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Marco Bontje
THE CHALLENGE OF PLANNED URBANISATION

Urbanisation and national urbanisation policy in the Netherlands in a Northwest-European perspective

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Ph.D. committee

Promotor: Prof. dr. S. Musterd
Co-promotor: Dr. W.J.M. Ostendorf

Other members: Prof. dr. A.G. Champion, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Prof. dr. D.B. Needham, Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen
Prof. dr. R.E. van Engelsdorp Gastelaars, Universiteit van Amsterdam
Prof. dr. L. de Klerk, Universiteit van Amsterdam
Dr. C. Cortie, Universiteit van Amsterdam

Cover design: Eva Pel

Appendix Map 5 and 6 by Christophe Jemelin, IREC / EPFL, Lausanne
Appendix Map 8 by Ann Rooke, Department of Geography, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK

All other tables and figures by author

Amsterdam study centre for the Metropolitan Environment (AME)
Department of Geography and Planning
Faculty of Societal and Behavioural Sciences
University of Amsterdam
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Map 6 Population growth of Swiss municipalities, 1980-1990


PREFACE

In the very final stage of writing this book, only one thing was still missing: the title. In the four years of my Ph.D. research, a lot of ‘preliminary’ or ‘working’ titles have passed. How to capture the essence of the book in just one catchy phrase that might draw the attention of possible readers? The end result you see on the cover combines the attempt to summarise my research in one sentence (the subtitle) with my personal view on national urbanisation policy in the Netherlands and elsewhere. The word ‘challenge’ did not end up in this title by coincidence. It is a big challenge indeed to try to influence urbanisation trends through physical planning policy, and even more so when one tries this on a regional or even national level.

Writing this book has been a huge challenge for me as well. First there were the new disciplines I had to make myself familiar with: planning and mobility studies. The specialists in those fields might have their doubts about this ‘outsider’ entering their disciplines, but I hope it gave me the advantage of looking at things in a relatively fresh and original way. In addition, my research included an international comparison with three areas that I never studied before, and the available time for each of these cases was very limited. Fortunately I could rely on the help of local experts in geography, planning and several other sciences. Their names are mentioned in the acknowledgements section in the back of the book.

There are far too many people I should thank for their help in the past four years to be able to mention them all personally. Still I would like to mention specifically:

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Among the many people that also contributed in many ways to my Ph.D., some groups I got involved in deserve a special mention: the Ph.D. colleagues at our department (if I can finish this job, all of you can certainly do it too!); the Ph.D. colleagues from ‘the world outside of Amsterdam’ I met in several congresses, but especially the participants in the pre-conference workshops of ENHR and AESOP; the people from all over Europe that I met through the young geographers network of EGEA; and my editorial colleagues of the Dutch journal ‘Agora’ (keep up the good work!). All other colleagues and friends that I got to know throughout the years, who offered interesting ideas for my research but also managed to make me forget about this Ph.D. for a while and enjoy ‘life outside science’: thanks a lot for everything and I hope we can keep in touch!

Amsterdam, August 2001

Marco Bontje
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

"The Netherlands is decidedly the most planned country among the European nations. Only a few democracies of the world can match the planning apparatus of the Dutch government. Such a state of affairs is a product of circumstances created by harsh environmental constraints, a challenging history, conflicting socio-cultural forces, hard economic necessities, and the size of the country."

(Dutt & Costa, 1985, p. 1)

1.1 The Netherlands: a planner's paradise?

Many foreign visitors of the Netherlands are amazed about how planned the country appears to be. At first sight, the country seems to be dominated by straight lines, agricultural land divided in rectangles with mathematic precision, sharp contrasts between city and countryside, and houses neatly arranged in rows, blocks and neighbourhoods. The Dutch themselves seem to be proud of this image of the Netherlands as a planned country. A popular proverb even states that 'God created the world, but the Dutch created the Netherlands'. This proverb mostly relates to the struggle against the sea and the land reclamation for which the Netherlands are known worldwide. The early roots of Dutch planning history also derived from its position on the crossroads of Europe, functioning as the main entrance to continental Europe since the 16th century, and the fact that the Netherlands is a fairly small country with, especially in its western part, a high population density (Dutt & Costa, 1985; Faludi & Van der Valk, 1994; Needham, 1989).

While some tourists might be impressed and others frightened by such a high degree of planned development, planning researchers seem to be united in their praise for Dutch physical planning. The citation of Dutt & Costa (1985) at the start of this chapter was illustrative for a more general admiration from foreign observers of Dutch planning. Peter Hall (1977) included the Randstad, the ring of cities in the West of the Netherlands, in his analysis of 'world cities'. In his case study on the Randstad, Hall is clearly impressed by the Dutch physical planning policy, more specifically the national urbanisation policy. This policy was built up around the concepts Randstad and Green Heart, the latter being the relatively green and open area enclosed by the Randstad ring of cities. Burke (1966) studied the way in which the Dutch national planners tried to meet the increasing space demands of a growing population and a flourishing economy while safeguarding sufficient space for nature and recreation areas. His comparison of various local, regional and national government initiatives to influence the spatial development, though critical at some points, presented the Netherlands as hardly less than a 'planner's paradise'.

This foreign admiration for Dutch planning in general, and national physical planning in particular, is certainly understandable when the ambition level of the national planners is considered. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the Dutch National Physical Planning Agency has produced a series of national reports that were supposed to bring about significant changes in the future spatial development of the Netherlands. In these reports, the planners were far from modest: they aimed at national, regional and local government influence on the settlement structure, the infrastructure, regional and national economic development, and the protection of various natural resources. All this
was to be realised in a coordinated way, in one comprehensive physical planning policy. In the 1960s and 1970s, the National Reports on Physical Planning were even more or less seen as ‘blueprints’ of the future spatial design of the Netherlands. Later, this was considered to be not only too ambitious, but also no longer wanted. The idea that Dutch society could be ‘re-created’ through social policy lost its appeal, citizen participation in the planning process increased and the notion of ‘blueprint planning’ was left behind. However, looking at the content of the national plans produced since the 1970s, not so much seems to have changed in these high ambitions after all. Underlining its lasting ambitions to influence the spatial development of the Netherlands, the National Physical Planning Agency recently published a brochure in which the development of Dutch physical planning throughout the 20th century and the future perspectives were summarised (Ministerie VROM, 2000). The list of ‘basic principles of future spatial policy’ that was later included in the Fifth Report of Physical Planning (2001) is impressive:

- ‘Vibrant and complete cities’: cities are considered as a core element in the further socio-economic development of the Netherlands and should be integrated in regional, national and international networks to a higher extent;
- ‘A robust countryside’: the countryside as an area to live, work and recreate, in which alternative income sources are offered to compensate for the reduction of agricultural employment;
- ‘Sustainable economy and renewable energy’: encouraging a further spatio-economic development in which economic growth is realised without increasing the burdens on the environment.
- ‘Mobility and infrastructure’: aiming for a balance between infrastructure, environment and maintaining the prominent position of the Netherlands in international transport.
- ‘Sustainable mainports’: the further development of Schiphol airport and Rotterdam seaport should be realised while taking account of environmental effects.
- ‘Water management’: ‘(...) making use of natural water systems instead of fighting their disadvantages” (Ministerie VROM, 2000, p. 31)

All these targets are to be coordinated in one integrated policy approach of the future spatial development of the Netherlands, in which the Fifth Report of Physical Planning is supposed to function as the overarching policy document for the various policy fields that are involved.

Apart from the Department of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment, also the Departments of Transport, Agriculture, Economic Affairs, Education, Social Affairs and Internal Affairs are to some extent involved in parts of the above policy agenda. To make political life for the national planners even more complicated, also within their own department there are competing interests between the planners and the sectors for housing and environmental policy. Once the national planners have managed to reach a compromise that satisfies all these parties, they still have to convince regional and local government levels, as well as various lobby groups, that their approach is the most useful one. Can one plan really have this coordinating capacity? If this would be the case, the Netherlands would truly be a ‘planner’s paradise’.

Needham (1989) indicates that it is probably not so much the plan itself that brings about a coordinated Dutch physical planning strategy, but much more the exceptional talents of the Dutch to reach compromises. Foreign planning researchers are often amazed about the
contradiction between the high ambition level of the formal planning system, with its (at first sight) clear hierarchy of national, regional and local plans, and the limited powers to enforce the realisation of these ambitions. The Dutch solution to this problem is "(...) an extensive and fine-meshed network of co-ordination and consultation between the physical planning at the various levels and between the physical and sector planning (Needham, 1989, p. 13).

Be this as it may, even if this high degree of coordination could be reached through negotiations, the success of national physical planning still stands or falls with the extent to which the effects of economic, socio-cultural and demographic trends encourage or frustrate the desired future spatial development of the Netherlands. Unfortunately, this is an aspect of the discussion on the effectiveness of physical planning in which contributions of Dutch (and largely also foreign) planning scientists have in recent years been as good as absent.

1.2 The spatial future of the Netherlands: a societal, political and scientific debate

The self-esteem of most Dutch planners, both in planning practice and in planning science, has surely not always been as high as it seems to be in recent years. In the early 1980s, Dutch physical planning was thought to be in crisis. Several planning scientists were highly critical about the lack of effectiveness of the Dutch physical planning policy. Glasbergen and Simonis (1979) analysed the feasibility of several elements of the Dutch national physical planning policy: did the results of national physical planning policy correspond with the initial goals, and could the plans be realised with the means available? Their conclusions cast heavy doubts on the extent to which Dutch national physical planning was realistic in its goals and intentions. Some years later, Nozeman (1986) reached quite negative conclusions as well in his study of the contribution of recent new housing projects in the Utrecht region to the realisation of national urbanisation policy targets. Faludi & De Ruijter (1985), in their essay ‘No match to the present crisis?’, blamed Dutch planning for ‘the absence of a coherent body of planning thought’, the counterproductive effects of ‘disparate traditions’ and the ‘institutional fragmentation’ that these traditions produced. This critical view on Dutch physical planning was a reflection of a crisis of confidence in the Dutch planning community. In advisory documents of that time physical planning policy was described as having no problem-solving capacity, no grip on other fields of policy and no identity. The answer proposed by planning scientists and implemented by the National Physical Planning Agency was a more ‘execution-oriented’ approach. The Fourth Report was supposed to contain statements not only on policy principles, but also which actions should be taken to realise them (Galle, 1992).

Turning to the early 1990s, a revolution seemed to have taken place in the debate on Dutch national physical planning. The dominant tone changed from pessimistic to highly optimistic. A crucial role in this change was played by the introduction and enthusiastic reception of the concept of ‘planning doctrine’. Faludi & Van der Valk (1990) described the policy of concentrated deconcentration, especially the realisation of the growth centres, as a success story based on the gradual development of a so-called planning doctrine. This can be described as an interrelated whole of discussions and actions to reach a desired spatial arrangement of an area. The interpretation of the policy of concentrated deconcentration as a success story is especially remarkable because the same Faludi was still highly critical of Dutch physical planning policy in general only five
years earlier. The concept of concentrated deconcentration, an attempt to prevent urban sprawl by offering large-scale new housing areas on a selection of sub-urban locations called ‘growth centres’, formed the core element of this policy from the 1960s until the mid-1980s. Shortly afterwards, Faludi & Van der Valk (1994) published their analysis of the evolution of Dutch physical planning in the twentieth century with the daring title ‘Rule and Order’. The first sentence of the book’s preface leaves little room for doubt about the positive opinion of the authors: “This book is about an art in which the Netherlands excels: strategic planning.” (p. xiii). In both books, the authors argue that Dutch physical planning has gradually developed a consistent and effective apparatus to influence the spatial design of the Netherlands. Apparently, contrary to the argument of Faludi and De Ruijter (1985), there was a ‘coherent body of planning thought’ in the Netherlands after all. Dieleman et al (1999) followed this line of thought and argued that Dutch physical planning policy, especially national urbanisation policy, has already been based on the same spatial design principles for more than three decades: compact urban development, containment of suburban expansion and the spatial concepts of the Green Heart and – to a lesser extent- the Randstad that were already introduced earlier (section 1.1).

Nevertheless, criticism on Dutch planning arose once more towards the end of the 1990s. In the popular media, much criticism could be heard on the current compact city policy, and most of all on its housing component: the VINEX locations. These large-scale locations for new housing were claimed to become too monotonous, too mono-functional and too large-scale before they were even completed. Remarkably, an evaluation of the proceedings of the compact city policy was undertaken before the first VINEX houses were constructed (Needham et al, 1994). Although the evaluators showed their admiration for the accomplishment of the national planners to reach an agreement with all parties involved on the realisation of VINEX-locations, they also gave some clear warning signs. In their view, the realisation of the VINEX locations happened too slow, the provision of so many houses in such a short period could cause problems on the housing market, and the realisation of the VINEX programme could be troubled by changes in the land market under changing economic conditions. The policy makers themselves seemed to be dissatisfied with the preliminary results of their compact city policy as well. In 1999, a merciless evaluation of the National Physical Planning Agency appeared, dealing with the results of its own national physical planning policy. A confrontation of planning goals and the preliminary outcomes led to various negative scores, especially with respect to the realisation of building projects on the planned locations and building restrictions on other locations (Ministerie VROM, 1999). Shortly afterwards, a working group of the Dutch parliament published a highly critical report on recent development of Dutch planning policy. The main tendency of this report was that there was a huge gap between the goals and the results of physical planning policy. This gap was, amongst other reasons, due to the habit of renegotiating restrictions on all government levels and the long period between the acceptance of a plan on the national level and the execution on the local level (Werkgroep Vijfde Nota, 2000). Apparently, despite the high hopes of the Fourth Report as being a much more ‘execution-oriented’ document (Galle, 1992), this new approach has not produced much better results than before.

Meanwhile, the Dutch national government seemed to undermine its own physical planning goals. Since the new ‘purple coalition’ (a combination of socialist and liberal-democratic parties) came to power, a new entrepreneurial spirit has apparently invaded the Netherlands. Many large-scale investments have been announced, mainly argued as
necessary to retain or improve the Dutch position in the international economic competition. Furthermore, investments in spatial development seemed to be ever more adapted to the demands of citizens and companies. Many of these large-scale investments produced spatial effects contrary to the compact city policy. Only by some, the ‘necessity’ and inevitability of all these investments was questioned:

“The plans are covered with a mist of ‘faits accomplis’, ‘structural necessities’ and ‘pressure for development and adaptation’. One million one-family houses should be produced because people ‘happen to’ want to live suburban. The necessity of new highways is, apparently, beyond dispute. Also, it ‘happens to be’ unavoidable that companies settle (...) along highways and away from public transport connections” (Hajer & Halsema, 1997, p. 13; translation by author).

In this respect, another example worth noting is the campaign of ‘Milieudefensie’, a non-governmental organisation that is arguing for more restrictions to the loss of agricultural, natural and recreation areas to new extensions of the built environment. This campaign, revolving around the catchy slogan ‘Trek de groene grens’ (‘draw the green border’) caught quite some attention in the debate towards the issuing of the Fifth Report (Zagema, 1999).

However, these critical accounts of the recent development of Dutch physical planning have remained exceptions in the recent debate on the further spatial development of the Netherlands. As far as there have recently been critical comments on recent and future physical planning policy, these comments mostly came from politicians, lobby groups and journalists. One might wonder what happened to the scientific planners in this debate. Since the 1980s, when several scientific planners demonstrated their concerns about the effectiveness of physical planning policy, Dutch planning scientists seem to have become more concerned with the planning process before the plan is published, than with the process from plan to realisation. The central issue of concern for most Dutch planning researchers seems to have become how to reach consensus between all parties involved in the process towards a plan. What happens with this plan once it is completed and politically accepted is largely ignored. Apparently, most planning scientists are either not interested in this part of the planning process or they assume that once all parties involved have agreed on a plan, it will be realised without further obstacles. Three exceptions to this rule are worth noting. First, Wissink (2000) put the influence of a planning doctrine on the planning process in perspective. While the planning doctrine approach is valuable in demonstrating how the goals of physical planning policy are ‘socially constructed’ in a negotiation process, it might view the planning process too much from the position of the professional planners and be focused too much on how these professional planners can maintain their position in the (Dutch) planning debate. Second, looking at the ‘match’ between policy intentions and outcomes, Martens (2000) clearly demonstrated the failure of national spatial mobility policy in the 1990s, especially the policy on the location of firms. Third, De Klerk (2001) argued for tighter connections between land use planning and empirical research of dynamics in socio-spatial configurations.

Dutch urban, regional and economic geographers are specialised in this type of research, so it is not surprising that some of them have recently taken a more critical position towards the results of physical planning in their country. Musterd and Ostendorf (1996), for example, focused on the two core concepts of national urbanisation policy since the 1960s. They argue that concentrated deconcentration was only partially successful. The success was that the planned amount of houses was produced on the planned locations:
the growth centres. Moreover, people actually moved to these houses because they met their housing demands to a high extent. However, the national planners did not manage to prevent that meanwhile, sub-urban growth outside the growth centres continued. Moreover, because economic growth in the growth centres was far less than population growth, the policy produced large-scale commuting between growth centres and the large city agglomerations, which led to severe congestion problems. While Musterd and Ostendorf could not evaluate the outcome of compact city policy yet, they indicated that it would probably not be successful because the gap between policy intentions and popular housing demands had become too wide in this policy. Bontje and Ostendorf (1999) worked out this argument in more detail, in their analysis of the ‘match’ between policy intentions and outcomes and the degree to which the national planning goals meet societal and individual space demands. In addition, Dieleman et al (1999), mentioned earlier as being quite positive on the development of Dutch national urbanisation policy in general, still expressed serious doubts about the degree of realism of compact city policy, especially with regard to its daily mobility goals.

New fuel to the debate was provided when the first concept version of the Fifth Report on physical planning was finally published (Ministerie VROM, 2001). In this report, the government’s plans for the spatial development of the Netherlands until 2030 were outlined. The concept-Fifth Report introduced many policy changes. Apparently, the dissatisfaction of the national planners with the compact city policy was such that they wanted to forget about it as soon as possible. The new strategic planning concept for national urbanisation policy was ‘urban networks’, a concept that meant a clean break with all former compact building intentions. In fact, extensions of the built-up areas were allowed to take place all over the country. ‘Contours’ were introduced as a new instrument to limit further urban sprawl, but instead of selecting locations where building was to be concentrated (like in the concentrated deconcentration policy and the compact city policy), every municipality could now draw its own contour within which new construction would be allowed. Some areas received extra protection against urban sprawl: they were destined to become ‘national landscapes’. However, the way in which these areas were to be kept as ‘open’ and ‘green’ as possible was not made very clear. More in general, the first concept version of the Fifth Report produced many questions on how the ambitious national policy intentions were to be realised on the regional and local level. While the national planners announced an impressive package of goals and intentions, they also announced that most of these goals and intentions should be realised by the provinces and municipalities. Therefore, while the Fifth Report still expressed a high ambition level of the Dutch government to influence the future spatial design of the Netherlands, this was hardly accompanied by concrete measures or instruments that justify this high ambition level.

1.3 Research questions

This study is about the degree to which Dutch physical planning has been effective in the recent past and what we can expect of this policy in the near future. Because physical planning policy as a whole is a too broad field to analyse in terms of effectiveness, the choice has been made to limit this study to national urbanisation policy, which has always been a core element of national physical planning policy. Two aspects of this policy are studied in more detail: the policy on population distribution, and the policy on the distribution of activities.
This, of course, immediately raises the question what is meant with the effectiveness of a policy. In planning science, the degree of effectiveness is often measured in terms of 'to what extent did plans on a higher government level influence plans on a lower government level' (Bukkems, 1989). Although this is certainly an important precondition for an effective application of, for example, national policies on the regional and local level, it does not guarantee that the goals of the national plans are eventually reached. When all parties involved have agreed on a planning strategy but no concrete actions are taken afterwards, the policy can certainly not be considered effective (Glasbergen & Simonis, 1979; Nozeman, 1986). An alternative view on planning success raises the question 'imagine what would have happened without planning'. This view has recently been very dominant in Dutch planning science. Several academic planners and geographers suggest that if the West of the Netherlands had not been consequently targeted with strategic spatial concepts such as Green Heart and Randstad, most of the open space would have been lost to urban sprawl (Faludi & Van der Valk, 1994; Dieleman et al, 1999). The large problem is of course that this suggestion cannot be tested in any way since we do not know what would have happened without planning. It is certainly possible and imaginable that the West of the Netherlands, or the Netherlands as a whole, would have seen much more urban sprawl without national urbanisation policy, but this is only one of the possible developments that could have taken place.

Instead, in this study, a (national) plan is considered effective when the goals set out in the plan are really reached. The main criterion of effectiveness, therefore, is the match between policy goals and policy results. From the national documents on urbanisation policy since the 1960s, several concrete policy goals regarding population distribution and functional relations within urban regions can be derived. Statements have been made on the desired population development of categories of municipalities and/or regions. Some categories of municipalities and regions were supposed to realise a significant population growth, while other categories of municipalities and regions had to limit their further growth as much as possible. Also, the national plans contained various attempts to influence the daily mobility relations within and between functional urban regions. The development of daily mobility was mostly targeted through a set of measures to change the distribution of activities within functional urban regions. An example of this type of measures is the 'ABC-location policy' with which the national planners promoted the location of firms near railway stations and intersections of railways and highways. In some cases, these population distribution and daily mobility goals were explicitly mentioned in the national plans; in others, the goals were more implicit (more in the form of 'intentions' than of concrete goals). However clear or vague the eventual policy goals may have been, this study starts from the assumption that it is possible to evaluate the degree of success of Dutch national urbanisation policy through a confrontation of the policy goals and intentions of this policy with the concrete dynamics in population distribution and daily mobility.

The main research questions of this study are:

1. To what extent did Dutch national urbanisation policy influence the most recent developments in Dutch population distribution?
2. To what extent did Dutch national urbanisation policy influence the most recent developments in Dutch daily mobility patterns?
To what extent are the recent developments in population distribution and the influence of national urbanisation policy on these developments in the Netherlands different from the experiences of other Northwest-European countries?

The answer to these questions is sought with the help of a theoretical framework in which the disciplines of urban and economic geography and physical planning meet. On the one hand, in urban and economic geography, explanations of the dynamics in population and activity distribution tend to underestimate the possible role of welfare state policy in general, and physical planning policy in particular. On the other hand, planning theory might be too optimistic about the degree to which physical planning can really produce changes in spatial development and largely ignores the role of economic, socio-cultural and demographic changes in this respect.

1.4 Structure of the book

In the following three chapters, the theoretical framework of this study is worked out in more detail. In Chapter 2 a selection of the most influential theories on the development of population distribution and the factors contributing to this development is presented. Economic growth and economic restructuring have often been singled out as the most important explanatory factors for population distribution dynamics. In addition, several social scientists have pointed at the influence of recent dramatic changes in the socio-cultural and demographic structure of the population in Northwest-Europe. The possible influence of various kinds of welfare state policy, among which physical planning, has so far been largely absent from this theoretical debate.

In Chapter 3 the focus is shifted from the distribution of population to the distribution of activities and the urban form this has produced over time. Throughout the twentieth century, many attempts have been made to express the development of cities and urban regions in models and concepts. A clear tendency in these models and concepts was to consider the phenomenon of urbanisation on a regional scale to an increasing extent. Gradually, the geographic scale of these regions became larger and larger. The extent to which the large-scale concepts that dominated the most recent urbanisation debates like ‘urban fields’ and ‘urban networks’ still refer to the daily life of the people that are supposed to live, work and recreate in these areas is doubtful.

In Chapter 4, the debate on the possible role of physical planning in general, and national urbanisation policy in particular, in the development of the distribution of population and activities in the Netherlands and Northwest-Europe is discussed. Especially in the period after World War II, most Northwest-European countries have launched national policy initiatives to influence the further spatial development of their territory. As almost all of these countries are heavily urbanised, it comes as no surprise that national urbanisation policy formed a core element of their national physical planning policies. The attempts to influence the dynamics of population and activity distribution in Northwest-Europe varied from country to country, but two approaches were applied in as good as all countries in some form. The first is the attempt to prevent urban sprawl by building large-scale new housing areas in a selection of locations, while imposing restrictions on building elsewhere; the second is the concentration of new housing and employment in and around large and medium-sized cities, again combined with building restrictions elsewhere. Strategic spatial concepts such as ‘concentrated deconcentration’ and the ‘compact city’ played an important role in the development of these policies. However, in the recent
theoretical development of planning science, the role of these concepts and other means to produce an effective planning policy has received most attention, while the degree to which such a consensus resulted in concrete changes in spatial reality was largely ignored (see also section 1.2).

In Chapter 5, the methods of empirical analysis used to answer the research questions mentioned in section 1.3 are discussed. Chapter 6 contains an analysis of the influence of national urbanisation policy on the development of population distribution in the Netherlands. This policy influence is analysed in two ways: first, by confronting the goals and intentions of national urbanisation policy with the actual dynamics in population distribution; second, by looking at the degree to which the goals and intentions of national urbanisation policy were feasible (see also Bontje & Ostendorf, 1999). In addition, the discussion on the future spatial development of the Netherlands during the process towards the publication of the Fifth Report on Physical Planning is shortly summarised and discussed.

Chapter 7 is a collection of three case studies on the effectiveness of national urbanisation policy elsewhere in Northwest-Europe. The case studies are Switzerland, West-Sweden and Northern England. These cases are compared to the Netherlands to explore to what extent Dutch national urbanisation policy has really been as unique in its effects on the distribution of population as Dutch and foreign planning researchers often seem to think. The comparison of the Netherlands with the three international cases also serves to get more insight in the possibilities to influence the distribution of population through national urbanisation policy in general (Bontje, 2001).

