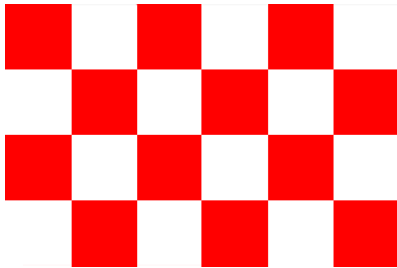


*Subnational stakeholders' support for the
Europe 2020 strategy*

*A comparison of the Dutch provinces of Noord-Brabant and
Overijssel*



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Preface

I am happy to announce that my Master thesis is ready. It was written within the framework of the Double degree programme European Studies offered by the University of Twente and the University of Muenster (Germany). When I took the decision to move from the province of Noord-Brabant to the province of Overijssel (the city of Enschede to be more precise) I was not aware of the fact that the final part of the programme (the master thesis) would include a comparative case study between these two provinces.

I decided to contact my former boss MEP Lambert van Nistelrooij to request his permission to assist me and guide me through the empirical part of this thesis. I thank him for his confidence and willingness to help me and in addition I thank his staff in Brussels and the Netherlands. For a long time I have had contact with Prof. Dr. Groenendijk (he taught me some subjects in the field of European Studies) and I successfully asked him to become my first supervisor. I thank him for his fruitful guidance through the whole process and for helping me from the beginning until the very end. I also thank Dr. Freise from the University of Muenster for his work during the last stage of the master thesis. Last but not least, I thank all interview partners who were willing to make some time receiving me at their offices in order to conduct the structured interviews.

Where is a human being without the support of his parents, his family and friends? I thank them for their unwavering support as well, and I thank David Bane for his willingness to review my master thesis.

I hope you will enjoy reading my master thesis and I hope the academic world and the European Union will take advantage of it.

Yours faithfully.
Andries Ravesloot

Enschede, August 2013

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1 Introduction

"The European Union is only fully legitimate with the broad support of the people. We need a real debate involving the public – in all our countries. But that debate must not be based on passions and clichés." (KU Leuven, 2013, par. 5) Mr. Van Rompuy (President of the European Council) stated this during the introduction of Mr. Habermas at a seminar organised by the University of Leuven.

1.1 Background

According to Lindberg & Scheingold (Hurrelmann, 2007, p. 352) European integration was for decades a project where the upper class had a lot of room for manoeuvres. Hence, the European citizenry was no potential risk for the project of European integration. To be more precise, the European institutions were generally accepted as part of the political architecture and the respective citizens did not show any interest in the project, but supported the broadly formulated targets of the European project. However, since the referendums in France and Denmark in the 90s and especially the Dutch and French referendums in 2005 the so-called 'permissive consensus' slipped away from the hands of the elites. Hooghe and Marks (Down & Wilson, 2008, p. 26 as cited in 2005) call it 'constraining dissensus'. According to Hillebrandt (2013, par. 9), France used to be one of the key promoters of European integration. Despite this, approximately only 51% of the French voters approved of the Maastricht Treaty in the referendum. This was perceived as a major shift in the citizens' attitudes towards European integration.

The European Commission strives for the involvement of civil society, lower levels of authority, and a wide range of sectors active in society. (European Commission, 2010, par 1a) In order to realise this involvement, support is crucial among these groups and hence, the final actions undertaken by these perspective groups. Is this the case for the subnational stakeholders which are key players in realising the current EU2020 strategy? These crucial stakeholders are for example, Higher Education Institutions (HEI's), innovation and regional economics-based organisations, local and regional authorities (cities and cooperating regions), and interest groups and so on. Organisations like for example cities, are often represented

in European umbrella organisations (e.g. Eurocities). Does this automatically mean that stakeholders perceive the EU-wide strategies as their ideal strategies? In general, the support came from the results delivered by the European Union, and hence, created output legitimacy. Proponents of stakeholder contribution model do perceive international umbrella organisations as appropriate institutions to close the legitimacy gap. (Lindgren & Persson, 2010, p. 451)

1.2 Problem definition

As the investigated strategy deals with policy fields where Member States have competencies (education, energy efficiency, innovation, employment and poverty reduction) the support among crucial subnational stakeholders is crucial in order to effectively realise the formulated targets at the EU and national level. The two cases the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel have been selected, because they are situated outside the economic engine of the Netherlands; Randstad and both provinces have a (technical) university which is part of the 3TU. (Regio Randstad, n.d. par. 2) As a province Noord-Brabant has the highest level of innovation takes place in this province compared to other provinces in the Netherlands (for example highest level of patent requests). Moreover, the province of Overijssel is selected because the city of Enschede has a long history of the highest unemployment rates of the Netherlands. Are there discrepancies between the two provinces? Are there similarities that are perceived important? (Nu, 2010, para 1; Benneworth, P, Hospers, G.J, & Jongbloed, B, 2006, page 14). These two similar characteristics make it interesting to investigate the respective cases in order to measure the support for the EU2020 strategy. Scharpf developed a theory in order to measure the legitimacy in terms of input. This theoretical model is commonly understood as the degree of participation possibilities (input legitimacy) and whether or not the stakeholders' preferences are incorporated. Furthermore, it looks at the degree of accountability the EU institutions take. Since its development it is widely applied by students of European Studies. (Lindgren & Persson, 2010, p. 451)

1.3 State of the Art

According to the Eurobarometer of autumn 2009 approximately 40% of the citizens do not stand on the positive or negative side of support towards the European Union. (European Commission, 2012, p. 15b) Furthermore, 6 out of 10 Europeans are of the opinion that the crisis is not over yet and that a next wave of crisis is still to come in terms of unemployment. (European Commission, 2012, p. 17) In addition, about 23% of the respondents in the Eurobarometer survey state that the European Union is the best way of providing action against the consequences of the severe economic and financial downturn. This is slightly more than the general confidence in the capabilities of the respective national governments. (European Commission, 2012, p. 21) The support of the citizenry towards the investigated EU2020 strategy is also continuously investigated. One concludes that the inhabitants of the European Union remain positive about the current strategy. The increase of citizens who are proponents of the formulated targets and initiatives has risen since spring 2012. Two activities are found crucial by 8 out of 10 Europeans: 'modifying labour markets and supporting the people living at the risk of poverty or who find themselves in this financial position. More than 7 out of ten Europeans believe that it is crucial to help an economy that consumes more natural products. (European Commission, 2012, p. 22) Significantly more support is needed to favour the targets formulated in the current strategy. The most favoured objectives are the increase of the consumption of sustainable energy and the percentage of people between 20 and 64 years-old who should have permanent employment (European Commission, 2012, p. 24) Finally, the Eurobarometer concludes that approximately 40% of the Europeans believe that the European Union is taking the right measures to depart from the crisis in order to create sustainable growth for the short and longer term job (European Commission, 2012, p. 25)

Quittkat investigated (2011, pp. 654, 671) online consultation procedures are handled by the European Commission and concluded that these are intensely used by private interest groups. Particularly EU civil society stakeholders largely neglect the invitation from the European Commission to participate in the consultation sessions. The Open Consultation mechanism was introduced in 2002 with a certain

specific goal, namely the more definitive establishment of specific culture of a dual communication line between the European Commission and certain interested organizations and the general citizenry. Moreover, the inclusion of civil society organisation is used in order to increase the democratic standards of the EU decision-making processes. (Quittkat, 2011, p. 654-655)

According to Kratochwil, (2006, p. 302) in the case of multi-level based organisations, such as the European Union the output-side of legitimacy is often focused upon as well as in the case the so-called 'democratic deficit' at the moment of the adoption of the legislation is acknowledged. Despite the fact that input and output legitimacy seem to vary in their meanings, it is still adequate if one defines 'legitimacy' as the accordance by the specific organisations and the broader publics. Bartolini handles the definition 'system building' to indicate the whole range of characteristics that construct loyalty to the sui generis animal which is called the European Union by the member states, the citizenry living in the EU- member states, and the social stakeholders. (Holzhacker, 2007, p. 258) It is the second step of a process of European reforms. Scharpf's input and output legitimacy is applied to several EU policy fields.

Meunier states that (2002, p. 7) trade policy is subject to a discourse which shows an increasing imbalance between effective problem-solving and the priority of seeking legitimacy. In other words, an augmentation of legitimacy would lead to a more constrained field of competence concerning negotiating international agreements. Scharpf supposes that effective problem-solving and legitimacy complement each other and not the opposite. The author (2002, p. 8) states that EU trade policy clearly has a lack of both input and output legitimacy. The theory of Scharpf is mostly applied to single policy fields. The EU2020 strategy consists of a number of headline targets in policy fields where member states have competencies. Is there a discrepancy between the input and output legitimacy in these respective fields? According to Lindgren & Persson (2010, p. 453) James Fearson (as cited in 1998: 56f) states that the psychological idea of having influence automatically leads to the likeability of acceptance of the outcomes, even if the ideas of the actors are not incorporated into the new policy or strategy.

A study which comes close to the subject of this master thesis is executed by Richard Hyman and is called: 'Trade Unions, Lisbon and Europe 2020: From Dream to Nightmare.' According to the author (2011, p. 2) the short consultation period was subject to a substantial degree of criticism compared to the consultation on the Green Paper 'Modernising Labour Law to Meet the Challenges of the 21 Century in 2006-07'. Moreover, the Commission's assessment of the Lisbon strategy was released only when the consultation period ended. The use of the Internet raised doubts by ETUC on the interlocutor position by societal groups at the EU level. Is the European citizen more privileged? Furthermore the author makes a distinction by means of the countries where participants live. The majority comes from Germany and the Nordics. The relatively new member states did not contribute that much. The complementary aspect of this proposal is that there will be a study between two provinces. The author, (2011, p.2) implies that the democratic nature of unions implies long consultation sessions among the members and this led to a low output in responses, due to the short consultation period. The contributions of trade unions show a majority of criticism compared to the previous Lisbon strategy. And is this also the case in Noord-Brabant and Overijssel? (2011, p.2)

A crucial part of the interest representation in the EU is the mere fact that the employer and employee organisations released a communication on the EU2020 strategy. Opinions released assumed the opposite of the neo-liberal focused ideas of the Council and the Commission. (Hyman, 2011, p. 14)

A study of Warleigh-Lack (2011, p. 298) released that there is a general belief in EU policy fields that a more environmentalist EU can enlarge the legitimacy of the European Union. Despite the fact environmental policy is secondary in terms of an explicit mention, there is coherence in the idea that green parts of the economy is likely to pursue a significant part for employment and salaries. (Warleigh-Lack, 2011, p. 306) A more environmentalist EU could be a potential source of legitimacy in the reduction of the harm resulting from climate change. (Warleigh-Lack, 2011, pp. 307-308) Nevertheless, the author is of the opinion that the EU is not able yet to 'green' the policies. (Wartleigh-Lack, 2011, p. 298)

1.4 Research questions

This paragraph deals with the research questions being investigated within this Master thesis.

Main question:

“To what extent do subnational stakeholders in the Dutch provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel support the EU2020 strategy?”

1 How can the EU2020 strategy be defined?

This sub question seeks to describe the EU2020’s governance architecture and to explain how the national and EU targets are formulated. It mainly consists of primary documents (released by the European Commission) and secondary sources (academic articles).

2 What theoretical perspectives are relevant in the context of measuring stakeholders’ support?

Scharpf’s theory on input legitimacy uses indicators that will be applied to the measurement of the support for the EU2020 strategy. This question will be answered by means of analysing the EU2020’s predecessor; the Lisbon Strategy. In order to assess the Lisbon strategy a review of the academic literature is executed in order to seek to gain data on Scharpf’s formulated indicators. This analysis implies an assessment of the contribution to EU’s input legitimacy. Other strategies of stakeholders are described as well as the logics of influence, access and membership in order to seek indicators that can influence stakeholders’ support towards EU policies and strategies. This question will be answered with the help of academic articles (i.e. secondary sources). Finally, respective theories on legitimacy are analysed.

3 To what extent do subnational actors in the Dutch provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel support the EU2020 strategy?

This sub question seeks to answer to what extent regard the subnational actors the crucial European institutions as accountable (externally towards stakeholders) and to what degree the stakeholders' preferences are incorporated into the EU2020 strategy. Moreover, the degree of participation possibilities has been analysed. In order to measure the support one makes use of a number of categories such as Higher Education Institutions, innovation and regional economics based organisations, local and regional authorities and so on.

The methodology used is structured interviews which allow the researcher to count the number of stakeholders that judged an answer to one of the 52 questions on a specific scale. The questions concern the judgement of the most crucial European Institutions' degree of accountability, satisfaction towards participation possibilities and the extent of satisfaction regarding the formulated national and EU targets. The case study is exploratory, because the topic is understudied. Hence, hypotheses can be formulated in a later stadium only, due to the limited number of cases and understudied character of this topic.

1.5 Results

Generally, the EU2020 strategy is supported by a wide range of subnational stakeholders in the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel. The interviewees do not have an opinion on the main European institutions' (externally) accountability, and the interviewees' preferences are to a large extent incorporated. Despite this, the national innovation target is widely criticised. Nevertheless, a major problem is that these stakeholders cannot form a demos, but they can influence it by pro-EU media campaigns (as some civil society-organisations did). Due to the limited number of interview partners, the effects of logics of influence, membership and access are excluded from the results. Finally, the participatory quality of the consultation session satisfies the majority of the interview partners.

1.6 Outline

Section 2 outlines the EU2020 strategy which is investigated, section 3 proceeds with an overview of factors that could determine stakeholders' support towards EU strategies. Section 4 describes the case selection and research methodology. It ends with the revelation of the results conducted within this study. Section 6 seeks to derive conclusions and suggestions for further research.

List of Abbreviations:

EP	European Parliament
EC	European Commission
EU2020	The current EU-strategy
HEI	Higher Education Institution
LS	Lisbon strategy
MEP	Member of the European Parliament

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2 EU2020 strategy's governance architecture

This section seeks to answer the following research question: “How can the EU2020-strategy be described?” This section provides an overview of the targets formulated in the EU2020 strategy. Furthermore, this section proceeds with the other parts of the governance framework which is used to steer the EU2020 strategy. The flagship initiatives are also indicated. Paragraph 2.1 deals with the differences between the Lisbon strategy and the EU2020 strategy, paragraph 2.2 outlines the EU and Dutch headline targets and integrated guidelines, this paragraph is succeeded by paragraph 2.3 and deals with the flagship initiatives of EU2020 and the role of the European institutions. Paragraph 2.4 explains the procedures and the specific tasks of the involved institutions and bodies. The final paragraph is the conclusion. This chapter lays out the EU2020 strategy in general.

2.1 From Lisbon to EU2020 strategy

The Lisbon strategy was succeeded by the EU2020 strategy. The former is the EU's strategy to modernise the continent between 2000 and 2010 (the ultimate goal was becoming the best performing continent in the field of knowledge economy), the latter continues on the Lisbon's results as a connection between economic growth and the realisation of jobs. Moreover, the EU2020 strategy seeks to enhance the co-operation between member states and the EU and a more efficient use of instruments available. (Son & Carcia, n.d., p. 301) The social aspects of the Lisbon strategy, more specifically the strategy to create more jobs and an enhancement of social cohesion are to remain crucial aspects in the EU2020 strategy. The EU2020 strategy concentrates on three dimensions: environmental, social, and financial/economic. The degree of participation in the labour market and the effectiveness of labour are crucial criteria to realise these goals.

The main themes of the EU2020 strategy are the production of value which stems from growth created by knowledge. This implies that possibilities for the people and social cohesion should be enlarged in a globalising world, in which the degree of innovation power of a continent is crucial in the field of production as well

as processes. Another theme is motivating citizens in societies which are inclusive, which suggests the creation of entrepreneurship; furthermore it comprises the gaining of knowledge, production of knowledge and a substantive degree of innovation. A further theme is the realisation of a competition-related, linked and environmental-friendly economy.

One can estimate that the EU needs to enhance its competition capacity and enlarge its productivity by means of a decreasing the degree of consumption of non-renewable energy products. The central goal of the EU2020 strategy, the production of value which stems from growth created by knowledge, indicates the increasing importance of education as one of the most crucial tools for combating discrimination and poverty. The EU2020 strategy, which entered into force in June 2010, indicates a radical change, namely a stronger focus on the effectiveness of labour per hour. In the past the percentage of people working was more crucial. The main focus points of the current strategy include employment guidelines, because of the high risks the EU is facing at the moment (for example ageing of the population). One of the major instruments is flexicurity. Flexicurity is a labour market tool with the objective of encouraging ideas by means of regulation and to increase smooth change possibilities on the labour market. Before the financial crisis began in 2008, the European Union did a good job on labour market performance. After the economic crisis of 2002-2003, the EU was characterised by strong economic performance and low inflation (Son & Carcia, n.d., p. 301-302)

2.2 EU2020's Headline targets

The EU2020 strategy was designed under the auspices of the European Commission and accorded by the European Council in June 2010. The current strategy is extremely ambitious in the fields of labour, tuition, energy and innovation. (Luminosu, 2011, p. 121) The following headlines are determined at the EU-level, which are to be translated in national headlines. The Dutch headlines can be found below the EU-headlines. In order to reach the European targets formulated in the EU2020 strategy one should accomplish a target of 75% of the people in the age of 20-64 year who should be at work. Furthermore, of the European Union's GDP, 3% has to be committed in R&D (public & private), next to this concerning Climate/Energy goals, the 20/20/20 targets should be reached. Another target is the proportion of people leaving without a diploma has to be fewer than 10%, and a minimum of 40% of young people should have a tertiary diploma. Last but not least, the people risking the status of being 'poor' should be decreased with 20 million less people. (European Commission, 2010, page 3c) (Targets formulated for the entire EU).

2.2.1 EU2020's National targets

These EU targets are translated into national targets, and for the Netherlands these are the following targets of the workforce in the age of 20-64: 80% should be employed, regarding R&D 2,5% of the Dutch GDP should be invested in the respective field. Concerning the reduction of targets regarding CO2 emission, a decrease of 16% is estimated. Another topic in this theme is renewable energy, which is estimated at 14%. In the field of education, a reduction of 8% of people leaving without a diploma should be reached and the percentage in tertiary education should be more than 40-45%. Finally, the reduction of people who are at risk of living with poverty or social exclusion is estimated at 100.000. (European Commission, n.d., par. 1d)

Figure 1.2: Overall architecture of Europe 2020

EU priorities	Smart growth	Sustainable growth	Inclusive growth
	Ten Integrated Guidelines Five headline targets		
EU level tools	Monitoring and guidance (*) Annual Growth Survey Annual policy guidance and recommendations Seven flagships EU levers for growth and jobs (**) European semester		
National level tools	National reform Programmes (with national targets)		

Notes: (*) Macro, thematic and fiscal surveillance; (**) The three levers are: Single Market relaunch, Trade and external policies, EU financial support.

