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Multiple Dimensions of Strategic Spatial Planning: Local Authorities Navigating between Rationalities in Competitive and Collaborative Settings

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ABSTRACT

This article scrutinises the role of strategic and communicative rationalities in strategic spatial planning. It contributes to the theoretical discussion on strategic spatial planning, where communicative rationality has usually been taken as a normative standpoint, despite the evident role of strategic rationality in guiding planning on the ground. To develop means for equally recognising the two rationalities, the article introduces an analytical framework in which four strategic orientations are identified by juxtaposing coordination through communicative and strategic rationalities with competitive and collaborative settings of social interaction. Its applicability is illustrated with the example of strategic spatial planning in Turku (Finland).

Introduction

Strategic spatial planning has been gaining popularity since the 1990s. Even though there is no agreement on its definition and scope (e.g. Ziafati Bafarasat, 2015), there are certain characteristics that have been repeatedly associated with strategic spatial planning in research literature. Strategic planning is typically practised to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of planning by differentiating between, first, selection of long-term, transformative goals that are supposed to be flexible enough vis-à-vis uncertain futures and, second, more concrete "operative" programming of the processes needed to achieve these goals (e.g. Bryson, 1988; Kaufman & Jacobs, 1987; Minzberg, 1994). Yet, it has been noted that because of the future uncertainties, the "operative" level of planning can provide useful feedback to the "strategic level" of selecting the goals, which means that the line between these two aspects of strategic planning becomes blurred in practice (Mäntysalo et al., 2019). The recursive nature of strategic planning, among other things, has also led many planning theorists to suggest that strategic planning is not primarily about formulating and linearly implementing strategic plans but about strategic thinking and action (Albrechts, 2004; Bryson, 1988; Healey, 2007, p. 30–31; Minzberg, 1994; Wolf & Floyd, 2017). Many normative conceptualisations of strategic thinking and action have associated strategic spatial planning with social or collaborative processes for managing spatial change, and have emphasised the need for broad engagement of stakeholders in the goal formulation and collective visioning of the future, even though this engagement might compromise the procedural efficiency of planning (e.g.

Albrechts, 2004; Healey, 2007). Finally, cross-sectoral co-operation has been seen as a typical characteristic of strategic spatial planning, although it can also be argued to work against the ideal of selectiveness in goal formulation (e.g. Albrechts et al., 2003).

Given that strategic spatial planning comprises such a broad selection of planning approaches, and that some of these approaches seem to be incompatible or mutually exclusive, some critics have argued that the whole concept has lost its analytical and normative relevance. With such a broad coverage, the critics have claimed, the concept has turned into a source of confusion rather than offered a guiding light for planning scholars or practitioners involved in strategic spatial planning (Mazza, 2013).

We argue that this does not need to be the case, but that the contradictory elements of strategic spatial planning call for further analysis and clarification so that the concept would be useful for analysis of planning practice. We start with two seemingly incompatible settings of social interaction involved in strategic spatial planning: the collaborative and competitive settings. Although strategic thinking has been associated with a collaborative process between diverse actors for developing transformative visions and mobilising collective action for development of urban areas, this social interaction also serves cities and city-regions, for instance, in their search for competitive advantage over their contemporaries in attracting investments and talent under the conditions of globalised economy (e.g. Albrechts, 2004; Albrects & Balducci, 2013, p. 17; Healey, 2007). Therefore, we recognise that strategic spatial planning involves not only collaborative but also competitive social processes.

Second, and even more importantly, we recognise that strategic planning is simultaneously about two seemingly competing and conflicting forms of rationality: strategic and communicative. Whereas strategic rationality is typically associated with competitive settings of interaction, communicative rationality, a form of rationality introduced in Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action, is typically associated with collaborative settings of interaction. Theorists of strategic spatial planning have been criticised for overemphasising communicative rationality and for focusing mainly on inclusive search for shared views and visions. The critics claim that, in so doing, they have failed to address the rationalities related to competitive settings, within which planning increasingly takes place (e.g. Lapintie, 2002; Newman, 2008; Persson, 2019; Sartorio, 2005).

This article partly agrees with the criticism. The normative theories of strategic spatial planning have largely overlooked the role of strategic rationality (see, however, Albrechts, 2004; Healey, 2009, p. 454) even though it has been given a central role in the theories of strategic management and governance (e.g. Kornberger & Clegg, 2011; Minzberg, 1994) and it has been found intrinsic to planning practice (e.g. Alexander, 2001; Flyvbjerg, 1998). The reason for this disregard may lie in the association of strategic rationality with the obsolete comprehensive-rational planning doctrine, in which planning receives the role of technical-administrative implementation of pre-given goals (Healey, 2007, p. 31; Sager, 2013), or with the highly criticised neoliberal political ideology and its governance models (e.g. Olesen, 2014). Nonetheless, even though agreeing with the criticism concerning strategic rationality being overlooked, this article argues that the critics themselves have inappropriately identified communicative rationality as a form of rationality that can only thrive in collaborative settings. By so doing, they have failed to recognise that communicative rationality can include aspects of competition and contestation, too (Mattila, 2020).

