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Borders, visions and regions
The cross-border governance capacity of the
Øresund Region
How to improve the influence of cross-border regions

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Course code SGEMO8
Semester/year: HT/2020

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Abstract

In recent years, cross-border regions have been challenged by multiple levels governance creating barriers rather than solutions to support cross-border spaces. This study aims at inquiring how the role of cross-border regions is changing in relation to their governance capacity. Governance capacity relates to actions, practices and visions of such regions. Through investigating a case study in the Øresund Region, the study analyses how the reorganisation of a cross-border institution leads to a new type of governance capacity. The empirical insights of the thesis were collected through stakeholder interviews and desktop research. In this case study, I challenge traditional state-centred views of space, and instead suggest that there is a need to change the national political discourse in order to benefit from cross-border regions.

Key words: Cross-border regions, governance capacity, Øresund, Greater Copenhagen, rescaling, institutional reorganization

Word count: 18.519

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge gratefully the help of all contributors of this thesis. This includes my supervisor Teis Hansen, thank you for your guidance, for giving me new insights and for your support when I was having trouble making decisions. These COVID-times have been difficult.

I would also like to thank Thea Wiborg and Johan Wessman at Øresundsinstittet, who helped me find contacts and fresh perspectives to cross-border issues in Øresund I didn't have the slightest clue existed.

Of course, I also have to give thanks to all the participants of the study. Without you, this thesis wouldn't have been possible.

In addition, I would also like to thank the following people for your critique and positive feedback when I needed it the most: Lucas, Søren, Maiwenn, Sofie and Hanna.

Copenhagen, 11 January 2021

Jens Bjørn Gefke Grelck

Borders
What's up with that?
Politics

M.I.A
Borders, from the album *AIM*, 2015

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List of Abbreviations

CBR	Cross-border region
CR	Critical realism
GCC	The Greater Copenhagen Committee
GCSC	The Greater Copenhagen and Skåne Committee
ESS	European Spallation Source
EU	The European Union
IBU	Infrastruktur og Byudviklingsstrategi
INTERREG	European Territorial Cooperation (ETC)
HH	Helsingør-Helsingborg (Elsinore-Helsingborg)
ØC	The Øresund Committee
ÖRUS/ÖRIB	Öresundsregionala Utvecklingsstrategin

1. Introduction

Cross-border spaces do not appear out of the blue. This becomes even more evident due to the current outbreak of the COVID-19 virus where borders have been closed across most of the European countries. Border regions have become relevant again in political action within a short period of time. This holds true for inhabitants, commuters and stakeholders, whose cross-border lives were immediately influenced by the closed borders and a limitation of the freedom of movement. Border controls have not just been rediscovered as instruments of security and health instruments, but their effects also reach far into different sectors of society (Wille & Kanesu 2020). Hence, borders and barriers can be experienced as more than territorial spaces in which, on one hand, political actions cause economic backlash and diminishes the capacity of cross-border regions. On the other hand, COVID-19 has demonstrated the existing high interaction of businesses and commuters as well as the density of social interaction across borders. Consequently, the European response to the COVID-19 outbreak demonstrates everything that the European Union has been trying to avoid, which is the hindrance of a united Europe where national, regional and local governments collaborate through cross-border, transnational and interregional cohesion policies, also called Interreg (Interreg 2020). Cross-border cooperation serves an important role to eliminate these barriers of border controls. Nonetheless, the existence of differing legal systems, administrative structures and competences of relevant partners (Böhm 2014), together with the novel COVID-19 pandemic hampering cross-border issues, makes the conditions of a cross-border region difficult as things are at present.

In the context of political geography, I look at the notion of *scale* and the relationship between multiple levels of *governance* involving local, regional and national actors. Following the emerging role of the cross-border region, strategic priorities of economic growth is the driving force behind region-building (Perkmann & Sum 2002). Their primary tool to achieve strategic priorities depends on their *governance capacity*.

So-called *governance capacities* are practices of cross-border institutions which serves as a key theoretical tool for this study. Drawing upon Healey et. al. (2002), Gualini (2002; 2005) and Magalhães et. al. (2002), who are among the main contributors advancing the notion of *governance capacity*, I use the concept in a cross-border context. Healey et. al. (2002:18) encloses governance capacity as:

Governance capacity is [...] embedded in complex local milieux whilst interacting with all kinds of external influences. It is not something with a fixed asset, but evolves through time. [...] This also means that transformations in governance have variable trajectories and are to an extent continuously ongoing projects. [...]. Capacities to act are moulded by the ongoing efforts of active agency in maintaining, re-interpreting, and building new dimensions to these capacities.

In this way, governance capacity is a set of practices that can be changed by the work of active agency engaged in *collective action* processes. Governance capacity can thus be used to analyse institutional transformations and the practices that build around them as well as how these governance practices interact with the wider context in a process of mutual constitution and reorganisation (Healey et. al. 2002). In this study, I inquire how the role of cross-border regions are changing in relation to their political capabilities. As external factors such as the novel COVID-19 outbreak, the former economic crises and the maintenance of national borders are challenging the status-quo of cross-border institutions, it is of great importance to explore whether cross-border institutions are the right response in handling cross-border issues and whether they are capable of sustaining themselves. This thesis is a case-study of the Greater Copenhagen Committee (GCC) and its political ancestor called the Øresund Committee (ØC), which uses stakeholder interviews and extensive desktop research to emphasise the challenges of political collaboration across the Øresund Strait, in view of its political evolution within the last 20 years. These cross-border institutions have encountered several challenges with severe effects, but, in many cases, they have also been able to uphold their survival after a crisis has passed. However, their political objectives have been difficult to fulfil and put into practice, which points to a general challenge among cross-border institutions about acting a common line of actions and setting the same priorities on multiple levels of governance (Sohn & Riffinger 2014). Through this study, I identify these issues and

investigate the challenges of the ØC turning into the GCC to better understand the *cross-border governance capacities* on the two sides of the Øresund Strait.

Focusing on a widely researched case of cross-border policy, which is the Øresund Region, this study applies Healey et. al. (2002) and Gualini's (2005) governance approach to analyse the change of cross-border governance capacity between cross-border institutions. As argued by Bucken-Knapp & Shack (2001), each border region is unique, but too much emphasis on the unique leads to a lack of general understanding of how the relationship between politics and space is changing. Therefore, instead of searching for similarities, it is more useful to investigate themes that cut across the multidisciplinary literature on cross-border regions. The cross-cutting themes of this study are *cross-border governance*, *rescaling* and the reorganisation of *cross-border regions*. Former research on the reorganisation of cross-border governance regions has only studied individual case studies with severely limited cross-border integration and without the same level of empirical thickness (Pikner 2008). In this study, I aim at reducing the theoretical-empirical gap in the cross-border governance capacity research as well as contributing constructively to the debate on the future role of cross-border regions.

1.1 Research questions

How does the reorganization from the Øresund Committee to the Greater Copenhagen Committee change the cross-border governance capacity and policy outcomes?

What can be done to improve the governance capacity of cross-border regions and strengthen the potentials for policy outcome?

1.2 Statement of research question

What is meant by *reorganization* is the organizational change of governance practice from the former cross-border institution of the ØC to the GCC. The analysis looks at how the governance capacity building process of the ØC eventually led to the reorganisation process that turned into the GCC. This reorganisation process sheds light on what triggered the change of governance capacity and policy outcomes of these institutions. The concept of

governance capacity is further defined in the theoretical framework, but it is used as a conceptual tool to understand and interpret the political reorganization process of the Øresund Region as a change of practice that occurred between 2013 and 2016. When stating policy outcomes, I analyse and discuss the likelihood to improve governance capacities of cross-border institutions. *Policy outcomes* are referred to as to what degree the cross-border institutions are able to carry out their political objectives. The Øresund Region is used as a case-study to understand and analyse what supports and hinders cross-border spaces. On the background of the analysis, this leads to a discussion about whether it is possible to improve the governance capacity of cross-border regions, which can strengthen the potentials for policy outcome.

1.3 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis in this thesis is the ØC and the GCC in the Øresund Region and the time frame 2010 to 2020. This time frame is chosen since it enables me to analyse how the governance capacity was practised before the reorganization process between 2013 and 2016 and how the capacity changed after this process. The committees comprise local and regional policymakers from Denmark and Sweden, as well as representatives of a secretariat. In addition, members of the working groups and affiliated consultants occupied with the political strategies (i.e. Danish Industry), affiliated partners (i.e. Medicon Valley Alliance) and officials (i.e. from Region Skåne or the City of Malmö) are also included. Interviews with these stakeholders, in combination with strategic reports, charters, organizational statutes and regional and municipal strategies form the unit of analysis for this study.

1.4 Thesis structure

The thesis is divided into 9 chapters. Chapter 2 presents the involved actors of the study. Chapter 3 forms the theoretical framework of the study with literature on governance capacity and cross-border regions. Chapter 4 introduces the methodological reflections and choice of research methods. Chapter 5 forms the analysis about the cross-border capacity of the former ØC, chapter 6 assesses the reorganisation of the ØC into the GCC, whereas chapter 7 looks at the current case of the GCC. Chapter 8 reflects on the analysis by discussing the role of these cross-border regions more generally. Chapter 9 winds up the thesis with the main findings and general reflections on the research of the thesis.

2. The political space of the Øresund Region:

In order to provide a better understanding of the political space of the Øresund Region, this section sketches the former ØC and the current GCC. As I devote more attention to the aftermath of the ØC, this overview mostly outlines the GCC and its public members, associated private actors and networks who relate to the political space of Greater Copenhagen.

2.1 The Øresund Committee

For a long period of time, the Øresund Committee (*Öresundskomiteen*, the spelling is a combination of Swedish and Danish) was the largest and most important political institution in the Øresund Region. From 1993 up until its demise in 2015, the committee consisted of 36 regional and municipal politicians from both Danish and Swedish regions (See Table 1).



Figure 1. Map of the Øresund Region formed by the Øresund Committee. *Source:* The Øresund Committee (2010)

The members included the former Copenhagen County (*Amt* in Danish), Region Skåne (also known as *Skåne Län*), along with an additional 5 counties from Eastern Denmark, 9 municipalities around the Øresund coast and government representatives from both

countries (City of Copenhagen 2000). The representatives were in the “formation phase” meeting several times a year and an executive board consisting of 12 members were meeting four times a year. Later on, the representatives only met twice a year. The chairmanship rotated between Denmark and Sweden on an annual basis and the member fees were paid according to population in the member county (later on regions) and municipality. The Øresund Secretariat was set to implement the committee’s cross-border actions and initiatives.



Figure 2. The logo of the Øresund Committee. *Source:* The Øresund Committee (2010)

2.2 The Greater Copenhagen Committee

Founded in 2016, the GCC¹ is the current political institution of the cross-border region of Øresund. In looking at the GCC, it is led by a political board, an administrative board and a coordinating group and it is financed by the member regions (Region Hovedstaden 2015a). One annual conference is organized where political representatives from all the 85 municipalities and Region Skåne, Region Halland, Region Zealand and the Capital Region are present. The committee is serviced by a secretariat which includes a few employees as well as a newly employed managing director. They are in charge with handling the practicalities of the committee’s work, including the meetings, the annual conference and the financial management of the committee’s funds.

The decision-making body is the political board² consisting of 18 elected politicians in which 9 members are appointed by the municipalities and regions of Copenhagen and Zealand, and

¹ Until 2018 known as the Greater Copenhagen and Skåne Committee. In 2018, Halland Region and its 9 municipalities joined, changing the name to Greater Copenhagen Committee.

² *Bestyrelse* in Danish/*styrelse* in Swedish

9 members from the municipalities and regions of Skåne and Halland (Copenhagen Capacity 2019a). The political board decides on an annual basis an action plan in which they select strategic goals. The action plan is supposed to ensure a focus on creating economic growth and working places in the entire geography of Greater Copenhagen. The chairmanship³ represents the political board in between meetings, and it consists of four persons, a chairman and three deputy-chairmen appointed by the four geographies once a year. They meet at least 4 times a year. The political board is also served by an administrative board⁴ with the object of ensuring that the member organisations carry out the decisions made by the political board. The administrative board consists of chief executives, reflecting the member representation of the political board. The work of the administrative board is serviced by a coordinating group⁵ led by officials representing the 18 member organisations of the political board, meeting at least once a month.

