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Policy integration for sustainable development:

Agenda 2030 meets Region Skåne

Master's thesis in Welfare Policies and Management

Department of Political Science

Supervisor: Tomas Bergström

WPMM43, spring 2018

Words: 21 825

Filip Lidegran

Abstract

In an effort to promote sustainable development work in Region Skåne, the regional government seeks to integrate Agenda 2030 into their Regional Development Strategy (RUS). This paper compares the two policies, using qualitative content analysis to problematize the prospects of policy integration. Applying theories from policy integration, policy transfer and policy diffusion, the analysis covers four dimensions of policy integration: the frame, the interactive, the substantive and the motivational dimension.

Key insights from the study showcase that RUS's international character opens it to integration: both policies share a humanistic worldview, emphasize liberal market dynamics, environmental improvement, increased sciences funding and expanded infrastructure. Simultaneously, they have differing understandings on matters of openness, governance and sustainable growth. There are also substantial challenges: Agenda 2030's qualitative indicators for sustainable development need to be concretized into the local context of Skåne. Pressing deadlines regarding Agenda 2030's environmental ambitions must be assessed according to Skåne's ability to match them. Lastly, the highly competitive character of RUS should be weighed according to what is best for sustainable development on a global level. The thesis concludes that policy integration would not resolve the imbalance between the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development in Region Skåne.

Keywords: policy integration, sustainable development, regional government, Region Skåne, Agenda 2030

Acknowledgements

I wish to extend my deepest gratitude to all the people who have helped make this thesis a reality. Three in particular deserve special mention:

Kontie Moussa and Anna Normann, my co-supervisors at Region Skåne, whose warm welcome made me feel like a true part of the organization. Their knowledge about Region Skåne has substantially helped me make sense of the underlying processes behind the policies.

Tomas Bergström, my supervisor at the Department of Political Science at Lund University, for teaching me that good thesis-writing should not constrain itself to pre-assigned labels. His continuous feedback throughout the semester has helped ensure the academic rigor of the study.

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Disclosure

During the period 01/02/2018 – 30/06/2018, I have been employed by Region Skåne as a student employee, working 15 hours per week at the command staff of the Unit for Regional Development. Region Skåne has hired me to perform a content analysis of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the Regional Development Strategy (RUS) *The Open Skåne 2030* with the aim of analyzing if and how the two policy documents could be integrated in relation to the organization's work with sustainable development.

This task has motivated my choice for the subject of my thesis during the Welfare Policies and Management programme at Lund University in the spring semester of 2018. I have retained academic liberty to pursue this task as I see fit, with my co-supervisors at Region Skåne providing feedback when I have asked for it. The thesis, and all of its content, is of my own production has been designed with academic rigor in mind.

1. Introduction

In this thesis I set out to compare two policy documents: *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, (commonly referred to as Agenda 2030); and *The Open Skåne 2030*, the regional development strategy (RUS) of Region Skåne, the regional government of Skåne County, Sweden. My main interest in this analysis is to investigate whether these two policy documents can be integrated in order to achieve a unified vision for sustainable development in Skåne.

For some time, it has been argued that current paths of human development are unsustainable (René Kemp, Saeed Parto & Robert B. Gibson, 2005: 14). Increased levels of environmental degradation in the global ecosystem has sparked a staunch – and unquestionably polarizing – debate about human impact on the environment, the means to achieve sustainable resource management, and even about the baseline understanding of ‘sustainable development’ itself. Among the most commonly cited definitions is the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations which, in 1987, characterized ‘sustainability’ as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (cited in Jan-Peter Voß & René Kemp, 2005: 5). While this statement may seem vague to the point of being toothless, the Commission’s definition has inspired many nations to adopt their own, locally adapted strategies towards sustainable development (Bill Hopwood, Mary Mellor & Geoff O’Brien, 2005:6).

Conceptually, ‘sustainable development’ is commonly divided into three pillars – economic, social and environmental – which must be treated as inseparably linked if implementation is to succeed (Kemp, Parto & Gibson, 2005: 14). While legitimate critique has been raised toward the compartmentalized nature of these three pillars in policy making practice (see for instance Kemp, Parto & Gibson, 2005 for a full discussion), the framework is still quite widespread as a frame for policy making and academia (Vladimir Strezov, Annette Evans & Tim J. Evans 2017: 243). I will return to the concept of ‘sustainable development’ in section 4.1: Operationalizing ‘sustainable development’ for a more thorough discussion. For now, I will suffice to say that while a critical analysis of human epistemology on sustainability would surely be a worthwhile pursuit of valuable knowledge, I do not aspire to make a contribution to this particular

field. I would, however, encourage the reader to remain critical, for our current understandings of ‘sustainable development’ are not etched in stone and a change in this understanding could also impact one’s interpretation of the work I am about to present. With this thesis, I instead pursue the ambition to develop some insights to how policy integration can contribute to the quest for sustainable development practice in regional governance.

Then why this particular focus? It has been argued that sustainable development requires an integrated approach towards the complex problems that humanity faces (Basil Bornemann, 2008: 2). Integrative policy making is seen as a vital precondition for sustainable development, but these pleas have, to a large extent, remained normatively and analytically underspecified, unclear, and vague (Bornemann, 2008: 2). This is a pattern that, as we will find out as we continue down this path, is quite prevalent in the realm of sustainable development policy.

An illustrative example of this can be found in the southern tip of Sweden, where Region Skåne, the regional government of Skåne County, bears responsibility for overseeing development of the region. This is stipulated in ‘Law (2010:630) on regional development responsibility in certain counties’¹ and ‘Regulation (2017:583) on regional growth work’². This responsibility has been condensed into a Regional Development Strategy, abbreviated RUS (from its Swedish term: Regional Utvecklingsstrategi) named *The Open Skåne 2030*³, which outlines a vision for sustainable development in the region onto the year 2030. RUS entered into force in 2014, following an extensive dialogue with citizens, civil society, business, and the public sector in Skåne County (Region Skåne, 2014: 3).

On 25th of September 2015, the 193 UN member states adopted the 17 global goals stipulated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to be undertaken from 1 January 2016 and onward (Regeringskansliet, regeringen.se, accessed 24-03-2018). The Agenda 2030 delegation, appointed by the Swedish government, has been created to stimulate nationwide implementation of the goals (Regeringskansliet, regeringen.se, accessed 24-03-2018). According to the national Budget Proposition 17-18, municipalities and regional governments have a “central role in implementing Agenda

¹ Original translation: ‘Lag (2010:630) om regionalt utvecklingsansvar i vissa län’.

² Original translation: ‘Förordning (2017:583) om regionalt tillväxtarbete’.

³ Original translation: *Det Öppna Skåne 2030*.

2030 for sustainable development in Sweden” (Regeringens proposition 2017/18:1: Budgetpropositionen för 2018, 2017: 25).

As a constituency to the Swedish government, Region Skåne is bound to honor the commitments in Agenda 2030. At first glance however, Agenda 2030 seems to share many of the properties of the already established RUS – both policies set a general outline for sustainable development throughout the same timeframe, and both visions are propagated by the Swedish national government. As such, Region Skåne is currently operating with two parallel policy tracks in which neither policy document make reference to the other, nor is there any interaction between the two. If the claims for policy integration are warranted, and sustainable development requires an integrated policy frame to handle the complex problems of contemporary development challenges, it would then signify that Region Skåne is operating under inefficient conditions to carry out its responsibilities. Confusion, wasteful resource management and potential policy failure are among the risks associated with such wicked problems (Raffaele Vignola, Gregorie Leclerc, Mariela Morales & Julian Gonzalez, 2017: 85).

This scenario motivates my choice to write this thesis. At the time of writing, Region Skåne is investigating different ways to resolve the matter of these two policy tracks. One step in this project is to assess what can be won, lost or otherwise may affect the implementation of sustainable development through integrating these two policies. Insights gained from this study can be used to contribute to whatever decision Region Skåne ultimately opts for. This is what I will set out to do in this study.

1.1. Research question

Can a policy integration of *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and *The Open Skåne 2030* help promote sustainable development practices in Region Skåne?

The main research question will be approached through a theoretical framework that draws insights from policy integration, policy transfer, and policy diffusion theory. This framework is then further operationalized into four distinct sub-questions, each covering

different aspects of the policy content. These sub-questions will be elaborated upon in detail in Chapter 4.1: Towards an analytical framework, but I will briefly introduce them in this section for the sake of convenience to the reader:

1. What problems is the policy seeking to resolve?
2. Who is targeted by the policy?
3. What instruments are emphasized in the policy?
4. Why is the policy being engaged with?

2. Previous research

The case for having an integrated view of development in public policy making is not new. Before the SDGs were adopted by the UN in 2015, academic interest revolved around the concept of Environmental Policy Integration, EPI. Its purpose was threefold:

1. Achieve sustainable development and prevent environmental damage
2. Remove contradictions between policies as well as within policies
3. Realize mutual benefits and the goal of making policies mutually supportive (cited in William M. Lafferty & Eivind Hovden, 2002: 13).

EPI was meant to incorporate environmental policy objectives into other areas rather than working on its own (Sofie Storbjörk & Karolina Isaksson, 2014: 3). EPI could manifest itself in several ways, ranging from normative, organizational, procedural, and/or reframing approaches (Storbjörk & Isaksson, 2014: 5). Related to this was the depth, or hierarchy, of EPI in relation to other policy areas. Depending on a variety of factors – such as policy context, design, administrative capability and political willingness, timing and multiplicity of actors – EPI could either be coordinated, harmonized or prioritized in different settings over time (Storbjörk & Isaksson, 2014: 4). However, single-minded focus on integration into existing policy alone is insufficient – Storbjörk & Isaksson make the argument that without an established environmental administration, EPI could risk becoming a pure cosmetic appliance that weakens rather than strengthens overall attention to environmental sustainability (Storbjörk & Isaksson, 2014: 4).

Studies of EPI in Sweden have demonstrated that regional development processes have struggled with a number of practical key inertias. It has been proved difficult to find solutions that live up to the win-win rhetoric of environmental policy makers, instead revealing the traditional antagonisms between environmental, social and economic development (Storbjörk & Isaksson, 2014: 2). The regional government bodies have traditionally quite limited authority over its constituents, and the presence of public-private partnerships have made it difficult to interact across over such a vast array of sectors and actors (Storbjörk & Isaksson, 2014: 2). Moreover, reorganizations also had a negative impact on EPI, lending weight to the notion that timing of policy integration is critical (Storbjörk & Isaksson, 2014: 2).

The emergence of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the UN Agenda 2030 led to an unprecedented policy window for sustainability agendas across the world (Kathryn J. Bowen, Nicholas A. Cradock-Henry, Florian Koch, James Patterson, Tiina Häyhä, Jess Vogt & Fabiana Barbi, 2017: 90). The SDGs were among the first of global policy making to treat all member nations in a non-differentiating manner (Biermann, Kanieb & Kima, 2017: 27). Of course, this was possible due to the fact that the many of the goals had a qualitative character with little institutional authority, thus leaving plenty of room for governmental preferences to dictate national action (Biermann, Kanieb & Kima, 2017: 27). In this regard, little has changed since pre-21st century EPI.

In many ways, the rhetoric about sustainability has remained similar since the emergence of the SDGs. Several recommendations on how to implement the SDGs echo those of earlier EPI attempts – strengthening political commitment and global governance arrangements, translating global ambitions to national contexts, ensuring effective and adaptive policy implementation remain classic recommendations for contemporary governance mechanisms (see Biermann et al., 2017). Challenges abound: there is a need for coordinated, collectively anchored decision spaces that allow deliberation, a strategy to handle the *trade-offs* and *co-benefits* between the three pillars of economic, social and environmental development, and accountable institutions with measurable indicators for progress (Bowen et al., 2017: 91-93). Perhaps the second point marked the greatest development from the Brundtland Commission’s initial statements, by moving away from the old win-win rhetoric and acknowledging that difficult decisions must eventually be made in order to reach a sustainable compromise (Bowen et al., 2017: 92). Biermann et al. has called for research that strengthens academic support for the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development (Biermann et al., 2017: 29).

The SDGs are presented as “indivisible”, which implicates that all countries should implement the agenda as a whole (Nina Weitz, Henrik Carlsen, Måns Nilsson, Kristian Skånberg 2017: 1). However, the means to do so has been left to the discretion of individual states and/or regions, often with little or no knowledge base on how to address sustainability issues in this manner – which is not made easier by the fact that the 169 indicators directly or indirectly influence each other through ripple effects (Weitz et al., 2017: 2-3).

Paul Fenton & Sara Gustafsson observe that local level action to address climate change has generally occurred in a haphazard manner (2017: 130). Where concrete action

has taken place, it seems to be the result of voluntary action from local actors rather than through top-down governance models (Raffaele Vignola, Gregoire Leclerc, Mariela Morales and Julian Gonzalez, 2017: 84). There still remains an urgent need for research on how to clarify the roles and responsibilities of local actors, to investigate ways to address institutional and political barriers to policy integration, and how to embed the SDGs into existing governance practice (Fenton & Gustafsson, 2017: 132).

Agenda 2030 is a relatively young policy innovation. There is yet no abundance of publically accessible research or reports that analyze empirical cases of Agenda 2030 integration, especially considering that I will limit myself to the Swedish context in order to keep this thesis on point. Thankfully, my position at Region Skåne makes it somewhat easier to find comparable cases in Sweden. For instance, shortly after its creation, the Agenda 2030 delegation proposed six prioritized areas for sustainable development in Sweden: An egalitarian and equal society, sustainable cities, a socially beneficial and circular economy, strong and sustainable enterprises, sustainable and healthy food, and strengthened knowledge and innovation (Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2018: 7).

On 1 March 2018, The Agenda 2030 delegation released a follow-up report on the progress of implementing the SDGs in the Swedish public sector. This was complicated by the fact that several of the parliament-bound goals, as well as many indicators in Agenda 2030, lacked means for measurement (Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2018: 18). The report concluded that, while the Swedish parliament-bound goals have in some cases higher ambitions than expressed in Agenda 2030, those goals rarely make explicit references to Agenda 2030 (Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2018: 21). The report called for further analysis to identify synergies, conflicting objectives and/or sub-optimizations of a policy integration (Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2018: 21).

Interview research at the Swedish Government Offices has demonstrated that incentives for implementation of Agenda 2030 varies among the departments (Lilly Rosander, 2016: 27). This has been traced to at least two different causes: lack of a clear division of responsibility and lack of cross-sectoral meta-policies that give guidance (Lilly Rosander, 2016: 27). A positive example is the Ministry of Finance – belonging to the top-tier of the interdepartmental hierarchy – which has taken an increased responsibility to oversee the implementation of Agenda 2030 (Lilly Rosander, 2016: 27). Still, further research on sub-national public institutions facing the same challenge is

requested in order to better understand the full chain of Agenda 2030 implementation (Lilly Rosander, 2016: 28).

There is a growing number of examples of Agenda 2030 on the regional level. For instance, the Västra Götaland Region has put together a gap analysis, using interviews and desk review to map the relevance of each of the 17 goals in Agenda 2030 to the regional development, as well as identifying potential shortcomings of the regional development plan to reach the SDGs (2016: 4). The report, written by a proxy, does not disclose the full methodology. Similar initiatives have commenced in other regions, such as Stockholm and Blekinge, to name a few.

Unfortunately, the heavy emphasis on local implementation of the SDGs implies that any universal blueprint that may be derived from these cases has little practical use – Storbjörk and Isaksson has argued that when it comes to sustainable development, there is rather limited generalizability across different contexts (2014: 7). It thus follows that in order to get a sense of Agenda 2030's potential in Region Skåne, I will need to perform my own analysis.

3. Method

This chapter describes the content analysis method and how it will be applied qualitatively through an abductive approach to the material. An element of participant observation also permeates the study in order to make the most use of the resources of Region Skåne.

3.1. Content Analysis

My choice of method is motivated by the fact that the bulk of this study will focus exclusively on textual data. According to Klaus Krippendorff, content analysis excels at studying social realities that are constituted in language, and well able to capture meanings, intentions, consequences and context depicted in texts (Krippendorff, 2002: 75; also in Elo & Kyngäs, 2008: 109). Put more simply, a content analysis can effectively map the “who?”, “what?”, “where?”, “when?”, and “why?” as they appear in a document (Elo & Kyngäs, 2002: 109). Two additional points provide a rationale for the chosen method: First, the analysis becomes easier the more repetitive, routine and institutionalized the phenomena that is being studied is (Krippendorff, 2002: 77). Second, content analysis is instrumental when comparing similar phenomena inferred from different bodies of texts (Krippendorff, 2002: 93). Given that both Agenda 2030 and RUS represent a public institution in their own respective right, I would claim that there is a strong case for the usefulness of content analysis in regards to the chosen material.

Several features of the content analysis method distinguishes it as capable of answering my stated research question. First, it is an unobtrusive technique that can approach the data without risk of altering its content or behavior (Krippendorff, 2002: 40). Unlike a more ethnographic approach, I can extract information from the documents without facing the risk of satisficing. Second, it can handle unstructured, diverse and unanticipated matter as data (Krippendorff, 2002: 41). Information obtained from a text can vary both qualitatively and quantitatively, but content analysis leaves the researcher open to finding means to deal with this (Benoît Rihoux, 2006: 684). Thus, the method allows me to adjust my strategies in case I encounter unexpected data. Third, content analysis is sensitive to the context that the texts are embedded in (Krippendorff, 2002:

41), which enables my study to remain open towards contributing clues that may emerge from the surrounding environment. I will return to this particular point later on in Section 3.4: Participant observation. Lastly, content analysis can cope with and summarize large data volumes while checking their coherence in relation to one another (Krippendorff, 2002: 42; Rihoux, 2006: 683). While I limit my study to two policy documents, their encapsulated topic of sustainable development may contain a vast array of concepts that, without a structured approach, can easily become overwhelming. With a proper coding scheme, this problem can be circumvented.

3.2. The qualitative approach

Content analysis can be conducted both quantitatively and qualitatively, and both approaches would be a worthwhile endeavor in my study. However, my main interest lies in investigating the presented ideas, the subtle connections (or lack thereof) between elements of sustainable development, and the agendas present in the two policy documents. As Elo & Kyngäs state, qualitative content analysis is “concerned with meanings, intentions, consequences and context” (2008: 108) that derive from a socially constructed reality (Ulla H. Graneheim, Britt-Marie Lindgren, & Berit Lundman, 2017: 29).

