




# **City-regions in Europe: creativity, connectivity and sustainability**



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# Overview

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- **Deep drivers of change**
- **Key themes in city-regionalism**
  - creativity, connectivity, sustainability
- **City-regions in the making**
  - Stuttgart, Manchester
- **Multi-level governance**
  - the vertical challenge
  - the horizontal challenge
- **Inter-municipal collaboration**
  - new economic geography
  - green infrastructure

# Deep drivers of change

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## ■ **Globalization: economic narratives**

- the flat world: hyper-mobility of capital and the 'death of distance'
- the spikey world: capital sticks to agglomerations and 'being there' matters

## ■ **Urbanization: spatial narratives**

- mega-city regions/mega-slums
- cities key to knowledge economy

## ■ **Climate change: ecological narratives**

- rise of a low carbon economy/society
- new metrics for development (eg carbon footprints)
- the rise of the ecological city

# Key themes in city-regionalism

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- Three key themes in city-regionalism
  - **Creativity** - innovation and economic development
  - **Connectivity** – transport networks, digital infrastructure
  - **Sustainability** - natural resources, waste management and green infrastructures

# Stuttgart: the heart of a robust region

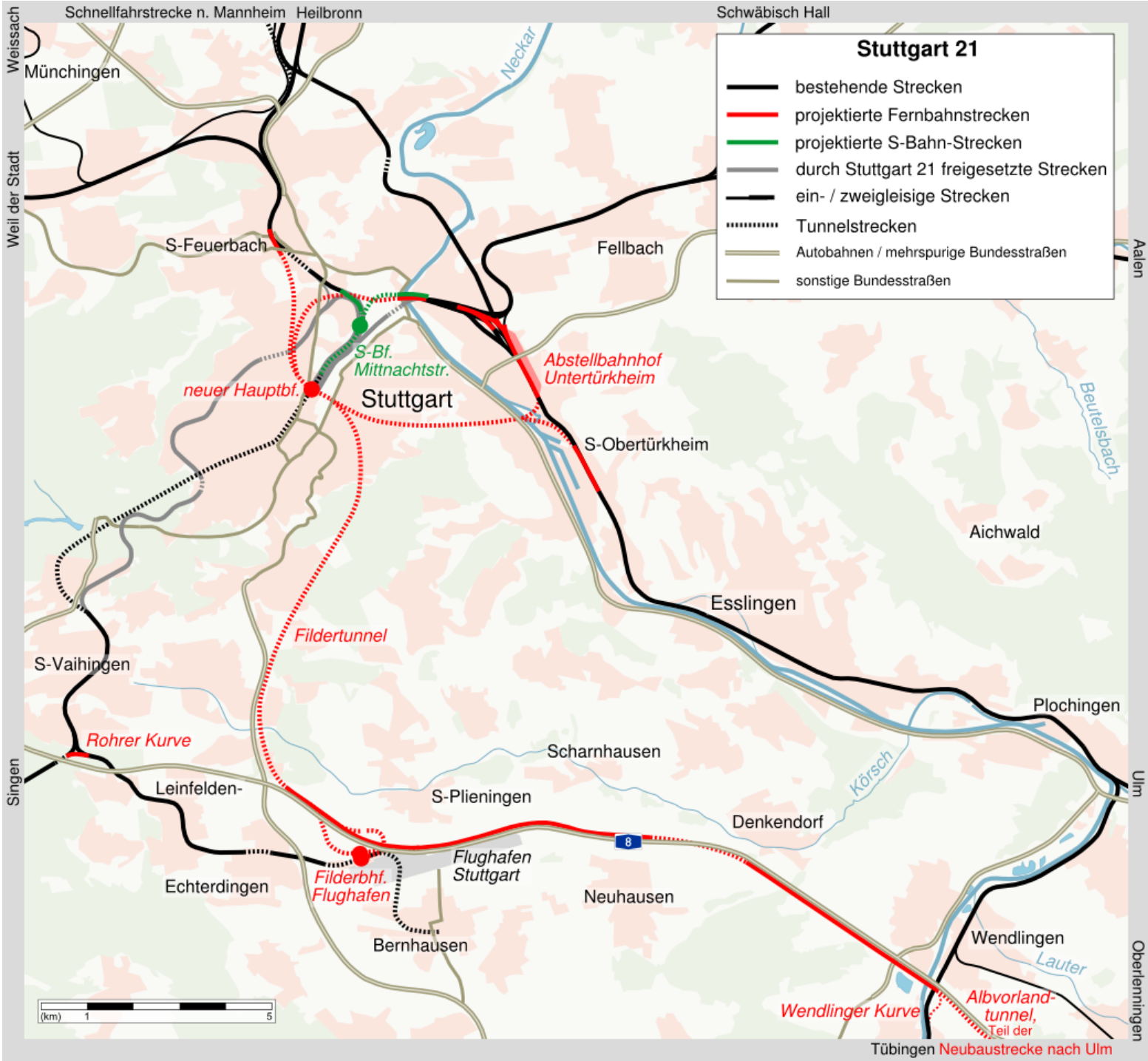
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- Capital of Baden Wurttemberg, a highly innovative region
- Industrial crisis triggered demands for a new urban governance system– and the VRS was created in 1994
- VRS members elected – unique at that time
- Key emphasis – economic development, transport and green infrastructures
- Stuttgart 21 - the biggest urban project

