HELENA VALVE

Social Learning Potentials Provided by EU Rural Development Programmes

A Comparative Study on Three Institutionalisation Processes

■

Distribution

Contents

Acknowledgements

When preparing this thesis I received generous support from various directions. Professor Yrjö Haila, the supervisor of my work, provided me with indispensable intellectual guidance. His teaching encouraged me to look dynamic complexes straight in the eye, although to what extent I managed to do this is of course another matter.

Programme director Mikael Hildén offered me the opportunity to do research and guided me to the academic world. He has consistently helped me over various material and immaterial obstacles. I can hardly thank him enough.

In addition to Mikael my other colleagues at the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) have also been of great help. The research programme for environmental policy is a delightful community to work in. My special thanks to Minna Kaljonen and Per Mickwitz for their comments and support.

In the UK the Government Department of the University of Essex offered me working facilities. I am particularly grateful for the valuable comments I received from the different members of its staff. Dr Lynn Dobson I thank not only for her advice but also for her friendship. Professor Philip Lowe of the Centre for Rural Economy of the University of Newcastle provided me crucial help. My visits to Newcastle were very productive. For that I also thank Dr Rachel Woodward and Ms Eileen Curry.

The realisation of the Gävleborg case study is an example of woman power at work. Dr Tuija Hilding-Rydevik of Nordregio made the whole project possible. Mikaela Grönqvist did all the hard work. I wish also to thank the whole staff of Nordregio for making my stay in Stockholm very enjoyable.

Besides SYKE and Nordregio the Academy of Finland (project 49576) and the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) have also supported this work financially. Research director, docent Torsti Hyyryläinen of the University of Helsinki and docent Jukka Oksa of the University of Joensuu were responsible for the official reviewing.

The interviewees gave generously their time and effort. I particularly want to thank the programme managers and the members of the Secretariats in the three regions. I practically received all information I thought to ask for.

Marion Haberhauer transcribed my English interviews and Mikaela Grönqvist helped me interpreting the Swedish ones. I would have been lost without their patience. Virginia Mattila provided significant assistance by checking the English of this dissertation. I also thank Jonatan Hildén and Jukka and Ville Helminen for drawing and editing the various maps. Ritva Koskinen produced the layout. We are lucky to have such a professional at SYKE.

Finally, never during this research process have I been totally alone. Most of all, my mother, Kaija, has been there for me all the time. She has the wisdom and the talent to care and still to remember that I do things in my own way. Big hugs go also to my gorgeous sisters, Anu and Liisa.

I have the most rejuvenating, but wise friends. I wish to express my deepest gratitude particularly to Hanna Matinpuro, Päivi Merilä, Jaakko Nousiainen, Mirja Hartimo and Mirja Vainionpää. I also want Heli Heikkinen and Ulla-Maija Liukko to know that the walks and discussions I have had with both of them have meant a lot to me. Matti Leikas I thank for the most precious thing of all – for bringing love and companionship to my life.

Helsinki 5.2.2003

Helena Valve

Summary

In this thesis I study how the EU rural development programmes (the so called Objective 5b programmes) affected the conditions of social learning in three European rural regions during the 1994-1999 programming period.

Social learning is critical for the integration of environmental goals and rural development. Assessing the emergence of social learning potential requires studying the development of interaction conditions. The crucial issue is the limits which the conditions impose on the participation of particular individuals or organisations. Moreover, an actor should be able to participate in common problem solving without identifying herself with only one single group or category. Only then is the emergence of novel alliances or coalitions possible. The potential for social learning describes how well the institutional conditions support the production of collective innovations.

The case study regions were East Anglia in the UK, Gävleborg in Sweden and South Ostrobothnia in Finland. In these regions I carried out interviews and observed meetings. This material helped me to analyse the practices on which the implementation of the Objective 5b programmes were based. Documents and previous studies provided me information about the origins of the differences I identified between the case studies.

One of the aims of the dissertation was to build a theoretical framework to enable the assessment of social learning potential. In this task I made a use of a preliminary study in which I had examined the environmental assessment of a transport plan called the Nordic Triangle. The primary study demonstrated the link between the definition of a politico-administrative problem and the conditions of participation. The meeting of new and old has to be understood as a process where the new (here the EU programmes) produces capital (i.e. stakes such as expertise and authority) for opening and existing contests.

Within each of the regions the rural programmes created new practices and changed or strengthened old planning routines. In the contests which opened up the EU framework and its national interpretations were important sources of capital, but the capital the actors had been able to gather in the course of history also affected who could seize the programme and the stakes it offered and how. Since the changes often concentrated power in small groups of civil servants and experts, the potential for learning rather decreased than increased. On the other hand in Gävleborg, for example, the Objective 5b programme encouraged new groups to take part in debates about the economic development of municipalities.

If good conditions for social learning already existed, the programmes were likely to strengthen these conditions – and vice versa. In South Ostrobothnia the expert-driven forestry schemes continued to operate in the old fashion, without new participants or innovations. In East Anglia, on the other hand, the already active voluntary organisations created new projects which were interesting from the environmental policy point of view. Even a single innovative official or an active civil group could make a difference and increase the social learning potential. However, the very standardised funding system tends to decrease imagination and learning. If this happens agency is conditioned by the concepts and goals of programmatic development – not by the plurality of rural people and their problems.

The results indicate that the framework created does indeed have analytical power and that it offers a tool for the environmental assessment of institutional changes.

Yhteenveto

Tutkin tässä väitöskirjatyössä, miten EU:n maaseudun kehittämisohjelmat (ns. tavoite 5b –ohjelmat) vaikuttivat yhteiskunnallisen oppimisen edellytyksiin kolmella eurooppalaisella maaseutualueella ohjelmakaudella 1994-1999.

Yhteiskunnallinen oppiminen on välttämätöntä ympäristönäkohtien ja maaseudun kehittämisen integroinnille. Sen edellytysten arviointi tarkoittaa vuorovaikutusolosuhteitten tutkimista. Useiden ihmisten kohtaaminen on tärkeä, mutta ei yksin riittävä yhteiskunnallisen oppimisen ehto. Vasta ihmisten monien identiteettien samanaikaisuus voi luoda osallistujien välille kosketuspintoja ja uusia yhteenliittymiä. Lopputuloksena mahdollisuudet uusien ratkaisumallien löytämiseen kasvavat. Valmius yhteiskunnalliseen oppiseen kertoo, miten hyvin institutionaaliset olosuhteet tukevat kollektiivisten innovaatioiden tuottamista.

Tutkimusalueet olivat East Anglia Iso-Britanniasta, Gävleborg Ruotsista ja Etelä-Pohjanmaa Suomesta. Keräsin näillä alueilla haastattelu- ja havainnointiaineistoa, jonka avulla selvitin, millaisiin käytäntöihin tavoite 5b-ohjelmien toimeenpano perustui. Hallinnolliset asiakirjat ja aiemmat tutkimukset kertoivat osaltaan siitä, millaisiin historiallisiin tekijöihin tutkimusalueiden välillä havaitut erot palautuivat.

Tutkimuksen yhtenä tavoitteena oli tuottaa teoreettinen kehys yhteiskunnallisen oppimisen edellytysten arvioimiseksi. Tässä tehtävässä hyödynsin esitutkimusta, jossa tarkastelin Pohjolan kolmioksi kutsutun liikennekäytävän ympäristövaikutusten arviointia. Esitutkimus osoitti yhteyden poliittis-hallinnollisen ongelmanmäärittelyn ja osallistumisen ehtojen välillä. Uuden ja vanhan kohtaaminen on ymmärrettävä prosessina, jossa uusi (tässä EU-ohjelmat) tuottavat pelimerkkejä (panoksia, kuten asiantuntemusta ja auktoriteettia) avautuviin ja olemassaoleviin kamppailuihin.

Kullakin alueella maaseutuohjelmat synnyttivät uusia käytäntöjä sekä muuttivat tai vahvistivat vanhoja suunnittelurutiineja. EU:n politiikkaraamit ja sen kansalliset tulkinnat olivat avautuneissa kamppailuissa tärkeitä pääomalähteitä, mutta myös toimijoiden historian kuluessa keräämä pääoma vaikutti siihen, kuka ja miten saattoi ottaa uuden politiikan ja sen tarjoamat panokset haltuunsa. Koska muutokset usein keskittivät vaikutusvaltaa suppeille viranomais- ja asiantuntijaryhmille, edellytykset oppimiselle pikemminkin vähenivät kuin kasvoivat. Ohjelmien toimeenpanoon osallistuminen edellytti erikoisasiantuntemusta ja usein myös vakiintunutta asemaa maaseudun kehittämisessä. Toisaalta esimerkiksi Gävleborgissa ohjelma kannusti uusia ryhmiä osallistumaan kuntien elinkeinopolitiikkaa koskevaan keskusteluun.

Jos oppimiselle oli jo ennestään hyvät edellytykset, ohjelmat todennäköisemmin vahvistivat näitä valmiuksia ja päinvastoin. Etelä-Pohjanmaalla asiantuntijavetoinen metsänparannustoiminta jatkui entiseen tapaan, ilman uusia osallistujia tai innovaatioita, kun taas East Angliassa jo ennestään aktiiviset kansalaisjärjestöt synnyttivät ympäristöpoliittisesti mielenkiintoisia kehittämishankkeita. Oppimisen edellytyksiin saattoi kuitenkin vaikuttaa yhdenkin suunnittelijan innovatiivisuus tai tietyn kansalaisryhmän spontaani aktiivisuus. Toisaalta pitkälle standardoitu tukijärjestelmä voi vähentää mielikuvitusta ja oppimista. Tällöin toimijuutta ohjaavat ohjelmatyön käsitteet ja tavoitteet - eivät monitahoiset ihmiset erilaisine ongelmineen.

Tutkimustulokset viittaavat siihen, että laaditulla arviointikehyksellä on analyyttistä voimaa. Kehys tarjoaa välineen institutionaalisten muutosten – ja erityisesti niiden ympäristövaikutusten – arvioinnille.

Sammanfattning

I denna avhandling undersöker jag hur EUs program för utveckling av landsbygden (sk. mål 5b-program) inverkade på förutsättningarna för social inlärning i tre europeiska landsbygdsområden under programperioden 1994-1999.

Social inlärning är ett villkor för att kunna integrera miljösynpunkter med utvecklingen av landsbygden. Det är viktigt att många människor möts, men detta är inte i sig en tillräcklig förutsättning för social inlärning. Först när deltagarna är i en situation där de inte är bundna till en specifik identitet kan de finna gemensamma beröringspunkter och därigenom kan nya koalitioner uppstå. Detta ökar möjligheterna att finna nya lösningsmodeller. Möjligheterna till social inlärning visar hur bra de institutionella förhållandena stöder produktion av kollektiva innovationer.

Forskningsområdena var East Anglia i Storbritannien, Gävleborg i Sverige och Sydösterbotten i Finland. I dessa områden samlade jag intervju- och observationsmaterial. Där genom kunde jag klargöra på vilka verksamhetsformer mål 5b-programmen grundade sig. Administrativa dokument och tidigare undersökningar visade å sin sida på vilka historiska faktorer skillnaderna mellan forskningsområdena berodde.

Ett mål med undersökningen var att skapa en teoretisk ram för utvärdering av möjligheterna för social inlärning. För denna uppgift använde jag en förundersökning, i vilken jag granskade hur miljökonsekvenserna av trafikleden kallad Nordens triangel utvärderats. Förundersökningen visade på ett samband mellan politisk-administrativ problemdefinition och villkoren för deltagande. Mötet mellan nytt och gammalt måste ses som en process, där det nya (här EU-programmen) skapar spelmarker (insatser som sakkunnighet och auktoritet) för begynnande och existerande kamper.

I alla områdena skapade landsbygdsprogrammen nya verksamhetsformer och förstärkte eller förändrade gamla planeringsrutiner. Ramarna för EUs politik och dess nationella tolkningar var i de inledda kamperna viktiga källor till kapital. Även det kapital som aktörerna samlat genom historien inverkade på vem som kunde utnyttja den nya politiken och dess resurser och hur den gjorde det. Eftersom förändringarna ofta koncentrerade inflytandet till små grupper sakkunniga och tjänstemän minskade snarare än ökade förutsättningarna för social inlärning. Deltagande i verkställandet av programmen förutsatte specialkunnande och ofta även en fast position inom utvecklingen av landsbygden. Å andra sidan uppmuntrade till exempel programmet i Gävleborg nya grupper att delta i diskussioner om kommunernas näringspolitik.

Om förutsättningarna för social inlärning redan färdigt var goda så förstärkte programmen med stor sannolikhet dessa färdigheter och vice versa. I Sydösterbotten fortsatte den sakkunnigbaserade skogsförbättringsverksamheten som förut, utan nya deltagare eller innovationer, medan de redan från förut aktiva medborgarorganisationerna i East Anglia tog fram miljöpolitiskt intressanta utvecklingsprojekt. Till och med en enda planerares uppfinningsrikedom eller en viss medborgargrupps spontana aktivitet kunde påverka förutsättningarna för inlärning. Å andra sidan så kan det långt standardiserade stödsystemet minska på fantasi och inlärning. Då styrs programarbetets funktion av dess begrepp och mål, inte av mångsidiga människor med sina olika problem.

Forskningsresultaten tyder på att den inrättade utvärderingsramen har analytisk kraft. Ramen erbjuder ett medel för utvärdering av institutionella förändringar och särskilt deras miljökonsekvenser.

Original publications and manuscripts

This thesis is based on the following articles and manuscripts which are referred to by their Roman numerals in the text.

I   Valve, Helena. 1999. Frame Conflicts and the Formulation of Alternatives: Environmental Assessment of an Infrastructure Plan. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 19:125-142.

II Valve, Helena. 2001. EU:n maaseutupolitiikan tulkinta ja tulkitsijat Etelä-Pohjanmaalla: analyysi osallisuuden ehtojen muotoutumisesta. *Alue ja ympäristö* 30(2): 50-62.

III Valve, Helena. 2002. Implementation of EU rural policy: is there any room for local actors? - The case of East Anglia, UK. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 61: 125-136.

IV Valve, Helena. 2003. Evaluating learning potentials generated by EU Structural Funding programmes - reflections from two case studies. Submitted.

V   Valve, Helena and Grönqvist, Mikaela. 2003. Regional policy reform and the environment - a case study on institutionalisation of an EU structural funding programme in Gävleborg, Sweden. A manuscript, to be published in the *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*.

1 The challenge: towards reflexive rural development

The rural areas of the European Union are facing remarkable challenges. Employment in the primary sector and rural industry employment continue to decline, while the new industrial and service activities seem to be able to replace only a part of the losses (e.g. Lowe et al. 1998). At the same time peripheral areas are objects for increasing demands on environmental protection and recreation.

Although sustainable development has long been an objective of EU rural policy (CEC 1988), environmental concerns are still inadequately integrated into the implementation of the policy (Baldock et al. 2001). Some Member States have even allocated EU funding for projects not in keeping with the EU environmental legislation (Environment Daily 19.06.2000).

In addition to environmental requirements, EU rural policy is under many other pressures as well. Particularly the coming enlargement of the Union imposes new demands. EU enlargement does not necessarily mean that rural policy will perish in the existing member states. Instead the opposite may happen: the recent interim evaluation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CEC 2002) shows that the EU Commission is willing to increase the role and intensity of rural development measures at the expense of agricultural subsidies. The role of agriculture as the mainstay of the rural areas has decreased. It is also easier for the EU to defend rural development rather than purely agricultural subsidies in the WTO negotiations. The pressures for change are also endogenous: CAP in its current form is viewed as "politically unsustainable" e.g. in France and in the UK (Lowe et al. 2002).

The EU provides means for rural development through the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF). Before Agenda 2000 EAGGF funding was allocated to rural regions largely via so-called Objective 5b programmes. Objective 5b was one of the six objectives of structural funding. The regions which could receive an Objective 5b designation were required to have below average level of economic development, employment dominated by the agricultural sector and poor level of agricultural incomes.

The Agenda 2000 reform relegated Objective 5b programmes to history, but, at least nominally, strengthened rural development as the "second pillar" of the Common Agricultural Policy. The novel rural development programmes resemble the Objective 5b programmes, although the former do not necessarily follow the institutional structures produced by the latter.