Consequently, the theoretical aim of this article is to provide a fresh and more nuanced picture of the relations between communicative and strategic rationalities on the one hand, and competition and collaboration on the other hand, in the context of strategic spatial planning. We hope that, in so doing, the article provides analytical tools with which planning scholars and practitioners involved

in strategic spatial planning, or any planning professionals for that matter, can differentiate between the distinctive roles of communicative and strategic rationalities, and of competition and collaboration. In our experience, especially practitioners involved in strategic planning often have feelings of confusion caused by the seemingly self-contradictory nature of the concept of strategic planning. They would, thus, benefit from an analytical tool with which to critically reflect on the ways in which they move between rationalities and interactive settings.

To provide such a tool, the article develops a four-field for classifying orientations of strategic spatial planning that can be (1) strategically rational and competitive, (2) communicatively rational and competitive, (3) strategically rational and collaborative, or (4) communicatively rational and collaborative. Rather than choosing which one of the rationalities – strategic or communicative – ought to be seen as the guiding rationality of strategic spatial planning, the four-field acknowledges the complementary role of the rationalities (cf. Alexander, 2000, 2001). The four-field sheds light not only on the role of the rationalities in different settings of interaction, but also on their interconnections. These interconnections can be recognised through the documentation of the ways in which these rationalities play out in different phases and discursive networks of strategic planning.

We illustrate the potential of our four-field in planning research by applying it in the analysis of strategic spatial planning by the City of Turku, Finland, where the officials and political decision-makers subjugated their practises of strategic spatial planning under our theoretical scrutiny, as they wanted to achieve a better understanding of their navigation in and between different phases and discursive networks of strategic planning.

Strategic Spatial Planning and Rationalities

Modern planning theory first conceived planning as comprehensive-rational action, in which an expert planner evaluates the best possible means for reaching the pre-given ends in a situation of perfect information (Faludi, 1973; Meyerson & Banfield, 1956). This approach assumes that the ends are selected in pluralistic political decision-making, with the planner having the role of studying and selecting the combination of means that would most optimally achieve the politically given ends. This view, however, became questioned because the rationality of planning was found to be limited by information available, as well as by the information processing capabilities of planners (Lindblom, 1959; Simon, 1991). Furthermore, it became criticised for ignoring the intrinsic value of the planning process (e.g. Sager, 2013). Following this strand of criticism, many contemporary theories of strategic spatial planning draw from the Habermasian theory of communicatively rational action (e.g. Albrechts, 2004; Healey, 1996, 2007). Habermas' argument is that while rationality is undoubtedly partly about finding means to achieve ends, it is also – and above all – about giving reasons for one's beliefs and actions. According to Habermas, this understanding-oriented type of rationality – communicative rationality – is inherent in human capability to use language argumentatively (Habermas, 1981, Chapter I). Given especially that Habermas claims this form of rationality covers not only questions concerning facts, but also normative questions concerning the ends and goals of our actions (Habermas, 1981, pp. 18–19), communicative action can form a basis for coordinating social action. In this case, at issue is "communicative action" (see especially Habermas, 1981, p. 101).

With his theory, Habermas (1981, 1981) challenged the modern tradition in philosophy and social sciences, where it has been typical to argue that along the advances of human mastery of nature through science and technology, rationality has been gradually reduced to instrumental means-ends rationality. Instrumental rationality – it has been argued – becomes prevalent also in the social realm: when other people are treated instrumentally, as means to ends, at issue is "strategic

rationality". In Habermas's theory, strategically rational action is "social action oriented to success in influencing the actions of other rational actors" (Johnson, 1991, p. 183).

Strategic rationality still has a crucial place in Habermas' theory of action coordination because communicative rationality alone would be an insufficient – and above all inefficient – medium for coordinating all action in the modern society (Habermas, 1981, p. 239). Habermas relates the two rationalities to the differentiation between action contexts of "the system" and "the lifeworld". Strategic rationality enjoys priority in the contexts of the system, those of economy and administration, whereas communicative rationality is the primary mode of rationality in the contexts of the lifeworld (Habermas, 1981, Chapter VI). Given that communicative rationality does not typically thrive in system contexts, and that planning takes place predominately in these contexts, it is not surprising that Habermasian communicative planning theorists have been criticised of a category mistake as they assume that planning could be made communicatively rational (see e.g. Lapintie, 2002, p. 38; Mattila, 2020, pp. 12–13). Nonetheless, Habermas himself never wished to introduce communicative rationality in the context of the system; his argument was that the system, as a whole, needs to be anchored in the context of the lifeworld, and that this anchoring should take place through communicatively rational creation of the norms and rules that steer the system (Habermas, 1981, 1992; see also Mattila, 2020). When deliberative processes are elevated above everyday practices of the system, to the level of creating rules and norms that steer the system, the participants can be expected to be better able and more willing to rise above their strategic interests than they would be in the context of operative plan-making (Mattila, 2016).