In Chapter 8, the focus is once again shifted from population distribution to activity distribution. The recent development of daily mobility patterns is used as an indicator for changes in the distribution of activities on the scale level of functional urban regions. Through such an analysis, recent theoretical assumptions of a considerable scale enlargement of daily life in the Netherlands could be tested. Concepts like the ‘urban field’ and ‘polynucleated urban regions’ (discussed in Chapter 3) have recently become popular among Dutch academic geographers and planners as well as among Dutch national and regional professional planners. The results of the daily mobility analysis give reason for serious doubts about the relevance of these large-scale urban regions for the daily ‘activity space’ of average Dutch people (see also Bontje, 2000). Also, the data on daily mobility give some insight in the degree to which the functional relations within and between urban regions have recently developed like the Dutch national planners would have wanted.

Finally, in Chapter 9, the main conclusions of the study are presented and on the basis of these conclusions, the future plans of the Dutch national planners as presented in the first version of the Fifth Report will be critically discussed.
CHAPTER TWO
WHERE PEOPLE LIVE AND WHY THEY LIVE THERE...
THEORIES ABOUT THE DYNAMICS IN POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

2.1 Introduction

The questions ‘where do people live?’ and ‘why do they live there?’ have always been among the central issues of concern for geographers in general and urban geographers in particular. Much has already been written on the factors that might explain why people settle in a certain place. Very often, the explanation has been sought in economic and technological development. International, national and regional economic growth and decline are generally accepted to influence population distribution in the advanced capitalist world. In recent decades, the restructuring from a mainly manufacturing-oriented to a mainly service-oriented world economy has also been mentioned frequently, but the extent to which this shift really produced changes in the spatial distribution of population is still largely unknown. The same is true for the influence of new and improved information and communication technologies. Socio-cultural changes and demographic trends are also often pointed at as relevant processes for the dynamics of population distribution in countries and regions. In this respect, the most often mentioned processes are the increasing share of small households in relation to the rapidly declining birth rate and the individualisation of Northwest-European societies, and the increase of foreign migration since the 1960s.

This chapter will try to give an overview of the most influential publications dealing with these factors, without the ambition of presenting a complete overview of the relevant literature. While section 2.2 focuses on some of the most influential recent contributions dealing with the spatial impact of economic and technological development, section 2.3 will pay attention to the possible role of the radical societal, cultural and demographic changes in Northwest Europe since the 1960s. As both groups of contributions have been able to offer only a partial explanation at most, in the 1980s and 1990s several attempts have been made to integrate them into multidisciplinary approaches. Some of these approaches are discussed in section 2.4. The factor cluster ‘policy’, discussed in section 2.5, has been much less included in explanations of population distribution dynamics so far. As mentioned earlier, the influence of policy, especially physical planning policies aimed at controlling the urbanisation process, will have a central place in this study. Section 2.6 presents a conceptual model for the explanation of recent trends in the distribution of population and activities in Northwest Europe that will be applied to the cases of the Netherlands, Switzerland, West Sweden and Northern England in the empirical analyses of the Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

2.2 The spatial impact of economic and technological development

2.2.1 Economy and urban growth: growth pole theory, export base theory and cumulative causation

The growth pole theory is an explanation of urban growth that is entirely based on local and economic development. In this theory, introduced by Perroux in the 1950s, the central line of thought is that a process of economic growth originates from a ‘key firm’ (‘firme motrice’ or ‘pôle de croissance’) from which growth is spread via a network of firm contacts. Perroux calls this network ‘economic space’. This term causes confusion,
certainly amongst geographers, since Perroux refers to an abstract meaning of ‘space’ and not to the geographic meaning. However, in later publications of Perroux and others (like Massey, 1984), the growth pole theory was extended with locational patterns: “The functioning of markets and multinationals, of capital and knowledge, is indeed influenced by locations, the locational patterns and the production environment in which a firm settles” (Lambooy, 1988, p. 93; translation by author).

With the addition of the locational component, the growth pole theory became more aimed at application in policy practice. The central question for many policy makers and theorists was how the growth effects of the network of relations of a growth pole could be used to the benefit of the region as much as possible. In more recent publications, the term ‘growth pole’ therefore became more identified with the location of the firm than with the firm itself.

A possible objection against the growth pole theory is that it does not offer a sufficient explanation for the location choice of firms and for regional economic development. Without doubt, the presence of large multinational companies can contribute to attracting additional employment and generating economic growth, but it is only one amongst many factors in the location choice of a firm. Another problem in recent decades is the process of economic restructuring. The growth pole theory was introduced in an era in which large industrial complexes still provided many thousands of jobs, a situation that in most countries no longer applies (Lambooy, 1988).

A theory often used in combination with the growth pole theory is the export base theory. Export produces wealth in the country or region of origin and can increase its production capacity. According to the export base theory, a country or region needs export-oriented industries to realise economic growth. The profits of the export-oriented industries can be used to stimulate the development of service industries and institutions like education, health care and retail. In the export-base theory, however, an important question is not answered: how does a region attract these export-oriented industries? According to Jane Jacobs (1984), only regions able to develop a city with a differentiated network of activities can be assured of consistent long-term economic growth. Regions without a (large) city or with a one-sided production structure normally do not have good prospects on long-term economic growth.

A third theory that could possibly contribute to the explanation of the urbanisation process is the theory of cumulative causation (Myrdal, 1957). According to this theory, the improvement of the regional production environment can give a region a comparative advantage to other regions. The quality of production factors and the improvement of circumstances of production can attract new economic activities to the region, which could then gradually become a ‘core region’.

After some time, decentralisation of economic activities will threaten the economic growth of the core region, but the dominant position of the core region will not be lost. This is because decentralisation will generally be a selective process in which especially the economically weakest sectors will move out, and also because the decentralisation process takes the form of an extension of the core region rather than a move to another region. Furthermore, core regions will have the potential to attract new growth impulses because their production environment is favourable for innovations. Following this model of cumulative causation, once a core-periphery pattern has come into existence, it will always remain in place or even reinforce itself (Lambooy, 1988).
The most important problem with the growth pole theory and export base theory is their strong focus on the development of the urban local economy. In these theories, urban growth is almost exclusively seen in terms of growth of the urban economy. The dynamics of urban and regional population distribution as a result of economic development are hardly considered. While a concentration of urban employment generally coincided with a growing urban population until at least the 1950s, when the growth pole theory and the model of cumulative causation were introduced, this is no longer the case in most Western countries. The considerable growth of income for large parts of the population of Western countries since the 1960s and improvements in transportation technology, amongst other factors, facilitated sub-urbanisation and increasing distances of commuter traffic. Population deconcentration has made explanations of urbanisation based on local and regional economic (employment) growth much less relevant. In the choice of the most attractive place to live, the importance of distance to the job location gradually decreased, while the importance of the quality of the house and the living environment has increased. Therefore, while an urban economy might grow rapidly, the urban population can decrease considerably at the same time. When the economic explanations of urban growth are applied on a somewhat wider geographic scale, like agglomerations (see section 2.2.3) or functional urban regions (see Chapter 3), the growth pole and export base theory might still contribute to an explanation of the dynamics of population distribution. In this respect, the theory of cumulative causation seems more applicable since it is already referring to regions instead of places (cities). However, also in this model, alternative factors that are not directly related to economic production and specialisation, like improvements in transportation technology and the increased importance of housing quality and an attractive living environment, are not considered.

2.2.2 The pros and cons of agglomeration

Referring mostly to the North-American context, Simmons (1978) presents four models for the development of urban systems:

- The 'frontier' model, in which "(...) the growth of cities is initiated externally by investment decisions from a previously developed urban subsystem" (p. 67). The earliest phase of US urbanisation from the North East coastal area towards the west followed this pattern.
- The 'staple export model', based on a surplus of agricultural production.
- The 'industrial specialisation' model, in which the growth of cities is primarily determined by the growth of the national economy and "(...) the relative strength of the cities' sector of economic specialization" (p.67).
- 'Social change', a model that actually does not seem to deserve to be called 'model' considering Simmons' description of it: "(...) the growth of cities is largely unpredictable in the face of rapid social and technological change" (p.68).

The industrial specialisation model could be applied to the European situation in most of the twentieth century as well. The central thought behind this model is the economic theory of agglomeration advantages, in which the development of cities and regions is strongly connected to the development of the regional, national and international economy. However, in the last decades of the twentieth century, the role of other factors in urban (economic) development apparently gained importance. These other factors are
discussed by Simmons (1978) under the header ‘social change’. The factors he mentions are extremely diverse and include ‘amenity’-factors like climate and recreational opportunities and the influence of region-specific government investments (in the US context, for example investments in the defence and space industry in California).

Already during the 1960s and 1970s, the end of the agglomeration advantages of metropolitan areas seemed in sight. In a comparative study of migration between core and peripheral regions, Vining & Pallone (1982) discovered considerable differences in recent migration patterns between categories of countries. While the selected countries in Northwest Europe and North America all demonstrated a net out migration from the core to the peripheral areas, countries in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia showed an opposite migration movement. Vining and Pallone claimed these differences were mainly caused because in Northwest Europe and North America, the economies of further agglomeration in the core areas no longer existed, while in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia these agglomeration economies still existed and were in several cases promoted through national spatial-economic policy.

The rapid emergence of the information and communications technology since the 1980s could be expected to undermine the validity of theories of agglomeration advantages of large metropolitan centres (see section 2.2.5). Van der Vegt and Manshanden (1996) suggest that there might be as much disadvantages as advantages resulting from agglomeration of economic activities. The most important disadvantages are traffic congestion around the large cities and relatively high costs of land and housing for companies and their employees. However, there are still advantages left, the most important of which (for employees as well as consumers) is the diversity of service provision. As a further reason to hold on to agglomeration of economic activities, the necessity of a centralisation of decision-making paradoxically resulting from the increasing internationalisation of the economy could be mentioned. Directly connected to this is the question of the value of ‘face-to-face’-contacts. On these points, opinions in recent literature are strongly divided. The accumulation of knowledge and expertise of companies and their employees might contribute to a fast exchange of information and innovations in cities. Van der Vegt and Manshanden (1996) doubt if this will continue to be the case due to the further development of the ‘electronic highway’, exchanging face-to-face contacts through digital contacts, and the problems of traffic congestion around large cities when so many people would have to travel there for their meetings. Changes in the relative importance of each of these factors might contribute to trends of suburbanisation or re-urbanisation dominating the process of population distribution. This issue will be discussed in more detail in section 2.2.4.

2.2.3 Urbanisation as a phased process

In the late 1970s, a Dutch research group presented a model for the process of urbanisation in Europe (Klaassen, 1979; Berg et al, 1982). Their model presented urbanisation as a cyclical process, inspired by earlier comparable thoughts on urbanisation, most notably of Hall (Hall, 1971; Hall & Hay, 1980). The basic assumption of the model is that urbanisation takes place in phases and that eventually all urban regions in Europe will go through the entire series of these phases. The model is summarised in Figure 2.1.
The stages of urban development in this model are primarily determined by changes in the regional, national and international economy. Phase I starts due to the emergence of industrialisation, which brings many migrants from the countryside to the cities looking for a job. At first, the financial means of these in-migrants are very modest and their housing demands therefore could not be too high. Gradually, however, the incomes of most city inhabitants increased. Together with the mass production of cars, this leads to a considerably larger freedom of choice of housing locations for many of them. On the city's edges as well as on more remote locations new housing areas are built: the urbanisation process entered the phase of sub-urbanisation (Phase II). Manufacturing companies also start to move outwards from the city centre in search for more space to expand. In this phase, the term 'city' seems to lose much of its relevance. Van den Berg et al (1982) speak of 'urban area' or 'urban district' instead.

While in the sub-urbanisation phase cities still grew slightly, this is no longer the case in phase III. In this phase, the problems of traffic congestion more and more hinder the accessibility of companies and services in the city centre. This encourages people as well as companies (including the tertiary sector) to move out towards suburban locations. The urban region extends further outwards, beyond the suburbs built in phase II. The newly formed, larger-scale urban region that grows out of this phase is called 'functional urban region' (see also Chapter 3). Within this functional urban region, economic and population growth is said to occur mostly on the outer edges. The fourth and last phase proposed by Klaassen (1979) is also the most challenged one among geographers. Re-urbanisation would take place if the long-term trend of urban depopulation would be stopped and exchanged for a new period of urban growth. Berg et al (1982) foresaw re-urbanisation as one of the alternative future developments of European cities, the other one being a further acceleration of de-urbanisation.

The 'stages of urban development' model has some clear strengths. Especially the first two stages of the model, urbanisation and sub-urbanisation, can be applied to the historic development of most European urban regions. The strong link between urban development and changes in the economic structure (industrialisation and de-industrialisation) is another strength. Although urbanisation can certainly not exclusively be explained by economic changes, it is certainly an important part of the explanation. A
third strength of the model is the attention paid to housing preferences, a factor often overlooked in other economic explanations of urbanisation. The third and fourth phase of the model, however, are far less convincing. The differences between "sub-urbanisation" and "de-urbanisation" are rather vague. In addition, once the de-urbanisation phase is questioned, the 're-urbanisation' phase loses its logic too: if the de-urbanisation phase never occurred, there can be no re-urbanisation phase following it either. Furthermore, although many European cities indeed demonstrated a population growth in the 1980s and 1990s after losing a large part of their population in the 1960s and 1970s, this population growth was only very modest, generally well below the national growth, and the preceding decline could not be compensated. It is therefore questionable to refer to this development as 're-urbanisation'. This becomes even more questionable if the population growth of cities is compared to that of suburban and rural areas. Furthermore, the position of medium-sized cities (often showing a continuous growth while the large cities were in decline) is hard to implement in the model. As the empirical analysis of population distribution trends in Chapter 6 and 7 will illustrate, the main trend of Northwest-European population distribution since the 1980s should rather be interpreted as a 'status quo' between (large and medium-sized) cities, suburbs and rural areas. To the critique on the 'stages of urban development'-model summarised above, Atzema (1991) adds the tendency of Klaassen and Van den Berg to make deterministic statements without testing these statements empirically, and the neglect of the role of the individual actor in the urbanisation process.

2.2.4 Technological changes, internationalisation and economic restructuring

The global economy has become increasingly organised around collecting, processing and generating information and knowledge. Old industrial cities lost ground and were forced to shift their economic focus. New centres specialised in information technology have emerged. Although the results of this economic restructuring are still highly uncertain, several social scientists have already suggested that the development of the 'information highway' will have consequences for society as revolutionary as the development of railways in the 19th century (Hall, 1993; Castells, 1992).

The development of the 'new economy' is also characterised by a continuously increasing integration of the economic system on the global level, and a 'new international division of labour'. Not only the economy, but also policy, education and culture are getting more and more international in character. This does not necessarily mean that the world is becoming more uniform. Parallel to the increasing importance of the international sphere, regional and local differentiation appears to be strengthened as well. Processes that seem contradictory at first sight such as spatial homogenisation and spatial differentiation, or increasing spatial mobility and increasing spatial fixation, not only take place at the same time, but could even be seen as two sides of the same coin (Musterd et al., 1998). This paradox is often expressed in the somewhat curious term 'glocalisation' (Pater & Van der Wusten, 1996).

In the early 1990s, Castells (1992) pointed at the following processes as the most important influences on European urban development:

- A fundamental technological revolution, based on production and exchange of information, having far-reaching consequences on economy and society;
• The emergence of the ‘informational society’ as a result of this technological revolution: "By such a concept, I understand the social structure where the sources of economic productivity, cultural hegemony and political-military power depend, fundamentally, on the capacity to retrieve, store, process, and generate information and knowledge (p.4)."

• The formation of a ‘global economy’. This is a fundamentally different economic system from the ‘world economy’ that emerged centuries earlier (of which the Netherlands of the ‘Golden Age’ in the 17th century form an example). The main difference between the global economy and the world economy is the mutual dependence of capital flows and labour markets across the entire world in the global economy. Power and wealth are distributed across the world in a very uneven way. Castells points at constant accumulation of power and wealth in North-America, (Northwest) Europe and Southeast-Asia. These regions are immensely attractive for immigrants from the poorer parts of the world.

• European integration, the shift of power from nation states to the European Union which also offers opportunities for a shift of power from the national to the regional and local level (‘Europe of the regions’).

• The emergence of the ‘social movements of the informational society’, like the environmental and the emancipation movements.

Still according to Castells (1992), these processes reflect themselves spatially in cities in the following ways:

• Concentration of management and control-functions in national and international business centres increases;

• Creation of ‘exclusive spaces’ by and for the elite groups that thank their improved socio-economic position to the emergence of the informational society. These elite locations can be found outside as well as inside the large cities;

• Increasing polarisation: not only elite groups, but also marginal groups become increasingly concentrated in large cities. "It is in the core administrative and entertainment district of European cities where urban marginality makes itself present" (p.13).

The resulting city landscape was dubbed ‘informational city’. The strengthening of the international key position of metropolitan centres, the downturn of industrial regions (in some cases re-emerging as concentration locations of commercial services and ICT) and the upsurge of regions like the French Midi and Andalusia (Spain) led to a new division of labour in Europe. This led Castells to his famous and intensively debated statement that the ‘space of flows’ is getting more important than the ‘space of places’. The debate on this issue will return in more detail in Chapter 3.

A term showing many similarities with the informational city is the ‘post-industrial city’. Herbert & Thomas (1991) described the historical development of the urban system, in which three phases were distinguished: the pre-industrial, the industrial and the post-industrial city. The transformation from industrial to post-industrial city is said to have taken place during the second half of the twentieth century. The transformation from industrial to post-industrial city was accompanied by the emergence of a post-industrial society. characterised by:

• An economy in which the service sector plays the central role;

• The growing importance of ‘professional and technological classes’:
• The growing importance of research and development as a basis for company strategies and government policies;
• More attention for the possible future consequences of technological innovations;
• The emergence of new systems of information and communication.

These processes, amongst others, lead to concentration and centralisation of economic power in a selective group of large metropolitan centres. The transition from the industrial to the post-industrial society has consequences for the spatial structure of urban areas and the spatial distribution of population as well. Herbert and Thomas (1991) refer to the emergence of new growth regions like the Sunbelt in the United States and the Outer Metropolitan Area of London and the process of counter-urbanisation: "a situation in which smaller towns and semi-rural areas beyond the traditional metropolitan rings begin to act as magnets for people and activities" (p.39). This process will be dealt with in more detail in section 2.4.1. Furthermore, the authors claim that the meaning of location and distance have considerably declined as a consequence of the emergence of the post-industrial city. Continuous improvements in transportation and communication technology have made an increase in people's action radius possible. This claim has been challenged by several other observants of recent trends in urbanisation, however. The discussion on the meaning of distance and location will return more extensively in Chapter 3 as well as in the remainder of this section.

In addition to the above-mentioned economic factors determining the changing face of cities and urban regions, Jobse & Musterd (1994) point at the increasing flexibility of products and production processes. Not only people and organisations, but also the city has to be able to adapt to fast changes in production processes. This results in cities getting more complex, multiform and volatile: "In brief, the city as a kaleidoscope and a paradox, where dynamics have become the norm, disparities between rich and poor are demonstrated and prosperity and decay manifest themselves at short distances from each other" (p.3, translation by author).

Most of the trends suggested above, but most of all the supposed rise of a global economy and the political integration of Europe, might contribute to a further strengthening of the functional ties between European cities. Since the early 1980s, several urban and economic geographers approached European cities as locations within a network of cities on the European scale. The central thought in their analyses is that all cities in Europe form a functionally interrelated network, which in its turn is linked (mainly via the 'global cities' London and Paris) to a worldwide system of cities. Theorists following this line of thought have studied recent trends in economic development and population growth and decline of metropolitan areas and tried to deduct general trends occurring throughout the entire collection of European metropolitan areas.

Among the trendsetters in the European urban system approach were Hall and Hay (1980). The central question in their study was to what extent urbanisation trends in Europe had followed the 'American model' of urbanisation in recent decades, or could be expected to follow this model in the near future. This American model implied as the dominant trends of urban growth:
• 'top-down' through the (inter)national hierarchy of metropolitan areas (with the highest-ranked metropolitan areas in terms of population and economic importance growing the fastest);
• an outward movement within metropolitan areas;
• net migration from metropolitan to non-metropolitan areas;
• replacement of urban growth from old industrial regions to newly industrialising regions and urbanising regions dominated by tertiary activities

Hall and Hay concluded from their study that European cities generally did not follow the American model in the 1970s. While in the US the traditional pattern of net migration from the countryside to the metropolitan areas was turned around, a process also known as counter-urbanisation (see section 2.4.1), this development did not take place in Europe. However, another trend from the American model, namely the outward movement within metropolitan areas, could be found in a large part of the European metropolitan areas. This outward movement within metropolitan areas intensified during the 1970s.

Building on this research, two groups of urban researchers have tried to establish a hierarchy of metropolitan areas in the European urban system. Cheshire et al (1988) explored the distribution of wealth across functional urban regions in Western Europe. As a measure of wealth, 4 indicators were used: the income per capita, the unemployment level, a migration index based on incoming and outgoing migration streams, and the demand for hotel beds as an indicator of economic vitality and the attractiveness of the living and working environment. A comparable study was done by a French group of urban researchers (Reclus, 1989). This study set up a hierarchy of European urban regions according to the functions represented in the urban region. All agglomerations of 200,000 or more inhabitants in 14 countries in Northwest and Central Europe were included in the study. For each agglomeration, information was gathered on 16 characteristics of economy, financial services, international relations, research and development, communication, culture and population size. This produced a European urban hierarchy, in which the agglomerations with the most complete functional profile claimed the top positions. The agglomerations were also divided into groups according to their functional specialisation. Furthermore, the Reclus-group drew a map of the European urban system, in which a number of urbanised areas that were presumed to form a functionally integrated urban region were presented. The largest of these regions was an area extending from London via the river Rhine towards North Italy. A second border-crossing urban region was supposed to be found along the Spanish, French and Italian Mediterranean coastline. Cortie and Dignum (1991) undertook an interesting attempt to combine the urban region hierarchies of Cheshire et al (1988) and the Reclus group (1989). They concluded that longer-term prosperity of urban regions (at least in the Northwest-European context) was most of all promoted through the presence of internationally orientated activities in commercial services, culture, communications and research. The geographic position and the number of economic activities were considered less important than the degree to which urban regions possessed of those economic sectors that were (and still are) the most relevant in the recent international economic development.

There can hardly be any doubt about the continuously growing intensity of economic relations between large metropolitan centres, both on a European and a global scale. However, the degree to which this results in changes in the distribution of population and activities on lower scale levels (countries or regions within countries) is still largely unknown. Even less is known about the actual spatial consequences of the growing influence of ICT in the world economy and society. The literature on the spatial consequences of a complex of economic and technological factors such as ICT, the shift from an industrial to a service economy, globalisation and European economic integration
so far is dominated by hypothetical thinking. Lots of possible influences, often working in opposite ways, have already been suggested but the eventual outcome of all these suggested trends in terms of the spatial distribution of population and activities still remains a mystery. Many observers, following the argument of Castells (1992) about the growing importance of the 'space of flows' at the expense of the 'space of places', foresee a development towards further deconcentration. Others, like Fielding (1994), expect a rather stable distribution of population under the influence of economic restructuring and the upsurge of ICT. Fielding explains this by pointing at the compensating effect of welfare state transfers to regions with declining industries and the largely 'endogenous' nature of the development of new industrial districts. With this latter point he means that the development of new economic branches might to some extent have taken place in locations that were not industrialised before, but that this development mainly came about by using the special skills of people already living in these locations without causing large shifts in the distribution of population. The term 'new industrial districts' mainly refers to clusters of small companies in 'niche'-markets. These new industrial districts often originate spontaneously; however, once they have formed, they tend to be relatively strongly bound to their geographic location (Scott, 1997; Storper, 1992; Musterd et al 1998). Herewith we already touched upon the central theme of Chapter 3, which deals with the supposed scale enlargement of human action space as a result of (amongst others) improvements in transportation and communication technologies. While in this section the lasting importance of geographic location for economic development was repeatedly stressed, Chapter 3 will argue that the same holds true for individuals and households in their daily activity behaviour.

2.3 The spatial impact of demographic and socio-cultural changes

Economic and technological changes alone are not sufficient to explain the dramatic changes in population distribution in Northwest Europe since the 1960s. Parallel to the economic and technological changes discussed in section 2.2, considerable shifts have also taken place in the way of life of households and individual members of these households in Europe, most of all in Northwest Europe. Due to various coinciding and partially interrelated trends the 1960s and 1970s turned out to be a 'demographic watershed' (Faus-Pujol, 1995). The development of European population was radically changed from a fast growing towards a 'zero-growth' population in the course of only 40 years. This caused the Dutch demographer Van de Kaa (1987) to announce 'the second demographic transition'. Starting in the 19th century in Northwest Europe, the first demographic transition involved a rapidly dropping death rate caused by improvements in hygiene and health care. This, in combination with a high birth rate, resulted in a considerable acceleration of natural population growth. The second transition started in Northwest Europe when (in the 1960s) also the birth rate started to fall and landed (in the 1990s) at a level just above, or in some countries even slightly below, the death rate. Although the drop in European fertility actually already started in the late 19th century, this did not immediately result in a dropping birth rate. At first, the fertility decline was compensated by a rapid decline in infant mortality, again due to improvements in hygiene and health care, but this compensating effect diminished in the second half of the twentieth century (Faus-Pujol, 1995).

One of the most powerful trends resulting from the dropping birth rate was the decrease of average household size. However, also several socio-cultural developments played an influential role as well. All these developments can be seen as products of the process of
individualisation - through which traditional institutions as the nuclear family, the church and the neighbourhood lose their relevance for the way of life of individuals - and the process of emancipation. Hall (1993, p. 892) mentions "(...) rising divorce rates, the survival of widowed partners, and the departure of young people to higher education or careers" as the most relevant developments changing the demographic and socio-cultural structure of society. Champion (1992) adds the rapid increase of labour market participation of women since the 1960s. This led to a strong growth of the share of two-earner households in the population. The two-earner household tends to postpone family extension and in many cases chooses not to have children at all. Two-earner households generally give more priority to the labour market career than the traditional one-earner households.