GREATER COPENHAGEN

Figure 3. The logo of the Greater Copenhagen Committee. *Source:* Greater Copenhagen (2020)

³ *Formandskab* in Danish/*ordförandskab* in Swedish

⁴ *Styregruppe* in Danish/*ledningsgrupp* in Swedish

⁵ *Koordinationsgruppe* in Danish/*samordningsgrupp* in Swedish



Figure 4: Map of the Greater Copenhagen Area. *Source:* Greater Copenhagen (2020)

2.3 The actors of the Øresund Committee and the Greater Copenhagen Committee

The key local and regional public actors in both ØC and GCC are the City of Copenhagen, City of Malmö, the cities of Helsingborg and Elsinore as well as the Capital Region and Region Skåne (see Table 1). These have been the motive powers of the establishment and development of both collaborations including Interreg projects connected to the institutions. Besides these, Region Zealand, the City of Lund, some surrounding municipalities of Copenhagen⁶, and recently Region Halland as well as the national business authorities of Denmark and Sweden are also important public players. In Table 9 (see Appendix), the current network of public-private and private actors affiliated with Greater Copenhagen is outlined, though it is rather complex. Some key actors include the consultancies of Copenhagen Capacity and Invest in Skåne and the life-cluster organisation of Medicon Valley Alliance.

⁶ Municipalities include Albertslund and Solrød due to profound interest from both of their mayors having chairmanships in the Municipal Contact Councils of the Capital and Zealand

Table 1. Actors involved in the political cross-border institutions of the Øresund Region

<i>Name</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>Aim</i>
<i>The Øresund Committee or Öresundskomiteen (1993-2016)</i>	16 Danish members and 16 Swedish members, including The Capital Region ⁷ , Region Skåne, Region Zealand, Contact Council of the Capital, City of Copenhagen, City of Malmö, City of Helsingborg, Lund Municipality and Landskrona Municipality	A political platform to collaborate between municipalities and regions in the Øresund Region.
<i>The Greater Copenhagen Committee (2016-)</i>	Region Hovedstaden, Region Skåne, Region Halland, Region Zealand, 46 Danish municipalities and 39 Swedish municipalities	The aim of the committee is to connect Southern Sweden and Eastern Denmark by promoting regional collaboration and economic growth in order to attract international investments, tourism and talent

Sources: Øresundsinstittet (2015), Greater Copenhagen (2020)

⁷ 3 municipalities of the Capital Region, 2 municipalities of Region Zealand were also members of the ØC

3. Theoretical framework

The following section provides an overview of pertinent literature to this study. As the notions of borders, cross-border regions, and governance capacity represent the key concepts of the theoretical framework in this thesis, they all need to be clarified.

3.1 Borders

In recent years, *borders* and *border regions* have become an increasingly more complex phenomenon as the acceleration of the globalisation of economic exchanges and more supranational integration mechanisms, i.e. the EU, have led to the rescaling of regional economy (Hansen and Serin 2010; Sohn 2014). This means that the concept of borders is of great importance in political geography since it exposes frictions of scale, space, territoriality, regions and states (Szary 2015). Above all, the notion refers to a geographical delamination of social groups by legal lines (Mendoza & Dupeyron 2020). In post-modern terms, borders are now deeply embedded in the concepts of flows and networks (Castells 1996;1999), identity (Paasi 2003) and globalism (Sinclair 2001). Therefore, borders can be conceived as a multidimensional concept, whereby their cultural, social and symbolic significance is historically and geographically produced and re-produced by societies (Paasi 2002; Paasi & Prokkola, 2008). In EU literature, the main question usually focuses on the capability of how formal organizations implement cross-border strategies and are able to redefine state space beyond national jurisdictions (Sohn 2014). Often, these cross-border spaces have certain challenges owing to their multi-scalar characteristics that require resolution at multiple levels (Anderson & O'Dowd 1999). In Jessop (2004), it is stressed that economic cooperation requires supranational coordination to make regional governance and macroeconomics flourish and work alongside each other. These different spaces of regulation tend to conflict with each other and can, at times, work in opposite directions depending on their spatial domains of power and interest.

The notion of borders should be perceived as a theoretical steppingstone to grasp more contextual concepts such as cross-border regions, governance and institutional capacity.

3.2 Cross-border regions

Several terms are used in the literature to define these border spaces, such as border regions, cross-border spaces or cross-border regions. In this study, I use the concept of *cross-border regions* (CBRs) because it can be used as part of a theoretical framework to analyse the case of the Øresund Region and the cross-border institutions of the ØC and the GCC. In this thesis, a CBR is defined as a territorial unit made up of contiguous subnational units from at least two nation-states (Perkmann & Sum 2002). In line with Deas and Lord (2006:1862), this study sees CBRs as “unusual regions” that exist independently from preliminary defined administrative borders. In detail, there is also a political dimension to CBRs in which Pupier (2020:82) classify them “as the bounded geographic scope on which cross-border cooperation asserts implementation of a spatial strategy”. Similarly, I understand CBRs as political spaces originating from existing governmental and spatial territories, with the implication of reorganizing into new political shapes.

Many examples of CBRs around Europe show that several issues need to be covered such as proximity, language, cultural identities, political visions, governance structures and economic cohesion in order to better integrate and consequently make a region prosper (EU 2016; Hospers 2006; Lundquist & Trippel 2011). According to Harguindéguy & Sánchez (2017), there are around 177 CBRs in Europe. According to Pikner (2008), CBRs present regional forms of policy, which can reconfigure the roles and practices between public administrations, entrepreneurs and citizens and at the same time modify governance relations between actors across spatial scales. One example is the Svinesund Committee, which focuses on cross-cooperation between Oslo and Gothenburg, connecting the regions of Västra Götaland and Østfold (OECD 2018). An even broader collaboration is the mega-regional network by the name of STRING stretching from Oslo to Hamburg, originally initiated in 1999 with a focus on establishing a new fixed link between Denmark and Germany across the Fehmarn Belt (STRING 2020). The Euro Metropolis of Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai crossing the French-Belgian border consists of 157 Flemish, Walloon and French municipalities, with Dutch and French-speaking inhabitants and has a long history of cross-cultural bonds (Euro Metropolis 2020). These three examples all have in common that they collaborate between multiple borders to

create stronger economic bonds, an integrated labour market and intensifying regional growth.

3.3 The Europe of Regions and the political rescaling

In governance terms defined by the EU, cross border regions have been a crucial tool in the promotion of European regionalization (Scott 2009). The concept of the *Europe of Regions*⁸ is a political concept which was brought along when the European integration process promoted the regional level into its next steps of regional integration in the 1980s and 1990s. This term came into fashion when regionalization procedures happened as direct effects of the European integration process (Ulrich 2016). This approach is based on the assumption that to empower regions, it is necessary to reconstruct a multilevel polity with supranational arenas of self-constitution. The main tool from the EU making the cross-border growth flourish began in the 1990s when the territorial scope of Interreg programmes was growing in size. According to Pupier (2020), the geography of Interreg programmes shows both a multiplication process - which means new programmes at new borders - and an expansion process - bigger programmes' perimeters along the borders and into hinterlands. In order to strengthen the internal market of EU, strategies of growth in CBRs have proven to be one successful tool to boost this development. This development of the European regionalism is tied to the notion of rescaling. European regional policy that responded to the economic logic of regional development as well as to build up regions as a way to get around national politics, i.e. Interreg, created a shift of policy attention to the regional scale (Deas and Lord 2006). *Rescaling* is consolidated through the creation of governance institutions and functions at a different scale (i.e. CBRs) that have both the legitimacy and the capacity to act (Nelles & Durand 2014). The rescaling of regions refers to how the construct of the nation-state with a fixed set of policy boundaries and a hierarchical structure is transcended by the emergence of new boundaries above and below the national level, as well as cross-border spaces cutting across state systems (Keating 2009). This discourse on political rescaling can be seen as a perceived change of government referred to as *the hollowing out of the state* leading to the

⁸ As from the early 2000s referred to as "Euroregions" in regional policy literature (Perkmann 2002)

production of new political spaces (Jessop 2013; Nelles & Durand 2014). This process can be encapsulated by the concept of *glocalization* that has weakened state capacity. According to Swyngedouw (2004:25), glocalization refers to how:

institutional arrangements shift from the national level both upwards to supra-national or global scales and downwards to the scale of the individual body or to local, urban or regional configurations and the local or regional configurations and, secondly, economic activities and inter-firm networks are becoming simultaneously more localised/regionalised and transnational

In this logic of rescaling, there is a blurred line between functional, political and institutional boundaries as well as no strict hierarchies of collective action. This means that such regional spaces are often contested, since regional actors can both gain and lose influence as a result of authority reconfigured around new spaces (Stead 2014). Following Le Galès (2016), this thesis discusses CBRs as disputed *post-political spaces* and aims at making connections to the asymmetric nature of such spaces. In sum, the process of rescaling involves the creation and empowerment of new territorial and political actors in a complex interrelation between state-power, rescaling and neoliberalism. I find the case of the GCC and its ancestor of the ØCC as an example of the emergence of a new political system where the political rescaling of a region is under development. Consequently, the analysis is exemplifying the contestation regarding the capacity to implement growth policies in a cross-border context. In the following, this theoretical framework goes from the theoretical background to the concepts operationalized in the analysis of this study.

3.4 Governance in cross-border institutions:

As this study analyses governance practices in cross-border institutions, the term *governance* needs further inquiry. According to Gualini (2005: 298), governance can be defined as: “emergent patterns of policymaking (a) dealing with the resolution of collective problems (b) at the threshold between state, markets and civil society (c) in terms which may be held accountable to institutions of representative democracy.”

This is a key conceptual basis for understanding the organizational changes from the ØC to the GCC since it accounts the collective action and boundaries between different social actors,

spaces and modes of governance. The complexity becomes even more evident, because the governance is taking place across national borders. Therefore, as a practice, cross-border governance is done through organizational forms in which actors from different spatial scales are involved (i.e. municipal, regional, the EU). Formulated by Pikner (2008), the organizational form of the cross-border governance is designed by a statute, assigned members, formulated purposes and processes of collective action. These cross-border institutions have certain motives and limits to bring actors and activities under their governance umbrella to make them collective, and as a result they also try to institutionalize them (by presenting them as their own activities). In some cases, organizational forms in CBRs may combine municipalities, cities, regional authorities, states and NGO's, which means that these cross-border institutions can influence the state policies and power relations to a certain extent.

3.5 Cross-border governance capacity

In the study, I make use of the concept of *governance capacity* to analyse governance practices in cross-border institutions. By analysing the cross-border practices of the ØC and the GCC as political resources, the concept of *cross-border governance capacity* becomes central as a theoretical tool to understand these practices. Argued by Pikner (2008), the concept of *governance capacity*, although not originally used in a cross-border context⁹, assists a vital role in cross-border governance, since it creates basis to mobilise inter-regional interests and resources across borders. Therefore, the notion of governance capacity acts as a conceptual door-opener to analyse the empirical case of Greater Copenhagen. According to Gualini (2005:294) *governance capacity*¹⁰ is “in understanding the specific relationships that tie governmental and institutional action with networks in defining policy outcomes, and the public strategies that built around these ties.” Elaborating on this definition, Gualini highlights that *governance capacity* should be understood as the enabling dimension of

⁹ Healey et. al. (1999) have used the concept of institutional capacity to analyze urban regeneration projects and to argue for the positive role for local action in reaction to external factors

¹⁰ 'Institutional capacity' and 'governance capacity' refers to the same conception, although the theoretical schools are different when looking at Healey's planning perspective and Gualini's political science perspective on the concept

institutions related to their ability to sustain social cohesion and to generate collective action as well as the strategical foundations to which they are built on. This new-institutionalist stance sees governance capacity as an outcome of interactive processes involving practices in the negotiation and social construction of meanings. In line with Gualini (2005), Healey et. al. (2002a:27) and Magalhães et. al. (2002) also use the term *institutional capacity* (inspired by Innes et. al. 1994)¹¹, which is characterized as a public good and involves three types of connected *capitals* in the interactive governance context: *intellectual capital* (knowledge resources), *social capital* (trust and social understanding) and *political capital* (the capacity to act collectively). This study uses the term *governance capacity* to cover these types of capitals, in which the analytical interest is to evaluate the processes of building such capacities. When analysing how governance capacity emerges and transforms, reorganizations in governance require analytical tools which focus on how practices interact with the wider context in a process of mutual constitution and transformation.