It could be argued that if there were a place for communicative rationality in planning, it would be at the strategic level of spatial planning. In strategic spatial planning, for instance, economic interests – be they private interests or municipalities' interests in attracting private investment – are not present as directly as they are for instance, in "operative" practices of land-use planning and zoning. Nonetheless, there are hardly any contexts that would be completely free from strategic interests, and therefore, it is not surprising that the current realities of strategic spatial planning have been argued to be far from the Habermasian communicative ideals (Newman, 2008). Communicative and deliberative processes do not often reach the level of abstraction needed for the emergence of communicative rationality, and it has been observed that strategic goal formulation is often guided by economic and political interests related to concrete, operative level development projects (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2009; Ziafati Bafarasat, 2015), especially infrastructure projects (Olesen, 2020). As such, strategic rationality often has a major role to play in strategic planning, even at the level of formulating the normative goals and rules for planning. When strategic rationality becomes the dominant mode of rationality, strategic planning may end up reinforcing hegemonic goals rather than creating new, more progressive ones through inclusionary communicative processes (Persson, 2019, p. 13).

The question arises then whether both private businesses and public sector decision-makers should be excluded from processes that are purported to be communicatively rational, given that both parties are known to foster strategic goals in communicative processes. While the system-lifeworld differentiation suggests that only civil society actors can represent proper communicative rationality, Habermas has argued in his works, published after the Theory of Communicative Action, that civil society and the public sphere arising from it are not free from power-imbalances that allow strategic interests to corrupt deliberative processes (Habermas, 1992). Habermas proposes that while the free and unconstrained nature of the public sphere is essential for the discovery of the whole array of societal problems calling for resolution, decisions on how to tackle these problems might be, after all, more communicatively rational when they are taken in the procedurally-guided

formal decision-making bodies of the political-administrative system (Habermas, 1992, pp. 306–308). In this vein, many have suggested that the ideal of communicatively rational deliberation cannot be realised in one communicative process but it requires a variety of discourses where different kinds of actors engage in discourses that have differing purposes and that are framed by settings that range from informal to formal (e.g. Hendriks, 2006; Mansbridge et al., 2012). As we will show later, this kind of array of discourses can be identified also in our empirical case of strategic planning in the city of Turku.

To conclude this section, both types of rationalities, strategic and communicative, are needed in strategic planning. Furthermore, both rationalities take various forms in practice, including orientations towards cooperation and collaboration, in various discursive networks. Our analytical framework presented in the next section is not only purported to facilitate empirical research on the practice of strategic spatial planning but also to help practising planners to monitor their navigation between the multiple dimensions of strategic thinking and action.

Analytical Framework for Strategic Navigation

In this section, we present our analytical framework for analysing strategic navigation. This is done through juxtaposing competitive and collaborative settings of interaction, and communicative and strategic rationalities that guide them. These interactive settings and rationalities are interrelated in our framework in the form of a four-field, which is intended to provide a heuristic and idealised mapping of four different dispositions available for practitioners in the processes of strategic spatial planning (Figure 1). In the following sub-sections, we will give a detailed description of the four orientations, after which we will use them for analytical purposes.

Communicative Rationality in Collaborative and Competitive Action Orientations

In communicatively rational action, social coordination is sought in the public sphere by means of argumentation, which is oriented towards reaching mutual understanding and agreement (Habermas, 1981, 1981; see also Johnson, 1991). The pre-assumption is that through argumentation each actor may freely and equally participate in the search for a best possible resolution. Such argumentation in the public sphere entails a dialogue between parties for exchanging views and information. The dialogue relies on inter-subjective validity criteria, including ones concerning shared or generalizable values or conceptions of morality, the sincerity of the speaker, and shared or generalizable understandings of valid knowledge and the determinants of its production (Habermas, 1981, pp. 15–16, 99–100). In order to reach an understanding, the participants contest and vindicate the claims. Ideally, the only force influencing the process of reaching understanding is the "force of the better argument" (Habermas, 1981, p. 25). Such communicative action entails mutual understanding and trust, which, according to Habermas, is reproduced by argumentative speech, with the presupposition that the speakers are committed to justifying their claims by recourse to the shared validity criteria (Habermas, 1981, p. 302; 1981, p. 77).

Communicatively rational and collaborative action (Figure 1, cell 4) relies on such inclusive and agreement-orientated argumentation. Strategic spatial planning in this orientation, thus, appears as inclusive collaboration for reaching decisions that all the participants find acceptable for the reasons that they all agree on. The planning theories that draw on communicative rationality (e.g. Forester, 1993; Healey, 1997; Innes, 1995; Sager, 2013) generally conceive planning goals to be ideally shaped in a broad and inclusive collaboration and communication between different stakeholders, such as

Figure 1. Analytical framework for distinguishing dispositions of social coordination available in strategic spatial planning.

citizens, NGOs, and the private and public sector actors. This is despite the fact that some proponents of communicative (or collaborative) planning have also accepted compromise-oriented practices within which the parties agree, while not for the same reasons (e.g. Innes, 2004, p. 5). Nonetheless, in Habermasian rational communicative processes, the views of different stakeholders are adjusted towards a joint perception of the planning context and the future direction of development. Communicatively rational collaboration is, thus, understood as a transformative process, potentially shaping the stakeholders' understandings of the planning issues at hand, not just juxtaposing pre-given interests and seeking mutually beneficial 'win-win' alliances to avoid conflicts (Healey, 1997, p. 312). It is characterised by convergent thinking, which derives from shared values and consent, and aims for systematic problem solving on what is already known and valued.