Ageing is another demographic process with consequences for the household structure of the population. Continuous improvements in health care have resulted in a marked increase in life expectancy. Together with the decrease in the birth rate this has led to an increase of the share of elderly households. In the coming decades, ageing will bring down the share of the 'active' population, that is, the share of the population that is or can be active on the labour market according to current standards (generally defined as the population between 15 and 65 years old). However, if in the long run adaptations to an ageing population would be made, like a change of the retirement age, the eventual effect might not be as 'catastrophic' as many now tend to think (Faus-Pujol, 1995). The ageing process also contributes to the decrease of average household size since elderly households generally exist of only one or two persons. It could be expected that the increasing share of elderly in the population might have consequences for housing preferences and eventually also for the spatial distribution of population. Surprisingly little research has been done to find out to what extent the housing preferences of the elderly are different from those of the population as a whole. This lack of knowledge was already recognised by Wames (1992) in the early 1990s, but little seems to have changed in this picture since then. An increase of retirement migration is frequently mentioned, within Northwest-European countries from urban to rural areas (Droogleever Fortuijn & Ostendorf, 1999; Thissen & Engelsdorp Gastelaars, 2000) and within metropolitan areas to seaside resorts (Champion, 1992), but also to an increasing extent from Northwest to South Europe (Williams et al, 1997). However, the effects of this retirement migration on both the departure and the destination locations have remained largely unclear so far.

The growth of foreign migration in recent decades, however, has had a compensating effect on the decrease of average household size as well as on the ageing of the West-European population (Hall & White, 1995). Many West-European countries suffered from a shortage of labour in the early 1960s. The solution was sought in attracting temporary labour migrants from abroad, mostly from the countries of the Mediterranean region. Many of these migrants, popularly known as 'guest workers', eventually chose for a permanent stay in the receiving country and let their families come over from their country of origin. Parallel to these significant foreign migration flows of guest workers and their families, countries like the UK, France and the Netherlands received another sizable group of foreign migrants. This in-migration originated from the countries' former colonies that gained independence in the 1960s and 1970s. From the 1980s on, both mentioned migration flows decreased in importance. However, they were replaced by a new rapidly emerging migration flow of refugees and asylum seekers (Muus, 1995). Put in very generalised way, all these foreign migrant groups are characterised by a household size considerably above the average of the receiving countries. Gradually, after staying in
the receiving country for some decades, the household size of most migrant groups tends to decrease towards the national average (Van Amersfoort, 1991).

Both the increase of the share of small (one- and two-person) households as the increase of foreign migration is claimed to have had positive consequences for the population development of the cities, most of all the largest cities. Generally, young one-and two-person households, more often seem to have a preference for an urban living environment than family households. Foreign migrants generally tend to start their housing career in the largest cities of the receiving country, where the chances to find a job are highest and earlier migrants from the same country have often already settled (Jobse & Musterd, 1992). These groups therefore largely compensated the selective out-migration of the cities since the 1960s, mainly existing of middle- and higher income groups and family households (Ottens, 1989).

Influenced by these demographic and socio-cultural trends and the economic and technologic developments described in section 2.2.2, the West-European society is said to have become ‘post-modern’. Post-modernism is supposed to have become the successor of modernism, a societal mainstream development characteristic for most of the twentieth century. Modernism was dominated by ideals like the ‘logical, analysing human being’ and a firm belief in progress through technologic innovations and large-scale planning of economy and society. From the late 1970s on, modernism was more and more challenged. The emerging alternative of post-modernism is characterised by stressing "(...) the confused, the fragmented, the manifold, the lack of consensus and of orderly principles in society" (Pater & Van der Wusten, 1996, p. 239). In terms of housing preferences, an increasing diversification of demands for housing types and environments would be the most logical outcome of this increasing fragmentation. This might have spatial consequences through changes in residential mobility patterns. However, at least in the Netherlands, this has not (yet) led to a situation in which the traditional housing preferences have been completely pushed aside. For the Dutch case, it has been argued that the demographic and socio-cultural changes described above have resulted in a housing market that is increasingly ‘bi-polar’ of character. Both young small households and foreign migrants are said to have a more urban housing preference than the Dutch population as a whole, which might explain the recent revival of the popularity of central urban housing locations. However, although decreasing in importance, family households still form a considerable part of Dutch population and especially households with young children still demonstrate a suburban housing preference. The housing environments ‘in-between’ (the outer urban areas) have gradually lost their attractiveness according to this line of thought (Meulenbelt, 1997; Musterd & Østendorf, 1998).
2.4 Interdisciplinary approaches: population distribution dynamics as a product of economic, demographic and socio-cultural trends

Just like the economic-technological trends discussed in section 2.2, also the demographic and socio-cultural trends discussed in section 2.3 can only offer a part of the explanation. An interdisciplinary approach that tries to combine both factor clusters promises a more complete and powerful explanatory framework. Several urban researchers have made attempts for such an interdisciplinary, multi-factor explanation in recent decades. Some of these explanations will be presented in the following pages.

2.4.1 Counter-urbanisation

In the 1970s, several urban researchers signalled a 'clean break' in the development of settlement patterns in the Western world. As with many urbanisation tendencies during the twentieth century, the United States were seen as trendsetters in this respect. Berry (1976) coined the term 'counter-urbanisation' to indicate a turning point in the US urbanisation process. He defined counter-urbanisation as "(...) a process of population deconcentration; it implies a movement from a state of more concentration to a state of less concentration." (p. 17). This movement away from population concentration was, in Berry's view, rather a comeback of the traditional American preference for a non-urban living environment than something completely new. Counter-urbanisation could be attributed to traditional American values like 'the love of newness', 'the desire to be near nature', 'the frontier spirit', 'the freedom to move' and 'the wish to maintain the individuality of the homogeneous subgroup'. Berry has a very broad definition of counter-urbanisation, including not only the return to a more 'ruralised' society, but also planned new towns and even the high-rise urban extensions in the formerly socialist Eastern Europe.

Following this broad definition of counter-urbanisation, one could wonder if it is not simply a continuation of a trend already started long before the 1970s: sub-urbanisation (Atzema, 1991). Champion (1989) and Hoekveld (1985) judge that Berry's definition is too vague, including all possible forms of population deconcentration. However, Champion agrees with Berry that a far-reaching change in the urbanisation process of Western societies took place since the 1970s. He draws this conclusion on the basis of his own research and that of several others in Europe and the United States. Champion introduced an alternative definition that clarifies the difference between sub-urbanisation and counter-urbanisation: while sub-urbanisation refers to a population shift from the city core to the surrounding region within the metropolitan area, counter-urbanisation involves a shift across the borders of the metropolitan area. Counter-urbanisation then occurs when the population of non-metropolitan areas grows on the expense of the population of metropolitan areas. Although Champion recognised that the development of the population distribution during the 1970s and 1980s varied considerably within Europe, he stuck to the hypothesis of counter-urbanisation as a general trend in both North America and (Northwest) Europe. In a more detailed way, he expresses counter-urbanisation in the following working definition:

"In brief counterurbanization is deemed to be the prevailing tendency when the distribution of population is shifting from larger to smaller places, where 'places' are defined in terms of relatively self-contained areas comprising an urban centre and its commuting and servicing catchment. On this basis counterurbanization does not require the abandonment of all types of urban settlements in favour of the villages and isolated
dwellings traditionally associated with the countryside, nor does it necessitate a return to the rural life-styles in the sense of giving up the trappings of modern society. It does, however, require the faster growth of those smaller places that are not linked to major cities by significant commuter ties or other frequent journeys than those that are, and therefore specifically excludes the long-established processes of sub-urbanisation and metropolitan expansion" (Champion, 1989 p. 32).

Champion interprets counter-urbanisation as a cyclical process. This process also includes 'ups' and 'downs', originating from the national and regional economic development, the transformation from a manufacturing-oriented to a service-oriented economy, demographic trends like changes in the age and household structure of the population and the urbanisation policy of national governments. As a logical consequence from the nature of the process, counter-urbanisation would gradually lose its intensity: "(...) because, defined as a negative association between net migration and settlement size, counterurbanization contains the seeds of its own destruction in a way that was not true of urbanization. Whereas the latter process can be considered a cumulative process in that the largest places grow fastest and thereby increase their attractive power, counterurbanization is self-defeating because the fate of the smallest places that, by definition, are the most attractive, is that they should grow most rapidly and thus decline in their attractiveness. In theory, therefore, the pace of counterurbanization will tend to decline over time as places become more evenly matched in size." (Champion, 1989, p. 241).

With this interpretation of counter-urbanisation, Champion comes close to the phase of de-urbanisation of the stages of urban development - model presented in section 2.2.3. Further support for this viewpoint can be found in the work of Cheshire, who claims that during the 1980s, a long-term process of population deconcentration in Northwest-Europe has come to an end. In the 1980s, most functional urban regions in Northwest-Europe experienced a stabilisation or modest growth of their population. In some regions, even the population of the central city started to grow again after decades of decline (Cheshire, 1995).

However, the counter-urbanisation thesis is criticised by many. The criticism is largely based on the same arguments challenging the stages of urban development-model, to which the counter-urbanisation thesis is clearly related. The difference between sub-urbanisation and counter-urbanisation is, despite Champion's attempts to clarify it, still rather vague. Therefore, the claim that counter-urbanisation is something new and not a continuation of a long-term deconcentration trend is doubtful (Dean et al, 1984). Furthermore, the term 'counter-urbanisation' could work misleading in the sense that it would suggest that, in the 1970s and 1980s, cities and their immediate surroundings were constantly losing population to remoter areas. Instead, cities went through a process of functional specialisation, attracting specific population groups and pushing out other groups. The increase of in-migration of small non-family households and foreign migrants to the cities in many European cities during the 1980s is hardly considered in the theory of counter-urbanisation (Atzema, 1991).
2.4.2 The escalator region

An alternative explanation for inter-regional migration patterns is the concept of the escalator region as introduced by Fielding (1992). The escalator region hypothesis starts from two basic ideas:
- people with the same qualifications living in different regions experience different chances to get ahead in life in terms of their education and labour market careers;
- by moving from one region to another, people can improve their chances on upward social mobility.

In the context of inter-regional migration, escalator regions are then:
1. Regions that attract many young people at the start of their labour market careers;
2. Regions that provide a context that encourages an acceleration in upward social mobility for these in-migrating young people;
3. In a later stage, these regions lose a significant share of people who profited from this accelerated upward social mobility through out-migration.

Translated into the metaphoric terms of the escalator region concept, young people ‘step on the escalator’ when they move to a region where they have more chances on upward social mobility, and ‘step off the escalator’ again when they have reached this upward social mobility and move out of the region towards a more attractive living environment.

Fielding based his escalator region hypothesis on an empirical study of migration patterns in England and Wales. He compared the social mobility of migrants moving into, and out of, the South East region with that of the total national and regional populations. From this study he concluded that in-migration and out-migration differed considerably in age and socio-economic status. The in-migrants into the South East were more often ‘potentially upwardly mobile young households’, while the out-migrants from the South East were more often older middle and upper class households that increased their socio-economic status between 1971 and 1981. Also, by comparing data of the national censuses of 1971 and 1981, Fielding could prove that upward social mobility in the South East was generally much faster for young people than in all other regions of England and Wales.

This escalator region concept could be seen as part of larger explanatory framework encompassing links between economic restructuring and international and internal migration. Fielding (1993) presented such an explanatory framework, in which interestingly no distinction was made between foreign migration and inter-regional migration as they were thought to be largely explained by the same economic and societal processes that only took place on different geographical scales.

In the model of Fielding (1993), the effects of economic changes on migration to and from West European metropolitan cities and regions were considered to take place at three levels, also connected with three timeframes:

1. Through the combined forces of the ‘conjuncture’ of economic growth and decline, the business cycle and housing market cycle (short term processes): in-migration rises when the urban and regional economy grows, unemployment falls and new housing construction rises, and falls when the urban and regional economy and housing market decline and unemployment rises;
2. Restructuring (medium-term): in the ‘fordist’ regime (until the late 1960s), national sectoral specialisation generated international migration of manual
workers, with a concentration in metropolitan regions. When the economy transformed into 'postfordist' (since the late 1960s), the 'new international division of labour' resulting from the internationalisation of the economy generated international migration of managers and professionals. At the same time, de-industrialisation reduced the international migration of manual workers. A third restructuring phase distinguished by Fielding is 'international functional integration' (since late 1970s), characterised by high international migration, creation of new industrial spaces and a balance between in- and out-migration for most metropolitan regions.

3. 'Deep structural' (long-term): at this level Fielding mentions three phenomena with relevance for migration to and from metropolitan regions: ties with former colonies, world city formation enlarging global inequality, and the function of European metropolitan regions as escalator regions.

The escalator region hypothesis seems to offer a logical explanatory framework for the long-term migration patterns in the UK. The traditional net migration gains of the South East at the expense of especially Northern England, Scotland and Wales and the strong concentration of economic growth in the South East in the second half of the twentieth century have often been indicated as the 'North-South divide' (Lawton, 1973; see the case study on Northern England in section 7.4). In countries with a comparable 'primate city' like France (Paris and the Ile-de-France region), comparable selective migration patterns would undoubtedly be found. However, it is questionable if the escalator region effect also applies to countries lacking such a primate city, which is the case in most of Northwest Europe. When education and employment opportunities are distributed in a more equal way, the need for young people to move to other regions to improve their chances on upward social mobility might disappear. Nevertheless, also in the Netherlands, a country with a highly decentralised settlement pattern, some evidence for an escalator region effect of the Randstad region has been found: the Randstad region had a growing net gain of migrants who moved to the region for educational and labour market reasons during the 1980s (Hooimeijer & Nijstad, 1996). Unfortunately this potentially interesting hypothesis has not been worked out in more detail and across longer time periods so far. It has therefore, for example, remained largely unknown to what extent the volume of migration with the motive of upward social mobility to the supposed escalator regions differs from those between other regions. Also, if housing environments meeting the demands of those that moved into an escalator region to realise upward social mobility are sufficiently available within the region, the in-migrants might not have not leave the region in later stages of their housing career at all.

2.4.3 Economic restructuring, changing household composition and the revival of urban population growth

As mentioned in section 2.2.3, the stages of urban development model (Klaassen, 1979; Berg et al, 1982) includes a fourth phase in which at first the urban region and later also the central city recover from a period of severe population loss and enjoy population growth again. While the first three phases seem to reflect the actual development of population distribution in Northwest Europe quite adequately, this re-urbanisation phase has been criticised by many urban researchers, as has been discussed earlier. Remarkably, though, only a few years after the Klaassen and Van den Berg model was introduced, many urban regions in Northwest Europe demonstrated the recovery that was predicted by the stages of urban development model. This produced a lively debate about whether this
recovery was the beginning of a structural, long-term urban growth, as for example Cheshire (1995) argued, or only a short-term interruption of a long-term development towards further deconcentration.

One of the theoretical approaches that would suggest a genuine ‘urban revival’ revolves around the process of ‘gentrification’. Gentrification could be defined as the process in which a renewed interest of middle and upper class households for deteriorated urban neighbourhoods first leads to improvements in the built environment in these neighbourhoods and eventually, through a rise of real estate prices, also to a (partial or complete) displacement of the original inhabitants of these neighbourhoods (Bontje, 1996). First witnessed in London and several North-American cities in the 1960s and 1970s, the phenomenon was recognised by many researchers across the advanced capitalist world in the 1980s and 1990s (for example: Cortie & Van de Ven, 1981; Smith & Williams, 1986; Blasius, 1994; Falk, 1994). The gentrification process generally ‘takes off’ when an unpopular neighbourhood is discovered by young low-income households in search for cheap housing. These new inhabitants often include quite specific groups like students and artists and have been described as ‘pioneers’ (Gale, 1980) or ‘marginal gentrifiers’ (Rose, 1984). Typical characteristics of a potential gentrification neighbourhood are a location close to the city centre, an attractive built environment (in terms of historic architecture and public space), the availability of relatively large dwellings that could easily be adapted towards the newcomers’ own interior decoration preferences, and low rents and/or selling prices (Falk, 1994). While the ‘pioneers’ often have no intention to ‘take over’ or change the neighbourhood character, later in-migrants often upgrade their houses and turn run-down apartments or former business sites (like warehouses and storage rooms) into luxury apartments. These later in-migrants were attracted to the area by real estate developers and the local media that noticed the changes in the neighbourhood’s population composition and may have advertised the area as ‘trendy’. The second generation of newcomers might also attract new businesses to their neighbourhood that cater their service needs, or start these businesses themselves. After a while, this group might then profit from the increased interest in their neighbourhood and sell their apartments with a high profit. The gentrification process could eventually lead to radical changes of the neighbourhood: a rapid rise of real estate value, changes in the neighbourhood economy (mostly with regard to shops, bars and restaurants) and as a result, the partial or complete displacement of the population that lived there before the process started. In the end, even the ones that started the process, the ‘pioneers’, might be forced to leave because they cannot afford the neighbourhood’s price level or they don’t appreciate the neighbourhood’s atmosphere anymore (Gale, 1980; Smith & Williams, 1986; Rose, 1984).

At first, the gentrification hypothesis provoked enthusiastic reactions among several local urban governments. Several plans were made to facilitate or encourage gentrification since this seemed to be an effective medicine to cure the social and economic problems of their city as a whole and of older deteriorated neighbourhoods around the city centre in particular. However, the phenomenon of gentrification generally remained very limited in its effects on cities. Many older neighbourhoods failed to meet the conditions that might favour gentrification. Sometimes, the changes of the built environment, population and local economy as a result of gentrification were even only limited to a few streets or a few houses. In addition, a factor remarkably largely overlooked by most observers of gentrification was the housing system. Gentrification in its purest form could only take place in a housing system dominated by the owner-occupied or private rental sector. This
is certainly true for the North-American countries and to a lesser extent in the UK where some of the most spectacular examples of gentrification were reported (Gale, 1980; Smith & Williams, 1986), but much less for continental Northwest Europe. In most continental Northwest-European countries, the majority of the housing stock in (inner) cities is in the social rental sector and is distributed through housing corporations or municipalities. These government and semi-government organisations are of course also interested in a housing stock as profitable as possible, but they are also supposed to serve certain ‘social goals’ like providing housing for low-income people. Furthermore, gentrification had at least as many opponents as defenders in the scientific and popular debate. Gradually, the phenomenon has acquired a quite negative image. Many authors see gentrification (and often also urban revitalisation in general) not as a process initiated by spontaneous initiatives of ‘pioneers’ at all, but as a means for local government to attract more affluent people to the inner city at the expense of the original inhabitants (Marcuse, 1992; Rose, 1984; Zukin, 1991).

During the 1980s, another phenomenon changing the urban built environment and population structure was the restructuring of old harbour and industrial sites into residential neighbourhoods. The economic crisis of the 1970s had hit heavy industries and harbour activities concentrated on the urban waterfront particularly hard. In many North American and Northwest European cities, dockland areas changed from lively and profitable production environments into derelict sites in the course of only 10 to 20 years. In the context of a radical change in urban socio-economic policies, in which the focus shifted from small-scale urban renewal and anti-poverty policy to the promotion of new urban economic growth, the docklands were chosen as locations for prestigious housing and business developments. The approach proved to be a success in the harbour areas of Baltimore and Boston, and many American and Northwest-European cities tried to follow their example afterwards (Harloe et al., 1992; Hall, 1992). This produced projects like Battery Park in New York City, the London Docklands, Albert Dock in Liverpool, the Eastern Harbour Area in Amsterdam and the south bank of the river Maas (‘Kop van Zuid’) in Rotterdam in the 1990s. The redevelopment of urban waterfronts took place within a broader trend of ambitious building projects meant to produce ‘tempting images of the city’ (Cammen & De Klerk, 1996; Jobse & Musterd, 1994). Projects like the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin and the construction of a new high-rise office centre in The Hague could also be seen as exponents of this trend.

Both gentrification and these ambitious urban restructuring projects could be considered as representations of an overall restructuring of the socio-economic structure of Western cities. Short (1989) saw a ‘new urban order’ emerging in the 1980s, most of all in ‘global cities’ like London and New York. This new urban order was a result of de-industrialisation and the increasing influence of private investors on the housing market, especially in the inner cities. The economic restructuring and the increasing commercial pressure on inner city locations went together with a growing polarisation between rich and poor in the inner cities, popularly expressed with the terms ‘yuppies’ (‘young urban professionals’ or ‘young upwardly mobile persons’) and ‘yuffies’ (‘young urban failures’). The household types that are typically associated with this ‘new urban order’ are young singles and childless couples and single parent families. Often they are described as ‘new households’, suggesting that these household types did not exist before. However, the term ‘new’ is only a relative one, as it refers to household types that were always present in the cities. Still, since the 1960s, these household types have increased in absolute and relative figures dramatically (Häusermann & Siebel, 1987; Engelsdorp
Gastelaar & Vijgen, 1992). Nevertheless, as mentioned above for the gentrification process, this growing polarisation of inner city population was especially a phenomenon of North American and British cities, while in the continental part of Northwest-Europe this process was much less extreme.

Everaers & Musterd (1994) suggested a possible explanatory framework that links the processes of economic restructuring, the rising share of (young) small households and the revival of urban population growth. They derived this explanatory framework from an empirical study of the changes in residential patterns of household types in sub-areas of Dutch metropolitan regions. For the case of the Netherlands, their explanation could be summarised as follows:

- The oil crises of 1973 and 1979 led to severe job losses in the manufacturing sector and gave an extra impetus towards a restructuring from the Dutch economy from a manufacturing-oriented to a service-oriented economy;
- This economic restructuring, combined with a growth of flexible employment, was especially beneficiary to women that were at the same time, thanks to the emancipation movement, increasing their participation in the Dutch labour market considerably;
- The increasing labour market participation of women contributed to a shift of priorities in which a labour market career gained importance, while having children was in many cases postponed or reconsidered. This contributed to the increase of small households (singles and two-earner households) and to the decrease of the share of family households. Another, but not unrelated process that contributed to this development was individualisation;
- The relative concentration of service jobs in urban agglomerations and the relatively high preference (compared to family households) of young one- and two-person households for an urban living environment might in this way have contributed to the recovery of urban population growth. This urban preference is probably related to the need for proximity for all kinds of services that are offered more in cities than elsewhere (Vijgen & Engelsdorp Gastelaars, 1992).

The above discussion certainly gives reason to assume that the 1980s and 1990s have been an era of recovery of urban population growth. The degree to which this recovery was only short-lived remains to be seen. Everaers & Musterd (1994) also point at the limits of the new urban growth because the growth of small households that is the generating this growth will inevitably diminish or cease in the long run. Apart from that, two other migration flows will decide on the long-term development of urban population in Northwest Europe. First, the inflow of foreign migrants that is traditionally highly concentrated in (large) cities might be supporting the continuation of urban population growth. It is surprising that foreign migration and the migration behaviour of established ethnic minorities is hardly considered in all the approaches of urban revival discussed above. Second, sub-urbanisation certainly did not cease to exist. While the migration behaviour of young small households might be connected to the process of economic restructuring, this is much less true of the migration behaviour of family households. The process of sub-urbanisation, still largely dominated by family households, is rather determined by economic growth and decline: it tends to intensify when the economy grows, and to diminish when the economy declines (Everaers & Musterd, 1994). This complex of migration flows into and out of the city has produced a housing market that is increasingly bi-polar of character, with peaks in both suburban and central urban housing areas (Meulenbelt, 1997; Musterd & Ostendorf, 1998).
2.5 The withdrawal of the welfare state and the role of physical planning

The economic downturn of the 1970s and early 1980s forced most West-European countries to reconsider their welfare state arrangements. Many instruments and policies of the welfare state programme became too costly. This was most of all true for arrangements for unemployment and health care. The insight that not too many people should become dependent on government funds gained popularity. More generally, the idea of a society that could be re-created through welfare state policy lost its attractiveness. In the plans to restructure welfare states, the key word 'equity' was traded for 'efficiency' (Jobse & Musterd, 1994).

The housing sector did not escape from the huge cutbacks in welfare state policies. In most West-European countries, the 1980s and 1990s were a period in which governments allowed and encouraged private parties to get more influence on several activities previously being part of welfare state policies. Housing policy forms an example. The share of social housing in new housing projects has decreased considerably in countries like the UK and the Netherlands as a result of large cutbacks in housing subsidies (especially object subsidies) and investments. In the Netherlands, housing corporations were privatised. The corporations received a lump sum from the government meant to encourage a lasting commitment of the corporations to social housing provision. This produced a more market-oriented approach with an increasing share of expensive rental and owner-occupied housing, both in new housing production and through selling parts of the social housing stock. However, the Dutch government still has a strong influence on the housing market through instruments such as the housing allowance and the large amounts of potential building land it possesses.

A form of policy generally not considered in studies of population distribution is physical planning. This is remarkable, since many European countries have demonstrated the ambition to influence the development of the settlement pattern and the population distribution of their countries in the second half of the twentieth century. Policy measures in various fields can have direct or indirect influence on the spatial order of society. Except for the policy field most directly involved, physical planning, other policies to be mentioned are housing policy, national and regional economic policy, traffic infrastructure policy, agricultural policy and environmental policy. In this study, the focus will be on physical planning policy, and more specifically on national urbanisation policy. National urbanisation policy could be defined as the set of measures on the national government level intended to influence the spatial pattern of urbanisation on the national and/or regional level.