Figure 1 (Marlier & Natali) shows the governance architecture of the EU2020 strategy.

Reprinted from: Marlier, E & Natali, D. (2010) Towards a more social EU? Page 19,
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2.2.2 Integrated guidelines

The EU2020 strategy is the current attempt to stimulate the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy. It emphasises the relation between the member states and the EU institutions and it stimulates the realisation of jobs and growth by means of making efficient use of the instruments available at the Community level. Concerning the institutional architecture, the areas of the EU priorities are formulated in the integrated guidelines. This is also the case for the headline targets of the EU2020 strategy, which are to be translated in national targets. The European Commission is of the opinion that the strategy is characterised by strengthened economic governance constructed on the two suggested points, namely country documents and thematic priorities. The thematic mechanisms are a tool to bring the EU objectives into practice by means of a collective set of concrete actions. At the EU level concrete examples are the internal market, the financial instruments and the external

policy instruments to decrease struggles and to enhance the likeability of reaching the EU2020's goals. The European Commission's task is to prioritise the attempts to be undertaken in order to get out of the current financial crisis which is damaging the EU's economies. The aforementioned national targets must force member states to identify the present situation and to take action according to the country's situation in the respective fields.

The European Council is divided in specific fields, for example EcoFin, and is the major actor in assessing the progress made regarding the targeted headlines. The General Economic Policy guidelines and the Employment Guidelines contain suggestions concerning the released NRP's by the 27 member states. If a certain member state does not commit to the suggested ideas, the European Commission can provide a warning to the member state in question. Country reports are meant to formulate the specific member states' efforts and strategy on how to get rid of the current debt crisis. This step is followed by recommendations provided by the EC, which concern for example, budget strategy. It's the European Council's task to assess the member states' and EU's performance regarding the strategy, referring to competition, structure and macroeconomic conditions. This analysis has to be executed on a yearly basis. (Bongardt & Torres, 2010, page 3)

Furthermore, according to De la Porte and Jacobsson (Lundvall & Lorenz, 2011, page 5) the results in employment policy are very disappointing; also Daly (2008) comes to the same results in the fields of social policy. EU2020 acknowledges the complexity and indicated an urge for enforcing governance. According to the document (Bongardt & Torres, 2010, page 5 as cited in EU2020, page 25) one needs to formulate explicit targets, and benchmarks which are publicly available. This demands a well-constructed architecture of governance enabling the EU, and its member states, to incorporate in an effective manner. The function of the European Council remains the same as it was in the Lisbon Strategy, namely the main responsible for the incorporation of the targets but the problem was that it directed its tasks to the European Commission. (Bongardt & Torres, 2010, page 5, as cited in Chalmer and Lodge, 2003) From the side of the member states one can conclude that only a dozen civil servants remain responsible for the communication sessions

with the European Commission. The policy that requires countries to deal with the headline targets and the Stability and Growth Pact exist already since the revised Lisbon strategy in 2005.

Since that year the Stability and Growth Pact (hereinafter SGP) and the Open Method of Co-ordination (hereinafter called OMC) were to be evaluated at the yearly Spring Council. This mode of governance provides manoeuvring room for civil servants dealing with public finances, a veto possibility on fields like innovation and social policies. As it turned out, the EU2020 strategy is favouring the new mode of governance as a form of benchmarking.

Finally, the Council approved 10 integrated guidelines in October 2010, which consist of six broad guidelines on economic policies of the member states and the EU, and concerning labour there are 4 guidelines formulated. These guidelines were approved on the grounds of the TFEU (article 121 for the economic ones, and article 148 for the labour guidelines). The objective of the respective guidelines is to assist member states on formulating their NRPs and introducing reforms, taking into account the relationships with other member states and in the framework of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP). (Marlier & Natali, 2010, page 22) Below the ten guidelines are outlined:

- Guaranteeing the aspects and durability of public finances;
- 1 Concentrating on balancing macroeconomic situation of the member states;
- 2 Decreasing distortions in member states;
- 3 Combating effectively significant differences in Euro area;
- 4 Making work of encouraging R&D and innovation, enhancing the knowledge triangle, and stimulating the features of the digital economy;
- 5 Enhancing energy-efficiency and decreasing emission of greenhouse gas
- 6 Enhancing the quality of the business and customer environment, and improving and developing the industrial sector, which aims to make use of the chances the internal market offers;
- 7 Supporting people to get a job of both men and women, decreasing the structural problem of unemployment, and encouraging the quality of jobs;

- 8Creating a competent labour force, able to fulfil the requests by organisations/companies and to encouraging lifelong tuition;
- 9Enhancing the standards and results of tuition and training systems at all education levels, and enlarging enrolments in tertiary education;
- 10Stimulating an inclusive society, and fighting poverty. (Marlier & Natali, 2010b, n.p.)

Finally, one should take into account that this master thesis only deals with the Headline and national targets and the flagship initiatives.

2.3 Flagship initiatives

Besides the formulated headline targets, the so-called ‘flagship initiatives’ concentrate on education, innovation and sustainable growth increased by encouraging greater mobility and competitiveness more jobs and expertise the battle against poverty by means of increasing inclusion into society, addressing climate issues and energy-consumption and last but not least Kroes’s digital agenda regarding smart growth. (Pochet, 2010, page 2)

- **Digital Agenda for Europe**

One of the major goals of the Digital Agenda for Europe is to remove hurdles which do not encourage a smooth process of services and entertainment business that are crossing the border. One of the goals is to create a single payment-area for international transactions and to modernise the regulations for the single market towards the current state of digitalisation. One of the activities under pillar 1 “Digital Single Market’ is to assess the state-of-affairs of the EU protection regulation towards information protection (European Commission, 2011, par 1e) The second pillar “Interoperability & Standards” is eager to give answer to fields of positive changes in standard-setting rules and enhanced interoperability as driving force to succeed. One good example of interoperability is the Internet. One of the tasks to be fulfilled in this pillar is to make it mandatory for Member States to adopt the rules under the European Interoperability Framework. To proceed quickly with the other

pillars: Pillar 3 “Trust & Security” seeks to find an answer to enable European Union citizens to safely execute transactions via the Internet. One of the goals is to let Member States establish national warning platforms. Pillar 4 ‘Fast and ultra-fast Internet access’ forces Member States to think about how to formulate legislation in order to ease expenditure in broadband. The final goal would be to be in the top countries list like Japan and South Korea by 2020. Pillar 5 concerns ‘Innovation’: the realisation of the goal to get rid of barriers which stimulate fragmented attempts to enhance the competitive position, in order to beat the US in terms of ICT expenditure. (European Commission, 2011, n.p.) Pillar 6 is called “Enhancing digital literacy, skills and inclusion’ seeks to decrease the gap between the amount regular users of the Internet and the 30% of European Union citizens who never went on the Internet by means of learning digital tools. One of the goals is to guarantee easy access for all citizens to websites of the public authorities.

Pillar 7 is called “ICT enabled benefits for EU society.’ This pillar deals with the social cohesion of the elderly in the Member States and to reduce the daily hindrances by means of using digitalised tools. Moreover digital tools could lead to the better provision of public tasks to EU citizens. One of the goals is to judge whether ICT business has lived up with the mandatory rules in order to make the EU more energy-efficient. Finally, all the seven pillars contribute towards the three themes characterising the EU2020 strategy; to make the EU more inclusive, environmental-friendly, and more innovative (European Commission, 2010, n.p.)

- **Innovation Union**

One of the major concerns in this flagship initiative is that approximately 1,000 researchers have moved to another country than an EU Member State and that the EU spends significantly less than the United States and Japan. If the 3%-target concerning expenditure in R&D is reached, this can realise 3.7 million jobs and significantly enlarge the EU’s GDP by 2025. One of the activities is to reach convergence among regions to reach the same level of innovation. (European Commission, 2010, n.p.f)

- **Resource-efficient Europe**

In order to realise a more environmental-friendly European Union one delivers tools which help the Member States and the European Union to implement legislation to reduce the risk of the global warming threats. Some policy areas include various modes of transport and regional growth. Some initiatives comprise proposals on the modification of the Common Agricultural and the Cohesion Policy.
(European Commission, 2010, n.p.g)

- **Youth on the move**

This initiative comprises a coherent set of initiatives to help youngsters increase their competences through education and hence, their chances on the labour market. These target groups should be motivated to spend a certain period abroad to study with the help of EU-funding tools. The concentration is on young people, because of the young inhabitants between 15 and 25 years old, 7.5 million of these do not have a job nor are enrolled in study programme. Another method to reach the target is to motivate Member States to ease the flow of graduated students to the labour market.
(European Commission, 2010, n.p.h)

- **An Agenda for new skills and jobs**

This initiative stimulates the member states to reach the target on Employment, the Educational targets and the one on the reduction of poverty. One of the tools is to modernise the labour market (introduce flexicurity) and the enhancement of working circumstances and the nature of the jobs. One of the reasons of this flagship initiative is the significant amount of unemployment in the EU Member States.
(European Commission, 2010, n.p.i)

- **Industrial policy for the globalisation era**

This initiative intends to protect the industrial area in the European Union in order to create more quality-jobs and to protect the environment at the same time. There are some EU policies connected to this initiative, namely the Competition Policy, Innovation Policy and Energy policy. One of the key actions is to assist the SMEs to ease access to funding methods and to help them to ease internationalisation. (European Commission, 2010, n.p.j)

- **European Platform against Poverty**

According to this flagship initiative approximately 80 million EU citizens live under the social minimum standards, with the treat to become poor. Despite the fact fighting poverty and social exclusion do belong to the competencies of the Member States the European Union can act as a guide in this field, by means of formulating EU-regulation. One of the key initiatives includes creating connections between the public and private fields. (European Commission, 2010, n.p.k)

2.4 Procedures of EU2020

This paragraph provides an analysis of the procedures which are incorporated into the EU2020 strategy. Moreover a more detailed governance framework is outlined. In order to attain convergence among EU countries and to enhance internal coordinating mechanisms, the Commission suggests a powerful governance framework, which is built on a subject-related focus based on the achievement of results regarding headline targets and the inspection of single countries. The second pillar indicates the briefing of current situations of EU-countries, executed by the European Commission and the member states. The first fundament requires joint action of both the European Union and the member states and partners. For the sake of clarity, this master thesis deals only with the headline targets and the flagship initiatives.

The legal instruments applicable to the strategy are the Europe2020 integrated guidelines which are adopted by the European Council after having received the arguments of the European Parliament. Furthermore policy recommendations are to be incorporated into Opinions subject to Council Regulation no 1466/97, and propositions as part of the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines (art. 120 TFEU and subsequent articles). The approval of these propositions is the core task of the European Commission. The report suggests the discussions and strategic role are in the hands of the European Council.

2.4.1 European institutions' roles

Contrary to the past, the European Council is forced to play a more active role at the EU-stage, encouraged by the extension of the co-decision procedure, which is subject to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. According to the European Commission's document, the European Parliament is requested to act as a crucial institution, seen in the light of the co-decision role. Moreover, the European Parliament is to play an active role in attracting inhabitants of the EU and national parliaments of every single EU member state. The authorities active at the national, regional and local level are requested to play a significant function in discussions on the National Reform Programs (hereinafter called NRPs). The European Commission is of the opinion that by engaging the various levels of authorities into the strategy elaboration, it can create a feeling of ownership of the EU2020 strategy, which is achieving the aim article 1 of the Treaty of the European Union. (Luminosu, 2011, p. 123)

The procedure, which is used to bring the EU2020 strategy into practice, is in line with the discretionary powers as laid down in the treaties concerning the governance of the European Union, i.e. the Treaty on the European Union (hereinafter called TEU) and the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (hereinafter called TFEU). Moreover, it takes into account the different roles of the involved European institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, and European Council). The content of the procedure rests on articles 120 and 121 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union, and is focused on the

economic policy of the EU. The European Council, which consists of the Presidents or Prime Ministers of the 27 member states, has according to the TEU, the privilege to formulate the political strategies and focus points (art. 15). Nevertheless, the treaty leaves no room for the European Council to exert legislative powers in the European Union. The position of the European Council is characterised by rising controversy, as it crosses the border lines of the traditional national political institutions. Nevertheless, because of its significant impact on the European integration discourse, it can definitely change the legislative content of the EU. It should be noted that the European Council was only incorporated into the institutional system, when the Lisbon treaty entered into force on 1 December 2009. The co-decision procedure will, as prescribed in the Treaty of Lisbon, decrease the legislative discretion of the European Council. The legislative tools of the European Council stem from article 161 TEU and the related provisions in the TFEU. The position of the European Parliament will be increased with the extension of the co-decision procedure. One of the objectives of the European Parliament was to enhance the representative role of the European Parliament, but at the same time the legislative discretion is to remain the main task of other European institutions. (Luminosu, 2011, p. 124)

One of the core tasks of the European Parliament (hereinafter called EP) is to encourage inhabitants of the EU and the 27 national parliaments to report collective opinions to the European Council. Despite this crucial legitimising role, the other institutions are not required to take over the viewpoints of the European Parliament and its affiliates. This could yield a democratic deficit when bringing the EU2020 strategy into practice. As Section 6 of the strategy report prescribes, the EP will be asked by the European Council to create the crucial circumstances in order to be able to incorporate the Commission's proposals in the directions of the European Council. The amendments of the EP remain vulnerable in the respective section. The participatory function of the EP is not restricted in the aforementioned TEU and TFEU in the context of the described procedures. The conditions on transparency and accountability are also clearly formulated in the framework of EP. The European Council is not accountable to any kind of institution or demos. Nevertheless, the respective institution consists of Presidents or Prime ministers and release normally

clearly defined opinions on pieces of legislation. These indicate opinions of the most crucial representatives of the member states. The European Commission plays a prominent role in the legislative framework of the European Union. This is also the case for its executive function. When looking at member states' institutions, one can see a mandatory activity for the different levels of authority to achieve results as agreed upon in the EU2020 strategy. The European Commission is responsible for reviewing the yearly progress made by the member states. These will be documented in annual reports. The programme uses related elements of the reviewing trajectory used by the mechanism for cooperation and verification (MCV). Its intention is to check the improvements made in Romania and Bulgaria in the field of fight against corruption and judicial modifications. (Luminosu, 2011c, p. 124-125) The European Commission has the instruments available to issue sanction, conduct policy recommendation and to produce an assessment of the improvements achieved in the Euro zone-area. The discretionary powers to issue sanctions are not incorporated into various mechanisms, but are rather depending on other legal tools, which can be used by the European Commission, the European Council and the EP, in order to force member states to make progress in line with the national targets as part of the EU2020 strategy. Hence, the so-called 'partnership' is rather based on voluntary action than on mandatory conditions. (Luminosu, 2011d, p. 124-125)

2.4.2 European institutions, bodies, member states and civil society: the division of tasks

This paragraph lays out the tasks which have been assigned to every single involved stakeholder:

The European Council consists of the Heads of State and Heads of Government of the respective member states of the European Union. These political responsible officials do have an adequate insight in the MS' current positions. The European Council is the main responsible for the governance of the strategy. This is executed by means of the following tasks. First of all, the yearly evaluation of the developments is a task. This is to be executed at the EU and Member State level, during the fixed spring meetings. It keeps an overview of the economic

circumstances in the European Union and the developments and improvements made regarding the formulated targets and the flagship initiatives.

The financial part of the strategy (such as Euro-plus pact) is not part of this master thesis. Another major task is horizontal policy coordination. The European Council should execute this task for both the European Union and the Eurozone. This coordination is executed by means of the Annual Growth Survey which is published by the European Commission. It deals with fiscal, economic, structural policy reforms and policy fields which can create growth. Furthermore, there should be held talks on the economic situation of the EU and the Euro zone and the challenges for the EU2020 strategy

During the June Council there should be support for the advice which is specified per country. The responsibilities of the Council of the European Union include tracking and peer evaluation. The abovementioned tasks are to be executed by the Council of the EU. This is the institution where the EU ministers of the corresponding ministries hold their meetings within their own Council group such as ECOFIN, hold talks on the insertion of the NRP in their field of policy. Another responsibility is checking the improvements towards the EU2020 strategy targets. One has to keep stock of the position of the strategy on annual basis, grounded on the framework of indicators as formulated by Eurostat during deliberations with departments of the European Commission. These schemes enable the Council of the EU to keep track of the improvements towards the goals in the EU2020 strategy. Furthermore, the publication of an annual growth survey is a major task of the Council of the EU. Moreover, one is responsible for the judgements of the country documents and stability/ convergence programmes. (The respective document is major information at the table of the spring Council session). Last but not least, the release of country-related policy advises and, if the Council of the EU needs to issue one, release of warnings to the members of the European Union (June). These warnings need to be grounded on the major findings of their documents on the improvements towards the EU2020 national headline targets and the flagship initiatives. One of the crucial functions of the EP towards the strategy is that should be an encouraging institution in order to motivate EU citizens and national parliaments. Every single year, the European Parliament might release a resolution

towards the current position of the EU2020 strategy headline targets and flagship initiatives. Furthermore, the European Parliament is co-legislator in many policy areas, together with the Council. The EP is the only direct-elected European institution. The European Economic and Social Committee gives direction to the direct involvement of civil society and social partners. It puts emphasis on co-responsibility of national societal stakeholders and on encouraging cross-border networks. Its tasks are to keep stock of and to guarantee adequacy of the activities executed in the Committee, and the resolutions released concerning EU2020 and to hold meetings with the national Economic and Social committees and similar organs, in order to discuss activities which are carried out together and documents concentrating on EU2020.

Finally, it is urged to guide with EESC members and the Communication group on a EU2020 document by organised member associations. The Committee of the Regions is required to execute the following tasks: The cornerstone of EU2020 is territorial cohesion and the Committee of the Regions provides inspiration and policy ideas to be incorporated into the strategy. The Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform of the Committee is a mechanism for the European Union regional and local authorities to be heard in strategy-related processes. The Monitoring Platform seeks to reach an overview of the connection between EU2020 and cohesion policy, to include local and regional authorities with the goal to improve the bringing into practice of policies related to EU2020, to review the activities of the local and regional authorities in the governance procedures of the EU2020 strategy. Furthermore, it needs to visualise the hurdles discovered by the respective levels of authority while inserting the current EU's strategy. Finally, it needs to encourage the vicious circle of policy innovations of other Member States, data, and stories.