3.6 The operationalisation of cross-border governance capacity

In this study, operationalising the concept of cross-border governance capacity is done by using the three types of connected capitals from Healey et. al. (2002). Following their definition, this study sees cross-border governance capacity as how a cross-border institution is able to act collectively, both internally in the organisation and externally with its partners with the purpose of sustaining and transforming cross-border collaboration via practises of political, spatial, strategic, economic and cultural matter. This leads to the primary point of governance capacity, which is the three capitals from Healey et. al. (2002). First, *intellectual capital* which can be divided into four elements (Magalhães et. al. 2002). The first element depends on access by stakeholders and their *range of knowledge* on what to do, why and how that are expressed within networks, both expert knowledge and local experiential knowledge. Second, it refers to the *frames of reference* that shape the meanings and interpretations given to the flow of knowledge. The third element is the degree of *integration* of the knowledge and their ability to translate different types of knowledge among stakeholders within and between

¹¹ Healey et. al. (2002) and Magalhães et. al. (2002) are inspired by Innes et. al. (1994) who identified three kinds of capital: intellectual, social and political capital.

networks. Fourth, the ways in which knowledge resources are deployed in networks depend on *the capacity to access new ideas and inspiration* and how to learn from them. *Social capital*, or the ability to build up relation resources, is linked to four variables: firstly, the *range of relations* linking the stakeholders, and the nature of bonding values holding these networks together. Second, the *morphology* of the networks, their architecture, highlighting the density of interconnections, spatial and temporal reaches, nodal points and key *switching points* where connections between networks are possible. The third variable is the existence of *integration* between the relational webs transecting a place, affinity of *bonding values*, density of *shared nodes* and *switching points*. Fourth, the nature of the *power relations*, which manage the networks and govern access to them (i.e. open or closed) as well as shape the links which local networks have with national and international centres of economic, legal and ideological power. Drawing on Tarrow's dynamics of social movements (Tarrow 1994), *political capital* is linked to the ability of stakeholders to mobilise *opportunity structures* for collective action, to identify structural shifts that create opportunities for change and identify *agenda-setting powers* which can act as magnets for mobilisation. Secondly, it is linked to their ability to identify the *arenas* where regulatory power lies and where real changes can be made. Thirdly, it is connected to the *repertoire* of mobilisation techniques for each situation. Lastly, it requires the presence of skilled *change agents* to operate at critical *nodal points* on the routes to resources and regulatory power. I use the term *governance capacity* to cover all three capitals.

Connected to the reorganisation from the Øresund to the Greater Copenhagen Committee, a change of strategy between the two seems to have mobilised a new agenda. The goal is to identify, as governance relations evolve, how the *governance capacity* of the organisations shapes this change and creates new capacities (Healey et. al 2002). As an empirical framework, the organizational transformation of the ØC to the GCC is applied in order to understand the change of *cross-border governance capacity*. In order to build a more thorough analysis, I want to examine the effect of these capacities, or as Gualini (2005:303) refers to as *the policy outcomes* of governance.

Defined by Le Galès one of the key dimensions of governance is identifying its *outcomes* (as cited in Gualini 2005:304) as:

[...] the dimensions related to the results of the implementation of policies and to their patterns with regard to their impact, to their selective (inclusive-exclusive), and to their innovative features with regard to different societal sectors and groups or individuals and to different policy issues

In this study, I understand *policy outcomes* as to what degree the cross-border institutions of the ØC and the GCC have been able to outlive their political objectives, their level of impact and democratic features in either excluding or including groups when deploying strategical policy. This adds a comparative element in the sense that the policy outcomes are different in how these cross-border institutions policies impact on targeted issues and groups.

4. Methodology

The research for this study builds on a critical realist (CR) framework established to be in line with my ontological, epistemological and methodological choices. Following this critical stance, the thesis consists of a case study combining different methods and materials. This section discusses the analytical prospects of studying cross-border governance, the benefits of case-study research as well as the limitations of the study. In what follows, I reflect on the metatheoretical implications of using a CR perspective and how this links to the empirical work of the thesis.

4.1 Philosophical reflections: A critical realist perspective

As this thesis applies a CR approach to the conducted methods, knowledge is, epistemologically, created by building models of how real processes shape events and experiences in the light of contingent circumstances (Huckle 2017). Epistemologically, CR differs between the *intransitive* and the *transitive* dimensions of scientific inquiry, implying that the world should not be conflated with our experience of it, hence, it is misleading to speak of the empirical world (Sayer 2000). Offering a transcendental proof for the existence of real objects, the founder of CR, Roy Bhaskar, found that they were accessible to empirical observation via three ontologically divided levels: *the real*, *the actual* and *the empirical* (Jessop 1997). The real is generative structures or causal mechanisms that exist whether or not we can perceive it, which according to Sayer (2000) means that objects that have structures and powers reside, no matter whether we can see or not. The actual refers to events resulting from various real tendencies and counter tendencies when powers of the real are activated (Jessop 1997). The empirical relates to the domain of experience - observations or measurements of actual events and, in rare cases, underlying structures and mechanisms - which can prefer either the real or the actual though it is contingent whether we know the real or the actual (Sayer 2000). Methodologically, CR aims to discover the necessary and sufficient conditions of a given explanandum¹². In relation to the method of case studying, Wynn & Williams (2012) found that CR-based case study research is a fruitful foundation for a causal analysis, which,

¹² An explanandum, a Latin term, is that which needs to be explained and that which contains the explanation either as a cause, antecedent event etc. (Oxford Reference 2020)

at best, should seek to develop a causal and transitive explanation of how a complex phenomenon happens. Therefore, I need to identify an event or events constituting the outcome of this study. Empirically observed experiences are abstracted allowing the researcher to describe and explain in detail those events believed to have occurred.

4.2 Research design: Case-study research

Applying the ontological and epistemological principles of CR, case-study as the research design of this thesis have three aspects that are specifically important in relation to CR: specifying the research question, case selection and generalizability (Wynn & Williams 2012). Rather than describing events in theoretical terms, explaining how and why specific, complex events occur is of specific consideration. Given the epistemological principles of CR, the research question of this study seeks to get hold of the mechanisms responsible for the key events which illustrate the change of governance capacity between the two cross-border institutions. The second aspect of case-study research relates to case selection. Usually, case study research focuses strictly on an intensive examination of events occurring in a single structure, which in this study is the evolution of one cross-border institution turning into another. Finally, generalizability is important in the sense that under CR the idea is to utilize the detailed causal explanations of the mechanisms at work in a certain setting to obtain insights as to how and why a similar mechanism could lead to different, or supposedly similar, outcomes in a different setting.

This study undertakes a critical glance at a cross-border case in the CBR of Øresund, the cross-border institution by the name of the Greater Copenhagen Committee and its ancestor, the Øresund Committee. The study takes both institutions into account and although they are highly relating to each other, I choose to see them as two separate cases, in which the process of reorganization rationalizes the idea of analysing them independently. Despite the fact that both institutions have adopted somewhat the same political objectives of place-marketing and the unification of a cross-border labour market, they are both institutionally and in terms of governance practices unlike each other, which means that a third part profitably should be analysed. This is where the reorganization of the institutions comes into play as a third part of the analysis. On a practical level, the decision why this case has been chosen is also

motivated by a former case study experienced by the author conducted during an internship at Nordregio during Autumn 2019. The case study dealt with skills development in the Greater Copenhagen area in which I became familiar with the cross-border challenges about the Øresund Strait.

4.3 Research methods

The research methods conducted for the thesis entails a combination of desktop research and stakeholder interviews, engendering a fruitful understanding of the case selected for the thesis. During the research process, both methods have undergone several reassessments in relation to their relevance and relation to the guiding principle of thesis, which is the research question.

Stakeholder interviews

The primary data collection for this thesis includes ten semi-structured interviews, having been conducted with relevant stakeholders during November and December 2020. Eight interviews were conducted via online video-meetings, one over the phone, and one face-to-face meeting. The duration of the interviews was between 30-60 minutes. Potential stakeholders were identified through the cooperation with the Øresund Institute (*Øresundsinstittet*) as well as through desk research. The interviewees include former officials and politicians affiliated with the ØC and the Focused Growth Agenda and current politicians of the GCC. Furthermore, one public and one private advisor have been interviewed together with one close collaborator of the GCC. One interview was made with a professor sketching the overall challenges that the Øresund Region has been facing within this time frame. Three of the interviews were conducted with ØC stakeholders, whereas five interviews were conducted with stakeholders from GCC. However, all three of the GCC politicians have either partly or been fully engaged in ØC as well, equalizing the distribution of interviews between the two cross-border institutions. See Table 2 for an overview of the stakeholder interviews. The research method of semi-structured interviews was chosen since they imply a predetermined order but still ensure flexibility in the way the issues are addressed by the informant (Dunn 2005). In spite of the different versions of the interview guides, the topics were similar, enabling a comparison between each individual and

institution. First of all, the interviews provided me with a timeline of how each institution had been progressing through time, what helped establishing each institution in addition to what challenges they faced. Second, as the interviews were conducted, they provided me with knowledge about the network of projects, relationships and experiences that each individual knew of or had been working with. Third, the interviews enabled me to further investigate the role of the stakeholders in relation to the state of the institution. An interview guide example is found in the Appendix.

At first, all interviewees were contacted via email and subsequently a phone call if I did not get a reply. Nine out of ten interviews were conducted from my home office, one at the interviewees' place of work. Upon permission by the interviewees, the online video-meetings and the face-to-face meeting were recorded and transcribed. Seven of the interviews were carried out with Swedish interviewees where both Swedish and Danish was spoken. 3 were conducted in Danish. However, I speak nearly fluently Swedish, reducing the translation disparities between Swedish and Danish. On request from the author, full interview transcripts are accessible. Permission to use the names of interviewees as well as publishing the quotes has been approved by all informants. After transcription and translation, I proceeded by coding the transcripts using the questions and theoretic themes as guidelines for the coding process. First, the interviews were coded according to each capital of governance capacity, either social, intellectual or political. When all codes were assigned, codes were grouped into main events, challenges and shifts of practice. Categorising the code material into main groups allowed me to see mutual answers, formulations or depictions of events widening the causality of how one event led to another. Consequently, the findings were placed into the analytical framework mirroring the theory, allowing a better understanding of how the findings support previous research on CBRs and urban and regional governance as well as offering alternative analyses.