National policies aimed at regulating the process of urbanisation have been practiced, and are often still practiced, in several European countries. These urbanisation policies often existed of a combination of physical planning and housing policy measures. Examples are the Dutch growth centre policy, the French 'villes nouvelles' and the UK 'New Towns'. An important aim of most urbanisation policies through time has been either to limit or to channel sub-urbanisation and prevent a too large loss of population of the larger cities. Most European planning authorities realised that sub-urbanisation, a process in which many people were able to move to their preferred living environment, could not be stopped. Nevertheless, an unlimited sub-urbanisation would lead to large-scale loss of open, green space. Therefore, instead of trying to stop sub-urbanisation, most planning policies aimed at concentrating the out-migration of the cities in a limited number of
locations. While the above-mentioned countries have left this policy and exchanged it for a compact city approach in the 1980s, more recent examples include the Swiss policy of 'centralised decentralisation', with a key role for the regional centres, and the joint planning initiative of the 'Bundesländer' Berlin and Brandenburg, in which a model of concentrated deconcentration should contribute to a more even distribution of population and economic growth between the metropolitan area of Berlin and the surrounding periphery. The policies of concentrated deconcentration and the compact city will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

The restructuring of West-European welfare states limited the possibilities of government planners to influence the development of the settlement pattern and population distribution. The decision where to build new housing areas and business complexes is increasingly left to private investors (Dieleman et al, 1999). Their ideas about the most suited building locations do often not coincide with the locations preferred by the national government. Another issue of constant concern regards the coordination of various policy measures with effects on the spatial distribution of population and activities, both 'horizontally' (the coordination at the national level between ministries, and at the regional and local level between departments) and vertically (how well do local and regional planning policies and practices fit in the national plans?).

Considering the high ambition level often expressed by several European governments in their physical planning programmes, a certain influence of physical planning policy on the development of population distribution should be expected. This is certainly true for the Netherlands, a country often praised for its effective physical planning policy measures and the consistency of its national urbanisation policy by national and international commentators (Hall, 1992; Faludi, 1994; Dutt & Costa, 1985; Davies, 1989; Dieleman et al, 1999). However, as mentioned above, physical planning is a factor generally overlooked in recent explanations for the development of population distribution. In this study, the relationship between physical planning and trends in the distribution of population and the development of urban (regional) form is the central issue. Would the settlement patterns and the patterns of the distribution of population and activities have looked significantly different in the Netherlands and other European countries if there would not have been physical planning policy in the period since World War II? And what could be the consequences of the recent withdrawal of government from welfare state policy in general and physical planning as a part of it? The international theoretical debate on these and related questions will be addressed more extensively in Chapter 4, while in the chapters 6, 7 and 8, the influence of national urbanisation policy on the distribution of population and activities in the Netherlands and Northwest Europe since the 1960s is explored in further detail.
2.6 Conclusions: a model for explaining recent urbanisation trends in Northwest Europe

In the limited space of this chapter it was only possible to present a selection of recent contributions to the issue of dynamics in population distribution. First, a division was made between studies that stressed economic and technological explanatory factors (section 2.2) and studies that deal mostly with socio-cultural and demographic changes (section 2.3). Although all of the presented views have certainly contributed to our understanding of the factors determining population distribution dynamics, neither of these two categories could offer a satisfactory explanation for the development of population distribution in Northwest Europe since the 1960s. Instead, the explanation should rather be sought in multidisciplinary approaches that combine economic, technological, socio-cultural and demographic factors. Some examples of these multidisciplinary approaches were discussed in section 2.4. However, even these approaches still largely ignore at least one potential cluster of possible influences on population distribution dynamics: the influence of various types of policies. In the second half of the twentieth century, all Northwest-European national governments have extended their political influence on society through welfare state arrangements. Some of the policies within the welfare state framework were introduced with the explicit aim to bring about changes in the spatial distribution of population and activities. Other policies did not intend to have this effect but unintentionally produced changes in the distribution of population and/or activities.

Figure 2.1 tries to express the complex of factors and processes determining the dynamics of the distribution of population and activities as simple as possible. In this figure, the factors that stand most central in this study are highlighted with bold lines and bold typing. The other factors will certainly not be neglected, but will mainly serve as a background context while the analysis will concentrate on the relations between physical planning policy (especially national urbanisation policy) and recent trends in population distribution, the development of urban (regional) form, and daily mobility.

The factor clusters 'economic-technological development', 'socio-cultural and demographic trends' and 'policy' influence a complex of processes that in turn are strongly interrelated: dynamics in population distribution and the distribution of activities, residential mobility and daily mobility. To make the picture even more complex, the factor clusters on the left hand side of figure 2.2 are also strongly interrelated. Of all the relations shown in this model, the influence of policy measures on the distribution of population and activities is without doubt the least researched and most unknown relationship. While especially physical planning policy presupposes that is possible to influence socio-spatial developments in a desirable direction, surprisingly little is known about the extent to which this has been realised in the recent past. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, the current debate in planning science seems to concentrate more on the planning process itself than on the eventual outcome of this process. Many planning researchers seem to consider the completion of 'the plan' on paper as the ultimate goal of the planners. Therefore, the current discussion in planning science concentrates on themes like the effective use of concepts, how to reach consensus, and the role of the several parties involved in the planning process. There seems to be much less concern about the eventual changes in spatial configurations for which these plans were produced in the first place. On the other hand, geographers and other social scientists that are trying to explain recent dynamics in the urbanisation process often neglect the possible role of government
policies like physical planning. This study wants to contribute to bridging this gap between geographers and planners. While constantly taking the context of economic-technologic, socio-cultural and demographic changes into account, it will take national urbanisation policy plans as its point of departure and try to explore the extent to which this type of policy has in the recent past managed to change the dynamics in the urbanisation process. Before focusing on the development of national urbanisation policy in the Netherlands and Northwest-Europe, however, attention should also be paid to another relevant strand in urbanisation research that is specifically concerned with the distribution of activities over space and the urban (local and regional) form this produces. This type of urbanisation studies was already referred to before in this Chapter and will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 3.

Figure 2.2. Conceptual scheme of explanatory factors for urbanisation trends in Northwest Europe
"The city's force field (...) stretches for a hundred miles in each direction, over towns and villages and across vast tracts of what appears to be open country, far from any existing settlement that could conventionally be called a city."

(Sudjic, 1992 p. 305)

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 mainly focused on the underlying economic, technologic, socio-cultural, demographic and policy developments producing recent dynamics in population distribution in Northwest-Europe. However, as was already shown in the conceptual scheme of figure 2.2, a second central issue in this study is the development of urban (regional) form. Obviously, these two issues are strongly interrelated. Changes in population distribution inevitably contribute to changes in the physical shape of a city or urban region, together with changes in the locational pattern of businesses and services. On the other hand, changes in urban (regional) form brought about through government policies such as national urbanisation policy might contribute to changes in population distribution as well. In Dutch physical planning policy, and most of all in national urbanisation policy, the spatial development of cities and urban regions has always taken a central position. Most initiatives within the overall framework of Dutch national urbanisation policy since the 1960s have been aimed at influencing the spatial distribution of population and the development of daily mobility in their mutual interdependence, and at the urban (regional) form these developments produced. Recently, the question of the expected future spatial development of Dutch urban regions was placed on the planning agenda once more when the national planners proposed a new urbanisation policy in which the 'compact city' concept was traded for the concept of 'urban networks'. The choice to leave the compact city policy behind and choose urban networks as the new central urbanisation concept was not only made because of growing political opposition to the compact city policy, but also based on the recent development of the scientific debate on the geographic scale of urbanisation in the Netherlands, Northwest Europe and North America.

Throughout the twentieth century, social scientists have continuously debated on the question what a city physically and functionally looks like, what distinguishes a city from its surroundings, and how the interrelationships between a city and its region should be interpreted. In the first decades of that century, broadly two categories of theoretical approaches to urban form and urban extension could be discerned: one group focusing on the internal structure of the city itself, and another group focusing on urban regions. Towards the end of century, these two groups seemingly came together in a new debate on the terms 'city' and 'urban region'. The crucial issue in this more recent debate is whether 'the city' is still a relevant term and if it is still recognisable as a separate spatial and functional entity. This debate is taking place within the broader context of more general doubts about the meaning of place and location. Put in more dramatic words: are we witnessing 'the end of geography'?
From the 1960s on, a flood of new concepts of ‘city’ was proposed. These new concepts treat the city more as an area or region than a place. Examples are the polynucleated urban region (Dieleman & Faludi, 1998), the technocity (Fishman, 1987), the urban field (Friedmann & Miller, 1965) and the 100-mile city referred to in the citation above (Sudjic, 1992). In some cases, the new urban models even have no geographical component at all, stressing patterns of human interaction on any given scale. An example of these models is the non-place urban realm (Webber, 1964).

In this chapter, the development of theoretical approaches of urban form and the relationships between cities and their surroundings throughout the twentieth century will be outlined. Instead of trying to provide an exhaustive overview, some of the most influential approaches are highlighted. Moreover, in this chapter as well as in this study as a whole, the ‘household perspective’ is chosen as the point of departure for judging the relevance of urban regional concepts. As Kloosterman and Musterd (2001) made clear, the debate on scale enlargement of urban regions is often troubled by clashing opinions resulting from different criteria for the degree of functional coherence. For example, many of the proponents of large-scale, low-density urban regional entities emphasise mostly the increasing spatial fragmentation of economic activities, while critics of these claims of scale enlargement seem to pay most attention to the daily action space of individual households. In this chapter, the possible scale enlargement of urban regions is mainly viewed from the ‘daily life’ perspective of households. After all, concepts of functional urbanised entities would probably not make much sense if their geographic scale would not come reasonably close to the geographic areas within which functions relevant to daily life of households are located. These households contain the people than are supposed to live, work and recreate in the urban regions, whatever geographic scale they might have. In this context, it is particularly useful to pay attention to the interrelations between urban form and daily mobility behaviour. As Bieber et al. (1994, p. 321) stated, “...(daily mobility) is the type of transport which is influenced, determined and produced to the greatest extent by the relationships which exist between spaces themselves and the spatial forms created by economic development, in the same way that it plays a role in modifying these relationships.”

This implies that changes in daily mobility behaviour can be a useful indicator for possible changes in urban form and the relevant geographic scale of urbanisation. In Chapter 8, an analysis of recent trends in daily mobility behaviour in the Netherlands will be presented which provides an empirical basis to judge whether the claims of totally new forms of urbanisation coming about in the Netherlands are justified.

3.2 The internal structure of cities

During the 1920s and 1930s, a number of theories and models explaining urban growth were produced on which much of our current understanding of urban expansion is based. One of the dominant approaches of that time was to see urban growth as an outcome of two categories of forces working in opposite directions: the so-called centripetal and centrifugal forces, introduced by Colby in 1933. Centripetal forces derive from the attractive qualities of the city. Among these forces are: ‘Site attraction’ (quality of original natural landscape), ‘functional convenience’ (mainly accessibility), ‘functional magnetism’ (concentration of a function that attracts other functions), and ‘functional prestige’ (reputation). Centrifugal forces are forces that encourage people to move away
from a city or from a part of a city. Among these forces Colby categorised ‘spatial force’ (congestion), ‘site force’ (disadvantages of intensively used space and advantages of little used periphery), ‘situational force’ (unsatisfactory location of functions within central zone, lack of space etc.), ‘force of social evolution’ (land value gradient, taxes, rules and laws on land use), and ‘status and organization of occupancy’ (obsolete forms and crystallized patterns of central city, in contrast to a modern, dynamic and congestion-free periphery). Colby added a factor that could work both centripetal and centrifugal: ‘human equation’, with which he meant human choice (Nelson, 1971).

Another major contribution to urban growth theories came from Chicago. In 1925, the book ‘The City’ appeared, which would prove to be highly influential on many urban researchers for several decades. One of the contributors to this book was Burgess. He presented a model of urban expansion known as the concentric zone theory. According to this model, a city expands radially and forms a series of concentric zones. Each of these zones contains a specific type of residents and/or economic functions. Burgess saw the city as a dynamic organism, with a constant flow of new residents moving into it. The new residents would typically start their housing career in the innermost rings of the city and move outwards in later stages of their housing career. The eventual model from centre to periphery contained: the core or central business district, the zone in transition, the zone of workingmen’s homes, the zone of better residences, and the commuter zone. The tendency of each zone to expand outwards into the next zone was seen as the main operating mechanism of further expansion (Burgess, 1925).

Hoyt (1939) came up with an alternative model for urban expansion, which focused mainly on residential development. His model became known as the residential sector theory. According to Hoyt, residential neighbourhoods of different status (categorised by rent levels) were not spread randomly across the city, but they did not form concentric circles either. Sectors of neighbourhoods with a comparable status were determined by distance from the city centre, as in Burgess’ model, but also by the direction from the city centre and certain site characteristics, like height, nearness of lakes, rivers or parks and accessibility.

Harris & Ullman (1945) formulated the multiple nuclei model as a modification of the models of Burgess and Hoyt. They recognised that cities can expand around more than one centre. Apart from the CBD, other possible nuclei mentioned by Harris and Ullman were ports, airports, industrial areas and retail centres. The urban districts in this model are: CBD, wholesale and light manufacturing, heavy industrial, residential (subdivided into several classes, inspired by Hoyt’s sector theory), suburbs and satellites.

All of the models described above were models of the ‘modern’ or ‘industrial’ city, with one clear centre for business and services: the CBD. Although Harris and Ullman mentioned several nuclei as sources of urban growth, they still singled out the CBD as the dominant centre. Trends in transportation, building techniques and societal changes made these models outdated in post-war era. Apart from that, the models of the Chicago school were not generally applicable to other cities since they were exclusively based on the specific situation of American cities, most of all on Chicago.

In the 1960s, a new debate on the evolution of urban form came up. In this debate, almost all participants seemed to agree that the traditional models of the modern, industrial city no longer applied. Several alternative models and theories on urban expansion were
presented. However, in the end most of these models still took the basic assumption of a city with one dominant centre from where further expansion was initiated. A few examples:

- Urban expansion can be seen as analogous to the dynamics of the ocean surface, taking the form of waves and ripples (Boyce, 1971). Boyce indicated three types of wave-like developments: a recession wave, a precession wave, and a tidal wave. The recession wave took place within the existing built-up area and referred to the different dynamics of parts of the city, with a decline in dynamics outwards from the city centre. The precession wave expressed the changes in land use and land value just outside the built-up area, preceding the outward move of the metropolitan edge. The tidal wave in Boyce’s analogy was the actual edge of the metropolitan area.

- Urban expansion takes place in a number of stages. Following its inception, the city grows by means of a number of processes following each other in time. The first stages, exclusion (formation of a central business district and zones with other functions surrounding it), segregation (meant here in the sense of a separation of functions within the CBD) and extension (the growth of downtown) cause an increasing internal differentiation of the city core. Later stages of urban expansion involve decentralisation of functions to regional centres. Partly or completely, the functions of the CBD are ‘replicated’ in locations at some distance from the original city centre. The resulting metropolis is one in which most residents will only use a small part of the metropolitan area for daily life (Vance, 1971).

- Urban expansion takes place based on land market mechanisms and competition for land use. One of the main representatives of this approach is Alonso (1964). He based his theory of urban growth on bid-rent curves for land for various categories of users. For companies, the bid-rent curve is primarily based on maximising profit. For residential users, the bid-rent curve depends on maximising the level of satisfaction with a given location. They will balance the costs of commuting against the advantages of cheaper land and more space for living at locations further from the centre. This also implied differences in bid-rent curves between lower and higher income groups, with the higher income groups being able to live further away from the city centre. In this theory, Alonso clearly assumes a ‘classical’ city with a CBD in the centre where most of the residents work. However, he claims that his model can be easily adapted to situations with multiple centres.

In more recent theoretical approaches, the modern industrial city is often seen as something from the past. In the 1990s, the city is frequently referred to as ‘the post-modern city’. The post-modern city concept fits in the broader scientific context of postmodernism. Post-modernism stands for a break with the ‘modernist’ trust in rationality, progress, unity and overall principles ordering society. Instead of this, as was already noted in Chapter 2, a post-modernist society is usually characterised by fragmentation, diversity and a lack of consensus and of overall principles (Pater & Van der Wusten, 1996). Following this world-view, the post-modern city can take various shapes and sizes. Still, several urban researchers claim that cities of the post-modern age develop in the same direction and therefore share some characteristics. One of the prominent characteristics of post-modern cities is that it consists of a collection of centres and sub-centres without a clearly dominant central business district. The post-modern city is very fragmented in its economy as well as in the socio-economic and ethnic structure of
its population. This fragmentation is expressed in the built environment. A typical feature of post-modern cities is a collection of large-scale residential and commercial developments, often referred to as 'flagship developments'. In this respect, Knox (1993) describes the city of the 1990s as a 'galactic metropolis', with flagship developments being the 'stars' in an extensive urbanised space.

The degree to which the post-modern city really is something new is questionable, as well as the degree to which the features of the post-modern city can be generalised. Hall (1998) rightly remarks that 'post-modern' forms of urbanisation have not replaced modern forms everywhere. Most cities consist of a mix of modern and post-modern elements. It is very striking that Soja (1989, p. 234), one of the major representatives of post-modernist geography, stresses that despite the strong tendencies of decentralisation and fragmentation, cities still have centres: "Only with a persistent centrality can there be outer cities and peripheral urbanization. Otherwise, there is no urban at all."

Many proponents of the post-modern city hypothesis have taken a limited number of 'global cities' as their reference and assumed that the recent development of these cities would soon be followed by most other cities of the Western world. Instead, "Post-modern urbanisation, like most other facets of urbanisation, is emerging as a complex series of trajectories mediated locally rather than a single, simple, universal trajectory of development" (Hall, 1998, p.108).

3.3 Urban regions: The central place system, the network system and the daily urban system

Parallel to the various theories and models of the internal structure of cities outlined in the preceding section, another body of theory developed in which the relationships between cities and their surrounding regions formed the central issue.

In 1933, Christaller published his famous model of a hierarchic urban system. This model is a further elaboration of the traditional geographical concepts 'site' and 'situation'. The essence of the Christaller model was that the functions of a settlement, as well as its hierarchical position in a settlement system, were determined by its situation in a region. The more central a settlement was situated in a region, the higher its level of functions. Moreover, the settlement with the highest function level would consist of a higher educated and wealthier population than its surroundings. An important precondition of the Christaller model is an 'isotropic' region, which means that population, wealth, transport facilities and resources are initially equally spread across the region. Under these circumstances, a settlement could improve its centrality by means of locational advantages like being situated on an important transport route. Improvements in transport technology or centralisation of regional government could also contribute to the development of a settlement to a central place. This model, developed by Christaller on the basis of empirical work in the German region of Bavaria, was clearly referring to a traditional agricultural society (Cortie, 1991).

In industrialised societies, the hierarchy of central places was challenged. Due to various improvements of communication and transport, urban economies were less and less dependent on their immediate surroundings. Apart from still being a central place within their own region, cities became also part of national and international networks. According to the theory of network systems, a city acquires its position in the settlement
hierarchy mainly through specialisation in one or a few economic branches, dependent on the available knowledge on site. While in a central place system the regional service function is the most important factor for urban development, in a network system the production function is the most relevant factor. In a central place system the position of a settlement in the regional or (inter) national hierarchy depends on centrality, whereas in the network system the crucial characteristic is nodality (Thissen, 1995). In a network system, population as well as economic functions are distributed over many cities that can be situated at considerable distances from each other. As a consequence, the settlement hierarchy in a network system is generally less clear than in a central place system (Cortie, 1991).

The 'systems of cities'-approach, that gained much popularity in the 1970s and early 1980s, was based on the network theory. Pred (1977, p. 13) describes a system of cities as follows: "The term 'system of cities', as used here, encompasses all those individual urban units - however defined - in a country or large region which are economically linked to one or more other individual urban units in the same country or large region. More precisely, a system of cities is defined as a national or regional set of cities which are interdependent in such a way that any significant change in the economic activities, occupational structure, total income or population of one member city will directly or indirectly bring about some modification in the economic activities, occupational structure, total income, or population of one or more set members." Added to this, Pred points at the 'openness' of the system of cities. Units that are part of a system of cities interact with the outside world and this interaction, according to the definition cited above, has immediate consequences for the entire system of cities.

In the meantime, both the central place system and the network system have lost significance as explanatory models for settlement system development. Both models assume a 'productive order', in which settlements develop in accordance with local employment opportunities. Towards the end of the twentieth century, however, population distribution has become more related to consumptive functions of settlements. The importance of an attractive living environment and nearby recreational opportunities has gained prominence over local employment opportunities. Once again, the earlier mentioned rise in real incomes and the improvements in transportation and communication, leading to a decreasing meaning of distance, played an important role in this development. This has led to the replacement of a 'productive' order by a 'consumptive' order (Thissen, 1995; Ostendorf, 1988).

The settlement configuration that resulted from the transition from a productive to a consumptive order is the daily urban system. A daily urban system can be defined as a spatial conglomerate of various companies, institutions and households, related to each other through daily mobility, which forms one housing and labour market that is spatially inseparable (Engelsdorp Gastelaars et al, 1980). Physically, a daily urban system generally contains a dominant urban centre or agglomeration surrounded by suburbs and villages. Some daily urban systems have more than one urban agglomeration within their borders, but as a general rule there is always one of these agglomerations clearly dominant, at least in terms of employment. There have been several attempts in the past to limit daily urban systems but a general standard was never reached. Most daily urban region definitions are based on a minimum share of local labour market participants working in the central agglomeration (see for example Ostendorf, 1988, Dingemans 1993, Meulenberg 1997).
A concept very similar to the daily urban system is the functional urban region, introduced by Hall and Hay (1980). The functional urban region was defined by Hall and Hay in a very precise and absolute way: it should contain a core urban agglomeration, existing of a centre with at least 20,000 jobs and surrounding administrative entities with at least 1235 jobs per hectare. Added to this area are all municipalities surrounding the central agglomeration from where home-to-work-traffic is more oriented on this central agglomeration than on others (Hall & Hay, 1980). Although attempts to come to geographic limits of functional urbanised entities based on clear statistical definitions are certainly valuable, this might have been a too rigid and precise attempt to distinguish functional urban regions from other, less urbanised regions. Apart from its statistical rigidity, the functional urban region in its original definition suffers from another shortcoming: it is based on a situation with one clearly dominant city or agglomeration, a situation that is found to a continuously lesser extent in Northwest Europe. The daily urban system concept seems to be better applicable to the recent trend towards polycentric urban regions in Northwest Europe, since it includes the possibility of more than one urban agglomeration within the regional borders.

3.4 Urban fields: the end of the city?

Gradually the theories on the internal structure of the city and those on the structure of urban regions grew closer to each other. Due to tendencies of decentralisation of people and functions in most of North America and Western Europe since World War II, the dichotomy between city and countryside was increasingly questioned. This resulted in a new collection of theories and models, treating cities and their surrounding regions as one coherent, interdependent entity. In the 1960s, a lively debate about 'the end of the city' took place. One of the alternative visions launched in this debate was the 'urban field'. Friedmann and Miller (1965, p. 313) introduced their new urbanisation concept with the words: "Looking ahead to the next generation, we foresee a new scale of urban living that will extend far beyond existing metropolitan cores and penetrate deeply into the periphery. Relations of dominance and dependency will be transcended. The older established centers, together with the intermetropolitan peripheries that envelop them, will constitute the new ecological unit of America's post-industrial society that will replace traditional concepts of the city and metropolis. This basic element of the emerging spatial order we shall call the urban field."

Just four years earlier, Gottmann (1961) published his famous 'Megalopolis', in which he interpreted the series of agglomerations along the coastline between Boston and Washington as one integrated urbanised whole. Another prominent participant in this debate was Webber (1964), who coined the term 'non-place urban realm'. He claimed that urban planners should no longer treat the city as a static spatial arrangement. Instead, planning should be primarily based on activity patterns of people. Four years later, Webber even proclaimed 'the post-city age': because social organisation no longer coincided with spatial organisation, people would no longer need the city to live an urban life. Revolutionary improvements of transport and communication made an urban lifestyle possible on as good as any location (Webber, 1968).

The debate on the scale level of urbanisation did not start in the 1960s. As early as 1915, Geddes already noticed that several cities in Europe and the United States spread out over the surrounding countryside and sometimes amalgamated with neighbouring cities. He
introduced the term 'conurbation' for a conglomerate of cities. Among Geddes' examples of conurbations were Greater London, Clyde-Forth (Glasgow, Edinburgh) and Tyne-Wear-Tees (Newcastle, Middlesbrough) in the UK, the Ruhr region, Paris and Berlin on mainland Europe, and New York-Boston in the United States. Following in Geddes' footsteps, Wright (1935) launched his 'Broadacre city' concept. This was a plea for total integration of farmland and cities. He foresaw a virtually unlimited urbanised landscape, spreading out along highways (Hall, 1988).

In the original definition of the urban field, like in the concepts of the daily urban system and the functional urban region, the most essential characteristic is the network of relationships between the locations within the area: "(...) The idea of an urban field is (...) based on the criterion of interdependency. It represents a fusion of metropolitan spaces and nonmetropolitan peripheral spaces centered upon areas (SMSA's) of at least 300,000 people and extending outwards from these core areas for a distance equivalent to two hours' driving over modern throughway systems (approximately 100 miles with present technology). This represents not only an approximate geographic limit for commuting to a job, but also the limit of intensive weekend and seasonal use (by ground transportation) of the present periphery for recreation."

(Friedmann & Miller, 1965, p. 314)

As follows from the above citation, unlike daily urban systems and functional urban regions, the limits of an urban field are not primarily defined by home-to-work traffic. Locations that have no commuter relationship with each other can still be part of the urban field when people travel regularly from one place to the other for recreational purposes. As a consequence, the urban field includes an area considerably larger than the average daily urban system or functional urban region.

In a more recent publication, Friedmann clarifies his urban field concept in more detail:

"(...) The following three-dimensional definition is proposed as a basis for further discussion:

(1) as a territorial subsystem of society, the urban field is characterized by a spatially extended pattern of functional interaction and a multi-centric form of spatial organization. Its outer limits are defined by periodic recreational uses on the part of its resident population;

(2) as a density configuration, the urban field is characterized by the spatial dispersion of its population into high-density activity clusters, surrounded by low-density open spaces that are related to each other by a complex network of transport, communication, and energy flows;

(3) as a physical environment, the urban field is characterized by permanent as well as periodic uses of land-extensive environmental resources for activities such as outdoor recreation, intermixed with spatially segregated but permanent and land-intensive uses for residential, economic, cultural, and political activity."