It seems then, that in order to pursue my task I must go beyond the mere “counting game” that most quantitative approaches have to offer (Hsiu-Fang Hsieh & Sarah E. Shannon, 2005: 1283; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008: 108; Graneheim et al., 2017: 29). With a qualitative approach, I can apply a content analysis that targets patterns of subjective interpretation and searches for the underlying “red thread” of sustainable development (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1278; Graneheim et al., 2017: 30). Merely comparing the numbers in the policy documents will be indicative towards certain goals, but without a qualitative interpretation of them, they will not necessarily give a sense of the overall objectives that Agenda 2030 and RUS seek to achieve.

Of course, when opting out of the standardized sets of quantitative methodology, I open myself up to an all too common critique of qualitative studies: how to ascertain the reliability and validity of my findings. However, Krippendorff argues that all texts are reader-dependent – the message of a document does not exist without interpretation in

the eyes of the reader (Krippendorff, 2002: 22). The interpretive nature of qualitative approaches thus requires a different set of criteria – trustworthiness, credibility, accountability, confirmability and reflexivity are common requirements that a qualitative researcher must always live up to (Krippendorff, 2002: 88; Graneheim et al., 2017: 33). Qualitative research requires constant jumping back and forth to revise earlier interpretations whenever deemed necessary in light of later insights, and this process would be exhaustive when analyzing large volumes of text (Krippendorff, 2002: 88). Delimiting my material to only two policies thus seem warranted, given the chosen approach. As I go forward with my analysis, I will provide a detailed account of my research steps, present detailed results, and make explicit my own train of thought whenever it appears in the research. With these precautions, I hope to strengthen the trustworthiness of my study.

3.3. Abductive inference

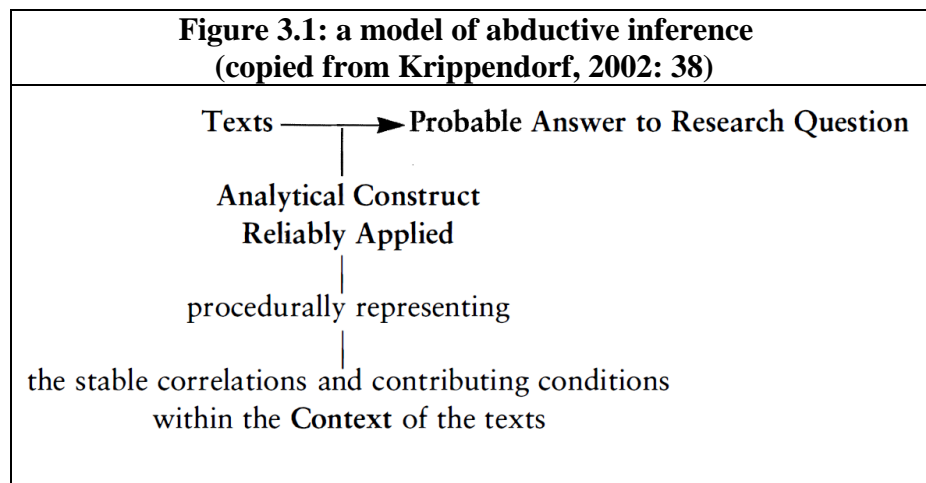
When discerning the “red thread” of a text, it can at times be challenging to make clear whose voice is being heard in the various parts of the research (Graneheim et al., 2017: 33). A common way to improve the internal validity of the study is the application of a theoretical framework guiding the study. While a comparative qualitative study is inductive, in the sense that knowledge is constructed as the researcher engages with the material, an input of theory can still provide consistency to the analysis (Rihoux, 2006: 684). The *deductive*, sometimes also dubbed the *directed*, approach to content analysis does just that – existing theory or prior research is used to identify key concepts as initial coding categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1281). Krippendorff argues that such analytical constructs are useful when a particular context is already researched and well-theorized generalizations are available (2002: 176). As I will demonstrate in chapter 4: Towards an analytical framework, there is ample theorization on the subject of policy integration. Not using these resources seems unwarranted – my main interest is to provide factual basis for decision-making in a specific region, and although a contribution to theory-building is a positive side-effect, I do not claim that I can close a gap in existing theory.

That being said, even the most sophisticated theory is not foolproof against the weaknesses of qualitative analysis. As Hsieh & Shannon point out, theories force the researcher to approach the material with a strong, preconditioned bias, as well informed as they may be (2005: 1283). With a directed approach, one is likely to find more evidence that supports the theory rather than contradicts it (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1283). This puts considerable responsibility on me as a researcher: mapping the similarities and the differences between Agenda 2030 and RUS are relatively uncontroversial, but I must show thorough restraint in how I present my conclusions – I reiterate that my intention is to merely develop knowledge on the possible grounds for policy integration, not to favor one resolution over another.

Lastly, a deductive content analysis based exclusively on a previously established model is left with the challenge of how to treat left-over data that does not fit into the existing explanatory model (Graneheim et al., 2017: 30). For this very reason, I will go beyond the classical deductive format and draw inspiration from the *abductive* approach to content analysis. According to Krippendorff, analytical constructs that draw from theory are valid on account of their structural correspondence with their allocated *context* (2002: 179). Content analysis is no exception – texts are examined within a certain context, and the analyst must construct a world in which the data can make sense (Krippendorff, 2002: 24).

Bridging the logical gap between text and context is a strength of the abductive approach. The method implies a move back and forth between induction and deduction and, at a deeper level, a means to discover underlying patterns that allow the research to integrate surface and deep structures (Graneheim et al., 2017: 31). Figure 3.1, copied from

Krippendorff
 (2002: 38)
 illustrates the
 basic model of
 abductive
 inference: the
 analytical
 construct of a
 theoretical



framework is further reinforced by the analyst's knowledge of the context in which the texts occur (Krippendorff, 2002: 38).

The abductive inference of contextual data is claimed to be unique to content analysis, but requires that the analyst makes the chosen context explicit in order to provide clarity to the research findings (Krippendorff, 2002: 34, 83). Despite its popularity within content analysis theory, Graneheim et al. note that there are only a few articles that truly demonstrate the abductive leap (2017: 31).

The full extent of the usefulness of the abductive approach in my study is impossible to predict in advance. In the end, I believe that a theoretical lens is necessary to bring academic rigor to the study. Nonetheless, I do not wish to impose constrictions that may blind me to important pieces of information that may appear during the research process. The two policy documents are public and easily accessible. My presence in the regional government offices in Malmö, however, gives me a unique opportunity for insight into the conditions surrounding the policy integration process as well as a source of information from government staff with unrivalled knowledge of the local dynamics. Therefore, my methodological approach can be summarized as follows: A theoretical framework, guided by policy 'integration', 'transfer' and 'diffusion' theory, will be applied to identify categories pertaining to the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development while at the same time leaving me open to inductive input from unexpected insights that may appear from the texts or the surrounding context of the Regional Government offices.

3.4. Participant observation

Citing Schensul, Schensul & LeCompte (1999), Barbara B. Kawulich defines *participant observation* as "the process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the researcher setting" (2005: 2). By becoming part of the target group, the researcher collects data from the "inside", and is thus able to study how the group is operating in their natural setting (Kawulich, 2005: 3, 4). Kathleen M. DeWalt & Billie R. DeWalt argue that participant observation as a method is used to develop a holistic and more accurate understanding of the phenomena under study (2002:

92). As an employee of Region Skåne, I work in close proximity to the phenomena I study and I would be amiss to *not* consider myself a participant in the organization.

One major advantage of including an element of participant observation is an increased validity of the study, as direct observations help the researcher develop a better understanding of the context of the data (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002: 92). This is especially true in cases where several strategies are used to gather data (Kawulich, 2005: 5). The combination of direct observation, content analysis and policy integration theory enables me to capture more aspects of the phenomena than a narrow document review would ever achieve on its own (Kawulich, 2005: 6).

The inclusion of participant observation into the method also brings with it some potential pitfalls. One example is the dependency on key informants. I am fortunate enough to have been co-supervised by two professional staff working directly with regional development at Region Skåne, who are considerably interested in what Agenda 2030 might bring to the organization. I believe that these informants have helped, rather than hindered, access to important information during the research process.

A second matter for reflection is the fact that any researcher always enter the research field with a personal interpretive lens (Kawulich, 2005: 8), and I am no exception to this rule. My analytical framework will remain a guiding principle throughout the whole research process. While I strive for the greatest possible transparency, I nonetheless invite the reader to scrutinize my work from different theoretical standpoints.

Participant observation is especially sensitive to ethical considerations, since the study builds its success on the group's willingness to share information (Kawulich, 2005: 11). In my work at Region Skåne, I have strived to always openly inform the staff of my purpose to analyze RUS and Agenda 2030 as a graduate student. I have participated in several meetings during my time in Region Skåne, all of which I have been directly invited to attend. Collaboration with staff has been undertaken as to ascertain the anonymity of sources and to double-check whether any presented material could be considered sensitive information. Lastly, this research has been undertaken with the promise to share the findings with Region Skåne after the completion of this study.

3.5. Generalizability of the study

In the words of Rihoux (2006), the quest for generalization should always be bounded to cases that share a sufficient number of features and that operate within sufficiently comparable contexts (2006: 687). The most obviously comparable entity to Region Skåne is, of course, other regional governments in Sweden. Local living conditions vary across the country, however. Sweden is an increasingly heterogeneous society, with varying social, economic and environmental conditions that all require individualized consideration. I do not make the claim that my study can stand on its own as a universal solvent towards regional policy integration of Agenda 2030. My intention is exclusively to make a contribution to the immediate work of Region Skåne. That being said, if this work could prove to inspire future studies on the relationship between local governance and Agenda 2030, those studies would surely be fruitful to compare with my own analysis: any similarities or differences could yield further insights on the challenges facing policy integration in regional governments.

3.6. Limitations

Content analysis would not necessarily be my sole option for data gathering. The method, while rigorous, delimits my study to two policies – texts that may or may not be perfectly representative of their host institutions. As an employee of Region Skåne, I have access to the institution and the people working with these issues on a regional level. If given enough time and resources, an extensive case study could have yielded a far more thorough analysis that, in addition to document analysis, could track the institutional processes working for and against policy integration. Such a method could include interviews, focus groups, the use of archive and database searches, to name a few. This would of course be far too ambitious for one person working in a timeframe of one semester. I will settle for a comparison of the policy documents since this research will essentially be a springboard for subsequent policy integration processes in Region Skåne, thus warranting a specialized study as to make it as reliable as possible. That said, it would be a waste to not use the availability of information that comes with being surrounded by knowledgeable government staff as I'm writing about their work.

The participant observation approach may offer some complementary insights from other government staff, but main focus rests on the content analysis which has been undertaken by myself alone. Thus, the analysis is exclusive to me only, which delimits the study to the perspective of one person. However, it also enables me to take full responsibility of the opinions expressed in this thesis through qualitative and abductive inferences. Therefore, I consider the limitation warranted for its purpose.

Finally, a different theoretical framework could have structured the analysis differently, consequently also altering the insights drawn from the study. For instance, realist, feminist or Marxist perspectives would have taken the study into equally fascinating fields of research. However, I find that policy integration theory is a worthwhile starting point for a study of this character. It allows me to use theoretical concepts specified for the material and fits well into the context of the task faced by Region Skåne.

3.7. Coding scheme

Regardless of the exact specifications of the analytical construct, a content analyst always ends up scouring textual data for certain *categories*, also known as *themes* (Graneheim et al. 2017: 32). The creation of categories – and by extension, the reliability of the coding scheme – will depend on the success of the discriminant function that drives the sorting process (Krippendorff, 2002: 91). In a theory-driven approach, the categorical distinctions usually derive from the analytical framework constructed in advance (Krippendorff, 2002: 105), as is the case in this study.

The coding procedure will be conducted using Nvivo 11, a software program for qualitative data analysis. This allows me to code segments of the text into smaller components of data, called *nodes*. These nodes are consequently sorted according to their thematic content into distinct sub-nodes. The program allows for easy sorting and counting of references, as well as some simple visualization techniques to simplify the presentation of the acquired data. The means to create the nodes will be described in the following chapter.

4. Towards an analytical framework

A theoretical framework designed to analyze whether two policies on ‘sustainable development’ could be ‘integrated’ requires an operational understanding of these two concepts. This chapter will provide an operationalized description of the two, followed by a synthesis that will inform the coding process and subsequent analysis.

4.1. Operationalizing ‘sustainable development’

An operational understanding of ‘sustainable development’ is necessary if I am to concretize the themes that may or may not exist in the research material. Alas, bringing clarity to the contested concept of ‘sustainable development’ is, as we have already seen, short of an insurmountable task given the lack of a unified theory (Giddings, Hopwood & O’Brien, 2002: 188).

First of all, the Brundtland Commission’s ambiguous definition of “sustainable development” was designed to gain widespread acceptance (Giddings et al., 2002: 188). While this gave governments the freedom to interpret the concept in relation to their respective local context, critics have argued that the inherent blandness of the concept makes it meaningless, lacking potential for rigorous analysis (Giddings et al., 2002: 188), instead becoming little more than a catchphrase for politicians and business leaders (Hopwood, Mellor & O’Brien, 2005: 6).

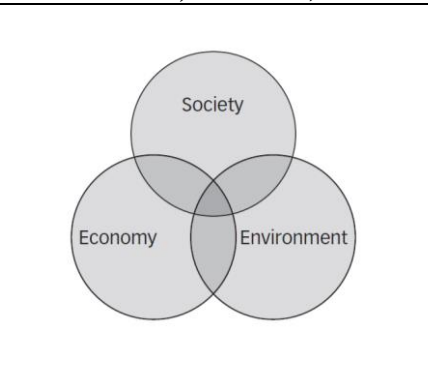
Second, strategies claiming to promote sustainable development may conceal hidden flaws. For instance, “development” can easily be confused with “growth”, but as Herman E. Daly puts it, the latter implies quantitative growth in physical scale whereas the former pertains to “qualitative improvement or unfolding of potentialities” (1990: 1). This also involves a temporal dimension: maximizing a sustainable annual profit, Daly argues, cannot be treated as identical to maximizing present value by discounting future costs and benefits (Daly, 1990: 2). However, contemporary notions of unsustainability is often treated as a distant threat (Hartmut Bossel, 1999: 1). Daly has proposed the term ‘sustainable livelihoods’ in order to better reflect ‘development’ as a qualitative process instead of an ‘end state’ (Hopwood, Mellor & O’Brien, 2005: 7). This example

demonstrates how yet again it is difficult to pinpoint what, which and how definitions are to be used.

Third, even when sustainable development is taken seriously, the concept's proclaimed omnipotence makes it easy to fall victim to a blind sense of optimism. Numerous constraints restrict a society's development and, while some are negotiable, others are unchangeable (Bossel, 1999: 3). These constraints can be a matter of *physical conditions* (e.g. available space, resources or absorption capacity), constraints of *human nature* (such as diversity, culture, ethics, and technology), and temporal constraints (Bossel, 1999: 4-6). Bossel speaks of an *accessibility space* – the aggregated theoretical possibilities of action that are limited by existing constraints in any given system (Bossel, 1999: 3). This concept will be applied as a discriminant function (more on this in Krippendorff, 2002: 92) – as a regional government in Sweden, Region Skåne has a limited jurisdiction and therefore, cannot (or need not) address all of the points brought up in Agenda 2030.

These contestations aside, sustainable development is usually presented as an interplay between the pillars of *environment, society, and economy* – three separate but connected aspects operating within any given system (Giddings, Hopwood & O'Brien, 2002: 187). This is often presented as a model of 'three rings' as seen in Figure 4.1, a Venn diagram that supposedly demonstrates an integrated outlook on sustainable development (Giddings et al., 2002: 192).

Figure 4.1: Three pillars of sustainable development (copied from Dharmasasmita et al., 2017: 84)



The *economic* pillar traditionally considers issues related to economic efficiency, profitability of markets, and agricultural and industrial production (Cristian Cristu, Sorin Angheluță & Mihaela Cristu, 2016: 61). Bossel further distinguishes between the economic sub-system – involving production, commerce, labor, income, consumption – and the infrastructure sub-system – pertaining to transportation, supply systems, health, communication, education facilities, and science (Bossel, 1999: 17). The *social* pillar concerns the welfare of individuals and the community, social justice, health and social cohesion (Cristu, Angheluță & Cristu, 2016: 61), which can be further subcategorized according to individual development, the social system, and a well-functioning public

sector (Bossel, 1999: 17). Finally, the *environmental* pillar aims to ensure a stable depletion of non-renewable resources, regeneration of renewable resources, recycling and carrying capacity, non-degradation and protecting biodiversity (Cristu, Angheluță & Cristu, 2016: 61; Bossel, 1999: 7).

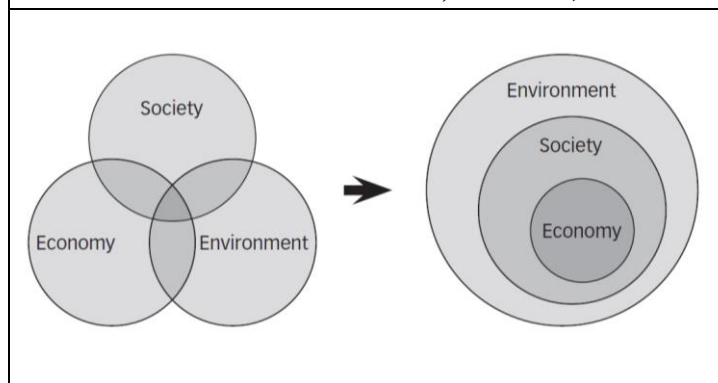
Viability of the whole societal system is dependent on the functionality of each of the pillars as well as their respective sub-systems (Bossel, 1999: 18). These are subject to growth or deterioration, depending on how well they are managed, which then affects their contribution to the overall system (Bossel, 1999: 18). With this view, systemic development becomes limited by whichever factor is performing the poorest (Daly, 1990: 3). Therefore, finding relevant indicators for each subsystem is paramount (Bossel, 1999: 18).