Table 2. Overview of interviews

Interviewee	Position	Details
Michael Svane	Industry sector executive, DI Transport, Confederation of Danish Industry (DI)	Interview: 9. 11. 2020
Daniel Persson	Managing director, PR Progress Öresund Former Public Affairs Manager, Øresund Committee	Interview: 18. 11. 2020
Pia Kinhult	Head of Host States Relations, ESS Former Chair of the Regional Executive Committee, Region Skåne	Interview: 20. 11. 2020
Henrik Fritzon	Member of the Region Council, Region Skåne Former Chair of the Regional Executive, Region Skåne	Interview: 23. 11. 2020
Steen Christiansen	Mayor, Albertslund Municipality	Interview: 24. 11. 2020
Jesper Falkheimer	Professor, Department of Strategic Communication, Lund University	Interview: 24. 11. 2020
Mikael Stamming	Former Managing Director, the Øresund Committee	Interview: 27. 11. 2020
Sophie Hæstrup Andersen	Chairman of the Regional Council, the Capital Region of Denmark	Interview: 1. 12. 2020
Petter Hartman	CEO, Medicon Valley Alliance	Interview: 1. 12. 2020
Arian Ratkoceri	Political advisor for the Mayor of the Executive Committee Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh, City of Malmö	Interview: 2. 12. 2020

Desktop research

Forming the initial research and empirical background of the thesis, a large number of strategic documents, dissertations, academic literature, newspaper articles, regional and municipal minutes, third part evaluations and annual reports from stakeholders affiliated with either the ØC or the GCC have been thoroughly investigated, leading to a smaller sample of regional development strategies having been further examined. This has been done in order to form the background knowledge of the ØC as well as the reorganisation process of the Focused Growth Agenda, transforming into the GCC. Analytically, the two prime regional development strategies benchmarking the individual progress of the ØC and the GCC were chosen due to their profound weight and influence on the internal work of the institutions. The outcome of the comprehensive investigation of political documents is displayed in a table for each institution, serving the purpose of summarizing the strategic priorities of both institutions given their governance capacities (see Table 3 and Table 6). Academic literature acts as background as well as empirical support, mapping previous studies on cross-border collaboration as well as to summarize relevant literature on, primarily, four academic themes: the Øresund Region, CBRs, urban and regional governance and political rescaling. Research and academic articles on the Øresund Region have provided additional knowledge on the starting point of the ØC.

4.4 Limitations

In order to undertake a more purposeful analysis, it is key to define the limitations of the analysis. As this study is using *governance* as a theoretical tool to understand a political context in a cross-border region, I am aware that traditional understandings of both government and governance is difficult in a cross-border region with multilevel practices of governance. However, as Gualini (2007:884) argues, I have focused on governance practices that redefine the ways the state intervenes “in realizing new forms of sociopolitical regulation at the threshold between the private and the public, between the economic and the non-economic”. Thus, governance becomes strategic formal cooperation attempting to regain legitimacy to state action by promoting development initiatives at a regional cross-border scale. The space of the Øresund Region is political both in a normative way, as the framing of

policy spaces becomes key to the capacity of politics to achieve legitimacy and effectiveness; and it is political in a critical sense, as Gualini (2007:892-93) argues, since “representations of space convey power relations and - even if implicit - hegemonic projects”.

Another limitation is that I focus less on the everyday cross-border integration that comes from the ones establishing businesses across the border, those commuting across the border and the job centres supporting an exchange of labour in the common cross-border labour market. Focusing on how the reorganization changed the governance capacity of the ØC to the GCC, this thesis briefly considers the build-up of the ØC from 1993 as well as after the opening of the Øresund Bridge in 2000. However, the primary focus of the thesis is what led up to the reorganization during the time of the ØC, the reorganization process in itself and how this changed the governance capacity of the GCC, consequently comparing the governance capacities between the ØC and the GCC. Aside from the regional perspective, the political landscape of Øresund also comprises the national level as well as the supranational level related to EU-funded Interreg projects. These are not the primary focus of the analysis, yet, they are still discussed partially.

5. Analysis - Part I. The case of the Øresund Committee

This chapter sets out to analyse the *governance capacity* in the cross-border context of the Øresund Region from 2010 to 2020. The aim is to provide answers as to how the reorganisation from the ØC to the GCC changes the *governance capacity* of these institutions. As I take a critical stand towards *traditional hierarchies of scale*, this analysis challenges the established levels of governance practice. In its place, I suggest *rescaling* as the empowering process for *cross-border regions*.

5.1 The birth of the committee

In the year 2000, Copenhagen and Malmö became connected by the Øresund Bridge, creating a whole new space for a common labour market, new kinds of transnational collaboration and potentials for business development and tourism. There were high expectations towards a functional region, an awakening of a “bi-national city” took shape (Wichmann 2004:61), where thoughts of a cross-national regional government based on legal systems and with the exercise of power were in its early stages. Founded in 1993, the ØC quickly became a key actor of this development. Legal policies inciting the job integration of Øresund were still yet to be seen until 2004 when a commuter taxation was arranged. The agreement implied that the border-crossing commuter paid taxes to the place of work and that money to cover municipality expenditures in the place of living were transferred.

5.2 The amalgamation and the financial crisis - the breaking point for the committee

In 2008, the institutional structure of the ØC was weakened for numerous reasons. This was partly due to a new attempt of setting a strategic direction for infrastructure but mainly because of the regional and municipal amalgamation in Denmark happening the same year, causing a new organization structure of the committee. The new structure of the ØC meant, as Pia Kinhults puts it, that the cooperation was supposed to “speed up”, leading to distrust and lack of confidence between the Danish and Swedish partners of the committee.

Social capital in the executive board was weakened due to the new organisational structure that followed the amalgamation. As a consequence of the distrust and lack of confidence, the *morphology* of the network was therefore destabilised among the members. The committee was rather struggling to derive advantages from this transition period. On top of this, by 2008 the integration of Øresund had never looked better since the commuter numbers reached its peak at more than 25.000 daily cross-border commuters (The Øresund Institute 2020). However, when the financial crisis hit later that year, the commuter numbers began decreasing and has been dropping ever since. The integration process was failing.

5.3 The secretariat

According to Hall (2007), the committee's own Øresund Secretariat was able to exercise a great deal of informal influence on the actual cross-border activities due to the new IBU-strategy¹³ of 2008, which especially points to the importance of funding from Interreg. The secretariat comprised an office of ten people, with the involvement of public actors on both sides to implement the committee's strategies and hosting the secretariat for the programme Interreg IVA Øresund as well as the Øresund Direct. Surprisingly, the *agenda-setting power* for the cross-border activities was mostly the officials from the secretariat, not politicians of the ØC. This created a complicated balance since the secretariat on one hand was expected by the politicians to take initiative. On the other hand, the secretariat both needed to win support from the strongest members in the cooperation (in order to gain influence) at the same time as meeting negative remarks about their independence from other politicians, mostly less influential and interested municipal councils. This role of the secretariat resembles the bureaucratic governance model of Sweden, in which officials are working independently from the appointed politicians to set out the political objectives (Smith 2000). In terms of *governance capacity*, the secretariat could be characterised as the practising *collective actor* working across the Øresund to develop *social capital* through a wider *range of relations*, reaching multiple networks across the border. In this sense, the secretariat as the *active agent* moulded the *capacity to act collectively* across Øresund by its attempt to maintain

¹³ The IBU-strategy was funded by the INTERREG-IV project as an initiator for the following ÖRUS strategy of 2010

and build-up new Interreg projects (See Table 3 for Interreg projects). Thus, the secretariat formed *political capital* in terms of its ability to draw resources, to handle strategies and to create new ideas into the effort of *collective action* (Healey et. al. 2002). However, the degree which the ØC was able to act collectively was, according to Pia Kinhult, fairly limited. She points to the fact that since neither the Danish nor Swedish politicians would compromise, this led to a political institution where it “rarely was that concrete. That is why the ØC became more of a lobby organisation”. According to Henrik Fritzon, until recently Chair of the Regional Executive of Region Skåne, “the Øresund Committee was fairly small as an organization”. This makes the ØC a politically modest phenomenon, as *the ability to act collectively* comes down to if these dialogues have equally included all actors in order for them to have a shared understanding for a common vision.

A common vision was not introduced before 2010 - although having forerunners from 2005 and 2008 by the names of ÖRIB and IBU. Consequently, the Öresund Region Development Strategy or ÖRUS was the first of its kind, preparing an integrated and holistic vision of the Øresund Region.

5.4 The new strategy

Due to the kick-start of the IBU infrastructure vision from 2008, the first common development strategy saw the light of day in 2010 entitled ÖRUS (See Table 3 for further information about the priorities of the strategies). The primary aim was to develop the Øresund Region into Europe’s most attractive and sustainable region for citizens, businesses and tourists by 2020 (The Øresund Committee 2010). This was to be achieved by a sufficient utilization of the integration and the cross-border dynamics. Identified by the organization (The Øresund Committee 2010), their toolbox towards realising further integration and cross-border dynamics was through the four “main themes” of the ÖRUS (See Table 3). Thus, the committee had access to a great deal of *intellectual capital* in the sense that the committee, for the first time, tried to *innovate* their strategical aims in which infrastructure attained an explicit focus. Following the IBU-project, identified infrastructural visions were re-launched such as the extension of Copenhagen Airport, high-speed trains to Øresund via the airport, accessibility to the whole region and the development of the Fehmarn-connection, thereby

making an attempt to explore *opportunity structures* during this challenging period with decreasing commuting numbers (Healey et. al. 2002).

Although having been discussed in fora elsewhere, these could, at least, be seen as an attempt to bring new ideas to the table. The ÖRUS was, by other means, a way of breathing new life into the stagnated cooperation by welcoming *new ideas* to the collaboration (See Table 3). At the same time, the ÖRUS became a reasoning to uphold the work of the ØC by stating themselves as the key actor to break down the identified cross-border barriers (The Øresund Committee 2013). The list of new ideas is long, but here is an excerpt of the *range of knowledge* presented in the ÖRUS as well as the former ÖRIB and IBU:

Table 3. Strategic priorities of the Øresund Committee

<i>Initiating collaboration (1993-2000)</i>	<i>Institution-building phase (2000-2005)</i>	<i>Amalgamation and financial crisis (2005-2010)</i>	<i>Transitioning towards a new growth agenda (2010-2015)</i>
<i>Common development areas according to the three strategies of ÖRIB, IBU & ÖRUS</i>	Cooperation activities in the Øresund Committee:	Cooperation activities and plans according to the ÖRIB (2005, 2008) and IBU (2007) strategies	Cooperation activities and plans according to the regional development strategy of ÖRUS (2010)
Business	Medicon Valley Academy	“Better conditions for businesses, logistics and innovation”	“Developing business networks”
Culture and tourism	Tourism plan by Copenhagen Capacity called “Location Copenhagen”	Rich cultural life	New Øresund Event Strategy
	Öresund Food Network		Establishing an “Øresund Identity”
Research and innovation	Øresund University	Danish and Swedish should be offered in language teaching at all schools in the Øresund area	Øresund Class
	Øresund IT Academy		ESS Spallation Center and MAX IV
	Database called Ørestat I	Strengthening innovation	Climate and clean tech e.g. through Energy Øresund
		Second phase of Ørestat II	

Mobility and transport	Øresundsbron (before 2000)	Better accessibility (e.g. road pricing)	Further development of the airport
	Malmö Citytunneln		
	Copenhagen Metro	New Fehmarn Link	
		HH-connection & Ring 5	
Communication and media	Øresund Identity Network (from 2002 Øresund Network AB)	“Branding is a precondition for further development”	Øresund News Øresund Events at the People’s Meeting
	Place-branding strategy of “Øresund: The Human Capital”		
		High-speed trains	
Labour market	Øresund Direct	Øresund Direct and Øresund Direct Business	Further development of Øresund Direct
	New national tax rules supporting cross-border commuting	Attractive and coherent labour market (ÖRUS)	New working group of border barriers of ØC

Sources: Hospers (2006), IBU-Øresund (2010), Øresund Committee (2010, 2013)

As a publicly funded cross-border organisation standing out from traditional levels of governance, the ØC and its ÖRUS indicates that they had limited options to offer more than strategic levels of authority, which shows why they have continuously advocated for future investments in transport without any chance of exerting an influence on municipal or especially national governments. As a result, the ÖRUS only held *capacity to build a vision* for the Øresund Region of symptomatic treatment of the decreasing commuter numbers and prospering growth agendas in the public sector of Denmark. According to Daniel Persson, the strength about the ÖRUS strategy was that it enabled officials to connect from both sides of Øresund to agree on four different themes which created an anchoring of a common vision for the whole Øresund Region.

In this sense, the strategy of ÖRUS transcended from a *knowledge resource* of the committee into a *relational resource* that mobilised integration in the organisation. Consequently, the creation of visions can become a means to *act collectively* in itself. However, the strategy only strengthened *internal social connections* between Swedish and Danish officials and needed

further political support. This means that the ÖRUS was an institutional attempt to use *learning processes, releasing creativity, developing trust, acting collectively* (Healey et. al. 2002), but without the element of bringing new *windows of opportunities* to the table in its political future to come.