(Friedmann, 1978, p. 42-43)

An important difference with the traditional perspectives on suburbanisation is that patterns of daily mobility in the urban field are typically 'criss-cross' relationships. Commuter traffic within the urban field, for example, can take place between two suburbs as well as (more traditionally) between suburb and city. Another crucial difference is that urban fields lack a central city or agglomeration that dominates the region. As Friedmann mentions, there are still differences in density of people and activities within the urban field.
field, but the clear centre-periphery contrasts that characterise daily urban systems and functional urban regions have disappeared.

Jobse and Musterd (1994) take the urban field definition of Friedmann a step further, stating "the urban field is an entity in which a dominant city is lacking, existing of a polycentric configuration, an urbanised zone, in which the fastest growth occurs on the edges" (p. 147; translation by author). In this way the authors integrate the 'edge city'-concept into the urban field. The edge city was introduced by Garreau (1991) as the successor of the traditional city centre as a concentration area of economic growth. Edge cities are also different from the traditional conception of suburbs being mainly dormitory places. In edge cities, according to Garreau, there are 'more jobs than bedrooms'. The vast majority of employment exists of commercial services and services for the edge city population. Edge cities, as Garreau sees them, are completely new cities that developed since the 1960s. His edge city concept shows similarities with the term 'technoburbs' (Fishman, 1987): peripheral zones within metropolitan areas that developed into independent socio-economic units. Fishman sees these 'technoburbs' as parts of 'technocities', with which he means metropolitan areas of which the periphery is the most dynamic part.

Urban field, edge city, technoburb and technocity are concepts based on deconcentration trends in Northern American urban regions since the 1950s. Especially on the Pacific coast, urbanisation trends have fitted into these concepts rather well. Added to this, the explosive growth of new metropolitan centres in the south of the US points at the development of yet another new form of urbanity. Cities like Phoenix, Tucson and Houston extend rapidly and seemingly unlimited into their surrounding regions. Ottens and Harts (1996) refer to this urbanisation pattern as 'carpet urbanisation', because the city seems to be rolled out like a carpet over its surroundings. Within these new cities, a centre can hardly be found. Instead, the economic functions of the 'carpet city' are spread out over several sub-centres. A comparable vision is the '100-mile city' of Sudjic (1992): an area stretching for 100 miles in each direction from an imaginary central location, containing various activity concentrations (housing areas, shopping malls, airports, office parks etc.) that have no visible connection but are still part of the same 'city'. Sudjic draws a parallel with the force field around a high-tension power line to explain what keeps this 'city' together, in which the energy powering this force field is (daily) mobility and most of all mobility by car. He draws a cynical image of the urban landscape that resulted from the increasing car mobility and the marginal place left for the traditional downtown in it:

"The old certainties of urban geography have vanished and in their place is this edgy and apparently amorphous new kind of settlement (...) in its present incarnation, the old centre is just another piece on the board, a counter that has perhaps the same weight as the airport, or the medical centre, or the museum complex. They all swim in a soup of shopping malls, hypermarkets and warehouses, drive-in restaurants and anonymous industrial sheds, beltways and motorway boxes." (Sudjic, 1992, p. 305)

So, in a physical sense, urbanisation in the United States has undoubtedly changed its appearance in recent decades. The clearly distinguishable central business districts seem to have become something of the past. However, this does not necessarily mean that the functional organisation of cities and their surrounding regions has changed radically. Maybe the shift in mobility patterns that is said to have caused the new spatial forms of urbanisation took place much earlier than most urban researchers tend to think. Webber
(1964, p. 83) in this respect remarked quite strikingly: "It is likely that the new scale of the physical forms reflects spatial linkage patterns that are as old as colonial America; in our limited view of the metropolitan system's surface, we may have failed to recognize that the patterns of intercourse have long extended far beyond the urban nodes."

3.5 Urbanisation in Northwest-Europe in the 1990s: from polynucleated urban regions to urban fields?

Any attempt to copy the concepts and definitions of urban fields, edge cities and the like to the Northwest-European context will probably not be very useful. There are several reasons against copying American concepts of urbanisation to Northwest-Europe. First of all, even in the United States itself urbanisation trends have been very diverse in the twentieth century. Clearly, a strong movement towards decentralisation can be found all over the US. However, while in most metropolitan areas of the South and Southwest decentralisation seemingly took place without any spatial limits, this was not the case in the Northeast. Here, the existing central cities have lost some of their dominance within their metropolitan regions, but they still occupy a prominent position within regional, national and international urban systems. Decentralisation certainly also took place in the Northeast of the United States, but within the limits of the pattern of urbanisation developed earlier. The decentralised form of urbanisation was added to the already existing settlement system, in contrast to the cities of the South and Southwest that developed in a highly decentralised form from the very start.

The settlement systems in Northwest-Europe have a history of urbanisation considerably longer than American cities. Here, the arguments presented above for the Northeast of the US have an even stronger validity. Generally, Northwest-Europe has a strong tradition of urban settlements in fairly high densities. Urban life has a much more positive image in Northwest-European societies. Added to this, even if people would like to deconcentrate 'American-style', it would simply be impossible in the Northwest-European context: a densely populated area where space is a scarce resource.

Bieber et al (1994) explored the possible future development of transport in conurbations in France. They presented three scenarios based on experiences in other European countries and the United States. Two of these scenarios show clear contradictions and clarify some of the major differences between the Northwest-European and the American situation: the 'Californian or post-modernist' scenario and the 'Rhenan or conservative scenario'. The Californian transport scenario is produced by a highly liberal culture, in an environment without major spatial constraints and with large amounts of land available at low costs. Under these circumstances, attitudes towards property conservation are relaxed. Most economic growth takes place on the outskirts of urban development instead of in the centres. The dominant housing type is a one-family detached house and more in general, there is a low concentration of buildings and functions. The 'Rhenan' scenario, of which Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands are examples, is characterised by a social-democratic approach. There is a strong urban tradition based on intensive use of existing infrastructure. The presence of powerful spatial constraints prevents large-scale urban expansion into rural areas. Urbanisation policy in the Rhenan scenario shows a tendency to build new housing areas in relatively high densities and a strong preference for multifunctional spaces, which are supposed to diminish interurban traffic.
Still, it is not totally unlikely that some densely populated parts of Northwest-Europe have recently developed more in the direction of urban fields, or that this will happen in the near future. A first step on the way to urban fields could be the formation of polynucleated urban regions, as recently observed by several geographers and planners. Polynucleated urban regions are perceived as one functionally integrated whole of formerly independent urban regions, linked by extensive road and rail networks. Gradually, the interaction networks of several urban regions have started to overlap each other and a new functional unit of urbanisation, the polynucleated urban region, came into existence (Dieleman & Faludi, 1998). Examples of polynucleated urban regions can be found all over Northwest Europe. To name but a few: the Randstad (Netherlands), the Rhine-Ruhr region (Germany), the Mittelland (Switzerland), Merseyside / Greater Manchester, West- and South-Yorkshire, and the Tyne & Wear region (UK), the Öresund region (Denmark and Sweden), and the Po-delta (Northern Italy).

A theoretical concept that comes very close to the polynucleated urban region is the 'network city'. Lamboooy (1991) clarifies the network city concept by contrasting it to countries where a 'dominant agglomeration' leads the settlement systems in all respects. Examples of these dominant agglomerations are Paris, London, Copenhagen and Dublin. Lamboooy focuses on the distribution of functions on a national scale. The network cities he describes are not necessarily one functional entity, but the network as a whole contains all functions that are concentrated in dominant agglomerations in other countries like the UK and France. The most important differences between dominant agglomerations and network cities as defined by Lamboooy (1991) are:

- in dominant agglomerations, all relevant economic functions are represented, while network cities consist of several specialised cores;
- dominant agglomerations have considerably higher rent levels than network cities, especially on 'international top locations';
- it is easier to develop public transport systems in dominant agglomerations because most transport routes run radially between centre and periphery. There are large amounts of potential travellers per line because may people have to travel in the same direction. The mobility pattern of network cities is more complicated and fragmented, with relatively small amounts of potential travellers per line. Many locations in the network city are much easier accessible by car than by public transport;
- with respect to the internal spatial structure, network cities lack the dominant business centres of dominant agglomerations. While in network cities a highway location is considered central, in dominant agglomerations it would be considered peripheral. The urban region of network cities typically has a 'grid' or 'polycentric' structure.

An alternative definition of the network city is provided by Batten (1995, p. 313): "A network city evolves when two or more previously independent cities, potentially complementary in function, strive to cooperate and achieve significant scope economies aided by fast and reliable corridors of transport and communications infrastructure."

The network city concept is a further elaboration of the earlier mentioned network theory. While in the network theory a city network could exist at any scale level, the network city seems to be identified mainly with settlement systems on a national or sub-national scale. Batten (1995), for example, refers to the Randstad and the Kansai region in Japan.
The interpretation of polynucleated urban regions and network cities as one functionally integrated whole is under continuous attack, at least in the Netherlands. Here, the question 'is the Randstad one urban region?' has already been a guarantee for lively debates for many decades. In the Dutch geography and planning community, opinions on the Randstad can roughly be grouped in three categories. Some researchers claim that the Randstad can really be seem as one integrated urban region, or even one city (Dieleman & Faludi, 1998). The arguments for this view seem to be based on theoretical rather than empirical grounds, referring to trends like the continuous improvement of transport facilities and the decreasing meaning of distance. This group finds inspiration in foreign observers of the Randstad, most notably Hall (1977), who included the Randstad in his comparative study of seven world cities. Their opponents insist on sticking to the 'traditional' urban regions of the four largest cities within the Randstad (Cortie et al., 1992). Their arguments are mainly based on empirical data on migration and daily mobility. The data show that in the late 1980s, a vast majority of daily mobility still took place within the context of mono- or polycentric regions of relatively modest sizes. A third group takes an intermediary position, distinguishing between a North and a South wing of the Randstad (De Smidt, 1992; Knol & Manshanden, 1990). The division of the Randstad in a North and a South Wing is mostly connected to differences in labour market structure: the labour markets of the North and South wings seem to have developed almost independently from each other in very different directions in recent decades. The interpretation of the Randstad as a rather loosely integrated combination of at least two sub-regions, the North Wing and the South Wing, was recently reconfirmed through an analysis of the formation of clusters of economic activities. Using business start-up profiles as an indicator for regional economic specialisation, Kloosterman and Lambregts (2001) suggested that the North and South Wing of the Randstad still show considerable differences in their economic activities, although a convergence trend between the two areas could also be witnessed in the 1990s.

In the late 1990s, the urban field concept seems to have gained popularity in the Netherlands. Salet & van Engelsdorp Gastelaars (1996), for example, state that since the 1960s daily urban systems have become intertwined into urban fields all over the US and Europe. They also claim that urban fields are growing in several parts of the Netherlands, most of all in the southern and eastern part of the country, and in a less extreme form also in the Randstad. The authors provide no empirical evidence at all for their bold statement on urban fields. Nevertheless, their view on the Dutch urbanisation process seems to be recognised by the Dutch national planning agency. In an advisory study for the Fifth Report, the urban field is mentioned as "the most far-reaching spatial development confronting the planning governmental bodies in the next decades" (VROM-raad, 1998, p. 40). The lack of empirical evidence for the supposed formation of urban fields raises the important question to what extent this claim can be justified.

3.6 The urban region as a collection of action spaces

The preceding discussion on the current scale level of urbanisation eventually comes down to the question on what scale level the daily life of people takes place. The central concept in this discussion should therefore be 'action space'.

The term 'action space' was introduced in the 1960s and applied in several meanings afterwards. One group of social scientists applied the concept to explain migration behaviour within cities. Wolpert (1965), for example, explored migration from a
behavioural perspective. He launched the term 'place utility', expressing the degree to which an individual is satisfied or dissatisfied with a given location. The search for the location with the highest place utility, or in other words a location which better satisfies the needs of the household concerned, takes place within a certain 'action space'. This is "(...) a subset of all locations within the urban area, this subset comprising those locations for which the intended migrant possesses sufficient information to assign place utilities." (Brown & Moore, 1971, p.201). Among the many possible reasons to migrate Brown and Moore (1971) refer to is daily mobility, more specifically the travel time from home to work.

Another definition of action space, fitting better to the focus of this chapter, refers to daily mobility patterns of households. One of the pioneers in the development of this notion of action space was Webber (1964). He preferred to study cities and regions as interaction systems rather than physical structures. According to Webber, each individual takes part in several 'realms' depending on the activity undertaken by that individual. These realms have a wide range of scale levels: for some activities, the realm is on a neighbourhood level, for others the realms are nation- or even worldwide.

Webber's approach emphasises the choices of households, hardly paying attention to the possible constraints to daily mobility. This type of research has later been characterised as the 'choice-approach'.

Hägerstrand (1970) presented 'time geography' as an alternative to the behavioural approach, represented in the above by Wolpert, Brown & Moore and Webber. In Hägerstrands view, activities do not only result from preferences but also from constraints. Many activities are largely explained by a lack of choice rather than by choice itself. Therefore, his work and the work of other time geographers are also known as the 'constraint-approach'.

Hägerstrand mentions three types of constraints to activities:

- capability constraints: physical and biological limits of human behaviour, like need of sleep and food, but also time needed to go from one location to the other and the fact that people can only be at one place at a time;
- coupling constraints: people need to be at certain places at certain times to fulfil tasks and duties that the society they are part of imposes upon them, like work, education and child care;
- authority constraints: certain areas are not freely accessible for everybody, they are controlled.

The time geography approach of Hägerstrand acknowledges that human behaviour is ruled and strongly related to the way a society is organised. On the other hand, it seems to deny that despite the numerous constraints, individuals still have a lot of freedom of choice left (Pater & Van der Wusten, 1996).

Two other prominent researchers of human activity patterns in time and space, Chapin and Cullen, combined elements of both the choice- and the constraint-approach. Chapin (1974) claims to treat a person's activities in the city as the result of a mix of incentives and constraints that mediate choice. In this approach, some activities are seen as direct outcomes of 'positive choices', while others result from 'negative choices' made because constraints limit the freedom of choice. Cullen (1978) stresses the relationships between 'short-term' and 'long-term' behaviour. The latter type of behaviour involves decisions that can influence daily life for a long period, like moving house, changing jobs or changes in the household situation of the person involved. According to Cullen, a large
part of our short-term behaviour takes place on the basis of routine determined by long-term behaviour decisions. Within these daily routines, the freedom of choice is constrained considerably. Although both Chapin and Cullen clearly witness the importance of societal constraints in their approach, they still lay most emphasis on choice and individual behaviour as the most important factor explaining time-spatial patterns of human activity.

The choice-constraint debate in the 1970s and 1980s eventually seems to have resulted in a compromise, as so often happens in social science debates. One of the outcomes of this debate is the emergence of the ‘activity-based approach’ to the dynamics in human activity patterns. In this approach, attention is paid to both the constraints on human activities that result from the social and time-spatial contexts of these activities, and the possibility to change these contexts through individual choices and preferences. An example of the activity-based approach is the study of action spaces by Dijkstra (1995). In his view, all activities take place in spatial entities (like houses, company buildings, service buildings and public space) called ‘activity places’. Dijkstra defined two types of action spaces: the ‘actual action space’ and the ‘potential action space’. The actual action space is the spatial entity within which all activity places visited in a certain period by the person in question are situated. The potential action space is the spatial entity within which all activity places that could be visited in a certain period by a certain person are situated. The size and shape of these action spaces is determined for a large part by the location of fixed locations of leave and arrival, the so-called ‘bases’. These bases could be the dwelling or the workplace. Another important determinant of the size and shape of action spaces is the available speed of movement, which in its turn is largely determined by the used means of transport.

3.7 ‘The end of the city’ revisited

In recent years, due to the spectacular advancements in communication techniques, the lasting validity of constraints as explanatory factors of human behaviour is once again challenged. Especially the validity of the ‘coupling constraints’ (Hägerstrand, 1970) could be questioned. With tools like Internet and e-mail the need to leave the house for work, education, shopping etc. seems to disappear. This in turn also diminishes the capability constraints: people can spare the time they needed for travelling and they can actually fulfil several tasks from one place more or less parallel in time. Once again, the importance of the geographical concepts ‘place’ and ‘location’, and with that also the existence of the city as a geographical entity, is questioned. Terms like ‘spatial detachment’ (Salet, 1996) express a belief that reasons for people and economic activities to concentrate have disappeared. It is not surprising that a spatial concept like the urban field, already introduced in the 1960s, regains popularity under these circumstances.

Curiously, the current debate is an almost exact copy of the earlier debate on ‘the end of the city’ in the 1960s. The argument that new technologies of transport and communication would make the traditional city something of the past can even be traced back further, at least to the plea of Frank Lloyd Wright (1935) for a ‘Broadacre City’. The only things that changed in the discussion were the technologies referred to: first the automobile, telephone and radio (Wright, 1935), later intercontinental air traffic (Webber, 1968), and in the most recent debate Internet and e-mail. It is often presumed that digital contacts can replace much of the ‘physical’ movements people make to get from home to earn a living, buy consumption goods, use services or spend their free time. Although the
The impact of the recent development of Internet, e-mail and the like cannot yet be overseen completely, the opposite seems to happen. Instead of a considerably reduction in daily mobility, recent statistics indicate a further increase, as will be shown in Chapter 8.

Clearly, at the start of the twenty-first century, the so-called ‘traditional’ cities are still clearly present in both Northwest-Europe and North America. Although the technologies that are currently available to us make it possible to live and work at any given location theoretically, this does not happen in practice. People still show a strong tendency to cluster their activities in relatively small parts of the land available to them, maybe no longer only in cities, but still within areas not too far from these cities. Overlooking the recent theoretical debate on urban regional form, Musterd and Van Zelm (2001) express their surprise about the enthusiasm with which American concepts like the urban field are considered to be applicable in the European context as well. Especially in the case of the Netherlands, the possibility of urban field formation is hardly imaginable when the traditionally high importance of the historically grown identity of places is considered. The same holds true when recent empirical evidence on daily mobility behaviour is taken into account, as was discussed earlier. In Chapter 8, recent data on the development of daily mobility patterns in the Netherlands will be presented, demonstrating that most daily trips of the Dutch continue to take place within relatively small regions that are a far cry from the suggested development towards urban fields. The data in Chapter 8 will make clear that daily mobility has indeed grown fast recently, but that this was rather a growth in number of trips than in the average trip distance or the share of long-distance trips.

An important and often underestimated factor blocking unlimited decentralisation of people as well as economic activities is the identification of people with the places and regions where they live, work and recreate. People generally prefer to live in neighbourhoods that have a strong specific identity. This identity is determined by many factors amongst which the built environment, the surrounding (natural and cultural) landscape, and local or regional culture. Musterd & Ostendorf (1998) summarise these characteristics as the ‘historically grown identity’ of a place. To a certain extent, also companies are sensitive to the local identity of the place where they settle. Of course, factors like available space, land prices and tax levels are usually more important factors in a firm’s location choice. However, the image of a city or region certainly also plays a decisive role. This role seems to have gained in importance. Especially for headquarters of multinational companies, a representative location is considered essential. In this respect, Musterd and Ostendorf (1998) remarked: “Good access roads, telecommunications and the like can be developed anywhere, but location-specific and historically grown identity can not” (p. 12, translation by author). Musterd and Van Zelm (2001), focusing more on living environments than on economic location factors, take this point further and search for connections between the emergence of polycentric urban regions and the lasting and growing importance of ‘spatially bounded qualities’ of places. They suggest that there is a growing ‘mismatch’ between housing supply and housing demand in the Netherlands and that this mismatch is to a large extent due to the neglect of the demand for specific housing milieus.

The lasting importance of local identity is also an important ingredient in recent local government policies. Instead of posing a threat to the importance of locality, globalisation so far rather seems to have emphasised this importance. The more cities all over the world start to look alike, the more they will attempt to distinguish themselves from other cities. Another factor that tends to be overlooked by those proclaiming the end of the city are the
constraints posed by the already existing built environment and the existing economic structures. The built environment generally changes much slower than transport and communication technologies. For a large part this is caused by the fact that simply destroying the existing built environment to make room for new development would mean huge financial losses for the owners of the buildings. An added reason specific for Northwest-Europe is the strong tradition of preservation of historic, monumental buildings and city structures mentioned earlier. Added to this, also local and regional economic structures tend to change rather slowly. Economic specialisations of cities and regions generally do not emerge or disappear overnight, but gradually come about instead. In planning policies of many Northwest-European countries, the vitality of cities, especially historic city centres, is one of the central issues. This directly links back to the importance of people's identification with their living environment mentioned above. Therefore, Lamboooy (1991, p. 439) is right to conclude that "judging from the experiences of the last few hundred years it can be assumed that the continuity of the urban structure is stronger than is generally being accepted on account of the present-day belief in change."

3.8 Conclusions

The preceding overview showed that during the twentieth century, theoretical approaches on the internal structure of cities and the functional relationships within and between urban regions have gone through some major shifts. Until the 1960s, roughly two groups of theorists could be distinguished. One group was mainly concerned with modelling the division of cities in neighbourhoods and zones of economic activities, another group focused on the interrelationships between cities and their surrounding regions. Both groups of theorists shared the basic assumption of a city as the economic, political and cultural centre of its region. This assumption was increasingly attacked from the 1960s on. Concepts like the urban field, technoburb / technocity and the network city are examples of an approach that treats city, suburbs, countryside and the interlinkages between them as one integrated whole.

The latter category of concepts tends to be based mainly on assumptions and hypotheses. The new forms of urbanisation that are supposedly coming about are said to be the logical outcome of trends like globalisation, improved transport technology and the 'communications revolution'. Meanwhile, empirical evidence for the new forms of urbanisation is very scarce. On the contrary, various empirical studies in the 1980s and 1990s demonstrated that the 'action space' of the majority of Dutch households still has a far more modest extent than the urban field or poly-nucleated urban region. Evidence from other European countries does not give much support to the existence of intensive functional relationships across large distances either. Nevertheless, the proponents of urban fields and the like appear to be very convinced of their interpretation of current and future urbanisation trends. Essential for the judgment of the validity of these concepts is an analysis of the actual scale level on which daily mobility takes place. The analysis of recent trends in daily mobility patterns in Chapter 8 will shed some light on this question.

The economic-technological and socio-demographic trends and the spatial implications of these trends discussed in Chapter 2 and 3 formed the context for various attempts of national, regional and local governments in Northwest-European countries to change the distribution of population and activities (and with that, urban form) through physical planning policy. The future perspective (realistic or not) of a strongly deconcentrated
amorphous ‘megalopolis’ in which the traditional cities and countryside would virtually disappear functioned as a ‘doom scenario’, probably most of all in the Netherlands (Engelsdorp Gastelaars & Ostendorf 1991; Wusten & Faludi 1992). National urbanisation policies that were formulated after World War II tried to prevent this doom scenario mainly via two types of strategies. The first of these was to limit sub-urbanisation to a select group of locations while restricting building activities outside of these locations. This approach has been used on several locations in Northwest Europe under a variety of names, of which the British ‘New Town policy’ and the Dutch policy of ‘concentrated deconcentration’ were probably the best-known examples. The second approach was to work against sub-urbanisation by concentrating new building locations within the already existing built environment or at least close to it, most of all in around large and medium-sized cities. This approach has become internationally known as the ‘compact city policy’. Each of these national urbanisation policies was based on assumptions of regional, national and sometimes also international urban systems, and functional relationships within these systems between cities as well as between the cities and their hinterland. In Chapter 4, the arguments for national governments to introduce such national urbanisation policies will be discussed as well as the way in which they are formulated, agreed on and executed.
“We want two extremes. We want the intensive meeting place, the urban environment, the place where everybody is together, and we want the secluded open space where we are alone in the country with nature. We need and want both. (...) This is the contradictory desire in our utopia. (...) We want to live in a small community with which we can identify and yet we want all the facilities of the city of millions of people. We want to have very intense urban experiences and yet we want the open space right next to us.”


The above citation expresses one of the central dilemmas that have faced physical planning in Northwest-Europe during most of the twentieth century. Almost every plan on the national, regional and local level struggles with the question, which spatial form of urbanisation should be chosen to be able to provide a high level of services for all inhabitants and access to open space for recreation within reasonable distance. Physical planning as we know it today for a large part derived from a long tradition of utopian design of ‘the ideal city’. These utopias could not be realised, but many plans have tried to at least approach these ideal living environments.

This chapter discusses the historical development of comprehensive planning at the national level in Europe. The physical planning policies that stand central in this chapter, and in this study as a whole, are policies aimed at influencing the spatial pattern of urbanisation and daily mobility patterns, or in other words the functional integration of urban regions. The chapter focuses mostly on the Netherlands, but frequently comparisons with other European countries are sought. The chapter starts from the viewpoint that physical planning should be considered as an integrated part of the policy programme of the welfare state (section 4.1). After that, the development of objectives of urbanisation and spatial mobility policy throughout the 20th century are shortly introduced (section 4.2). One of the main instruments that planners use to reach these objectives is the spatial concept. The way spatial concepts are used is discussed in section 4.3. Two concepts have formed a key element in the urbanisation and spatial mobility policies of many European countries in the period since World War II: ‘concentrated deconcentration’ and the ‘compact city’. These concepts will be introduced in section 4.4. This is followed by a discussion on the most recent development in Dutch urbanisation and spatial mobility policy: in the Fifth Report, the compact city strategy is traded for a strategy in which the ‘urban network’ is the new central concept. The final section of the chapter (section 4.6) deals with the political context in which plans have to be implemented and the prerequisites for a plan to reach its objectives ‘on the ground’.
4.1 Reasons for physical planning:
Physical planning as an element of the welfare state

Welfare states have a long history, but the West-European welfare states, as we know them now, have developed mainly after World War II. Welfare states take several forms, but the essential characteristic of all welfare states is that the government aims to guarantee the collective social welfare of its citizens (Veen, 1990). Most European welfare states reached their most extensive and generous form in the early 1970s. The deep economic crisis starting in the late 1970s caused a discussion about whether welfare state arrangements had become too generous. All over Western Europe the government expenditures on welfare states were drastically reduced during the 1980s and 1990s. Many governments decided to withdraw partially or completely from various sections of society. Several state-owned companies were privatised and the intervention of governments in fields like social security and housing was considerably reduced.