While communicative rationality is typically associated with collaborative action-orientation, we argue that certain forms of competition can belong to the realm of communicative rationality, too. The critics have established a view that Habermasian communicative action entails a form of consensus that suppresses divergent views (e.g. Hillier, 2002, 2003). However, they fail to see that the Habermasian theory is just as much about contesting existing consensus formations as it is about searching for agreement (e.g. Markell, 1997, p. 378; White & Farr, 2012). Furthermore, the critics have argued that being limited to the collaborative approach, Habermasian communicative rationality does not allow the participants "to bring private interests to the forum and see if they can be generalised" (Lapintie, 2002, p. 33). We argue that the Habermasian theory does not only allow

but even welcomes this. The process of introducing interests, views and opinions in the discussion may well be contestatory and competitive, but it is true that the Habermasian theory emphasises the collaborative moments of justification, when the generalisability of interests is tested (Mattila, 2020, p. 20).

As our case study indicates, local authorities might have good reasons for including in their strategy formation such phases where competing visions are created, differentiating these phases from the phases of agreement-oriented, collaborative decision-making. The contestatory phase may include, for instance, the use of ideas-competitions, which enable divergent and creative thinking, and encourage new problem definitions and viewpoints (Figure 1, cell 2). The contestatory and collaborative phases can be seen as mutually complementary, if competitively produced alternative visions are subjected to agreement-oriented practices for identifying the justifiability of these visions.

Strategic Rationality in Competitive and Collaborative Action Orientations

Like communicative rationality, strategic rationality can also coordinate interaction, but unlike communicative rationality, it is neither orientated towards reaching mutual understanding via shared reasons nor presupposes shared values and knowledge resources. Instead, strategic rationality typically coordinates interaction through mediation by power or money (Habermas, 1981, Chapter IV). Regarding the medium of money, such mechanisms include, for example, markets, the wage system, subsidies, and taxation. The medium of power, in turn, operates through such mechanisms as legislation, authorised institutions, organizational hierarchies, and chains of command (Habermas, 1981, Chapter IV). In a system coordinated through a mechanism mediated by money and/or power, the actors are free to maximise their own self-interest.

For individual actors, strategically rational action is typically based on analysis of costs and benefits, with the aim of maximising their own benefit. Therefore, the actors are not engaged with reaching mutual understanding on the goals of action. The actors instead take the interests and aspirations of other actors as given and mutually recognise one another as equally rational. Therefore, they perceive their own plans as entangled in a web of social interdependencies (Johnson, 1991, p. 190). Such rationality can be modelled with different game-theoretical settings, in which either competition or collaboration can be strategically rational. Regarding our analytical framework, the most relevant game settings are zero-sum game and plus-sum game, either played as a one-off game or as an iterative game (see Innes & Booher, 2010; Kangas, 1994; Rapoport, 1989; Von Hertzen, 1993).

In a one-off zero-sum game (Figure 1, cell 1), competition with the other players is strategically rational when the aim is to maximise one's own benefit at the expense of other players, in the distribution of given resources. In a zero-sum game that is iterative, a competitive orientation to the other players can be strategically rational, if there is mutual lack of trust between the players. Then a player preferring even-handedness cannot rely on the other players having the same preference in the subsequent games. When the resources are limited, iterative zero-sum games of mutual competition might, however, lead to spiralling 'tit for tat' cycles that are harmful for all players, as in the so-called 'tragedy of the commons' dilemma (Hardin, 1968). Indeed, in the case of the tragedy of the commons we are not dealing with a zero-sum game, but in this case the sub-optimisation practiced by the players may lead to overall loss of resources. If the players become critically aware of approaching such a situation, they may jointly decide to shift from a competitive mode to a mode of mutual collaboration and trust-building, in which they seek even or fair sharing of benefits.

Agreeing on such a sharing of benefits, especially on the rules of sharing, may then require shifting from strategically rational action to communicatively rational action.

In a plus-sum game, exclusive collaboration occurs as strategically rational maximisation of one's own benefit (Figure 1, cell 3). Unlike in zero-sum games, in plus-sum games, the resources, in which the players have a stake, are not treated as determined. Instead, the players may increase the resources in mutual collaboration by complementing each other's capabilities. Building such collaboration becomes strategically rational when all players may benefit from the increased resources, even though this can of course mean loss of resources for some other competing coalition. Thus, on a larger scale, the plus-sum games of one coalition do not necessarily increase the overall resources. The collaboration through coalitions builds on win-win arrangements. In iterative plus-sum games, long-standing urban regimes (see Stone, 1989) and coalitions (see Molotch, 1976) may be established between the players, for generating mutually beneficial conditions of steady growth.

Action-Orientations and Rationalities at Play in the Strategic Planning of the City of Turku

In this section, we utilise our analytical framework to analyse strategic spatial planning in the city of Turku, located in South-West Finland. With its 190,000 inhabitants, it is the sixth largest city of Finland. It is also the oldest city, dating back to the 13th century, and the former administrative centre of Finland.