5.5 The demise of the committee

According to Daniel Persson, the committee was during the years from 2010 until 2015 mostly anchored to the Swedish members. Consequently, a certain scepticism was spreading in the Danish camp of the committee. As of the years up until around 2010-2012, the overarching challenge for the ØC was to establish a *capacity to mobilise the knowledge resources* from the ÖRUS and its *relational resources* into a change of scenery making the Øresund Region relevant to politicians from local, regional and national level in both Denmark and Sweden. In other words, the ØC was at this time challenged in fulfilling their political objectives considering their *lack of capacity* to mobilise *social and intellectual capital*. Several cross-border projects, including the Ørestat database¹⁴, networks such as the Øresund University, the Øresund Science Region and the Øresund Entrepreneurship Academy collapsed during this period. Between 2008 and 2012, the employment rates dropped and went lower than both Oslo and Stockholm (City of Copenhagen 2015). According to Daniel Persson, the political commitment behind the ØC was at its lowest, which meant that the secretariat of less than ten people was not provided with sufficient resources to fulfil the political objectives of the ÖRUS. In 2014, a decision was made to close down the ØC and restructure the collaboration under the name of the Greater Copenhagen Committee.

¹⁴ A database that contained comparable statistics for the Øresund Region funded by the Interreg projects of Ørestat I and II, III

6. Analysis - Part II. The reorganisation from the Øresund Committee to the Greater Copenhagen Committee

The following section of the analysis discloses what catalysed the reorganisation from the former Øresund Committee to the Greater Copenhagen Committee with the purpose of establishing how this transformation changed *the cross-border governance capacity* between the cross-border institutions.

6.1 Towards a renewed strategy for growth

The reorganization from the Øresund Committee to the Greater Copenhagen and Skåne Committee took its baby steps as early as 2013. According to Daniel Persson, Pia Kinhult and Henrik Fritzon on the Swedish side as well as mayor of Albertslund, Steen Christiansen and Chairman of the Regional Council of the Capital Region, Sophie Hæstrup on the Danish side, times were changing which meant that the Capital Region alongside with the Municipal Contact Council of the Capital¹⁵ were starting to search for new ways of producing growth. As Daniel Persson asserts about the times when the transformation was starting:

The Øresund Committee was strongly anchored to Sweden and was a bit weaker to the Danish side. Afterwards, a new change was happening with the political management of the Capital Region in which Vibeke Storm Rasmussen was replaced by Sophie Hæstrup Andersen [...] Anyhow, a new group of people had entered the management on the official's side in the Capital Region, and they were very vigorous.

The Capital Region wanted to wipe the slate clean and reinforce a regional focus that cut off everything but an economic agenda. By 2013, an enactment called “A Focused Growth Agenda”, The Capital Region, Region Zealand and the City of Copenhagen among others formed a working group with the aim of creating growth and development for the geography of Eastern Denmark (Region Zealand 2013). The overarching reasoning, or what Daniel

¹⁵ In Danish, these organizations are called KKR, *Kommunale Kontaktråd*. These are parts of Local Government Denmark consisting of five regional collaboration platforms.

Persson calls “the narrative” behind the formation of this agenda entailed, in brief, two arguments. First, according to a report published by OECD by 2013 (Nauwelaers et. al. 2013), the economic growth in the Capital Region was experiencing stagnation which, combined with a political collaboration losing its momentum and the failing cross-border integration, resulted in a weakening of the region’s financial position. The partners behind this working group addressed a need to turn this negative trend on its head since these weak growth patterns triggered a loss in working places and increasing unemployment (Nauwelaers et. al. 2013). According Daniel Persson, this OECD report became an argument in itself in this discussion addressing the idea that “Labour market integration [...] declined post-crisis”, “Overall integration trends in the Oresund were possible until 2007-2008, after which stagnation is visible” and that the area has an “untapped potential for a better policy mix for innovation” (Nauwelaers et. al. 2013: 10;23). These arguments also triggered the next big rationale behind the reorganisation, which was a lack of growth. The Capital Region, as the growth engine of Denmark as well as Southern Sweden, was challenged in creating growth and productivity compared to similar regions such as Stockholm or Hamburg. According to both Daniel Persson and Petter Hartman, CEO of Medicon Valley Alliance, the growth of Stockholm was rapidly changing as of the years of 2010-2012 (see Table 4) and since the city was branding itself under the name of “The Capital of Scandinavia”, this became a strong inspiration for Copenhagen and the Capital Region to brand the itself in a bigger context. These two arguments paved the way for the idea of a common trademark under the headline of *Copenhagen*.

Table 4. Chosen European cities by GDP between 2010-2012

	<i>Hamburg</i>	<i>Copenhagen and Malmö</i>	<i>Berlin</i>	<i>Stockholm</i>
<i>GDP in million EUR by 2012</i>	97.608	97.256 (excl. Malmö) ¹⁶	109.334	133.303
<i>GDP per capita growth (annual %)</i>	2.6	0.4	2.2	4.9
<i>Employment growth (annual %)</i>	2.7	-0.3	2.9	3.0

Source: Eurostat (2020), Faxe Kommune (2013)

As the main facilitator of this new branding strategy, the Danish marketing organization of Greater Copenhagen, by 2013, proceeded with the theory that by collecting the Danish and Swedish motivations under this headline, they would all be in a stronger position. Consequently, a vision was created which branded Copenhagen as a potential international hub for investments and research. In collaboration with the closest municipalities and regions, the idea was to boost economic growth and employment, levelling the region with some of the most successful cities of Europe (Faxe Kommune 2013). It is evident by stating a goal with such high ambitions that Copenhagen alone, during this period of time, would have no chance to keep up with other European cities having larger economies and higher growth rates (See Table 4).

According to Steen Christiansen, one of the key politicians leading the Focused Growth Agenda during that time, the main reason behind the formation of this agenda was triggered by an observation from several mayors about the “suburban fingers” of Copenhagen:

¹⁶ Incl. the GDP by NUTS Region level 2 of Southern Sweden, the total GDP of the Capital Region and Southern Sweden was 150.844 in million EUR by 2012

First, they observed that too many business organisations working with business promotion had overlapping agendas but did not have a common platform. Second, there was a sense of inertia where funds were not allocated to the same place combined with long treatment times. That is why we started talking about another way and a common agenda, or a focused growth agenda.

The regions, on the other hand, were more sceptical about the collaboration. Nonetheless, this led to the formation of a new growth agenda which was started by an analysis of all pre-existing organisations who were working with business promotion already, which turned out to be more than 120 organisations spread all over the Capital Region and Region Zealand. Although having a rather loose structure in the collaboration between Eastern Danish partners, by January 2013 it was agreed to focus on strategic work and tightening the structure in the collaboration. This idea was supposed to ensure a broad sense of ownership among the initiatives and to limit the efforts under the same brand. It was emphasized at a municipal meeting that all interested parties were welcomed to join as part of a plan to let in the Swedish partners of Skåne (KKR Hovedstaden 2014). Henrik Fritzson argues that a concrete explanation to why the political commitment was so substantial from both regional and municipal level, especially among the Danish members, was that the member organisations were encouraged to be the motive power of the collaboration, whereas “the Øresund Committee was more of its own authority”.

By 2014, the ØC was discussed as a possible candidate to undertake the organizational role of this focused growth agenda. However, according to the partners behind a municipal document, the committee did not have the resources or the applicable secretariat to rise to the challenge (KKR Hovedstaden 2014). In other words, it would require thinking about the organization and its duties in a new way in order to uphold its existence. On the other hand, the ØC already had all the necessary actors and partners near them. However, according to both Henrik Fritzson and Steen Christiansen, there was a common understanding among the partners of the Focused Growth Agenda that the ØC had not been able to trigger commitment among its members. Rather the opposite, the ØC had turned into its own little authority without involving its members.

At the core of this growth Focused Growth Agenda, business development stood out representing the main goal, but the visions also included urban development, employment, education as well as developing sustainable cities. By October 2013, six initiatives were presented by the Municipal Contact Council of Zealand at a municipal meeting, including:

Table 5. The new initiatives of the Focused Growth Agenda

- a. A common brand which is anchored to Copenhagen
- b. A common charter within infrastructure
- c. A common international visitors' service
- d. A common digital investor portal
- e. A common effort to develop the skills within service and tourism
- f. A common effort to unite the food sector

Source: (Faxe Kommune 2013:13)

During Autumn 2013 and Spring 2014, the plan was to continue the work with the six initiatives, to involve relevant partners such as Skåne as well as to start a political kick-off meeting with municipalities and regions from both Eastern Denmark and Skåne. By September 2014, the Swedish partners reported that they would consider taking part in the collaboration after the election of implementing a potential political board (KKR Sjælland 2014). During the same month, the Municipal Contact Council of the Capital (KKR Hovedstaden) agreed on establishing a political board in, what at that time is called "Copenhagen", consisting of the two chairmen from the Municipal Contact Council of Zealand and the Capital, the two chairmen of Region Zealand and the Capital Region and the lord mayor of Copenhagen (Furesø Kommune 2014). Aside from the regional and municipal partners comprising the political partnership, a longer list of actors was invited to support the initial political initiatives, which included assisting in the creation of the strategies, supporting the communication work and attracting companies. These so-called regional operators were Wonderful Copenhagen, Copenhagen Capacity, Copenhagen Business Hub¹⁷,

¹⁷ *Væksthus Hovedstaden* in Danish, in 2019 renamed Copenhagen Business Hub

MOVIA¹⁸ and GATE 21¹⁹ among others (KKR Hovedstaden 2014). By January 2015, the second-last decision was made before Greater Copenhagen became reality, which was when the collaboration was renamed “Greater Copenhagen”. The political board decided to comply with this objection and a logo was made with the new name as its brand (see Figure 3) (Faxe Kommune 2015). This renaming can be explained as a profound interest especially of Region Skåne to join forces with the collaboration, but with the objection of calling the collaboration “Copenhagen”, and instead changing the brand to “Greater Copenhagen” signalling a bigger geography. According to Henrik Fritzon, Region Skåne had been struggling with the Danish partners to get a word in since the discussion had mostly been going among the Danish politicians. On top of that, there was an understanding among certain Scanian municipalities that they were left out by the Danish part in these discussions, which led to a tough struggle from Region Skåne to get involved in the formation of Greater Copenhagen as well as convincing Scanian municipalities such as Malmö and Lund to join the collaboration. However, after the official beginning of Greater Copenhagen, the Scanian scepticism vanished by itself.

¹⁸ MOVIA is the public transport company of Eastern Denmark

¹⁹ GATE21 is a green public network of Eastern Denmark

7. Analysis - Part III. The case of the Greater Copenhagen Committee

A change of scenery came in 2016 when the Øresund Region had been declared officially dead as a concept. Instead, the renewed growth agenda had assumed power and consequently set the scene for the new political agenda of Øresund (The Øresund Institute 2020). This became evident by January 1, 2016, when the ØC was merged with the new cross-border organisation of Greater Copenhagen and Skåne Committee, also popularly known as Greater Copenhagen, winning the support from Region Skåne, Region Zealand and the Capital Region as well as 46 Danish and 26 Swedish municipalities (Region Hovedstaden 2015a). The Øresund brand had been inefficient in attracting investments, visitors and new residents, which was supposed to change with the new brand officially called “Greater Copenhagen”.

During its 5 years of lifetime, the Greater Copenhagen Committee has encountered a lot of external policies hindering policy outcomes at the same time as becoming a stronger political institution gaining foothold in a bigger geography, leading to a change of *social* and *political capital* compared to the ØC. However, the governance capacity has been challenged by several hindrances. The first came between 2015 and 2016 when the first wave of border controls was introduced (See Box 1). Internally in the committee, the Danish actors along with Region Skåne were still struggling to get Malmö City and Lund Municipality on board. These cities had different opinions opposed to their Swedish counterparts since they were worried about whether the questions of a common labour market and cross-border restrictions were still on the agenda in the new committee. In a notice of interest made by Region Skåne in October 2015, only 26 out of all 33 Scanian municipalities showed an interest in the new Greater Copenhagen collaboration (Karlsson & Kvist 2015). After a few months of negotiations, it was proposed that the geography of the Capital Region got 5 seats, Region Zealand got 4 seats and Region Skåne got the last 9 seats with an overrepresentation of municipal representatives (Region Hovedstaden 2015b). During the first half of 2016, all Scanian municipalities jumped on board. One of the first things they started off with was forming a new secretariat.