Generally, analyses of welfare states focus on government interventions in the distribution of labour, income and welfare. The policies and measures mostly associated with these interventions are the social security system, labour market policy, and health care policy. Another, less frequently included field of policy is housing (Kemeny, 2001). Physical planning is almost never included in welfare state studies. Nevertheless, there is sufficient reason to consider physical planning as an integral part of welfare state policy.

Physical planning clearly relates to the general aims of government intervention in the collective welfare of its citizens. Among the four main aims of welfare state policy defined by Veen (1990), two could also be seen as aims of physical planning:

- providing services that enable individuals to function in society. The role of physical planning in this could be to promote such a distribution of these services that they come within reach of all inhabitants of the given society.
- promoting individual well-being. The role of physical planning in this respect is an ambiguous one. Physical planning aims at collective rather than individual interests. In the interest of a society as a whole, physical planning measures will often mean that certain individual preferences cannot be met. Eventually, however, most individuals in the society for which the plan is made might be better off when collective interests are given higher priority than individual interests. Physical planning could then function to prevent what has become known as 'the tragedy of the commons': a situation in which a group of individuals all strive to maximise their own profits and damage public resources in the process, so that in the end, each of these individuals is worse off than before (Hardin, 1968).

According to Zonneveld (1991), the roots of physical planning lie in the basic assumption that certain situations lead to problems and that the government is the most suited institution to solve these problems. Concrete examples of these problematic situations are activities that lead to nuisance for their environment and situations that are perceived as unfair. A classic example of the latter is a continuous concentration of economic growth and wealth in core areas at the expense of peripheral areas. The ambition of physical planning to contribute to the collective well being of a society is expressed very clearly in various recent definitions of physical planning in government documents. Examples are given in Figure 4.1.
In the Netherlands, the 1970s were considered as the 'golden age of physical planning' (Cammen & De Klerk 1996, Kreukels 1992). The high ambition level of the national planners in this decade must be seen in the context of an overall belief in the possibility to re-create the society. Many scientists and politicians were convinced that helped by the newest developments of communication, technology, energy sources and scientific knowledge, the future development of a society could be planned (Glasbergen & Simonis, 1979). From the 1980s on, this belief was more and more challenged. Looking back on the 1970s, Faludi and Wusten (1992, p. 29) conclude: "(...) views propounded by the agencies concerned with physical planning may well permeate far outside the bounds of physical planning. This seems to have happened at the apogee of physical planning in the 1970s."

Figure 4.1. Main goals of physical planning policy as stated in official government documents

"To regulate the development and use of land in the public interest" (UK, Planning Policy Guidance no. 1; cited in Cullingworth & Nadin 1997 p.2)

"(...) searching for and bringing about the best conceivable mutual adaptation of space and society, in the service of that society" (WRR 1998, p.14; translation by author)

"The legitimacy of physical planning lies in the notion that the government pre-eminently is the institution, and can offer the approach, to prevent or solve conflicts in land use. (...) Physical planning is meant to provide added value to spatial development through an integral vision and deliberate consideration of all interests" (Werkgroep Vijfde Nota, 2000, p. 266; translation by author).

"The planning of land and water areas, as well as of buildings, shall, with due regard to the freedom of the individual, be carried out to encourage the development of an equitable society as well as good living conditions for people today and for future generations" (Swedish Planning and Building Act, cited in Nyström, 1996, p.61).

"The main principle (...) is a durable spatial development that brings social and economic space demands in harmony with ecological functions and contributes to a lasting, spaciously balanced order". (German Federal Law on Physical Planning, Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Wohnungswesen, 1998; translation by author)

"With their physical planning measures, the federal, cantonal and municipal government should support especially the following pursuits:  
  a. Protection of the natural sources like soil, air, water, forest and landscape;
  b. Providing and maintaining living environments and meeting the spatial requirements for the economy;
  c. Promoting social, economic and cultural life in all parts of the country;
  d. Safeguarding a sufficient national food supply;
  e. Guaranteeing the military defense of the country."
(Swiss Federal Law on Physical Planning, cited in Groenewoud & Hermans, 1980, p.17; translation by author)
A comparable tendency could also be noticed in other European countries. In the UK, for example, physical planning moved from comprehensive 'grand plans' towards a much more pragmatic approach in which the reconciliation of conflicting interests in land use was given most stress (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). Apart from this tendency that already started in the 1960s, the Thatcher government diminished government activities in physical planning during the 1980s as an element of the more general dismantling of the British welfare state. In a less extreme way, national government involvement in physical planning was reduced in almost all West-European countries during the 1980s and 1990s. Physical planning responsibilities were in some cases decentralised to the lower government levels. In other cases, governments have sought ways to reduce investments in physical planning in the form of public-private partnerships (European Commission, 1997).

4.2 Objectives of urban, regional and national physical planning

The roots of systematic or comprehensive physical planning, as we now know it, are often placed in the late 19th and early 20th century. This was a period in which all over Europe cities went through a process of explosive growth. The main engine for this growth was industrialisation, generating many new jobs that attracted a huge labour force from the countryside. In the cities, a massive production of houses was required in a very short period. This housing production was almost entirely provided by private developers. Their main aim was to maximise their profit. This aim was reached by building as many houses as possible on the land they had acquired. The speculative housing development for the working class, often leading to housing areas of extremely high densities with unsanitary living conditions, led to a debate about the possibilities of local and national governments to promote minimum requirements to housing. The Housing Laws that were introduced in several European countries around the turn of the century can be seen as the first attempt of national governments to intervene in the quality of cities as living environments. These Housing Laws often contained initiatives to promote what could be called 'systematic town extension' (Faludi & Van der Valk, 1994; Ravetz, 1986; Hall, 1992; Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997; Alexander, 1992).

Initially, planning in most European countries remained limited to the local level. However, during the first decades of the 20th century, the continuous spatial extension of urban areas became of growing concern to regional and national governments as well as to academics. The UK and the Netherlands were European forerunners in the development of strategic plans on the level of urban regions. In the UK as well as in the Netherlands, the dominant opinion became that urban sprawl was an unwanted development and that further extension of the cities should preferably take place in an orderly and spatially limited way. Parallel to this and as a logical consequence, it was realised that attempts to influence urbanisation required a regional rather than a local approach. In the Netherlands, in the early 1920s, Rotterdam launched the first strategic plan for its urban region, followed by the Amsterdam Extension Plan in the 1930s (Faludi & Van der Valk, 1994). In the UK, the Greater London Plan in 1944 was a landmark in the development of strategic planning on the regional level (Hall, 1992). The main sources of inspiration for regional planning in this period were Howard, whose concept of the 'Social City' involved a system of settlements (garden cities) connected by public transport, and Geddes, who introduced the 'city-region' as the basic unit for analysis and planning of urbanised areas (Alexander, 1992; Hall, 1992).
In the first year after World War II, the main concern of most European countries was to rebuild society, to solve the huge housing shortage (initially caused by war damage and intensified due to the rapid population growth in the post-war years) and to recover national economies. Also, the increasing consumption of space and the growing interrelatedness of housing, employment, service provision and recreation across growing distances asked for a response on the national and regional government level (Glasbergen & Simonis, 1979). In this context, physical planning gained considerably in societal importance. Physical planning was seen as a tool to reach a better society in many respects. The expectations of physical planning policy were high and national and regional planning programmes became more and more ambitious. This was especially true for the UK. The clearest expression of the high ambition level of British planners in the earliest post-war years was the policy of concentrated deconcentration, with the instruments of New Towns and Green Belts. Green Belts were installed around all major urban agglomerations to serve the traditional goal of preventing urban sprawl (especially in the London region), while New Towns had to generate regional economic development of deprived areas and provide an ideal suburban living environment for family households. They were also a logical outcome of the strong anti-urban sentiments in the UK at that time. Inspiration was once again found in the pioneering work of Howard (Alexander, 1992; Hall, 1992; Ward, 1993). The instrument of new satellite towns would return several times in various European countries in later decades (see section 4.4.1).

In the 1970s, two more concerns were added to physical planning policy. The alarming report of the Club of Rome about ‘limits to growth’ provoked a growing concern with the effects of economic growth on the natural environment. Manufacturing and traffic (especially car traffic), seen predominantly as expressions of progress until then, appeared to have their negative sides too. The most important negative aspects discussed were several forms of environmental pollution and traffic congestion (Dantzig & Saaty, 1973). Physical planning was supposed to take these negative influences of economic growth into consideration. In the late 1980s, the environmental awareness in physical planning received an extra impetus through the introduction of the concept of ‘sustainable development’ (Jenks et al, 1996). Parallel to this, from the 1970s on, a re-valuation of urban living took place. Urban social problems became another growing concern of policy and society. It was feared that if the middle and upper class people kept moving to the suburbs, the cities would be left with concentrations of the poor, the jobless, the lower educated, and ethnic minorities. To prevent this, various initiatives were undertaken to increase the attractiveness of urban neighbourhoods. From the 1980s on, the combination of growing environmental awareness and the re-valuation of the cities led to an upsurge of compact city policies throughout Northwest-Europe (Dieleman et al 1999; Breheny, 1996). At the end of the twentieth century, most national planning strategies in Northwest Europe therefore consisted of a combination of urban regeneration, the protection of natural areas and open land through building restrictions, and several attempts to discourage car use and encourage public transport through physical planning (see section 4.4.2).

This study focuses on planning measures on the national level trying to influence trends in population distribution and daily mobility. The comprehensive set of planning measures that is dealing with population distribution and daily mobility dynamics is generally called ‘national urbanisation policy’. Because of this focus, the remaining sections of this chapter will concentrate on the most important strategies used in Northwest-Europe to intervene in population distribution and daily mobility behaviour. However, before
turning to these strategies, some attention should be paid to the way physical planners try to communicate the desired government interventions. A key instrument to get the planner’s message across is the spatial planning concept, which will be dealt with in the following section.

4.3 The use of spatial concepts in physical planning

In several policy fields, ‘acting concepts’ are used to express a certain gap between an actual situation and a desired situation. These acting concepts also present suggestions on how to overcome this gap. A specific type of these acting concepts is the spatial planning concept. According to Zonneveld (1991, p.21), a spatial planning concept "(...) expresses in a concise way, using words as well as images, the way a planning actor sees the desired development of spatial design, as well as the nature of the interventions that are considered necessary" (translated by author)

Spatial planning concepts can have various functions as an instrument of physical planning policy. Zonneveld (1991) mentions five possible functions:
- Cognitive function: the spatial planning concept expresses empirical assumptions;
- Intentional function: the spatial planning concept indicates the necessity or desirability of interventions in spatial development and spatial structure;
- Institutional function: clarifying the division of decision-making powers between individuals, government institutions and other organisations involved;
- Communicative function: using language and images to reach consensus on the definition of the situation and the interventions needed to change this situation in the preferred direction. This is often done in the form of a metaphor;
- Action function: the spatial planning concept bridges the gap between planning goals and intentions and the actions necessary to realise those goals and intentions.

Probably the most important function of the above is the communicative function. Almost as a general rule, opinions on the future spatial development of a location or area are divided among the parties involved. A spatial planning concept might function to combine aspects of these different views on the desired spatial development. As a simplified image of reality, it could provoke associative thoughts, convince parties of an alternative view and generate a discussion leading to consensus on the preferred policy and the measures needed to reach the goals of that policy (Duinen, 1999).

Spatial planning concepts could be divided into two main types: strategic planning concepts and instrumental planning concepts. Strategic planning concepts are mainly meant to create a broad political and societal basis for planning actions. These concepts work to reach a consensus on the definition of the situation to be planned. They form the ‘hard core’ of a planning programme and the framework in which practical planning measures should take place. Strategic planning concepts lay most stress on the cognitive, intentional and institutional aspects of physical planning. Instrumental planning concepts are more focused on the eventual planning actions needed to bring the intentions of the government into practice. The two types of concepts are combined in most policies. The instrumental planning concepts then function to translate the general goals of planning policy (expressed in the strategic planning concepts) into concrete planning measures. Together with regulations, financial instruments and the like, the strategic and instrumental planning concepts from a ‘conceptual complex’ (Zonneveld, 1991).
Alternatively, spatial planning concepts could be considered as a part of a body of thought that Faludi & Van der Valk (1994) call 'planning doctrine'. Planning doctrine involves an interrelated whole of discussion and actions to reach a desired spatial arrangement of an area. Within this planning doctrine, spatial planning concepts express principles of spatial organisation. Complementary to these principles, a set of notions about the planning method is established, known as planning principles. Faludi & Van der Valk (1994) consider planning doctrine an important instrument to reach consensus in a society about the goals and intentions of Dutch physical planning.

The type of concepts focused on in this study are strategic planning concepts, more specifically, strategic planning concepts used in national physical planning policies on population distribution and daily mobility. Two concepts that dominated the post-war development of Dutch physical planning in general, and the policies on population distribution and daily mobility in particular, will be studied in more detail. These concepts are concentrated deconcentration and the compact city. As will appear from the next section, these concepts have been used in various forms not only in the Netherlands, but also in several other Northwest-European countries since World War II.

4.4 Dominant strategic planning concepts in Northwest-Europe

This study mainly focuses on the recent development of population distribution and daily mobility and the attempts to influence these developments through physical planning in the Netherlands. However, this will be done in the context of a wider geographic area that could be called Northwest-Europe. This area, roughly including the Benelux countries, the UK, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, and parts of France and Sweden, shares a lot of economic, socio-cultural and demographic characteristics. Its settlement structure is dominated by many relatively small urban centres rather than primary cities (with the exceptions of London and Paris). Moreover, in recent decades, all countries in Northwest-Europe underwent an almost continuous process of deconcentration of people and economic activities (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 5).

Apparently, these similarities in economic, societal and population distribution trends have led to quite comparable responses in physical planning policies throughout Northwest-Europe. Looking at the national planning policy documents of the countries in Northwest-Europe in the post-war period, two strategic planning concepts have dominated the scene in various appearances: concentrated deconcentration and the compact city.

4.4.1 Concentrated deconcentration

In the early 1960s, the Dutch National Statistics Agency published an alarming forecast about the expected population growth until the year 2000. According to this forecast, the Netherlands would have more than 20 million inhabitants by the year 2000. This meant a growth with more than 7 million inhabitants in 40 years. One of the crucial dilemmas of the national planners in the 1960s became therefore where and how to provide all these people with adequate housing. The possibility of a further concentration of population in and close to the largest cities was not considered as an option. In the Netherlands, the 1960s were a time in which the largest cities had a very negative image and their further expansion towards metropolitan proportions was feared to produce an anonymous, dangerous and immoral environment. At the same time, the foresight of a completely urbanised West of the Netherlands as a result of unlimited urban sprawl functioned as a
The Dutch government was convinced that a more equal spread of population and economic activities across the country would lead to a more balanced division of wealth and a better quality of life. To avoid overcrowding of the western provinces and depopulation of the peripheral regions, the policy of 'concentrated deconcentration' was introduced (Wusten & Faludi, 1992; Cammen & De Klerk, 1996; Faludi & Van der Valk, 1994).

The strategic spatial concept 'concentrated deconcentration' was applied at both the national level as at the level of the urban region. At the national level, the economic development of the peripheral regions would be given an impetus. The government set 'the good example' and deconcentrated some of its services to regional centers. It was hoped that the private sector would follow this example. On the level of the urban regions in the western provinces, concentrated deconcentration was supposed to stop urban sprawl. Suburbanisation was not disencouraged, but channeled into a selection of location called 'growth centres'. Apart from providing housing for migrants from the large cities, the growth centers were also planned to become new centers of employment. It was foreseen that growth centers would become the centres of their own daily urban systems. This strategy was introduced in the Second Report on Physical Planning (Ministerie VRO, 1966). However, it was not until 1976, in the Urbanisation Report (Ministerie VRO, 1976), that the concrete instruments to reach the goals of concentrated deconcentration on the level of urban region were provided. By that time, the other goal of concentrated deconcentration, namely the more equal spread of population and economic activities across the country, was already given up.

The growth centers were mainly located outside of the 'Randstad', the area containing the four largest cities and their agglomerations. In-between the horseshoe-shaped urbanised zone of the Randstad, a relatively open area of agricultural land could be found: the 'Green Heart'. This Green Heart was supposed to be kept as open as possible, so that the earlier mentioned 'doom scenario' of a totally urbanised West of the Netherlands could be prevented. At the same time, however, a further growth of the largest cities was not considered an attractive foresight either. The logical consequence was that the growth centers could only be located north, east and south of the Randstad-Green Heart complex (Wusten & Faludi, 1992). A more detailed discussion on the policy of concentrated deconcentration and its results will follow in Chapter 6.

The Dutch policy of concentrated deconcentration found inspiration in earlier policy initiatives in the UK. In the immediate post-war years, 14 'New Towns' were developed. Eight of them were located on the outskirts of the London metropolitan area. The New Towns in the London area were all meant to provide housing and working locations for the overspill of London. In other locations, New Towns were used as a tool to generate regional economic growth. This first generation of New Towns were entirely new settlements of a modest size, with around 50,000 inhabitants. The main inspiration source for these towns and their modest size was the garden city of Howard (Ward, 1993; Hall, 1992).

In the 1960s, a second generation of New Towns was planned. Most of these New Towns were not new settlements, but expansions around existing towns or villages: Expanded Towns. Just like in the Netherlands, in the early 1960s alarming projections were issued concerning the population growth of the UK. In 1960, the UK was thought to have 64 million people in the year 2000, while in 1965 this figure was even raised to 75 million
based on the high birth rate of the early 1960s (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). A new
 generation of New (and Expanded) Towns, with a much larger size than the earlier
generation, was introduced to meet the expected huge demand of new housing. Most of
these second generation New Towns did not reach their ambitious goals regarding
population size in the end. After the steep decline in natural growth in the late 1960s and
early 1970s, the population projections were revised downwards drastically. This caused
the eventual New Town projects to become considerably more modest in size than
initially planned (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). The further construction of New and
Expanded Towns ended in the mid-1970s (Hall, 1992).

Like in the Netherlands, the location of New Towns was partly determined by the aim to
prevent urban sprawl. The UK solution was the 'Green Belt'. Around all major
metropolitan areas, a zone with severe building restrictions was installed. The aims of
these Green Belts were to provide 'green' and 'open' land within reasonable reach for the
metropolitan inhabitants, and to prevent metropolitan areas to grow together into a larger
urbanised whole. Most of the New Towns were situated at the outer borders of these
Green Belts.

While in the UK and the Netherlands, the strategic planning concept of concentrated
deconcentration gradually became discredited in the 1970s (see section 4.4.2), the concept
kept its appeal in other countries. France, for example, has pursued a policy of
concentrated deconcentration on both the national and the regional level since the 1960s.
On the national level, 'métropoles d’équilibre' were appointed to promote a more even
distribution of economic development across the country. These regional centres were
supposed to form counterweights to the capital region of Paris. This strategy is quite
comparable to the initial aim of the Dutch government of 'concentrated deconcentration'
on the national level. Within the Paris region itself, eight new cities were proposed in the
regional plan of 1965. Just like the 'métropoles d’équilibre' on the national level, these
new cities should decrease the immense concentration of economic power as well as
social and cultural activities in one centre within the metropolitan region. These new
cities were expected to provide housing, work and services for about 5 million people
(based on an estimate of population growth in the Paris region from 9 to 14 million
between 1965 and 2000). In the 1970s, these growth estimates were cut back drastically
and so was the development of the new cities. Only five instead of eight new cities were
eventually realised and in a considerably more modest extent than initially planned (Hall,

In Switzerland, the concept of concentrated deconcentration has been at the core of
federal physical planning policy since the 1960s. However, it was not used to channel
urban sprawl into a few selected locations, as happened in the UK and the Netherlands.
Here, concentrated deconcentration meant the promotion of growth in regional centres
with the aim to develop peripheral areas. Therefore, in Switzerland, concentrated
deconcentration was much more a tool of regional economic policy than of population
distribution policy. The promotion of regional centres was a direct result of the specific
Swiss political context of a confederation. One of the main aims of the Swiss federal
government has always been to spread economic development and wealth across the
country as equal as possible (see Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion).

The most recent example comes from the German 'Länder' Berlin and Brandenburg, that
set up a joint strategic planning perspective with 'dezentrale Konzentration' ('decentral
concentration') as its central concept. In this case, the concept expresses two main aims: first, to give an impetus to the development of the remoter parts of Brandenburg, and second, to prevent the loss of open land to urban sprawl in the direct surroundings of the built-up area of Berlin. In the period between 1945 and 1990, Berlin and its surrounding regions could not develop into a functionally coherent metropolitan area due to the unique political situation of the city. West-Berlin was an enclave of the Western world in the socialist German Democratic Republic. After the reunification of Germany and Berlin, it was feared that urban sprawl would take place with a speed unprecedented in any other location. Indeed during the 1990s, the immediate surroundings of Berlin developed rapidly as a location for low-density suburban housing areas and large-scale shopping centres. In this inner ring around Berlin, the concept of deconcentrated concentration aims to prevent further urban sprawl, with attempts to concentrate all new developments in and around existing cities. In the outer ring, a series of regional centres has been selected in which population and economic growth are promoted. These regional centres, like in the Swiss case, are supposed to function as ‘growth poles’ and contribute to improved economic perspectives for their surrounding regions as well. This strategy should then contribute to decrease the extreme centre-periphery differences between the Berlin agglomeration and Brandenburg (Ministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Raumordnung, 1998).

4.4.2 The compact city

The most important impetus towards the development of compact city policies was probably the emergence of environmental awareness, inspired by the report about ‘limits to growth’ of the Club of Rome in 1972 and given an extra impetus through the 1973 oil crisis (Cammen & De Klerk, 1996). Under the circumstances of constant economic growth and accumulation of wealth in the 1950s and 1960s, many people managed to realise their ideal of a detached house on a spacious plot outside the city. This continuous trend of deconcentration of people and activities was hardly questioned. A dramatic increase of car possession and car use was a logical consequence, since the private car was the most suited means of transport to reach dispersed activity locations within a reasonable time. Only in the 1970s, the negative environmental consequences of population deconcentration were fully realised. Planners in Europe and North America started to consider possible alternative ways to locate people and activities that would have less negative effects on the environment. This was combined with a growing concern for the threat of deteriorating urban neighbourhoods as a result of selective migration of the middle and higher income groups.

An example of this line of thought is the book ‘Compact City’ (Dantzig & Saaty 1973). After shortly summarising what the authors consider the problems of urban sprawl in American metropolitan areas (mainly focusing on long commuter times and over-dependence on the car for transport), Dantzig and Saaty outline an idealistic picture of a new type of city. A ‘four-dimensional city’ (the dimensions being length, width, height and time) is proposed, built on a platform with 8 levels. Each of these levels would contain land for housing and facilities. In this way, the city of Dantzig and Saaty could be built on a relatively small surface and still provide spacious plots for each inhabitant. Almost three decades later, their concrete plans for the shape and design of this compact city still look rather futuristic and far-fetched. However, most of the basic design principles of this new ‘compact city’ found their way to many official government
documents on urbanisation policy from the early 1980s on. Among the requirements that Dantzig and Saaty (1973) mention for urban areas are:

- Major activity centres close to each other, so that work, shopping and other services are available to all inhabitants within walking distance from home;
- Easy access to natural recreation areas, but also to top cultural and shopping facilities;
- A transport system without delays or congestion;
- Arrangement of housing and facilities in such a way that contacts between the inhabitants are encouraged.
- Availability of all basic services 7 days a week and 24 hours a day.

From the late 1970s on, the compact city gradually grew towards the dominant concept in urbanisation policy in several European countries. The report of the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 provided an extra impetus for compact city development. It contributed considerably to the integration of the concept of 'sustainable development' into the mainstream of the political and societal debate. In many government documents and scientific contributions since then, the compact city has been presented as one of the major planning principles for sustainable development. The main reference for compact city strategies was the densely populated core of historic European cities. This was not only because of the before-mentioned reasons, but also because these city centres "(...) are seen, often by those from outside, as ideal places to live and experience the vitality and variety of urban life. The danger is that it is a romantic vision, one which assumes a golden age that can be recaptured through urban form, leading to a sustainable and benign civility" (Jenks et al., 1996). In addition to the environmental and mobility arguments, the increasing international competitiveness was also used as a reason for compact city policy. It was argued that cities, especially the largest cities, were the main engines of national economic growth and therefore, investments in urban revitalisation were beneficiary to the country as a whole (Ostendorf & Musterd, 1996).

In the Netherlands, the roots of compact city policy can be traced back to the urban renewal initiatives of the 1970s. Already in the Urbanisation Report (Ministerie VRO, 1976), one of the central aims was to stabilise and if possible even increase the population of the large cities. However, this was written down while the policy of concentrated deconcentration was finally realised on the ground with large-scale new housing areas in the growth centres. Therefore, although the dangers of depopulation of the large cities (degeneration of urban neighbourhoods, declining service provision on the neighbourhood level) were realised all too well, the policy of concentrated deconcentration was still pursued. The main reason for this was that the national and local governments had already made huge investments on the growth centre locations. The costs for land acquisition, building preparation and new infrastructure had to be earned back through the realisation of the planned housing areas (Cammen & De Klerk, 1996). As happens more often in physical planning, it took quite some time to translate the concept of concentrated deconcentration into concrete measures 'on the ground'. By the time the instruments to realise concentrated deconcentration were available, there were already serious doubts about the strategy to provide new large-scale housing areas in the growth centres. Already in the 1970s, the growth centres located furthest from the large cities were considered at a too large distance, even though in some of these locations, the first houses were still to be built. Although the dominant concept remained concentrated deconcentration, the emphasis had shifted from 'deconcentration' to 'concentration' (Faludi & Van der Valk, 1994). Not much later, also the growth centres closer to the large cities were considered
an undesirable development, since the dominant planning concept had become the compact city instead of concentrated deconcentration. Under these circumstances, the policy of concentrated deconcentration has eventually been put into practice only partially (Zonneveld, 1991).