Turku provides an interesting case, as the local government of Turku is among the very few Finnish local governments that have aimed to develop a strategic approach to spatial planning at the municipal level. In the European discourse, strategic spatial planning is a concept that has been mostly used to refer to the city-regional scale of planning (e.g. Albrechts et al., 2017), but in Finland strategic steering in the city-regional scale has remained weak, since the formal planning powers lie mainly at the local level. While there are some other Finnish cities that have practiced strategic spatial planning, this has been typically done through general land-use plans, which, however, are legally binding statutory planning instruments that are burdened by several requirements related to, for instance, background surveys. This, in turn, has meant that general plans often lack strategic selectivity and flexibility (e.g. Mäntysalo et al., 2019). The local government of Turku, by contrast, has chosen to use comprehensive municipal strategy as its main strategic spatial planning instrument. Municipal strategies are statutory but legally non-binding documents determining the long-term objectives for all activities and finances of the municipality (Local Government Act 410/2015, 2015, §37). Municipal strategies seldom include spatial determinations, and thus, their connection to land-use planning has commonly remained very weak. In turn, the city of Turku has carried out path-breaking work in building a connection between land-use planning and the municipal strategy, establishing a practice of multi-sectoral strategic spatial planning.

The empirical data consists of interviews and policy documents related to strategic spatial planning in Turku. Eleven semi-structured interviews with officials and political decision-makers involved in strategic spatial planning in the city of Turku and Turku city-region were conducted between April and December 2018. All interviews commenced with scoping of the interviewee's general conception of strategic planning and then moved on to discussing the practice of strategic spatial planning in Turku, including the instruments, objectives, motives, operationalisation, and – above all – the stakeholders of planning. More precisely, the interviewees were asked who were involved in the strategic planning in different phases of the process and in different arenas, and how

and why they were involved. These questions were to spark discussion on the competitive and collaborative interaction as well as communicative and strategic rationality behind the interaction. The interviews were concluded with a discussion on challenges, lessons, and development needs related to strategic spatial planning in the city of Turku.

The interview data were analysed by using content analysis as a method. The data were first grouped under different phases, arenas, and instruments of strategic planning. Furthermore, the interaction related to the phases, arenas and instruments was identified and categorised based on the type of interaction (collaboration, competition) and the reach of interaction (with local stakeholders, within the local government organisation, beyond local level stakeholders and local government organisation). These categories were further divided into sub-categories based on the form of rationality characterising interaction and on the actors involved in the interaction. These sub-categories were not mutually exclusive, but a same statement about interaction could be attached to several sub-categories. As the final step of the analysis, the categorised data were connected to the theoretical framework by organising the categories according to our four-field of strategic navigation.

In the next sub-sections, we present the results of the analysis. First, we describe the instruments of strategic planning in the City of Turku, and show how the phases of strategic planning, namely strategy-making and strategy operationalisation, differ. Although theoretical views on strategic spatial planning typically suggest that communicative rationality guides strategy-making, and then strategic rationality guides the operationalisation, our aim is to show that this relation is more nuanced in practice. Furthermore, we will also show that strategic rationality is not always related to competitive interaction, which is not news for the theorists of strategic planning who have well recognised that organisations do not always aim at competitive advantage as they carry out strategic planning; they might just wish, for instance, to increase the efficiency in implementing their goals to win time, without considering the other actors. Furthermore, even if other actors were recognised, not all of them are perceived as competitors; some may be identified as collaborators and strategic allies. The case of communicative rationality is more complicated, however. As we will show, communicative rationality is not always about collaboration. It often includes also competitive phases. So far, this has not been recognised in the research literature on strategic or communicative planning.

The Practice of Strategic Spatial Planning in the City of Turku

In Turku, the local government decided to increase its strategic governance capacity by developing an over-arching city strategy (2014), which aimed to provide jointly accepted strategic long-term goals for all activities and sectors of the city administration, including land-use planning. Previously, the city of Turku had practised planning with incremental and detailed zoning-type statutory land-use plans, which had no formally defined connection to the broader development objectives of the city council. In the new model, the city strategy formally steers land-use planning:

> The city strategy sets the objectives and principles at the level of the whole city administration. Land-use planning should deliver these objectives, too. There is therefore a clear hierarchy. The connection to the municipal strategy is what differentiates strategic spatial planning from traditional land-use planning. We have established a system of agreements and monitoring for ensuring that the city administration implements the strategy. (Local Politician B)

The local government aimed to achieve effective strategic planning by differentiating between *strategy-making*, where the long-term development goals for the City are selected, and *operationalisation* of the strategy, through programming processes and establishing instruments to

deliver the goals. Many interviewees held that the discussions during the strategy-making processes aligned with communicative rationality, even though it can be noted that strategy-making can never be purely communicatively rational for many reasons, starting with the fact that Habermasian communicatively rational "discourses" do not serve any other ends than the one of reaching agreement – not even the aim of forming a strategy (Sager, 1994). In addition, strategy-making processes in cities do not typically fulfil the criteria of being inclusive in the sense that they mainly aim at the engagement of local inhabitants and stakeholders. This was the case in Turku, too, although, in the resulting strategy document, regional cooperation was selected as one of the strategic goals – a theme that we will discuss further later.