The European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund are assigned the task to create new finance tools which are corresponding to the wished of commercial partners. The European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund can be the backbone for beneficial finance of innovation and the commercialisation of ideas. These efforts can take place in connection with the public activities in force at the Member State level. Crucial actors within the strategy are the respective EU Member States. Inserting the crucial reforms at Member State-level is one of these tasks. This should be done in order to speed up growth, for example to intensify research expenditure and employment participation. Another activity is working together with the European Commission on the seven respective flagship initiatives. Governments of the respective member states must release two documents in April, when revealing what they are planning in order to reach the formulated goals at the national level.

Another subject is the Stability/convergence programmes. These are to be sent before the respective governments approve on the national budgets for the coming year. The proposals should be formulated explicitly; hence a fruitful discussion on public finances and fiscal policy is possible. NRP's are sent together with the above mentioned programmes, and describe the indicators crucial to assess the improvements made in the direction of the EU2020 targets for employment, innovation etc. While the financial instruments for the governments to invest in growth are limited, the respective governments are the major institution to be held responsible for guaranteeing continuous investment in a larger GDP. An example is making higher education more accessible and more resource efficient measurements. The described documents should be fledged within the national budget governance procedures and the European Semester. The semester is introduced in order to enhance policy guidance throughout the European Union. One crucial prerequisite is to include regional and local authorities, social partners and other stakeholders most also be consulted in order to gain support. Another level in the multi-level architecture is to hold talks between national, regional and local authorities which will close the distance between the strategy and EU's citizens, enhancing the sense of ownership which is crucial to get people enthusiastic about the EU2020 strategy. In a number of EU member states, the regional and local levels are competent in the

areas connected to the EU2020 strategy, like education and labour market. It is necessary to create awareness among all public authority levels that reached the three main objectives as formulated in the current strategy. The Committee of the Region assists in encouraging regional and local authorities, which are connected to (as explained above) competent regional and local authorities; - The Committee of the Regions established the Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform and the European Commission assists in publishing an online networking platform to include local and regional levels to deliver results in the area of the EU2020 goals. (European Commission, 2012, n.p.l)

2.5 Conclusion

This section outlined the current strategy of the EU, i.e. EU2020. It is the subject investigated within this thesis that seeks to find patterns by measuring the extent of support among subnational stakeholders. The following section proceeds with factors which can influence stakeholders' attitude towards strategies and policies of the EU.

3 Significant factors determining stakeholders' support

This section outlines factors which are of significance regarding the extent of stakeholders' support. Nevertheless, some theories on legitimacy could include this aspect as criterion to gain considerable legitimacy.

3.1 Lisbon strategy and stakeholders' involvement

This paragraph deals with the stakeholders' inclusion within EU2020's predecessor, the Lisbon strategy and firstly takes into account the discussion on Lisbon's main governance tool and its perceived legitimacy deficiency. Paragraph 3.1 outlines the results regarding stakeholders' involvement within Lisbon's main governance tool, the OMC. It then proceeds with a paragraph on various theories on legitimacy in the political context. Paragraph 3.3 lays out the three logics (of access, influence and membership). Finally, paragraph 3.4 seeks to explain the various theories on stakeholders' strategies to reach their goals and paragraph 3.5 deals with the conceptualisation of the factors mentioned in this section and how they are put within the context of measuring support for the EU2020 strategy.

It has been since several years only academics shifted their attention to the Lisbon's Open Method of Co-ordination (hereinafter called OMC) and its legitimacy in order to bridge the legitimacy gap between the European Union (hereinafter called EU) and its member states' citizens and stakeholders. (Kröger, 2009, p. 5) as cited in Borrás and Conzelmann 2007; Büchs 2008; de la Porte and Nanz 2004; Friedrich 2006; Kröger 2007; Radulova 2007; Dawson in this issue). The (un)elected officials at both the EU and national level praised the novelty as a medicine to guarantee and increase EU's legitimacy and to mobilise a wide spectrum of stakeholders. Hence, it is without doubt that the large body of academic literature is premised on the concept of deliberative democracy.

It should be stressed that the majority of the authors focused on the active role by stakeholders within the OMC processes. Representation and accountability have been largely ignored by the respective academics. (Kröger, 2009, p. 5 as cited in Borrás and Conzelmann 2007; Kröger 2007; Nanz and Steffek 2005; Rudulova 2007 and Kröger 2007, 2008b).

Does the OMC fulfil its objective as a remedy to decrease EU's legitimacy gap?

The measurement of the activation of a wide range of stakeholders as a variable is a logical consequence of measuring the success of Lisbon's governance tool. This measurement can be derived from deliberative democracy. How is the OMC's legitimacy assessed by academics?

The answer is twofold. Despite the fact some scholars perceive the OMC's legitimacy as significant as it was able to activate stakeholders to deliberate on the member states' best practices and so on (Kröger, 2009, p. 6 as cited in Armstrong 2003; Hamel and Vanherke 2009; López-Santana, Vanherke in this issue), there are obviously more advocates who are substantially more pessimistic about the OMC's legitimacy promises. A large number of academics assessed the OMC as acting too much 'behind the curtains'. A major criticism is that it is even less transparent than hard law.

The OMC cannot fulfil its ideal as a deliberative mechanism, because it is mainly an elite project, where sub-national (social) actors, parliaments are left outside the deliberation process.

Furthermore, a significant working of accountability is not possible, because the professionals involved cannot be punished by anyone, last but not least because of the OMC's deficiency of openness. (Kröger, 2009, p. 5 as cited in Arrowsmith et al. 2004; Berghman and Okma 2002; de la Porte and Pochet 2003; de la Porte and Nanz 2004; Friedrich 2006; Goetschy 2004; Hemerijck 2004; Jacobsson and Vifell 2007; Kröger 2007, 2008a; Natali 2005, 2009; Papadopoulos 2005; Radaelli 2003; Smismans 2004, 2006; Vifell 2004; Wessels 2003, Dawson in this issue)

This widely acknowledged legitimacy deficiency can be perceived as a major shortcoming of legitimacy. Therefore, this is one of the reasons why the support for its successor, EU2020, is investigated by means of variables as derived from Scharpf's input legitimacy.

Below one can find a description of the stakeholders' involvement in the Lisbon era and it proceeds with theoretical assumptions on political entity's legitimacy.

This paragraph includes a discussion on the Lisbon strategy's (hereinafter called LS) input legitimacy. Below one can find a description of the major events. First of all, the LS is to be perceived as a governance framework. These architectures can be characterised as strategic, and with a focus on long periods enabling reaching formulated goals. These are overruling traditional policy areas, and the concentration is on increasing the output of the EU on a wide range of policy fields. The EU combines old and new forms of organisations, in order to overcome the complex puzzle of struggles present in the EU. Furthermore, they can imply a growing 'raison d'être' of the EU (in the case of the LS). Finally, it should attract a wide range of stakeholders to deal with a discourse on the measurements and processes to be implemented to reach the formulated goals (Borrás & Radaelli, 2011, page 464 as cited in Muller 1995) Let's turn to the input legitimacy of the EU as derived from the context of the LS, the predecessor of EU2020.

3.1.1 The origins

The 'raison d'être' of the Lisbon strategy is to be perceived as a reaction to the significant economic downturn, partly due to demographic changes on the European continent, and also to be able to compete with the strengths of the knowledge-based sectors in the United States. (Armstrong, Begg & Zeitlin, 2008, page 428-429) During the process, it appeared to be the case that the EU failed in responding adequately to the waves of globalisation and to incorporate a more structured response to the increasing pushes of competition. It is also regarded as an effort to re-inject the engine of the European economy by means of modifying the structures of governance but it appeared to have features showing a lack of coordination. There

are some scholars, who suggest the deficiencies of pure economic integration and pursue the idea of simultaneously handling of quality of investments and the use of market princes. (Armstrong et al, 2008, page 429) The answer that emphasises the Lisbon agenda is 'structural reform'. One of the characters is that it can create winners and losers. Hence, it results in a redistributive effect. It might also cause a delayed pay-off. Moreover, strategic performance growth is accepted as one of the main objectives of structural reform, as seen in terms of productivity and employment figures. The tools productivity and labour rate are microeconomic tools. Hence, there might not be a direct result in terms of growth or employment. However, not reacting to the economic downturn would mean an even more static economy, and result in a lagging position of the EU in the world, in times of deepening globalisation. The latter implies a high degree of input legitimacy. (Armstrong et al, 2008, page 429)

3.1.2 The process (Stakeholders' inclusion and accountability)

The LS is highly likely the most strategic initiative in the EU since the beginning of the new millennium. (Borrás & Radaelli, 2011, page 464 as cited in Begg 2007; Rodrigues 2003) Moreover, it features high-profile governance architectures since the existence of the EU politics. The LS kicked off in March 2000, and it comprised labour, social cohesion and competitiveness. The Summit, held in Gothenburg (Sweden) in June 2001, only complemented the goals with the will to be reaching the state of 'world leader in sustainable development'.

The LS comprised policy fields which enabled the European Commission to act according to the treaty, but there were also fields where the member states had full competencies. The LS sought to overcome this problem by means of the introduction of the aforementioned OMC (Borrás & Radaelli, 2011, page 464 as cited in Tholoniati 2010) It should be stressed that the LS was renewed in 2005, due to disappointing results until then.

In 2004 the Barroso Commission took office (right wing), and a high-level group, chaired by former Dutch prime-minister Wim Kok released the Agenda of 'Growth and Jobs'. The most crucial modification entailed a shift in the direction of formulating European Integrated Guidelines, its incorporation by means of three years-cycle's national reform programmes and the assessment of the improvements executed by cross-country and single-country monitoring. These changed procedures implied a crucial shift in the tasks of the European Commission, the Council and the member states. Moreover, a significant number of policy areas were integrated in the Community part in an added Lisbon programme. For example, policy reforms as regulatory modifications became 'Lisbonised'. (Borrás & Radaelli, 2011, page 464 as partly cited in Borrás 2009)

A major goal of the LS is to enhance governance by means of a more structured inclusion of national stakeholders and to increase the accountability of the member states' governments to their respective stakeholders. The sense of responsibility is found crucial but despite this conclusion, the LS played no major role in national political processes. Regarding the initial phase, Lundvall & Lorenz (2011, page 2) argued that the former prime-minister took more time than the European Commission did with the drafting of the EU2020 strategy, and consulted member states' governments and international professionals. Moreover, the major circumstances were different. The reason to pursue a common strategy in 2000 was underperforming economic member states, while the US was much better on these terms. The Lisbon agenda wanted to become the best on all aspects vital to a continent's country. (Lundvall & Lorenz, 2011, page 2)

3.1.3 2005 Evaluation and the stakeholders' inclusion

The evaluation halfway the process of the strategy in 2005 also indicated modifications in governance. This is characterised as a crucial improvement in the European integration process, which is to be applicable in policy fields that belong to the competences of the member states. One puts a lot of emphasis on the achievements to be reached by means of the OMC. The methodology used was founded on common guidelines, evaluation, and consultation (including a wide range of (sub)national actors). Up to 2005, the national plans had been sent to key civil

servants from the other member states for peer evaluation. After the evaluation, executed under the presidency of Wim Kok, the national plans needed to be sent to the European Commission. The core elements of the OMC are that member countries agree on non-committing targets and draft a regularly released national action plan which indicates policy plans to reach the formulated goals.

After that the European Commission has reviewed these plans it releases a publication of Joint Commission/Country reports. A framework of indicators is constructed in order to execute evaluation and, hence the major goal is to reach convergence in the direction of best practices. Lundvall & Lorenz, 2011, page 2)

3.2 On legitimacy

It is since a few years only that the legitimacy of international institutions and governance gained considerable interest in the academic world. Nevertheless, the national governments' legitimacy enjoys a wide range of academic attention which dates back to the ancient Greeks. The term legitimacy originates from the Latin expression *legitimus* and *lawful* is the exact meaning of it. (Schneller, 2010, p.1 as cited in Beetham 1998, 538)

First of all, the following paragraph deals with normative theories on legitimacy. It then proceeds with specific theories on legitimacy in the context of the EU.

3.2.1 National institutions' legitimacy

It is extremely complicated for theorists and other professionals to reach the goal of defining legitimacy in some sentences. The main questions which one is attempting to answer are:

- What factors provide the privilege to a government to govern over the ones which are the governed? (the nations' inhabitants);
- Which powers are executed in an adequate manner? (Schneller, 2010, p.1 as cited in Barnard 2002, 3)

As a consequence, legitimacy mainly focuses on the justification and consent of

the privilege of ruling and of the execution of power. Schneller, 2010, p.1 as cited in Flathmann 2007; de Búrca 1996)

When taking the debate on legitimacy into account one can distinguish between normative, and empirical, descriptive perspectives. Considering the normative perspective, it is possible to define legitimacy as the validity of a political entity (or its structures and arrangements) perceived from an objective view. There is a wide range of interpretations among professions that deal with legitimacy issues. For lawyers, the right to govern over others can be perceived as legitimacy 'where its acquisition and execution' is in line with constitutionalised law. In this perspective, normative legitimacy is in line with legality. Scholars in the fields of political and moral philosophy power can be perceived legitimate 'where the rules governing' are acceptable when taking rational promoting normative standards into account. When considering empirical legitimacy it mainly concerns societal consent of a standard or a government. Nevertheless, the multiple answers to empirical legitimacy are highly contested. (Schneller, 2010, p.1 as cited in Beetham 1991, 4; Beetham 1991, 5; Herwig and Hüller 2008, 231 and Cheneval 2005; Zürn, 2004).

For the majority of modern constitutional systems, a government and the measures it takes are to be perceived legitimate if the arrangements and compromises entered into force with respect to all democratic standards. (Schneller, 2010, p.2 as cited in e.g. Fierlbeck 1998, especially at 201)

Legitimacy indicates that it contains legitimating elements while the legitimization itself is reached by means of activities or various stages in policy-making processes that legitimate certain elements. (Zürn, 2011, p. 66 as cited in Nullmeier et al, Kap 1) Legitimation is also obtained with the help of deliberative processes in the context of legitimization. (Zürn, 2011, p. 66) In the viewpoint of Easton, there is only access to gaining legitimacy if there is congruence in common values drives the citizenry and groups in the direction of evaluation criteria. These common values are able to neglect the personal and groups' interests. As a consequence legitimacy can be achieved by means of the adequacy of an entities' action plan. (Gilley, 2006, p. 502 as cited in Easton 1965: 312–319).

When taking Weber's theory into account one can conclude that if a nation or supranational institution is built and fulfils its activities on the grounds of acknowledged principles, and it can count a significant degree of consent among its crucial stakeholders. Then it can be perceived as legitimate. Collective binding conditions and arrangements are founded are crucial parts to legitimate entities when they are founded on common beliefs concerning for example public interests as well as parts of systematic fairness.

It is not the question if an organisation can enjoy direct consent among the social stakeholders but rather the question the core activities of a nation or entity correspond with the normative core principles which are shared among a community or group, which will be incorporated within an organisation or entity: **“a given power relationship is not legitimate because people believe in its legitimacy, but because it can be justified in terms of their beliefs** (Zürn, 2011, p. 66 as cited in Beetham, 1991, s. 11)

Hence it is not exceptional that scholars of legitimacy raise doubts about the legitimacy of the international institutions such as the World Trade Organisation. One of the crucial subjects whether these international organisations are to be held accountable in order to legitimise themselves to a certain *demos* or its members. (Schneller, 2010, p.2 as cited in see e.g. Moravcsik 2004) A *demos*, the idea of the citizenry, fairness in providing human rights and a representation system of interests do all belong to a specific country.

3.2.2 International institutions'/ governance's legitimacy

This part deals with the various concepts or visions that exist in the academic literature on the transnational institutions' legitimacy. The theories approached are: gradualist, transformationalist, and more recent visions on input, throughput and output legitimacy.

- ***Gradualist approach***

Advocates of the gradualist approach perceive democracy at the supranational level indicates a quasi-identical normative architecture of a nation state's democracy. (Schneller, 2010, p.2 as cited in Bohman, 2005)

- ***Transformationalist approach***

In the perspective of transformationalists one perceived the shift of democracy to a higher level than the nation state which took place when the representative democracy was born in the early stages of the city-state. Schneller, 2010, p.2 as cited in Held, McGrew, and Perraton 1999; see also Bohman 2005).

A major issue on the discussion of democratic legitimacy is whether democracy is able to have a significant 'life' without a *demos*. Advocates in the field of the gradualist approach democracy without a *demos* is not highly likely to have a fruitful existence and one neglects the alternatives for democratic legitimacy at the supranational level. In the explanation to support this thesis they state that there is not only a necessity of common values, but also of shared experiences in order to enable the citizenry to have a feeling of attachment with the political system which they are part of, and can rely on the democratic arrangements as laid out in the constitution and the results stemming from it. (Schneller, 2010, p.2 as cited in Arblaster 2002; for more references see e.g. Bodansky 1999; see also Zürn 2000)

Put bluntly, a *demos* postulates a 'guarantor of collective identity'.

This is one of the core argumentations why Dahl is proponent of the view that international organisations are not in the position to be democratically legitimised. Zürn is in favour of disaggregating the definition *demos*. According to this scholar *demos* can be divided into five elements:

The recognition of every single individual and the prerogatives to develop themselves in line with their own wishes, confidence, public sphere, public discussions and solidarity (Schneller, 2010, p.2 as cited in Zürn 2000 196-199) He advocates the vision that 'democratic process beyond the nation-state should not be

managed as an unalterable matter of principle until all parts of a *demos* are completed in terms of matureness.

According to Bohman and others democracy higher than the level of a nation-state is urged to complete a modification of the political subject from *demos* to *demoi*. They support this viewpoint by stating that the nation-state level is too crucial to be neglected. It is not a matter of how supranational democracy can take the place of nation-state level of democracy but rather how it can complement the national level as a differentiated type of democracy. Schneller, 2010, p.2 as cited in Bohman 2005; see also Cheneval 2005; Cheneval 2006 and Nicolaidis 2003). An essential part of a *demoi*-cracy would be the republican perspective of freedom non-domination. The most optimal form of non-domination would have to fulfil the condition all citizens have the possibility to fully obtain the prerogatives to participate in legal exercises of authority over them'. (Schneller, 2010, p.2 as cited in Bohman 2004)

As one can see above there are various strands in the literature on legitimacy. It can also be divided in terms of EU's governance's legitimacy and the EU's democratic quality and to what extent it delivers positive results towards common goods on the other hand. The subject of EU's legitimacy or its deficiencies has been a hot issue in the academic world since the beginning of the 1990s. (Schmidt, 2012, p. 2) The following paragraph deals with the meaning of Scharpf's input and output legitimacy.