Hooghe (1996) notes that a peculiar feature of the structural funding system is that it does not only provide funding, but also sets regulations on how to make policy decisions and how to implement them. Perhaps the most significant pre-requisite is the so-called partnership principle. With the help of the principle the European Commission aimed at more efficient implementation of the policy (McAleavey 1995, cit. McAleavey and De Rynck 1997). The idea is also to aid indigenous economic development by involving actors with intimate knowledge of local problems (McAleavey and De Rynck 1997:4-5). The latter aim is also supported by the subsidiarity principle, which states that decisions should be made as close as possible to those they concern.

The achievement of the targets which have been set for EU rural policy, and particularly that of sustainable rural development, demand *reflexivity*. The concept describes the capacity to react to circumstances and experiences which vary across time and space. Reflexive rural development encourages innovation and the creation of context specific solutions. The Cork Declaration, the outcome of a major EU international conference

considered to indicate a paradigm shift in EU rural policy (COST Action 12 on Rural Innovation 2002), announces that "the emphasis must be on participation and a 'bottom-up' approach which harnesses the creativity and solidarity of rural communities" (European Conference on Rural Development 1996:4). The recent "Budapest Declaration on Rural Innovation" (COST Action 12 on Rural Innovation 2002) further specifies that innovation should not be understood as a "modernising" activity, but as an outcome of a social process which can only be studied in relation to its own specific characteristics and context (see also Van der Ploeg et al. 2000).

Due to their meta-policy character, structural funding programmes offer opportunities for the re-direction of policy practices and for the generation of innovations. In the official interim and ex-ante evaluations the institutional impacts of the programmes have received little attention, but the academic studies assessing the operation of structural funding have tended to offer pessimistic estimates on the innovative potential of the policy. Most crucially, the ambitious goals of endogenous and co-operative rural development have been achieved only partially. In the making of regional policies, nation states and their officials have remained in dominating positions (e.g. Hooghe and Keeting 1994; John 2000). Moreover, in regional partnership arrangements those who have traditionally been strong have also tended to obtain favoured positions in the new circumstances (Westholm 1999). However, the studies seldom indicate whether the objectives were better achieved in one region than in another and if this was the case, why.

Demands for more extensive involvement of the public are not, of course, confined to rural development. In the environmental contexts particularly important channels for public participation are offered by the EIA procedure and other forms of environmental assessments. In this dissertation I use a case study on the environmental assessment of a transport infrastructure plan as a preliminary study. The case study offers theoretical insights into the institution and participation, but I also use it in appropriate contexts as a point of comparison.

As it appears to me, academic research can support the reform of rural policy and the development of evaluation practices in at least two ways. First, we need an understanding of the social conditions in which the integration of environmental goals and human subsistence is most likely to take place. Second, it is important to conceive about how such conditions might come about.

In this study I analyse the institutionalisation of three Objective 5b programmes during the 1994-1999 programming period. My aim is to provide a means for the assessment of the implementation of EU rural policy and an understanding on the institutional dynamics of such implementation processes. Although the Agenda 2000 reform brought changes to the means of rural policy, I do not think that the changes pre-empt the usefulness of historical analysis. We need a conceptualisation of the forces and counter-forces of responsive rural development and when constructing this we can only rely on the experiences we already have.

When studying the Objective 5b programmes I use *social learning potential* as a normative yardstick. Social learning (Glasbergen 1997) is a precondition for reflexivity: it offers opportunities for the creation of context-specific innovations and options and, by so doing, can promote the integration of human subsistence and environmental protection.

2 Research strategy

2.1 The task

In this dissertation I analyse the construction of social learning potential in the implementation EU rural development (Objective 5b) programmes in three cases in three different countries. My aim is to provide a methodology for the assessment of the institutionalisation of rural programmes and to offer an heuristic understanding of the constitution of social learning potential in such processes. In addition, I wish to contribute to the discussion on the further development of EU rural policy and particularly to the efforts which aim at the integration of rural policy with environmental objectives.

The research task includes the following, interconnected parts:

1 To describe the trajectories that the implementation of the Objective 5b programmes followed in the three cases I studied, leading to extrapolations on the origins of various trajectories. Articles II, III, IV and V also address the individual case studies under comparison.

2 To build a conceptual link between institutional arrangements and conditions of participation. Environmental protection in particular requires local initiative, which may easily be suppressed by centralised bureaucratic procedures. The preliminary study on the environmental assessment of the Nordic Triangle describes what happened when a rather standardised procedure was put into practice in a particular political and historical setting. The case studies, in turn, represent processes where EU programmes were integrated into varying circumstances.

3 To create a theoretical understanding of the institutional prerequisites of *social learning* (Glasbergen 1997). Learning is necessary for any progressive dynamic. Leaning on Glasbergen (1997) I argue that successful environmental integration requires particularly the existence of a potential for social learning. In order to provide an understanding of the political conditioning of social learning potential I turn to the preliminary study, in which I examined the construction of the key prerequisite of social learning: social space. In addition, to make the analytical studying of social space possible, I employ the theory of *interactive pluralism* introduced by Chuck and Carl Dyke (2003). I apply the framework in a comparison of the three implementation processes.

4 To elaborate a framework for the assessment of rural policy implementation from the perspective of social learning. Following Bourdieu (e.g. 1991), I describe the context in which social learning may take place as a *field*. The crucial quality of a field is its level of autonomy (Bourdieu 1991; Lash 1990). The opening and reformation of fields takes place in a process of *institutionalisation* (Jessop 2001). I present the main parts of this framework in Article IV.

5 To draw conclusions on the institutional dynamics relevant for the constitution of social learning potential and to discuss the implications of the results for the development and evaluation of rural policies. The conceptualisation of dynamics also supports the development of environmental assessment practices.

2.2 Material and methods

2.2.1 A preliminary study: the Nordic Triangle

Environmental assessments are expected to make planning more interactive, but during the assessment of the transport infrastructure plan which was called "the Nordic Triangle in Finland", serious communication problems arose. In Article I, my aim was to identify reasons for these difficulties. I use the Nordic Triangle case as a preliminary study since it provides understanding, and a practical example of, the difficulties in institutionalising public participation.

The interpretative struggles which took place during the environmental assessment of the Nordic Triangle were about the correct definition of the planning situation and about the interpretation of the problem to be solved. The actors participating in the process had conflicting views on which questions and topics the plan should respond to and whom it concerned. In other words, it was unclear on which choices the environmental assessment, a decision-making support as it is, should shed light, and which relevant planning alternatives were available. In the analysis I used the concept of *framing* (e.g. Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Schön and Rein 1994) to characterise the ways the actors perceived the task and constructed their arguments. (Article I.)

The policy frames I identified gave impressions of either a narrow or broad freedom of action. Those actors who considered the policy feasibility low also claimed that the institutional limitations were very limiting and vice versa. The parties criticizing new investment schemes questioned the official problem definition of the Ministry of Transport. They claimed that the environmental assessment ran the risk of neglecting relevant policy options. The groups that stressed the necessity of the new investment schemes pointed out that lengthy reconsiderations might cause a historical opportunity to develop the transport system to be lost. Instead these participants wanted to limit the assessment to the technical options relevant for the actual construction of the investments. The assessment also called forth very narrow local interests. (Article I.)

In the end, the task force carried out the examination of the alternatives it had drafted earlier and with which only few other participants were satisfied. However, this did not matter much, since the environmental assessment became a separate endeavour which was not taken into account in the debates that followed. Nor did it produce a report to which the decision-makers could refer. Instead the results indicate that the environmental assessment was, for the Ministry of Transport, a gesture it was pressed to carry out, but which could simultaneously support the legitimacy of the Nordic Triangle. The motive for having an environmental assessment done may thus have been to convince the public and other financiers that environmental matters were being taken care of and that the decision-making was being carried out in an appropriate manner. (Article I.)

2.2.2 Comparative case studies: East Anglia, Gävleborg and South Ostrobothnia

As empirical material in this thesis I use three individual case studies. Ever since my research task started to take shape in 1998, I have had little doubt that a case-study approach could serve my intentions best. Only case studies allowed me to study programme institutionalisation which is, by definition, a process which takes place in a specific political context. My aim has been to identify dynamically relevant differentiations and

understandings as they appeared to the actors involved – or who could have been involved – in the implementation process. Such an approach naturally differs radically from those evaluation frameworks that are based on the application of predetermined, theory-derived variables in a top-down manner. While the latter tend to operate with rather detached facts, the framework I have constructed here aims at revealing the role of the programmes in historically conditioned, hegemonic struggles.

I made the decision to analyse several cases since the similarities and differences of the results offer me an opportunity to draw conclusions on the dynamics of the institutionalisation of rural programmes. A comparative approach enables me to analyse the role of varying historical and institutional conditions for the interpretation of the European policy schemes.

The political science textbooks suggest that comparative studies take place either between similar or differing cases. I did not follow either of these strategies literally when choosing the cases, since my intention is not to identify explanatory linkages as studies in traditional political science tend to do. My aim is to reveal critical features of the policy processes, not universal explanations for the outcomes. However, the cases I study have a common nominator which also justifies their comparison: the Objective 5b programmes. On the other hand, since the cases I selected come from different Member States, their historical and political backgrounds differ radically.

Naturally I could have chosen cases from one country or two countries only. Such a design would perhaps have revealed better the role of particular regional characteristics and interpretations. However, I was primarily interested in identifying dynamic variation in how the interpretation of the Objective 5b programmes proceeded in different contexts. The significantly varying, cross-national cases seemed to provide good opportunities for this.

The three countries from which I selected the regions represent both old and new Member States. I ended up with the combination of these three countries because of my limited language skills. The implementation of the three case studies was all I had resources for. I do not claim that these cases are in any way representative Objective 5b regions. Nor are they typical rural regions in their respective countries: such simply do not exist.

I chose East Anglia and South Ostrobothnia as case studies due to the existing background information: useful studies have been conducted regarding the origin of Objective 5b status and about the programming period (Ward and Woodward 1998; Linnamaa and Sotarauta 1999). Gävleborg, on the other hand, seemed suitable case since its six municipalities form a fairly coherent, but not too large whole: not many of the former Objective 5b designated areas in Sweden appeared to fit this criterion. Moreover, in common with Mikaela Grönqvist I wished to find a region from Sweden which could be conveniently compared with South Ostrobothnia. Between the Nordic countries and the UK I did not even expect to find corresponding regions.

In the case studies I focus on the implementation of the rural development (EAGGF) measures. However, Articles III and V have a thematic, not fund-specific, emphasis. In Article III I analyse the conditions of local environmental action and in Article V the opportunities for environmental integration. The implementation of the EAGGF measures was a key issue in both analyses, but the examination was not solely confined to them.

The EAGGF measures aim at developing businesses which are closely linked to farming and to direct utilisation of natural resources. Changes – or continuums - in such practices have significant environmental implications. This explains my focus: after all, I am interested in the conditions of social learning primarily since I assume that such learning is necessary for the successful integration of rural and environmental policies.

2.2.3 From data to results

My primary data concerning the three case studies consist mainly of semi-structured interviews. In East Anglia and in South Ostrobothnia I carried out the interviews myself, but in Gävleborg the work was done by Mikaela Grönqvist while I myself participated only in four of these. Table 1 and Appendix 1 present the primary data. Sometimes there were two respondents present at an interview and therefore the number of interviewees exceeds the number of interviews.

Table 1. Primary data of the study

	East Anglia	Gävleborg	South Ostrobothnia
Number of interviews	23	19	20
Period under which the interviews were carried out	June 1998 – June 1999	January - February 2001; October 2001	October 1999 - January 2001
Other primary data: observation	Norfolk County Council: project innovation meeting 17.11.1998 East Anglia Objective 5b programme: working group meeting 17.02.1999		South Ostrobothnia Objective 5b programme: Project team of the working group 21.12.1999

As Table 1 shows, the timing of the interviews varied between the cases so that while in East Anglia and South Ostrobothnia I studied an ongoing process, in Gävleborg the Objective 5b programme had come to an end. As a result, in Gävleborg the activities and events to which the respondents referred dealt partly with the programming period, which was in its beginning at the time of the interviews. Observation of meetings was also impossible. However, the interviewees had few problems in recalling the proceeding events.

The interviewees were selected to represent parties with varying roles and responsibilities. They all had made, or could have made, a significant input for the process. Mikaela or I started by contacting programme managers, who named actors they considered influential. The snowball process continued, but at the same time we selected organisations and individuals from lists including information about projects financed through the programme.

In the regions we studied Mikaela and I interviewed representatives of national and local governments, particularly nominated programme co-ordinators and facilitators, project managers, project partners and representatives of such, mainly voluntary, organisations who could have, but did not participate in programme implementation. We particularly aimed at finding experiences of the generation of project initiatives. The obvious lack in the primary data is the fewness of non-contributors' stories. This is partly a consequence of the unwillingness of such actors to give interviews. Moreover, the number of interviews was naturally restricted by the resources we had. However, at the end of the data gathering we felt in all three cases that the last interviews told us little in addition to what we had heard before. In East Anglia and in South Ostrobothnia I observed working group meetings, one in each of the regions. In East Anglia I also participated in a project generation workshop.

In addition to the regional actors, Mikaela or me interviewed government officials in London, Helsinki and Stockholm. In September 1999 I interviewed one person from the European Commission (DG VI). Finally, in November 2000 I had a chance to meet three people I had interviewed before in East Anglia. This gave me an opportunity to check some of my interpretations.

The interviewees, even when describing the same implementation process, told Mikaela and me stories which naturally varied depending e.g. on the position a person held or had held in the process. However, the narratives were seldom in actual contrast with each other and therefore it was fairly easy for me to construct case-specific meta-narratives (Roe 1994) from the individual interviews. To do this I classified the interviews which had been earlier transcribed for that purpose. I analysed two of the interviews directly from tapes.

As a technical help in the coding task I applied the NUDIST/ NVivo software (QSR International Pty Ltd, e.g. version 1.2, 2001). The software also supports the analyses by making comparison of reactions and responses easier. However, I mostly processed the data in my head: after numerous readings I started to remember the content of the interviews almost by heart. The classification system naturally supported such memorising.

In addition to the preliminary data I also collected secondary data. This included policy documents, many of them in electronic form, and the results of previous research. The material enabled me to study the historical, cultural and economic factors that characterised the regions, nations and policy sectors which I studied.

In the four cases – including here the Nordic Triangle - I approached the realm in a problem-oriented way. This means that I did not try to fit the studies to a specific academic tradition. To study and assess the institutionalisation of the three Objective 5b programmes I built the framework introduced in the next chapter. The empirical analyses of the processes and the theoretical framework developed very much in tandem. From the outset I aimed at finding out how the conditions of environmental integration and participation developed in the various cases. Such development is an outcome of the interaction between the existing institutional conditions and the Objective 5b programmes. Realisation of this led me to the work of Paul Sabatier (Article III) and particularly to that of Pierre Bourdieu (Articles II; IV; V).

3 Theoretical framework

3.1 Participation and institutional dynamics

In the environmental assessment of the Nordic Triangle the contest over correct problem definition was also about the right to participate. Some actors considered the discussion about the impacts of the drafted alternatives to be fruitless since the alternatives were, according to them, absurd or too limited. Agreement on the alternatives would have been needed to make the discussion of the significance of specific impacts and their mitigation generally meaningful. (Article I.)

In public policy-making, the connection between problem definition and extent of participation becomes evident also when, in a particular situation, potential participants are screened. The definition of the situation then affects which dimensions and groups appear relevant for the solving of the problem.

Established practices and perceptions influence the definition of a problem. A policy issue is located to various categories in advance. Such implicit understanding locates the problem, for instance, in a political – technical continuum, in an administrative structure and on spatial and temporal scales. In fact, all our thinking is based on the application of such logical categories, provided along with our social lives (Douglas 1987). This means we are unable to grasp the world "as it is", but require classification systems in order to make any sense of it. For communication to be possible, the categories need to be shared[1].

All social objectivities, i.e. outcomes of social cognition, are political in nature. In an action context the categorisations which have become institutionalised affect our views of what is possible, acceptable and desirable – and for whom. Mostly we do not question the principles of vision and division. However, in the Nordic Triangle case the links between cognitive claims and political interests were indeed obvious. Instead of debating preferences or values, the actors argued about the categories by which the problem should have been described (Article I).