Giddings et al. argue that the ‘three rings’ model has some major weaknesses: this type of understanding assumes a separation between the three pillars, an over-simplification which in practice has led to a compartmentalized approach to programme execution (Giddings et al., 2002: 189). Technical issues such as pollution control, greenhouse gas trading and resource efficiency have worked as substitutes to programmes to tackle deeper, multi-layered societal issues (Giddings et al., 2002: 189, 193). The element of diversity – another important part of sustainable development – are lost in favor of the dominant parts of society (Giddings et al., 2002: 192). Typically, policy making has favored the economy and as a result – or perhaps because of it – the economy dominates matters of both society and environment (Giddings et al., 2002: 190). Economic growth has demonstrated to be an ineffective means to achieve encompassing sustainable development: as Hopwood et al. point out, the trend is towards decreasing equality, not increasing (Hopwood et al., 2005: 30). Even when coupling the social dimension to this dilemma, we fall short of the holistic approach requested by sustainable development. Poverty reduction, for instance, requires population control and income redistribution – neither of which are popular issues to tackle for politicians seeking to stay in power (Daly, 1990: 5).

An improvement over the ‘three-rings’ model is to be found in the *nested dependencies* model shown in Figure 4.2, which better reflects the dependency of the economy on society and environment, as well as the importance of activities that categorically fall outside the borders of the realm of production (Aldilla Dharmasasmita, Lina Erlandsson, Jessica Willats & Seraphina Brown, 2017: 84; Giddings et al., 2002: 191). This sentiment

has begun to leave its mark on society – a practical example is the tenets of sustainable business management: *people, planet, profit* – listed in order of importance from highest to lowest (Elkington, cited in Dharmasasmita et al., 2017: 86).

Figure 4.2: The *nested dependencies* model of sustainable development (copied from Dharmasasmita et al., 2017: 84)



Attempts have been made to create indices that accurately capture an integrated assessment of sustainability (see Strezov, Evans & Evans, 2017 for a full discussion). Even so, the social and environmental pillars still lack many of the neatly defined standards of measurement that are common in economic theories (Dharmasasmita et al., 2017: 87), thus dampening the hopes for a holistic framework for sustainable development.

Despite the conceptual challenges, I reiterate the importance of an operational understanding of ‘sustainable development’ that can help me inform my conclusions. Without an index, this too will have to settle for a qualitative character. Creating aggregated views are a risky business: there is always a possibility that averages mask deficiencies or inequalities within the system (Bossel, 1999: 12; Giddings et al., 2002: 194). For this reason, Giddings et al. argue that sustainable development “needs to be based on principles that would apply to all issues whether they are classified as environmental, social, economic, or any mix of the three” (2002: 194). Such principles are provided by Haughton (1999) who outlines five *equity principles* (Haughton, 1999, cited in Giddings et al., 2002: 194):

- (i) Futurity – inter-generational equity
- (ii) Social justice – intra-generational equity
- (iii) Trans-frontier responsibility – geographical equity
- (iv) Procedural/participatory equity – people treated openly and fairly
- (v) Inter-species equity – importance of biodiversity

These qualifiers help create a balancing mechanism between the three pillars. They stress the importance of responsibility of current generations for the well-being of future

generations, acknowledge universal, democratic participation and well-being, as well as promote equity between human systems and natural systems. With this understanding, ‘sustainable development’ shifts away from treating economy, society and environment as three distinct realms (Giddings et al., 2002: 194). Instead, ‘sustainable development’ ought to resemble something that emphasizes general human as well as non-human well-being – a far more holistic approach, albeit not necessarily more concrete. That being said, the bottom line is that each of the three pillars must strive towards fulfilling all of these five qualitative criteria before ‘sustainable development’ can be said to take place. The extent of how much society would have to change in order to reach a state of sustainable development is relative to each system. This is a normative and empirical matter that falls outside the scope of this thesis. For a full discussion on this topic, I recommend the detailed elaboration found in Hopwood et al. (2005).

Having pinpointed some of the many difficulties in finding a suitable definition of ‘sustainable development’, I remain optimistic that by disclosing my own views on the concept – a nested model that treats economy, society and environment as inseparable, and their relative importance to each other judged according to a normative set of equity principles – will improve the transparency of the analysis and bring a sense of rigor to the reading of the documents.

4.2. A framework for ‘policy integration’

My theoretical framework situates itself primarily in the field of *policy integration*, which is defined by Basil Bornemann as a function serving to “dissolve contradictions, to reduce redundancies, and to exploit synergies between policies” (Bornemann, 2008: 2), ultimately aiming to shape a system’s ability to address a cross-cutting policy problem in a more holistic manner (Jeroen J.L. Candel & Robbert Biesbroek, 2016: 217). Two policies are considered to be ‘integrated’ when they live up to three criteria: *comprehensiveness* in terms of actors, space, timeframe and issues, *aggregation* of the policy evaluation to an overall perspective, as well as *consistency* of policy components across different sections and levels of governance (Lafferty & Hovden, 2002: 15). With this understanding, ‘integration’ does not necessarily equate to a mutual compromise between the two documents, merely that there is some form of change aiming to

standardize the message expressed by the two policies. Overall, these definitions fit well into the overall task faced by Region Skåne to accommodate Agenda 2030 in their regional development strategy.

Even so, the international character of Agenda 2030 adds another layer – the global vs. the local – to the issues facing integration. The resulting status difference between the two documents makes comparison less straightforward. This dilemma motivates me to also draw insights from *policy transfer* theory – developed by scholars such as Dolowitz & Marsh (1996), Benson & Jordan (2011), Wolman & Page (2002), Duncan (2009), Stone (2001) etc. – and *policy diffusion* theory – favored by Sabatier et al. (2007), Braun & Gilardi (2006), Shipan & Volden (2008) etc.. ‘Policy transfer’ is commonly defined as a process in which “knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political setting” (Dolowitz & Marsh, cited in Marsh & Sharman, 2009: 270). A basic understanding of ‘policy diffusion’ views it as a process through which choices in one country affect those made in a second country (Marsh & Sharman, 2009: 270), or simply put: diffusion denotes a successive spreading of ideas and practices across members of a social system from a common source (Diane Stone, 2001:4, Sabatier et al. 2007: 310).

The theories outlined above originate from complexity and neo-institutionalist thinking (Helen Briassoulis, 2004: 2; Diane Stone, 2001: 4-6). The latter approach views organizational behavior as guided by a process of isomorphism, or policy convergence, which derives from shared rules, interpretations and meanings – i.e. structural forces (Stone, 2001: 4, 6). Nonetheless, Stone also identifies more voluntaristic, action-oriented activities of policy transfer which imply that actor intentions still have some precedence in organizations (Stone, 2001: 5). These two concepts should be treated as co-enabling: structures provide context and impose limits or facilitate the agents’ options for action, yet actors are also empowered to interpret these structures and act to change them (Marsh & Sharman, 2009: 275). Indeed, Candel & Biesbroek state that *integration* is “an agency-driven process of asynchronous and multi-dimensional policy and institutional change within an existing or newly formed governance system” (2016: 217), lending further weight to the interconnectedness of actors and structures. This perspective will thus allow my analysis to be open to a wider spectra of policy *mechanisms* – defined by Braun & Gilardi as ‘a systematic set of statements that provide a plausible account of how [two

variables] are linked' (2006: 299) – that could potentially have been lost with a narrower theory lens.

With the basics accounted for, the next step is to outline a framework that allows me to approach the material. There are already quite a few promising candidates, but many of them operate on a meta-level or are not directly compatible with a strict content analysis. Therefore, I need to construct my own model that draws inspiration from existing theory. Following a literature review, three in particular have been selected to help me form the basis of my own framework. These can be found in detail in the works of their respective authors, therefore I will be content to summarize their main points below.

First, David Benson & Andrew Jordan list six over-arching questions for policy transfer research which were originally coined by Dolowitz & Marsh in 1996: “Who transfers policy? Why engage in policy transfer? What elements of policy are transferred? Are there different degrees of transfer? From where are policies transferred? What factors enable and constrain transfer?” (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 367). These operational questions pinpoint an aspiring researcher to the important fields of inquiry in policy transfer studies, and serve as a starting point for my own policy integration framework – albeit with a few modifications: The fourth question is of an ex-post nature, which is impossible for me to answer in an ex-ante study, and is therefore omitted. The sixth question, ‘enabling and constraining factors’, span across all the other questions. Therefore I will integrate it into the other inquiries for greater thematic clarity.

The second inspiration comes from policy integration literature. Helen Briassoulis presents a framework for complex policy problems, utilizing a straight-forward classification of the various components of a policy: ‘policy object’ – the type of policy and the realm it addresses, ‘policy goals’ – objectives that the policy strives toward, ‘policy actors’ – identifying those involved with the policy, ‘policy structures and procedures’ – how to work toward the policy goals, and ‘policy instruments’ – active measures suggested by the policy (Briassoulis, 2004: 21). In a similar fashion, Candel & Biesbroek identify *policy frame*, *subsystem involvement*, *policy goals* and *policy instruments* as the dominating fields of a policy (2016: 218-222), which conceptually overlap quite well with Briassoulis (2004). For a more streamlined approach, I have opted to integrate the ‘Policy Object’ and ‘Policy Frame’ categories into one, as they all cover similar mechanisms of a policy; i.e. what type of societal problem is sought to be resolved.

My third inspiration is provided by Basil Bornemann's analytical framework for Policy Integration for Sustainable Development, which stands out because of its explicit intention to bridge these two broad conceptual realms. Bornemann sketches out three dimensions: a policy's *Function*, which sets the stage as a meta-policy that determines the problems, goals, and desired system for sustainable development; the policy's *Structure*, which dictates the extent, transformation and spread of the policy; and the *Process* of which substantive, cognitive and normative measures should be applied to achieve integrated means for sustainable development (Bornemann, 2008: 26). Bornemann's framework is ambitious in its holistic design, allowing for both evaluative and prescriptive inferences (Bornemann, 2008: 2). That said, the framework merely offers abstract contours for how to achieve its designated task, thus leaving – I speculate – plenty of room for interpretation among those who seek to apply it to a concrete study. Therefore, I have translated the terminology to a setup that is more “hands-on” towards a content analysis, allowing for clearer distinction of thematic categories.

From the insights of the above authors, my own framework has taken a form similar to that of Bornemann's. My product builds upon four dimensions of policy integration: The *Frame dimension* encompasses the abstract realm of values, ideologies and worldviews that is inherent in the policy documents. The *Interactive dimension* explores which actors, structures and transfer dynamics that are presented as pivotal for the policy to be implemented. The *substantive dimension* targets concrete measures that are proposed to achieve the goals expressed in the policy documents. Lastly, the *motivational dimension* critically questions what could be the driving causes of the push for integration, be it from competitive desire, some form of hierarchical pressure, and so on.

These four dimensions are then coupled with the three pillars of sustainable development, in order to focus the policy integration framework toward the context of sustainable development. The finished theoretical framework, which will inform my understanding of the research problem, is summarized in Table 4.3.

Similar to the pillars, separating the dimensions of policy integration is a bit controversial. They are in constant interaction with one another, and different aspects of a phenomenon do not always move in a concerted way (Candel & Biesbroek, 2016: 215). It is therefore unrealistic to expect an even display of all four dimensions in any given point in time. Nonetheless, the distinction is warranted in order to make a structured assessment of the composition of the policies.

Table 4.3: A framework for global-local policy integration				
<i>Pillars of SD</i>	Frame dimension	Interactive dimension	Substantive dimension	Motivational dimension
<i>Economic</i>	- Problem frames	- Responsibility of actors	- Hard/soft instruments	- Cooperative interdependence
<i>Social</i>	- Values	- Targeted groups	- Types of policy instruments	- Competition
<i>Environmental</i>	- Desired policy outcomes		- Formal/informal character	- Coercion
			- Indicators	- Normative pressure
			- Timeframe	

Alas, even with a mapping of the important concepts provided by this framework, it still falls short of providing a concrete operationalization. What it does accomplish, is functioning as a lens to which I can pinpoint areas of inquiry, which are crystalized into a set of operational questions that can guide the content analysis of the two documents:

1. What problems is the policy seeking to resolve?

This question corresponds to the *frame* dimension and focuses the study on what particular problems the policies identify as pressing, and what kind of world they wish to have instead.

2. Who is targeted by the policy?

Question 2 corresponds to the *interactive* dimension, seeking to map which actors, networks and structures appear in each policy, either because they are pushing for its implementation, are targeted for the policy’s impacts, or considered as a part of the solution.

3. What instruments are emphasized in the policy?

The third question covers topics found under the *substantive* dimension and is designed to search for references to which active measures, processes or concrete indicators are pushed as a means to implement sustainable development. This includes both measures of formal and informal character.

4. Why is the policy being engaged with?

The fourth question offers a critical component to the analysis, combining the works of the content analysis and abductive inferences to gain insights as to *why* this process is taking place to begin with. Understanding the underlying processes and motivations at work in Region Skåne can bridge the gap between text and reality, as well as help contribute to assessing the relevance of the results.

These four operational questions will allow me to assess the similarities and differences between Agenda 2030 and RUS according to a clear categorical framework, which – taken together – connects to the overall research question stated in the introduction. The extent of the policy content overlap, together with the objectives and motivation of the involved actors, can be indicative of the potential to integrate Agenda 2030 into the sustainable development work of Region Skåne.

Shipan & Volden have argued that these inquiries are ultimately a normative enterprise, as any insights from such a study may potentially affect the success of the policy integration (2008: 840). My motive is rather to promote learning – defined by Wolman & Page as a process of communication, assessment and utilization of a policy’s potential (Wolman & Page, 2002: 480). Far too often, importing policies without reflection on the possible consequences is done in order to reduce transaction costs – a different process known as “imitation without lesson-drawing” that ultimately could negatively affect the integration process (Sue Duncan, 2009: 456, de Jong et al. 2002: 4). I recognize the sensitivity of the task I’m facing, and move forward by providing an explicit and detailed account of the theoretical concepts that guide my answers to the four operational questions in order to improve transparency. These are provided in the sections below.

4.2.1. What problems is the policy seeking to resolve?

The policy ‘frame’ generally refers to dominant problem definitions of issues facing public policy (Candel & Biesbroek, 2016: 218). Bordering on ideology, policy frames may therefore be of predictive value when assessing public support for different policy alternatives (Candel & Biesbroek, 2016: 218). These problems are commonly ill- or multi-defined, often conflicting and contingent on the context and historical background in which they developed (Briassoulis, 2004: 7; Storbjörk & Isaksson, 2014: 4).

Upon defining a problem, a policy will also (usually) propose a desired resolution to said problem. However, the inherent difficulties in concretely framing a policy ‘problem’ carries over to the means to tackle it. Thus, in Briassoulis’s own words, “seldom are these problems ‘solved’, at best they are ‘resolved’ (Briassoulis, 2004: 7). That said, integration of two policy frames are possible when they share a common scope, treat the facets of a problem in a congruent manner, or respect one another’s concerns (Briassoulis, 2004: 15).

Integration of policy goals across sub-systems of a society thus requires a shared policy frame for a range of cross-cutting policy issues (Candel & Biesbroek, 2016: 220).

Bornemann states that policies on sustainable development are aimed at steering other policies that themselves seeks to steer society (2008: 21). In a sense, then, the policy frame dimension can be referred to as a “meta-policy” of its own: on one hand created through sub-level policies, but on the other also limiting the movability of these systems with respect to the objective of achieving sustainable development (Bornemann, 2008: 21)

When a policy from a foreign context – in this case, the globally ambitious Agenda 2030 – engages with a local development strategy in Skåne County, there are a number of pitfalls that may affect the potential for integration. *Programmatic* constraints reflect problems with ‘exporter jurisdiction’, i.e. the uniqueness of the policy compared to the broader social context (Martin de Jong, Konstantinos Lalenis & Virgine Mamadouh, 2002: 23, adapted from Rose, 1993). The policy may have unclear guidelines, be marred by ambiguities and conflicting content that discredit its potential (Bergström, Hedegaard Sørensen, Gudmundsson 2008: 5), or it may be too complex or too difficult to validate (Sabatier, 2007: 314).

Contextual constraints in turn relate to the ‘importer jurisdiction’ and whether the policy really can manage to fit into the local context. Katherine J. Klein & Joann Speer Sorra points to the importance of actor engagement – policies often fail to get traction because employees use the introduced policy less frequently and less consistently than required for the potential benefits of the innovation to be realized (1996: 1055). To counter this, a host organization needs to ensure that new innovations are fitting into existing values (Klein & Sorra, 1996: 1077).

Programmatic and contextual constraints collectively amount to de Jong et al.’s notion of ‘*goodness of fit*’. The argument laid forth by scholars of new institutionalism is that certain nations are related in terms of structural, legal, cultural, and philosophical grounds (de Jong et al., 2002: 26). While the argument for such “family characteristics” among nations has had difficulties in finding stable empirical backing, the concept of *goodness of fit* is still applicable in the context of policy integration since policies that share core attributes should face less difficulty merging into a single entity (de Jong et al., 2002: 30).

4.2.2. Who is targeted by the policy?

A recurring theme throughout the literature on policy integration, transfer, diffusion and the like, is an academic interest in mapping the often complex networks of actors and structures that interact with the policy. To capture this, I summarized the concepts into an *interactive dimension* of policy integration.

Duncan has defined ‘policy making’ as ‘the process by which governments translate their political vision into programmes and actions to deliver “outcomes”’ (Duncan: 453). This should not lead one to believe that only governments are active in setting policies. At least six types of actors have been identified in the makings of public policy: elected officials, political parties, bureaucrats/civil servants, pressure groups, and supra-national institutions (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 368-369). Policy exchange can also be facilitated by individual transfer agents – sometimes referred to as *transfer brokers* or *policy entrepreneurs* – that provide the necessary expertise and advocacy to shape the exact nature of the policy process (Diane Stone, 2001: 20).

More broadly speaking, Candel & Biesbroek applies the term of *subsystem involvement* in a particular cross-cutting policy problem (2016: 218). This poses several worthwhile points of inquiry: identifying the multitude of actors involved, the frequency of their interaction with the policy and other actor networks (Candel & Biesbroek, 2016: 219; Briassoulis, 2004: 15), and the professional competence and/or willingness of the actors to working towards integration (Storbjörk & Isaksson, 2014: 5). These factors are more likely to promote policy integration if interactive structures are linked through congruent, non-conflicting and coordinated procedures whose solutions are integrated and accepted in all societal networks (Briassoulis, 2004: 16).