Broad deliberation between the city officials and political decision-makers, citizens, and other local stakeholders during the strategy-making process resulted in a strategy document (City of Turku, 2018), in which a shared vision for the future of the city was expressed (Figure 1, cell 4). Nonetheless, the achievement of a rational consensus of the strategic goals can be at least partly explained by the very general nature of the goals. For instance, Turku wants to "support the well-being of the inhabitants", as well as "the success of local businesses", in "ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable ways" (City of Turku, 2018).

The general nature of the goals did not seem to compromise the ability of the strategy to steer the operative level of administration, as one of the interviewees stated:

> There are strategies that go to the top shelf but the strategy of Turku really guides the work of city administration. (City Official C)

This guiding role was achieved not only by strengthening the commitment of all administrative sectors on the strategy document by the collaborative strategy-making process, but also by establishing instruments and processes for its operationalisation. Whereas communicative rationality guided the strategy-making phase, the operationalisation of the strategy was dominated by strategic rationality, as it aimed for efficient and effective implementation of the jointly defined strategic goals. The operational programming of the strategic goals included, for example, establishment of cross-sectoral strategic programmes as well contractual management and rigorous monitoring of different sectors of city administration.

What is specifically interesting from the point of view of spatial planning is that the strategic goals were also operationalised by establishing three spearhead projects: (1) Turku City Centre Development, (2) Turku Science Park and (3) Smart and Wise Turku. We are interested here in the Turku City Centre Development and Turku Science Park projects, since these two projects have a strong spatial dimension, whereas the interviewees did not mention any specific spatial implications as they discussed the Smart and Wise Turku project. Moreover, these two projects are interesting as they show how difficult it is to differentiate between strategy-making and operationalisation of the strategy. Both projects not only implemented the established strategic goals, but required decisions over new goals, the fact of which meant that the representatives of the city of Turku needed to move between different rationalities and processes of interaction throughout the process as they managed the spearhead projects.

Both spearhead projects were related not only to the internal processes in the city of Turku but also encompassed the role of Turku as the central city of the region. We will discuss the city-regional dimension of the strategic thinking and actions of the city of Turku after having scrutinised the ways in which the representatives of the city of Turku managed the projects of City Centre Development and the Turku Science Park.

Collaboration and Competition in Communicatively Rational Strategy-Making: Turku City Centre Development Project

The city opened broad arenas for discussion about the goals and methods of implementation of both spearhead projects. The way, in which the drafting of the vision for Turku city centre was organised, facilitated the emergence of communicative rationality, including its competitive (Figure 1, cell 2) and collaborative aspects (Figure 1, cell 4). Competitiveness was present as the city invited the participants to challenge the existing development principles and planning goals concerning the city-centre (Figure 1, cell 2). In so doing, the city also encouraged the participants to challenge each other in the creation of competitive candidates for new visions for the city centre.

Given that the goal was to obtain candidates with innovative and forward-looking visions, drawing from local experiences and identities in the spirit of communicative rationality, the city officials – representing primarily the system and its typical strategic rationality – were allotted only a marginal role in the process. Reflecting on their position, some planning officials considered that their active involvement in the visioning process could corrupt its communicatively rational orientation, as the following statement illustrates:

> Visioning needs courage to imagine the possible and the impossible, which is sometimes challenging to the city officials. Therefore, in order not to water down the visions, we should not involve them in the process. Only when a draft vision already exists, the officials and local politicians should participate to gain ownership of the vision (City Official C)

To avoid a situation where the strategic rationality of the system would distort and constrain visioning, but also to ensure that there are some basic rules that facilitate the emergence of rational outcomes, an external and independent party, the Futures Research Centre of the University of Turku, was commissioned to facilitate the vision-making process. The process involved political decision makers, the Chamber of Commerce, student unions, and stakeholders from the real estate sector and culture industries. Further insights and ideas were collected from the citizens, who were involved in the process through interned-based fora and large-scale public events, termed Turku Future Forums. According to the representatives of the city, citizens' perspectives were needed to introduce the lifeworld-perspective to the strategy process:

> We particularly want that the vision evolves through ideas generation of different actors. They provide viewpoints that we do not have in the city-administration. If the city-administration wants an innovative approach to the vision, it needs to involve citizens who see the things in a different way (City Official A)

The communicatively rational competition was capacitated by the level of abstraction on which the vision-generation was pitched. For example, one interviewee recounted how the city-centre vision aimed to foster thinking that is as divergent as possible, and in this way, to gather all imaginable ideas regarding the development of the centre, whether realisable or not. Visioning was, therefore, abstract enough for communicative rationality to flourish.

Finally, while the citizens and the group of stakeholders defined the content of the vision, the Turku city council discussed and politically agreed on it. This shows how, through agreement-orientated democratic decision-making, the communicatively rational collaboration (Figure 1, cell 4) came to complement the competitively orientated, divergent generation of ideas in the vision process.