A definition of a situation conditions participation by creating subject positions and by offering starting points for the construction of political identities. By identity I mean a socially constructed position from which an individual operates in a particular situation. A (political) identity is a relational subject position (Laclau and Mouffe 2001:106). It locates one in a social context, in a position relative to others. An identity is historically and materially conditioned so that our past and our characteristics, but also the specific institutional conditions, affect how we view ourselves and our interests and how we react to others. In a context we may act, for example, primarily as representatives of a particular sex, nation or profession.

Social circumstances vary as to how much room they give for subject positions to develop. What is crucial is not only the limits which the conditions set for the participation of particular individuals or organisations, but also the ways in which their identities are preconditioned. In conditions dominated by *one-dimensionality*, there is little room for the emergence of novel alliances or coalitions (Dyke and Dyke 2002). Rather, interaction easily becomes a bargaining process between representatives of pre-defined interests. (Article IV.)

Correspondingly, *multidimensionality* exists if an actor is likely to participate in common problem solving without identifying herself only with one single group or category. The point is that it makes a difference whether, for instance, a farmer participates as a representative of her profession only, instead of having, at the same time, many other qualities such as that of a mother or a fisher. In the latter case, she would have contact surface with non-farmers such as other parents or other users of the river basin. Such novel coalitions may allow totally new perspectives to emerge. (Dyke and Dyke 2003; Article V.)[2]

Massey (1999) argues that multiplicity of subjects requires spatiality, which offers context for relational constitution and co-existence of identities. Naturally political circumstances vary also across different places. The scale of the spatiality also makes a difference. Sometimes small communities are insular and dogmatic. On the other hand, the less the interaction between the participants requires the use of transitive, aggregative

---

[1] However, if the social realm can only be conceived of as an absolute system of differences, we are facing a closed totality (Laclau and Mouffe 2001; Mouffe 1993). Bourdieu (e.g. 2002:31) talks about the dialectical confrontation between habitus and objective structure.

[2] However, also in the conditions of multidimensionality successful interaction requests that some rules and values are commonly accepted.

and thus also "dimension diminishing" concepts, the higher are the potentials of social learning. When actors can participate directly, without representations, there is less need for fixed identities or categories of action (Dyke and Dyke 2003).

3.2 Social learning potential

In this section and in the two following ones I focus on *social learning* as the prerequisite of reflexive and sustainable rural development. I have earlier discussed the concept and provided a framework for the assessment of social learning *potential* in Article IV.

Social learning is critical for the achievement of environmental goals. As the Nordic Triangle case indicates, successful application of environmental policy instruments such as environmental assessments requires that freedom of action, i.e. potential for learning, exists. Little can be achieved by just raising "environmental awareness" or by commanding that environmental integration has to occur. Indeed, "it is not only environmental interests that are central, but also those interests which, in light of environmental objectives, have been forced to adopt and reorient themselves" (Glasbergen 1997:190).

What makes social learning then so special compared with other types of learning? In all, Glasbergen (1997) draws a distinction between technical, conceptual and social learning. By *technical learning* he refers to such use of knowledge which aims at better achievement of already existing targets. In the context of environmental policy, for example, technical learning is likely to take place when environmental experts – traditionally represented by environmental authorities – have an active role throughout a policy process. *Conceptual learning* materialises when policy objectives also come under discussion (Glasbergen 1997). The shift from technical to conceptual learning thus requires the involvement of other than only scientific experts.

Both technical and conceptual learning take knowledge as the key parameter. They represent forms of cognitive learning. The problem with both concepts is that they undermine the importance of the institutional conditions in which the production and use of knowledge takes place. For example, if an implementation process can be characterized mainly as a "garbage can" (Cohen et al. 1972), that is, as an unstructured meeting of miscellaneous interests, little connection between the knowledge base and the actions taken is likely to be found (Albæk 1995).

The concept of social learning, on the other hand, draws our attention particularly to the institutions and discursive closures which structure policy-making. Successful social learning requires, first, that a "considerable degree of structural openness" exists (Glasbergen 1997:189). During the interaction the participants should be able to negotiate "problem perceptions, interests, uncertainties and alternative solutions" (Glasbergen 1997:189). Second, learning is possible only if the participants are ready to commit themselves to the solving of a common problem instead of driving only narrow self-interests. Such flexibility can also be expected on the basis of the first criterion.

Social learning takes place when *actors can learn from each other during responsive communication and, as a result, are able to reframe their conditions of action and construct new policy horizons*. This means that the communicative process enlarges social space; it produces novel opportunities and alternatives. Multidimensionality favours social learning: the more there is room for changing positions and alliances, the more potential for such learning exists.

Glasbergen (1998; 1999; 2000) has studied e.g. environmental agreements and the operation of so-called environmental cooperatives. He searches for conditions where social learning could support environmental management. According to him (1999:57): "The critical factors in this form of governance [relating here to environmental agreements] are the recognition of mutual dependency, a constructive response to diverse standpoints, joint decision-making and acceptance of shared responsibility".

The distinction between cognitive and social learning has been also recognised in the context of rural policy. The Budapest Declaration notes that innovations by rural actors can be both a response to "new scientific and technical knowledge and [to] new perceptions and 'cultural codifications' of social, economic and ecological resources in the context of local knowledge" (COST Action 12 on Rural Innovation 2002:4).

3.3 The context of potential social learning: field

I chose *field* as the unit of analysis in which I study the development of social space and social learning potential. The concept is central piece of Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical thinking. For him, a field describes the manner by which some shared classifications and symbols precondition the constitution of meaning and, as a result, enable communication between the actors who operate in the same field. In other words, the actors within a field perceive the world according to similar cognitive and motivating structures: they share the same *habitus* (Bourdieu 1990:52-65; 2002). The actors in a field do not necessarily ever meet face-to face, but in a way, play according to similar rules and contest about the same stakes. Bourdieu (1990:52-65) describes this as "conductorless orchestration", causing practices and works to be immediately intelligible and foreseeable for actors.

A field is a state of social order. Its operation is based on schemes of classification and recognition which set limits to the social space. The actors are attached to a field by identities which are imposed on them in "rites of institution" (Bourdieu 1990, 1991), that is, in category-producing practices. Administrative procedures, for example, do this explicitly by naming actors by legal terms. However, an identity is more than a role: it is a historically developed way in which an actor perceives herself as an agent in a particular action context.

Within a field the positions of actors are constructed in relation to the relevant capital which they possess. Such capital can be economic, social or cultural by nature. All forms of capital, when they become recognised as legitimate, carry a symbolic dimension. *Symbolic capital* offers necessary authority for the production and reproduction of the principles on which distinction and recognition are based. Agents in power, i.e. those who possess symbolic capital, do well "in the struggle for the imposition of the legitimate version of the social world" (Bourdieu 1991:238; Bourdieu 1989).

The amount and suitability of the capital that an actor has been able to accumulate in her past – that is, her position in the existing or related fields - determine her opportunities in the new, opening, game. The privileged actors have a "feel for the game" (Bourdieu 1990:66); a subjective sense for the opening or changing game. However, participation is not just about abilities or resources: to become an agent in a field also requires that the actor perceives the stakes worth competing for and is ready to commit herself to the presuppositions of the game (Bourdieu 1990:66).

Definition of the stakes that are valid – i.e. the relevant dimensions of capital – are also constantly under contest. These contests are about the boundaries of a field. Those who have achieved a position to name concepts, to classify, can define what counts as

strategic capital in a field. By doing this such key actors also assign others to a particular position in a field, or rule them out of it. We can thus describe key actors as the distributors of stakes: they are the gatekeepers of the fields. The potential or existing entrants, on the other hand, often try to re-define the relevant stakes and in this way alter the premises of participation.

As I already noted, fields are dynamic entities and arenas for constant struggles. The contests take place, however, on the terms provided by the field at a given moment. Since the structures give the dominant actors transcendent resources, they are able to regenerate and further strengthen existing order. Bourdieu (1990) refers to this reproduction of social order as the "logic of practice". Activities within fields tend to regenerate their structures.

Bourdieu (1991:245) draws a distinction between two extreme types of fields. The first one, the broad social field, is a multi-dimensional arena of interaction. It is also an open set of the second type of fields, which are specialised and autonomous. The more autonomous a field, the less the broad, multi-dimensional social field – society – can interfere with the practices and contests within it. Correspondingly, success in a non-autonomous field requires that the actor can appeal to the groups or forces which lie outside the field (Thompson 1991).

An autonomous field has distinct boundaries. "Socially recognised capacities to speak and act legitimately" (Bourdieu 1975), i.e. conditions of agency, are strictly defined and the positions are stable, being based on the one-dimensional structure of the field. This means that the forms of capital are very specific: stakes from other fields have little value in an autonomous field. Participation therefore requires investments of a particular kind. As a result, the degree of autonomy equals the breadth of social space. *The more autonomous a field, the less potential it provides for social learning to take place*.

The struggles about the boundaries of a field are about the degree of its autonomy. When a field develops in a less autonomous direction, it becomes more open to outside criticism and provides less stable positions. Therefore it is in the interest of the "insiders" to maintain or strengthen autonomy.

The *bureaucratic field* is an example of an autonomous field. It operates relying on linearity and hierarchical, formal definitions, offering room only for one-dimensional identities. Positions in such fields depend on the possession of specific expertise and on the official statuses held by each actor. For example, in the case of agriculture, command and control techniques, subsidies and extension services attach individual farmers to the field. Since the bureaucratic field produces universality – which can include the transformation of specific interests into the "common good" – under the illusion of impartiality and neutrality, the field is also a transcendent source of symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1994).

3.4 Assessing learning potential

Since the time scale I study is short – one programming period only - I cannot say much about whether, and how, the Objective 5b programme promoted social learning in the cases I studied. Therefore I focus on the development of social learning *potential*.

The evaluation of such potential has two basic phases. At first I need to identify the fields which a new policy creates and to recognise the already existing fields into which the policy is introduced. In the second phase the task is to examine how the conditions of participation become constituted in the novel fields or, alternatively, how the conditions changed – or remain unchanged - in the existing ones.

A rural development programme offers economic capital, but it is also a novel source of expertise and authority, i.e. of symbolic capital. The regional games are about the attainment of the new capital. The fields which the programme opens or affects can therefore be specified by studying how the actors who participated, or could have participated, in the attainment of the capital describe the contests that have occurred. Moreover, when identifying fields I focussed on the practical orientations of the interviewees. For example, the actors in the agricultural field reproduce the practical logic of farming.

The opening and reformation of fields which results form the introduction of a new source of capital is a process of institutionalisation. In the beginning of the first funding period a development programme is likely to cause confusion, but it is equally likely that the situation will calm down relatively soon. After that, generation and realisation of projects tend to take place within particular networks and according to established practices.

Institutionalisation "coconstitutes institutions as action contexts and actors as their institutional supports" (Jessop 2001: 1230). The process of institutionalisation is a game in itself. The abilities of various actors to affect the outcome of an institutionalisation process depends both on the emerging or changing selectivities and on actors' changing, but historically conditioned, opportunities to engage in the strategic action (Jessop 2001:1226).

In the case of high autonomy, as already noted, the required amount of stakes is either high or they are of a very specific kind. Some actors may be "played out". For example, when a planning task is defined in terms of very specific expertise, access to the emerging forums may be denied from lay actors. Alternatively, if an actor is allowed to take part, she is often heard only if she possesses relevant authority, i.e. symbolic capital, and when her arguments fit into the dominant intellectual structures.

The extent to which policy implementation is perceived either as a technical task or as something which requires political deliberation is crucial for the generation of social learning potential. The implementation task is interpreted separately in every action context, but similarities in reading are likely to be found within a region or nation, or within the EU. Fields are then related to each other so that categorisations produced in one field affect the constitution of agency in another.

When a new policy is introduced to an autonomous field the actors already in power have good opportunities to reproduce their positions. They can define what the implementation means in the specific context. On the other hand, a funding programme may create demand for such types of capital which radically differ from the types of capital which have been relevant before. What might happen is a partial breakdown, or de-centering, of classificatory rules which structure agency within a field (Lash 1990:263). However, the point is not that it should open a single new dimension, but that it broadens the definition of relevant capital. If this happens, the autonomy of the field becomes eroded or alternatively, in a case of non-autonomous field, its plurality is further widened.

4 The Objective 5b cases

4.1 Administrative arrangements of the implementation of structural funding

The Objective 5b programmes financed projects assumed to support rural development. In 1994-1999 82 programmes were adopted under Objective 5b throughout Europe. They comprised about euro 8.800 billion, covering 32.7 million people across 12 member states (McNicholas and Woodward 1999). Each Objective 5b region received also automatically a LEADER II[3] designation.

The policy regulations (e.g. Council Regulation 2082/93; nowadays Council Regulation 1257/1999; 1260/1999) and their national interpretations address specific tasks in the implementation of structural funding programmes only to some actors. Therefore the starting points of participation vary from formal responsibilities to voluntary opportunities. Moreover, an actor may participate in the identification of needs or opportunities, but also become involved in the generation or realisation of a particular project. Figure 1 describes schematically the three levels of project generation. (Article IV.)

The structural funding legislation expects that the governmental organisations, local administrative bodies and private organisations which operate in a designated region initiate projects and find partners who could contribute to the financing of the activities. For being able to receive EU funding, an applicant needs to find national matching funding to cover about half of the total costs of a project. Potential project managers get information about the financing opportunity from programme managers, facilitators and local co-ordinators who are specifically nominated to the task.

Regional and local authorities, firms, voluntary organisations etc.
produce project initiatives

Programme managers (e.g. the programme Secretariat), co-ordinators, facilitators:
inform about the financing opportunity & eligibility criteria
build co-operative forums
check the eligibility of the initiatives

Regional working group approves the projects
Monitoring Committee monitors the implementation process
Financing authorities make the final financing decisions
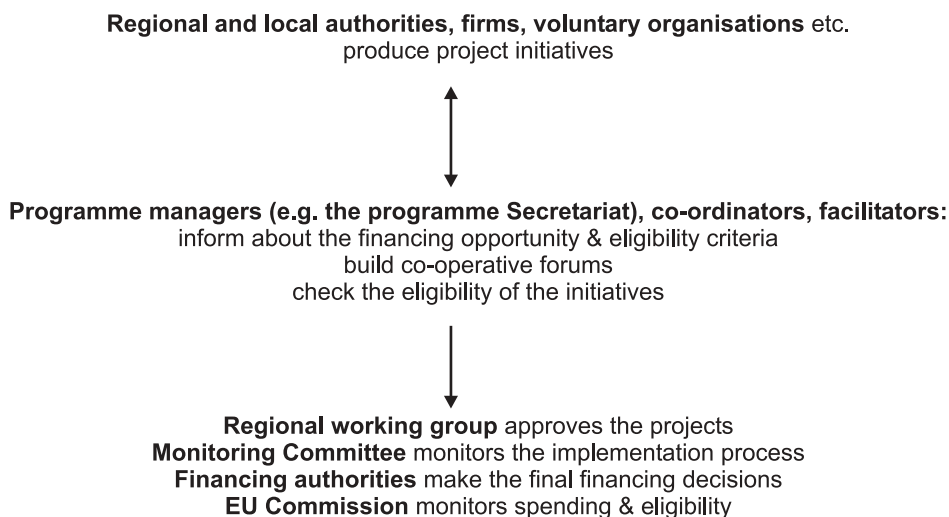**EU Commission** monitors spending & eligibility

Figure 1. The three levels of project generation

---

[3] LEADER programme is a Community initiative for local rural development. The aim of LEADER II was to promote innovative, demonstrative actions and disseminate them throughout the European Union (2000-2006: LEADER+: "Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy").

In the designated regions structural funding is allocated with the help of specific programming documents. The document introduces policy priorities and measures. The description of each measure reveals for which activity types the measure provides funding. The programming documents are drafted in the Member States and mainly in the designated regions, but approved by the Commission.

The quality of the projects is predetermined by the EU regulations, but often also national requirements give specifications on the matter. National and regional authorities who act as programme managers inform the potential applicants on the eligibility criteria. Broadly-based regional groups screen the project proposals. The European Commission monitors the processes with the help of inspections and annual spending reports.