Acceptance of a policy can depend partly on the nature of those engaged in it and policies can be transferred from both endogenous and exogenous sources, across multiple spatial and temporal scales, with the whole spectra of actor types that exist in the system (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 371).

Research on *vertical* and *horizontal* diffusion mechanisms in the older EPI literature offers key insights on how policies move between systems and subsystems. Lafferty & Hovden defined *vertical* EPI as the extent to which a particular government sector has adopted and implemented environmental and/or sustainable objectives as central to the portfolio of objectives in the care of said sector (2002: 19). In isolation, this suggests that

each sector is free to decide their own understanding and implementation of the concept (Lafferty & Hovden, 2002: 19). In contrast, *horizontal* EPI refers to the extent to which a central authority – such as the state or a regional municipal authority – has developed a comprehensive, cross-sectoral strategy for EPI (Lafferty & Hovden, 2002: 20). In simple terms, one can think of the horizontal dimension as the umbrella that provides overall goals and coordination for the vertical dimension. International empirical research has demonstrated that states have generally had more implementation success within the horizontal dimension (Lafferty & Hovden, 2002: 26), and Briassoulis makes the claim that a horizontal, rationally motivated approach to policy making is the most appropriate method for effective policy integration (Briassoulis, 2004: 12).

Yet other scholars showcase that change may come from below. For instance, Michael M. Bechtel & Johannes Urpelainen have demonstrated that local governments may have considerable influence in international policy integrations (for a detailed account, see Bechtel & Urpelainen, 2014: 560). Whether this has been the case in the development of Agenda 2030 would require a different study, inquiring into Region Skåne's collaborations with the UN institutions during the past decade. Non-governmental actors could also play a part. However, such potential scientific endeavors will have to wait until this policy analysis is concluded.

4.2.3. What instruments are emphasized in the policy?

A typical understanding of policy elements revolves around the binary differentiation between 'hard' and 'soft' policy instruments (Dolowitz & Marsh, cited in Benson & Jordan 2011: 370), also known as 'formal' and 'informal' institutions (de Jong et al. 2002: 22). Regardless of one's preferred terminology, the former includes policy instruments, institutions, administrative techniques and other governmental programmes (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 370). Early studies of policy integration kept its interests on these aspects, but later literature have shown an increasing interest in the latter, informal practices that are more closely intertwined with ideology, ideas, attitudes and concepts (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 370). Negative lessons are sometimes included in this list as well (Stone, 2001: 9). Put differently, concrete policy instruments are intertwined with the values that motivate their application, making the distinction of the two difficult at times. That being said, the substantive dimension of policy integration focuses on what the policy suggests

ought to be done in order to achieve its objectives. This includes substantive and procedural elements within a governance system and its associated subsystems (Candel & Biesbroek, 2016: 222).

Jong et al. applies a medical metaphor – policy *transplantation* – to emphasize potential difficulties in moving a policy element into a new setting. Similar to how a body can reject a donor organ, so can a policy be rejected by a host institution (de Jong et al., 2002: 5). Formal and informal institutions together add up to the sum of the whole institutional complex. However, the latter is far more difficult to transplant, and a likely scenario is that transplanted formal institutions may collide with lingering informal practices (de Jong et al., 2002: 22). At worst, this may lead to institutional schizophrenia. In other cases the outcome may be an improvement, though not always in ways intended by their domestic proponents (de Jong et al., 2002: 27).

Three levels of action specifies the different domains of institutional transplantation: the constitutional level, the level of policy areas and the operational level (de Jong, 2002: 27). Coupled with the ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ categories, de Jong et al. offers a matrix of six analytical domains for policy research (see Table 4.4, copied from de Jong et al., 2002: 22). The higher the level of action and the more informal the elements are, the more difficult the integration process becomes (Jong et al., 2002: 22).

<i>Level of Action</i>	<i>Formal Relations</i>	<i>Informal Practices</i>
Constitutional level (ground rules)	Legal systems	Value orientations
Level of policy area (relations between governmental bodies)	Formal regulations	Informal codes
Operational level (daily activities)	Procedures	Roles

An analysis of policy instruments must also assess how the instruments themselves relate to one another – there can be instruments of the same type, different types, and integrative instruments (Briassoulis, 2004: 17). The use of integrative instruments does not necessarily equate to policy integration, but coordinated, non-conflicting and

complementary instruments of any kind usually facilitate integration (Briassoulis, 2004: 17), while incompatible instruments have the opposite effect. Ultimately, any instrument is judged on its merits in improving the effectiveness and/or the efficiency of the institution, and unsound policy mixtures even make reaching the policy goal more difficult and contribute to ‘wicked problems’ (Tosun & Lang, 2017: 562-563). In a somewhat resigned fashion, Wolman & Page claims that it is much easier to offer a compendium of practices and ideas and leave it up to the receiving polity to decide what aspects are most appealing to them, rather than suggesting an evaluation of what works best (2002: 498).

Application constraints – the transaction costs associated with transferring the policy – can limit the concrete implementation of the policy. Resources and/or human capital may be too scarce (Sabatier et al., 2007: 324), or a state’s administrative reach across its constituents are, to varying degrees, limited (Bergström, Hedegaard Sørensen & Gudmundsson, 2008: 5). As such, it is difficult to validate whether actors “on the ground” are truly following their directives from above. A thorough review of Region Skåne’s economic capacity to integrate Agenda 2030 falls outside of the scope of this thesis, but comparing the directives of Agenda 2030 with Region Skåne’s administrative jurisdiction is of great importance when assessing the potential for policy integration.

4.2.4. Why is the policy being engaged with?

As mentioned earlier, a review of Agenda 2030 and RUS needs to be sensitive to both actor-driven initiatives as well as structural forces that shape implementation of the policy goals. The transfer and diffusion literature has uncovered several mechanics that explain *why* a policy is pushed for integration into a new context. Such motivations may be a matter of strategic considerations for decision makers (Tosun & Lang, 2017: 554), or simply because the policy may be introduced in a formative moment for the institution (Storbjörk & Isaksson, 2014: 4).

One such example is Paul A. Sabatier’s overview of innovation and diffusion models of policy research, which stipulates that a government (or another actor) “innovates” when it adopts a program that has previously been untested by said government (Sabatier, 2007: 307). Innovation can occur both from within and from outside of the polity (Shipan & Volden, 2008: 841). Transfer/diffusion then occurs by communicating this innovation

through certain channels over time across members of a social system (Shipan & Volden, 2008: 310).

That being said, the content analysis design of this thesis limits my ability to precisely assess why Agenda 2030 is being pushed for integration into RUS with regard to actor motivations. Even so, the question of why this process occurs is an important critical component of academic inquiry, and therefore I will proceed with a wider scope that may potentially capture some general explanatory patterns.

Broadly speaking, one can distinguish between coercive means – in which an organization with authority forces another entity into adopting a set of policy innovation (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 367) – and voluntary means to provoke policy transfer, although as we shall see below, there are sub-categories of each type (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 370). Terminologies abound: ‘direct coercive transfer’, ‘indirect coercive transfer’, ‘Semi-coercive’, ‘conditionality’ and ‘obliged transfer’ are all concepts that describe similar phenomena which highlight the mutual interconnectedness between states (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 367). However, persuasion and other voluntary modes seem to be the most common method for non-state actors (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 367). These means will be explored in further detail in the sections below.

Empirical considerations of transfer and diffusion have elaborated on the exact relationships of interconnected policy makers. For instance, Sabatier et al. note that relative power factors into local policy making, concluding that innovative leaders tended to be states and cities with higher wealth, larger populations and more cosmopolitan values (2007: 322). In contrast, smaller communities aspire to be more like their wealthier model communities and thus adopt similar policies without necessarily reflecting upon the consequences of their actions (Sabatier et al., 2007: 322).

A number of *demand side* constraints may create resistance to implementation of the policy (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 372). Openness to a policy is influenced by its relative advantage over the status quo (Sabatier et al. 2007: 314), as well as the social cohesion among the actors and agencies, which may or may not have quite differing perspectives and priorities (Tomas Bergström, Claus Hedegaard Sørensen, Henrik Gudmundsson 2008: 5). This point is supported by Braun & Gilardi, claiming that policy adoption become less likely as the amount of veto players increase (2006: 315). De Jong et al. proposes a similar argument: the concept of ‘actors pulling in’ captures the power struggle of policy proponents to incorporate the foreign element into its legislation, wherein a

combination of *practicality* and *desirability* of the policy, as seen in Table 4.5, are the main determinants for success (De Jong et al., 2002: 25, adapted from Rose, 1993).

Table 4.5: Assessing a potential transplant: Great example or fatal attraction? (copied from de Jong et al., 2002: 25)		
	<i>High desirability</i>	<i>Low desirability</i>
High practicality	Satisfactory transfer 'Great example'	Unwanted policy solution
Low practicality	Siren call 'Fatal attraction'	Double rejection

4.2.4.1. Interdependence – multi-form

I have opted to use the term “interdependence” as an umbrella for “competition” in order to capture the fact that not all forms of external pressure create antagonistic relationships. In its broadest form, interdependence merely means that the choices of a policy maker in one polity influences the choices made by other (Braun & Gilardi, 2006: 299). A *cooperative interdependence* can occur when polities benefit from having compatible policies, thus giving decision makers incentives to adapt to policies already in place in other polities (Braun & Gilardi, 2006: 308).

Nonetheless, literature on interdependent policy relationships seem to emphasize the competitive nature of different policy communities (see Sabatier et al., 2007; Marsh & Sharman, 2009; de Jong et al., 2002; Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Shipan & Volden 2008). A policy is enacted through *competitive interdependence* when a polity’s decision about whether to adopt a policy is motivated by the desire of its decision makers to secure an advantage, e.g. economic, over other jurisdictions (Sabatier, 2007: 312). Sabatier has distinguished between two types of competitive policy diffusion mechanisms: *location-choice competition*, of which an example would be states competing over low corporate tax rates in order to attract global businesses, and *spillover-induced competition*, in which the implementation of a policy in polity A changes polity B’s net benefit from implementing the same policy (Sabatier, 2007: 312-313). Another example provided by Shipan & Volden are “races to the bottom”, which have been observed in studies of how

states compete over having the least attractive welfare system in order to discourage immigration (Shipan & Volden, 2008: 842, Braun & Gilardi, 2006: 308).

4.2.4.2. Coercion

Coercive integration mechanisms are the imposition of policies by a powerful policy innovator onto weaker members of a social system, thus implying a hierarchical relationship (Braun & Gilardi, 2006: 309). Coercion can occur across both vertical dimensions – e.g. the case of a state government imposing policies on its municipalities – or horizontal dimensions – in the case of states applying pressure on a neighbor country (Sabatier, 2007: 313). Coercion can be carried out with varying proportions of “carrots and sticks” – although its composition, while affecting the payoffs for policy alternatives, does not necessarily influence the receiver’s perception of the effectiveness of the policy (Braun & Gilardi, 2006: 310). Generally, the literature seem to suggest that coercive means to impose a policy are less effective than voluntary adoption by the receiving entity (de Jong et al., 2002: 30).

As a normative framework of the UN, Agenda 2030 is not likely to exhibit explicitly coercive demands towards its constituents, especially not to a sub-national entity such as Region Skåne. In this situation, any coercive pressure from Agenda 2030 is likely to appear as a proxy in the form of the Swedish national government which, as we can recall from the introduction, has ratified Agenda 2030 and committed to implement its directives into all levels of government (Regeringens proposition 2017/18:1: Budgetpropositionen för 2018, 2017: 25).

4.2.4.3. Common norms

Repeated interaction and socialization within networks may eventually lead to the emergence of a set of common values, behavior and norms, which in turn define what is considered “appropriate” conduct (Braun & Gilardi, 2006: 310). In practice, these norms give actors the same views and opinions on different policy alternatives (Braun & Gilardi, 2006: 310). De Jong et al. describes this as a *hegemony*, i.e. the ruling set of ideas (2002:

6, see also Bornemann, 2008: 4). Major international organizations such as the UN, the EU, or the World Bank are typical examples of Western hegemonies.

Thus follows that international organizations eventually develop a *normative pressure* upon its members (Sabatier, 2007: 311). As ideas converge around these norms, they eventually become taken for granted as the obvious and proper thing to do in any given context, the consequence being that it is automatically assumed to have a high effectiveness whereas other policy alternatives are barely even considered (Braun & Gilardi 2006: 311). In other words, polities will emulate hegemonies through both symbolic and practical aspects in order to be perceived as sharing in the success of the hegemon (de Jong, Lalenis & Mamadouh 2002: 4).

5. Analysis

This chapter describes the coding procedure, providing examples to clarify the reasoning behind the coding classification. The results are presented according to the structure of the theoretical framework, starting with RUS and following up with Agenda 2030.

5.1. Data collection process

The coding process was carried out through a detailed desk review of the two policy documents, first with RUS and Agenda 2030 second, as this would help me approach Agenda 2030 in a context fitted for Region Skåne.

The theoretical framework for global-local policy integration was used to create a set of deductively identified nodes, identical across both documents. The nodes are as follows:

1. Frame	2. Interactive	3. Substantive	4. Motivational
- Problem frames	- Subject	- Enabling conditions	- Competition
- Values	- Object	- Hard instruments	- Cooperative interdependence
- Desired outcomes		- Soft instruments	- Coercion
		- Unspecified instruments	- Normative pressure
		- Indicators	
		- Timeframe	

The documents were then coded sentence by sentence in order to provide a fair representation of the message carried by the text – an inductive process that coded new sub-nodes as they appeared during the reading process. After the first coding draft, a review of the work was carried out in order to remove redundant sub-nodes that could be re-categorized into other sub-nodes.

The abductive approach enabled me to use my knowledge of the Swedish public sector to make inferences about the content that was not explicitly stated in the text.

Example 1:

“We shall create a world-class school, which will require increased diversity, specialisation and the ability to teach all children new skills and knowledge.”
(Region Skåne, 2014: 38).

In Sweden, the municipalities have responsibility for public primary schools and colleges. Ergo, sentences such as the one shown in Example 1 could be coded as ‘Local level’.

Example 2:

“Skåne shall offer well-functioning health and care services that are considered welcoming and characterised by a broad approach in which the collective needs of individuals are fulfilled with flexible services.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 36).

The Swedish regional governments have responsibility for hospitals and health centers, whereas elderly care rests primarily in the hands of the municipalities, but complemented somewhat by private enterprise. As such, sentences such as Example 2 was coded into ‘Regional level’ as well as ‘Unspecified subject’, since the request definitely involves efforts from Region Skåne but is unclear as to what other actors may be involved in the implementation process.

An overwhelming majority of the sentences were coded into several nodes at once, some which at first glance may seem contradictory without a few qualifications.

Example 3:

“12.1 Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 26).

Example 3 demonstrates a sentence that was coded into sub-nodes ‘Subject’/’Nations’ as well as ‘Object’/’Nations’. The sentence states that all countries are to take action for implementing Agenda 2030, whereas there is simultaneous consideration towards other countries, i.e. developing nations.

In other cases, a sentence could point out different types of beneficiaries.

Example 4:

“13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 28).

Example 4 showcases such a case, wherein both developing states and particular individuals are explicitly targeted by the policy. Hence, the sentence was coded into sub-nodes ‘Object’/’Nations’ and ‘Object’/’Individuals’.

While there are natural similarities between ‘Values’ and ‘Desired outcomes’ – and indeed, they frequently overlap in my coding scheme – they remain logically different from one another and this was reflected in numerous sentences.

Example 5:

“Skåne is a creative meeting place for people with different backgrounds and skills, a cultural melting pot for new ideas and solutions.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 23).

Example 5 displays an expressed positive sentiment about ‘diversity’ as well as ‘free-thinking and innovation’, and is hence coded as such in the ‘Values’ node.

Example 6:

“As such, Skåne shall – proactively and as a forerunner – invest in and develop the welfare services of tomorrow.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 35).

In Example 6, we instead see an example of an expressed desire to innovate new services that is without clearly stated value positions, therefore only coded as ‘Desired outcomes’/’Increased innovation, knowledge and initiatives’.

Example 7:

“We shall develop work methods and approaches characterised by evidence-based methods.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 37).

Example 7 instead demonstrates a case of double-coding: the sentence expresses a desire to innovate and create new work methods, while simultaneously referring to a value-position favoring a scientific perspective. Hence, the sentence was coded into ‘Desired

outcomes’/’Increased innovation, knowledge and initiatives’ as well as ‘Values’/’Free-thinking and innovation’.

When searching the documents for measurable indicators for success, the coding took a slightly different form between RUS and Agenda 2030. This was so because whenever an indicator appeared in RUS, it was clearly quantified and thus needed no further sub-nodes. The structure of Agenda 2030 required a slightly different approach, and each of the 169 indicators were sub-divided into one or several of four categories: ‘Quantified’, ‘Potentially quantifiable’, ‘Universal’, and ‘Qualitative’.

Example 8:

“6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 22).

Example 8 illustrates an example of double-coding. “Improve water quality” is a vaguely stated objective, fully open to subjective interpretation by individual readers. Hence it was coded as a ‘Qualitative’ indicator. However, the stated objective “halving the proportion of untreated wastewater...” opens up the possibility of quantifying the indicator for the purpose of creating a concrete target. Hence, the sentence was also coded as a ‘Potentially quantifiable’ indicator.

On a few occasions, two or more sentences were coded together. This was done after an assessment that one of the sentences were either empty of meaning or that the meaning was significant but impossible to interpret without the context of surrounding sentences.

Example 9:

“In 2030, Skåne is open. Open to ideas, open to all people, and an open landscape.”
(Region Skåne, 2014: 8).