3.2.2.1 Input and output legitimacy

The division between input and output legitimacy originates from Fritz Scharpf. The two dimensions are founded on normative premises and are derived from Abraham Lincoln's expression about democracy setting a condition for government by the people and (political participation and in terms of stakeholders' participation), of the people and stakeholders (citizens and stakeholders representation) and for the citizens and stakeholders (the results achieved by the government are good all groups in society). Scharpf's theory can be traced back to Easton (1965) and indicates input legitimacy as the extent of incorporation of the

inhabitant's conditions and support (not only reached by means of elections), but also derived from public's identity and feeling of system legitimacy. Output legitimacy means the quality of government agreements and efforts is satisfying the needs of a wide range of groups in society. (Schmidt, 2012, p. 4)

- **Input legitimacy**

As a consequence, as part of input legitimacy, public officials and governing bodies (also groups being) part should be forced to be accountable to all groups and citizens who are affected by its decisions (internal and external accountability).

One of the conditions to reach input legitimacy in a political unit is that it should take into account the direct involvement of all subjects which are directly part of the decision and its consequences. This task can also be fulfilled by their respective representatives in the decision-making process. Nevertheless, this condition is highly unlikely to reach its goal in large political systems, such as the EU. According to the author, the frequently used method of majority voting is also a large threat to the rights of minorities. This threat can be vulnerable in case there is a thick *demos*, and one can rely on the fact that other groups will not do any wrongdoing towards specific minorities. The representing function can be part of the deliberative turn in European democracy. (Godowska, 2011, p. 183)

Last but not least, input legitimacy implies that a substantive part of the subject's and stakeholders' choices are incorporated into the final agreements by a particular Government or political systems authority (e.g. EU).

- The responsibility that public authorities have to explain their activities (what went well and what went wrong) is one of the primary elements that create input legitimacy. Despite this, this should not be confused with the term 'democracy'. The fact that public authorities are accountable to the ones they have to explain their activities, does not directly indicate an inclusion participating stakeholders which are affected by the agreed laws and regulations. (Zürn, 2011, p. 610 as cited in (vgl. z.(B. Grant u. Keohane 2005)). It only implies the decision-makers responsible for their actions (both in judicial and electoral terms)

- There are two possibilities in an entity to enable the fairness of influencing policies by crucial stakeholders: either in an indirect manner (representative in terms of either functional or territorial). In the institutional constellation representation and the deliberative mechanisms can be multiple and remarkable. The rights that stakeholders have are a crucial part of the democratic principle. All parties involved should have the possibility to contribute to the discussions on the drafting of the policy proposals. (Zürn, 2011, p. 610 as cited in Dahl 1989).

One of the trends regarding political legitimation is the extension of the international political authority. The international institutions' political legitimacy cannot be traced back to the deliberative contribution of the directly involved (social) stakeholders, but rather do have options for consultation. International institutions are not known for their openness towards directly affected stakeholders. The European Parliament is the only international institution which is elected by its citizens. (Zürn, 2011, p. 611)

- **Output legitimacy**

At the end of the decision-making tunnel one is in the position to evaluate the political system's agreements as legitimate or not, because they contribute to the common prosperity of every group (of citizens) in the respective political system. Output legitimacy is reached when the highest authorities of a political system are able to find solutions which are positively tackling the issues at stake in that specific political system and that these authorities react to the preferences of its subjects. (Godowska, 2011, p. 183)

Scharpf advocates the viewpoint that these visions can exist positively alongside each other, but that this is only the case for nations. This viewpoint is not likely to be reached in the case of the EU. Scharpf states that the member states' citizens are that heterogeneous in background (in all kinds of respects) that it is very hard to realise a 'thick' identity or a European demos. Rather, it should focus on continuously reaching its goal of output legitimate decisions. Scharpf is sceptical because of argumentation:

- Deficiencies in collective identity;

- No considerable European-wide policy discourses;
- No significant European-wide institutional architecture which enables citizens and groups decision-makers accountable for their actions.

As S. Saurugger suggests the EU has struggles in dealing with '*government with the people*', but reaches its legitimacy by means of governance for the people, e.g. effective policy-making for the member states' subjects. Scharpf continues its claim with stating that the EU's output legitimacy would be enhanced if it would found a system of policy networks, developing standards for a wide discussion on policy results. A standard of input legitimacy would lead to a better output legitimacy result.

J. Greenwood states that the EU, with its character of a multi-level governance system, has shortcomings in the public sphere to ensure equal opportunities of contribution towards to the decision-making process, large political parties, EU covering media, a decision-making system that is easily to follow by its citizenry, and possibilities for the voters to remove a government by means of elections. Nevertheless, the incorporation of 'civil society' can imply a higher degree of participation quality (input legitimacy) for its respective members. Interest groups are a chain in the process with the goal communicating their wishes to the EU and can also serve as tool to communicate the EU's activities to the approximately 500 million citizens. (Godowska, 2011, p. 183-185)

A broad range of theorists (both constructivist as well as institutional) do have more reservations, more than Scharpf, towards EU's possibilities to reach input legitimacy. Institutional advocates concentrate on the EU's 'majority-character' institutions and the influence of the citizenry choices preferably by means of elections (Schmidt, 2010, p. 5 as cited in e.g. Hix 2008; Mair, 2006). Nevertheless, there are nowadays also theorists who focus on the potential role of interest groups and networks. Advocates of the constructivist premise the communication procedures at stake in election times and other methods of diverse deliberation with the target groups and civil society and how these process (whether or not) might enhance to the framework of collective identity and/or the construction of political will in a European 'public space'. (Schmidt, 2010, p. 5 as cited in e.g. Lucarelli et al., 2011; Risse, 2010, pp. 127-57; Steffek, 2003, Zürn 2000)

3.2.2.2 Throughput legitimacy

According to Schmidt (2010, p. 5) Scharpf's input and output legitimacy misses one element: a comprehensive theory on the activities what goes on in the 'magic box' of governance, and will be labelled 'throughput legitimacy'. Throughput legitimacy focuses on what happens in the 'magic box' of EU governance, the area between the political input and the results stemming from it. According to the author it was widely ignored by theorists on the political systems' legitimacy discourse. It concentrates on the value of the decision-making process of the EU as a manner to introduce a new kind of normative legitimacy. Throughput is concentrated on processes and premised on the communication processes (institutional and constructive) of all stakeholders committed to EU governance. (Schmidt, 2010, p. 5)

3.2.3 Why measuring EU2020's degree of support by aspects of Scharpf's input legitimacy?

Scharpf's input and output legitimacy is widely acknowledged and applied in the academic world studying EU's potentials or lack thereof for legitimacy. Despite the fact that this theory is mainly premised on political systems (nation states, EU and so on), the input legitimacy's crucial aspects (external) accountability of the EU institutions, extent of incorporation of sub-national stakeholders' preferences into the EU2020 strategy and the degree of participation possibilities can be applied as crucial aspects measuring these groups' support for the renewed Lisbon strategy. Sub-national stakeholders cannot hold the EU institutions accountable as the EU's citizens can only withdraw MEPs. (e.g. elections to punish or approve elected official's actions. Nevertheless, the EC states that all sectors in society are needed. Hence, support of these respective groups is crucial. (Keohane, n.d., p. 19) Finally, the legitimacy deficit of the EU institutions receives more critical evaluations among a wide range of academics and citizens, and will be hence the focus of this comparative case study. The focus will only be on aspects of input legitimacy, because the EU2020 strategy is not finished yet and cannot be evaluated yet (output legitimacy). The sub-national actors do not directly form a *demos*, but they can promote the formation of a sui generis *demos* in case they have a feeling of attachment towards EU's ideals, instead of taking the functional benefits (i.e.

financial benefits) only. Moreover, they can increase deliberation on EU's policies by means of the sub-national actors' membership of a EU wide umbrella organisation.

3.3 The three logics: of access, influence and membership

This paragraph seeks to describe three logics that can influence the position of subnational stakeholders regarding their support for EU policies and strategies.

3.3.1 Logic of access

According to Bouwen (2003, p. 6) business issues deliver data, called 'access goods' to the European Institutions. In exchange, the European institutions open the doors to enable the business groups putting their preferences on the tables of the policy-makers. An example is expert knowledge. These figures are desired by the respective institutions in order to be able to deal with the European market. Furthermore, there is a connection between specific access goods and the input and output legitimacy of EU policies. According to Bouwen (2003, p. 8) input legitimacy is closely related to data concerning the European encompassing issue and the national encompassing issue. These respective goods provide input legitimacy because they deliver data regarding the encompassing and representative issues. Output legitimacy is connected with expert knowledge. The more encompassing the access goods delivered by interest associations are, the higher the chance that groups see their preferences incorporated in EU policies. There are several possibilities to determine a company's or association's level of influence. For example single enterprises with a national strategy are not an appropriate manner to exert a high level upon EU policies

3.3.2 Logic of membership and influence

Another theoretical perspective that can be of crucial importance is the logic of membership. It implies that for example companies, such as SMEs, have the prerogative to become member of their respective national associations. This is a consequence of a need for such type of association and the members are eager to

contribute to feed the financial engine of the umbrella organisations. More significant in determining the support for specific policies is the logic of collective action. This implies that the one of the functions is to act as 'one voice' towards political institutions. The umbrella organisation possibly is more powerful than would be the case if companies would act by themselves. (Bennett, 2010, p. 18) According to (Beer de, 2011, p. 11) the other logic is the logic of influence and is also designed by the German sociologists Streeck and Schmitter. The logic of influence indicates the position of the associations towards the political institutions. The Dutch labour unions are traditionally in good contacts with the Dutch government, the so-called 'Poldermodel'. This 'model of deliberation' tends to concentrate on 'logic of influence'. Nevertheless, the EU is characterized by a high degree of fragmented interest representation. Hence, the focus of Dutch associations is on defending the members' interests in 'Brussels'.

3.4 Stakeholders' strategies

There is agreement among theorists of democracy that the main goal of democracy is streamlining the political institutions of the political structure at stake. Despite this, the respective theorists make significantly different choices in what they perceive important towards the relation of those institutions in the direction of the citizenry.

Liberals for example, favour aspects of freedom and the fundamental rights moreover they prioritise constitutionalism, checks and balances, judicial control and division of powers. The ultimate goal of the last element is to decrease populist trends in society. The major democratic body is the Government itself and its main function is to defend human rights and the freedoms (such as freedom of speech) of the inhabitants. On the contrary, participatory democracy focuses on the incorporation of stakeholders into the decision-making process. Advocates of participatory democracy seek to stimulate the active participation of inhabitants. One main characteristic of deliberative democracy is that both the governing parties as well as the citizenry do play a crucial role in the decision-making process

The public sphere, as theorised by Mr. Habermas, is a space in society where stakeholders can exchange ideas and proposals without any kind of limiting aspect of freedom. It is the area where civil society comes together and discusses and brainstorms concerning each other's ideas and best practices. According to Habermas, civil society is the 'social construction of independent stakeholders' who are involved in the procedure of informal position formulation. Those respective positions are communicated towards the targeted institutions in a formal way. Furthermore, social democrats advocate a democratic system whereby all aspects of the citizenry are included into the decision-making process. Some theorists are proponents of 'universal democratisation' which includes Higher Education Institutions, Media institutions, (primary as well as secondary) schools and religious organisations.

As a major conclusion one can say that civil society-centred strategists communicate a different approach, namely the involvement of inhabitants within the decision-making process as opposed to after the political institutions have played their part. Moreover, the citizenry active in the decision making-process have the characteristic that they are well-informed people and are also willing to act in a society where people can learn from each other. (Kohler-Koch & Berthold Bitberger, 2007, 14-15) There are also significant differences regarding how theorists of democracy perceive procedures as being crucial towards the incorporation of public interests into the decision-making process at the institutional level. These differences can be traced back to the position of inhabitants prior to the decision-making process and whether they were incorporated into the decision-making process. In the context of liberalists, one perceives electoral systems as appropriate if they are adapted to the context-specific situation. For example, majority-based voting is suitable for societies based on homogeneous grounds, supermajority arrangements and consensus-based systems are more appropriate for highly fragmented societies.

On the contrary advocates of the republic theory and deliberative democracy are proponents of a different starting point. The proposals of the social stakeholders are not definitively determined but rather changeable within the political procedure. Political strategies and proposals are described and rewritten in a deliberative manner. Despite the fact voting for candidates is recognised as a translation of popular will in

large societies, it does not occupy a crucial position in this school of advocates. . (Kohler-Koch & Berthold Bitberger, 2007, page 15) Major contributions of theories concerning democracy incorporate political contribution as a main theme of their theory. In this case, one element is crucial as a standard for participation: government by the citizenry. Despite this, contribution is evaluated by different criteria. The discrepancies can be brought back to the basic rule of whether one perceives active participation to reach certain goals or as a mechanism to incorporate stakeholders within the decision-making process. A particular strand in the literature is the instrumental one; it indicates that participation occupies an essential position to increase the likeability of achieving legitimate policies and to realise a political system which can be perceived as stable. Advocates of the liberal tradition perceive incorporation of stakeholders as being used adverting officials of oppressing the popular will of the people by popular judgement. Scholars in the 'popular' school of thought are keen on pursuing the participation of stakeholders as a means to get a clear overview of which preferences are genuine among stakeholders. The schools of thought which focus on the intrinsic characters do not raise questions concerning the instrumental attributes.

Rational choice and realism

Despite the fact that not all realists have become part of the notorious trend of pessimism, they agree with the strand of rational choice that the selfish activities and proposed ideals of social stakeholders which they produce on an instrumental basis are the foundation of all social activities. **“Whenever we speak of rational behaviour, we always mean rational behaviour directed primarily towards selfish ends”**. Advocates March and Olsen pursue a theory of ‘logic of consequentialism’: Social stakeholders produce rational proposals in the line of a variety of possibilities by ranking the possibility of results stemming from them (in the context that all stakeholders do the same) in neutral social circumstances, stakeholders pursue a strategic method of working with the result to reach their most favourable There exists a variety of literature in the field of rationalism. The focus on the selfish direction of social stakeholders is directed towards containment-seeking to competence-seeking, to welfare-realising activities. According to rational choice-theory the incorporation of proposed ideas goes mainly via the democratic rule of voting and negotiation systems. The efficiency results and distributive consequences are major parameters in order to measure the quality and legitimacy of a certain

polity. (Kohler-Koch & Berthold Bitberger, 2007, 17-18) One of the methods for theorists of democracy is to measure negotiation systems by the Pareto-efficiency (equal distribution of effects) or the Kaldor principle which stipulates that legislation by the government are likely to reach acceptance as one can finally calculate more surpluses than negative results on the side of the 'losers' of the battle. (Kohler-Koch & Berthold Bitberger, 2007, 18)

Idealism and Social Constructivism

Other advocates in the strand of Idealism and Social Constructivism are Fearon and Wendt (who are Constructivists) are keen on finding patterns in the socially founded characteristics of agents and principles. It implies that the favoured proposals and interests are crucial in social activities. The abovementioned rational choice-model is perceived as a part of the puzzle, but not as the complete story; it does not touch the educative role of institutions. Social activities are in any case a tool of the image or restyling of a specific social circumstance as well as the capability of social stakeholders to evaluate processes and to adapt their experiences to new situations. Democratic theorists of deliberation and discursion advocate these principles and ideas as well. They perceive will formation as a trajectory in which the citizenry are involved in communication activities (Habermas). This indicates that the goal of the inhabitant's involvement is purely for reaching common acceptance of the new legislation instead of reaching formulated goals (rationalists).

3.5 Conceptualisation in the context of support for the EU2020 strategy

This paragraph seeks to explain the relationship between the theories laid out above and the questions asked in order to determine the degree of support for the EU2020 strategy among sub-national actors in the Dutch provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel.

The structured interviews allow the researcher to gain both qualitative and quantitative data. The interview consists of 52 questions were divided into the following categories:

General

This section asks questions about the general stakeholders' attitude towards the EU. Do they support the ideals of the EU (attachment) or is it solely support, because of its potential to receive financial means or, on the contrary, too high costs stemming from EU's membership)? The subnational stakeholders cannot constitute a so-called 'demos' as being a perquisite to establish a sustainable degree of input legitimacy of the 'sui generis animal' EU. (McLaren, 2002, pp. 553-554) Furthermore, the extent of contacts the stakeholders with the major European institutions, e.g. European Commission, European Parliament, and European Council, Council of the European Union (via the national ministerial line) were investigated. The extent of contacts with the aforementioned institutions might have an influence on the degree of support for the current strategy. The same goes for the level of contacts with national members of parliament. The contacts can be a variable to measure the degree of (external) accountability the respective (European institutions) take. The two logics of influence and access are at stake here. The former implies the formal position of stakeholders in the decision-making process. For example, a specific membership of a European umbrella interest group might have an institutionalised position to be consulted by the European Commission. This aspect might lead to a significant higher or lower degree of input legitimacy. The latter relates to businesses data, which are of a considerable value for the European Commission, in order to premise their policies upon. Instead policy-makers open their doors to enable stakeholders to put their preferences on the table. Does this automatically lead to a higher degree of support? Finally, as the master thesis is about the sub-national stakeholders' support also the related provinces' strategies in the context of EU2020 are evaluated. The strategies stakeholders can pursue might indirectly have an influence on all these aspects, and indirectly, determine the degree of support.

Performing degree of COORs' and EESC's EU2020's committees (logic of influence and membership, strategies) (and RegioNetwork 2020)

The Committee of the Region (hereinafter called COOR) is an institutionalised consultative body in order provide the Commission with its consultations on policies related to local and regional authorities. It is part of the Commission's task to consult the Committee. (logic of influence and membership). Its EU2020 Monitoring Platform was established in order to bridge the gap between cities and regions to

influence the EU policy-making process in the context of EU2020 from the beginning until the very end. Furthermore, it continuously evaluates the active contribution of its target group in the decision-making process at the EU-level. (Committee of the Region, n.d., par. 1-8) The same goes for the European Economic and Social Committee (hereinafter called EESC) which claims on its website that it is positively approaching European integration. Its Europe 2020 steering committee works closely together with the European Commission seeking to promote their members' interests towards EU2020. Moreover, it seeks to enhance and sustain the responsibility taken by civil society. Questions are asked about the role and functioning of EESC's steering committee. (European Economic and Social Committee, n.d. par. 1-8) The Regional Network 2020 is an online deliberation forum for local and regional authorities with a prime interest in regional policy. Other stakeholders are also invited. What is their opinion on the working of this forum? All these types of question relates to Scharp's aspect of participatory quality of decision making (in the context of stakeholders). It proceeds with questions on the consultation session organised by the European Commission.