Box 1: The border controls

Several waves of border controls across Øresund have been introduced during the past six years. As a consequence of the influx of refugees that came during the summer of 2015, the first wave of border controls arrived by November 2015 with the border check and the so-called ID check by January 2016 both initiated by the Swedish government causing serious delays among train passengers (News Øresund 2020). These were abolished by May 2017. However, random checks still occur. By November 2019, the Danish government introduced a temporary so-called “inner border control” of travellers from Sweden due to criminal acts of terrorism coming from Swedish citizens. The border controls have led to a bigger discussion on the national will to support the Øresund Region since the freedom of movement has been limited (Ahrenkilde Holm & Søndergaard 2017; Aftonbladet 2019). During the COVID-19 pandemic several border controls have been introduced, mostly by the Danish government. Recently, by the end of December 2020, the Swedish government has closed the borders to Denmark due to a new British mutation of the COVID-19 virus. Commuters from Denmark are still allowed to enter Sweden.

7.1 The secretariat

During the last 5 years, the Greater Copenhagen secretariat has seen four different directors with Sara Pezzolato Ipsen managing the first secretariat of 3-4 employees. The task of the secretariat has since mainly been to produce marketing material, e.g. promotion videos, brochures etc. with the aim of attracting investments to the region. According to Petter Hartman, the secretariat was during this period seen as small and insignificant since the employees of the secretariat were mainly hired through the Capital Region, The Capital Contact Council and some additional member organisations. According to Mikael Stammering, also former development director of Region Skåne, this meant that the new officials of the Greater Copenhagen secretariat also had to work with assignments related to internal affairs of their employer, e.g. the Capital Region, and not solely tasks related to cross-border interests of the Greater Copenhagen collaboration. However, this way of contracting out the employees of the secretariat by the regions and municipalities has now changed due to the Business

Promotion Act of 2019, at least in the political space of Denmark (See Box 2). By October 2017, a temporary head of the secretariat was hired since Sara Pezzolato resigned the job and Anette Prilow took over. By Spring 2018, Sara Røpke assumed the post as head of the secretariat as well as being in charge of the Øresund Direct Business. From September 2019 until April 2020, the secretariat was yet again without management. This ever-changing landscape of managers as well as a much smaller staff compared to the Øresund Secretariat shows that the GCC secretariat has only been superficially rooted to the actual organisation, meaning the political network of regional and local politicians across Øresund. The simple message can be summed up by Sophie Hæstrup: “The secretariat has turned small, whereas the actual strength lies within each of the regions and municipalities in which each member has to ensure ownership”. Supporting this argument, Steen Christiansen argues that what has happened since the secretariat came into being is that the secretariat has now become more independent and less attached to the Capital Region than in its initial phase.

According to Petter Hartman, this drastic reduction indicates how the political position has changed from seeing the secretariat as a lobby organisation into becoming a secretariat with a limited mandate to realize political visions. This can be explained as the cross-border institution of GCC no longer concentrates on tasks that it can influence on its own, which, according to the latter, was more visible in the case of ØC:

They [The GCC] started talking about business promotion without having any business actors on board. They are carrying out questions about infrastructure. However, these are matters at state level in Denmark and Sweden. These are not questions concerning the regions or the committee. They are more working with place-branding and marketing the region instead of focusing on the everyday life of the citizen

Accordingly, Daniel Persson believes that compared to the Øresund Secretariat, the GCC secretariat has lost momentum. However, new ambitions have been set with the recent hiring of a new managing director, Tue David Bak: “The political board has asked for a more present secretariat” and continues: “It is part of my job to represent the organisation. It will be more of a partner race, and not just the political board representing Greater Copenhagen” (Wiborg

2020). Highlighted by both Daniel Persson and Petter Hartman, what has been and should be the top priority of the secretariat is exerting influence upon national decision-makers. When the Øresund Secretariat existed, this was a central concern gathering national decision-makers from Stockholm and Copenhagen to meet in smaller committees around places of the Øresund Region where they had a chance to meet face-to-face. As Daniel Persson remarks when talking about the potentials of the Greater Copenhagen collaboration:

In order to profit from Greater Copenhagen, it should be more than just to propose a toast when talking about the potentials. You have to express how to make a profit on the Øresund Region and looking out to the rest of the world and those branding potentials that exists which Greater Copenhagen has been good at. However, what is most important is that it requires political influence with the national level.

What Daniel Persson is pleading for is that someone, either the politicians or the officials of the Greater Copenhagen organization, needs to exert influence on the national decision-making. As Daniel Persson clarifies: “The argument should be, if Greater Copenhagen does not work on the political collaboration across the Øresund, no one is working with Øresund issues”. And this tends to be hard work if the local and regional *cross-border governance capacity* should have a chance to be influential in matters of national law-making. This also holds true for the political visions of Greater Copenhagen, as the impact is limited to get financial support from the national level in the case of the strategic work of Greater Copenhagen, restraining the *political capital* to mobilise a change in funding schemes. However, the level of *collective action* in the collective space of Øresund has changed from the ØC to the GCC, which indicates a new political direction of the *cross-border governance capacity* of the Øresund Region. This becomes evident when looking at the Transport Charter.

7.2 The Transport Charter and the new role of the politician

The first work launched by the Greater Copenhagen and Skåne Committee was the policy document called the “Transport Charter” advocating for considerable government investments in the transport sector. The primary strategic aim of the document was to make

Greater Copenhagen an international hub for investments and knowledge on par with the majority of European metropolises by 2020 (Greater Copenhagen 2016). This resembles the original visions from the Focused Growth Agenda, but also the IBU and the ÖRIB strategies of the ØC. In detail, the vision is to expand the existing Copenhagen Airport, starting the work of the Fehmarn Belt connection, strengthening internal road mobility, making additional links across the Øresund Strait and extending high-speed train connections in both Sweden and Denmark. The two most important links across the Øresund Strait that is proposed is the Øresund Metro between Copenhagen and Malmö as well as a HH-fixed link connecting the cities of Helsingborg and Elsinore. According to Steen Christiansen, the work behind the strategy was a mixture of official's efforts and several workshops with municipal politicians, which was done to anchor the working process of Greater Copenhagen among the members, and not just secretariat officials. Supporting this argument, Mikael Stamming underlines that this is part of a new method where politicians are outsourcing strategic work to regional officials from different places around Greater Copenhagen. He asserts:

I was working on the traffic charter in which it was decided to focus on fewer questions. In this case, they used officials from the cities and regions instead of just the secretariat, which I think was a good solution

This way of anchoring the working process among the politicians and regional officials can be seen as a fundamental shift of *governance capacity* from the ØC. According to both of these informants having been involved in ØC as well GCC, the Øresund Secretariat was of 2013-2014 seen as too big and authoritative which changed dramatically with the GCC secretariat having less influence and limited control tools. In other words, the aim was to limit the level of bureaucracy by reducing the amount of personnel in the secretariat to a minimum. This new approach of letting politicians agree and work continuously with new policies gives a new dimension to the level of *collective action* compared to the ØC. Now that the politicians are part of the process of shaping political strategies, it has led to greater involvement on both sides of the Øresund Strait. Seeing that the GCC has 89 members and now boasts numerous meetings both in its political and administrative boards as well as monthly meetings in the coordinating group, the *range of relations* has changed quite remarkably since the ØC.

According to Sophie Hæstrup Andersen, the role of the regions has changed since the ØC, forming new *social capital*:

The Øresund Committee was an organisation which had some difficulties where the regions played a leading role, including Region Skåne and the Capital Region and the biggest cities such as Malmö, Lund, Helsingborg and Copenhagen and Roskilde. It was a club only for the few. [...] So, we focused on culture, the environment and research, while in Greater Copenhagen we are now formally four regions, ranked equally and, in principle, also the municipalities and the municipal contact councils that exist.

First of all, Sophie Hæstrup Andersen acknowledges that the regions, as well as a few bigger cities, have moved from being the only actors in control of the political Øresund into becoming four regions of the same status. Thus, *the power relations* are, in her opinion, less visible with a closer bond between all four regions. However, the *morphology* of the committee reveals the ones who are insiders and outsiders, which in reality comes down to the member organizations forming the political board, the only decision-making body of the committee. On the other hand, in spite of the changing *morphology* of its *social capital* with a wider *range of relations*, the work of the committee is still formed by the *opportunity structures* of the Focused Growth Agenda acting as the magnet for mobilisation.

Consequently, *political capital* of the GCC is primarily practised through the working process of the political strategies, such as the Transport Charter. In other words, the *agenda-setting* tool is strategical agendas that mostly motivate the internal work of the organisation but has a rather incomplete *capacity* to act as *opportunity structure* carrying out the political objectives of the strategies. According to Henrik Fritzon, the Transport Charter shows how the set of values has changed from the ØC to the GCC:

The Transport Charter is an example of a very important decision about transport, which has shown a very clear focus on development questions, labour market questions and transport questions that didn't really exist in the Øresund Committee. We have a clear vision and a clear goal about growth which can be

achieved through a stronger and bigger labour market, that is the most important part, and this can be achieved by extending the infrastructure and the public transport. That is the important point about our collaboration

Supporting this argument, Sophie Hæstrup believes that the labour market was less prioritized during the ØC. In turn, as emphasized by Petter Hartman, the everyday issues of Øresund supporting commuters and citizens subjected to changing policies from the national level, e.g. tax issues and undisturbed mobility has been less prioritized. However, reorganising the structure and letting politicians set the overall agenda for the organisations' work makes the chance to affect national politicians even more difficult. Instead of letting officials meet with national actors or facilitating bi-national meetings with the respective governments, this is now more complex when party members from regional levels take on the role of collaborating with representatives from national levels. This leaves less room to either object or, at the least, establishing contact with members of the parliaments. *The range of knowledge* of what to do seems to have been either downgraded or intentionally pushed aside by politicians. As the GCC secretariat is almost left out of the political work, they are unable to provide expert knowledge about the limited mandate of regional and local politicians on Øresund issues and the remaining alternatives. However, with a new managing director in charge of the secretariat, there is a chance for the committee to extricate themselves from this national-local spider's web of mixed interests, despite party affiliation, and instead authorizing the secretariat to make the necessary linkages to national stakeholders.

Nonetheless, according to both Henrik Fritzon and Sophie Hæstrup, the level of *collective action* has changed since the ØC. Besides, the role of the Danish regions has also changed during the last couple of years, making an unbalance in *the political capital* to mobilise action among the regional members of GCC (See Box 2). Several new strategies, or *charters*, have been enacted, such as the Digital Charter from 2018, the Labour Market Charter from 2020 and the latest called the Green Charter (See Table 6). These strategic priorities are the tools to achieve the vision of the GCC:

Table 6. Strategic priorities of the Greater Copenhagen Committee

<i>Reorganisation from ØC to GCC (2015-2016)</i>	<i>Launching projects (2016-2018)</i>	<i>Expanding the organisation (2018-2019)</i>	<i>The restriction of the region (2020-)</i>
Common development areas (beginning in 2015)	First charter plan and new members (2016-2018)	The adding of Region Halland and the renaming (2018-2019)	New head of secretariat, and COVID-19 (2018-2021)
Internally	Political board, chairmanship, administrative board and secretariat	Adding of Region Halland	1 st managing director
Investment	Support from Copenhagen Capacity	Digitalisation Charter	
Transport	Transport Charter	Continuous work with the Transport Charter	Continuous work with the Transport Charter
Branding	Promotion video, social media	Social media	Social media
Environment			Green Charter
Labour market			Labour market Charter

Sources: Author's analysis and Greater Copenhagen (2020)

7.3 Halland joins and business leaves

As for the last two years, the GCC has experienced less development internally as new hindrances have caused severe damage to most of the committee's work. However, the committee has become more solidly constructed, as the strategical focus has extended to a wider palette of remits and commitments and Interreg projects have been unrolled regarding the continuous work with the strategies, primarily the Transport Charter. By the end of 2018, Region Halland joined and the committee was renamed the *Greater Copenhagen Committee*. Just two months later, the question of whether the whole organisation would demise was left hanging in the air due to a new regulation made by the former Danish government about letting the Danish regions solely focus on health and thereby not servicing the business

agenda of Greater Copenhagen (See Box 2). A time was reappearing where job integration was standing still and most of the members were holding their waiting with anticipation. As per a board meeting in March 2019, the political board agrees to a new proposition where the budget of 2019 takes the new Business Promotion Act into account by dividing the funds into 50 percent business promotion and 50 percent regional development in order to meet the different financial authorities between the Danish and Swedish regions (Copenhagen Capacity 2019b).