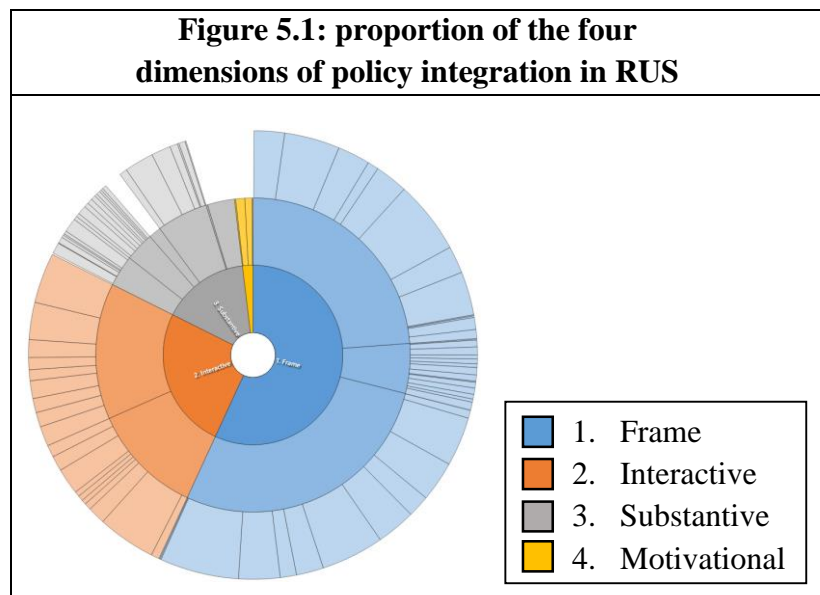
As Example 9 demonstrates, the sentence “In 2030, Skåne is open.” carries significance, but only when specified through the subsequent sentence. In order to improve the clarity of its coding, this sentence – and other cases like this one – was coded together as one unit.

5.2. Results

The amount of references in each node and sub-node are directly correlated with the weight of the content in relation to the policy as a whole. This is so because the content is expressed in a positive sense. To give an example, the 77 references made in RUS to the value statement ‘Diversity’ are 77 *positive* sentiments towards a diverse and homogeneous population. This pattern is consistent in the whole analysis.

5.3. Four dimensions of RUS

An overview that simultaneously offers the necessary detail required to answer the research question is nigh impossible to give. Figure 5.1 demonstrates the complexity of the task – each color spectrum corresponds to one of the four policy dimensions in RUS, the central nodes forming the center of the chart and radiating out into their respective sub-nodes, divided by relative size into smaller sections of the outer rings. From this, we can quickly summarize that the character of expressed statements in RUS are unevenly distributed across the four dimensions of policy integration.



5.3.1. Frame dimension

‘Problem frames’ pertain to matters that are presented as a negative aspect of contemporary society in the policy document. Coding of the Frame dimension has highlighted that RUS seeks to address 14 different types of problem frames, which are presented in Table 5.1. Environmental degradation, human employment and education are most heavily emphasized. Matters of health, public growth and infrastructure rank in the middle, and poverty and crime are the fewest openly stated problem frames.

Table 5.1: Problem frames	Total: 136
Environmental degradation	15
Unemployment	15
Low education or skills	14
Demographic changes	13
Mobility and infrastructure	12
Public health issues	12
Productivity, Growth and Trade	11
Gender inequality	9
Technological advancements	9
Ethnicity	8
Intolerance and Discrimination	7
Unclear Leadership or Responsibility	6
Crime and Social conflict	2
Poverty	2

‘Values’ are underlying sentiments about what is considered “positive attributes” that motivate certain decisions on what kind of world the policy strives to create. 741 references were made coded into ‘Values’, making it the single largest node in RUS. Value expressions pertaining to ‘Openness and Accessibility’ and ‘Free-thinking and Innovation’ far outweigh more conservative values such as ‘Public order or safety’ and ‘Tradition’, as shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Values	Total: 741
Openness and Accessibility	151
Free-thinking, Knowledge and Innovation	120
Democratic deliberation	94
Liberal market economy	79
Diversity	77
Equality	75
Human security and Health	52
Environmentalism and Biodiversity	42
Individual freedom and self-determination	31
Adaptability	15
Public order or safety	2
Tradition	2

‘Desired outcomes’ are the cognitive product of what kind of problems are perceived and what kind of world the creators of the policy would want to have instead. The ‘Desired outcomes’ node in Table 5.3 mirrors ‘Values’ somewhat, with statements about improving human welfare, economic growth, and innovation occurring most frequently. Only two references to ‘Protect cultural heritage’ appeared in the coding process.

Table 5.3: Desired outcomes	Total: 632
Human welfare	140
Economic and Societal Growth	106
Increased innovation, knowledge and initiatives	83
Globalization and internationalization	63
Enhanced infrastructure	62
Attractiveness of Skåne	58
Increased deliberation	52
Sustainable business	23
Environmental improvement	21
Sustainable eco-systems	17
Public legitimacy and Organizational leadership	3
Protect cultural heritage	2

5.3.2. Interactive dimension

The ‘Subject’ node of the Interactive dimension captures whom is suggested by the policy to be the driving force behind the accomplishment of the policy’s objectives, presented in Table 5.4. The largest sub-node was ‘Unspecified subject’, which contained statements expressing how “Skåne will do X...” but without pointing to a specific actor that should bear responsibility. The second largest sub-node was ‘Regional level’, with other subjects receiving a relatively even share of responsibility for the policy’s implementation.

Table 5.4: Subject	Total: 372
Unspecified subject	96
Regional level	71
Academia	38
Local level	34
Private sector	34
Individuals	28
International	27
Non-profit sector	23
National level	21

The ‘Object’ node singles out the actors who are expressed to be the main beneficiaries of (or otherwise affected by) the policy objectives. As demonstrated in Table 5.5, RUS singles out Individuals as the main beneficiaries of the policy’s objectives, with the private sector coming in second and cross-border actors in third place. Least targeted are non-profit organizations, natural eco-systems, and the national government.

Table 5.5: Object	Total: 305
Individuals	111
Private sector	50
International	34
Regional level	29
Unspecified object	23
Academia	16
Local level	13
Natural environment	10
Non-profit sector	10
National level	9

5.3.3. Instrumental dimension

Not all instruments are by design of the policy. At times, references are made to existing conditions that will facilitate the implementation of the policy objectives, with or without some help from the policy proponents. As shown in Table 5.6, RUS considers Skåne’s geographical proximity and environment to be a great advantage for achieving the desired outcomes expressed in the policy.

Table 5.6: Enabling conditions	Total: 85
Proximity	27
Environment in Skåne	21
Human capital	12
Public health	7
Labor growth	6
Innovations	5
Interconnectedness of transport networks	3
Existing deliberative forums	1

‘Hard instruments’ are direct and concrete means to accomplish the policy’s objectives. As shown in Table 5.7, the instrument most commonly referred to in RUS is expansion of physical infrastructure, such as transport networks etc.

Table 5.7: Hard instruments	Total: 80
Building physical infrastructure	17
Financial instruments and Trade	10
Expanded E-infrastructure	9
Increasing welfare infrastructure	9
Regional agreements	8
Action plans and Operational strategies, Adjusting budgets	7
Labor market programmes	7
International agreements	5
Legal instruments	4
Monitoring and Evaluation	4

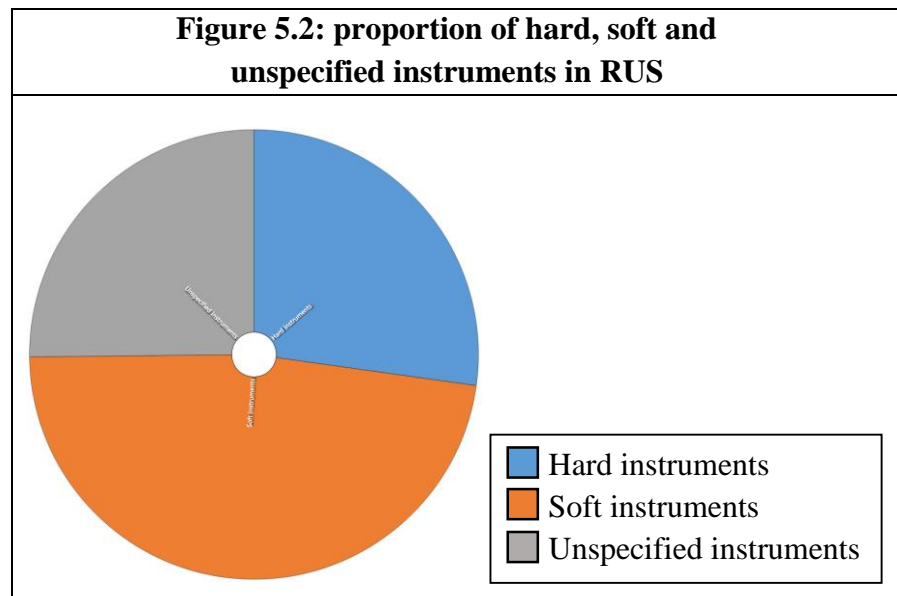
‘Soft instruments’ cover indirect, less authoritative means to implement the policy. These occur more frequently in RUS than ‘Hard instruments’. Means to share experiences and knowledge through dialogue and education are heavily favored, as demonstrated in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Soft instruments	Total: 140
Deliberation and cooperation	56
Educative efforts	37
Culture	15
Expertise (individual)	15
Leadership	12
Highlight natural environments	3
Lobbying	2

A total of 74 references were made to vague statements about which means ought to be used for

Table 5.9: Unspecified instruments	74

the policy’s implementation, as seen in Table 5.9. Figure 5.2 demonstrates the proportion of hard, soft, and unspecified instruments.



Concrete indicators were scarce in RUS. However, whenever they appeared, they were clearly quantified and its desired outcomes stated in concrete numbers, which warranted any sub-division of the node irrelevant to the task. A total of 34 indicators were coded.

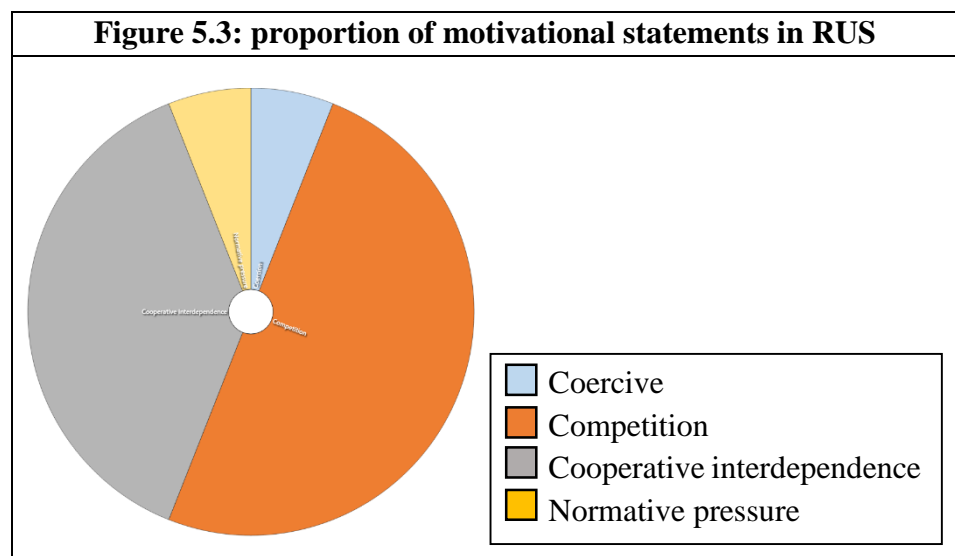
Table 5.10: indicators and timeframe	
Indicators	34
Timeframe	4

Since both policies are aiming for 2030 as the target timeframe, the node ‘Timeframe’ codes statements whose scope is for a different year than 2030. Four such statements were recorded in RUS. These, together with ‘Indicators’ is presented in Table 5.10.

5.3.4. Motivational dimension

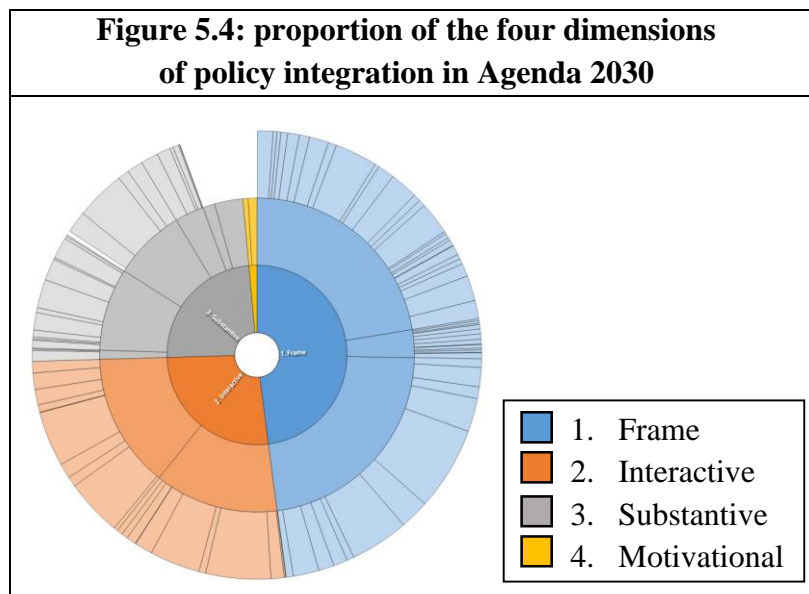
The Motivational dimension is arguably the smallest of the four dimensions. A total of fifty statements were coded, where competitive motives and cooperative interdependence dominated the coding frequencies. This can be seen in Table 5.11, with the proportion of motives relative to each other demonstrated in Figure 5.3.

Table 5.11: Motivational	Total: 50
Competition	25
Cooperative interdependence	19
Coercion	3
Normative pressure	3



5.4. Four dimensions of Agenda 2030

Similar to RUS, Agenda 2030 displays substantially uneven proportions of the four dimensions. As seen in Figure 5.4, the ‘Frame’ dimension is somewhat smaller compared to RUS, in favor of a larger share for the ‘Substantive’ dimension. The outer rings of the pie chart are also larger compared to RUS, indicating a higher amount of sub-nodes required for a representative coding scheme.



5.4.1. Frame dimension

Being a global policy with a far larger scope than RUS, Agenda 2030 displays a larger variety of problems that the policy seeks to address. Table 5.12 demonstrates that there is a much higher emphasis on macro-level issues such as large-scale conflict and inequality across the global system compared to particular problems at individual level.

Table 5.12: Problem frames	Total: 82
Violence, Conflict, War and Terrorism	12
Inequality among people	11
Gender	10
Inter-country inequalities	10
Environmental degradation	9
Natural disasters	7
Crime, Corruption and Trafficking	5
Sickness, Disease and Disability	5
Child and Reproductive Health	4
Poverty	4
Displacement and Refugees	3
Lack of concrete indicators and data	1
Unemployment	1

The coding process identifies that Agenda 2030 is permeated primarily by values pertaining to ‘Equality and solidarity’ and ‘Human security and health’, as shown in Table 5.13. The least frequently occurring values pertain to ‘Individual freedom and self-determination’, ‘Public order and safety’ as well as ‘Tradition’.

Table 5.13: Values	Total: 651
Equality and Solidarity	173
Human security and health	121
Environmentalism and Biodiversity	69
Free-thinking, Knowledge and Innovation	61
Openness, Accessibility and Mobility	53
Deliberation and Cooperation	40
National sovereignty and self-determination	32
Liberal market economy and-or Growth	29
Diversity	24
Adaptability and Resilience	18
Individual freedom and self-determination	15
Public order and safety	15
Tradition	1

The stated desired outcomes in Agenda 2030, demonstrated in Table 5.14, also reflect to some extent the underlying value positions identified in the text. Welfare for people and equality among nations occur most frequently, whereas desires to protect cultural traditions are scarcely mentioned.

Table 5.14: Desired outcomes	Total: 643
Human welfare	88
Inter-country equality	67
Increased innovation, Knowledge, Capacity building and Initiatives	58
Sustainable Production and Consumption	52
Gender equality	40
Sustainable eco-systems	38
Increased Deliberation and Democratization	35
Economic and Societal growth	32
Strengthened human rights and Rule of Law	27
Environmental improvement	24
Eradicate poverty	21
Raise employment	20
Globalization	17
Increased trade and Functioning markets	15
Enhanced infrastructure and Energy	14
Institutional transparency, accountability, efficiency and legitimacy	14
Peace	12

Table 5.14: Desired outcomes continued:	
Safe, nutritious food and water	11
National sovereignty and leadership	10
Reduction of sickness and unsanitary conditions	10
Improved disaster risk management	9
End crime and exploitation (child abuse, trafficking)	8
End hunger	8
New frameworks and commitments	6
Intra-country equality	5
Protect cultural heritage	1

5.4.2. Interactive dimension

Table 5.15 showcases the actors that are expected to take responsibility for Agenda 2030's implementation. Being a UN policy, we find that global partnerships and nations are designated as the major locomotives for achieving the policy objectives whereas civil society and academia occur least frequently in the coding.

Table 5.15: Subject	Total: 398
Global level	118
Nations	114
Regional level	34
Private sector	32
Local level	31
Unspecified subject	24
Individuals and groups	21
Non-profit sector	15
Academia	8
Natural environment	1

Table 5.16 demonstrates who is to be targeted by the policy as beneficiaries. 'Individuals and groups' and 'Nations' outscore other objects by a clear margin, with 'Academia' and 'Non-profit sector' receiving extremely little coverage by Agenda 2030's statements.

Table 5.16: Object	Total: 365
Individuals and groups	134
Nations	104
Natural environment	37
Global level	27
Private sector	20
Local level	14
Regional level	13
Unspecified object	12
Academia	3
Non-profit sector	1

5.4.3. Instrumental dimension

Operating at a global level, Agenda 2030 relies for the most part on previous agreements among the UN Member States, referring to previous conferences and summits

Table 5.17: Enabling conditions	Total:
Previous UN policies, conferences and summits	22
Societal and Technological progression	3
Sports	2

22 times in the policy. The Agenda also refers to technological advancements as well as sports as enabling factors that may facilitate the implementation of the policy. This is listed in Table 5.17.

Agenda 2030 lists a total of 244 ‘Hard instruments’ for achieving its objectives, of which legal instruments and agreements on a global and national scale have a dominating position. Moreover, ‘Monitoring and evaluation’ also occurs frequently in the policy, stressing the need for continuous assessment of the progress of implementing Agenda 2030. A few specialized topics are also scattered across the document, as can be seen in Table 5.18.