As regards the implementation of the vision, the communicatively rational process contributed to the residents' increased acceptance to infill projects. One of the interviewees stated that whereas the inhabitants had previously engaged in strategic NIMBYism, torpedoing new projects that "block

their views and cast shadows over their apartments", the collaboratively created vision helped the city to communicate the infill projects to the inhabitants as steps towards the "broader goal" (Local Politician B). The vision for the city centre, then, made a difference in the interplay of competitive and collaborative action orientations at the urban neighbourhood scale in Turku.

Collaboration and Competition in Strategically Rational Strategy-Making: Turku Science Park Project

Turku Science Park emerged as a project that is essential for enhancing the position of Turku in the national and global competition between cities in the era of knowledge-economy (Figure 1, cell 1). In stark contrast to the communicatively rational process of vision-generation for Turku city centre, the vision-generation of Turku Science Park was mainly driven by strategic rationality. The arena for the building of a vision that became to be called the Science Park master plan, was ostensibly portrayed as an arena for integrative and inclusive strategy making in the interviews, and as such, it engaged a wide group of stakeholders for a discussion on the development trajectories. Yet, in practice, it turned out to be an arena for pursuing strategic interests that were only vaguely related to the goals defined in the city strategy (Figure 1, cell 3). The organisation of the stakeholder involvement and the interactions underpinning the process suggested that the deliberation was not even meant to be elevated above the everyday system-driven practices and strategic interests. For a start, the city officials adopted a leading role in the vision-generation process. While they involved also other actors in the process, such as the universities and major businesses locating in the area, stakeholders were not supposed to question the concept of the Science Park project, but to only contribute to the search for the most efficient ways to realise the project. Such strategically rational collaboration (Figure 1, cell 3), where the public engagement served as a tool for the city government to pursue its pre-given objectives, rather than to generate open deliberation challenging the development trajectory, was motivated by the strategic (economic) interests of the city. These interests were related, not only to the creation of an attractive environment for businesses, but also, and above all, to the obtainment of national government funding for an infrastructure project of utmost strategic importance for Turku, namely the high-speed rail connection between Turku and Helsinki, the capital of Finland.

> In my opinion you never get a good deal if you cannot offer the other party something it wants. Consequently, cities aim to offer the national government something it wants, in order to gain what they themselves want. (…) For example, we can offer the national government, who promotes densification of urban structure, that we will implement a dense area of Turku Science Park on a tight schedule, if they invest in the high-speed rail connection from Helsinki to Turku. (City Official C)

Moving between Strategic and Communicative Rationalities: City-Regional Dimension of Strategic Thinking and Action in Turku

The high-speed rail connection was seen as essential, not only for the city of Turku but for the economic development of the whole city-region. In order to ensure the investment, Turku and other local governments of the city-region had joined forces in lobbying for the rail connection to the state. Thus, the rail connection motivated strategically rational collaboration, not only at the municipal level but also at the level of city-region, where all municipalities were involved in a plus-sum game (Figure 1, cell 3) that could lead to obtainment of extra resources for the city-region. By

forming a strategically rational coalition to lobby for the rail investment, the local governments of Turku city-region were able to compete with Tampere city-region (Figure 1, cell 1), the second largest city-region in Finland, and a region that also wanted to frame their own high-speed rail project as the one with highest national priority. One of the Turku city officials (City Official C) noted: "The connections compete for a status of the most important national infrastructure project. There is clearly a competition. We follow what Tampere is proposing and then plan our own next step based on that. It is classic competition."

The competition against Tampere city region in the contest over the high-speed infrastructure investment was not the only thing that brought together the municipalities in Turku city region. The national government has a broader strategy to encourage strategically-rational cooperation (Figure 1, cell 3) between municipalities in the largest Finnish city-regions such as Turku city-region, by offering economic incentives to the municipalities in exchange for commitment in the implementation of strategic objectives that advance the development of the city-region as a whole. This has been done through agreements that have covered themes such as sustainable transportation and land use, and subsidised housing (the so-called MAL-agreements), economic development (growth agreements), and transformation of economic structure (bridge agreement). The central government has recognised the need for such strategic tools to facilitate collaboration, because the city-regional level lacks formal decision-making organs which could facilitate the search for optimal solutions from the city-regional perspective. Instead, this level has given rise to "vacuums of strategic planning", where the competition between local strategic interests (Figure 1, cell 1) is unleashed (Hytönen & Alhqvist, 2019) and municipality-driven sub-optimisation is commonplace. According to the interviews (e.g. Regional Official A), this has been typical also of much of the interaction between Turku and the other local governments of the city-region. When the representatives of Turku participated in strategic planning on the city-regional scale, the participation was often geared towards zero-sum guarding of the municipal interests (Figure 1, cell 1) on capital investments and municipal tax income, generated by enterprises and well-to-do families (cf. Hytönen et al., 2016).

Nonetheless, there were signs that Turku, as the central city, has changed its approach to this kind of competition at the city-regional level. To attract well-to-do families, Turku had previously provided spacious lots for single-family houses and thus, allowed a certain amount of urban sprawl. However, according to some of the interviews, the choice of city-centre development as a spearhead project signalled that the era of this strategy is over. The administrative and political decision-makers in Turku had recognised that, as the central city, Turku needs to rise above the inter-municipal competition fuelled by sprawl-friendly planning policies, and to promote values related to the urbanistic tradition, the values that only the central city can promote, even though all municipalities in the region benefit from these values in the end. However, while some interviewees suggested that Turku did this in a collaborative spirit, when seen from the city-regional perspective, it seems also clear that the promotion of urbanism was meant to boost the position of Turku in the competition between European cities of culture and university-driven cities of innovation and business – a goal that is also reported in the city strategy of Turku, alongside the goal of strengthening the city-regional perspective in spatial planning (City of Turku, 2018).