The administration of the structural funding programmes requests that the EU Commission, national authorities and the region in question built a co-operative system. John (1996) describes the co-operation and the shearing of responsibilities which takes place between the EU Commission, the Member States and the regional authorities as a *triadic model*. The potentially emerging new model of government is called multi-level governance (e.g. Bache et al. 1996; Hooghe 1996).

4.2 Description of the Objective 5b programme areas I studied

In each of the regions the programming period I studied, 1994-1999, was the first one. The programme was introduced to South Ostrobothnia and Gävleborg only in 1995, when Finland and Sweden became members of the EU. In all cases the programming documents were drafted in haste. The regional representatives of national governments were responsible for the task in East Anglia and in Gävleborg, while in South Ostrobothnia the regional authorities were in charge (Table 2).

The designated area of the East Anglia Objective 5b programme comprised four distinct territories (Figure 2). This structure originated in negotiations between Whitehall and Brussels prior to the designation. The negotiators included the town of Lowestoft, which suffer from the decline in fishing industry, into the Objective 5b region. This meant that the rural market towns, which could have had a crucial role in programme delivery and where much of the rural poverty is located, had to be excluded from the programme. Otherwise the number of people living in Objective 5b regions in the UK would have exceeded the agreed limit. (Ward and Woodward 1998; Article IV). Out of the Objective 5b region parts of the Breckland and Waveney Districts and the North Norfolk Coast were given an Objective 2 status for the period 2000-2006. The region is also covered by the East of England Rural Development Programme.

In Gävleborg only the most rural parts of the county (*län*) became parts of the Västerbotten/Gävle/Dala Objective 5b programme. As the name of the programme suggests, the region designated for the programme comprises three patches, all belonging to different counties (see Figure 3). At the time of writing, the region is part of an Objective 2 programme and of the Swedish Environment and Countryside (rural development) programme.

In South Ostrobothnia the Objective 5b programme covered the whole region (*maakunta*) (Figure 4). Most of the region nowadays has an Objective 2 status. The South Ostrobothnia Rural Development Programme offers funding for the whole region.

Table 2 and Figures 2-4 present the regions and programmes studied. In the Chapters 5 and 6 I present the results of the case studies and also introduce additional background information on the cases. I review the cases starting from East Anglia, which was the first studied, and finish with South Ostrobothnia which is most familiar to me contextwise.

Table 2. The three regions and Objective 5b programmes under study.

	East Anglia	Gävleborg	South Ostrobothnia
EU funding, euro million	60	24	34.5
EAGGF, share of tot. EU contr., %	17.5	31[1]	43
Share of EU funding from public allocation, %[2]	50	30	35
Designated regions (see Figures 1-3)	Four distinct territories, involving 3 County Councils: Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire and 8 Districts Councils.	Six municipalities of the county of Gävleborg.	The whole county of South Ostrobothnia, including 5 sub-regions and 27 municipalities.
Population	230 770	122 000	200 000
Designated area, km2	2410	11 840	13 500
Average farm	90 ha arable[3] /1996	23 ha arable[4], 85 ha[5] forests /2000, 1999	24 ha arable[6], 31 ha forests /2000
Agriculture & forestry: share of the workforce, %	4 /1995[7]	3 /1999[8]	14 /1998[9]
Primus motors behind the designation	Local Authorities	Central Government	Central Government (initial aim an Objective 6 status)
Largest EAGGF measures, euro million. Figures converted and rounded by HV. Note that the figures do not show the amounts of intended, not occurred, spending.	—On farm diversification assessment 3.5 —Marketing 2.7 —Crop and product diversification 1.9 —Environmental projects 1.9	—Increased utilisation of forests 4.2[10] —Diversified activities in agric., forestry, fisheries 3.4 —Tourism 4.1	—Developing diversified rural occupations 6.1 —Management of forests, wood for energy 1.9 —Small-scale mech. wood processing 1.9 —Developing villages and rural tourism 3.4
Preparation of the programming documents	—Gov. officials consulted experts —Consultants did much of the writing —Problems to get the Commission programme to accept the document	—Only three persons did the writing, each representing one of the separate patches —Municipalities' proposals heard	—One national framework document for all 5b regions —The region-specific proposals produced by regional and state authorities; municipalities could propose "key projects"

[1] Share of EAGGF funding in the SPD of Västerbotten/Gävle/Dala

[2] EAGGF-measures

[3] Describes the mean value in the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. Source: FRCA 1998.

[4] Jordbrukets betydelse för Gävleborgs län 2001.

[5] The whole county of Gävleborg. Source: Mats Hindström, Gävleborg County Administrative Board, personal communication.

[6] Source: http://www.epliitto.fi/mtilast/ 020312

[7] Source: http://www.inforegio.cec.eu.int.wbover.overmap.uk/uk4/prof_en.htm 010618

[8] The whole county of Gävleborg. Source: Skogsbrukets betydelse för Gävleborgs län 2001.

[9] http://www.sjoki.uta.fi/epliitto/mtilast/maakprof1.htm 030103

[10] Funding for the whole region of Västerbotten/Gävle/Dala

LEGEND

- [ ] Not Eligible
- [ ] Objective 5B : Wholly Eligible
- [ ] Objective 5B: Partly Eligible
- [ ] Case study region

Figure 2. Region studied: East Anglia

LEGEND

☐	*Not Eligible*
▨	*Objective 5B : Wholly Eligible*
▥	*Objective 5B: Partly Eligible*
■	Case study region

ÖVRE NORRLAND

MELLERSTA NORRLAND

NORRA MELLANSVERIGE

STOCKHOLM

ÖSTRA MELLANSVERIGE

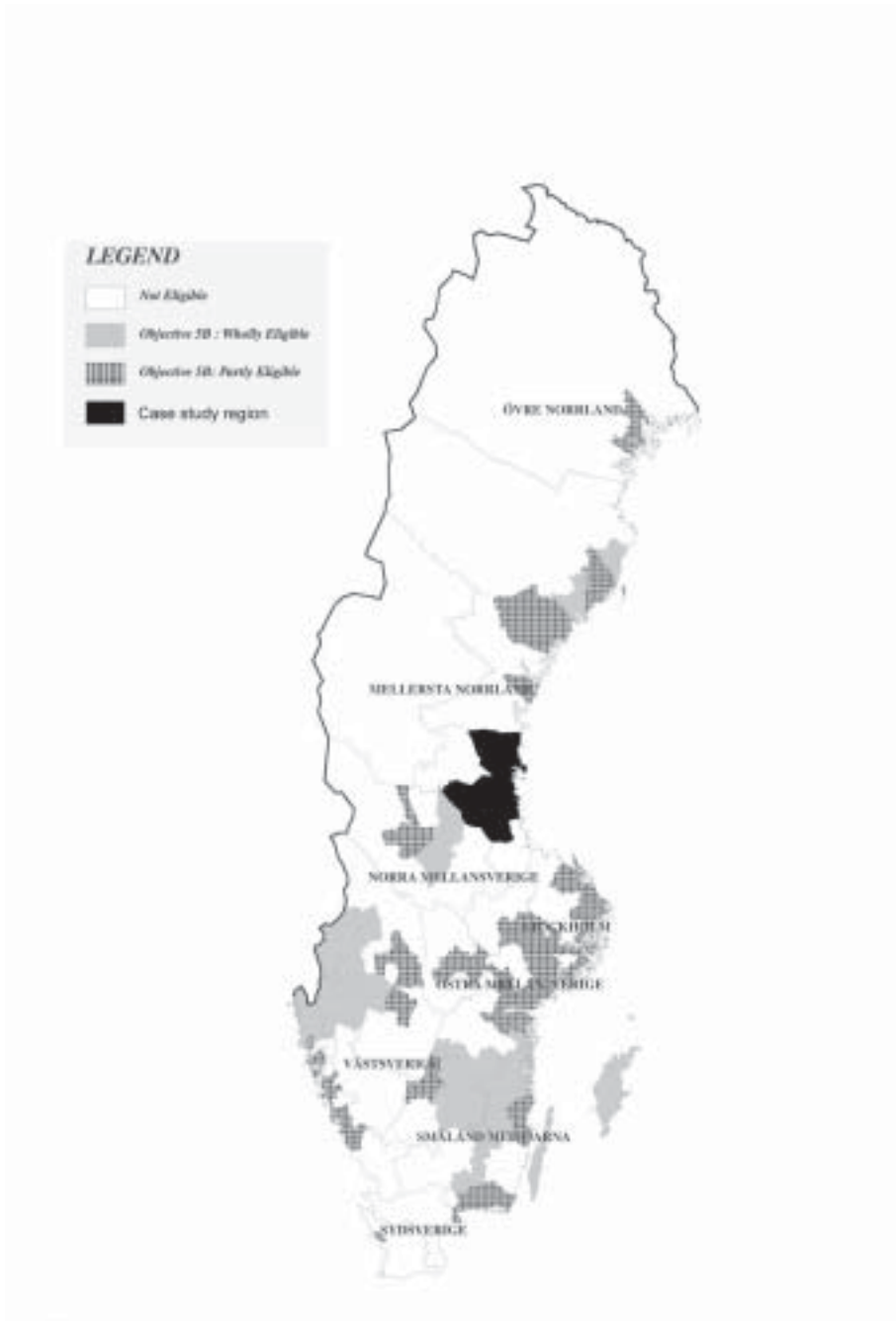VÄSTSVERIGE

SMÅLAND MED ÖARNA

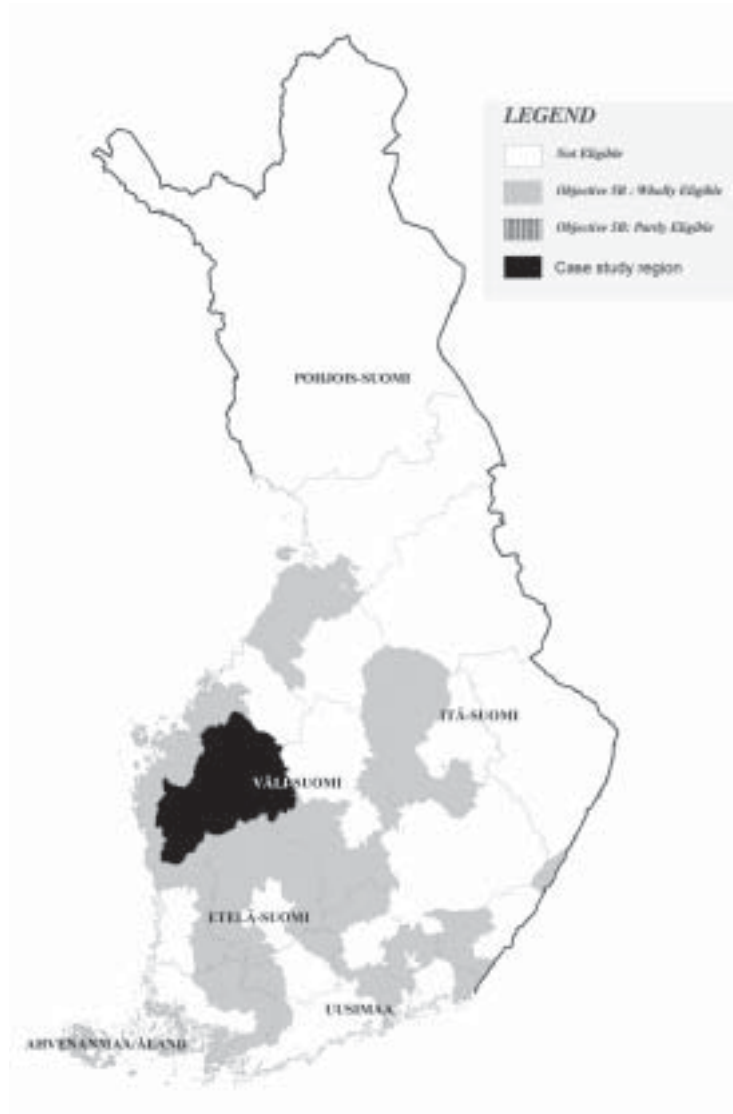SYDSVERIGE

Figure 3. Region studied: Gävleborg

Figure 4. Region studied: South Ostrobothnia

5 Bureaucratic fields of programme management

5.1 The constitution of fields

In this Chapter and the next one I present results from the three comparative case studies. While doing so I rely on the assessment framework introduced in Chapter 3. This means that I describe the fields which the Objective 5b programmes opened or affected in the three cases. I also examine how the conditions of interaction became restricted in these fields. I start from similarities and proceed to differences among the cases.

The structural funding legislation requires that specific administrative systems be established in the designated regions. As a consequence, in all three cases the Objective 5b programmes opened bureaucratic region-wide fields of programme management to which I refer here as Objective 5b fields. These fields were the regional contexts for the interpretation of structural funding regulations, providing categories and classifications for the organisation of facilitation services, project generation and, particularly, eligibility checking. (Articles II; IV; V.) Unsurprisingly, the Objective 5b fields resembled the bureaucratic field which the environmental assessment of the Nordic Triangle opened. In all of them particular interests and the representatives of the official contested on the definition of the common good. The struggles took place from the positions and by the means of the concepts which the bureaucratic framework provided.

The key actors in the Objective 5b fields, the officials in the Regional Government Offices, County Administration Boards and in Regional Councils, were specifically nominated to co-ordinate programme implementation. In East Anglia and in South Ostrobothnia the EAGGF measures were separated from the other measures so that their implementation generated "EAGGF specific Objective 5b fields" where the agricultural authorities had central positions.

The facilitation of the funds and the screening of the project initiatives were organised differently in the three cases. However, whoever was doing the work, or whether there was more than one body in charge, the mission was twofold: to make sure that all relevant regulations were followed, but also to promote the use of the funds (Articles II; IV; V). As a result, the programme managers, while assessing the eligibility of project proposals, adopted a supportive role. They could suggest alterations to the project initiatives - even to the wordings only - but turned down an initiative only if they found it strictly incompatible with the regulations. None of them was in a position to prioritise proposals: the initiatives seldom competed against each other. However, in all the cases studied the programme managers needed to build a basis for the legitimate use of the funds.

Interaction in the Objective 5b fields was conditioned by the concepts and temporal scales provided by the structural funding legislation and by the spatial borders of the designated regions. Although the regulations were interpreted and stressed somewhat differently and accompanied by national and regional details, the players' habitus in the Objective 5b fields was very similar. They were attached to the fields by the same aim: to work for the spending in full of the funds allocated to the region before the deadline. The people participating in the implementation on the region-wide level took care of "European" or "regional development" issues. They had common objectives and a need for similar expertise. (Articles II; IV; V.)

The regional officials who set the broadly-based forums in motion, clearly wished to commit various participants to the common challenge and build a regional loyalty. Here again are similarities to the Nordic Triangle case, where the Ministry of Transport wished to build a common understanding, although only between various authorities. To be able to participate in the Objective 5b –fields, the body involved, however, needed to be considered either as a contributor in the generation of projects or as a legitimate policy supervisor. Moreover, membership of the monitoring committee, for example, did not alone provide as good chances of acquiring "a feel for the game" as did an insider position in the circles where matters of programme facilitation and project eligibility were discussed on a daily basis.

The EU policy framework naturally determined the preconditions for its implementation. The applicants needed expertise and workforce of a special kind in order to cope with the application and project management procedures. The subsequent payment arrangements typically caused particular problems for voluntary organisations. Due to the complexity of the regulation, application of funding required earlier expertise or, alternatively, considerable dedication. Thus the applicants needed time and money to invest in the process. This alienated some actors, but also opened up novel business opportunities for the providers of consultancy. (Articles II; III; IV; V.)

Matching funding had to be public in origin, but in addition, private contributions to the projects were often requested. The paradox of the system was that for the poorest actors – such as small municipalities - the novel funding opportunity could be of strategic importance, but for them it was hardest to find matching funding (Article V). Participation as a co-financier was naturally also impeded by meager resources. Moreover, those actors who contributed only voluntary work-force or very limited sums of money tended to have less say in project planning than the main financiers (Article II).