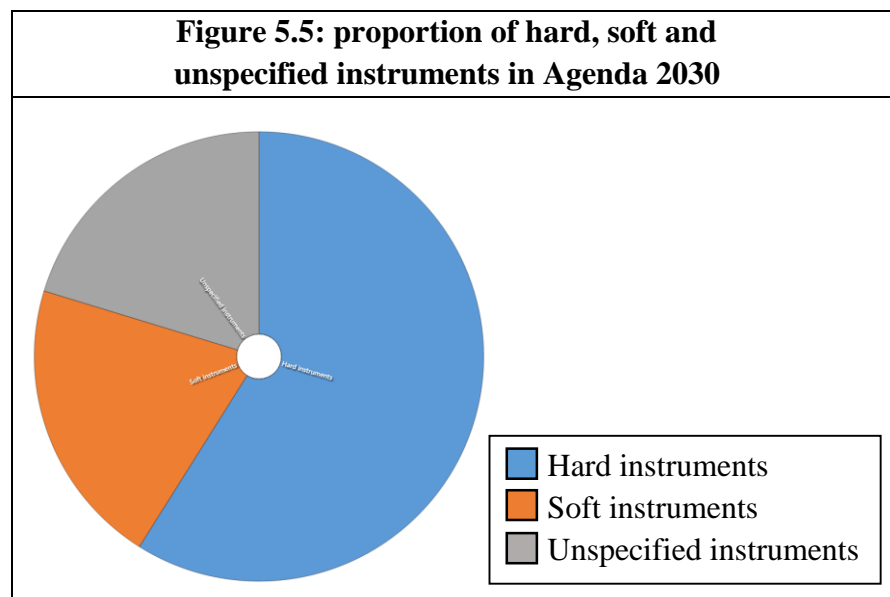
Table 5.18: Hard instruments	Total:
International agreements	59
Legal instruments and policies	45
Monitoring and Evaluation	44
Financial instruments and Official Development Assistance	36
Conservation and Management of natural resources	16
Expanded physical infrastructure	14
Global action plans	10
National action plans	6
Expanded E-infrastructure	4
Local action plans	4
Crackdown on crime	3
Waste management	3

The ‘Soft instruments’ presented in Agenda 2030 focus primarily on deliberative arenas, education and sharing expertise, shown in Table 5.19. However, a few requests for increased leadership is also called for, as well as an intention to utilize the benefits of international sports events to a greater degree.

Table 5.19: Soft instruments	Total:
Deliberative forums and Cooperation	36
Educative efforts and Innovation	28
Export Technical assistance	12
Expand health services coverage	7
Leadership	2
Sports	1

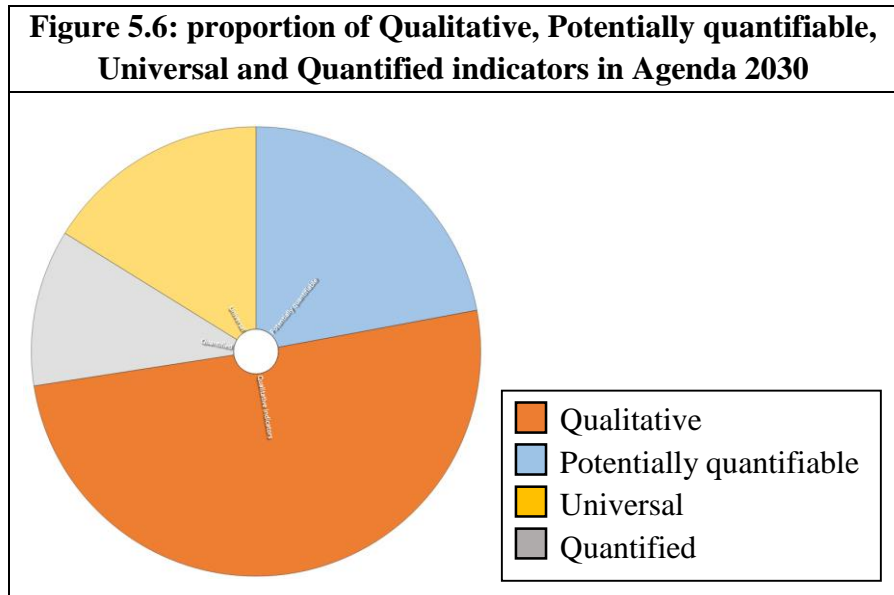
As table 5.20 shows, 84 instruments were left unspecified in regards to how to implement Agenda 2030 across its Member States. 35 references were made to dates that differed from the 2030 timeframe, often in reference to previous UN agreements with corresponding deadlines. Figure 5.5 illustrates the proportion of hard, soft and unspecified instruments in Agenda 2030.

Table 5.20: Unspecified instruments and timeframe	
Unspecified instruments	84
Timeframe	35



As previously mentioned, coding the indicators in Agenda 2030 required a somewhat different approach compared to RUS. The 169 indicators present in the policy are more varied and less structured, which led me to code them according to four different sub-nodes – and in some cases coded into several. As seen in Table 5.21, qualitative indicators make up almost half of the total references. Figure 5.6 shows the proportion of the different indicator types.

Table 5.21: Indicators	Total:
	213
Qualitative indicators	103
Potentially quantifiable	45
Universal	33
Quantified	23

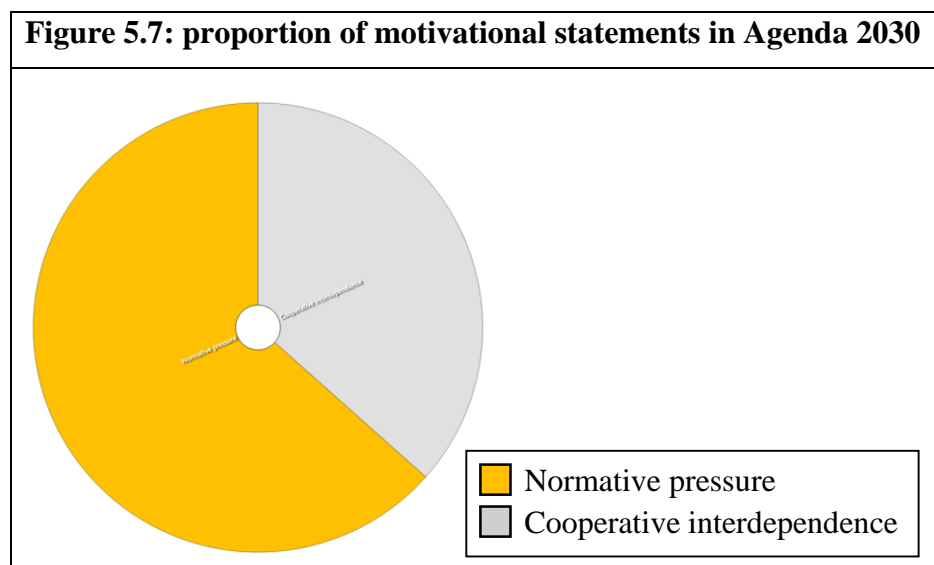


5.4.4. Motivational dimension

Similar to RUS, the Motivational dimension of Agenda 2030 is the least frequently coded. Table 5.22 demonstrates that Agenda 2030 relies primarily on normative pressure, promoting human rights as a universal standard across its Member States. This is followed by recognition of the interdependence across the global system. ‘Competition’ and ‘Coercion’ was created deductively from the onset of the analysis, but no sentences in Agenda 2030 corresponded to a competitive nor coercive motivation for pushing the policy.

Table 5.22: Motivational	Total: 41
Normative pressure	26
Cooperative interdependence	15
Coercion	0
Competition	0

Figure 5.7 shows the proportion of motivations in Agenda 2030.



6. Discussion

One could write endlessly on the comparison between RUS and Agenda 2030 and fill a whole library before coming to any “final” conclusions – *if* such a thing ever existed. This study, modest in its scope, will settle for a number of key insights that has been gained from the reading process which I want to bring up as particularly important to the task of policy integration in Region Skåne. These can be roughly divided into eight different themes, which will be discussed in detail below.

6.1. International character of RUS

The first insight of this study is that, although RUS is intended to as a tool to guide development processes at local level, it has remarkably international ambitions. This is clear from the onset, as demonstrated by statements such as the following:

“In the open Skåne, global cross-border collaboration and development are a given.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 9)

The idea that Skåne’s development is closely tied with an international context is taken for granted in RUS. With 27 references to ‘Enabling conditions’/’Proximity’, Skåne’s geographical location is frequently highlighted as a key feature of the County, and one of its primary strengths in terms of accomplishing the targets outlined in RUS. Skåne’s status as a border region, as well as its close links with Copenhagen and the rest of Europe through the Öresund Bridge, are likely explanations to this stance. Skåne’s long-standing interaction with the rest of the continent could constitute a likely structural factor for the calls for greater internationalization of RUS.

“Succeeding with this will enhance Skåne's global competitiveness and the region will become an internationally attractive place to live and work.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 43)

Being open and accessible to the world is the most recurring value statement in RUS. From the theory, we recall that domestic actors pulling in is a key mechanism for policy

integration and that societies with tendencies toward cosmopolitan values are more likely to be open to policy diffusion. It appears rather clear that RUS sets a level of high desirability for internationalization from the perspectives of structure and agency alike. Meanwhile, one could assume that practicality is always a desirable trait of policy integration – after all, virtually all of the desired outcomes expressed in the two documents are geared towards making the world a better place to live in. However, this analysis cannot answer for the actual practicality of policy integration *in practice*, since the target of the study has not yet been integrated. I can therefore not conclusively label it neither as a “satisfactory transfer” nor as a “siren call”, using de Jong et al.’s (2002) terminology. This assessment would have to wait until after a potential policy integration has occurred.

If RUS were the only authority on the matter, one could make the argument that there is political will for policy integration, although this analysis cannot answer whether this stems from particular actors or from structural forces. Other methods, such as interviews, would have better prospects at uncovering these motives.

While the context of Skåne offer certain enablers for integration, two types of potential contextual constraints should be noted: First, one must recall that RUS was drafted in 2014. The progressive open-border policies of that time in Swedish politics have come into question since then, and is nowadays replaced with a far more restrictive approach to, for instance, refugee reception (Sveriges asylregler anpassas till EU:s miniminivå, migrationsinfo.se, updatetd 23 June 2016, accessed 11-05-2018). Whether the values that permeate RUS have stood the test of time is up to debate. Unless they have, the merits of this insight can admittedly be questioned.

Second, assuming that RUS still supports a higher degree of internationalization, there could exist grounds for integration with Agenda 2030. This would help overcoming the issues of parallel policy tracks from the national government. If this is the case though, one must consider the weight that Agenda 2030 – a global UN policy – would have on a regional policy. The literature on EPI reminds us of the potential priorities given to the transferring policy, and given RUS’s attraction to the international, there is a potential risk for a one-sided policy integration in which Agenda 2030 becomes dominant, i.e. a “transplanted” policy, which has not originally developed in the local context and thus may inadvertently cause unforeseen tension in the future. Region Skåne would need to

take heed of the extent to which Agenda 2030 can adequately clarify its relationship to domestic factors in terms of actors, instruments and ideological factors.

6.2. Differences in scope

The first insight leads us onward to a second one. Can Agenda 2030 really help clarify matters of regional and local policy making? As obvious as it might appear, it is worthwhile to reiterate that the two policies are aimed at entirely different levels of governance. Agenda 2030 is targeted as a meta-policy for its 193 Member States and thus has a wider array of issues to consider compared to the local RUS. This becomes prevalent in the coding: Whereas the coding for RUS has 12 stated ‘desired outcomes’, Agenda 2030 has 26. Many of these concern matters of equality between nations, between world citizens, and inside the global system which are not directly applicable to a regional government.

Beyond the frame, the two policies also differ in the motivations they state for pushing the policy. As seen in the ‘Motivational’ statements, RUS has a mostly competitive character while Agenda 2030 has no references of the sort. Instead, the global policy relies on cooperative measures as well as normative pressure – predominantly on positions such as gender equality, respect for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the World Trade Organization standards on production and trade. These are clear examples of hegemonic ideals that are intended to shape informal value positions. When comparing this with Storbjörk & Isaksson’s (2014) insights from older EPI literature, it is apparent that the normative approach is still quite prevalent in global policies on sustainable development. Agenda 2030 seeks to diffuse a set of informal institutions that may not be neither applicable nor relevant to the day-to-day affairs of Region Skåne. Here, the ‘goodness of fit’ argument proposed by de Jong et al. (2002) becomes relevant to the discussion: for Region Skåne to integrate Agenda 2030 into their planning, it would be important to consider whether Agenda 2030’s jurisdiction as a policy exporter can fit into the contextual constraints posed by local legislations in Skåne County. Another matter is that both policies operate as a *vertical* policy tool, intended to steer “lower”, more specific policies. Whether they can co-exist within this function or if one policy will have to take

precedence over the other will be up to Region Skåne to assess when investigating the potential for integration.

That said, there are cases where the differences in scope between the two policies have potential to complement each other. Recalling that meta-policies are intended to limit the fluidity of individual subsystems, Agenda 2030 speaks at length about the role of the regional and local levels in terms of monitoring and evaluation, as shown by the 44 references of such instruments in Agenda 2030.

“We welcome in this respect the cooperation of regional and subregional commissions and organizations. Inclusive regional processes will draw on national-level reviews and contribute to follow-up and review at the global level, including at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 38).

From my time working in Region Skåne, I have learned that the regional government currently seeks to update its own regional census and statistical records, which until now has mostly relied on data from Statistics Sweden, SCB, that are not perfectly applicable to Skåne County⁴. In this case, Agenda 2030 could place a responsibility on actors in Skåne County that are congruent with an existing desire within Region Skåne. Agenda 2030’s recognition of the regional level reaffirms that there is a place for global-local cooperation and that these two levels can work together for shared co-benefits. A joint strategy for monitoring and evaluation of the various indicators for sustainable development has potential to become, in Briassoulis’s (2004) words, an integrative instrument in a RUS-Agenda 2030 fusion. Going back to the theory, we can recall that successful policy integration requires comprehensive scope, aggregation of policy evaluation, and overall consistency of components. Based on the above, there exists clear potential of aggregation, as well as a moderate policy overlap for comprehensiveness and consistency with potential for further exploration.

⁴ Participant observation in Region Skåne Government offices, 04-05-2018.

6.3. Mutually shared topics

RUS and Agenda 2030 also share similar understandings of quite a few topics – a fact that may plant seeds for future policy integration. Narrowing down the topics becomes easier when considering what could be applicable to RUS and Region Skåne, i.e. filtering topics through the available *accessibility space* for policy integration. The following topics stand out as particularly similar:

At the macro-level, individual-centered and humanist values permeate both policies. References to ‘Desired outcomes’/‘Human Welfare’ appear no less than 140 times in RUS. Agenda 2030 refers to the same topic 88 times, as well as 173 references to ‘Values’/‘Equality and Solidarity’.

“We envisage a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity.” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 8).

“By focusing on people and their needs, we can create attractive and vibrant environments, which in turn create attractive and dynamic towns and thereby a more attractive and more competitive region. Focus on people and their needs and create quality of life. People must be in focus when we develop the region – it is the people who create growth in the 21st century.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 19).

These fundamental similarities act as a shield against potential misinterpretation of the policies’ respective purpose. At their core, the stated objective of each policy is to improve the objective and subjective quality of life for ordinary people. In fact, both policies target quite a large array of different actors, both as locomotives for the policy but also as recipients of the benefits. Agenda 2030 proposes efforts for the protection of natural eco-systems, an increased production in the energy sector, strengthened efforts to promote small-scale food producers and setting goals for doubling of agricultural output – subsystems of which all are pointed out by RUS as highly relevant in the vision for Skåne in 2030. Agenda 2030 calls for an increased focus on materials science. Simultaneously, RUS claims that two of Skåne’s major research facilities, Max IV and ESS, can contribute precisely in this regard. Other topics are even more straight-forward: indicator 3.6 in Agenda 2030 aspires to halve the number of deaths and injuries from road

traffic accidents – a task which falls directly under Region Skåne’s responsibility. Other similarities include a recognition of the role of teachers in educating the next generation, as well as treating migrants as a contribution to the growth of society. Finally, culture is considered by both policies as a powerful engine to promote sustainable development.

These initiatives, by and large, include efforts from the public, private and non-profit sector and benefits society at large, from large organizations to individual humans and eco-systems. Whether this is due to an existing hegemony of common norms is difficult to say without tracing the genealogy of the policies, which falls outside the scope of this thesis. That said, an integrated approach to the aforementioned topics could very well help develop such a hegemony, and Agenda 2030 already clearly shares a wide assortment of concerns with RUS.

6.4. Differing understandings

In other cases, the respective policy objectives can only be considered to be complementary with some qualifications. For instance, the concept of “openness” seems to be interpreted somewhat differently in the two policies. RUS treats the word to a greater extent in relation to a geographical domain, in the sense that Skåne County ought to be open to outsiders.

“Being seen as an attractive region requires international openness and tolerance.”
(Region Skåne, 2014: 43).

While Agenda 2030 also propagates cross-border tolerance and exchange, its understanding of “openness” aligns more with an institutional quality in which governmental functions are accessible to its whole population.

“A just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 7).

Similar patterns appear when comparing the policies’ respective views on democratic deliberation.

“Taking a stand on where Skåne is to be in the future makes it easier to make the right decisions and find the right forms of collaboration. However, words,

willingness and ambition must be backed up by actions. And all development actors in Skåne must contribute.” (RUS, p. 46).

“16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 30).

Whereas RUS treats deliberation as a governance model in which societal actors collaborate to achieve the policy objectives, Agenda 2030 has stronger tendencies to focus on the decision-making aspect of deliberation – likely a consequence of the vast differences in democratization between nations in the world system.

A closer reading of the two policies also illuminates minor differences as to how “acceptable levels” of diversity is represented. While common qualities such as age, sex, gender, ethnicity, and religion seem to be highlighted in equal fashion across both policies, Agenda 2030 makes no mention of sexual orientation or gender identity, as demonstrated by the following examples.

“We shall have an inclusive approach independent of sex, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religious or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation and age.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 18).

“10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 25).

Swedish norms seem to treat “diversity” as a wider umbrella-term compared to Agenda 2030. This may not be an imminent problem for Region Skåne, given how Agenda 2030 grants the liberty of Member States to implement the policy according to national circumstances. That said, further reflection on the potential programmatic, contextual and application constraints is warranted in order to spot the differences in understanding.

The main insight underlying these three particular cases is that when considering the prospect of policy integration, one must beware of objectives that at first glance seem compatible, but may hide deeper conflicting instruments below the surface.