# Stuttgart 21

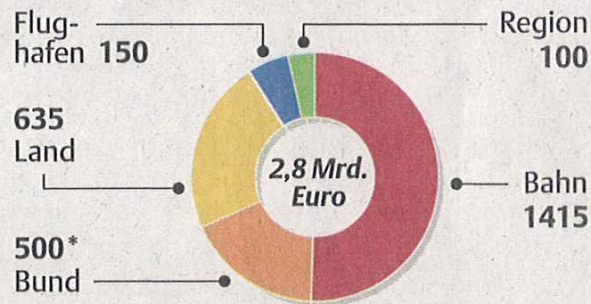
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- Stuttgart 21 has 3 major aims:
  - To convert an end station into a through station and make the city a key hub on the fast rail network, slashing journey times (a metaphor for the shift from bounded to relational space)
  - To release 100m hectares of land for new residential and commercial use
  - To curb greenfield development on the fringe of the city, curbing urban sprawl and making Stuttgart a more sustainable city



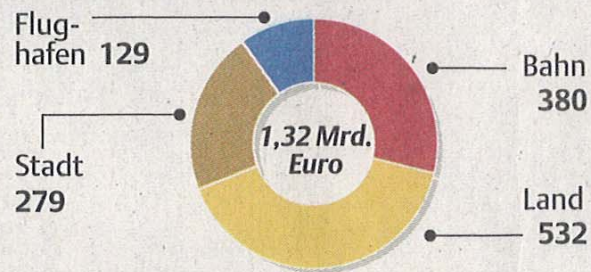
# FINANZIERUNG

## Kosten Stuttgart 21 in Mio. Euro

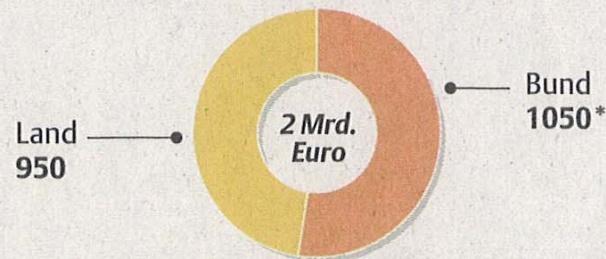


\*bis zu 250 Mio. Euro EU-Mittel enthalten

## Kostenrisiken Stuttgart 21 in Mio. Euro



## ICE-Strecke Stuttgart - Ulm in Mio. Euro



\*bis zu 100 Mio. Euro EU-Mittel enthalten

Die Kostenrisiken der ICE-Strecke trägt zu 100 % die Bundesrepublik Deutschland







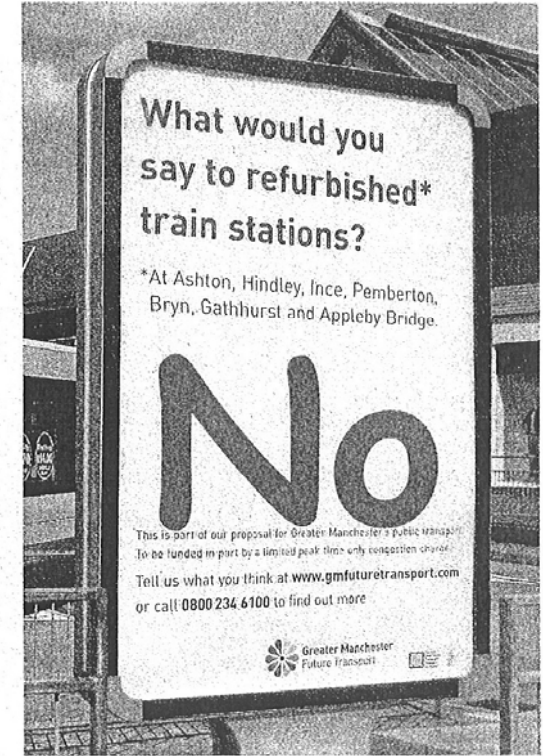
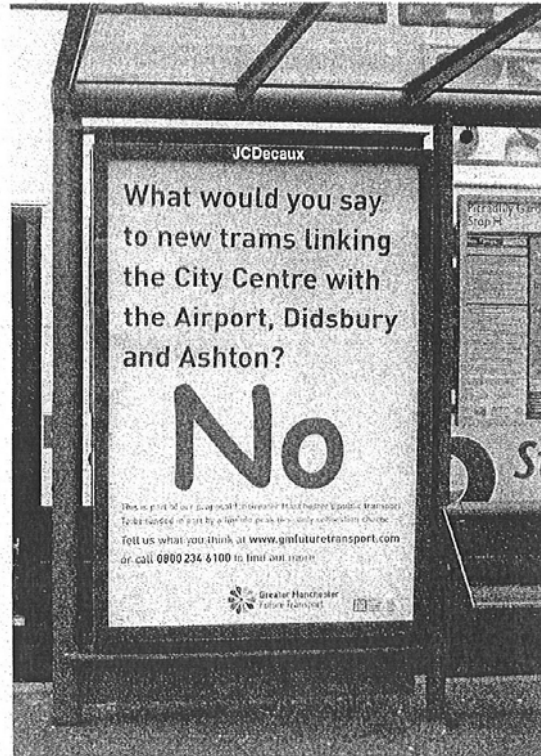
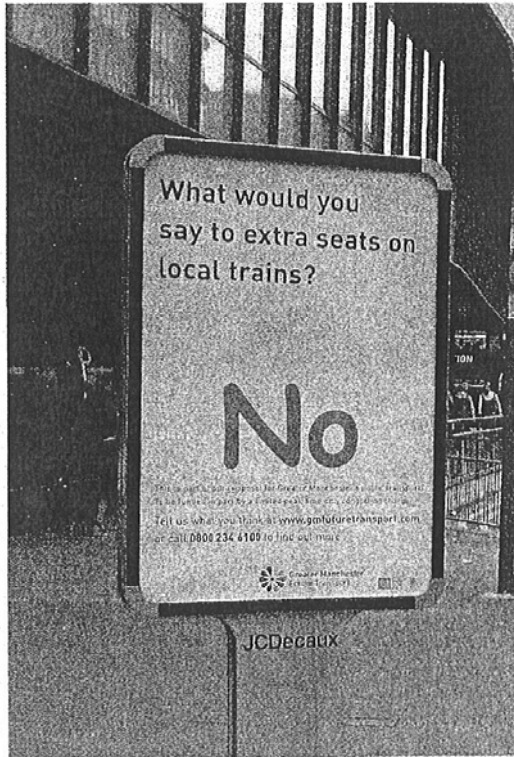
# Manchester: engine of the north?