In the UK, after the New Towns disappeared from national and regional planning policy, the policy on urbanisation more or less became a compact city policy too. From the post-war urbanisation strategy, the Green Belt was the only spatial concept to survive. Recent government documents indicate that the Green Belts will remain untouched for some more years to come (DOE, 1995). In addition, the most recent national government papers clearly express a preference for urban regeneration and compact urban development. The report ‘Towards an Urban Renaissance’ (Urban Task Force, 1999, p.11) mentions as two of the main aims of urban policy:

“(...) developing a higher quality urban product by creating compact urban developments, based upon a commitment to excellence in urban design and the creation of integrated urban transport systems that prioritise the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport passengers”, and

“(...) developing on brownfield land and recycling existing buildings must become more attractive than building on greenfield land.”

Dieleman et al (1999) consider the Dutch experience with concentrated deconcentration and compact city policy one continuous policy aimed at compact urban development. Comparable viewpoints have recently been expressed by Faludi & Van der Valk (1994) and by the national planners themselves (Vriesman, 1999). This suggests a long-term continuity in Dutch physical planning policy that was absent in reality. It is true that Dutch-style concentrated deconcentration also contained the element of compactness. Instead of suburban extension of large cities and their surrounding villages, suburban neighbourhoods were located in a selective group of new towns and built in a compact form. However, the concepts of concentrated deconcentration and the compact city show more contradictions than similarities. They form the expressions of policies that are opposed to each other in many ways. To channel suburbanisation towards a number of growth centres is a strategy very different in its aims and possible effects than to concentrate new housing and employment locations in and directly outside already existing cities. In the policy of concentrated deconcentration, suburbanisation was allowed and even encouraged. The compact city policy, instead, was very clearly an anti-suburbanisation policy.

The only elements of Dutch physical planning policy that survived all policy changes are the Randstad and the Green Heart. The suggestion of continuity in Dutch national urbanisation policy discussed above is mainly based on the continuous key role of these two concepts. Attempts to prevent urban sprawl around the Randstad and to preserve the relatively open agricultural landscape of the Green Heart have remained a central element of Dutch urbanisation policies throughout the second half of the twentieth century. However, these attempts were made through quite different, and even contradictory, approaches since the 1960s. At first, the preservation of the Green Heart was promoted through the policy of concentrated deconcentration, by locating the growth centres outside of the Randstad / Green Heart complex. In the compact city policy, the Green Heart was still preserved, but now in the framework of a policy to prevent the loss of open space in agricultural and nature areas in general. While within the western part of the Netherlands, in the concentrated deconcentration policy, the Randstad area was actually
(unintentionally) extended outwards, the compact city policy aimed at further concentration of population growth on the Randstad ring of large and medium-sized cities.

4.5 Towards a new central concept: the network city or the urban network?

The Dutch compact city policy seems to have undergone the same fate as the policy of concentrated deconcentration. Towards the end of the 1990s, while the concrete instruments of the compact city policy were finally set in motion, the policy met with growing dissatisfaction. The goals of compact city policy were said to be impossible to reach, and the gap between policy goals and reality seemed to become wider and wider. When the compact city was launched as central concept, the national planners already realised that problems of urbanisation and daily mobility had become regional rather than local, but the compact city as a central concept was thought to counterbalance the trend to further deconcentration. However, this proved to be harder to realise than previously expected. Therefore, in the Fifth Report, a new change of strategic concepts took place: after ‘concentrated deconcentration’ (Second and Third Report) and ‘compact city’ (Fourth Report), the ‘urban network’ (Fifth Report) was supposed to become the new core concept. Figure 4.2 gives a simplified graphical impression of the differences between the three concepts in terms of the intended functional relationships and the location of new extension areas. In this respect, the policy announced in the Fifth Report introduces another new spatial concept (more operational than strategic in nature): the concept of ‘contours’. Every municipality is asked to draw a boundary within which building is allowed, and outside of which building is prohibited (Ministerie VROM, 2001).

Academic geographers and planners have intensively debated the desirability of compact urbanisation as a planning goal. Advocates of the compact city argue that a more compact urban form contributes to a reduction of pollution, most notably through car use (Newman & Kenworthy, 1989; Ewing, 1997), helps to prevent the loss of open countryside (CPRE, 1999), and promotes urban regeneration (Bourne, 1996). The counter-argument holds that urban form is hardly related to car use and that the relationships found in empirical studies are due to spurious correlations (Dieleman et al, 1999). Several academics claim that a compact city policy denies the living preferences of the majority of the population. They question the use of spatial planning policy in general, stating that the housing and land market would lead to much better solutions if they would not be interfered by government interventions (for example Gordon & Richardson, 1997). Since the benefits of compact building have not been proved convincingly, but the evidence against compact building is at least as unconvincing, Breheny (1996) takes a compromise position between the ‘centrists’ and the ‘decentrists’. Although he sympathises with the compact city idea, he judges it as not realistic enough. Typically, he proposes a ‘controlled direction’ of deconcentration and with this, he returns to the tradition of concentrated deconcentration as the central strategic planning concept. Ewing (1997) seems to arrive at more or less the same conclusion. He favours compact urban expansion, but uses the term ‘compact’ in a quite broad sense, which might include a high-density monocentric city expansion, as well as a low-density settlement pattern with several concentrations of housing, employment and services.

Apparently, the arguments of the ‘decentrists’ found more approval among the Dutch planners than the arguments of the ‘centrists’. During the preparations for the Fifth Report, the Dutch planners sought a new concept that would better match current and
expected tendencies of population distribution and daily mobility. Initially, the regional urbanisation concept 'network city' was launched. This network city came quite close to the traditional daily urban system as defined in studies of daily mobility in the 1980s and early 1990s (Cortie et al., 1992; Dingemanse, 1993). The national planners realised that the functional urban regions they defined in the compact city policy (significantly smaller than the urban regions found in the studies mentioned above) did not reflect the actual patterns of daily mobility. Therefore, they proposed new entities composed of a few formerly independent but now intertwined urban regions (Ministerie VROM, 1999a).

**Figure 4.2** The core strategic spatial concepts of Dutch national urbanisation policy since the 1960s.

*Concentrated deconcentration*  

*Compact city*

*Urban networks with contours*
Later during the process towards the Fifth Report, the term ‘network city’ was traded for ‘urban networks’. This seems only a matter of words but involves much more than that. The change from ‘network city’ to ‘urban network’ was accompanied by an upward shift in geographic scale and increased stress on inter-regional instead of intra-regional linkages. For example, the three initially proposed network cities of Amsterdam, Utrecht and Rotterdam-The Hague were replaced by one ‘urban network’: the Delta Metropolis (Burg, 2000). This was probably the result of an intensive lobby campaign of the four largest cities and a number of medium-sized cities in the Randstad region, in close cooperation with several non-governmental organisations and academic researchers (Deltametropool, 1998). The change of terms might also have been a response to critical reactions or misunderstandings about the term network city. Although the national planners never meant to say they wanted to create new large-scale settlements with multiple centres, this might be the way that it was interpreted by a part of the (provincial and municipal) planning community. The term ‘urban network’ suggests a less integrated whole with centres that are more independent from each other than in a ‘network city’.

Confusingly, the scale of the ‘urban network’ more or less coincides with the academic notion of the ‘network city’ as proposed by Lambooij (1991) and Batten (1995) (see Chapter 3).

The network metaphor can also be found in other recent national planning documents. In Switzerland, the federal planners proposed to integrate all major national and regional centres of the country into one urban network, called ‘Vernetztes Städtesystem Schweiz’ (Swiss urban network system). In this strategy, the urban centres are expanded in a compact way, while at the same time their interconnections are intensified (Bundesamt für Raumplanung, 1996). In an advisory document for the future spatial development of Sweden, the urban regions are imagined as islands in a sea of forests and rural areas. This situation was perceived as not beneficiary to the future economic development of the country. The intensification of the interconnections between the urban regions, changing the urban regions from ‘islands’ into ‘pearls on a string’, is therefore strongly advocated by the Swedish national planners (Nystrom, 1996). The attempts to integrate the Danish-Swedish Öresund region into one functionally coherent urbanised entity (Ministry of the Environment, 1993) are another Scandinavian example of a network city strategy.

4.6 From ambition to reality: the results of urbanisation policy

National planning documents express the preferred future spatial development of countries in the view of the national planners. These documents generally contain ambitious goals and the firm belief that these goals can actually be reached. This is more or less true for national planning in all European countries, but perhaps most of all for the Netherlands. A crucial question is then of course to what extent these high ambitions are justified. As already pointed out in chapter 2, spatial planning policy is only one of a large number of factors influencing spatial developments. These other factors do not only include economic-technological, socio-cultural and demographic trends that are hard to influence through physical planning, but also other government policies, as well as other government levels and the political and administrative system of the country in question. The political context, in which national physical planning is trying to reach its goals, is discussed in section 4.6.1. Apart from the possible limits of this political environment, the success of physical planning also depends on the planning process and on the plan itself. This includes questions of internal coherence of the plan, a clear definition of goals and
objectives and the way the plan is communicated to the parties involved. These ‘internal’ factors determining the success chances of a plan are addressed in section 4.6.2.

4.6.1 The political context of physical planning policy

The possibilities to influence spatial developments through physical planning are for a large part determined by the political, legal and administrative framework in which planners work. This framework offers both opportunities and constraints to the planners. Most European countries have a law on physical planning, in which the powers given to physical planning and the available instruments are defined. In the law on physical planning, the legal status of plans is expressed and this status has consequences for the way the plans are implemented. In some countries plans have a legally binding status, while in others the plans are merely advisory. When plans are legally binding, they should contain concrete instruments with which the plan is to be realised. The realisation of the planning objectives ‘on the ground’ can be enforced in this case. In the case of an advisory plan, these concrete instruments become much less relevant, since the plan offers no possibilities to enforce the use of these instruments. In that case, national plans usually have the character of guidelines instead of operational plans. Apart from the law on physical planning, other laws and regulations also determine the possibilities of planners, for example laws on land use and possession, housing provision and environmental protection.

An important element of this legal and administrative framework is the division of powers and responsibilities between the national, regional and local level. Within Europe, considerable differences can be found in the degree of centralisation of government and therewith also in the degree of centralisation of the physical planning system. This has far-reaching consequences for the status of national plans within the planning system. Generally, the local development plan eventually is the most important element in the planning systems of European countries. The importance of the plans made at the national and regional level, however, varies considerably between countries (Healey & Williams, 1993). In some countries, there seems to be a clear top-down hierarchy of plans: the development plan has to meet the planning goals set in the regional plan, which in its turn has to fit into the national planning strategy. The Netherlands is an example of such a hierarchy of plans, but this hierarchy is a rather ‘informal’ one: even though both the national and the regional plans are not legally binding, the municipalities are still expected to design their local land use plans in accordance with the planning principles set out on the national and (to a lesser extent) the regional level. In another group of countries, the national plan is advisory only and the focus of the planning system is on both the regional and the local level. This is generally the case in federal states like Germany and Switzerland. An alternative approach is found in the Scandinavian countries: here, planning initiatives are strongly concentrated on the local level. National planning has only an advisory status and regional planning is as good as absent (European Commission, 1997).

Newman and Thornley (1996) have constructed a typology of European planning systems based on these differences in planning powers of the national, regional and government level and the above-mentioned differences in the legal arrangements for physical planning. This typology will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. The possible complications of the division of planning powers across government levels for national planners are evident. Politicians and planners on the regional and/or local level, who
might have very different ideas about the preferred future spatial development, might block national planners in realising their plans and ambitions. In political systems where the regional or local level is stressed and given much influence, this might frustrate any attempt to plan nationally, except when national, regional and local planners manage to agree on a compromise planning strategy.

Besides planners and politicians at the sub-national level, the national planners are also confronted with possible competitors on the national government level. Apart from physical planning policy itself, the national government pursues many other policies with possible consequences for spatial development. Examples are policies in the fields of housing, transport, economy, agriculture, environmental protection and protection of cultural heritage. These policies are usually spread out across various departments of the national government. In some cases, there are even competing divisions within the same department. Each of these departments would like to realise as much of its goals and ambitions as possible. The physical planners are then confronted with the task to unite all these policy goals and ambitions into one national planning strategy. It will often appear that the goals of the various departments are conflicting and incompatible and that priorities have to be chosen. Another problem might be that the national planners do not have sufficient competence to force the other departments to follow the spatial strategy they prefer. The national physical planning policy might then have to compete with several other policies with spatial consequences that might limit the possibilities to reach the objectives of that policy severely. Apart from 'intentional' attempts to reach goals contrary to those of the national physical planners, conflicts with other policies are sometimes also simply caused by bad communication between the departments (Wissink, 1982).

The priority given to physical planning as the main policy field to deal with the future spatial development of a country, as well as the priority given to the goal to influence future spatial developments in general, is connected to dominant political ideologies and the type of government in power. This relates back to the concept of 'planning doctrine' (section 4.3). Faludi and Van der Valk (1994) consider planning doctrine to be present in some form and extent in every country. This might be true, but the dominant planning doctrine of a country might not always be to the benefit of national planners. One could imagine planning doctrines with a preference to solve problems of spatial development at the sub-national level, or even planning doctrines that trust on market processes and promote a 'laissez faire' approach for government. In these cases, planning doctrine might work against national planning instead of strengthening it.

In addition to the goals and ambitions of planners and politicians on the sub-national levels and those of the various departments influencing spatial development on the national level, the national planners are also increasingly confronted with lobby groups. In recent decades, groups representing the civic society have successfully claimed an important role in the planning process in many countries. Lobby groups representing interests of population groups, industrial sectors, regions, cities or the natural environment are more and more asked for their opinion. The UK has a quite long tradition in this respect, with particularly strong lobby groups like the Council for the Protection of Rural England and the House Builders Association. In the Netherlands the influence of lobby groups has increased more recently. In the process towards the Fifth Report, the increased importance of lobby groups was expressed through the installation of a regular meeting of
the Minister of Physical Planning and the National Planning Agency with a gathering of lobby groups, in which the progress towards the final report was discussed.
Finally, a further complication for national planners is the increasing importance of the European Union. More and more, national planning policies are limited in their possibilities (or, alternatively, given new opportunities) through policy initiatives of the European Union. The EU policies with most consequences for spatial developments in its member states are agricultural policy, regional economic policy and environmental policy. The strict EU limitations to agricultural production caused many farmers to close down their companies or limit their agricultural activities, combining them with recreational activities. The Regional Development fund of the EU provides a strong financial impetus to the development of many backward regions in Europe. The EU also issued directives on the environmental assessment of building projects, through which national and sub-national governments are obliged to check each building project on their possible environmental consequences (Healey & Williams, 1993). So far the European Union has hardly been influential on the field of physical planning policy. However, there are clear signs that this is changing. In 1999, the member states agreed on a European Spatial Development Perspective. This is considered an important step on the way to an integrated physical planning policy on the European level, not only by many academic planners (Faludi, 1999; Böhme, 1999), but also by some of the national governments involved, probably most of all by the Dutch government (Ministerie VROM, 1999a). However, there is still a long way to go before European physical planning policy will have enough status to be able to compete with, or even replace, national planning policies, if it ever comes this far at all.

4.6.2 Plans and the planning process

The possibilities to implement a plan successfully depend not only on the legal, administrative and societal context described in the preceding section, but also on the plan itself and the process in which it was established. In the various models of the planning process that have been constructed over the years, several planning scientists (for example, Alexander, 1992; Hall, 1992) distinguished the following sequence of steps as the ideal way the planning process should develop:

- Clear problem definition: the planning process starts from dissatisfaction with an existing situation and a vision of a development towards a more desired situation. This problem definition is often made not by the planners themselves, but by their clients (in most cases, but not always, a governmental organisation);
- Clear definition of goals and objectives: the problem definition should be accompanied by goals to be reached through the plan, and these goals should be translated into operational objectives;
- Projections of relevant future developments: since plans are always future-oriented, the solution to a problem should be based on expectations of future conditions, needs and constraints;
- Design of alternatives: based on the projections of expected future developments, the planners develop one or several possible strategies to solve the problem;
- Test of internal consistency and feasibility: the planning strategies thought out in the design stage are checked on their coherence: does the proposed planning strategy respond to the objectives and is it possible within the constraints of the future situation in which the plan will be implemented? Inevitably also, the planning strategies are compared in terms of costs and cost-effectiveness;
• Evaluation of alternatives: the possible planning strategies are compared on their expected impact, the extent to which they actually contribute to reaching the goals and objectives, and the extent to which they meet the demands and interests of the parties affected by the plan. This evaluation also often contains procedures that are obligatory by law like environmental impact assessments;

• Implementation: the most preferred alternative is drawn up in a plan and, after being adopted by government, this plan is executed. The execution of the plan might be accompanied by efforts to monitor the extent to which the objectives of the plan are met during the period of implementation.

However, in planning practice, this sequence of steps is almost never reached in the ideal way described above. Many problems may occur that hinder the eventual quality of the plan and the possibility to implement it. This can already start with the problem definition. The problem definition given to the planners in their assignment might not recognise the real underlying factors causing the problem to be solved. A review of the problem diagnosis is therefore advisable before the planners start outlining the strategy to solve the problem (Alexander, 1992). Directly related to the problem definition is the definition of goals and objectives. Quite often, the goals of a strategic spatial plan tend to be on a rather high level of abstraction. Many plans suffer from problems with translating these goals into operational objectives. The client often prescribes the goals of the plan before the planners start their work. The clients giving these goals do not always realise if the goals they desire can actually be reached through physical planning measures. When planners try to work out these goals into workable objectives, they sometimes find out that the objectives are impossible to combine. Alexander (1992) gives the example of a low-income housing project that had to be realised within a limited budget. The best sites in this respect were found in the neighbourhoods with a concentration of low-income households from ethnic minorities. However, another objective of the plan was to promote socio-economic and ethnic integration of the population. Locating the low-income housing in the poorest neighbourhoods would only contribute to more segregation instead. In direct connection to the problems with defining clear objectives and combining them into a workable strategy, additional problems frequently appear in the phase of implementation. The concrete measures to realise the planning objectives are not always thought out properly, with the result that the plan does not change anything ‘on the ground’, or leads to unintended effects.

A problem directly related to the political context in which planners have to operate (see section 4.6.1) is that feasible alternatives that lead to a spatial development that planners prefer might be rejected by politicians on political or financial grounds. The plan might not fit sufficiently in the ideology of the political party in power, or exceed the budget reserved for physical planning by the governmental institutions involved. In addition, some conflicts of values and preferences between parties involved cannot be solved through a rational decision-making and negotiation process. Another problem of the policy context of physical planning is that often the interaction of plan with other policy initiatives is neglected (Hall, 1992). As mentioned before, the spatial development of a country is affected by many other policies than physical planning. Several government departments and organisations on the national, regional and local level all have their own agenda of priorities. It is up to the national planners to try to make an inventory of all these (often conflicting and incompatible) demands and interests, and to come up with a national planning policy that meets these demands without becoming merely a ‘wish list’. The planners should express the objectives that deserve most priority in their view and
refuse to meet demands that do not fit in their preferred strategy. Inevitably, national plans almost always lead to much controversy, especially in countries where national planners have been given - at least on paper - considerable influence on future spatial development, such as the Netherlands.

Without doubt, the most problematic point is the role of the projection of relevant future developments in the spatial planning process. The procedures the plan has to go through before getting approval of government can cause a considerable time-lapse between the design of the plan and its eventual implementation: the national planners have to negotiate with all parties involved, public hearings are organised, and both often lead to changes in the plan based on comments from these negotiations and hearings. This sometimes has the result that the projections that the plan was based on are already outdated before the plan is even implemented. However, even if this time-lapse problem could be solved, the degree to which future societal developments can be projected based on knowledge of current and past developments is highly questionable. This problem seems to increase with the length of the period planned for, as well as with the geographic size of the area that is targeted. Still, many (if not all) spatial plans rely heavily on projections of demographic and economic processes as a 'best guess' of what might happen in the future.

The element of the 'ideal planning process' described above which tends to be given least priority by planners and planning researchers, if it is considered at all, is the evaluation of the effects of the plan in reality. In the view of many academic planning researchers, if the plan meets all the above requirements it should be good enough to implement it and reach the desired results. However, frequently plans do not reach the desired results after all, even if all these process requirements were sufficiently taken care of (Glasbergen & Simonis, 1979). In this respect, Wissink (1982, p. 4) remarked: "In recent years, a certain neglect of the object analysis can be perceived. (...) Rules for plan preparation, decision making, 'process management' etc. are being defined in a more and more refined way". Meanwhile, however, the gap between the academic discussion on 'the ideal planning process' and the reality of the object to be planned had become too wide in his view.

More recent publications of academic planners give the impression that despite this warning, not much has changed since then. Many planning scientists even no longer define the eventual goal of strategic planning as 'to bring about changes in spatial reality', but 'to influence negotiations' and/or 'to contribute to reaching a consensus'. Consider, for example, the following two statements of Faludi & Van der Valk (1994):
"(...) in our opinion what is often considered its vagueness and lack of immediate relevance, are features which are inherent to strategic planning. If it was not abstract and general, then it would not be strategic planning" (p. 3);
"In strategic planning, meanings are frequently negotiated. It follows that a strategic plan cannot be judged solely in terms of whether outcomes conform to intentions. (...) As long as it has duly informed decision makers, the plan has been useful" (p. 12).

This stress in planning research on the process of negotiation and reaching consensus, which goes together with a relative neglect of the evaluation of planning results in the form of changes in spatial reality, is certainly not an exclusive Dutch phenomenon. Also in the UK, for example, evaluation is poorly integrated in the planning process. This is most of all true for the evaluation of planning results after a plan has been agreed on and
is executed, the so called ‘ex post evaluation’. Analysing the recent development of evaluation methods in UK national, regional and local planning, Lichfield and Prat (1998) conclude that ‘ex ante’ evaluation (evaluation of planning alternatives in the phase of plan preparation) is relatively widespread and that also methods of ‘in itinere’ evaluation (evaluation during a plan’s implementation) are sometimes used. ‘Ex post’ evaluation, however, was found to be “(...) almost non-existent” (p. 293).

This study takes the position that (national) strategic plans can and should be evaluated ‘ex post’, in terms of the match between intentions and outcomes. This is not to say that reaching consensus about a planning strategy cannot be seen as an admirable result in itself. However, reaching such a consensus and agreeing on a planning document is not the end of the planning process. On the contrary, once the plan is agreed on, the most crucial phase is still to come: taking concrete actions to come from a plan on paper to the desired interventions in spatial reality. Of course, it is inevitable that details of strategic plans are negotiated repeatedly with the parties involved in implementing the plan. Inevitably in this negotiation process, some compromises to the original plan will have to be made. Therefore, the idea that the effectiveness of a (national) plan could be exclusively measured by its eventual outcomes ‘on the ground’, in terms of its eventual effects on spatial developments, is unrealistic. This would require ‘blueprint planning’, a practice that certainly not exists in the Netherlands, if it exists anywhere at all. However, if negotiations lead to a change of the goals and objectives that were agreed on earlier in a strategic plan, or if it results in not reaching or even approaching the initial goals and objectives of this plan, the strategic plan can hardly be considered ‘successful’ anymore. In ‘ex post’ evaluations of spatial plans, it is perfectly valid to expect that spatial developments have at least to some extent developed in the direction that the (national) planners wanted. When the plan implementation ‘on the ground’ is evaluated, it might also appear that factors influencing spatial development overlooked by the planners were causing its failure. If this turns out to be the case, these factors could be taken into account in future plans to prevent repetition of the failures. Also, before a plan is thought out, it might be advisable to look at earlier experiences with comparable planning initiatives and under which circumstances these initiatives were implemented. Some plans might only work under very specific circumstances: only in one country, or political system, or period. Recently, the Dutch National Planning Agency has launched a yearly review of the goals and objectives of national physical planning which is a valuable attempt to evaluate its own work in a critical and objective way (Ministerie VROM / RPD, 1999). One might wonder why this increased interest in ‘ex post’ evaluation is hardly shared by the Dutch scientific planning community.

4.7 Conclusions

Physical planning as we know it today has its roots in a long tradition of attempts to create the ideal living and production environment. This tradition has been particularly strong in Northwest-Europe. Starting from utopian pioneers such as Howard and Geddes, physical planning gradually developed from a mainly local activity to an important element of national welfare state policy. One of the most important elements of national physical planning policies has traditionally been urbanisation policy. As appeared from the discussion on the development of urbanisation policy, there have been striking similarities in goals and approaches between several Northwest-European countries throughout the twentieth century. The spatial planning concept has become the most popular tool of planners to reach consensus on the preferred urbanisation strategy with all parties
involved. Two concepts have dominated the Northwest-European scene since the 1940s: concentrated deconcentration and the compact city.