6.5. Lacking clarity

The fifth insight relates to the meta-policy character of RUS and Agenda 2030 respectively. Intended to be a steering instrument for more concrete, localized policies, a consequence is that several of the values, desired outcomes and instruments in the policies are vaguely stated, to the point that it is impossible to figure out which actor is supposed to do what without subjective interpretation of the text. The coding of ‘Interactive’/‘Subject’ in RUS demonstrates this clearly. ‘Unspecified subject’ and ‘Regional level’ make up approximately 45 percent of the references.

“We shall strengthen the conditions for creativity and innovation in, for example, cultural and creative enterprise, but also in traditional trade and industry such as the manufacturing and food industries.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 24).

“We”-statements such as the one above lack a precise definition of who is to bear responsibility for implementing the policy objective. We can infer from context that it applies to the regional level, but the precise roles are left open to interpretation. At other times, responsibility over certain areas of governance can only be inferred abductively, such as matters of public transport which, in a Swedish context, fall under the jurisdiction of the regional governments.

That said, one must weigh the amount of references in these sub-nodes in relation to the whole policy – 96 references to ‘Unspecified subject’ does not mean that the whole policy is unclear on assigning responsibility, considering the total amount of 372 references in the whole ‘Interactive’/‘Subject’ node. Even so, a general recommendation to Region Skåne would be to further identify statements that, without proper clarification, does not bring concrete guidelines on how to move forward.

Thus follows the question of whether Agenda 2030 can provide help in this matter. Part of Region Skåne’s desire to integrate Agenda 2030 into RUS stems from a quest to find more concrete policy guidelines⁵. However, the few indicators that appear in RUS are already well quantified. The same cannot be said for Agenda 2030, of which 103 of the total 169 are qualitative in one form or another.

⁵ Participant observation in Region Skåne Government offices, 01-02-2018.

“5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 22).

In the example above, “sound policies” offers little guidance on when the objective of strengthened gender equality has been reached. Whereas Agenda 2030 may have a lot to offer in the domain of value orientations, as well as legal systems to a lesser extent, concrete formal regulations and procedures are simply lacking from the perspective of a regional government such as Region Skåne. I am compelled to advice that, if Region Skåne is to concretize the procedures in RUS, looking within its own borders might be more fruitful than importing a global policy.

6.6. Conflicting objectives

Within a vast concept such as “sustainable development”, it can be difficult to find a balance between the different components. This statement inspires the fifth insight of this study. A critical point brought up by the sustainable development literature is whether “growth” and “development” are truly compatible in modern society. At the very least, quantitative increase in production and consumption must be scrutinized according to its sustainability in a longer timeframe.

“Developing and strengthening existing trade and industry is fundamental to all growth work in Skåne, not least in the important manufacturing industry and in the Scanian industries associated with farmland and food production, which are unique in many respects.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 27).

As seen from the coding of ‘Frame’/’Desired outcomes’, RUS has 106 references to ‘Economic and Societal growth’, whereas ‘Sustainable business’ only scores 23 references. There is a consistent win-win rhetoric in RUS, claiming that growth and sustainability are mutually reinforcing. However, this is accepted without critical thought, and the amount of references alone puts into question whether these two objectives are prioritized equally.

In Agenda 2030, the rhetoric leans more on the side of sustainability. In ‘Frame’/’Desired outcomes’, the sub-node ‘Sustainable Production and Consumption’

has 52 references, whereas ‘Economic and Societal Growth’ has a mere 23 references. While Agenda 2030 is also characterized somewhat by a win-win discourse, it is less prevalent compared to RUS and ‘sustainability’ is treated as the primary condition to achieve.

“2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change [...]”
(Agenda 2030, 2015: 19).

As stated in the theoretical framework, non-conflicting and integrated policy instruments are a vital component for successful policy integration. In this case, an element of potential non-compatibility exists on two levels at once – growth versus development within RUS, and between RUS and Agenda 2030. This pattern is prevalent throughout the whole analysis: Agenda 2030 continuously reinforces the integrated and indivisible nature of its 17 goals, seeking a transformational approach to handling all goals at once. RUS lacks such internal references between its own objectives. If a policy integration is to succeed, Region Skåne will first have to reflect on whether its current development plans truly live up to the criteria of sustainability.

6.7. Conflicting instruments

Looking at the numbers alone, a discrepancy is seen between the two policies in their share of hard and soft policy instruments. Agenda 2030 clearly favors hard instruments, whereas RUS leans more strongly on soft instruments. I would, however, argue that this is no major cause for concern: I reiterate that Agenda 2030 is targeted primarily towards nations. At such a level, legal and financial instruments are popular means to advance a policy. RUS, with its deliberative approach, is more geared towards turning the various subsystems of Skåne County into co-actors for its implementation. I would argue that there is no conflict between these types of instruments, given the difference in policy scope.

Instead, an alarming point emerges from the coding of ‘Timeframe’. The overwhelming majority of goals in both policies are aiming for 2030 as the targeted timeframe. There are however a few exceptions: of the 35 references to ‘Timeframe’ in

Agenda 2030, 27 of them specify goals that are to be accomplished earlier than 2030. Several of these relate to matters ensuring the sustainability of natural eco-systems:

“14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans”
(Agenda 2030, 2015: 28).

In addition to the environmental goals stated in Agenda 2030, the Swedish government has outlined 16 environmental goals to be achieved nationally by 2020 (Hur har det gått i Skåne?, Miljö, utveckling.skane.se, updated 21-03-2018, accessed 07-05-2018). HUGA, the annual review of the progress of RUS, has reported that Skåne is expected to fail to live up to the criteria of all but one of these goals, which is also brought up in RUS as a problem frame. Instead, one of the stated indicators is that Skåne shall have reached the environmental goals for the County by 2030 (Region Skåne, 2014: 21).

The merits of integrating Agenda 2030 into RUS, when the global policy requires fulfilling certain goals that are already likely to fail in Skåne, are questionable when considered from an environmental perspective. Granted, adopting Agenda 2030 standards may serve as a normative recognition of their importance, but the statement could lose its power if a commitment is made when the outcome is already expected to fail. It also brings into question whether the particular policy instruments – i.e. the timeframe – can be considered to be non-conflicting.

A similar case can be done when comparing the targets for youth employment. In indicator 8.6, Agenda 2030 sets out to:

“8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 24).

RUS has stated the ambition to reduce unemployment in Skåne to levels that are lower than the national average by 2030. However, according to the HUGA's annual review of RUS, the amount of people in unemployment is still increasing across the county (Hur har det gått i Skåne?, Arbetslöshet, utveckling.skane.se, updated 21-03-2018, accessed 07-05-2018). Adopting this particular instrument in Agenda 2030 would thus put additional time pressure on actors in Skåne, which is especially challenging given the fact that Skåne County currently has the highest unemployment level in Sweden – a problem

reflected in the relatively high references to ‘Problem Frames’/‘Unemployment’ in the analysis.

Other targets fare higher chances of succeeding. One such example is Agenda 2030’s Indicator 3.6:

“3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents“ (Agenda 2030, 2015: 20).

The Swedish Transport Agency already has a national objective of halving the number of deaths in traffic accidents by 2020, a goal which is currently set at a maximum of 220 deaths per year. Official national statistics state that 253 individuals died in traffic in 2017 (Transportstyrelsen, transportstyrelsen.se, accessed 07-05-2018). While this thesis lacks the tools to predict future developments in Swedish traffic planning, indicator 3.6 appears to be far more likely to succeed in a Swedish and/or Skåne context compared to indicator 8.6 or 14.2, which is further facilitated by the fact that transport infrastructure falls directly into the jurisdiction of Region Skåne.

Summing up my argument, if an integration of RUS and Agenda 2030 is to take place, Region Skåne and other regional actors will be required to thoroughly reflect upon whether Agenda 2030 can be integrated as a whole – with honest intentions to accomplish the policy objectives – or if a selective prioritization must be done according to the fit between desired outcomes and contextual constraints.

6.8. RUS as a competitive tool

Lastly, the question of whether Agenda 2030 and RUS should be integrated hinges in part on the motivations for implementing them, both between and within the policy documents. The timing of this assessment owes its explanation to the fact that 2018 is a national election year in Sweden, and the regions are expected to make an assessment of their development strategies at least once every mandate period. As this has yet to be done, Region Skåne has a deadline for assessing the potential integration of Agenda 2030.

As previously stated, RUS has an explicit openness to the international. However, several of its ambitions have a competitive character attached to them:

“In order for Skåne to be among the ten most innovative regions in the world, we must become one of the most attractive places in the world, a place where entrepreneurs, companies, capital and ideas gather – a place where exciting global challenges are solved.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 25).

A problem with this mode of thinking is that ranking higher than other regions is of a relative worth, not an absolute quality. As a first-world country, Sweden is already better positioned to achieve sustainable development than many other nations with less resources. Similar to the issues surrounding the qualitative indicators in Agenda 2030, a recommendation to actors in Skåne County would be to develop more concrete ambitions for what constitutes a “world-class” innovative region.

“We shall attract expertise from the entire world. As such, Skåne needs to strengthen its appeal and international image to face the competition of tomorrow.” (Region Skåne, 2014: 41).

A second issue with RUS is apparent in the above citation. Several types of resources, including human capital, are still excludable goods. In other words, whatever is attracted to Skåne will likely leave their place of origin. Thus, we find clear indicators for location-choice competition in RUS – experts and enterprises should pick Skåne as host rather than other regions. When seen from a global perspective, criticism can be raised to whether Skåne amassing the world’s most talented people is truly what is best for global sustainable development. Agenda 2030 recognizes such a problem, making ‘Inter-country equality’ the second largest sub-node among its desired outcomes. The global policy aims at helping developing nations “catch up” to their wealthier counterparts. If developmental forces concentrate in a Swedish regional body such as Skåne County, it would counteract inter-country equality.

“80. Follow-up and review at the regional and subregional levels can, as appropriate, provide useful opportunities for peer learning, including through voluntary reviews, sharing of best practices and discussion on shared targets.” (Agenda 2030, 2015: 38).

The desire to compete with others over the title of “world-leading” rhymes poorly with sentiments of “sharing of best practices”. I do not make the claim that Region Skåne or any other actor in Skåne County willingly wishes to triumph at the expense of other

societies, but if integrating a global policy such as Agenda 2030 – where cooperative interdependence, deliberation and cooperation is presented as among the strongest tools for achieving sustainable development – Region Skåne might have to raise a debate on whether the competitive mindset of RUS is truly compatible with Agenda 2030 in its current form.

6.9. Reflections on the method

I will end the discussion with a few final reflections on the analytical framework applied in this thesis.

The abductive approach to content analysis has proven its usefulness to the task – the deductive approach, while influential as a stepping stone to the analysis, was complemented by an inductive coding of sub-nodes that aided me in mapping the details of the two policies. Granted, a few issues became evident after the conclusion of the coding process.

In the Frame dimension, ‘Values’ and ‘Desired outcomes’ overlap significantly with each other. This outcome is understandable when the analysis is delimited to coding one document at a time. Statements proposing a particular vision for the future will, quite naturally, simultaneously express a positive sentiment towards such an outcome. Still, I find that keeping these nodes categorically separate has merit. This study could potentially lay some groundwork for future integration studies in Region Skåne. Should such initiatives include a case study of, say, the organizational culture, then comparing policy values with actual outcomes would be a strong indicator for the success or failure of the policy.

The inductive component of the study raised the question about where to draw the line between creating new sub-nodes and coding content into existing ones. One such example would be the ‘Problem frame’ in Agenda 2030, which contained sub-nodes ‘Inequality among people’ and ‘Gender inequality’. Differentiating them became a subjective interpretation, subject to the delimitations facing the study in terms of time and material. While a different interpretation would surely be equally relevant to my own, I believe that the presence of a few overlapping sub-nodes does not dilute the main findings of my

thesis and that the conclusions I draw remain valid on account of the research theory and the content of the data.

Two components of the analytical framework proved to be somewhat difficult to apply with the given material. First, mapping the Interactive dimension of policy integration yielded somewhat vague results, coding broad categories such as ‘regional level’ and ‘private sector’ – clearly not detailed enough to discover potential “policy entrepreneurs” and the like. I speculate that the chosen material plays a part. RUS and Agenda 2030, being meta-policies, have such a wide scope that individual actors “slip between the fingers”, so to speak. Second, assessing the ‘goodness of fit’ between the two policies in terms of contextual constraints without taking informal cultures into account will lead to incomplete conclusions at best. At the very least, I hope that my assessment may pinpoint further areas of inquiry on this topic.

Lastly, the participant observation component proved to be useful in complementing the content analysis with contextual information. Collecting data from my colleagues at Region Skåne were instrumental in uncovering motivations for integrating the policies, as well as identifying arenas for complementary co-existence between the two. I believe that these insights have helped strengthen the credibility of the findings and perhaps also point to future areas of inquiry, particularly in the field of specifying measurement instruments.

7. Conclusion

In the previous chapter, I have showcased a couple of insights that could prove educational for the task of policy integration in Region Skåne. I am content to say that, with some qualifications, Agenda 2030 has some fundamental similarities with RUS that could provide fertile soil for integration – provided that Region Skåne takes a stand on how to handle the dissimilarities pointed out in this thesis. After inquiring whether the two policy documents *could* be integrated, a second question follows: *should* they? From this point on, the investigation becomes normative instead of descriptive, and I have no satisfactory answer to this matter. I would argue, though, that this ultimately comes down to whether such an endeavor would contribute to sustainable development on a global level – the one, definitive system of which all life on Earth is a part.

To that end, I would like to extend the reflection just a bit further using Haughton's five equity principles – previously outlined in Section 4.1: Operationalizing 'sustainable development'.

(i) Futurity – inter-generational equity

The first challenge to sustainable development traces back to the Brundtland Commission's definition from 1987, in which sustainable development needs to “[meet] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. In both RUS and Agenda 2030, there still lingers a tension between quantitative growth and sustainable production/consumption. In my discussion, I argue that RUS in its current form favors the former over the latter, which leaves questions concerning the economic aspect of sustainable development. Agenda 2030 has a somewhat higher tendency to speak in terms of “sustainability”, both in economic and social terms. Therefore, Agenda 2030 could have the potential to nudge RUS in another direction that more clearly focuses on equity across generations, although this could merely be the case from a policy perspective – what happens on the ground is another matter entirely.

(ii) Social justice – intra-generational equity

Both RUS and Agenda 2030 stress the well-being of individuals as their primary objective, Agenda 2030 from a global perspective, and RUS as an example of regional policymaking. In certain issues – such as anti-discrimination legislation – RUS even

provides greater specificity while Agenda 2030 lays a normative baseline for the social aspect of sustainable development. In this regard, policy integration has potential to create synergies for the advancement of human well-being.

(iii) Trans-frontier responsibility – geographical equity

Skåne's competitive desire to stand out as a world-leading region for innovation, business and attractiveness may run the risk of draining other regions of potential development actors. From a trans-frontier perspective, this becomes problematic. Sustainable development would depend on what Skåne gives back in terms of sharing expertise and wealth with the global system – i.e. working towards Agenda 2030's ambition to promote inter-country equality.

(iv) Procedural/participatory equity – people treated openly and fairly

Much like the case of intra-generational equity, RUS and Agenda 2030 have the potential to complement each other through two different levels of participatory equity: Agenda 2030 forms a normative codex for democratically ruled institutions that respect human rights, whereas RUS sets an example of regional collaboration on matters of practical governance – both of which are required for fostering a fair and inclusive society. While the two policies have different scope, their shared humanitarian values offer good prospects for policy integration.

(v) Inter-species equity – importance of biodiversity

The quest for a world with zero human impact on natural eco-systems remains challenging. The annual HUGA review of 2017 severely dampens the hopes of achieving the environmental goals of Skåne County by 2030. Against this background, integrating Agenda 2030 with RUS, while perhaps compatible in their ambitions, offers no solution to the immediate problem. RUS already shares the desire to conserve and sustain the County's natural eco-systems, and Agenda 2030 would merely speed up the timeframe. If the environmental goals seem unachievable by 2030, then surely they will not be achieved by 2020 as stated in Agenda 2030. The environmental pillar of sustainable development remains the weakest of the three.

So what could a policy integration achieve for the sake of sustainable development? The sum of the different components is a mixed answer. Societal efforts continue to be unevenly spread across the economic, social and environmental aspects, and it is questionable if an integration between RUS and Agenda 2030 could adjust this imbalance before 2030 when the sustainable development goals are to be achieved.

That being said, sustainable development should not be considered as an “end state” that humanity can reach once and for all. New challenges will always arise, as will our capacity to respond to them. From this perspective, continuous assessment of our society’s current position and progress becomes an integral part of sustainable development work – something that a policy integration of RUS and Agenda 2030 surely could contribute to. In writing this thesis, I have set out to make an addition to this very objective. I hope that the findings presented in this study can be of service towards making an informed decision about future efforts for sustainable development in Region Skåne.

This study has also problematized whether a global policy in its existing form can be fitted into a regional scope. Looking forward, I recommend that government officials, the private and non-profit sectors and, not least, the academia should turn their gaze to the national ambitions as expressed by the Agenda 2030 delegation’s six prioritized areas for sustainable development. Further inquiry into this could help localize Agenda 2030 into the context of Swedish regional governance. Such studies would inform efforts to reduce the adverse impact of parallel policy tracks – benefitting not only Region Skåne, but other regions and the national level as well.

The abductive content analysis backed by policy integration, policy transfer, and policy diffusion theory has demonstrated itself capable of providing insight into organizational culture as expressed by textual data. Its method and findings have uncovered structural forces in the texts that may impact the prospects for integrating Agenda 2030 into RUS. Future studies of Region Skåne should follow-up on the likely incorporation of Agenda 2030 in Region Skåne to assess the effects on decision-making post-integration. Such research should focus on the interplay between policy and practice, and assess how the organization, and all of its constituencies, work with Agenda 2030 guidelines on a daily basis. This could aid in further specifying what “sustainability” means in both a global and a local context. Thoroughly charting the waters of the conceptual ocean that is “sustainable development” yet remains an elusive but promising research field.