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- Greater Manchester – a metropolitan region of 10 urban councils and a population of 3.2 million
- Nascent city-region system in AGMA
  - the joint association of the ten councils has a measure of pooled sovereignty
  - created 7 city-region commissions to set strategy for the combined area
  - demanding London-style devolved powers (...and just got them in the April budget)
  - chief aim is to become a premier European city-region
  - main emphasis on new regional innovation networks, HE sector, housing and an upgraded transport system (but the latter has been scuppered by a failed referendum)

A 19733 pp 23-24

manchester referendum



# The vote and why we lost

Prejudice, conspiracy theories, dislike of bus companies and irrational beliefs about the causes of congestion all played a part in the rejection of Manchester's Transport Innovation Fund Bid by voters. **Chris Palmer** of the Yes campaign outlines what went wrong.

# Multi-level governance

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- EU is an uneasy amalgam of supra-national, national and sub-national political systems
  - Feds play up the supra-national scale
  - Nats play up the national scale
  - Localists/regionalists the sub-national
- Regional Policy and the Common Agricultural Policy absorb most EU funds

# MLG: the vertical challenge

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- EU is the world's most complex multi-level polity
- The main governance problem is a political disconnect between:
  - Policy design (supra-national and national realms)
  - Policy delivery (sub-national realm)
- Sub-national realm implements some 80% of all EU legislation (but has no formal status in the EU)
- The sub-national realm differs widely in its sources of finance (local councils in the UK are very dependent on central government grants)

# MLG: the horizontal challenge

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- City-regionalism is not just a bottom-up process among local actors
- Strong top-down pressures (from Brussels and nation states) to create city-region strategies and structures
- Two very different strategies:
  - the spatial hierarchy (the city as an urban prima donna)
  - the polycentric partnership (more attuned to inter-municipal collaboration)

# Inter-Municipal Collaboration

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- Holy grail of urban policy around the world, but IMC is a **means** not an end
- Kunzmann's agenda for securing it:
  - Allow flexible functional boundaries
  - Improve regional information/new blood
  - Develop a regional vision
  - Promote city-region identity
  - Strengthen regional innovation networks
  - Design catalyst projects for cooperation
  - Creative financing
  - Organise F2F meetings



# IMC 1: new economic geography

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- Economic growth is always uneven, but development can be inclusive
- Agglomerations and clusters have to be fostered not frustrated
- Good connectivity allows all places to access the (uneven) growth points
- This is a big challenge for local political elites, who want investment in their own backyard
- Bounded space v relational space

# ICM 2: green infrastructure

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- Local/regional food chains help cities to re-connect with their regional hinterlands
- Amsterdam no longer a prima donna. A senior planner now says –
  - “More than ever, city and countryside need one another. On the one hand, the regional countryside contributes in many ways to the sustainability, quality of life and economic performance of Amsterdam. It offers opportunities for recreation, leisure, water management, health care, sequestration of carbon, local food production, and so on...Amsterdam is still surrounded by agricultural landscapes of high historical and ecological importance” (Pim Vermeulen)