Consultation session & accountability

Concerning the consultation sessions organised by the European Commission, one is asked whether there is a certain extent of participation in the Commission's consultation sessions. Also, the period of EU2020's consultation session is evaluated and how one thinks of the participation possibilities by citizens and third countries. Last but not least, the seemingly 'equal' positions of the investigated provinces are approached. The (external and internal) accountability of the most prominent EU institutions is also a prominent aspect of Scharp's input legitimacy.

Satisfaction with EU2020 in general and specific targets and flagships

Generally, the section begins with the stakeholders' opinion on the EU2020 as possible answer to solve the current crisis the EU finds itself in. Also the period of the strategy is evaluated as well as the translation into national targets. More specifically, a comparative study is conducted whether the subnational stakeholders' preferences are incorporated into the formulated (EU and national) targets and the 7 corresponding flagship initiatives.

Finally, the effective use of EU's financial resources, the assessment of the Dutch "Topsectorenbeleid" and possible improvements towards the EU2020 strategy are of

crucial importance measuring EU2020's support and EU's input legitimacy in an indirect manner.

3.6 Conclusion

This section described crucial factors which could be of significance in measuring the degree of support for strategies (outlined in section 2). Moreover, it includes an analysis of Scharpf's input legitimacy. Factors explaining this theory are used in order to measure the degree of support. The following section proceeds with the case selection and research methodology applied within this research.

4 Case selection and research methodology

This section deals with the reasons why the respective cases have been selected and which research methodology was chosen in order to investigate the support for the EU2020 strategy among stakeholders. Paragraph 4.1 lays out the case selection within the context of measuring support for the EU2020 strategy, it also provides a division of interview partners in categories and divided among the two cases.

Paragraph 4.2 proceeds with an analysis of the applied research methodology.

Paragraphs 4.3 explains the external and construct validity, and reliability in detail.

4.1 Case selection

In order to measure the support for the EU2020 strategy, the formulated goals in the fields of R&D, labour participation, poverty reduction, enhancement of the consumption of sustainable energy resources and the respective flagship initiatives (European Commission, 2010, par. 3m) are subject to investigation as to whether the crucial sub-national stakeholders agree upon these targets or not and how they perceive the degree of accountability of the respective European institutions and bodies.

4.1.1 Selection of Dutch provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel

The selection of the two provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel is done for two reasons. First of all, both provinces are situated outside the economic engine of the Netherlands, e.g. Randstad. Finally, two of the technical universities (which are part of the 3TU are located in the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel (3TU, n.d., par 1b). There are also major discrepancies. As a province Noord-Brabant has been selected, because the highest level of innovation takes place in this province compared to other provinces in the Netherlands (for example: highest level of patent requests). Moreover, the province of Overijssel is selected because the city of Enschede has a long history of the highest unemployment rates of the Netherlands. Are there discrepancies between the two provinces? Are there similarities that are perceived important? (Nu, 2010, para 1; Benneworth, P, Hospers, G.J, &

Jongbloed, B, 2006, n.pc.) Why is this crucial towards investigating the support for the EU2020 strategy? Firstly, the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel do not belong to the economic engine of the Netherlands, i.e. the Randstad. What does this mean for the support of, for example, the labour target or the target on the educational level of EU citizens? Furthermore the crucial function of Eindhoven region towards innovation is also interesting to do research upon whether there are significant discrepancies in the respective targets and policy areas. Paragraph 4.1.3 deals with the socio-economic indicators of the respective provinces.

4.1.2 Division of interview partners

In total, 21 interviews were held with local and regional authorities (cities and so-called cooperating regions with a + -status, innovation and regional economics-based organisations (such as innovation-stimulating organisations), interest groups (including Civil Society), and HEI's. Below one can find of scheme of the number of interviewed stakeholders per province.

	Dutch province of Noord-Brabant	Dutch province of Overijssel
Local and regional authorities	2	2
HEI's	3	3
Innovation and regional economics-based organisations	4	4
Separate (advisory bodies to the province)	1	
Interest groups (also Civil Society)	2	1

Please note: due to the fact that one organisation is only active at the national level, this one is counted for both provinces. Hence, one can count 22 interview partners.

Table 2: Participants per province and category.

4.1.3 Socio-economic indicators

The paragraph below provides socio-economic indicators of the investigated Dutch provinces such as unemployment rates and economic growth.

	Province of Overijssel	Province of Noord-Brabant
Number of inhabitants	1.137.668 (on 1 January 2012)	2.463.686 (on 1 September 2012)
Provincial share towards GDP (GRP)	35 billion euros.	87,9 billion euros
Unemployment rates	Around 7%, Enschede highest of all cities in the Netherlands.	6,3% (expected for 2013)
Economic growth (2011)	2011: 1,9%, 2012: -1,5%	Nr. 1 in top 3 list (2011), -1,5% (2012)
Expenditure in R&D	80% of the total share takes place in the region of Twente. (no percentage known)	2,39% of the GDP

Table 3: List of relevant socio-economic indicators relevant to this study

(ING, 2013, n.p., Neth-ER, 2012, par. 2; Provincie Overijssel; Provincie Noord-Brabant)

The machinery industry, which is strongly represented in Twente, averts a significant downturn of the economic growth in the province of Overijssel.

4.2 Research methodology: exploratory comparative case study

Following the theory of Eisenhardt (1989) the research method case study can be explained as follows: ‘a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings.’ (pp. 534). Because there has not been as much research done on the support for EU-wide strategies among sub-national stakeholders, a comparative case study of an exploratory nature is the most appropriate method to use for this subject between the Dutch provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel.

However, the number of interview partners might be too limited in order to enable the researcher formulating hypotheses and research questions. (“Design of the Study and Case selection”, n.d, p. 41 as cited in Yin 2003a) for further research. Nevertheless, research questions are a prerequisite in order to execute a coherent master thesis. Moreover, because of the specific nature of the selected cases one has to be careful in terms of the generalisation of the outcomes with similar looking regions or provinces in other countries. Nevertheless, because of the highly innovative characters of specific regions (Twente and Zuid-Oost Brabant) in both provinces it is crucial whether the respective stakeholders do agree upon the formulated goals and thus to be willing working on the realisation of the EU-wide strategy. For example, do these provinces prioritise innovation-related targets of the current strategy? (Nu, 2010, para 1; Bennenworth, P, Hospers, G.J, & Jongbloed, B, 2006, n.p.)

Furthermore, the case study approach is appropriate for research with the aim to find explanations for ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions. (“Design of the Study and Case selection”, n.d., p. 41b) Case studies are frequently perceived as being inherent with research of a qualitative and ‘soft’ nature. Despite this, it is not a crucial condition that case studies are of a purely qualitative nature. The structured interviews held within this master thesis are both qualitative and quantitative of nature. The focus is on finding patterns stemming from these results. Interview partners were asked to tick the box at the appropriate level of a scale, and were in the condition to provide a more detailed explanation supporting the answer.

As mentioned above, the current EU2020 strategy is the subject under investigation in this master thesis. It consists of a number of headline targets formulated at the EU and national level. All divided categories do have their specific tasks regarding the headline targets and flagship initiatives i.e. local and regional authorities in the field of the fight against poverty.

4.2.1 Primary sources

In order to enable the researcher to measure the degree of support among stakeholders in both provinces there were held structured interviews (between spring and the end of autumn 2012), consisting of approximately 50 questions concerning the intensity of contacts with the respective European institutions and both provincial and national authorities. Furthermore, the degree of accountability of these institutions, as well as the evaluation of the provincial strategies towards the EU2020 strategy.

Thanks to the very broad covering of policy areas in the strategy and the fixed roles for the respective European institutions, one is able to give indication for the contribution towards the EU's input legitimacy. Moreover, one was asked how they evaluate the formulated targets at the EU and national level and how they perceive the designed flagship initiatives. Furthermore, the interviewed stakeholders were asked whether they perceive all involved organisations doing enough in order to realise the defined targets. Moreover, official documents from the EU were consulted in order to answer the descriptive question on the content of the EU2020 strategy. The character of the correspondents can be divided into the following categories:

- Local and regional authorities (cities and cooperation regions);
 - Innovation and regional economics-based organisations (for example: technical companies);
 - Interest groups (also Civil Society);
 - Separate (advisory bodies to the province);
 - Higher Education Institutions (Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences).
- The division of these categories was possible only after a sufficient number of interview partners agreed with participating in the interview sessions. The topics of

the interview might be perceived as highly sensitive information within the respective organisations such as data concerning the lobby strategies. According to Yin (2003) applying the case study research method is appropriate if the interview partners cannot be manipulated like for example is the case with experiments. (“Design of the Study and Case selection”, n.d, ,p. 41 as cited in Yin 2003) Furthermore, one has to take specific contexts into account within the cases such as the various contacts stakeholders have with the respective authorities. These are also derived from European Union documents (primary). Also, secondary sources are used, such as academic articles, and academic books.

4.2.2 Purposive sampling

Because the respective stakeholders are involved in the targets they are dealing with, the technique of purposive sampling is used in order to increase the adequacy of measuring the support regarding the EU2020 strategy. For example, stakeholders dealing specifically with innovation are perceived more important concerning the target of innovation and the flagship Innovation Union. The secondary sources consist of academic articles in journals, academic and European Union documents in order to complete the literature review (existing research on the topic of the master thesis), and the theoretical part (description of the EU2020 strategy and the literature on Scharpf's input legitimacy).

The table can be found in the attachment.

4.3 External and construct validity and reliability of the comparative case study

According to Thies & Volland (2010, p. 3 as cited in Benbasat et al. 1987a) one of the key positive features of case studies is that it is embedded in real-life circumstances. In this master thesis the support for the current EU2020 is under investigation. One of the negative characteristics of the comparative case study is the limited number of cases in the investigation (which are divided into the abovementioned categories). Construct validity indicates the way the empirical part has been brought into practice. This was done by means of linking the responsible organisations to the formulated headline targets and flagship initiative in order to be

able measuring the support for EU2020 and hence, indirectly the EU's input legitimacy. By means of the structured interviews and the literature review the researcher applied a (investigator triangulation) in order to increase the case studies construct validity. Questions were raised about the degree of accountability of the respective European institutions and whether the stakeholder's preferences are incorporated in the strategy. These are parts of the theory on Scharpf's input legitimacy. The well-constructed relation between variables and outcomes guarantees a significant construct validity of this case study. The selection of the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel allows the researcher or others to continue focusing on other regions measuring the support for the respective headline targets and flagship initiatives. This implies external validity. The reliability of this case study was enhanced by means of enabling the interview partners reviewing the summarised interviews approving the answers they have provided to the questions. Moreover, the research framework and the goal of the research were clear from the beginning of the investigation. (Thies & Volland, 2010, p. 3 as cited in Yin 2003; Eisenhardt 1989b) The internal validity is not at stake, because the case study is exploratory of nature.

4.4 Conclusion

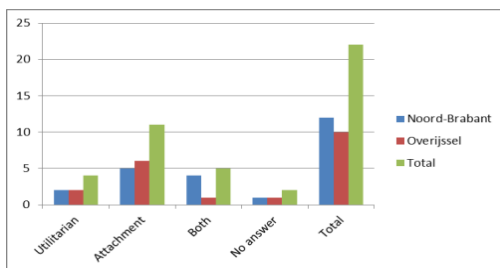
This section described the main factors for the selection of both cases in order to measure the support for the current EU-strategy. Moreover, it outlined the research methodology applied and what threats to validity and reliability might occur. The following section outlines the extent of support among crucial subnational stakeholders within the selected cases.

5 Support for the EU2020 strategy among stakeholders

This section provides an analysis of the answers provided by the sub-national stakeholders to the approximately 50 questions asked during the interview sessions. Each question will firstly discuss the results, and is followed by the implications for direct support regarding EU2020, and EU's input legitimacy in general an indirect manner. First of all, the results are outlined (and a description). Moreover, the implications for EU's input legitimacy are revealed.

- General

1 Does your organisation support the EU in general or its functional benefits?



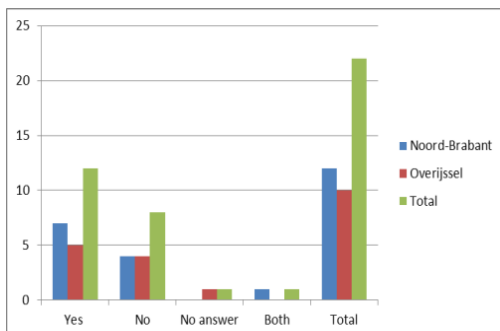
Implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

The interview partners which stated that they are attached to EU's ideals might launch a campaign in order to fulfil one of the conditions to create input legitimacy and gain support for the EU2020 strategy. Three civil society organisations did so. A national umbrella employer organisation, a retail association, and a horticultural and agricultural association started a campaign to promote the advantages of the EU. This might rise discussions among its and non-members, and hence, create a 'final' discourse. Also, it attracts media attention. (Joosten, 2012, par. 5)

Description of the results:

Concerning the support for the EU in general, one can conclude that more interview partners from Overijssel are attached to the EU's ideals, instead of the function of taking the benefits only. The utilitarian support for the EU is equally divided among both. More respondents from the province of Noord-Brabant indicated to be not being able choosing for one of them e.g. they chose both options.

2 Does your organisation make use of a lobbying strategy towards EU policies?



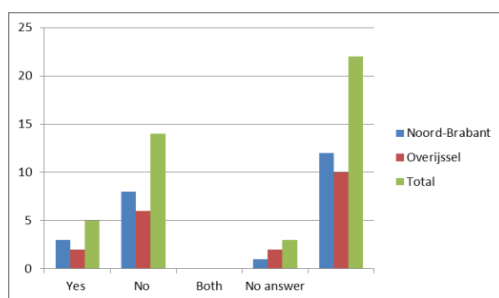
Description of the results:

There are more stakeholders that positively answered the question whether one makes use of a lobbying strategy towards EU policies. Nevertheless one has to conclude that many stakeholders work together with other institutions or organisations in order to combine lobby activities. There are more stakeholders from the province of Noord-Brabant than from the province of Overijssel which do have a lobby strategy towards EU policies. Despite this, it should be noted that there are more interview partners from the province of Noord-Brabant than from the province of Overijssel.

Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

It is stated in the literature that civil society organisations organised in a European umbrella association, can increase input legitimacy; increase the likeability of constituting a 'demos' among its members and subsequently non-members. Stakeholders which are in the position to deliver business data to the Commission and Parliament might get a 'foot between the doors' in exchange; so-called 'logic of access'. It should be stressed that too few interview partners are representing business in order to measure the significance towards stakeholders' support for EU2020. The members of European associations 'sub-national stakeholders' and members of civil society-groups might have an impact on how the lobby strategy is executed and subsequently reaches the goal of 'indirect' input legitimacy.

3 Does your organisation make use of a specific lobby strategy towards EU institutions?



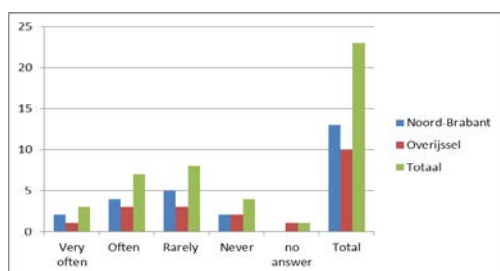
Description of the results:

One can conclude that a large majority of the interviewed stakeholders do not manage a specific lobby strategy towards EU institutions. This is the case for both provinces.

Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

One of the factors that might lead to the fact that sub-national stakeholders do not manage a lobby-strategy towards institutions (and policies) is the fact they are 'institutionalised' within the decision-making process i.e. logic of influence. This is especially the case for the COOR and the EESC (representing local and regional authorities and the economic and social organisations). The respective logic can be of significance towards subnational stakeholders' support regarding EU2020, because they have a likeable influence within these organisations. Moreover, their strategies might be adapted to reaching short-terms goals (policies) only, and not to long-term relationship management with the institutions. Logic of influence regarding national institutions is excluded. The influence on stakeholders' support by the 'logic of membership' is too complex to analyse. The interview partners might be member of a European umbrella association and it is not clear whether this organisation seeks to take 'collective action' in order to approach the respective European institutions to promote the proposal agreed by upon by its members. This is also the case for the participation in the open consultation session. The same goes for civil society organisations.

4 To what extent does your organisation have contact with Commission officials?

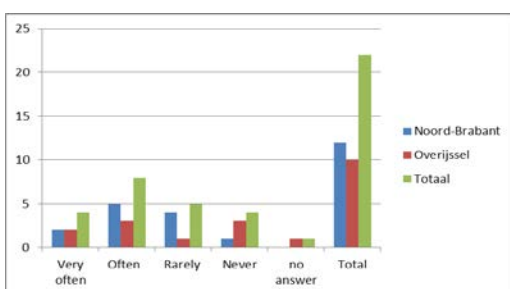


Description of the results:

Most stakeholders do have often or rarely contact with Commission officials. More stakeholders from Brabant can be found in the sections very often, often and rarely. One stakeholder from the business side stated that it has often contact with Commissioner Neelie Kroes and very often with Commission officials.

Please note: this interview section provides an analysis of the potential for input legitimacy after question 7.

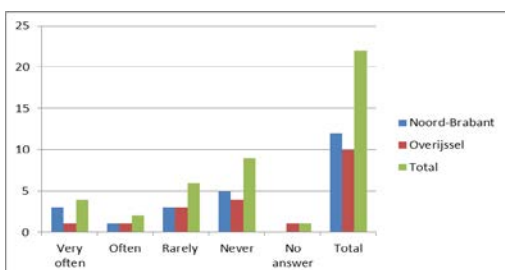
5 To what extent does your organisation have contact with MEPs/EP-officials?



Description of the results:

A significant proportion of the interviewees stated that their organisations have often contact with MEPs and/or EP officials. There are only significant differences between both provinces in the sections 'often', 'rarely' and 'never'.