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Annex: Codebook

Agenda 2030		2869
1. Frame	What problems is the policy seeking to resolve?	1376
<i>Desired outcomes</i>	Expression of a desire to reach a certain objective or favorable condition.	643
Economic and Societal growth	Quantitative increase in productivity, economic growth, demographic growth, trade or investment.	32
End crime and exploitation (child abuse, trafficking)	Eradicate criminal acts such as child abuse, child soldiers, trafficking, sexual exploitation etc.	8
End hunger	Ensure universal access to food for every individual across the planet.	8
Enhanced infrastructure and Energy	Increased physical infrastructure, e.g. buildings. Expansion of transportation network. Also includes E-infrastructure.	14
Environmental improvement	A quantitative increase in flora and fauna, natural resorts and wilderness.	24
Eradicate poverty	Ending poverty and extreme poverty (<1,25 USD per day).	21
Gender equality	Create equal opportunities and/or outcomes for all men and women, unaffected by their biological sex.	40
Globalization	A desire for a more integrated world system and higher exchange between countries.	17
Human welfare	The objective and subjective improvement of individual livelihoods.	88
Improved disaster risk management	Strengthened societal resilience and response capacity in the face of natural or man-made disasters.	9
Increased Deliberation and Democratization	An expansion of arenas/platforms/meeting places for dialogue among and between nations, IOs, citizenry, businesses, organizations and other societal actors.	35
Increased innovation, Knowledge, Capacity building and Initiatives	An increase of new ideas and actions for societal development, as well as an increase in the general education level among citizens.	58
Increased trade and Functioning markets	Growth of trade exchanges among nations and other actors, and an expansion of the policy elements necessary to ensure that trade can be conducted seamlessly.	15
Institutional transparency, accountability, efficiency and legitimacy	Enhanced public trust in public institutions, owing to righteous procedure, transparency and ability to deliver services.	14
Inter-country equality	A desire to help the poorest nations and redistribute wealth among the UN member states.	67
Intra-country equality	Explicit references to the desire to achieve greater equality within national borders.	5
National sovereignty and leadership	A call for strengthened national sovereignty and the enablement of nations to follow their own ambitions for sustainable development without negative interference from the outside.	10
New frameworks and commitments	Suggestions for an expansion of policy instruments.	6
Peace	Expressed desire to end violent conflicts.	12
Protect cultural heritage	Protect historical landmarks and cultural traditions.	1
Raise employment	Increase the share of citizens in employment.	20

Reduction of sickness and unsanitary conditions	A reduction and eventual elimination of sickness and disease that negatively affects an individual's lifespan.	10
Safe, nutritious food and water	Access to food and water that are clean, nutritious and healthy to consume.	11
Strengthened human rights and Rule of Law	An ambition to strengthen legal instruments through expansion or better enforcement, while adhering to the UN declaration of human rights.	27
Sustainable eco-systems	A balance between human and natural systems.	38
Sustainable Production and Consumption	Achieving a production sector that is viable long-term, without negatively affecting other systems.	52
Problem frames	Representations of problems that are either explicitly pointed out or implicitly assumed in the document.	82
Child and Reproductive Health	Problems with child mortality, child sickness, maternity deaths, sexual and reproductive health.	4
Crime, Corruption and Trafficking	Criminal behavior, corruption, embezzlement, fraudulent leadership, trafficking, child labor etc.	5
Displacement and Refugees	Recognition of the problems surrounding refugees and their situation, forced displacement etc.	3
Environmental degradation	Environmental deterioration that causes threatening conditions for human life.	9
Gender inequality	Problems pertaining to gender inequality.	10
Inequality among people	Problems pertaining inequalities between communities and societal groups.	11
Inter-country inequalities	Unequal conditions between the UN member states.	10
Lack of concrete indicators and data	A currently existing lack of knowledge and/or tools to accomplish the SDGs.	1
Natural disasters	Major catastrophes such as tornados, tsunamis, storms, earthquakes etc.	7
Poverty	Substantial global poverty.	4
Sickness, Disease and Disability	Problems pertaining to sickness, epidemics, physical disability etc.	5
Unemployment	Expressed concern for unemployment issues.	1
Violence, Conflict, War and Terrorism	Problems pertaining to war, social conflict and terrorism.	12
Values	Normative positions, things that instil a positive sentiment and is therefore worthwhile to adhere to through pursuing particular outcomes.	651
Adaptability and Resilience	Importance of "resilient societies" capable to adapt to sudden changes in society, economy and environment.	18
Deliberation and Cooperation	Universal right to voice opinions and exchange ideas.	40
Diversity	A heterogeneous and pluralistic society.	24
Environmentalism and Biodiversity	Protection of natural systems.	69
Equality and Solidarity	Equitable treatment of everyone, regardless of individual characteristics such as age, race, sex, nationality, religion etc.	173
Free-thinking, Knowledge and Innovation	Importance of general awareness, critical thinking and openness to new ideas.	61
Human security and health	Importance of ensuring access to the basic necessities of human life.	121

Individual freedom and self-determination	Removal of structural barriers for the pursuit of individual ambitions.	15
Liberal market economy and-or Growth	Support for "growth", open and free markets, competition, state non-interference etc.	29
National sovereignty and self-determination	Each state should be free to set its own course, without exterior influence.	32
Openness, Accessibility and Mobility	A society without legal/structural/physical barriers for interaction with the different parts of society, e.g. openness for outsiders, access to institutions etc.	53
Public order and safety	Importance of combatting crime, ensuring physical security.	15
Tradition	Importance of preserving current cultural aspects of society.	1
2. Interactive	Who is targeted by the policy?	763
<i>Object</i>	'Object' is defined as the recipients of the benefits proposed in the policy.	365
Academia	Universities, think-tanks, researchers, scholars, schools etc.	3
Global level	Global agreements, United Nations, multi-lateral partnerships etc.	27
Individuals and groups	Individual people and/or citizens of a nation.	134
Local level	Municipalities, local public offices, cities etc.	14
Nations	States, national government etc.	104
Natural environment	Natural environments, eco-systems, flora and fauna.	37
Non-profit sector	NGO:s, INGO:s, cultural organizations etc.	1
Private sector	Private enterprise, businesses, market, corporations etc.	20
Regional level	Regional governments, regional public offices, inter-city collaborations etc.	13
Unspecified object	References to actors without distinguishable characteristics.	12
<i>Subject</i>	'Subject' comprises those who are expected to work towards implementing the policy objectives.	398
Academia	Universities, think-tanks, researchers, scholars, schools etc.	8
Global level	Global agreements, United Nations, multi-lateral partnerships etc.	118
Individuals and groups	Individual people and/or citizens of a nation.	21
Local level	Municipalities, local public offices, cities etc.	31
Nations	States, national government etc.	114
Natural environment	Natural environments, eco-systems, flora and fauna.	1
Non-profit sector	NGO:s, INGO:s, cultural organizations etc.	15
Private sector	Private enterprise, businesses, market, corporations etc.	32
Regional level	Regional governments, regional public offices, inter-city collaborations etc.	34
Unspecified subject	References to actors without distinguishable characteristics.	24
3. Substantive	What instruments are emphasized in the policy?	689
<i>Enabling conditions</i>	Currently existing systemic conditions that act as facilitators for implementation of the policy goals.	27
Previous UN policies, conferences and summits	There are a number of existing policy frameworks that lay the foundation for continued policy implementation.	22
Societal and Technological progression	Positive technological and demographic development offers an engine on which to build continued efforts for policy implementation.	3
Sports	Global/national/local sports events help enable the ambitions of the policy.	2

<i>Hard instruments</i>	Suggested measures that involve concrete construction, legal frameworks or references to official agreements.	244
Conservation and Management of natural resources	Efforts to protect natural eco-systems, and a more efficient use of non-renewable resources.	16
Crackdown on crime	Actively combatting criminal networks.	3
Expanded E-infrastructure	Increased funding and implementation of telecommunications, internet infrastructure and other digital communicative methods.	4
Expanded physical infrastructure	Expansion of construction, building, transport networks etc.	14
Financial instruments and Official Development Assistance	Monetary funding, reduction of trade barriers, stipends, loans, financial assistance and expertise.	36
Global action plans	Concrete application of existing and/or planned action plans on a global level.	10
International agreements	References to existing policy frameworks that may guide efforts.	59
Legal instruments and policies	Expansion of legal frameworks, laws and other steering policies.	45
Local action plans	References to concrete application of existing and/or planned action plans on a local level.	4
Monitoring and Evaluation	Proposed means to continuously evaluate the progress of the policy goals.	44
National action plans	References to concrete application of existing and/or planned action plans on a national level.	6
Waste management	Concrete measures to reduce waste pouring out from human systems.	3
<i>Indicators</i>	The current quality and potential for evaluating progression of the policy goal implementation.	213
Potentially quantifiable	Indicators are expressed in such a way that a concrete number can be assigned to them in order to measure success.	45
Qualitative indicators	Indicator is unspecified, value-laden, relative, or otherwise non-numerical in nature.	103
Quantified	The indicator provide an explicitly stated target quota.	23
Universal	Indicator aims at achieving 100% coverage.	33
<i>Soft instruments</i>	Non-binding, abstract or indirect means that can facilitate the process of achieving the policy objectives.	86
Deliberative forums and Cooperation	Encouraging and increasing opportunities for joint deliberation and democratic procedures.	36
Educative efforts and Innovation	Means to improve the general knowledge of the population.	28
Expand health services coverage	An expansion of the availability of public health instruments to the general population.	7
Export Technical assistance	Sharing of vocational knowledge across boundaries.	12
Leadership	Explicit calls for actors to take increased responsibility over certain issues.	2
Sports	Using sports events as a means to spread the ambitions of the policy.	1

<i>Timeframe</i>	The policy as a whole aims to achieve its goals by 2030. References to 2030 are therefore omitted. Explicit references to other dates than 2030 are coded into this node.	35
<i>Unspecified instruments</i>	References to desired policy tools that lack specification.	84
4. Motivational	Why is the policy being engaged with?	41
<i>Coercion</i>	The policy is advocated due to pressure from above to comply.	0
<i>Competition</i>	The policy is presented as a means to improve the competitive power of nations compared to other nations and/or regions.	0
<i>Cooperative interdependence</i>	The policy is considered to enable mutual benefits between different actors.	15
<i>Normative pressure</i>	The policy is pushed as a means to follow and promote certain values in society.	26
RUS		2653
1. Frame	What problems is the policy seeking to resolve?	1509
<i>Desired outcomes</i>	Expression of a desire to reach a certain objective or favorable condition.	632
Attractiveness of Skåne	Skåne should be considered more desirable as a living place/investment place (or other venues) than other alternatives.	58
Economic and Societal Growth	References that imply a quantitative growth in economical or demographic terms.	106
Enhanced infrastructure	Increased physical infrastructure, e.g. buildings. Expansion of transportation network. Also includes E-infrastructure.	62
Environmental improvement	A quantitative increase in flora and fauna, natural resorts and wilderness.	21
Globalization and internationalization	An increased exchange between Skåne and the international community.	63
Human welfare	The objective and subjective improvement of individual livelihoods.	140
Increased deliberation	An expansion of arenas/platforms/meeting places for dialogue among and between citizenry, businesses, organizations and other societal actors.	52
Increased innovation, knowledge and initiatives	An increase of new ideas and actions for societal development, as well as an increase in the general education level among citizens.	83
Protect cultural heritage	Achieving non-deterioration of historical landmarks and cultural heritage.	2
Public legitimacy and Organizational leadership	Ensure broad support for public institutions and willingness to contribute to its continued performance, e.g. through taxes.	3
Sustainable business	Achieving a private sector that is viable long-term, without negatively affecting other systems.	23
Sustainable eco-systems	A balance between human and natural systems.	17
<i>Problem frames</i>	Representations of problems that are either explicitly pointed out or implicitly assumed in the document.	136

Crime and Social conflict	Criminal behavior and disagreements over the use of means and resources.	2
Demographic changes	Changes in the composition of the population in terms of age, gender balance, etc.	13
Environmental degradation	Quantitative and qualitative depreciation in natural systems.	15
Ethnicity	Conflict pertaining to the ethnic belonging of various social groups.	8
Gender	Issues pertaining to different treatment between the sexes.	9
Intolerance and Discrimination	Subjective animosity towards particular social groups.	7
Low education or skills	Workforce lacking the necessary skills to meet the needs of production. "Low education" is understood in a sense that is relative to the needs of the society and labor market.	14
Mobility and infrastructure	Lack of infrastructure to properly ensure convenient physical mobility in the region.	12
Poverty	Individual people are experiencing sub-par living conditions.	2
Productivity, Growth and Trade	Skåne's economic growth is considered inadequate in its current state.	11
Public health issues	Issues of deteriorating health in certain aspects of the population.	12
Technological advancements	Technological advancements place demands on Skåne to adapt to changing circumstances.	9
Unclear Leadership or Responsibility	Lack of clearly assigned leadership responsibility in certain areas of concern.	6
Unemployment	Problems with ensuring employment for all people in Skåne.	15
Values	Normative positions, things that instil a positive sentiment and is therefore worthwhile to adhere to through pursuing particular outcomes.	741
Adaptability	Importance of "resilient societies" capable to adapt to sudden changes in society, economy and environment.	15
Democratic deliberation	Universal right to voice opinions and exchange ideas.	94
Diversity	A heterogeneous and pluralistic society.	77
Environmentalism and Biodiversity	Protection of natural systems.	42
Equality	Equitable treatment of everyone, regardless of individual characteristics such as age, race, sexuality, nationality, religion etc.	75
Free-thinking, Knowledge and Innovation	Importance of general awareness, critical thinking and openness to new ideas.	120
Human security and Health	Importance of ensuring access to the basic necessities of human life.	52
Individual freedom and self-determination	Removal of structural barriers for the pursuit of individual ambitions.	31
Liberal market economy	Support for "growth", open and free markets, competition, state non-interference etc.	79
Openness and Accessibility	A society without legal/structural/physical barriers for interaction with the different parts of society, e.g. openness for outsiders, access to institutions etc.	151
Public order or safety	Importance of combatting crime, ensuring physical security.	2

Tradition	Importance of preserving current cultural aspects of society.	2
2. Interactive	Who is targeted by the policy?	677
<i>Object</i>	'Object' is defined as the recipients of the benefits proposed in the policy.	305
Academia	Universities, think-tanks, researchers, scholars, schools etc.	16
Individuals	Individual people and/or citizens of the region.	111
International	References to actors outside Swedish national jurisdiction.	34
Local level	Municipalities, local public offices, cities etc.	13
National level	Swedish national government.	9
Natural environment	Natural environments, eco-systems, flora and fauna.	10
Non-profit sector	NGO:s, INGO:s, cultural organizations etc.	10
Private sector	Private enterprise, businesses, market, corporations etc.	50
Regional level	Regional governments, regional public offices, inter-city collaborations etc.	29
Unspecified object	References to actors without distinguishable characteristics.	23
<i>Subject</i>	'Subject' comprises those who are expected to work towards implementing the policy objectives.	372
Academia	Universities, think-tanks, researchers, scholars, schools etc.	38
Individuals	Individual people and/or citizens of the region.	28
International	References to actors outside Swedish national jurisdiction.	27
Local level	Municipalities, local public offices, cities etc.	34
National level	Swedish national government.	21
Non-profit sector	NGO:s, INGO:s, cultural organizations etc.	23
Private sector	Private enterprise, businesses, market, corporations etc.	34
Regional level	Regional governments, regional public offices, inter-city collaborations etc.	71
Unspecified subject	References to actors without distinguishable characteristics.	96
3. Substantive	What instruments are emphasized in the policy?	417
<i>Enabling conditions</i>	Currently existing systemic conditions that act as facilitators for implementation of the policy goals.	85
Environment in Skåne	Geographical and natural conditions that facilitate the implementation of the RUS.	21
Existing deliberative forums	Access to existing forums, arenas and meeting places for dialogue and exchange among societal actors.	1
Human capital	Increase in an individual's skills, knowledge, efficacy, agency etc.	12
Innovations	Improved technology to face societal issues.	5
Interconnectedness of transport networks	Skåne's transport infrastructure is already well connected to the outside world, national and international.	3
Labor growth	An increase or adaptation of the means to meet the industry's demand for labor.	6
Proximity	A generally high potential for mobility between different geographical bodies.	27
Public health	A generally high living standard.	7
<i>Hard instruments</i>	Suggested measures that involve concrete construction, legal frameworks or references to official agreements.	80
Action plans and Operational strategies, Adjusting budgets	Developing new, written and formalized strategies and/or expanding the scope of existing ones through increased responsibilities, expanded budget etc.	7
Building physical infrastructure	Concrete building of transport networks.	17

Expanded E-infrastructure	Increased investment and application of telecommunications and internet usage.	9
Financial instruments and Trade	Means to promote the exchange of investment and capital.	10
Increasing welfare infrastructure	Expanded investment and development of welfare services such as hospitals, nurseries, etc.	9
International agreements	References to written and signed agreements across national boundaries.	5
Labor market programmes	Means to increase the amount of people in the workforce.	7
Legal instruments	Instruments of legal, binding character.	4
Monitoring and Evaluation	Continued work to develop indicators and criteria for success, regular follow-ups to measure concrete progress.	4
Regional agreements	References to written and signed agreements across regional boundaries.	8
Indicators	Concrete, specified and quantitative definitions of policy objectives.	34
Soft instruments	Non-binding, abstract or indirect means that can facilitate the process of achieving the policy objectives.	140
Culture	Use of cultural life to influence opinion towards the policy objectives.	15
Deliberation and cooperation	Encouraging and increasing opportunities for joint deliberation and democratic procedures.	56
Educative efforts	Means to improve the general knowledge of the population.	37
Expertise (individual)	Strengthening professional expertise of individuals and the work force.	15
Highlight natural environments	The nature in Skåne will be used to demonstrate the quality of Skåne's landscape.	3
Leadership	Clearly assigned leadership roles under given circumstances.	12
Lobbying	Soft efforts to export Skåne's point of view to outside actors.	2
Timeframe	References to certain target dates and deadlines.	4
Unspecified instruments	References to desired policy tools that lack specification.	74
4. Motivational	Why is the policy being engaged with?	50
Coercion	The policy is advocated due to pressure from above to comply.	3
Competition	The policy is presented as a means to improve the competitive power of Skåne compared to other regions and/or nations.	25
Cooperative interdependence	The policy is considered to enable mutual benefits between different actors.	19
Normative pressure	The policy is pushed as a means to follow and promote certain values in society.	3