Box 2: The Business Promotion Act

In regard to national policy making, the former Danish government initiated a new Business Promotion Act by 2019 that hindered the conditions of regional participation in cross-border collaborations like Greater Copenhagen, meaning that the regions were no longer allowed to work with the promotion of business (Øresundsinstittet 2020). One part of the act defined that regions were prohibited to hold the chairmanship in Greater Copenhagen, another was the abolition to fund business by the regions. In the wake of the latest general election in Denmark of 2019, the new government along with the regions made a new arrangement declaring that cross-border collaboration is important in Greater Copenhagen and that the regions were allowed to hold the chairmanship in cross-border collaborations such as Greater Copenhagen. However, the Danish regions are still not allowed to be part of cross-border collaborations, independently, if these solely focus on business promotion.

7.4 The current situation with the COVID-19 outbreak

What happened 12 years ago during the financial crisis seems to also be the case today in the light of the COVID-19 outbreak, where local and regional policymakers are facing a challenge of utmost priority in regard to the integration of the region. As with the financial crisis, this current situation has pushed back commuting patterns, cross-border business networks and the *governance capacity* of the cross-border institutions. For the time being, Henrik Fritzon

addresses that what needs to be done is to focus on changing the difficult border controls. Petter Hartman stresses that if the potential of Greater Copenhagen is to be realized, a new approach to governance practices needs to be taken as the primary tool to uphold the relevance of Øresund and he continues:

I think that the pandemic has shown how complex it is. If you gather 80 municipalities and 5 regions around one common message, you have to “ping-pong” back and forth so many times that time runs out and the message you wanted to express becomes so vague that it doesn’t work any longer

Namely, this implies that the organisation simply needs to recognise that during times of crisis, a strategic mind-set centred on internationalisation and attracting new talents rings hollow when national governments are closing down every possibility to move freely across the border. This even happened, as many other places around Europe, at local level in Northern Denmark where citizens were prohibited from travelling between municipal borders (Rosenkilde 2020). In order to change this development, the cross-border institutions have to put their feet down and actively try to discuss with the parliaments. However, this kind of effort is yet to be seen. A rather defeatist attitude is evident among the politicians of the committee, to which Steen Christiansen adds:

You have to acknowledge that the national parliaments are not very interested. That is why Greater Copenhagen has to fill the vacuum from the national level in Denmark since the growth of the capital is not being prioritized. It is the same on the Swedish side in Region Skåne which is neither prioritized by the government in Stockholm

At the other end of the scale, Sophie Hæstrup Andersen is more optimistic and firmly believes that the cross-border collaboration has only met a bump in the road, and will continue to merge in the near future: “Regional challenges require regional solutions in which cross-border collaboration is a means to solve this. This will continue to grow and will also become stronger.” Not far from this point of view, Daniel Persson sees that there is a need for

communicating the facts and the advantages behind the Øresund Region in order for national politicians to understand the value of the region.

What has happened so far in the lifespan of the GCC can act as an indication of its potential future role as a cross-border institution. This is further discussed in the following chapter.

7.5 Concluding remarks

All in all, there are several concluding remarks that should be made regarding the cross-border governance capacity of the ØC and the GCC. Looking at *intellectual capital* formed by public strategies, charters and visions has remained surprisingly unchanged from the ØC to the GCC. During the ØC, the officials were able to use their *knowledge resources* of the ÖRUS to form a *social capital* within the organisation as well as being able to integrate the political priorities from both sides of the Øresund Strait into one collective plan of action. On the other hand, *intellectual* and *social capital* was never mobilised into a *mobilisation capacity*, comprising further support, development or change of the committee. Rather the opposite, as the history of the ØC illustrates, although the intentions of the committee were evidently admirable, the politicians were unable to uphold their political objectives, making the ØC a somewhat weak political phenomenon. This points to the fact that, though there was a shared awareness of Øresund issues on the Danish as well as the Swedish side, the politicians were not equally committed.

In the case of the GCC, the role of the strategies providing the main instruments to form *knowledge resources* has stayed the same. More importantly, as with the ÖRUS, *intellectual capital* has also shaped *social capital* since the Transport Charter has pushed forward the political life of the committee through political board meetings, workshops with consultants and officials etc. However, with respect to the content of the so-called charters, nearly all the strategic work conducted during the ØC is still on the agenda of the GCC, including the Øresund Metro, the HH-connection as well as the Fehmarn fixed-link that finally got the green light 12 years after the first agreement was made, turning the first sod by the beginning of January 2021 (Karlsen November 30 2020).

When it comes to *political capital*, defined as *the capacity to act collectively*, things have changed quite remarkably between the ØC and the GCC. As for the ØC, the *capacity to act collectively* occurred on a large scale in the beginning of the 2000s by establishing collective action among municipalities and counties on both sides of the Øresund. During the 2000s, the Danish as well as the Swedish members worked hard to institute a common integration and political agenda of the Øresund Region, yet this was jeopardized with the instigation of both the Danish amalgamation and the arrival of the financial crisis. Eventually, around 2010-2013, the control of the committee fell into the hands of the Øresund Secretariat. Officials of the secretariat learned about their opportunities to act in terms of making strategies and prioritizing the work of the committee, acting as the *change agent* by its *capacity* to maintain and build-up new Interreg projects. However, the officials were met by a considerable lack of support from the Danish regions and municipalities as well as fewer resources given by the national authorities.

Following the political commitment among the members of the Focused Growth Agenda, *the capacity to act collectively* changed in the case of the GCC, as the ability to interact within a larger social network, *social capital*, increased. The main reason behind this is that the role of the secretariat has changed significantly from the ØC to the GCC in the sense that the *capacity* has shrunk both for the manager as with the employees and their mandate to act as *change agents*. The *agenda-setting* power of the GCC has eventually flipped since the ØC. Up until now, politicians of the GCC have played the leading role in carrying out the work of the committee, that is the decision and content making related to the four charters agreed so far. Previously in the case of the ØC, the division of roles between politicians and officials were more separated. Today, politicians of the GC have assigned a low priority to the secretariat. However, it seems the secretariat is entering a new phase. As desired by newer local and regional politicians, the secretariat is attached a higher importance to the work of the committee which resembles the Øresund Secretariat in the number of employees and level of mandate.

Social capital has also changed in the sense that a wider *range of relations* have entered in the member structure of the GCC. However, the political board, constituting the real *morphology* of the *power relations*, is still occupied by a smaller core of key politicians from the leading

member organisations, including the Capital Region, Region Skåne and the City of Copenhagen and the City of Malmö. By other means, the leading *power relations* of the GCC reflect the main forces behind the Focused Growth Agenda.

The policy outcome is minor, both in the case of the ØC as well as the GCC, which is ascribable to three things. The first reason is that a), as for GCC, they have included politicians from local and regional level in the work of strategical policies, but the secretariat has since the beginning of the GCC been excepted from the production and implementation of the policies. Opposed to the Øresund Secretariat, this means that the GCC secretariat has been left out of their actual *window of opportunity* to make an impact on the political objectives set out by *agenda-setting* local and regional decision-makers. The second reason is b) their ability to outlive political objectives which has been somewhat different between the ØC and the GCC. What separates them is the fact that the ØC failed to achieve a policy outcome of the ÖRIB, IBU or ÖRUS strategies. In return, the GCC has been able to reap the benefits of the hard-strategical work of the ØC, hence the recent construction-start of the Fehmarn-Link. However, the ØC and the GCC still have a lot in common since their strategic work has shared a low interest from both governments in prioritizing Øresund issues in the political space of Denmark and Sweden. This can, roughly simplified, be explained due to the simple fact that national decision-makers tend to rank matters within their own scale of governance, which means turning their eyes towards national territories and forgetting what lies on the other side of their own backyard. Closely related to this point, c) the geographical dimension explains how and why the biggest and closest-connected cities and regions to the Øresund Strait are the ones which are mostly involved in the collaborative efforts linked to the GCC as well as the ØC. Region Skåne and the Capital Region as well as the cities of Copenhagen and Malmö and Elsinore-Helsingborg have the biggest share in the business of the GCC. These were also core members during the ØC. Looking at the GCC, the development of the collaboration is led primarily by the biggest actors. However, this development is unevenly balanced both from a democratic and an inclusionary perspective. Region Zealand only has a limited interest due to its profound interests in the Fehmarn-Link, and Region Halland only has a symbolic interest in the GCC since they are closer connected to the Gothenburg-area.

This finding, exceeding both committees, reveals one of the key challenges in accomplishing *cross-border governance capacity* since the *capacity to act collectively* is inseparably linked with the actors meeting, talking and sharing ideas that shape the strategies around these social ties.

Finally, the case of the Øresund Region shows that cross-border initiatives are shaped by economic incentives from the local and regional level as well from the supra-national, to some degree the national level. Interreg funding from the supra-national level made sure that most of the activities of the ØC were realized. However, the national level has been hampering a lot of the political work and activities of the GCC for a long period of time. Practices from all levels show that the ØC and the GCC are cases that have established a new economic territory, consequently instituting a cross-border agency in the new political realm of the Europe of Regions. Nonetheless, both the institution-building process of the ØC and the current case of the GCC display the muddy inter-scalar dimension of rescaling and the modes of governance actually coordinating the political space of the Øresund Region, which evidently led to the reorganisation from the ØC to the GCC.

8. Discussion - the role of cross-border regions

The following section outlines the answer to the research question and discusses the results of the analysis by considering the future role of cross-border regions. The aim is to challenge both empirical, political and theoretical assumptions with regard to the traditional state-centred view of policy, which means to discuss the role of cross-border regions in general. I suggest that there is a need to change the national political discourse in order to benefit from CBRs.

The reorganization from the ØC to the GCC primarily represents a shift in *political capital*, which is both due to the new role of politicians as well as the shrunken mandate of the new secretariat. What triggered a change of *the capacity to act collectively* between the institutions was the Focused Growth Agenda which started as a spatially divided project, as Danish local politicians had a new common concern. They were worried about the fact that Copenhagen was unable to keep pace with other European metropolises in terms of economic growth. This implied a new political commitment among politicians about the Øresund Region to join forces under the headline of *Greater Copenhagen*. Earlier, the focus on economic growth was one out of many visions, but as the Greater Copenhagen was established, politicians were committed only to deal with economic growth. Looking at the current growth rates, the economic growth of Greater Copenhagen has soared between 2012 and 2018 (see Table 7), which creates a new economic position for the Øresund Region.

Table 7. GDP Index of chosen European cities

	2008	2012	2018
<i>Hamburg</i>	100	103	126
<i>Copenhagen</i> ²⁰	100	111	139
<i>Berlin</i>	100	111	147
<i>Stockholm</i>	100	129	141

Source: Eurostat (2020)

The reorganisation also meant that the role of the secretariat changed from the ØC to the GCC in the sense that the mandate shrunk both for the manager as with the employees and their mandate to act as *change agents*. During the ØC, the *agenda-setting power* was the Øresund Secretariat, which resembled more that of a lobby-organisation for Øresund issues than the present case of the GCC led by politicians. The GCC is now mostly about political meetings and strategy-making. However, *policy outcome* has only changed to a minor extent between the cross-border institutions. The cross-border spaces on each side of the border are still deeply embedded in the national scale of government, which means that the new political space about the Øresund Strait, now called Greater Copenhagen, is still challenged by traditional *scales* of national authority. The question is then what can be done to improve the *governance capacity* of CBRs, thus strengthening the potentials for policy outcome?