Although the collaboration between the municipalities in the Turku city-region was mainly driven by competitive pursuit for local interests (Figure 1, cell 1) or collaborative search for mutual gains (Figure 1, cell 3), there were some emerging signs of communicatively-rational cooperation, too (Figure 1, cell 4). Based on the interviews, it seems that when environmental concerns are at issue, in particular, the mutual trust resulting from successful strategic cooperation (Figure 1, cell 3) can

result in communicatively rational processes (Figure 1, cell 4), where the representatives of munici-palities elevate themselves above local interests and engage in the search for broader and more generalisable interests. As one of the interviewees stated, the local governments of Turku city-region had already started explorative collaboration, approaching communicative rationality, to create informal rules for responding to the climate challenge, in a situation where formal institu-tional arrangements enable municipalities to maximise their own interests even at the expense of sustainable development:

> Climate and carbon neutrality goals are sparking a new type of collaboration. The collaboration is surely based on a win-win setting but it is also driven by something else than the gains. Climate change requires immediate action, but the public administration is not accustomed to the whole theme. This pressure breaks the normal collaborative settings. New settings have really a spirit of finding the best, or at least some, solutions to tackle climate issues. However, this type of collaboration is only taking its very first steps. (Regional Official A)

The reason why we interpret this discussion as verging on communicative rationality is that the parties were interested in tackling the climate challenge, not each for their own reasons, but sharing the view that the current scientific evidence provides such reasons which all the actors should find compelling. However, this was only the tip of the iceberg in the city-regional collaboration still largely driven by strategic game settings where local interests played a key role.

Conclusions

Many studies of strategic spatial planning have emphasised the role of collaboration between different stakeholders. The normative stance adopted has stressed the inclusive, deliberative, and consensus-orientated nature of this collaboration. The Habermasian idea of communicative ration-ality has been a key source of inspiration for such a collaborative approach to strategic spatial planning, more or less explicitly.

However, it has been acknowledged that, in practice, strategic spatial planning is also conducted with strategically rational motives and measures, aiming at efficient realisation of given goals and often at gaining competitive advantage in inter-urban competition. In the *Realpolitik* of contemporary networked governance, the steering principles and measures are often adopted from entrepreneurial governance models. In this context, efficiency is seen as a key principle of strategic planning.

In this article, these two rationality types, and corresponding forms of strategic spatial planning, are not seen as mutually exclusive (cf. Alexander, 2001). Instead, with our analytical framework we have sought to provide conceptual tools for mapping planners' navigation between these two rationality types in different discursive networks and phases of strategic planning.

Understanding the coexistence of strategic and communicative rationalities in strategic spatial planning entails a more refined view of their connections to competitive and collaborative action orientations. We have sought to achieve this with our analytical framework, combining the rationality and action orientation dimensions into a four-field with four different combinations of rationality and interaction types. Strategic rationality is often about competition, and communicative rationality is often about collaboration – but not always. Strategically rational actors may also collaborate to fulfil their strategic interests; a notion which is well established in previous research on public-private partnerships, growth coalitions, and urban regimes. However, the article has aimed to show that, in turn, communicative rationality can include competition and contestation – an aspect not yet acknowl-edged in planning literature. Furthermore, with the empirical example of Turku, the article has aimed to

show that different approaches to rationality and interaction do not only serve different phases of the planning process but may also appear simultaneously, when local authorities navigate between governance networks. We hope that in so doing our article has not only provided an analytical framework for research purposes, but also a tool with which the actors involved in strategic planning can themselves analyse their strategy work and, in this way, avoid becoming frustrated with the idealised strategic planning models of the theory literature. Indeed, this frustration caused by the uneasy relationship between the rationalities and the action-orientations within planning work, can be assumed to be familiar to all professionals working in the field of public planning (cf. Kangasoja & Mattila, 2018). Finally, we wish to point out that our four-field should not be used for forming judgments, concerning the relative importance of each identified combination of social orientation and rationality approach, on the grounds of the observed quantity of each combination. For instance, in our analysis of strategic thinking and action in Turku, there were only very few instances of communicative rationality in collaborative settings. However, this observation does not prove that theorists of communicative-strategic planning are wrong when emphasising the role of communicative rationality and communicative action in strategic spatial planning. This is because the communicative-collaborative moments can change substantially the framework within which strategically rational competition and collaboration can take place. In the analysis of strategic planning, we, therefore, put emphasis on the transitions from the cells 1, 2 and 3 to cell 4, scrutinising what needs to happen, for the actors involved in strategic spatial planning to become motivated to move from strategically-rational competition, strategically-rational collaboration, or communicatively-rational competition, to communicatively-rational collaboration where the rules of the game can be legitimately changed.

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