a branch university

New citizens

- Welcome centre and fast-track permits and visa.
- Engaging local citizens to help integrate foreigners.
- Language skills.

International citizens – urban amenities

Support attracting the workers then think about:

- Cultural centres
- International schools.

Housing and transportation

Land strategy

- Protect the best sites and leverage them to for flagship projects (innovative housing, top-notch R&D centre for the clean energy valley...)

Mix of housing (social housing and private developers)

Exploring innovative housing concepts

- Invite architects for innovative concepts to gain international visibility, for instance, housing of the green and sustainable future to communicate with citizens about these housing pilots.

Soft-landing housing support packages

Transportation

- Use hydrogen for buses and show what is produced in Heide is consumed in Heide.

Urban experimentations (testbeds)

- Use startups to test innovation in public spaces – have calls to pilot innovative solutions - small cities as Heide provide a fertile ground for testing hydrogen, energy, organic agriculture, mobility, and smart solutions.

Mobilising Funds and Resources

Access to EU Funds

- **Be strategic with EU initiatives.** Align with EU initiatives more relevant for transformation. Money is not the end result (storyline)
- **Interregional innovation investments (I3)** as part of the European Regional and Development Fund (ERDF) aims at supporting interregional innovation projects in their commercialisation and scale-up phases giving them the tools to overcome regulatory and other barriers and bring their project to investment level.
- Working with **Schleswig-Holstein for European funding.**
- Mapping existing regional actors in EU projects.
- Use regional showcase for EU initiatives in hydrogen and **net-zero industry act**... Leverage on hydrogen and green energy to involve Region Heide in European initiatives.
- **Community-led Local Development (CLLD)** under the EMFAF in Germany focuses on raising awareness of the value of locally produced food and ecological connections, as well as promoting permanent economic growth for the respective areas.

Access to national public funds

- National funding for regional development and energy transitions.
- Shared service agreements to pool resources efficiently.

Private Sector Investment

- Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to drive infrastructure and energy projects.

Local Funding Initiatives

- Community bonds and crowdfunding to engage residents and create local ownership.

Communication strategy

Communication and branding

- Highlight and reinforce communication of hydrogen and clean energy valley initiative.
- Adopt a storytelling approach to communicate the net-zero region and communicate the vision, the objectives, and the why of having such a label.
- PMO to communicate regularly to avoid misinformation on the project development and implementation.
- "Region Heide as a pioneer of the green transition, Europe needs Heide for achieving the green transition".

- Engage young people in communication campaigns. For instance, the young people in Heide for the green transition. Example: Junge Lausitz (https://junge-lausitz.de/)

- Communicate on the indirect effects and make them part of the story (other effects on other sectors–traditional sector, service, constructions...).

- Highlight the positive and negative spillovers (rising costs must be compensated with higher salaries).

- Engage citizens in focus group to ask what citizens wants.

- Culture, sports, famous person from Heide as an ambassador of the project.

- For branding, following the example of Vestland County with simple and clear slogan. Heide, Hydrogen, Horizon, Heritage, Happiness, Hope... (H^n)

- Using higher administrative levels for branding and communication. For instance, West Coast, Hamburg, Kiel...

- Ownership: ensure all key stakeholders and levels are part of the strategy

- Believe in your communication. For the Project Management Office (PMO) will be the ambassadors of the projects.

- Have a symbolic transformation reflecting Heide transformation – Market Square – experiment with green urban solutions – step-by-step concrete transformation.

Design your strategy and walk the talk, through small, and sometimes, symbolic measures.

Possible calendar of implementation

Peer Review Designing a governance arrangement to support regional transformation Tuesday 15 and Wednesday 16 October 2024 , Region Heide, Germany													
Applicability [1]	**Recommendations**	month 1	month 2	month 3	month 4	month 5	month 6	month 7	month 8	month 9	month 10	month 11	month 12	**Comments**
Very likely to be applied	**Central Cordination Body**, someone who is composed and set up a strategic vision for the transformation								▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	Find the face of the project, still difficult to define
Depends on specific political decisions/conditions	Define a **"Region Heide Joint Declaration"** with all stakeholders which are already involved and also new participants with the shared responsibilities an the commitment					▓	▓	▓						define a leadership and fix the objectives
Depends on specific political decisions/conditions	**Establish a Project Management Office (PMO)** Define goals and tasks of the PMO Plan structure and resources Develop processes and standards						▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	Who should take which role? Creating only a few but efficient working groups on the most important topics
Very likely to be applied	**Mapping of Responsible Tasks** The aim of this mapping process is to create transparency regarding responsibilities, increase efficiency and ensure that no tasks are left.						▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	An informal network is already working on these tasks.
Very likely to be applied	**Clear Mapping of responsibilities** Responsibilities must be systematically recorded and assigned within the project with all stakeholders						▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	The Inter-Municipal Collaboration has to do this together.
Very likely to be applied	**Capacity to engage with EU initiatives** Active and effective participation in the various programs and initiatives of the European Union (EU) Development and maintenance of the network	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	Maybe find persons with the knowledge on the EU initiatives and funds for building a network arrangement
Depends on specific political decisions/conditions	**International visibility** Strengthen online presence Build and maintain networks and partnerships Entering into partnerships in international projects and initiatives	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	Highlight and reinforce communication of hydrogen and clean energy valley initiative.
Depends on specific political decisions/conditions	**Monitoring stakeholders' engagement and satisfaction** Identification and categorization of stakeholders Definition of KPIs Use feedback instruments if necessary						▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	
Very likely to be applied	**Housing** Preparation of a strategic development of housing projects that take into account both the needs of the population and the requirements of sustainable urban development				▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	Join task forces für housing, energy and infrastructure and share service agreements
Very likely to be applied	**Transportation** Preparation of a strategic development of infrastructure	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	
Very likely to be applied	**Mobilising Funds and Resources** Identification of various sources of funding such as public subsidies, private investors and loans, Applying for funding and grants	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	Support needed from the Schleswig-Holstein government
Depends on specific political decisions/conditions	**Communication strategy** Identification and segmentation of target groups Definition of clear communication goals							▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	Also conceivable as a PMO task

(In the further attachments you will find a separate file for the calendar)

Conclusions

The peer review was very helpful for us. The right partners were invited for our questions.

We were able to take away lots of tips and information and put our questions to the right people. The discussions about the challenges of the other transformation regions in particular gave us a good direction for finding solutions. The information on future obstacles that have arisen in the participating regions and how to overcome them was also very informative for us and will save us future capacities.

The support from the Policy Learning Platform team was also considerable and provided many recommendations and solutions.

The peer review exceeded our expectations and we leave the two-day workshop in a positive frame of mind. Many tasks and challenges still lie ahead of us, but with the right paths and approaches to overcome the difficulties, we have developed a good path together.

We look forward to further dialogue with the participants and will continue to make use of the Policy Learning Platform in the future.