Initially, the ØC succeeded by the creation of several new institutions, secretariats, cultural events and activities with the purpose of building capacity, both for the new political institution of the ØC, but also for the new Øresund Region which needed political, labour market and business networks agglutinating the Danish and Swedish sides. All this rooted in hard footwork by the secretariat which got the green light from politicians for most of the projects. Primarily funded by Interreg, the Øresund Secretariat received a lot of funding during the beginning of the 2000s since the CBR was still in its early stages. In brief, the Øresund Secretariat did most of the *capacity-building* during the beginning of the ØC. Moving

²⁰ In order to create the comparison, Southern Sweden is excluded from the table. However, Southern Sweden experienced a moderate growth by 118 in 2012 and by 131 in 2018.

forward, the Øresund Region is now at a completely different stage which, thanks to the Øresund Bridge, has led to a common labour market as the new status quo. However, compared to the ØC, the work of the GCC has been impeded by border controls and additional national law-making. What should be invoked here is what can be done to change the policy outcome of cross-border institutions for the better. Argued by Perkmann (2007), it is key getting political support from central governments since CBRs represent a specific challenge within public governance. As their constituent parts - municipalities and regions - belong to different nation states, CBRs operating outside the conventional context of public administration. Hence, they have no “government” on their own but rely on voluntary cooperation from two different national sets of rules, governance, jurisdictions and law-making. As implied throughout the analysis, the level of *policy outcome* is low in both the ØC and the GCC, and therefore I suggest at least three requirements to be met if this is to change:

Most importantly, the national discourse around the prospects of the CBR of Øresund must be improved remarkably if the policy outcome of the GCC should change. As highlighted by Petter Hartman, this requires an improved *capacity* of the secretariat, which means that the politicians need to loosen their grip on the secretariat. Instead of empowering the politicians, which practice all their influence through compromise, the secretariat could sufficiently proceed to action, as highlighted by Daniel Persson and Petter Hartman.

Second, the committee needs to take up an attitude in cases of national intervention towards the Øresund Region if the *policy outcome* should change. This means that either the politicians or the secretariat or both need to take a stand when the borders are closed down, especially during the current COVID-19 situation. If the cross-border actors of the Øresund Region refrain from doing this, national governments will most likely leave the Øresund Region out of consideration. The regional and municipal politicians need to think differently about the cross-border collaboration being more than just foreign affairs, which tends to be hard work if the local and regional *cross-border governance capacity* should have a chance to be influential in matters of national law-making. Cross-border governance needs more political legitimacy based on popular awareness of the geo-economic relations, authorities

and integration possibilities to cross-border regions, which requires willingness from above to trigger activities from below (Häkli 2008). In addition, the fact that people living at cross-border regions typically do not know how cross-border projects operate gives little support about how to strengthen policy outcomes in cross-border spaces.

Third, if the policy outcome should change, the political commitment among the most influential actors must be further increased. Highlighted by Daniel Persson, what truly counts as the motive power for the development of the ØC or the GCC as well as with any other organisation of the civil service is the member's commitment to engage in the development of the organisation. Ultimately, this comes down to the most influential individuals from the member regions and municipalities and their will and level of involvement to prioritise Øresund issues rather than issues relating to their own administrative borders. The territorial division between Denmark and Sweden has never been worse, which means that trans-boundary collaboration has never been more important. Politicians and economic actors have to seize opportunities in order utilize funding and enhance their *capacities* through strategic networking.

8.1 Rescaling: an opening for CBRs?

All three proposals about the *policy outcome* of the GCC relate to the notion of *rescaling* in the sense that in order to empower CBRs, national governments of Sweden and Denmark need to acknowledge this - relatively new - *political space* of the Øresund Region. Following the results of the analysis, it seems that *governance capacity* in both the ØC and the GCC only redefine existing *political spaces* to a limited extent. In the case of the ØC, institution-building processes, numerous Interreg projects and a sizable secretariat led to continuous cooperation on both sides of the Øresund Strait for a considerable period of time. However, as the evolutionary history of the ØC reveals, *the political capital* of the Øresund Secretariat suffered defeat in favour of a renewed focus on growth. In addition, the political instruments and administrative influence which is required for implementation of the presented *policy outcomes* remain bound to the national governments. The same holds true for the GCC, despite its increase of political commitment and *capacity to act collectively*. Consequently, as

argued by Fricke (2015), even in the cross-border context of *rescaling*, new forms of governance must take into account existing national structures seeing that they do not have the *level of capacity* to outlive *policy outcomes* without taking national policy into account.

In the case of the GCC, the regional chairmen and mayors have enthusiastically embraced, as Keating (2020:5) states, the “language of competition”, since it enables them to broaden their electoral constituency to the whole territory, turning regions into an odd mix of political and economic competition. This study pleads that members of these cross-border institutions, instead, have to align their economic chances, *political capacity* and level of influence more in line with their own jurisdictions and *scale of governance*.

In a study on the *political rescaling* in CBRs, Nelles & Durand (2014) address the overarching challenge that cross-border institutions are composed by politicians that represent other authorities in which they were elected than the cross-border institution. This means that cross-border institutions do not have political representatives uniquely charged with defending their interests or defining its policies. Based on Nelles & Durand’s (2014) findings, this thesis also concludes that political action in the *cross-border space* of the Øresund Region continues to be dominated by *traditional hierarchies of scale*.

As the analysis has displayed complex multi-level scales of governance in the case of the Øresund Region, both crossing *vertical* levels of government as well as the national borders *horizontally*, I expect the complexity of cross-border governance being too difficult to handle, if *policy outcomes* ever should happen. The asymmetric network of actors and levels of governance across borders challenges the likelihood of harmonizing and aligning the *political capacities* of the actors being part of the cross-border institutions. These findings indicate that if *rescaling* should be carried into practice, thus increasing the policy outcome of cross-border institutions, actors beyond the local and regional levels should be included in the governance structure of cross-border institutions. This requires either the inclusion of national politicians, closer communication with competent national authorities and/or new legal frameworks that avoid top-down intervention from national level, i.e. border controls.

9. Conclusions

In the last 20 years, cross-border regions have become more and more apparent. This development is owing to political and financial support by the EU, targeting the cohesion of cross-border regions. Institutions of varying size and characteristics have surfaced in both peripheral and urban areas that cross a national border. They work with policies that are part of processes of *political rescaling* that are affected by multiple levels of governance. This thesis has explored the challenges that cross-border institutions face in building *governance capacity* and achieving *policy outcomes*. Researchers suggest that successfully establishing a coherent cross-border region is a complex and ambitious achievement as it requires the coordination of policies at multiple scales and across different national borders (Fricke 2014; Nelles & Durand 2014). As cross-border institutions play a bigger role in the development of cross-border regions, it is becoming more and more important to assess the impact of *cross-border governance* and how they can attain influence. Subsequently, in this thesis I have examined the case of the Greater Copenhagen Committee and its ancestor called the Øresund Committee in which a reorganisation led to a new *governance capacity* owing to a renewed strategic focus on growth. Following the theoretical framework of Healey et. al (2002), Magalhães et. al. (2002) and Gualini (2002, 2005) for assessing *governance capacity*, I have analysed the actions, practices and visions constituting the *capacity to act collectively* among these cross-border institutions. The aim of building *governance capacity* is to make a difference in sustaining and transforming urban qualities, economic opportunities and increasing policy outcomes. In order to limit the scope of analysis, I have exclusively looked at *policy outcomes* related to *cross-border governance capacities*. The empirical insights of the thesis were collected through stakeholder interviews and extensive desktop research.

In the analysis, I discover that the reorganisation from the Øresund Committee to the Greater Copenhagen Committee changes the *cross-border governance capacity* through multiple capitals comprising *the capacity to act collectively* and to some degree the *policy outcome*. First, *intellectual capital* is identified as the creation of *knowledge resources*, which is visions and strategies of the cross-border institutions. In both cases, the leading strategies called the ÖRUS and the Transport Charter show the ability to formulate and disseminate a common

vision, thus forming the building process of the committees. The content is even the same in both strategies, which is infrastructure. Second, *social capital* seen as *relational resources* are mainly mobilised through the strategical work of the committees. The ÖRUS and the Transport Charter both work as a means *to act collectively*, though the political life and network in the case of the Greater Copenhagen Committee is much more devoted to the political work than the Øresund Committee. However, as with the Øresund Committee, the Greater Copenhagen Committee is still led by a small political core, which reflect *the agenda-setting power* of the reorganisation, called A Focused Growth Agenda. Third, *political capital* conceptualised as *the capacity to act collectively* has become more apparent in the Greater Copenhagen Committee thanks to the Focused Growth Agenda, which constrained the actors to agree on the same agenda, which was a restricted focus on economic growth. In the case of the Øresund Committee, it was primarily led by its secretariat, which only had a limited *capacity to act collectively*. The politicians were not obliged to arrange a compromise, which led to less concrete agreement and less political involvement. The role of the politician has now changed in the case of the Greater Copenhagen Committee, as the politicians have now become *the agenda-setting power* instead of the secretariat. Finally, *the policy outcome* of both committees has proven to be limited. The primary reason is a low interest and negative intervention from national governments of Denmark and Sweden combined with a limited mandate and inability for cross-border institutions, as well as its constituting regions and municipalities, to act outside own jurisdictions. In terms of the literature on cross-border regions, these results correspond with empirical and theoretical research suggesting the process of *rescaling* as an empowering process to increase *capacity* and the coordination of policies at multiple levels as a necessity to establish and maintain a coherent cross-border region (Nelles & Durand 2014). This must be done since the practice of *jumping scales* is a specific challenge of cross-border institutions due to their lack of *political capital* and effectiveness in producing a *scale* (Perkmann 2007). Building on this, I suggest that if *rescaling* should be carried into practice, thus increasing the *policy outcome* of cross-border institutions, actors beyond the local and regional levels should be included in the governance structure of cross-border institutions. Nonetheless, achieving governance capacity or policy outcome should not be the main goal in itself, but instead cross-border regions should be

regarded as a vital component in challenging *traditional hierarchies of scale* and national borders, hence increasing the economic, democratic, cultural and political integration of border regions.

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11. Appendix

Table 8. Actors involved in cross-border activities related to Greater Copenhagen

	<i>Public sector</i>	<i>Private/business sector</i>	<i>Unofficial partnerships</i>
Regional/ local	Capital Region of Denmark Region Zealand Region Skåne Region Halland 85 municipalities from these regions	Wonderful Copenhagen Visit Skåne Copenhagen Capacity Invest in Skåne Sydsvenska Handelskammaren Greater Copenhagen Connected Københavns Lufthavns Vækstkomité	City of Copenhagen & Malmö City (Øresundsmetro)
National/ centralized	Danish Government, Swedish Government, The Danish Executive Board for Business Development and Growth, Tillväxtverket		
Cross-border	Greater Copenhagen Committee HH political board STRING Öresundståg Interreg ÖKS ESS Øresundsmetro-Executive Gate 21 Greater Copenhagen EU Office (2019-2022) Øresundsdirekt Øresundsinstituttet Centrum for Øresundsstudier	Øresundsbrokonsortiet Forsea Copenhagen-Malmö Port (CMP) Copenhagen Capacity Medicon Valley Alliance Fehmarn Belt Business Council Femern A/S Øresundsadvokater	INTERREG partnerships included in the ÖKS collaboration
Supranational	The Nordic Council		

Interview guide example

Translated interview guide with Petter Hartman

Introduction

- Try to explain what your role is in relation to Greater Copenhagen?
- How has Greater Copenhagen changed through time?
- What has changed the most between the Øresund Committee and Greater Copenhagen?
- Do you think the set of values have changed between the Øresund Committee and Greater Copenhagen?
- Are there any other complexities?

Social capital

- Do you think that politicians prioritize the same values equally or are there differences between them?

Intellectual Capital

- Do you think politicians have learned more and been better at innovating between the Øresund Committee and Greater Copenhagen?

Cross-border regions

- What do you think is the future role of cross-border collaboration?