The political struggles for the positions in the Objective 5b fields largely took place before or at the start of the programming period. In Finland and Sweden EU membership caused rearrangements decided on the national level. In the regions the drafting of the programming documents was a strategic phase which introduced the funding system to those who had been invited to join in. The documents also structured participation by defining the measures into which the projects had to fit and by presenting assumptions regarding the likely project initiators and beneficiaries. Despite its importance, for most actors interviewed the programming document appeared as part of a ready-made regulatory framework handed down to them from above.

5.2 Contests for stakes

The shift to programmatic regional and rural development was a transition to a novel policy practice. The question was who, and to what extent, could utilise the change in order to grasp the stakes it offered, i.e., to adopt the new source of authority and money. Among all the regional actors only a few, however, operated in such a field where the expertise on structural funding would be of any use. For many voluntary actors the Objective 5b field appeared as a separate field unlikely to offer any long term benefits and where the achievement of immediate gains was costly.

On the other hand, for many actors the Objective 5b fields represented potential sources of highly relevant capital, for two reasons. First, the fields produced understandings on what can be done under an EU programme. Second, they offered an opportunity to

reproduce or question existing development practices. As a result, in all three regions and three countries the introduction of the Objective 5b programmes provided a strategic moment for actors involved to increase their influence and to try the positions of others (Articles II; III; IV; V).

The situation was very similar to that identified in the Nordic Triangle case. Before the environmental assessment process started, the environmentalists and representatives of the environmental administration had high hopes of the process. They hoped that a many-sided and interactive assessment might result in a breakthrough of environmentally friendly arguments and alternatives. At the same time the Ministry of Transport wanted to adopt the assessment system and while doing so, make the environmental requests harmless and increase the legitimacy of the plan and of the Ministry. (Article I.)

The Objective 5b fields, i.e. the administration of the programmes offered symbolic capital for the ongoing contests where administrative and political hegemonies and power relations were at stake. These fields were primarily characterised by the development of positions of authority.

Table 3 presents the fields for which the Objective 5b fields produced relevant capital in the three case studies. The second row describes the formal restrictions affecting who could generate projects and under what conditions. The rows are partly connected so that the lower row reflects the political circumstances presented in the upper one. In the following sections I prescribe the differences in more detail.

Since the triadic model of governance was first introduced to the national levels, and the positions on the Objective 5b fields were also divided nationally, in the coming sections I first put the Objective 5b programmes into national contexts, and only then describe the contests as they appeared in the regions.

Table 3. Political circumstances of programme administration and the role of formal restrictions in project generation in the three case studies

	East Anglia	Gävleborg	South Ostrobothnia
Fields to which the administration of the programme produced relevant capital	− Regional governance: positioning of local vs. national government − Domestic politics: an "EU matter"	− Rebuilding of regional governance	− Regional governance: • Integrity in the era of EU membership • Regeneration of the powers of government sectors
Conditions of project generation: programme-specific characteristics	− Strange map − Strict eligibility checking	− No matching funding pre-allocated − Lack of administrative synchronism − In some municipalities schemes to promote local, low-resource participation	− Little attention to "value for money" or innovativeness of the projects − Aim towards larger projects

5.3 East Anglia: growing pains of the triadic co-operation

In the UK, the 1993 revision of structural funds resulted in the establishment of Government Regional Offices (John 1996:301). In the Objective 5b designated regions the Offices co-ordinated the delivery of the programmes in co-operation with the regional service units of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries[4] (MAFF). Officers from these two organisations formed the programme Secretariat, which had the authority to evaluate the eligibility and appropriateness of project initiatives prior to the official acceptance of funding.

The UK is known as a highly centralised state. Particularly during the conservatives' era (1980-1997), local authorities had been suffering form strong central government dominance and form cuts in government spending (Davies 1993). The 1988 reform of the structural funds appeared as an opportunity for a change in power relations, offering local authorities both funding and a potential new role in the triadic system (Bache et al. 1996; John 2000). The development towards "Europe of Regions" was expected to increase the powers of the local governments at the cost of the central one.

However, despite the policy changes, the central government has been able to maintain its gatekeeper role in the making of regional policy (Bache et al. 1996; Martin 1998; Bache 1999). Instead, during the conservative's era, the funding even generated new tensions between the local administrations and the central government. These resulted from the manner the government accounted for EU capital receipts as a part of all local government expenditure (John 1996; Bache 1999). However, this ruling was repealed in 1991.

Like for their colleagues, also for many local authorities in East Anglia, the Objective 5b programme appeared as a tempting political and economic opportunity. Indeed, the local administrations benefited from the programme in many ways. Their mutual co-operation increased, they built new contacts in the region and learned to communicate with the EU Commission. However, the path to "Europeanisation" was troublesome (Ward and Woodward 1998; Valve 1999). The government officials were not ready to change their action patterns and acted, according to a local government official, "like the programme belonged to them". Moreover, many of the local officers criticised the Secretariat for being uncooperative and sometimes inconsistent and too strict in its rulings. The conduct of the Secretariat was associated with the conservative government and its eurosceptic attitude. (Article IV.) The problem was not, however, unique to East Anglia: the Government Regional Offices had suffered from a lack of accountability at the local level also elsewhere (House of Commons Select Committee on the Environment 1996: xlii).

The relationship between the Government Office and the EU Commission was tense particularly in the beginning of the programming period. (Ward and Woodward 1998; Valve 1999.) The Commission seemed to take a close eye on the region – or at least the Government officers felt that way. The tensions were results of human misunderstandings, but they could also reflect the conflicts which the UK Government and the Commission have had on regional policy (John 1996; Bache 1999)[5]. (Article IV.)

---

[4] Nowadays the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

[5] The implementation of the principle of additionality, stating that the contributions from the EU to regional development should be spent in addition to, not as a substitute for, domestic expenditure, caused disagreements between the EU Commission and the UK Government from 1975 onwards. In the early 1990's the conservative UK Government and the EU Commission faced a so-called RECHAR (Community Initiative Programme of Aid for Coalfield Areas) dispute, which allied the Commission with the British local authorities in the additionality issue. (Bache 1999.)

The interpretation of project eligibility affected the spectrum of, particularly environmental, project initiatives and initiators. The authorities emphasised that neither they, nor their colleagues in Brussels or particularly in London, would tolerate loose spending. According to them, administration of the Objective 5b programme was mostly about eligibility screening and about the assessment of the value which each project could provide for public money. The MAFF headquarters in London gave specific guidance on "achieving environmental objectives and economic outputs in Objective 5b projects" (MAFF 1995). The guidance letter notes that the economic benefit should always be considered as the primary goal when an eligibility decision is made. (Articles III; IV.)[6]

The interpretations were likely to be affected by the role which the EU and related funding have in the British domestic policy. For the UK, and particularly for its Treasury, the EU funding does not appear particularly tempting. In 1984 Margaret Thatcher's government and the European Community signed a so called Fontainbleu agreement which states that the UK automatically gets back, at the end of each year, about two-thirds of the difference between what it contributes and what it receives from the EC budget. Structural funding expenditure reduces the rebate. As the UK also contributes to the EU budget and provides matching funding for the implementation of the structural funding programmes, the UK Treasury regards itself as having to allocate about £ 6 to obtain £ 1 of non-UK money (Lowe et al. 2002; Dwyer and Baldock 2000; see also Sharp 1997:141-159). (Article IV.)

In East Anglia the co-operating administrators appointed an agricultural and a fishery facilitator as well as local programme facilitators to enhance project generation and to act as mediators between the programme and the potential applicants. These persons had contrasting views of the eligibility question. Some respondents pointed out that to get a project accepted, it is important to find the right justifications and to formulate them in the project application in a suitable way. They could also watch over the applicants' interests by asking for second opinions or by comparing the East Anglian rulings to those made elsewhere. Some of their colleagues, on the other hand, rejected such a flexible view. Instead, they were risk-aversive and unwilling to step on the toes of the controlling government officials. (Articles III; IV.)

5.4 Gävleborg: contest on regional authority

The structural funding programmes were introduced in Sweden at a time when regional administration was in a state of flux. At the beginning of the 1990's, discussions took place about the potential closing down of the County Councils (*landssting*). (Sandberg and Stålhberg 2000:1, 102.) Making of regional policy was becoming a dialogue between the central state and the local municipalities (*kommun*). From the late 1970's onwards even the smallest municipalities have tended to carry out their own economic development policies (Hallin and Lindström 2000), utilising in this various national subsidies. (Article V.)

---

[6] In the UK the impact of the strict economic output targets on environmental projects was recognised already during the 1988-1993 programming period by environmental organisations (The Wildlife Trusts and World Wide Fund for Nature 1996). The strict interpretation of eligibility also caused problems for the implementation of the community development measures of the Objective 5b Northern Uplands programme (McNicholas and Woodward 1999). In the survey reviewed by Martin (1998:241) local authorities viewed the "ambiguity of the criteria issued by the Commission and the government departments" as a hindrance for the efficient implementation of structural funding programmes.

The EU membership boosted discussion on the division of responsibilities in regional development. The introduction of the structural funds raised a contest between the County Administrative Boards (CAB, *länsstyrelse*), the County Councils and the municipalities: all of them were eager to take the lead in the administration of the funding programmes (SOU 1999; Aalbu et al. 1999:73; Grönqvist 2002). Finally, the task was given to the CABs, who had also administrated earlier regional development funds. Therefore the division of labour that followed has been characterised as a "victory of the CABs which are accustomed to power" (Gröning and Hjern 2000:12). (Article V.)

In Gävleborg, at the beginning of the programming period, interpretation of structural funding regulations and setting up of the required administrative arrangements proved to be a laborious and confusing task. This was the case although in the CAB the EU funds were closely integrated with the distribution of the existing subsidies. However, the programming document also included measures which had not before been so extensively a part of the regional policy tool-kit. To these some respondents referred as the "those tailored for voluntary organisations". By those they meant the specific local services and rural development measures. (Article V.)

In the awareness raising work the programme managers focussed mostly on the municipalities which were viewed as the key units for programme implementation. According to some interviewees, the Objective 5b programme strengthened the role of the municipalities in the field of regional development from what it had been before. (Article V.)

In the interviews carried out in Gävleborg, the respondents expressed conflicting opinions on what the primary focus of the structural funding should be and what kind of projects are desirable. Following one line of argumentation the programme aimed officially – and should aim also in practice - primarily to support business life and its development. A CAB official draw a distinction between "muddled" and proper projects. On the other hand, a group of respondents criticised the emphasis which, from their point of view, was given to the economic effectiveness of the projects.

Hallin and Lindström (2000:93-94) claim that structural funding programmes have generated requirements to the Swedish regional administration to justify and legitimate their funding decisions. The traditionally informal and practice-oriented Swedish network model has been confronted with the more formal and hierarchical administrative code of the EU. In Gävleborg particularly the impact of the grants on competition between private firms was given much emphasis by the interviewees. However, the willingness to safeguard the "value for money" of the projects seldom resulted to the actual rejection of the initiatives. The contest was of principle and about the authority to interpret the regulations.

The actors who had been involved with the generation of projects in Gävleborg mentioned frequently the requirement of public matching funding as a problem. Unlike as in East Anglia and South Ostrobothnia, the agricultural authorities did not automatically co-finance EAGGF projects. Partly the difficulties stemmed form the uncertainty related to the matching funding: some organisations could decrease their contribution from the sum they had initially promised, decreasing simultaneously the size of the available EU contribution. The county labour board, one of key co-financers, could change their eligibility criteria during the life-time of a project (Grönqvist 2002). More generally, the public authorities had difficulties in synchronising their action patters with each other and particularly with those stemming from the EU framework. (Article V.) The resistance or inertia discouraged participation by creating confusion among project managers.

5.5 South Ostrobothnia: structural funding as an antidote to the CAP requirements

The introduction of the structural funds and programmatic regional development coincided in Finland, like in Sweden, with the entry to the EU. In 1995 the regional administration was in the middle of large reorganisation. While the government was anticipating the EU membership in 1994, the regional policy underwent an administrative reformation. Along to the new Regional Development Act the system of regional policy was modified to correspond that of the European Union. The Act introduced new regional bodies, the Regional Councils (*maakuntaliitto*) which were to act as regional development authorities. Moreover, sub-regional units (*seutukunta*), consisting of three to five municipalities were formed to operate as the local units of regional development.

Finnish governmental departments have their own tasks and resources in making regional policy. The sectors of the state have been decentralised and the authority has been delegated to the Employment and Economic Development Centres (*työvoima- ja elinkeinokeskus*). At the same time the role of the small and numerous municipalities (*kunta*) is less significant than in Sweden. While the Regional Councils have a formal coordinative role, but little resources of their own, the making of rural policy is structured thematically rather than spatially (Virkkala 1998; Uusitalo 1999; Isosuo 2000).

The EU membership caused a radical change in the Finnish agricultural policy. Consequently, the EU membership was strongly opposed particularly in the rural regions, such as in South Ostrobothnia. Some of the municipalities and many individual farmers viewed everything which was EU-related, the Objective 5b programme included, negatively. As a result, the programme implementation became – to a large extent- an exercise where the managing officers tried to assure the averse actors about the benefits of participation. (Article II.)

The strong involvement of agricultural and forestry authorities was a result of an interpretation according to which structural funding could offer an antidote for the agribusiness of the region in its attempt to become adopted to the Common Agricultural Policy. The division of rural affairs of the Employment and Economic Development Centre (hereafter referred to as "the rural authorities") co-operated closely with the Regional Council already before the Objective 5b designation was clear. Together the representatives of these two organisations travelled in the old EU countries to learn from their experiences on structural funding implementation. (Article II.)

The state and regional officers reassured the potentially reluctant municipalities and private actors by forming a common regional aim: the more the region would be able to "take away what belongs to it", the better. This was done by referring to a regional interest: "… [if we do not use the funds] some other region will take them away". In Finland, due to the programme structure, it was possible to transmit funds from an Objective 5b region to another, depending on where the level of spending was highest. Maximum spending was also explained as an issue of national interest. (Article II.) Here the arguments resemble those which were put forward in the Nordic Triangle case: the opportunity to receive EU money was presented as a historical opportunity not to be missed (Article I).

In South Ostrobothnia the finding of matching funding caused much less problems than in the two other cases. In Finland the change to the system of European structural policy was perceived as a strategically important issue. The government wanted to exploit the EU funds as effectively as possible. As one sign of this, national matching funding

contributions are written into the budgets of the various government departments. This significantly facilitated – and facilitates - project generation. (Article IV.) However, sometimes municipal co-financing could become a bottleneck in project generation.

Out of the three cases in South Ostrobothnia least attention was put to the eligibility and innovativeness of the project initiatives. This may have something to do with the content of the accession negotiations which took place between the Finnish Government and the EU. The EU Commission recognised the handicaps which Finland faced in terms of isolated regions and agriculture (Miles 1996; Kuosmanen 2001). Kuosmanen (2001:144) notes in the context of food industry adjustment that "the possibility was given [by the Commission] to exploit, under regional policy, Objective 5a as a maximum as well *as flexibility in the criteria for the use of structural funding measures*" (emphasis added). (Article IV.)

On the other hand, in contrast to East Anglia and Gävleborg, in South Ostrobothnia the Regional Council set, near the final stage of the programming period, requirements for the geographical coverage of extension and development projects. In order to get rid of "tinkering", projects were required to cover at least one sub-region, but preferably the whole region. The change to larger wholes raised conflicting reactions, many sector-specific government units viewing it as inappropriate for their purposes. (Article II.)

6 Linking the programme to existing development practices

6.1 Interplay between the existing fields and the new source of capital

While in the previous section I presented a review of the development of interaction conditions on the region-wide Objective 5b fields where the rules for the implementation were set, this section addresses the local and thematic fields into which both the administration and facilitation of the EAGGF measures and the generation of projects were integrated. My focus is on the conditions of participation in these fields. The preliminary study on the Nordic Triangle indicates that even when a bureaucratic procedure imposes specific demands for public participation, it may actually standardise the premises of interaction.

In the case of the Nordic Triangle, the field of transport policy and the field opened up by the environmental assessment were closely connected: the two fields offered each other relevant capital. The Objective 5b fields and the fields of existing development practices were similarly linked. The division of responsibilities between existing administrative organisations meant that programme implementation was somehow linked to practices already in place. The new task offered a potential new source of capital in the fields structured around the administrative categories, but also created entities of problem identification and generated turf wars within them. Finally, in all cases the programmes encouraged the spontaneous generation of project initiatives. In other words, initiatives were only partly a result of organised processes of problem identification.