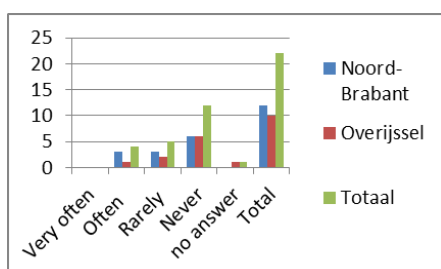
6 To what extent does your organisation have contact with ministries seeking to influence the Council of the European Union?



Description of the results:

Most interview partners indicated that they have rarely or never contact with ministries in order to influence the Council of Ministers' decisions.

7 To what extent does your organisation have contact with Heads of Government and/or Prime-Ministers seeking to influence the European Council's decisions?



Description of the results:

The same picture can be drawn for the European Council. Most sub-national stakeholders do have rarely or never contact with the prime-minister in order to influence the European Council.

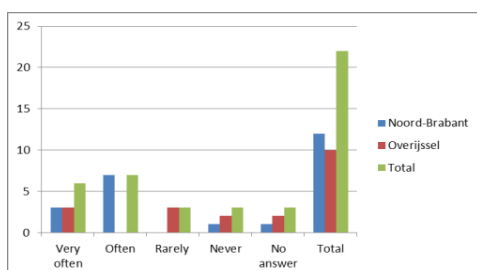
Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

It is obvious that most of the sub-national stakeholders have contacts with the only-direct elected institution of the EU i.e. European Parliament. The EP's powers have been increased in the co-decision procedure, and these contacts might be of influence of the support for EU2020 and the evaluation of EP's external accountability. Subnational stakeholders cannot vote MEPs out of office, but are obviously needed for realising goals. This might enhance the need for a participatory degree of these stakeholders and improve EU's input legitimacy.

- Contact with national and provincial politicians

This part outlines the results of the questions regarding contacts with Members of Parliament and provincial officials.

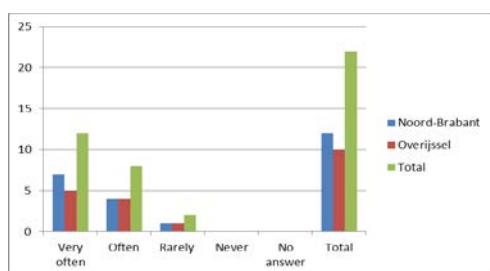
8 To what degree does your organisation have contact with Members of Parliament?



Description of the results:

More interview partners from the province of Noord Brabant do have very often or often contact with Members of Parliament. The interview partners from Overijssel are significantly more represented in the sections rarely, never or no answer.

9 To what extent does your organisation have contact with provincial officials?



Description of the results:

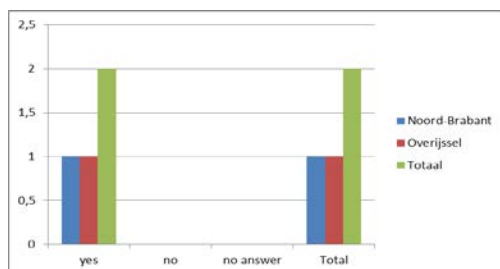
Most of the interview partners do have contacts with provincial officials. There are no discrepancies between the two selected provinces.

Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU2020:

The MS' national parliaments and provincial parliaments and boards are natural lower levels of authority than the EU. They can highly influence the NRP's to be sent by the Dutch government to the Commission. The level of contact of the sub-national stakeholders might be of influence towards the direct support for EU2020 and indirectly EU's input legitimacy.

- **Contacts of civil society**

10 Is your organisation member of the European Social and Economic Committee?

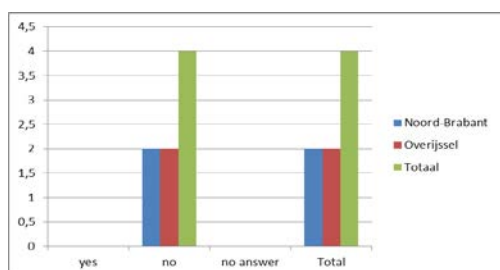


Description of the results:

Only two interview partners belong to the section 'civil society', and both are member of the EESC.

- **Contacts of local and regional authorities**

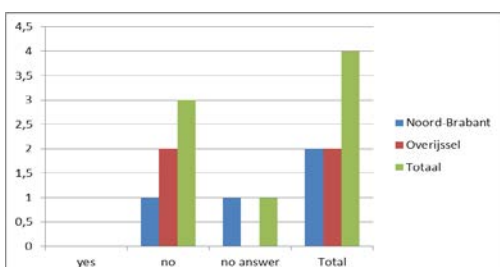
11 Is your organisation member of RegioNetwork 2020?



Description of the results:

The interviewed local and regional authorities are not member of RegioNetwork 2020.

12 Is your organisation member of the Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform?

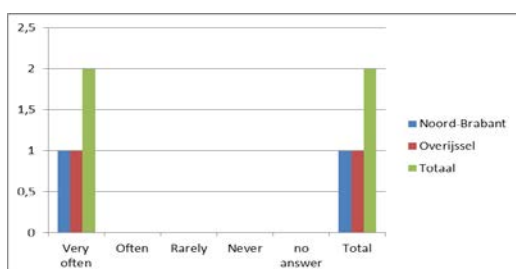


Description of the results:

No interview partners belonging to the section 'local and regional authorities' are member of the Monitoring Platform.

- **Civil society**

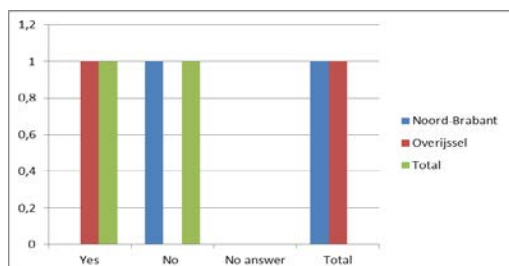
13 To what extent does your organisation have contact with the EESC?



Description of the results:

Both civil society- stakeholders do have very often contact with the EESC.

14 Is your organisation of the opinion that the Steering Group fulfils its function adequately?



Support for EU2020 and implications regarding input legitimacy:

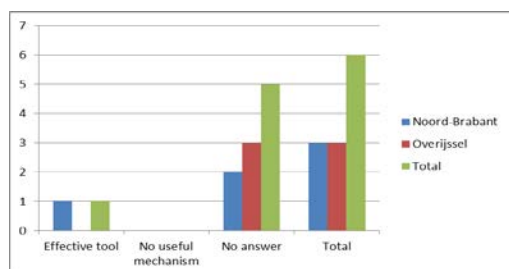
As there are some reservations towards the functioning of the EESC's Steering Group, one has to acknowledge that only two stakeholders belong to 'civil society'. Hence, the influence of this measurement is vulnerable with respect to the support of EU2020.

- Civil society and local and regional authorities

Description of the results:

There are two interview partners which can be labelled 'civil society'. Both are part of a large umbrella organisation, and one of the interviewees is member of the EESC. There are two interview partners which are part of a national umbrella organisation, which is the actual member of the EESC. These organisations do have intensive contacts with the respective Committee. The half of the respondents is of the opinion that the Steering Group does not fulfil its activities adequately.

15 What is your organisation's opinion on RegioNetwork 2020?

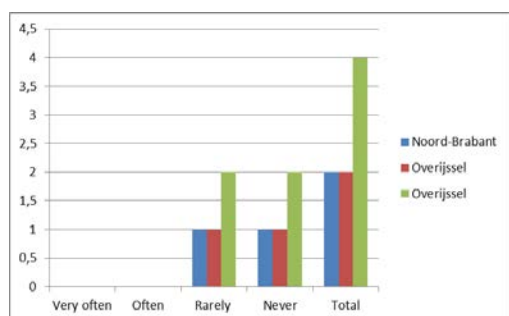


- Local and regional authorities

Description of the results:

Only one interview partner belonging to the section 'local and regional authorities' in the province of Noord-Brabant, does perceive the Network as an effective tool. The other interview partners did not provide an answer on this question.

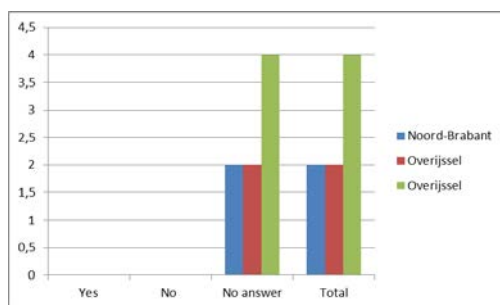
16 To what extent does your organisation have contact with the Monitoring Platform?



Description of the results:

None of the interviewed stakeholders, in the section 'local and regional authorities', do have often contact with the Monitoring Platform.

17 Is your organisation of the opinion that the Monitoring Platform is executing its tasks effectively?



Description of the results:

None of the respondents in the section local and regional authorities does provide an answer to the question whether the Platform is performing its tasks adequately.

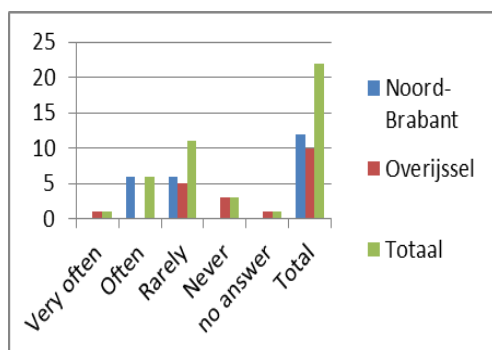
Implications for EU have input legitimacy and support EU2020:

It should be notified that in the light of measuring support for the EU2020 strategy, there are too few interview partners belonging to both sections. Hence, this perspective of 'logic of influence' is vulnerable.

- Commission's Consultation sessions

This part concentrates on the 'participatory' element of the EU2020 strategy. The European Commission enabled various stakeholders (organisations, citizens and so forth). The consultation session took place from the end of November 2009 until mid-January 2010. It should be stressed that for many countries Christmas holiday is included in this period. (European Commission, 2010, par. 4n) Some contributions of stakeholders can be found on the archived website, but one should bear in mind that stakeholders were able to keep their contribution secret.

18 How often does your organisation contribute to consultation sessions regarding EU proposals?



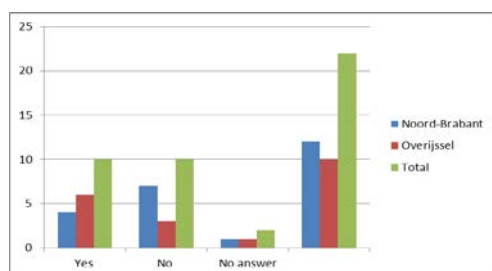
Description of the results:

More stakeholders from the province of Noord-Brabant contribute often to the consultation sessions of the Commission. Furthermore, there is one stakeholder from the province of Overijssel only that contributes 'very often'. Once again, there is often a co-operation with other partners or European umbrella organisations.

Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy

According to Quittkat (2011, p. 654) online consultation procedures handled by the European Commission are intensely used by private interest groups. Particularly EU civil society stakeholders neglect largely the invitation from the European Commission to participate in the consultation sessions. It should be noted that only one interview partner belongs to the business sector. Furthermore, there are two interview partners which belong to the label 'civil society'. Hence, the thesis stated above is complicated to be measured within this case study.

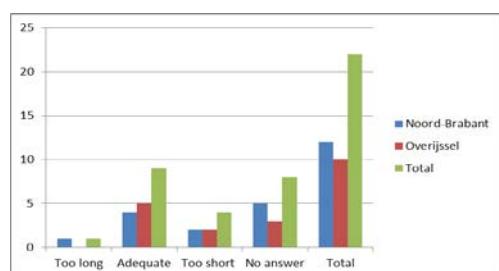
19 Did your organisation participate in the EU2020's consultation session? (Digital version)



Description of the results

More sub-national stakeholders from Overijssel participated in the EU2020's consultation session. It has to be stated that some did answer yes, while having participated in alternative sessions. (for example: hearing on Horizon 2020).

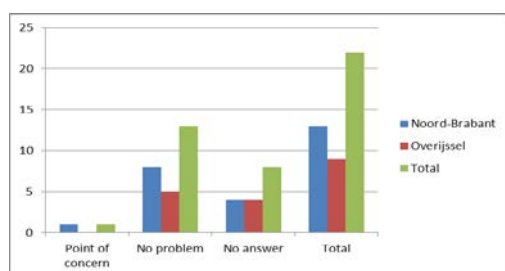
20 What is your organisation's opinion on the period of the EU2020's consultation session?



Description of the results:

Almost 50% of the respondents stated that the period of consultation was adequate. As an explanation some respondents stated that one should have their proposals ready if the Commission would ask an opinion. Nevertheless, almost a 1/5 of the respondents stated that the period was too short. There are no significant differences between both provinces.

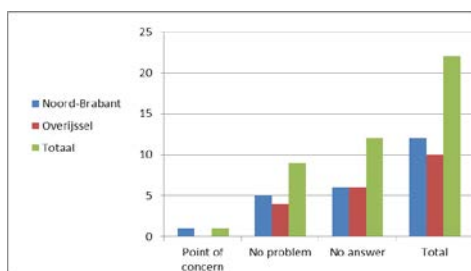
21 What is your organisation's opinion on the equal treatment of citizens and/or third countries and stakeholders in the consultation session?



Description of the results:

A majority of respondents do not have problems with the equal treatment of citizens and third countries in the consultation sessions. Nevertheless, one respondent from the province of Noord-Brabant does have problems with the equal treatment. It should be stressed that some stakeholders trust the Commission in making priorities among the stakeholders' contributions (organisations vs. citizens/ third countries).

22 What is your organisation's opinion on the equal position of Dutch provinces in the consultation session?



Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

Generally, the EU2020's consultation session can count on support from the subnational stakeholders. One does not have a problem with the equal opportunities for citizens/third countries and organisations on the other hand. One trusts the Commission to differentiate among the contributions. (trust in procedures can increase EU's input legitimacy, Max Weber). Moreover, one is willing to provide equal opportunities for the Dutch provinces in the consultation session. The interviewed stakeholders do not agree with the EU-level associations on the marginalisation of the 'interlocuteur' position.

Description of the results:

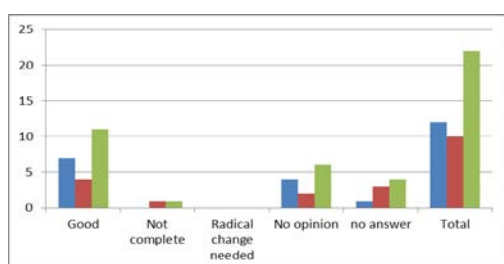
As this master thesis deals with finding patterns in the degree of support for the EU2020 strategy, it should be investigated whether one does agree on the equal treatment in the session among all provinces in the Netherlands, despite the economic differences.

One is of the opinion that it is no problem or the interview partners did not provide an answer. Only one stakeholder from the province of Noord-Brabant did not automatically agree (point of concern).

- Accountability and provinces' strategies

Another part of Scharpf's input legitimacy is the extent of accountability the public authorities take. Do they deliver what is arranged in the treaties and agreed upon? Despite this, only EU's citizens (approximately 500 million in 28 member states) can vote directly for Members of the European Parliament and indirectly influence the approval of Members of the European Commission. Furthermore, they can influence the composition of the European Council and Council of Ministers (via national elections). The European institutions' (external) accountability is only investigated, because their legitimacy is significantly more critically approached in the academic world and beyond. First of all, the provinces' accountability regarding EU2020 is assessed.

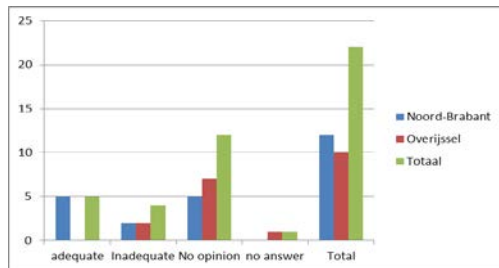
23 How does your organisation evaluate the province's strategies towards EU2020?



Description of the results:

Almost the half of the respondents judge the province's strategies towards 2020 strategy as good. There are significantly more respondents from the province of Noord-Brabant which approve the provincial strategies. Please note: the province of Overijssel was at the time of interviews (spring-autumn 2012) occupied with writing an international strategy.

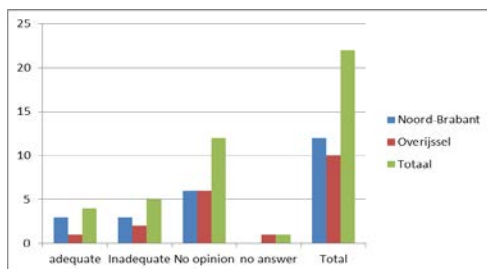
24 What is the organisation's opinion on the degree of European Parliament's accountability towards EU2020?



Description of the results:

Concerning the accountability of the European institutions, one can say that there are some respondents which stated that the accountability of the European Parliament is inadequate towards the EU2020 strategy. Nevertheless, almost the half of the respondents from Noord-Brabant believes the EP's accountability is adequate and 12 respondents do not have an opinion on this matter.

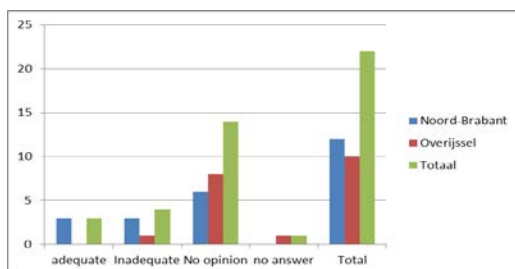
25 What is the organisation's opinion on the degree of European Commission's accountability towards the EU 2020 strategy?



Descriptions of the results:

Approximately 25% of the respondents are of the opinion that the European Commission does not fulfill its tasks adequately. Nevertheless, the majority does not have an opinion on this matter. Of the respondents, 4 ticked the box at 'adequate'.

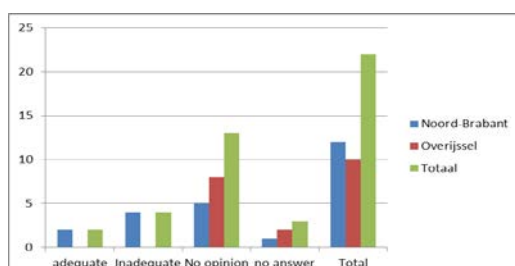
26 What is the organisation's opinion on the degree of European Council's accountability towards the EU 2020 strategy?



Description of the results:

A large proportion of the respondents (more than 50%) do not have an opinion on the European Council's activities. There is one respondent from Overijssel who perceives it as inadequate. About three respondents from Noord-Brabant did also tick the box 'inadequate'.