# PROEFTUINAMSTERDAM



## **Amsterdam Food Strategy**

**Pim Vermeulen, senior planner, city of Amsterdam**

**Presentation SW England, Bristol, March 12<sup>th</sup>. 2009**



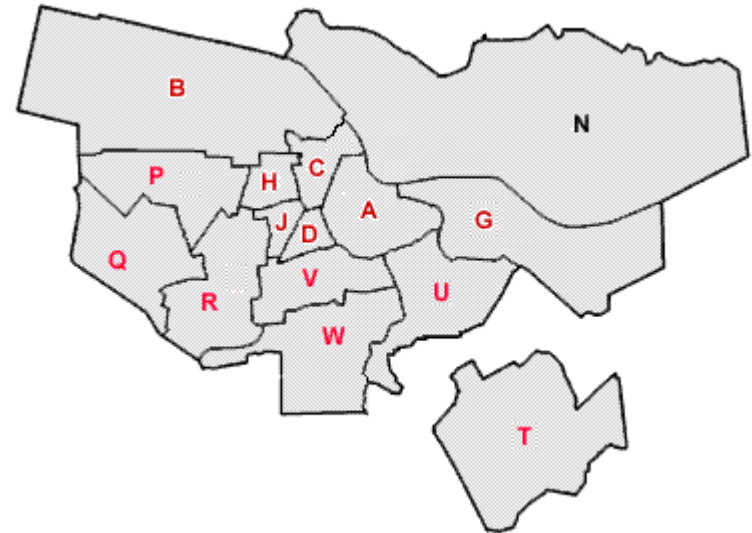
# PROEFTUINAMSTERDAM

## Region and City in parts



Gemeenten binnen de deelregio's in de Noordvleugel.

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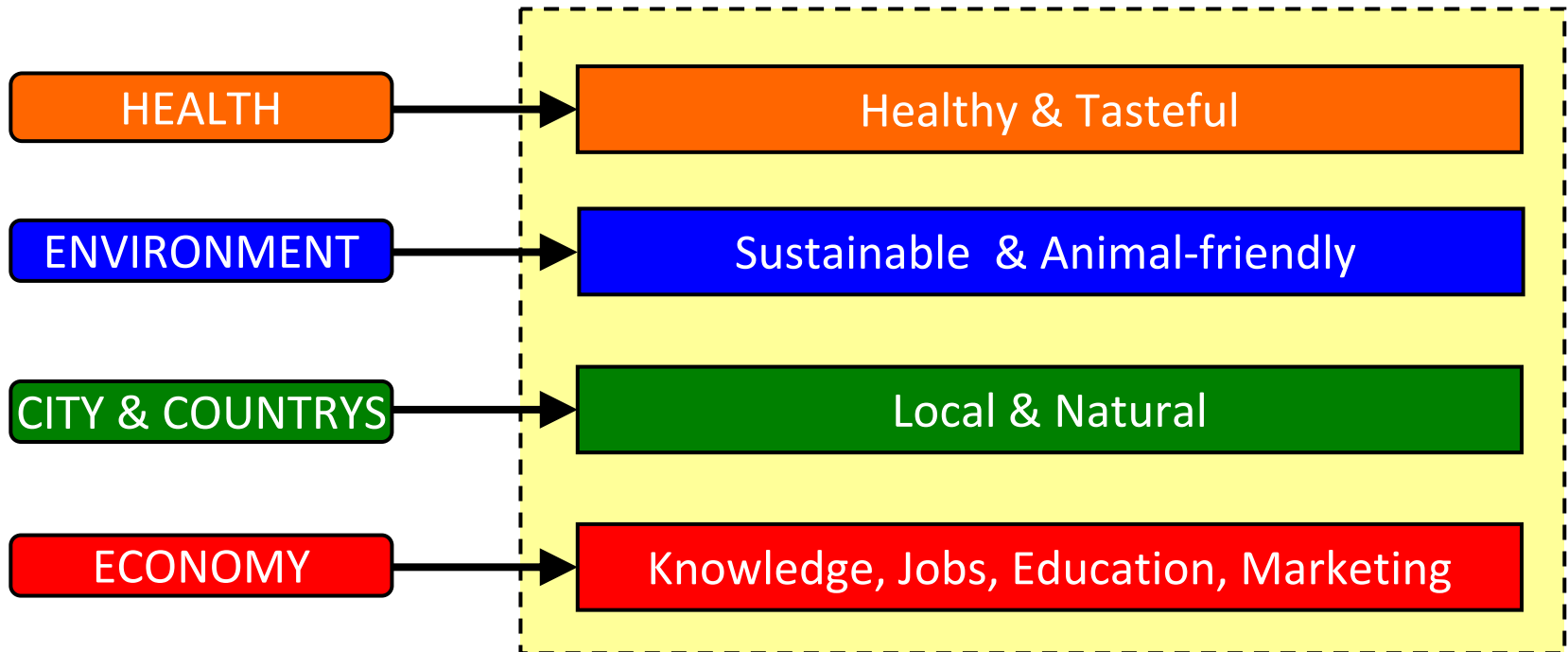