In all three cases the units of local administration were expected to have – and indeed did have – key roles in the implementation of the Objective 5b programmes. Counties and districts in East Anglia, municipalities in Gävleborg and sub-regional units and municipalities in South Ostrobothnia participated in the management of the programme, initiated projects and managed and co-financed projects. (Articles II; III; IV; V.) However, the programmes were introduced in conditions where the development of agriculture,

forestry and other rural occupations was – with the exception of Sweden - actively promoted by the government. The EAGGF measures were therefore largely integrated into sector specific fields, although the local administrations also participated in project generation.

In spatial and thematic administrative units, in line with the views established in the Objective 5b fields, the definition of development needs tended to receive a technical, apolitical status. As a result, the public bodies seldom offered channels for a systematic hearing of local perspectives and provided little scope for locality-specific initiatives to rise. The authorities often referred to the LEADER II programme which, in their opinion, took care of the local needs. However, at the same time some of them noted that the LEADER funds were quite limited.

The general rule was that the definition of demands and generation of projects were combined. It was common that the implementation was expected to require two types of expertise: that of the needs of private businesses and that of the funding system (Articles II; IV; V). As in the environmental assessment of the Nordic Triangle (Article I), the actions and decisions were expected to be grounded on professional expertise. Private consultants considered neutral and impartial were often assumed to have the necessary knowledge.

Moreover, in all cases the rationale of maximum spending, together with the limited time period, caused haste, leaving little room for the participatory identification of development needs and potentials. The de-politicisation of problem identification was also affected by the tradition of professionalism among local authorities. According to Martin (1998), in the UK, the technocratic responses reflect the way in which effectiveness has overrun local accountability. Professionalism and efficiency also characterise the development of local government in Finland and in Sweden (Ståhlberg & Ounasvirta 1996; Strömberg & Engen 1996).

The localities often competed for the flow of funding: the ability to acquire a large amount of funding became a means to hoard symbolic capital in the fields of municipal or district politics. Following the same logic the local units were often unwilling to provide matching funding for comprehensive projects which they assumed would benefit some other locality more than themselves.

In all three case studies individual projects generated networks which started to live a life of their own. Often such projects delivered information about new production and processing options. External funding encouraged co-operation in which the original idea was further developed and dissaminated. On the other hand, in many projects the beneficiaries were only the recipients of information. In such cases the entrepreneurs' freedom of action continued to be limited: taking part was equated with the execution of specific development tasks. (Articles II; IV; V.) However, I did not have possibilities to examine the fields generated by individual projects in detail.

Table 4 summarises the ways in which the Objective 5b programmes were integrated into existing development practices in the three case studies. The first row of the table illustrates the determination of the fields in which the programme was introduced, the second one shows which fields were mostly involved, while the third illustrates under what conditions participation in the implementation of the Objective 5b programmes became possible. In the following sections I shall describe the differences between the cases in greater detail.

Table 4. Constitution of participation conditions in the three processes of programme institutionalisation.

	East Anglia	Gävleborg	South Ostrobothnia
Practices of programme facilitation and project generation	– Disseminating information about the possibility – MAFF-driven thematic & patch specific facilitation – Encouragement of specific actors	– Information to the municipalities –> facilitation within them in various ways – Encouragement of specific actors	– Definition of needs in a top-down manner (mainly on a region-wide scale) – Intermediating orgs. generating projects
Development contexts in which in the measures operated as a source of relevant capital	– Agriculture and rural development – Agricultural & rural extension	– Economic development in municipalities – Agricultural & rural extension	– Agriculture and forestry – Project development and management services – Agricultural & rural extension – Village development
Specificity of capital required	– Contacts to MAFF and local authorities advantages – Knowledge of structural funding regulations	– Contacts with municipal administrations and with the CAB advantages – Monopoly position: rural extension org. – Matching funding – Knowledge of structural funding regulations	– Close contacts with agricultural and forestry authorities an advantage, sometimes a prerequisite – Knowledge of structural funding regulations

6.2 East Anglia: local initiatives meet bureaucratic categories

In East Anglia the generation of projects took place within the limits set by the peculiar spatial configuration of the designated region. The local administrations and the specific facilitators operated within the limits of novel patches which the Objective 5b programme created. Each patch covered a part of a county and had areas from several districts. This fragmentation discouraged participation. Both public and private organisations found it difficult to balance the development of those areas that were within the Objective 5b programme and those that were not. The exclusion of the market towns from the designated region also hindered implementation (Wood and Woodward 1998).

In the beginning of the programming period, the government officers managing the implementation process expected the spectrum of actors potentially interested in generating projects to be large. Indeed, this proved to be the case. After a rather enthusiastic beginning, however, many actors silently withdraw form the implementation process. (Article III.) The programme managers, on their behalf, remained in supervising roles and only seldom were involved in the definition of needs or innovation of projects (see also Ward and Woodward 1998:25).

In East Anglia the MAFF established thematic schemes for the implementation of the EAGGF measures. Their origin was in the initiatives which the MAFF had received from interested organisations, but the MAFF officials also actively encouraged some organisations to come along and to take responsibility on a particular measure. The schemes provided farmers with possibilities to reach extension services and to take part in marketing networks. The biggest of the farm diversification schemes was run by a private consultancy which earlier had been part of the agricultural administration. One of the measures of the

programming document was tailored to it. While carrying out "on-farm diversification assessments" it created understandings – or rather, maintained or reinforced existing ones - regarding development alternatives. (Article IV.)

Some of the projects which succeeded in receiving Objective 5b funding also provided stakes for actors who had not had an earlier position in the agricultural field.

The Food link–project, representing what Marsden (2000) would call "radical re-organisation of supply chains" was initiated by a farmers' organisation as a response to the new funding opportunity. Along with this project, the agricultural administration became a co-financer of a food-system based on organic farming. (Article IV.) Although this new project hardly altered the premises on which the hard core agricultural policy community operated, it may, in the long run, question the existing truths and support other attempts to do so. The project was among the ones which went on proceeding even after the European funding had finished.

Although the role of the local authorities was small in the implementation of other EAGGF measures, they were often in a key role in the generation of environmental projects. The specifically appointed new "European" or "economic" officers (see also Goldsmith and Sperling 1997; John 2000) arranged inter-departmental brainstorming sessions in counties and districts and contacted potential project managers. Sometimes, although seldom, the local residents could express their views about the development needs (Fakenham Regeneration Partnership 1996). (Articles III; IV.)

The local officers also run patch specific working groups where projects were supposed to be initiated and discussed. Several semi-governmental bodies and voluntary organisations were initially interested in participating in them, and the local officers actively encouraged their involvement. However, the newcomers were faced with unpleasant surprises in the working groups: a formal atmosphere with strict hierarchies and complex regulations which they did not know. Therefore they had little legitimacy to take part in the debates. In all, according to the interviewees, the item which was discussed most in the meetings was the current state of spending, not everyday problems of rural life. After a promising start, the meetings were reduced to gathering points of the various authorities only. (Articles III; IV.)

The strategic importance of the novel funding source naturally varied depending on an actor or on a field. It seems evident that in East Anglia some of the voluntary organisations were not interested in investing in the laborious game because of their good financial situation (Articles III; IV). In other UK regions structural funding programmes have faced similar reactions (Roberts and Hart 1996:24).

6.3 Gävleborg: partial politicisation of municipal policies

The specificity in Sweden is the low intensity of public intervention in agricultural and forestry policies: the agricultural and forestry subsidies were abolished in the early 1990's except for those which favoured environmental protection (Eckerberg and Wide 2001)[7]. Partly as a result of this, the implementation of the EAGGF measures, and particularly of the large forest measure, turned out to be difficult in Gävleborg. In the end, the take-up of the measure was very much "saved" – according to one interviewee – by the activity the

---

[7] The EU membership, by re-introducing subsidies, therefore appeared as beneficial for Swedish farmers. This is in contrast particularly with the Finnish situation.

municipalities showed towards it. This further emphasised the significance of municipal fields. Promotion of agricultural diversification was, however, integrated in the existing agricultural extension practices. (Article V.)

In different municipalities the Objective 5b programme was brought to very variable circumstances. The municipal councillors and authorities in Söderhamn viewed the programme as an antidote for the acute unemployment problems. In that municipality several large factories had recently closed down. Therefore it is no wonder that in Söderhamn the Objective 5b programme was closely integrated into existing business development practices: it was described as "an additional pot of money". In Söderhamn the administrators identified, in cooperation with business interests, in which sectors potentials for growth could be found. The aim was to generate long-lasting and large projects which could provide employment for many. (Article V.)

In many other municipalities the identification of development needs and potentials took place in centralised manner too. Particularly in the beginning of the programming period various meetings between the representatives of the municipality, the employment service, the county administrative board and private firms were held. The scale of deliberation was seen as appropriate since "the municipality has a comprehensive view". Neither was the centralised approach viewed as non-democratic: after all, the elected councillors made decisions on the municipal co-funding. (Article V.)

The rural municipality of Ockelbo chose a very specific kind of strategy in the identification of development potentials. Since this small municipality had been suffering from considerable emigration, promotion of local activity was identified as important even before the Objective 5b programme was launched. An earlier project had organised local study circles for the identification of development problems and needs. The novel programme was integrated into this existing activity and the project manager continued to work as a facilitator. The Objective 5b programme appeared to him as a "fantastic opportunity". (Article V.)

In Bollnäs an agricultural extension project evolved into a county-wide scheme which aimed at increasing the involvement of local communities in regional and municipal development. The project brought together a group of actors, representing what they called a "social economy" perspective. One of their common aims was to question the dominant thinking within the municipal economic development policies: they wished to change the way the needs of the policy were identified and to strengthen the role of villages in the making of the policy. However, the representative of the lobby noted that the division between the "traditional" economic development and the social economy approach was hard to overcome. (Article V.)

As the project manager expressed it, he and his associates were interested in working on *how* questions. As achievements he mentioned the manner the project had brought people together and how the network so formed had succeeded in getting a LEADER+ designation to the province (*landsskap*). Being inside the bureaucratic structural funding discourse, the lobby could take part in the related discussion. It criticised the Swedish interpretations of the structural funding regulations for causing "home-made problems" for local participation (Sinclair and Lager 1999:18). The lobby proposed private contributions also be counted as valid matching funding. (Article V.)

Despite the dichotomy in approaches, many municipal representatives – as well as the municipality administration they represented – perceived centralised business promotion and localised village development as complementary. For example, in Ovanåker

a specific village development scheme accompanied traditional business promotion. The exception here was the municipality of Hudiksvall which in general did little facilitation work. (Article V.)

6.4 South Ostrobothnia: increasingly autonomous fields of agriculture and forestry

In South Ostrobothnia, the programme implementation started from the premise that rural development is most of all a dialogue between the state authorities and the sub-regional units. The officer from the Regional Council captured the logic by stating that "the state authority defines its needs and so also do the municipalities, and the Regional Council then adjusts the interests". (Article II.)

The rural authorities identified themes or schemes into which the project initiatives had to fit, but they could also propose particular projects. In both cases they typically consulted potential project managers already during the definition task. Not only did they actively map development needs and innovate projects, but also the project proposals were addressed to them for eligibility checking. All proposals which searched for EAGGF-funding were addressed to the agricultural and forestry authorities who decided simultaneously on the EU and national contributions. In addition to that, the projects needed to acquire also municipal funding contributions.

The decision-making regarding the municipal contributions took place in the sub-regional units. Each sub-region had a coordinator who facilitated the funds and represented the sub-region in the regional Objective 5b field. The coordinators could influence the way the definition of needs was organised in the sub-region and who were heard in these processes. Mainly they consulted entrepreneurs, expert organisations, consultation firms and, occasionally also various interest and voluntary organisations. (Article II.)

Many interviewees noted that the Objective 5b programme was harnessed to the "EU adaptation of agriculture" that was taking place. The average size of holdings was perceived to be too small for profitable farming: the programme needed to serve enlargement and rationalisation. At the same time those farmers who had no possibility to intensify production required help in finding new sources of income. However, the farmers required persuasion before they were ready for "adaptation". When the agricultural officers and appointed co-ordinators tried to convince the farmers, they simultaneously created normative understandings on good agricultural practice. The administrators referred to polarities such as: we – other regions; modern - old-fashioned; broadminded – stubborn; pioneer - obstructer. (Articles II; IV.)

The administrators I interviewed referred to the implementation of the Objective 5b programme as a "project roulette" or machinery. Its utilisation required specific expertise. As a result, as the interviewees argued, coordinators, programme managers and consultants were needed as intermediaries between the entrepreneurs and the programme. For research institutes and extension consultants the programme opened a field of "project development and management". According to a critical stand the central role of the consulting organisations distorted the identification of development needs: the content of projects followed the availability of expertise and intermediating services. The perceptions of what was available were based, according to this interviewee, on the established relations between the specific extension consultants and the authorities. In

other words, those private actors which had a central position in the agricultural field from before, could strengthen it by adopting a new "spielmerke", expertise on the funding system. (Articles II; IV.)[8]

A specific feature in South Ostrobothnia was the involvement of manufacturing businesses in the definition of needs and in actual generation of projects. Thanks to the regular meetings the representatives of wood processing industries could assure that the constant production of timber received enough attention in the activities of the forest authorities. The food processors, on their behalf, carried out projects by which they could enhance the availability and quality of raw materials. (Article II.)

In the case of forest management the programme represented only an additional funding source: the forest owners receiving grants did not necessarily realise that they were taking part in an EU programme. On the other hand, some other – although much smaller – project entities also created novel activities. These gave forest authorities new roles and introduced new partners. (Articles II, IV.)[9]

The so-called village development scheme differed from all other project categories. The idea was that the residents themselves would define the development needs and actions. On the basis of the village appraisals the villagers often ended up repairing communal buildings, organising cultural events and taking care of the environment. The large scheme supported the strengthening of village development in the region, but was, according to a coordinator I interviewed, poorly fitted to provide help to the problems the villagers found as the most crucial ones. (Article II.) It was difficult to support the provision of local services from the measure.

7 Constitution of social learning potential in the implementation of rural development programmes

My results imply that the institutionalisation of the EAGGF measures did not provide particularly good conditions for social learning in the three regions studied. The case studies give a rather grim impression of the matter. The institutionalisation of the programmes had a tendency to increase the gap between the insiders and outsiders of regional policy-making by causing the accumulation of symbolic capital. Moreover, the complexity of the EU structural funding framework and emphasis placed on the policy on immediate instrumental purposes carried a risk of turning funding programmes into sources of

---

[8] This is in line with the notion of the Interim Evaluation of the Mainland Finland Objective 5b programme (1997: unnumbered) stating that "realisation of the Objective 5b programme mainly takes place through the former aid scheme which as such limits the opportunities for new types of development and strategies outside its structures". Rantama (2002) has made similar observations about the implementation of so called POMO (local rural development) programmes in Finland.

[9] The differences in forest ownership partly explain why the role of forest policies differ so much between Finland and Sweden – and why the role of the forest authorities in the implementation of the Objective 5b programmes varied as well. In Finland forest policy aims at the smooth availability of timber for the use of wood processing. Private forest owners are supported to manage their forests in a manner which safeguards such development. Forest management is supported by specific aid measures. In Sweden the worry about the supply of timber is not equally deep, thanks to the large forest areas own by the processing companies themselves. While in South Ostrobothnia private actors – mainly farmers – own 90% of forest area (Etelä-Pohjanmaan metsäkeskus 2001), the same number is in municipalities I studied in Gävleborg was 48% in 2000 (Skogsbrukets betydelse för Gävleborgs län 2001).

increased autonomy. However, the programmes were not exceptional in this: any procedure which offers some actors a monopoly to determine which categories of thinking are legitimate can accomplish same thing. Such a regulatory apparatus imposes cognitive structures through which it is perceivable and institute socially guaranteed identities (Bourdieu 1994). Here, again, the Nordic Triangle case serves as an example.