27 What is the organisation's opinion on the degree of Council of Ministers' accountability towards the EU 2020 strategy?



Description of the results:

Concerning the Council of Minister's accountability, a significant majority of the respondents do not have an opinion about it. Nevertheless, the majority originates from the province of Overijssel. There are four respondents from the province of Noord-Brabant which perceives it as inadequate.

Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

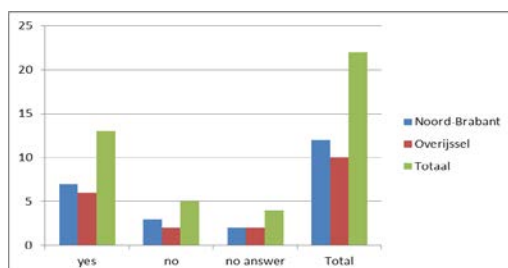
According to Max Weber a social or political order can be perceived legitimate if the citizens decide its laws and arrangements as reasonable and fixed. If these respective laws are considered as legitimate, then a natural legitimacy occurs whether the outcome is negative or positive for the principal (Kleine, M. & Risse, T., 2006, p. 4 as cited in Weber 1921/1980 and Hurd, 1999b) Perhaps Weber's theory on legitimacy is at stake in approving the degree of accountability within the EU2020 strategy. The same goes for the approval of the provincial strategies (lower level of authority in multi-level governance).

- Incorporation of stakeholders' preferences

Another aspect of Scharpf's theory is to what extent citizens' (in this case stakeholders') preferences are incorporated. One part deals with general questions about the strategy as whole. It then proceeds with an evaluation of EU2020's headline targets (both EU and national level) and the connected flagship initiative.

- EU2020 in general

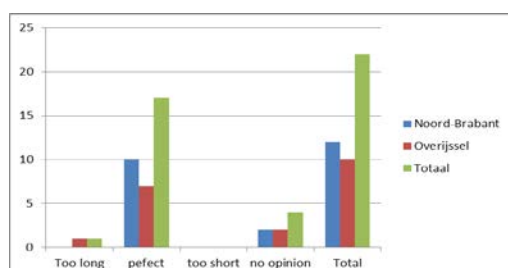
28 Is your organisation of the opinion the EU 2020 strategy is the right answer in the crisis context?



Description of the results:

A significant number of respondents are of the opinion that the EU2020 strategy is the right answer in the current (debt) crisis which is facing the EU. Nevertheless, there are some respondents (from both provinces) which answer this question negatively.

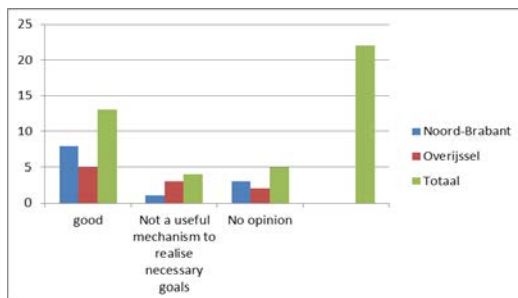
29 What is your organisation's opinion on the period of the EU2020 strategy (10 years?)



Description of the results:

A significant number of respondents judge the time period for the strategy as perfect. Nevertheless, there is one respondent from the province of Overijssel which judges the time period as too long.

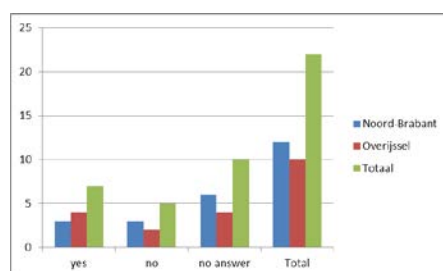
30 What is your organisation's opinion on the translation of EU targets into national goals?



Description of the results:

A large majority of the respondents perceive the translation of the European headline targets into national targets as good. Nevertheless, there is a small part of the respondents from Overijssel which perceive it as not a useful tool to reach the formulated goals. Some state that the European institutions should also define the goals into regional targets (next to the national ones) in order to adapt to the regional situation.

31 Is your organisation of the opinion that each stakeholder has an adequate feeling of ownership?



Description of the results:

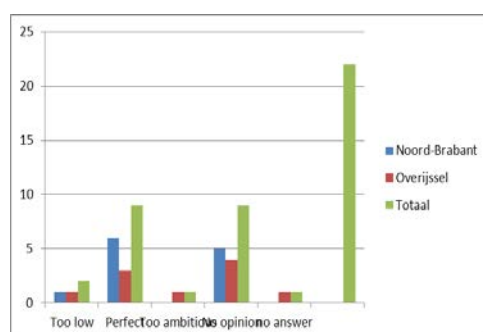
A significant amount of stakeholders from the province of Overijssel perceives the feeling of ownership of the involved organisations as adequate (almost 50% of total respondents from Overijssel). Nevertheless, a large share from the province of Noord-Brabant did not provide an answer to this question.

- Support for Headline targets (both EU and national)

This part deals with the headline targets formulated in the EU2020 strategy. These comprise employment, innovation, energy, education and the fight poverty. There are also 7 flagships established in order to help reaching the formulated goals.

- Employment targets (respectively EU and national targets)

32 What is your organisation's opinion on the employment target at the EU level?

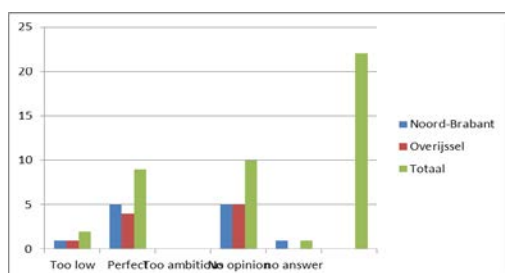


Description of the results:

A large share of the respondents are of the opinion that the formulated target at the EU level is perfect or does not have an opinion about this target. Nevertheless, stakeholders which are dealing with this subject do agree upon this subject, but one local authority in the province of Overijssel states that due to the crisis it might take longer than 10 years in order to reach the respective target. Significantly more respondents from the province of Noord-Brabant do agree upon the target at the EU level.

Too low	Perfect	Too ambitious	No opinion/no answer
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33 *What is your organisation's opinion on the employment target at the national level?*



Too low	Perfect	Too ambitious	No opinion/no answer
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Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

Taking the support for the EU target into account, one can conclude there is support. The interview partners who did not provide an answer to this question can also be perceived as actually agreeing on the target.

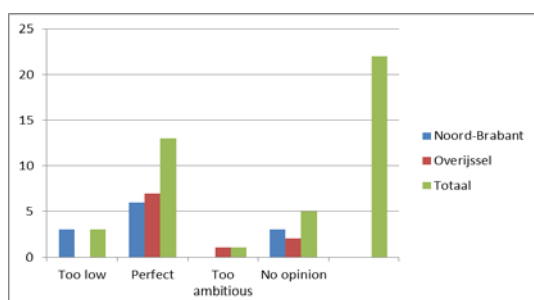
National target:

There are 2 out of four local authorities in both provinces that do not agree with the target. Local authorities are primary stakeholders in providing finance to the unemployed and helping them getting a job. Hence, there support is crucial.

Description of the results:

A large degree of the respondents are of the opinion that the employment target at the national level is perfect, but also a substantial degree of the interviewed stakeholders do not have an opinion about it. Nevertheless, the interviewed local authorities in Noord-Brabant and Overijssel do believe the target is too low. According to an innovation-based organisation in the province of Noord-Brabant there should be made a differentiation between: 1) Industrial activities; 2) Services; 3) Business. The contribution of business sectors to the economy is not significant. Hence, the industrial sector should be perceived as a 'heavyweight'. Two of the four respondents from the section 'Local and regional authorities' disagree with the national target.

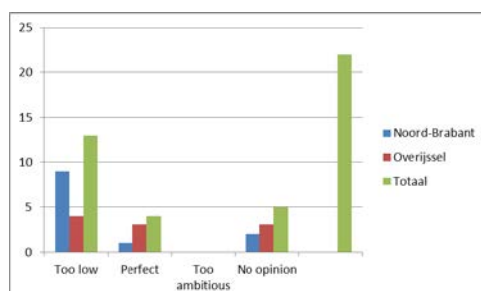
34 *What is your organisation's opinion on the R&D (private and public) target at the EU level?*



Description of the results:

A majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the R&D target is perfect. Only few consider it too low. Furthermore, the innovation and regional economics-based organisations and other crucial stakeholders do perceive the respective target as perfect. Only one regional economics-based organisation in Overijssel states that it is too ambitious and that the private sector should not be obliged to invest in R&D.

35 What is your organisation's opinion on the R&D (private and public) target at the national level?



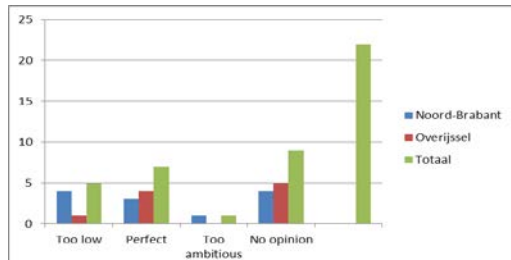
Support for EU2020 and implications for EU have input legitimacy:

There is general support for the EU's target on Innovation. Nevertheless, the widely criticised national target might also lead to a question on the European Council's legitimacy deficit. One of the members is the Dutch prime-minister. Hence, also the position of the government is at stake regarding the innovation target. One could possibly speak of 'a Shame on Innovation?' Further research could be done on the influence of national members of governments on the EU2020 strategy.

Description of the results:

A large share of the respondents are of the opinion that the R&D target at the national level is too low. Especially in the categories of innovation and regional economics based organisations, HEI's, interest groups and Separate one share this opinion. According to an innovation-based organisation in the province of Noord-Brabant the Netherlands has to compete with hot spot cities like, for example, Cambridge and Helsinki. Zuid-Oost Brabant scores significantly higher concerning R&D. Hence, the region situated around the city of Eindhoven reaches significantly higher results than the rest of the Netherlands. Investing in R&D implies creating jobs and welfare. Specifically in the Brainport Eindhoven region, the investments made by the public sector should be increased.

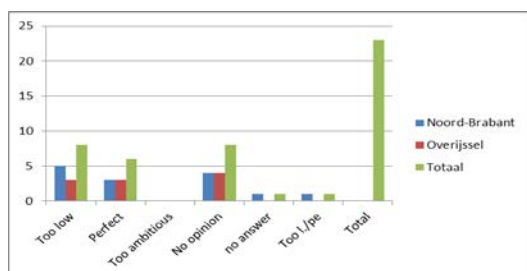
36 What is your organisation's opinion on the energy target at the EU level? (20-20-20-target)



Description of the results:

The sections local and regional authorities, innovation and regional economics based organisations and interest groups are of crucial importance in this field. A large majority in these categories do perceive the target at the EU-level as perfect. Nevertheless, only one respondent in the category of local and regional authorities in the province of Noord-Brabant does perceive it as too low/little ambitious. In general, approximately 25% of the respondents do perceive it as too low.

37 What is your organisation's opinion on the energy target at the national level? (20-20-20-target)

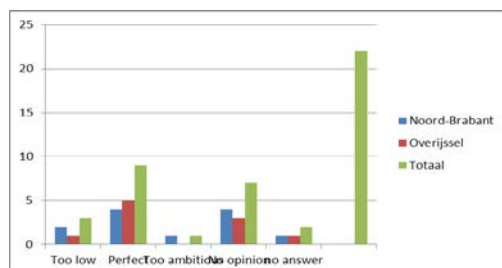


Too low/perfect

Description of the results:

A large part of the local and regional authorities in both provinces are of the opinion that the national energy target is too low/little ambitious. This is one of the crucial categories in this policy area. According to a HEI in the province of Noord-Brabant energy policy should be one of the main themes. One should encourage more sustainable energy, formulate ambitious goals. There is a too large focus on the trend of 'left-wing hobby'. According to a regional authority in the province of Noord-Brabant, the Netherlands is on the good path regarding the emission target and the rest is too low. According to a HEI in the province of Overijssel formulating targets at the European and national level was executed in an adequate manner, but realising the goals is another item. Hence, European and Dutch authorities should not only deliver lip service. From the respondents of Overijssel, two out of 7 stakeholders disapprove the national target.

38 What is your organisation's opinion on the education target at the EU level? (Both sub targets)



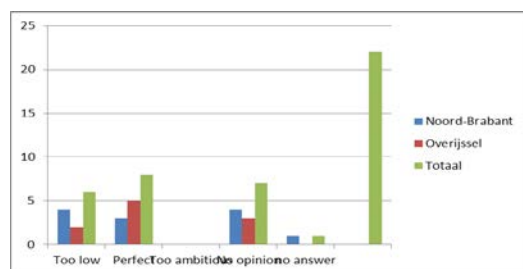
Too low/little ambitious	Perfect	Too ambitious	No opinion/no answer
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Description of the results:

Approximately 50% of the respondents are of the opinion that the education target at the EU level is perfect. The crucial organisations for this target are the HEI's (Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences, local and regional authorities (early school leavers) and Separate. There are two HEI's in both provinces which perceive the education target as too low/too little ambitious. According to a HEI in the province of Noord-Brabant reaching a target of 10% is not ambitious, and the 8% should be as low as possible (early school leavers). Concerning the tertiary diplomas, one does not have an opinion at the EU level, but the Netherlands should follow the European Union standard. According to a HEI in the province of Overijssel formulating targets at the European and national level was executed in an adequate manner, but realising the goals is another item. Hence, European and Dutch authorities should not only deliver lip service. According to an innovation-based organisation in Noord-Brabant one states that regarding early school leavers, one can say that educational institutions should be active in that way, students or pupils are not willing to leave anymore. The formulation of this target is very specific.

Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

There is congruence among the interview partners that the EU target is perfect. Despite this, the national energy target is more critically approached. This could decrease EU's input legitimacy as derived from a study of Warleigh-Lack (2011, p. 298) which released that there is a general belief in EU policy fields that a more environmentalist EU can enlarge the legitimacy of the European Union. Despite the fact environmental policy is secondary in terms of an explicit mention, there is coherence in the idea that green parts of the economy is likely to pursue a significant part for employment and salaries. (Warleigh-Lack, 2011, p. 306) A more environmentalist EU could be a potential source of legitimacy in the reduction of the harm resulting from climate change. (Warleigh-Lack, 2011, p. 307-308)



Too low/little ambitious	Perfect	Too ambitious	No opinion/no answer
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Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

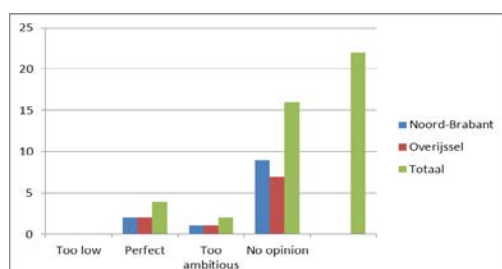
The EU target is approved, but the crucial stakeholders are more critical about the national target. Especially, the education policies related to the finance of the study are at stake. Here, also the legitimacy of Dutch ministry of Education has to be investigated for further research.

Description of the results:

A substantial degree of respondents in the category of HEP's are of the opinion that the national target is too low/too little ambitious. According to an innovation-based organisation in the province of Noord-Brabant there should be more attention at the lower levels for technical studies. It is very difficult nowadays and especially in the future, to hire Dutch technical staff. According to the interviewee, the tuition fees for sociology students should be multiplied by three, and the technical master studies should be free of charge. The exact percentages are not crucial, but the execution of the policies at the national level is of high importance. There are two respondents from the section 'local and regional authorities' which perceive the sub target 'early school leavers' as too little ambitious.

Poverty and social inclusion target

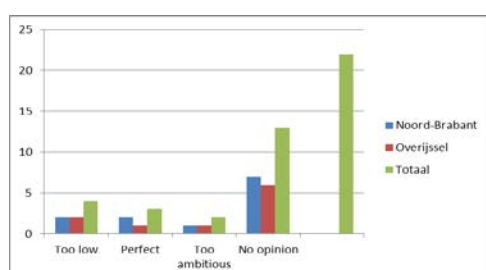
40 What is your organisation's opinion on the social inclusion and/or poverty target at the EU level?



Description of the results:

A large majority of the respondents do not have an opinion on the poverty target at the EU level. Nevertheless, the crucial local and regional authorities and related 'separate' organisation in the province of Noord-Brabant do perceive it as perfect or does not have an opinion. According to two respondents in the province of Overijssel it is curious that there are no percentages but a number of inhabitants formulated.

41 What is your organisation's opinion on the social inclusion and/or poverty target at the national level?



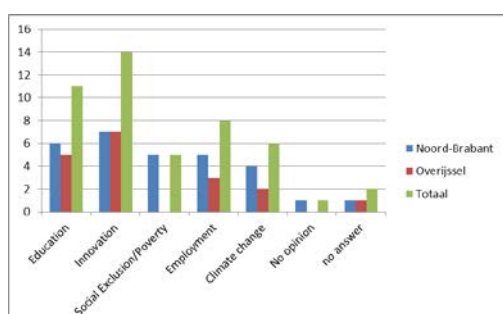
Description of the results:

A large degree of respondents do not have an opinion on the national poverty target. Nevertheless, two local authorities in the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel do perceive this target as too little ambitious (too low). According to a regional authority in the province of Noord-Brabant one has to translate the targets towards the regions. People need to be included actively into society, by means of social contacts, and let people being active for a longer period.

Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

Generally, there is support for the poverty target at the EU level. One considers the target in numbers as 'not significant'. At the national level there is some critical assessment among the purposive stakeholders. This is a negative item for EU's input legitimacy.

42 Which policy fields should be prioritised?

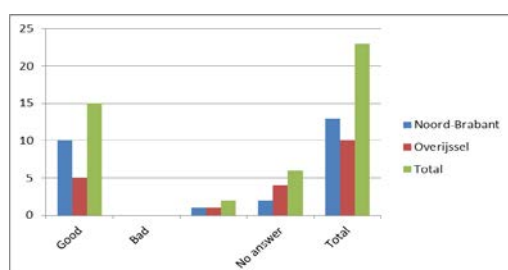


Description of the results:

According to more than the half of the respondents in both provinces innovation is the most crucial policy field. Number two is education, and far behind employment at number 3. According to an innovation-based organisation in the province of Overijssel innovation is the key to future success. It goes hand in hand with Education and Climate change, so that are the main priorities.