# PROEFTUINAMSTERDAM

## Linking the themes

### Policy themes

### Proeftuin themes



## Alliance partners (policy makers)

- **City of Amsterdam** (departments; city districts)
- **City of Zaanstad** (depts. Environment & economy)
- **Province** of Noord-Holland (agriculture & economy)
- **Ministry** of Agriculture , Nature and Food Security (depts. rural development & regions)
- **National landscape** 'Het Groene Hart' (3 provinces, south of Amsterdam)

## Other principal actors

### **Educational institutions**

- primary and secondary schools
- vocational training institutes
- universities
- **Farmers associations & co-operatives**
- **Private enterprises** and associations of enterprises: wholesale, retail, catering, restaurants, care organizations
- **Environmental associations & foundations**
- **Citizen associations**

# Green infrastructure

Green infrastructure is the network of green (and blue) elements in and around urban areas. This includes public and private spaces, such as parks, gardens, allotments, cemeteries, trees, green roofs and natural landscape features such as woodland, grassland, moors and wetlands.

With good planning and design, these green assets can help cities to cope with some of the extreme effects of climate change.

The [benefits of a green infrastructure network](#) include making places more attractive, healthier, and economically competitive.

Local authorities can [improve the green infrastructure network](#) by putting green assets at the heart of urban design and management.

## Priorities for green infrastructure

- **Integrate green infrastructure into urban areas**

Well designed green infrastructure can enhance the visual amenity and value of our existing places and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

- **Moderate the urban heat island**

Green infrastructure helps to reduce high temperatures in summer.

- **Help wildlife adapt to climate change**

Wildlife adapts more easily with the help of well-designed green spaces.



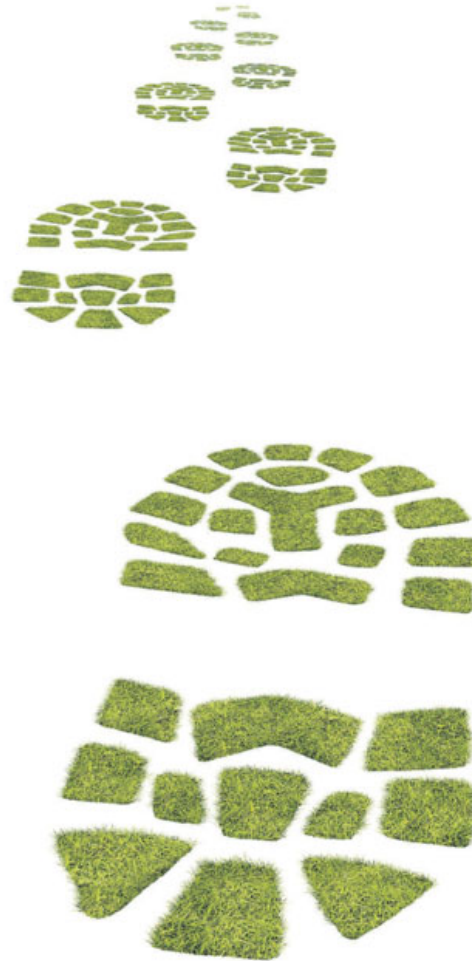
# City leaders wanted for hazardous journey.

Hard choices, bitter arguments, long months in political wilderness, constant peril, safe re-election uncertain. Honour and recognition in case of success.

[sustainablecities.org.uk](http://sustainablecities.org.uk)



Commission for Architecture  
and the Built Environment



# Tentative conclusions

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- No such thing as a “best practice” model of city-regionalism
- City-regionalism is initially motivated by the need to collaborate locally to better compete globally
- But an exclusive focus on the competitive rationale can trigger local turf wars
- Sustainability has most potential to bring people and places together because it affirms their inter-dependence