Opening up of the bureaucratic fields in the designated regions was unavoidable due to the common European framework which all participants needed to follow. The centres the funding system and its interpretations assigned as "the official representatives of the official" (Bourdieu 1994:2), that is, the EU Commission, the nation states and the various regional cores, spread standardised categories of thought and action across different development contexts. These centres re-produced the universalities of the regulatory system under an illusion of neutrality. Since the organisation of the implementation processes in each case followed existing administrative structures, the Objective 5b programmes offered symbolic capital for those who were already in privileged position.

In the cases I studied the rationale to maximise the regional or local "take" (e.g. Haughton et al. 1997) restricted social learning by offering spending as a starting point for interaction. Actors met in order to produce and screen project initiatives. There was no room for subjects who were unable or unwilling to contribute to such an endeavour. However, the co-financing and eligibility screening either restricted or encouraged project generation to a variable extent.

The diverse political circumstances affected the spectrum of the fields for which the Objective 5b programmes provided relevant capital. Moreover, the on-going contests into which the programme was integrated and which it - or EU membership in the case of Finland and Sweden – opened had an influence on how, and by whom, development needs and potentials were defined in the three case studies.

For instance, the Objective 5b programme was perceived as a remedy against agricultural crisis in South Ostrobothnia. In order for the region to reap maximum benefits from the programme, the rural authorities took the situation into their own hands and did not just wait for initiatives to emerge. From their point of view, it was the time for comprehensive and powerful actions.

As a very general rule, the level of autonomy in the pre-existing fields affected the development of social learning potential (see Table 5). The more autonomous a field, the easier it was for the dominating actors to interpret the new action dimension to further strengthened their position. This is in line with the "logic of practice", to use a Bourdieuean expression (Bourdieu 1990). Moreover, when a programme was introduced into an autonomous field, the number of potential entrants was low. (Article IV.)

In all, the interaction between the existing fields and the Objective 5b programmes created roughly five types of situations. *First*, if the implementation of an Objective 5b programme was integrated into an autonomous field, the shift in policy-making practices was often only superficial. The category of programmatic development was integrated into a field in a manner which did not generate needs for introducing new actors. Forest management in South Ostrobothnia serves as an example here. The programme further strengthened the autonomy of the field. The new action dimension became an extra source of symbolic capital – expertise, contacts, legitimacy – to those who already had a privileged position. On the other hand, in South Ostrobothnia there were few non-governmental actors likely to initiate projects or have a political interest in the content of the EAGGF

financed actions. Evidently the "corporatist agreements" still powerful in agriculture and forestry in Finland (Jokinen 1997) restricted the possibilities for multi-dimensional interaction. (Article IV.)

In the *second* type the Objective 5b programme generated a demand for a novel type of capital. The funding bureaucracy and expertise related to it started to structure agency and action in a thematic or spatial context, thereby opening up a kind of sub-fields within the existing fields. The funding instrument could open up the emerging sub-fields to new entrants or help in establishing the positions of pre-existing, but occasional actors. As a result, the programme could then widen participation, but only within the instrumental limits of effective programme implementation. The fields which the Objective 5b programmes opened up in the units of local administration in all the three cases tended to be of this type. (Articles II; IV; V.) In the environmental assessment of the Nordic Triangle a bureaucratic procedure was also attached to an existing field in this manner. Thanks to the assessment, participation also became possible for those who were in a marginal position in the field of transport policy. However, interaction in the assessment process was possible only in the narrow limits of the procedure, which was tailored to fit the categories of the transportation field.

However, the second alternative could - or still may - lead to a *third* one: interaction in a locality or in a thematic group could focus on a particular practical problem or business idea, largely dismissing the categories of *both* the funding scheme *and* the administrative unit. This is not to say that the concepts disappeared, but that they lost their power as those structuring agency. It is also possible that as a consequence of the programme, totally new connections between various spheres of action appeared and new understandings arose – resulting further in emerging new agents and identities.

In the municipalities of Gävleborg, in the fields of municipal development, the Objective 5b programme promoted erosion of autonomy (Article V). Economic development in municipalities has been traditionally motivated by the aspiration to provide favourable conditions for private enterprise and so to ensure high rate of employment. The identification of municipal interest with the interests of the firms operating in it has also made the policy sector elitist. (Hanberger 1997:154-157; see also Pierre 1996.) However, the Objective 5b programme introduced new entrants who demanded policy changes. At the same time the programme made the variations in economic development policies more explicit.

Fourth, the programmes could support existing multidimensionality. In East Anglia the EAGGF projects were to some extent initiated from below. For this to be possible, interested actors had to exist in the first place. Throughout the UK the diversity of potential actors is greater than in the two Nordic countries, where provision of services is quite firmly in the hands of public agencies and the role of voluntary actors is less significant than in the UK. Moreover, in the UK rural issues are relatively politicised and nonconformist movements are strong (see e.g. Lowe et al 1986; Shoard 1987; Simmons 1997). To some actors at least the Objective 5b programme offered a new opportunity for the articulation of such political views. (Article IV.).

Fifth, in an unfortunate situation a structural funding programme might further reduce an existing social space. This occurred if, in communities in which interactive plurality had been possible, one-dimensional rationales cause the narrowing of imagination. Such a risk is real, for instance, if the operation of a village development movement becomes dominated by the concepts of European bureaucracy. The Budapest

Declaration warns about "the risks of instrumentalising and manipulating local capacities" (COST Action 12 on Rural Innovation:8). For example, in Gävleborg the thinking of the village activists was greatly affected by the categories of the funding system.

These five trajectories describe how the conditions of environmental integration can be affected by a rural development programme. Even if - in a particular region or sector - the level of environmental integration is perceived to be high, the development which follows either of the two first trajectories may turn out to be unsustainable. Perceptions and knowledge base will change, causing new challenges for environmental integration. Moreover, if regional implementation cannot break the top-down logic of the policy, but perhaps even increases it, it may be hard to motivate local actors to participate and create the initiatives necessary for the achievement of environmental goals (Articles III; V). On the other hand, if a programme supports the erosion of universalities and opens new scales of public deliberation, rural inhabitants may find the integration of the economic and environmental concerns to be worth their attention. In the end, many of the residents reproduce the rural environment and all of them are directly affected by its quality.

Although I have discussed the constitution of social learning potential by taking examples from the three case studies and focussing on the differences between the institutionalisation processes, it is important to note that I found indications of various trajectories in all the cases I studied. This means that there was variation within the cases: there were several kinds of tendencies – or at least indications of them.

Moreover, the Objective 5b programmes could also open up new trajectories. Individual, problem-oriented projects in particular seemed to offer good opportunities for the development of multidimensional interaction conditions. In addition, the operation of the gatekeepers in the fields opened up or affected by the programmes could promote the development of multidimensionality. When the Objective 5b programme was re-interpreted in the various action contexts, the government and local officials in charge created identity positions by constructing practices of project generation. The potential applicants received attention from administrators and facilitators, and the various facilitators and co-operators defined their potential clientele in various ways. Particularly in East Anglia there were considerable differences in the ways these gate-keepers perceived the role of the eligibility criteria. Some of them were ready to contest the strict interpretations. (Articles III; IV.)

Ray (1999) describes gatekeepers who create a larger social space as reflexive practitioners. While acting as mediators between bureaucracy and the local/personal level, such actors contest the limits of bureaucracy. (Articles III; IV.) As I already noted, each of the centres, i.e. distributors of stakes and constructers of interaction conditions, can, in principle, question "the common principles of vision and division" (Bourdieu 1994:7), if such mental structures are not based on an absolute norm. On the other hand, interaction conditions cannot be freely manipulated by visionary governors. In a historical context a rural programme is given symbolic meanings which go back to earlier political contests and which are hard just to wipe out.

Table 5. Self-reinforcing processes relevant for the generation of social learning potential in the three case studies.

	East Anglia	Gävleborg	South Ostrobothnia
Potential entrants, existing degree of autonomy	– Agriculture and rural development relatively politicised issues – Active voluntary sector – Environmental organisations: initially interest in the programme, some of it faded	– "Social economy" lobby, political interest in municipal development emerged	– Corporatist agreements powerful in agriculture and forestry – Role of voluntary organisations slight above the village level – Authorities active in defining development needs in a top-down manner
Appearance of social learning potential	– A fragment of counter forces applied the programme as a political opportunity –> likely to support the relative plurality of the rural development field – Appearance of the bureaucratic field: widened the gap between insiders and outsiders in rural development	– Erosion of the autonomy in the fields of economic development in some municipalities – Appearance of the bureaucratic field: widened the gap between the insiders and outsiders in rural development	– Agriculture and forestry remained depoliticised – Village development: potential contexts for social learning – Appearance of the bureaucratic field: widened the gap between insiders and outsiders in rural development

8 Concluding remarks: supporting the reflexivity of EU rural policy

To develop EU rural policy in a less standardising and more reflexive direction is far from easy. The centrality of bureaucratic requirements and procedures naturally reflects the necessity to treat all Member States and regions as equal and to minimise misuse of the funds. The key difficulty lies in the top-down nature of the policy and in the manner in which structural funds feed money to the Member States and to the regions. The system encourages efficient spending and this aim, as we have seen, restricts participation and interaction. It seems that the local initiatives needed for environmental protection are particularly easily suppressed. To break the logic in which the funding seeks appropriate organisations to receive and use them, and not vice versa (Marks 1996), however, seems difficult: the sums allocated for various purposes are stakes in, and a result of, the "high politics" taking place in the Member States, among them and between them and the EU Commission.

However, a minimum solution would be to stop identifying success with the level of spending and, instead, to allow projects to start slowly and for their generation to proceed within a longer time frame. Indeed, the period of the current rural development programmes is seven years (Council Regulation 1257/1999). I would even suggest that very efficient take-up of a programme and fast spending of funds may indicate that the utilisation of the funds is strongly integrated into existing structures. Such a result is not necessarily a negative one, but if the attempt is to promote the entry of new participants and the adoption of new practices, something has probably gone wrong.

I hope that my research findings might decrease the dominance of the very instrumental intervention logic on which the evaluation of rural development tends to be based (e.g. EC/DGVI 1999a; 1999b). An input-output-outcome model often guides thinking towards measuring efficiency solely in terms of quantitative indicators. Although policy-makers may be fascinated by an illusion of control, I think they may be misled. The number of jobs safeguarded and generated, or the increase in turnover in a specific sector, gives a limited picture of what has actually happened. It is questionable whether such results alone can support policy-making, particularly if the evaluation fails to provide a historically located understanding of the connections between measures taken and outcomes achieved (see also COST Action 12 on Rural Innovation 2002:11). Moreover, such an approach may further strengthen the de-politicisation of rural development.

By relying on contextual variables and categories instead of standardised indicators, an emphasis on social learning may avoid the strengthening of the bureaucratic field. On the other hand, to focus on social learning requires that the analyses be based on qualitative case studies, which demands ample of resources. However, studying institutionalisation in this manner does not only reveal what happened during the implementation process, but also how the programme changed or reproduced the structures affecting future development.

Studying fields and the development of autonomy within them may reveal interesting differences in the ways social learning potentials are constituted in processes of rural policy implementation. Bourdieu's concept of "field" offers a dynamic model for studying the interplay between EU policy and the national and regional institutional conditions. Moreover, since a development programme may simultaneously increase and decrease social learning potential in a particular region, a field provides an appropriate analytical unit.

To assess the potential for social learning is also to study the conditions of environmental integration. For example, the ex ante evaluation of the Västerbotten-Gävle-Dala Objective 5b programme indicates that most of the project managers paid attention to environmental concerns during the generation of a project (Glesbygdsverket 2001:33). However, the results of the evaluation tell nothing about the effectiveness of the environmental integration that had taken place, since the consideration of environmental impacts may have been only cosmetic. In addition, rural development programmes in particular cause environmental impacts which are cumulative in nature. In order to grasp such impacts we need to focus on institutional changes and continuums. As a result, the framework I have applied here can contribute to the environmental assessments of rural development programmes or indeed any others. In the Nordic Triangle case a focus on social learning potential could have provided insights for the reorganisation of the assessment process, although it is hard to change the character of such a bureaucratic endeavour by changing only its administrative design.

Rural development is often driven by a situation in which the administrators recognise – or think they recognise - a rare opportunity where they should undertake rapid action. Such a situation raises the familiar tension between efficiency and democracy. The order of these goals depends on the time frame of the contemplation. Politically and socially the democratic alternative is certainly more sustainable. Moreover, the conditions for public deliberation may also be conducive to social learning. A wide variety of actors may be

encouraged to create and implement innovations which integrate economic and environmental concerns. The latter alternative is then likely in every sense to be the more sustainable.

All key actors - authorities, coordinators and facilitators – participate in the construction of multidimensional interaction arenas. The first challenge in the democratisation of rural development is to politicise its practices. Next, it is possible to focus on the operation of the political, i.e. to support the creation of conditions where social learning is possible. The authorities could already use the drafting of the programming documents to promote learning and mutual commitment. Moreover, instead of only addressing contentual requests in a top-down manner, the documents could, to an increasing extent, pay attention to the organisation of the implementation process.

However, a potential problem in the opening up of policy-making may be the passivity of those who could participate, easily resulting in a situation where the authorities, again, take issues into their own hands. There are no easy solutions to this, but here, too, the conditions of identification seem important: the spaces of contemplation and deliberation should make room for the experiences of individuals, which is something a purely bureaucratic endeavour is unlikely to do.

References

Aalbu, Hallgeir, Hallin, Göran, Mariussen, Åke. 1999. *When Policy Regimes Meet: Structural Funds in the Nordic Countries 1994-99*. Nordregio, Stockholm.

Albæk Erik. 1995. Between Knowledge and Power: Utilization of Social Science in Public Policy Making. *Policy Sciences* 28: 79-100.

Bache, Ian, George, Stephen, Rhodes, R.A.W. 1996. The European Union, Cohesion Policy, and Subnational Authorities in the United Kingdom. In Hooghe, Liesbet (ed.): *Cohesion Policy and European Integration.* Oxford University Press, Oxford, 295-319.

Bache, Ian. 1999. The Extended Gatekeeper: Central Government and the Implementation of EC Regional Policy in the UK. *Journal of European Public Policy* 6(1): 28-45.

Baldock, David, Dwyer, Janet, Lowe, Philip, Petersen, Jan-Erik, Ward, Neil. 2001. *The Nature of Rural Development: Towards a Sustainable Integrated Rural Policy in Europe*. A Ten-Nation Scoping Study for WWF and the GB Countryside Agencies. Synthesis Report. Institute for European Environmental Policy, London.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1975. The Specificity of the Scientific Field and the Social Conditions of the Progress of Reason. *Social Science Information* 14(6): 19-47.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1989. Social Space and Symbolic Power. *Sociological Theory* 7(1): 14-25.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1990. *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1991. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Ed J B Thompson. Polity Press, Cambridge.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1994. Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field. *Sociological Theory* 12(1): 1-18.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 2002. Habitus. In Hillier, Jean and Rooksby, Emma (eds.): *Habitus: A Sense of Place*. Ashgate, Aldershot, 27-34.

CEC (Commission of European Communities). 1988. The Future of Rural Society. Commission Communication to Parliament and the Council. *Bulletin of the European Communities, Supplement 4/88*. CEC, Brussels.

CEC (Commission of the European Communities). 2002. *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Mid-Term Review of the Common Agricultural Policy*, Brussels 10 July 2002, COM(2002)394.

Cohen, Michael D., March James G., Olsen, Johan P. 1972. A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17: 1-25.

COST Action 12 on Rural Development. 2002. *The Budapest Declaration on Rural Innovation*. http://cost.cordis.lu/src/action_documents.cfm?action_number=A12 (030108).

Council Regulation (EEC) No 2082/93. 1993. *Official Journal L* 193, 31/07/1993: 0020 –0033.

Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999. *Official Journal L* 160, 26/06/1999: 0080 –0102.

Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999. *Official Journal L* 160, 26/06/1999: 0001 –0042.

Davies, Howard. 1993. Free Markets and Centralised Political Power: a British Paradox. In Bennett, Robert J. (ed.): *Local Government in the New Europe*. Belhaven Press, London and New York, 80-94.

Douglas, Mary. 1987. *How Institutions Think*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Dyke, Chuck & Dyke, Carl. 2003. Identities: The Dynamical Dimensions of Diversity. In Alperson, Philip (ed.): *Diversity and Community: A Critical Reader*. Blackwell's, Oxford. (forthcoming)

Dwyer, Janet & Baldock, David. 2000. *The Rural Development Regulation in Britain: Fulfilling the Promise*. A Report on the Behalf of Wildlife and Countryside Link. Institute for European Environmental Policy, London.