- Flagship initiatives

43 What is your organisation's opinion on the 'Digital agenda for Europe' flagship initiative?



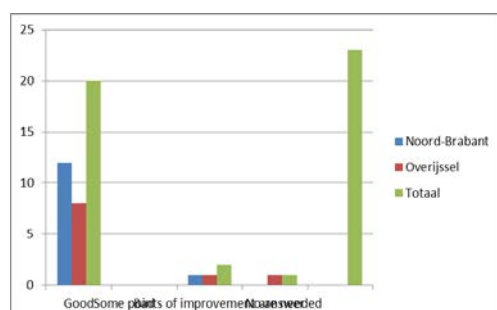
Please note, the indicators are:

Good	Bad	Some points of improvement are needed	No answer
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Description of the results:

More than 50% of the respondents agree with the Digital Agenda. The crucial interview partners are (almost all categories, except Separate. According to an innovation-based organisation in the province of Noord-Brabant this is one of the key themes for the European Union. There are a lot of improvements possible at the EU level. The Netherlands is still one of the laggards in the area of services. A civil society group in the province of Noord-Brabant states that the focus should be put on the manageability of the countryside. According to a regional authority in the province of Overijssel for all flagship initiatives the interviewee states there should be formulated effective strategies. According to an innovation-based organisation in the province of Noord-Brabant all flagships are indicated as good but some improvements are needed in any case; without dealing with details.

44 What is your organisation's opinion on the 'Innovation Union' flagship



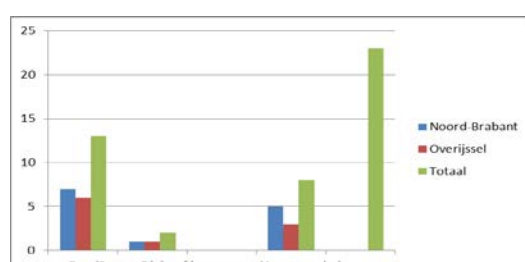
Please note, the indicators are:

Good	Bad	Some points of improvement are needed	No answer
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Description of the results:

Especially in the field of innovation-based organisation one agrees with the Innovation Union flagship. According to a HEI in the province of Noord-Brabant it contributed to this consultation session. There is space for improvements. The misbalance between technical science and medicine on one side and the social sciences and humanities on the other should be repaired. Another HEI in the province of Overijssel worked closely with the European Parliament and the responsible DG's on the content of Horizon 2020. The stakeholder agrees with the encouragement of the mobility of researchers.

45 What is your organisation's opinion on the 'Resource efficient' flagship initiative?



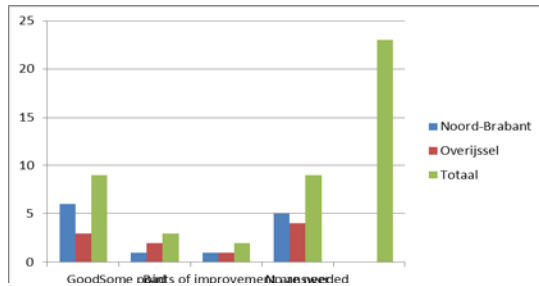
Please note, the indicators are:

Good	Bad	Some points of improvement are needed	No answer
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Description of the results:

According to a majority of the respondents in the categories innovation and local and regional authorities this is a good flagship initiative. Nevertheless, an innovation-based organisation in the province of Overijssel states that there are some national constraints (without mentioning details). Generally, the flagship is approved.

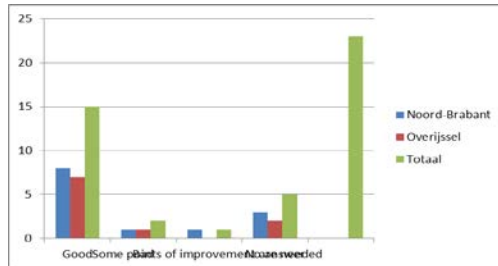
46 *What is your organisation's opinion on the 'An industrial policy for the globalisation era' flagship initiative?*



Description of the results:

According to a substantial degree of respondents this is a good initiative (almost 50%) but also the same part does not have an opinion about this flagship. According to an innovation-based organisation in the province of Noord-Brabant protectionism should be avoided. There are more constraints within the category of innovation and regional economics based organisations in Overijssel.

47 *What is your organisation's opinion on the 'An agenda for new skills and jobs' flagship initiative?*



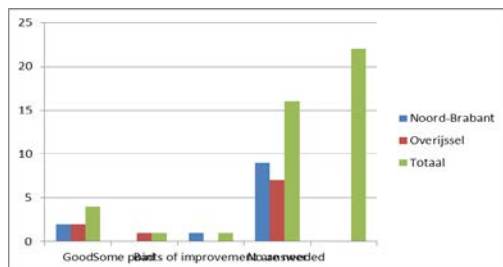
Description of the results:

In general, a large share of the respondents are of the opinion that this is a good flagship. This is also the case for the crucial interview categories local and regional authorities and HEI's. Nevertheless, a HEI in the province of Noord-Brabant states that Lifelong learning for older employees should be improved. It could be facilitated by means of financial support. Moreover, researchers, lecturers and other employees should be encouraged to go abroad for work experience. According to an innovation and regional economics-based organization in the province of Overijssel it should be arranged at the national level.

Please note, the indicators are:

Good	Bad	Some points of improvement are needed	No answer
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48 *What is your organisation's opinion on 'European Platform against Poverty' flagship initiative?*

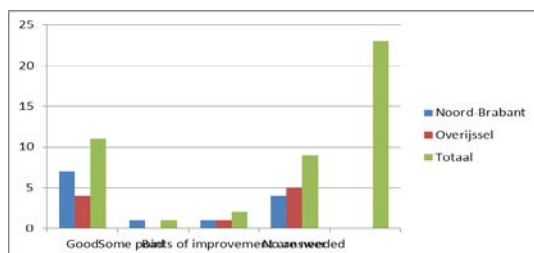


Description of the results:

A substantial part of the organisations does not have an opinion about this flagship initiative. Nevertheless, the majority of the crucial local and regional authorities are of the opinion that is a good flagship. The other crucial stakeholder, Separate, did not have an opinion on this flagship. Please note: this question is an exception for the double answer.

Good	Bad	Some points of improvement are needed	No answer
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49 *What is your organisation's opinion on the "Youth on the move" flagship?*



Description of the results:

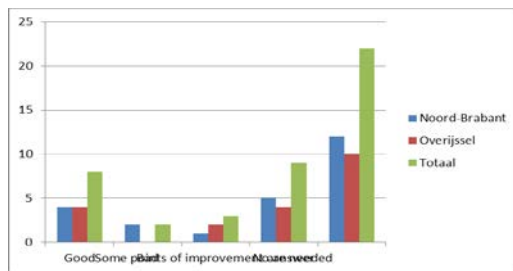
According to a large degree of HEI's this is a good initiative. The same goes for local and regional authorities. Nevertheless, a HEI in the province of Noord-Brabant states that the judgement of PHD-programmes in Europe should be harmonised, in order to create equal standards and conditions.

Good	Bad	Some points of improvement are needed	No answer
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Support for EU2020 and implications regarding EU's input legitimacy:

Generally, the 7 flagship initiatives can rely on a wide range of support among the interviewed stakeholders. Nevertheless, some flagships were not evaluated negatively or positively.

50 *What is your organisation's opinion on the government's "Topsectorenbeleid"?*

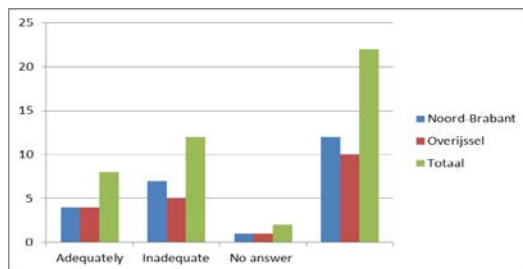


Good	Bad	Some points of improvement are needed	No answer
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Description of the results:

In general, the crucial innovation-based organisations and HEI's do support the "Top-sector-policy" of the government. Nevertheless, according to a HEI in the province of Overijssel one has forgotten the regions in this policy. "The Hague" has a too big influence in who receives how much money. On the research side, one has forgotten the Universities of Applied Sciences.

51 *To what extent does the EU make efficient use of its (financial) instruments?*



Good	Bad	Some points of improvement are needed	No answer
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Definition of the stakeholders:

A substantial degree of the respondents are of the opinion that the EU deals inadequately with the use of its financial instruments. According to an innovation-based organisation in the province of Noord-Brabant the procedures regarding requesting money from the Structural Funds do cause a high amount of transaction costs. Some conditions can be improved. According to a regional authority in the province of Overijssel, the system is too dispersed and too complicated. The wide range of procedures takes a lot of time and is not easy to manage for regions. The accessibility should be enhanced and there are too many rules to meet.

This last question of the interview and of the final section deals with how one thinks the EU2020 can be improved. Below the answers are outlined.

According to a civil society group in the province of Noord-Brabant the transaction costs are too high. The private sector should be reached in a more pro-active manner by the European institutions. Currently, the system is too bureaucratic, and the EU formulates too complicated criteria. Hence companies and SMEs should deliver detailed reports in order to apply properly for funding. A national innovation-based organization states that “Brussels’ interferes with ‘too detailed’ procedures and prescriptions in the daily businesses of SMEs. The acceptance of the EU2020 strategy should be the result of concrete steps taken by the Dutch government and the European Union. According to an innovation-based organization in the province of Overijssel there is a too big distance between the apparatus (‘Brussels’) and the practical business in the member states’ businesses and civil society. According to an innovation-based organization in the province of Noord-Brabant the Blue Card-system for non-EU expats in the EU can be improved. If expats works in Eindhoven, one cannot change to Leuven with the same permission. This is a major hindrance in the realization of innovation. Procedures should be simplified.

Conclusion

Generally, the EU2020 strategy is supported by a wide range of interviewed stakeholders. (as derived from Scharpf’s input legitimacy). Nevertheless, the significantly disapproved national innovation target raises doubts about the support in the field of R&D at the national level. This is especially crucial, because innovation is one of the top priorities in the point of view of the interview partners.

6 Conclusion

At first sight, the EU does not have a significant problem with input legitimacy. Input legitimacy implies a significant degree of influence by the relevant stakeholders and the incorporation of their preferences into EU policy making. Government leaders of every single member state are member of the European Council and of the Council of Ministers, which represent a majority in the respective elected parliaments. The European Commission is obliged to justify their actions towards the abovementioned European Council as well as to the elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). EU's citizens do have multiple (i.e. on the domestic as well as the European level) possibilities to vote the parties that they do not like out of their responsibilities. But obviously, this representation of the facts is too simple. The complexity of the EU's input legitimacy stems from the multi-level governance-based structure and from aspects of supranationalism with a lack of an EU-wide interest representation system. Moreover, subnational actors don't have the same opportunities as EU subjects to go out and cast their vote. As a consequence stakeholders can become confused about who is to be held responsible for certain decisions. For decades, European citizens provided a green card to the European leaders, i.e. there was a permissive consensus in order to provide economic benefits for the EU's member states, i.e. output legitimacy was sufficient at those times. However, since a number of referendums in the '90s and in 2005 (crucial member states France and the Netherlands rejected the Constitutional treaty) the room to manoeuvre by European and national elitists has become limited. Hence, an automatic approval for a neofunctionalist approach has slipped away from the hands of the elites. As a consequence, the European leaders and institutions are forced to take the opinions from the citizens and crucial stakeholders into consideration order to create and sustain input legitimate policies and strategies. Moreover, the European institution's degree of accountability is more at stake than of the national institutions, because of the EU's legitimacy crisis. This is the so-called constrained dissensus as put forward by Hooghe and Marks.

In order to seek the involvement of stakeholders the European Commission introduced an online consultation session at the beginning of the new millennium. But one has to conclude that especially private interests are overrepresented in the respective sessions. Perhaps the financial tools at their availability are of crucial importance? The same goes for the so-called logic of access. Businesses have important insights to provide on market details for the European institutions. In order to compensate them they are able to influence the European institution's policy proposals. This might imply a strong prerogative for (international) businesses in the European Union. Associations are accountable to their respective members and have to take into account that members need to have some time in order to formulate their input for the association's main reaction. What is the effect of the so-called logic of influence on the degree of participation towards consultation sessions? All these questions were part of this master thesis, and the case selection was done on the grounds of how do provincial and regional stakeholders perceive the policies of the European Union.

An interesting strategy to investigate is the current EU2020 strategy which obliges the member states to reach certain targets in order to reach the European goal. A special characteristic of the strategy is that it concerns policy fields where the member states have their competencies, such as innovation, energy, labour policies, and the combat against poverty. The Dutch provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel were selected because they are both situated outside the main economic engine of the Netherlands, i.e. the Randstad. Both provinces do have other EU-member states as neighbours. Moreover, two (technical) universities in both provinces are part of the cooperation organisation of technical universities, called 3TU. Furthermore, there are significant differences between both cases. The province of Noord-Brabant is known for a significantly higher level of R&D expenditure than the province of Overijssel. Moreover, the cities of Almelo and Enschede are both known for a long history of high unemployment rates. Last but not least, the province of Noord-Brabant has significantly more inhabitants than the province of Noord-Brabant.

These factors make of the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel interesting cases to investigate whether there are significant discrepancies or correlations in terms of support for the EU2020 strategy. The increase of citizens who are proponents of the formulated targets and initiatives has risen since spring 2012. Two activities are found crucial by 8 out of 10 Europeans: ‘modifying labour markets and supporting the people living at the risk of poverty or who find themselves in this financial position. More than 7 out of ten Europeans do believe that it is crucial to help an economy that consumes less natural products. (European Commission, 2012, p. 22) Significantly more than the crucial support is needed do favour the targets formulated in the current strategy. The most favoured objectives are the increase of the consumption of sustainable energy and the percentage of people between 20 and 64 years-old who should have permanent employment (European Commission, 2012, p. 24) Finally, the Eurobarometer concludes that approximately 40% of the Europeans believe that the European Union is taking the right measures to depart from the crisis in order to create sustainable growth for the short and longer term job (European Commission, 2012, p. 25) There are data about the citizen’s preferences and attitudes towards the EU2020 strategy, but this is not the case for a comparative data study among Dutch provinces which do have a (technical) university and are situated outside the Randstad.

Because of the low number of reactions from civil society organisations (2 in total) and only 1 enterprise the data are too limited to measure the influence of respectively logic of influence/membership and logic of access on the extent of the support for the EU2020’s among stakeholders in the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Overijssel. For further research on the legitimacy of EU policies, it is advisable to concentrate on these special areas. Also, in other constitutional senses the logic of influence/membership is present (e.g. at the national level), but these were left of this study.

The EU2020 strategy is partly supported by the crucial stakeholders, as derived from aspects of Scharpf’s input legitimacy. When taking the role of the EU institutions into account one does not have an opinion on the respective responsible organisations towards the EU2020 strategy. In terms of Max Weber one can indicate

these respective institutions as input legitimate. One cooperates primarily with other (inter)national counterparts in order to lobby EU policies (proposals). These transnational networks might take care for a (in the Tocquevilian tradition) decrease of the legitimacy gap indirectly. When taking the method of purposive sampling into account the respective national targets concerning education, energy (exception for employment and poverty targets) and so on are not heavily supported. One exception is the innovation target. A significant majority of the interviewed stakeholders from both provinces do not agree on the national target regarding innovation. Is this is a so-called 'shame on innovation? Habermas' speech earlier this year at the University of Leuven brought the definition 'solidarity' to the fore. EU2020 is also about solidarity. A country has to contribute what it can contribute, but will only do that if it can rely on the other peers doing the same. (KU Leuven, 2013, par 16) The corresponding flagship initiatives are all approved, with some minor details to improve. The bureaucratic elements which can be found in the EU are one of the crucial improvements to be made.

As a result, the following three recommendations can be derived from the conclusions:

Consulting provincial/regional stakeholders before submitting National Reform Programmes

One possibility to increase the influence of provincial and regional based stakeholders on the EU2020 strategy is to allow them to react on a preliminary version of the National Reform Programme, which is to be sent every March to the European Commission and explains in detail how the Dutch government will reach the formulated goals in the EU2020 strategy. A more pro-active approach by the EESC's Steering Committee and the COR's RegioNetwork 2020 is needed. There is not so much contact with the target groups.

Re-pro-activation of an alternative OMC within the Netherlands

In order to learn from other province's best practices" it is a suggestion that the EU establishes a national kind of Open Method of Co-ordination, which was the main governance tool in the Lisbon strategy. This might indicate that provinces learn how to deal better with, for example, innovation. The involvement of stakeholders during the Lisbon period (2000-2010) was disappointing, but one should take a more pro-active approach in incorporating the ideas of the crucial players in the EU2020 strategy.

Stimulate the Dutch ambitions on innovation

According to a sharp majority of the respondents in both provinces one is not content with the innovation target at the national level.

Suggestions for further research

Another interesting research topic is to investigate one is content with the EU innovation policies in innovation hot spots (comparative analysis) as Paris and Helsinki. Also, other Dutch provinces without a technical university can be researched whether they perceive the national target as too little ambitious. A possible hypothesis is that the Dutch national target on innovation is widely disapproved among subnational stakeholders.

Limitations of this study

One of the limitations of this research is that not all stakeholders could be equally compared with each other. For example, one advisory body to the province in Noord-Brabant did not have a counterpart from Overijssel in this study. A reason was that one first agreed upon participation and later did not participate anymore. Another limitation is that only few respondents are part of the ‘civil society’ and ‘local and regional authorities. Finally, not all categories present in for example, the Western part of Overijssel, are represented in this study. This might result in a certain bias

Attachment

Attachment 1: Purposive sampling of stakeholders

<i>Purposive samling of the stakeholders</i>	Local and regional authorities	Innovation/Regional	Interest groups (incl. civ so)	HEI's	Separate
Parts of EU2020					
Employment (EU and national)	x				x
R&D (EU and national)		x	x	x	x
Energy (EU and national)					
<i>Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions</i>		x	x		
<i>Energy from renewables</i>		x	x		
<i>Increase in energy efficiency</i>	x	x	x		
Education (both sub targets) (EU and national)					
<i>Early school leavers</i>	x			x	x
<i>Tertiary diploma</i>				x	x
Poverty and social inclusion (EU and national)	x				x
Flagship initiatives					
Digital agenda for Europe	x	x	x	x	
Innovation Union		x	x	x	x
Resource-efficient Europe	x	x	x		
An industrial policy for the globalisation era		x	X		x
An agenda for new skills and jobs	x			x	x
European Platform against Poverty	x				x
Youth on the Move	x			x	

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