East Anglia Objective 5(b) Programme: Interim Evaluation. 1998. Segal Quince Wicksteed Limited, Cambridge.

EC/DGVI (European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture). 1999a. *Guidelines for the Ex Post Evaluation of Objective 5(b) Programmes, 1994-1999 Programming Period*. http://europa.eu.int/ comm/agriculture/eval/index_en.htm (020417).

EC/DGVI (European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture). 1999b. *Evaluation of rural development programmes 2000-2006 supported from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund. Guidelines.* http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/rur/eval/index_en.htm (020417).

Eckerberg, Katarina & Wide, Jessica. 2001. *The Nature of Rural Development. The Case of Sweden.* Department of Political Science, Report 2001:1. Umeå University, Umeå.

Environment Daily 19.06.2000. *EU Extends Green Conditions on Funding*. ENDS Daily, Europe's Environmental News Service, Issue 784. http://www.environmentdaily.com/articles/ index.cfm.

Etelä-Pohjanmaan maakuntasuunnitelma, aluekehittämisohjelman tarkistus 1998-1999. 1997. Tiivistelmä. Etelä-Pohjanmaan liitto, julkaisu A:8, Seinäjoki.

Etelä-Pohjanmaan metsäkeskus. 2001. *Etelä-Pohjanmaan metsäohjelma* 2001-2005. http:// www.metsakeskus.fi/epm/index1.htm (020503).

European Conference on Rural Development. 1996. *Rural Europe – Future Perspectives*. Cork, Ireland 7-9 November. http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/rur/cork_en.htm (030117).

Fakenham Regeneration Partnership. 1996. *A Regeneration Strategy for Fakenham*. Final Strategy Report by Pieda plc, ref. 8050.

FRCA (Farming and Rural Conservation Agency). 1998. *Agricultural and Rural Economy Issues in East Anglia*. Cambridge.

Gamson, William A. & Modigliani, Andre. 1989. Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach. *American Journal of Sociology* 95(1): 1-37.

Glasbergen, Pieter. 1997. Learning to Manage the Environment. In Lafferty, William and Meadowcroft, James (eds.): *Democracy and the Environment*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham and Lyme, 175-193.

Glasbergen, Pieter. 1998. Modern Environmental Agreements: A Policy Instrument Becomes a Management Strategy. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 41(6): 693-709

Glasbergen, Pieter. 1999. Tailor-made Environmental Governance: On the Relevance of the Govenanting Process. *European Environment* 9: 49-58.

Glasbergen, Pieter. 2000. The Environmental Cooperative: Self-Governance in Sustainable Rural Development. *Journal of Environment and Development* 9(3): 260-283.

Glesbygdsverket. 2001. *Slutlig utvärdering Mål 5b Västerbotten/Gävle/Dala*. www.glesbygdsverket.se/ publikationer (020320).

Goldsmith , Michael & Sperling, Elizabeth. 1997. Local Governments and the EU: The British Experience. In Goldsmith, Michael & Klausen, Kurt K. (eds): *European Integration and Local Government*. Elgar, Cheltenham, 95-120.

Gröning, Lotta & Hjern, Benny. 2000. *Kommunal Industripolitik och glokalt politiskt ansvar. En underlagsrapport till den regionalpolitiska stutbetänkande.* www.naring.regeringen.se/ propositioner_mm/sou/2000/index.htm (020320).

Grönqvist, Mikaela. 2002. *Partnerskap - från princip till praktik. En jämförande studie i hur partnerskapsprincipen tolkats i praktiken i ett regional strukturfondsprogram i Sverige och i Finland.* Nordregio, Stockholm.

Hallin, Göran & Lindström, Bjarne. 2000. *Det ouppklarade partnerskapet. Om svensk regionalpolitik, strukturfonderna och den territoriella utmaningen*. Institutet för regionalforskning, Östersund.

Hanberger, Anders. 1997. *Lokalpolitikens möjligheter. Historisk policyanalys av problemnärhet och effektivitet i kommunal policy och dess betydelse för politisk legitimitet*. Statvetenskapliga institutionen, Umeå Universitet, Umeå.

Haughton, Graham, Peck, Jamie, Strange, Ian. 1997. Turf Wars: The Battle for the Control over English Local Economic Development. *Local Government Studies* 23(1): 88-106.

Hooghe, Liesbet. 1996. Introduction. Reconciling EU-Wide Policy and National Diversity. In In Hooghe, Liesbet (ed.): *Cohesion Policy and European Integration.* Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1-23.

Hooghe, Liesbet & Keating, Michael. 1994. The Politics of European Union Regional Policy. *Journal of European Public Policy* 1(3): 1350-1763.

House of Commons Select Committee on the Environment. 1996. *Third Report: Rural England, the Rural White Paper*. HMSO, London.

Interim Evaluation of the Mainland Finland Objective 5b programme. 1997. The University of Oulu; Pellervo Economic Research Institute; Finnish Area Research; University of Vaasa. VI/3664/97. europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/eval/reports/ rurdev5ab/interim/fi/text.pdf (030117).

Isosuo, Tuula. 2000. Suomalaisen maaseutupolitiikan vaiheet ja erikoispiirteet. In Hyyryläinen, P. and Rannikko, P. (eds.): *Eurooppalaistuva maaseutupolitiikka*. Vastapaino, Tampere, 46-60.

Jessop, Bob. 2001. Institutional Re(turns) and the Strategic-Relational Approach. *Environment and Planning A* 33: 1213-1235.

John, Peter. 1996. Centralisation, Decentralisation and the European Union: the Dynamics of Triadic Relationships. *Public Administration* 74: 293-313.

John, Peter. 2000. The Europeanisation of Sub-national Governance. *Urban Studies* 37(5-6): 877-895.

Jokinen, Pekka. 1997. Agricultural Policy Community and the Challenge of Greening: The Case of Finnish Agri-environmental Policy. *Environmental Politics* 6(2): 48-71.

Jordbrukets betydelse för Gävleborgs län. 2001. LRF, Länsstyrelsen Gävleborg.

Kuosmanen, Antti. 2001. *Finland's Journey to the European Union*. European Institute of Public Administration, Maastricht.

Laclau, Ernesto & Mouffe, Chantal. 2001. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. Second edition, first published in 1985. Verso, London and New York.

Lash, Scott. 1990. Modernisation and Postmodernisation in the work of Pierre Bourdieu. In Lash, Scott: *Sociology of Postmodern*. Routledge, London, 237-265.

Linnamaa, Reija & Sotarauta, Markku. 2000. *Verkostojen utopia ja arki. Tutkimus Etelä-Pohjanmaan kehittäjäverkostoista*. Tampereen yliopisto, aluetieteen ja ympäristöpolitiikan laitos, alueellisen kehittämisen tutkimusyksikkö, Sente-julkaisuja 7/2000, Tampere.

Lowe, Philip, Cox, Graham, MacEwen, Malcolm, O'Riordan, Timothy, Winter, Michael. 1986. *Countryside Conflicts. The Politics of Farming, Forestry and Conservation.* Aldershot, Gover.

Lowe, Philip, Ray, Christopher, Ward, Neil, Wood, David, Woodward, Rachel. 1998. *Participation in Rural Development: A Review of European Experience*. Research Report, Centre for Rural Economy, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle.

Lowe, Philip, Buller, Henry, Ward, Neil. 2002. Setting the next agenda? British and French approaches to the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy. *Journal of Rural Studies* 18(1): 1-17.

MAFF (Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries). 1995. *FIB 95/28: Guidance on Achieving Environmental Objectives and Economic Outputs in Objective 5b projects*. Land Use and Rural Economy Division, unpublished.

Marks, Gary. 1996. Exploring and Explaining Variation in EU Cohesion Policy. In Hooghe, Liesbet (ed.): *Cohesion Policy and European Integration: Building Multi-Level Governance.* Oxford University, Oxford, 388-422.

Marsden, Terry. 2000. *Food, Nature and the Rural Economy: Regulating Rural Uneven Development*. Paper presented in European Society of Rural Sociology Summer School, August 2000, Siuntio, Finland.

Martin, Steve. 1998. EU Programmes and the Evolution of Local Economic Governance in the UK. *European Urban and Regional Studies* 5(3): 237-248.

Massey, Doreen. 1999. Spaces of Politics. In Massey, Doreen, Allen, John, Sarre, Philip (eds.): *Human Geography Today*. Polity Press, Cambridge, 279-294.

McAleavey, Paul. 1995. *Policy Implementation as Incomplete Contracting: The European Regional Development Fund*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, European University Institute, Florence.

McAleavey, Paul & De Rynck, Stefaan. 1997. *Regional or Local? The EU's Future Partners in Cohesion Policy*. European University Institute, Working Paper RSC No 97/55, Florence.

McNicholas, Kate and Woodward, Rachel. 1999. *Community Development in North Yorkshire: an Assessment of the Objective 5b and LEADER Programmes*. Centre for Rural Economy Research Report, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle.

Miles, Lee. 1996. The Nordic Countries and the Fourth EU Enlargement. In Miles, Lee (ed.): *European Union and the Nordic Countries*. Routledge, London, 63-78.

Mouffe, Chantal. 1993. *The Return of the Political*. Verso, London and New York.

Pierre, Jon. 1996. *Framgångsrika kommuner – mot en ny näringspolitisk modell?* Svenska Kommunförbundet, Regional- och Näringspolitiska sektionen. Svenska Kommunförbundet, Stockholm.

Rantama, Eeva. 2002. *Uudet instituutiot omaehtoisen kehittämisen tukena*. Acta Universitatis Tamperensis 879, University of Tampere, Tampere.

Ray, Christopher. 1999. *The Reflexive Practitioner and the Policy Process*. Centre for Rural Economy working paper 40, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle.

Roberts, Peter & Hart, Trevor. 1996. *Regional Strategy and Partnership in European Programmes. Experience in Four UK regions*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York.

Roe, Emery. 1994. *Narrative Policy Analysis. Theory and Practice*. Duke University Press, Durham and London.

Samlat programplaneringsdokument för mål 5b Västerbotten/Gävle/Dala 1995-1999 i Sverige. 1996-04-03.

Sandberg, Siv & Ståhlberg, Krister. 2000. *Nordisk regionalförvaltning i förändring*. Åbo Akademi, Åbo.

Schön, Donald A. & Rein, Martin. 1994. *Frame Reflection. Toward the Resolution of Intractable Policy Controversies.* Basic Books.

Sharp, Paul. 1997. *Thatcher's Diplomacy. The Revival of British Foreign Policy*. ICBH & the Institute of Contemporary British History.

Shoard, Marion. 1987. *This Land is Our Land. The Struggle for Britain's Countryside*. Paladin Grafton Books, London.

Simmons, Michael. 1997. *Landscapes – of Poverty. Aspects of Rural England in the late 1990s*. Lemos & Crane, London.

Sinclair, Hans & Lager, Ragnar. 1999. *Lärande uppföljning av kommunernas landbygdsutveckling med tillhörande EU-stödprogram I Gävleborgs län*. Uppdrag av Länsstyrelsen i Gävleborgs Län, CER Education AB.

Skogsbrukets betyldse för Gävleborgs län. 2001. LRF, Mellanskog, Länsstyrelsen Gävleborg.

SOU 1999. *EU:s strukturstöd – Ny organisation for de geografiskt avgränsade strukturfondsprogrammen*. Government communication / SOU 1994:24.

Strömberg, Lars & Engen, Tone. 1996. Sweden. In Albæk, Erik, Rose, Lawrence, Strömberg, Lars, Ståhlberg Krister: *Nordic Local Government. Development Trends and Reform Activities in the Postwar Period*. The Association of Finnish Local Authorities, Helsinki, 235-284.

Ståhlberg, Krister & Oulasvirta, Lasse. 1996. Finland. In Albæk, Erik, Rose, Lawrence, Strömberg, Lars, Ståhlberg Krister: *Nordic Local Government. Development Trends and Reform Activities in the Postwar Period*. The Association of Finnish Local Authorities, Helsinki, 87-157.

Thompson, John B. 1991. Editor's Introduction. In Bourdieu, Pierre: *Language & Symbolic Power.* Polity Press, Cambridge, 1-31.

Uusitalo, Eero. 1999. Finnish Rural Policy and Local Initiative. Maaseudun uusi aika 7(2): 50-67. (*New Rural Policy, English Supplement*)

Valve, Helena. 1999. *Environmental Policy Goals and the Objective 5b Programmes: the Case of East Anglia*. Centre for Rural Economy working paper, 44, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle.

Van der Ploeg, Jan Douwe, Renting, Henk, Gianluca, Brunori, Knickel, Karlheinz, Mannion, Joe, Marsden, Terry, de Roest, Kees, Sevilla-Guzmán, Eduardo and Ventura, Flaminia. 2002. Rural Development: From Practices and Policies towards Theory. *Sociologia Ruralis* 40(4): 391-408.

Ward, Neil & Woodward, Rachel. 1998 *The Europeanisation of Rural Development Policy in the UK: The Case of East Anglia*. Centre for Rural Economy working paper 31, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle.

Westholm, Erik. 1999. Exploring the Role of Rural Partnerships. In Westholm, Erik, Moseley, Malcolm, Stenlås, Niklas (eds.): *Local Partnerships and Rural Development in Europe. A Literary Review on Practice and Theory*. Dalarna Research Institute, Falun, 13-43.

Wildlife Trusts and World Wide Fund for Nature. 1996. *Objective 5b Structural Funds – Environmental Opportunities in the UK*. Final draft, November 1996.

Virkkala, Seija. 1998. *Thematic Assessment of the Partnership Principle: Country Report Finland.* Chydenius Institute, Kokkola, unpublished.

Glossary

CAB   County Administrative Board (in Sweden)
CAP   Common Agricultural Policy
DGVI   Directorate-General for Agriculture of the European Commission
EAGGF   European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund
EU   European Union
LEADER   Community Initiative for Rural Development
MAFF   Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries in the UK; Nowadays the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
Objective 5b One of the Objectives of the EU Structural Funds in the programming periods 1988-1993 and 1994-1999, focussing on the development of rural areas
SPD   Single Programming Document
WTO   World Trade Organisation

Appendix 1: The interviewees

Interviewees[1]	East Anglia	Gävleborg	South Ostrobothnia
Central Government organisations (and their regional representatives)	— Dept. of Environment, Transport and Regions — English Nature — Environment Agency — Farming and Rural Conservation Agency — Government Office for the Eastern Region (2)[2] — Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (2) — Rural Development Commission — TEC (Great Peterborough)	— CAB (2) — The Objective 5b Secretariat (2) — Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications — National Board of Forestry	— Regional Employment and Economic Development Centre: • Employment and Enterprise Services • Rural Services (2) — Regional Centre of Forestry (2) — Regional Environment Centre (2)
Regional authorities		— Gävleborg County Council	— Regional Council (2) of South Ostrobothnia
Local administration	— Standing Conference of East Anglian Local Authorities — Breckland District C[3] — Norfolk County C — North Norfolk District C — Suffolk County Council — Suffolk landscape project	— EU-coordinators from • Bollnäs • Hudiksvall and Nordanstig • Ockelbo • Ovanåker • Söderhamn — Rural development officer (Ovanåker) — Local councillor (retired, Söderhamn)	— Sub-regional unit "Seinänaapurit" — Sub-regional unit "Suupohja" — City of Seinäjoki
Voluntary Organisations	— Foodlink- project — Norfolk Rural Community C — Suffolk ACRE (ex-official) — Suffolk Wildlife Trust	— Society for Nature Conservation in Gävleborg — Vedmora village	— Regional Dist. of the Association for Nature Conservation — Regional unit of BirdLife Finland
Facilitators	— Agricultural facilitator — Objective 5b/RDA Office, Suffolk	— Village development group	— Agriculture — Village development — Utilisation of march land
Private consultants	— ADAS	— Forest-owners´ assoc. Mellanskog — Rural Economy and Agricultural Society	— Foodwest — Rural Advisory Centre
EU Commission	— DG IV		

[1] The organisations which the interviewees represented
[2] (2) = two interviews
[3] C = Council