Many obstacles have to be conquered before the ambitions of a plan result in the desired changes in the spatial development of an area. Physical planning is only one of many factors influencing spatial development. The influence of economic, technological, socio-cultural and demographic trends was already discussed in Chapter 2. These trends develop largely autonomous and can only to a very limited extent be influenced by government policy. In this chapter, the limitations and opportunities the political context offers to physical planning have been highlighted. Apart from all these contextual factors, the physical planning process itself also plays a decisive role towards a potentially successful plan. This involves not only a careful consideration of alternatives and their possible effects and negotiations with all parties involved, but also the translation of abstract goals into concrete measures 'on the ground'. Many planners and academic planning researchers tend to pay more attention to how a good plan should be created than to what happens after this plan has been completed and approved of. In their view, a strategic plan can already be considered successful if it managed to convince all parties involved. Although reaching consensus on a planning strategy is an essential precondition for a potentially successful plan, this is only a partial success. If all parties agree on a planning strategy, but do not take any actions, or counterproductive actions, to translate this strategy into concrete spatial changes, the plan cannot be considered a success. The same can be said if the necessary actions are taken, but do not lead to the desired results. The realisation of planning goals and objectives in reality is a crucial element of the success of planning policies. If the goals and objectives of a plan are not realised through concrete measures, the plan is nothing more than a set of good intentions on paper. It will then not contribute to changes in spatial developments in the direction the planners aimed for. It is therefore perfectly valid to evaluate strategic plans by looking at the extent to which the actual spatial development matches the goals and objectives expressed in the strategic plan, meanwhile realising of course that the national plans should not be considered 'blueprints' for future spatial development. Such an analysis will be presented for the Dutch urbanisation policy since the 1960s, as it was expressed in national strategic plans, in the chapters 6, 7 and 8. Chapter 5 will introduce the research methodology used for this evaluation of Dutch national urbanisation policy.
CHAPTER FIVE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction: Approaches in the evaluation of planning policy

As indicated earlier in Chapter 4, there has been a considerable amount of discussion about criteria for the success and effectiveness of physical planning. According to Bukkems (1989), the effectiveness of a plan has at least two aspects. A plan can be considered effective if it has led to changes in the behaviour and decisions of the actors involved, and/or if it has led to changes in ‘spatial reality’.

Faludi & Van der Valk (1994) stress the influence of a plan on the decision-taking behaviour of planning actors in their analysis of the effectiveness of Dutch physical planning policy. If strategic plans would be ‘blueprints’, the evaluation of their success could compare effects with intentions to see whether or not the plans were successful. However, since most strategic plans are not blueprints, an evaluation of planning success based on results ‘on the ground’ is, in the view of Faludi and Van der Valk, not useful. They see the strategic plan as only one of many inputs into the decision-making process of physical planning. Its main function would then be to shape ‘decision situations’, not necessarily resulting in changes in spatial development. In a more recent article, Faludi reconfirms this view by stating that ”(...) strategic spatial plans must be evaluated, not primarily in the light of their material outcomes, but for how they improve the understanding of decision makers of present and future problems they face. Where having such plans increases this understanding, they may have said to perform their role, irrespective of outcomes” (Faludi, 2000, p. 300). This viewpoint seems to put the importance of (national) strategic plans in a too modest perspective, at least in the Dutch situation. Dutch national strategic planning aimed at more than just ‘shaping decision situations’: the Reports on Physical Planning, especially the Third and Fourth Report (Extra) contained very concrete statements on how the Dutch built environment should be developed. The Dutch national strategic plans since the 1960s clearly give the impression that the national planners have always wanted, and still want, to exert influence on spatial developments, not just to advise on them. The same goes for strategic plans in several other countries, most notably the UK and France.

Faludi and Van der Valk are certainly not alone in their approach of physical planning. The recent debate on planning as a science, as expressed in books, on congresses and in international journals, seems to indicate an increasing stress on the administrative and political preconditions for successful plans, as well as a stress on the plan’s design and its communication towards the outside world. Dominant discussions within the international planning community include for example the degree to which the possibilities of planners are determined through the political context in which they have to operate (Forster, 1989), the interpretation of planning as a ‘communicative’ or ‘argumentative’ process (Fischer & Forester 1993, Innes 1996, Healey 1997), the use of spatial concepts as an important communicative tool (Zonneveld 1991, Duinen 1999), and more recently the importance of informal institutions, rules and societal norms (Salet 2000). The focus of planning science seems to have moved away from the eventual aim of physical planning: changes in spatial reality.
Glasbergen & Simonis (1979) view the effectiveness of national physical planning policy in a more result-oriented perspective. They distinguish three phases in the study of effectiveness of policy:

1. Determining the degree of effectiveness of the policy: which are the goals of the policy, during which period should the objectives be reached, and to what extent were the objectives eventually reached in this period?

2. The means used to reach the policy objectives, and the theoretical conception of the problem and its possible solution that lead to the choice of these means.

3. Could the objectives be reached through the means used? Or in other words: was the theoretical conception of the problem and its possible solution justified?

The possible outcomes of a study of the effectiveness of national strategic plans could then be:

- The chosen means could impossibly reach the effect that the policy aimed for,
- The theoretical conception was justified, but the means to reach the policy’s objectives were not used enough or in the right way,
- The theoretical conception of the problem and its possible solution cannot be evaluated because the objectives are too vague or too implicit. In this case, the effectiveness study can only be aimed at the means used and the way these means are applied.

Musterd & Ostendorf (1996), following earlier studies by Bukkems (1989) and Faludi & Van der Valk (1990), use the terms ‘plan conformity’ and ‘goal conformity’ to evaluate the success of strategic national plans. Plan conformity refers to the extent to which a project has been executed according to the plan. It evaluates the implementation process: are the right measures taken to reach the goals of the plan? Goal conformity refers to the extent to which the goals of the plan were actually reached. It is perfectly possible that after all the measures needed to reach the goals of the plan have been taken, the goals are nevertheless not reached. In that case, the execution of a plan meets the criterion of plan conformity, but fails to meet the criterion of goal conformity.

In this study, plan conformity and goal conformity are used as criteria for the extent to which Dutch national urbanisation policy can be considered successful. Contrary to the mainstream of recent Dutch (and international) planning research, the analysis presented in the following chapters starts from the assumption that the success of physical planning policy can and should be evaluated by judging the eventual results of the plan ‘on the ground’ (goal conformity). It is important to note here, however, that a plan will not be regarded as a ‘blueprint’ for spatial development. It is fully realised, as discussed before in Chapter 4, that the goals and intentions of national plans will frequently be renegotiated on lower (regional and local) planning levels and even on the national level. However, the evaluation will start from the assumption that the goals and intentions put forward in the national plans (the Reports on Physical Planning) will at least offer a framework for action for the lower government levels. It is also assumed that on the national level, the Reports on Physical Planning generally reflect the national urbanisation policy that is supported by all departments involved in physical planning. It is not for nothing that these Reports on Physical planning are published on behalf of the entire Cabinet and not just on behalf of the National Planning Agency. While national urbanisation policy might not have direct effects on population distribution and urban (regional) form, it should at least show indirect effects (via regional and local plans that are supposed to be in line with the national policy) in order to be regarded as ‘successful’. Even if the plan is not a
‘blueprint’, still the goals and intentions of national urbanisation plans should to some extent be reflected in the actual developments of population distribution and urban form for a national urbanisation policy that could be called ‘successful’.

In addition to this confrontation of planning goals and objections with reality, the question of the feasibility of plans coined by Glasbergen and Simonis (1979) will also be addressed. Two aspects of Dutch national urbanisation policy are analysed: population distribution policy and daily mobility policy. These aspects are dealt with in two separate analyses. The first analysis, aimed at the goals concerning population distribution within Dutch national urbanisation policy, is introduced in section 5.2. In addition, the results of Dutch population distribution policy are placed in an international perspective. An international comparison of the Netherlands with three other areas in Northwest-Europe is undertaken to deepen the insight in the potential effectiveness of population distribution policies in general. It also functions to explore to what extent the Dutch policy has really been particularly successful compared to other countries, a claim that is frequently made in national as well as international planning literature. The design of the international comparison is presented in section 5.3. The analysis of the second aspect of Dutch national urbanisation policy, concerning the goals with respect to daily mobility patterns, is the topic of section 5.4.

5.2 Evaluation of Dutch national population distribution policy

The evaluation of Dutch national population distribution policy that will be discussed in Chapter 6 focuses on two criteria for planning success:
- the degree to which the actual development of population distribution matches the planned development;
- the degree to which the proposed plans have been feasible and / or will be feasible in the near future.

To judge on the first of these aspects, the aims of national urbanisation policy are confronted with the actual development of population distribution. The indicator used for population distribution trends is the development of the total number of inhabitants on the administrative level of the municipality. The ideal situation would have been to be able to study the population development of settlements. Administrative boundaries often do not coincide with settlement boundaries. In the 1990s, a very detailed account of population size and structure (age, ethnicity, socio-economic situation etc.) became available on the level of the 4-digit postal code: the ‘Wijk- en Buurtregister’ (‘district and neighbourhood register’) of the National Bureau of Statistics Netherlands. This dataset would have made it possible to study the development of the population of different settlements, or even parts of settlements (like neighbourhoods) within municipalities. However, for the largest part of the period under study, this data source was not available. Therefore, municipalities have been chosen as the closest possible approach to individual settlements. The data source used is the yearly account of the total number of inhabitants per municipality on 1 January by National Bureau of Statistics Netherlands. An additional reason for choosing the municipality as the basic unit of analysis was the comparative study, undertaken to judge the specific Dutch situation in a (Northwest-) European perspective (see section 5.3). In the three case studies that were compared to the Netherlands, data on the municipality level were also the most accessible and available source for population distribution trends.
Map 1 in the Appendix shows the municipal division of the Netherlands in 1995 as well as the geographic distribution of the municipality types as they were then used in population statistics of Statistics Netherlands. This municipality typology, to which the category of growth centres is added because of its highly specific recent population development, is used for the international comparison of population distribution dynamics that will be introduced in section 5.3.

A practical problem of choosing the municipalities as the unit of analysis was that between 1970 and 1995, the municipal division of the Netherlands went through many changes. A large number of small and sparsely populated municipalities were merged into larger units that were better able to perform the tasks of local government in a cost-efficient way. Also, some municipalities were split up and divided between several bordering municipalities. This resulted in a decline of the number of municipalities from 890 in 1970 to 633 in 1995. To enable the time-series analysis the municipal borders of 1995 were used as the point of reference. The register of changes in the municipal division of the National Bureau of Statistics Netherlands was used to 'equalise' the municipal divisions of the years between 1970 and 1995 with the municipal division of 1995.

The period of analysis starts with the implementation of the Second Report on Physical Planning in 1966 and ends with the implementation of Fourth Report Extra, a process still running at the time of writing this thesis. Since the 1960s, a number of reports can be singled out that defined the main strategic planning principles of the Dutch government during parts of the period of analysis (Figure 5.1). Each of these reports contained statements on the preferred population development of categories of municipalities and parts of the country. Although these goals of population development can generally not be quantified directly, they can at least be expressed in terms of growth or decline. Some municipality types were clearly stimulated in their population growth, while others were not allowed to grow, or only allowed to grow to a very limited extent.

**Figure 5.1** National reports on population distribution policy used in the evaluation study

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</thead>
</table>
In the analysis, then, the goals of population development for categories of municipalities as expressed in the national reports are evaluated, looking at how the total population of the municipality categories in question developed in reality. The evaluation of national urbanisation policy will mainly concentrate on the Randstad and the regions surrounding it. From the 1960s on, this has been the area with the most consistent urbanisation policy from the national level. While in the rest of the Netherlands the goals of national urbanisation policy have often been expressed rather abstract or even vague, the goals for the Randstad and its immediate surroundings were generally quite concrete. Therefore, this is the most suited part of the Netherlands for an evaluation of the success of national urbanisation policy. In Chapter 6, this area will be referred to as ‘Central Netherlands’. Map 2 in the Appendix shows this research area, including the categories of municipalities that are derived from national urbanisation policy. It should be noted that the municipality typology used here is not the same as the national municipality typology of Statistics Netherlands shown in Map 1 of the Appendix. While the typology of that map is based on the degree of urbanisation of municipalities, the typology used in Appendix Map 2 exists of municipality types that were explicitly targeted in national urbanisation policy since the 1960s. The typology used here is more useful for the evaluation of Dutch national urbanisation policy than the typology of Statistics Netherlands (Appendix Map 1) since it is much more referring to the types of municipalities relevant for this policy. For each of these municipality types, statements on their preferred population growth development (like: ‘fast growth’ or ‘as little growth as possible’) could be derived from official policy documents on national urbanisation policy, either for the whole period under research or for a part of this period. Meanwhile, the typology of Statistics Netherlands shown in Map 1 of the Appendix will be used for the international comparison of urbanisation trends. Because the national urbanisation policies of the three Northwest-European case studies do not contain such precise statements on municipality categories as the Dutch national urbanisation policy, but is more aimed at broad municipality categories (‘large cities’, ‘regional centres’, ‘the countryside’), only a typology based on the degree of urbanisation could be used for the comparative analysis.

The second criterion analysed in Chapter 6 is the feasibility of the national plans on population distribution. This feasibility is expressed in two dimensions:
- who is paying for the planned spatial investments (government or market);
- is the plan mostly in the general (societal) interest or the individual interest?
These two dimensions produce a typology of policy situations as expressed in Figure 5.2.
In this typology, two ‘balanced’ situations occur: situation 2, in which the government invests in a general interest, and situation 3, in which market parties invest in individual interests. In situation 1, the physical planning policy seems to be chosen mainly for reasons of feasibility: individual interests are met through government investments. A policy of this type will most probably reach its goals because the space demands of individual households, companies and other parties involved are met to a large extent. Such a policy could, however, have negative consequences for issues of general societal interest. To give an extreme example: when the government would provide a spacious detached house with a large garden for every Dutch household, most of the publicly accessible open green space would be lost. On the contrary, the type of policy of situation 4 seems to be characterised more by desirability than by feasibility. In this situation, market parties are called upon to invest in a general societal interest, a situation that will be hard to realise. An example of such a policy could be that the government urges market
parties to build only high rise housing estates in cities, while the main housing demand exists of detached one-family houses with gardens in a suburban setting.

Figure 5.2 A typology of physical planning policy situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment in physical planning policy by...</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Ostendorf, 1999)

The analysis of feasibility presented in Chapter 6 will focus on the two central concepts of Dutch population distribution policy since the 1960s: concentrated deconcentration and the compact city. Especially for the compact city policy, this additional evaluation is useful. Because of the quite recent introduction of the compact city policy, planners can easily argue that it is too early too judge on its efficiency. The instruments to realise the population distribution aims of the compact city policy, the so-called ‘VINEX-locations’, were introduced in the Fourth Report Extra in 1990. However, the actual realisation of housing projects on these locations only started in 1995, the year in which the analysis of population development in the municipalities ends. Still, it is possible to evaluate the feasibility of the plans for compact city development based on the typology presented above. The same analysis is possible for the policy of concentrated deconcentration. In this case, we already know the eventual results, but the analysis of feasibility can contribute to the explanation why this policy succeeded or failed to reach its targets (Bontje & Ostendorf, 1999).

5.3 An international comparison of urbanisation trends and policies in Northwest-Europe

In national as well as international planning literature, the national urbanisation policy of the Netherlands is often presented as exceptionally successful and effective. As already discussed before in Chapter 1, several planning researchers praised the Dutch national planning system with its clear division of tasks between government levels and its consensus on goals and measures to realise a balanced distribution of population over the country. Especially the 1960s and 1970s, when the concept of ‘concentrated deconcentration’ formed the core of Dutch national urbanisation policy, is frequently mentioned as an era of effective planning (Faludi, 1994; Hall, 1992). The evaluation of the results and feasibility of Dutch national urbanisation policy outlined in section 5.2 will give a first indication whether this positive view on the results of Dutch national urbanisation policy is justified. An additional indication of ‘planning success’ might be found when the Dutch situation is compared to experiences of other countries.
5.3.1 A typology of planning systems as a tool for comparative research

Europe contains a huge variety of national planning systems. There are probably not even two countries in Europe with the same planning system. However, some broad similarities between groups of countries can certainly be found. In recent years, several attempts have been made to make sense of the similarities and differences between planning systems in Europe. Healey and Williams (1993), for example, differentiated planning systems with characteristics of the national legal and constitutional settings and the country’s administrative and professional culture. Another example of a categorisation of similarities and differences between European planning systems is the EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems (European Commission, 1997). The EU Compendium also considered planning systems in the context of legal and administrative structures.

Elaborating on the work of Healey and Williams, the British planning researchers Newman and Thornley (1996) constructed a typology of planning systems in Europe that provides a useful methodological tool for international comparison. Newman and Thornley divided Europe into five groups of countries (Figure 5.3). Existing groupings of legal families and administrative families in Europe were merged in order to form a typology of national planning systems. The groups are mainly based on the country’s legal style (defined in terms of historical development, legal mode of thought, legal sources and ideology) and its administrative system. The most important aspect of the administrative system considered in the typology is the division of responsibilities between the national, regional or local level.

The authors themselves used their typology to compare recent urban planning projects in three countries, each representing one group of their typology. However, the typology could be applied to national or regional physical planning as well. In this case, the Newman and Thornley typology is applied to national and regional urbanisation policies, i.e. policies aiming to influence patterns and trends in population distribution and the distribution of economic functions across a country or region.

The comparative analysis starts from two main pre-assumptions:
- physical planning policies can influence the process of population distribution;
- differences in physical planning systems and ambitions lead to different trends in population distribution.

If these pre-assumptions are true, the four selected cases should show clear differences in their population distribution trends since the 1970s, despite all the characteristics they have in common. The main hypothesis of the comparative study, then, is that urban sprawl will be much less pronounced in countries with a strong position of the national government in physical planning than in countries where planning powers are concentrated on the regional or local level. This hypothesis is in line with the viewpoint that coordination of physical planning actions on the national government level is essential to reach an effective national physical planning policy (Glasbergen & Simonis, 1979). In countries with a dominant position of the national level in physical planning, urbanisation policies on the sub-national level will be strongly determined by the strategic policy framework set out on the national level. In countries with a high degree of autonomy on the regional or local level, it is much less likely that national guidelines on urbanisation policy are followed throughout the entire country. Of course, it is hypothetically possible that several regions or even municipalities, independent from one
another, design a comparable urbanisation strategy. However, because of the natural
tendency of municipalities and regions to meet their own interests before considering
spatial problems on higher scale levels, it is much more likely that local and regional
authorities will come up with different urbanisation strategies. These strategies will
without doubt be beneficiary to the development of the region or municipality in question,
but the chances that the strategy will reach across regional or local borders are not very
high. This will lead to a collection of strategic plans for parts of a region or country that
will most probably be in conflict with each other.

Figure 5.3. Groups of national planning systems in Europe according to the typology
of Newman & Thornley (1996) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>British: UK, Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|   | ⇒ 'evolutionary case law' (legal framework for planning is built up gradually, 'decision by
decision')             |
|   | ⇒ no legal protection of local government |
|   | ⇒ strong control / monitoring from national level of local planning actions |
| 2 | 'Napoleonic': Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece |
|   | ⇒ planning 'systematic', with general rules and laws (national law on spatial planning) |
|   | ⇒ planning system is hierarchic, with a clear division of tasks and responsibilities
   between the national, regional and local level (subsidiarity) |
|   | ⇒ national and local level most influential, regional level relatively weak |
| 3 | 'Scandinavian': Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland |
|   | ⇒ national (and regional) planning reduced to minimum |
|   | ⇒ local level most important; local governments make very detailed plans |
| 4 | 'Germanic': Switzerland, Germany, Austria |
|   | ⇒ planning 'systematic', with general rules and laws (like the Napoleonic countries) |
|   | ⇒ planning system is hierarchic, with a clear division of tasks and responsibilities
   between the national, regional and local level (subsidiarity) |
|   | ⇒ regional level (Bundesländer, cantons) most powerful |
|   | ⇒ federal government gives 'guidelines' but has hardly any powers to force the regions to
   follow these guidelines |
| 5 | 'East-European': Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Yugoslavia, Albania, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldavia |

An important shortcoming of the typology of Newman and Thornley (1996) is that the
types of planning systems are purely based on a country’s legal and administrative
system. This makes the typology rather 'mechanical' and limits its explanatory value.
Apart from differences in legal style and administrative framework, also the 'ambition level' of (national) governments in physical planning should be considered. The degree to which national governments are involved in physical planning could also be connected to the political colour of the parties in power, the influence of societal groups and non-governmental organisations, a tradition of prioritising certain tasks of 'national concern' etc. For example, in the Netherlands during the 1970s, a concept dominating the national political scene was 'de maakbare samenleving'. This concept expressed the firm belief that it was possible to develop an ideal society through policy measures. It is no coincidence that the 1970s were also the decade in which national physical planning policy demonstrated its highest ambition level (Kreukels, 1992). Within the groups of planning systems distinguished by Newman and Thornley, considerable variation can be found in the extent to which governments not only have a legal and administrative planning framework, but also use it to implement physical planning policy in general and population distribution policy in particular. Although it is hard to make a factor like 'ambition level' operational, it was taken into account when the case studies for the comparative study were selected.

5.3.2. Selection of case studies

For the comparative study, countries or regions were sought that represented the types of planning systems of Newman and Thornley. In addition, the selected case studies should demonstrate a clear variation in the ambition level of national planners with respect to physical planning in general, and population distribution policy in particular. At the same time, however, the comparison regions had to be as much like the Netherlands as possible on other factors that determine the dynamics in population distribution. In the ideal situation, the planning system and the governmental ambition level with respect to physical planning would be left as the only factors on which the case study areas would differ from each other. This situation was of course impossible to reach in reality. As Dickens et al (1985) made clear, it is not possible for social scientists to replicate the experimental method of natural science. The variables that social scientists work with can never be isolated completely from each other. This certainly applies to planning policy, which inevitably takes place in the context of an open and constantly changing society. Furthermore, each country and region in Europe has responded to economic, socio-cultural and demographic changes in its own specific way.

The eventual selection of case study areas, however, shows a lot of similarities on important factors influencing the dynamics of population distribution. So, to refer to the work of Dickens et al (1985) once more, it has at least been possible to reach a considerable reduction in the variability of the case study areas. The most important aspects of similarity are population density, the settlement system and geographical size of the area, recent socio-cultural and demographic processes, and recent economic development. The geographical scope for the other case studies was limited to Northwest-Europe. This was done to make the foreign case study areas as comparable as possible to the Netherlands with respect to recent socio-economic, demographic and economic developments.

The case study areas that were eventually selected for the comparison with the Netherlands were Switzerland, West-Sweden and Northern England. The case study area West-Sweden consists of the counties Västra-Götaland, Halland and Skåne and stretches from the Norwegian border in the northwest to the Öresund in the south. The case study
area Northern England includes the 'standard planning regions' North West, North East and Yorkshire & Humberside, and is bordered by Scotland in the north and the West- and East-Midlands in the south. Within the case study selection, Northern England represents the British group; the Netherlands is a member of the Napoleonic group; Switzerland belongs to the Germanic group; and West-Sweden is an example of the Scandinavian group.

The fifth group of Newman and Thornley (1996) is called 'East-European'. This group was left out of the international comparison. The only common feature of the East-European planning systems is their socialist heritage. After the breakdown of the Iron Curtain, the countries in this group all went their own way. Some Eastern European countries gradually developed Germanic-style systems, some countries more or less stuck to the socialist system, and some countries undertook no planning actions at all. The huge differences in planning systems within the Eastern European group make it impossible to choose a region that is more or less representative for the group.

Of the remaining four groups, the group of the Netherlands is clearly the most diverse and complicated one. It is not easy to find a country that is representative for this group. The Napoleonic countries vary between intensive government involvement in planning on the national level (Netherlands, France) and almost no national government involvement (some of the southern European countries). Adding to the complexity is the tendency to increasing federalisation of Italy, Belgium and Spain. Still, the planning systems of the countries of this group are based on the same principles: a systematic approach with a national law on spatial planning and a hierarchical planning system with a national, regional and local level, each with its own clearly defined responsibilities.

On the second dimension, the ambition level of the national government with respect to physical planning, at least a dichotomy could be made. The national governments of the Netherlands and the UK have demonstrated a clear ambition to influence population distribution through physical planning in the recent past. Of these two, the UK national planning policy seems to demonstrate the highest ambitions to determine what happens regionally and locally. These ambitions are expressed in a series of reports on topics that are considered to be of national concern, the so-called 'Planning Policy Guidances'. In Dutch planning, the national planners write highly ambitious reports too, but in the end, the municipal planners most often decide what happens 'on the ground'. The reports of the national planners could be characterised as 'integral'; the national reports cover all aspects of the desired national spatial development. Contrary to the UK and the Netherlands, the national planning agencies of Switzerland and Sweden limited their activities to advisory documents for the lower tiers of government where the actual planning policies were designed. Although Sweden has a reputation of being a planned country, this does not mean that the national government is very active in physical planning. Traditionally, physical planning policies were mainly left to local authorities and the strong position of the municipalities in this respect was even strengthened since the 1980s.

In Switzerland, the national (federal) government has recently demonstrated an increased interest in a coordinating role in physical planning policy. However, in a political context of a country that is highly sensitive of too centralised government, the federal planning reports can hardly become more than advisory strategies without concrete planning actions. In the end, the ‘real’ planning is done in the cantons and municipalities. The
variety of the case studies on the two dimensions ‘planning system’ and ‘planning ambition’ is summarised in Figure 5.4. The case studies are placed in a tentative hierarchical order. On the basis of the dimensions ‘planning system’ (expressed by the variable ‘most influential government level’) and ‘planning ambition’, Northern England is expected to demonstrate the strongest influence of national planning policy on population distribution, followed by the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden. The type of national planning documents, which is also mentioned in Figure 5.4, results from the combination of the ambitions of the national planners and the possibilities given to them by the planning system in which they have to operate.

Figure 5.4. A typology of national physical planning policies in the case study areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study</th>
<th>Dominant government level</th>
<th>Type of national planning documents</th>
<th>Ambition level of national planners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern England</td>
<td>national</td>
<td>thematic strategic plans</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>national / local</td>
<td>integral strategic plans</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>regional / local</td>
<td>advisory strategy</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>local</td>
<td>advisory strategy</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the regions that are included in the case studies have a size of about 40,000 square kilometres. The regions are characterised by a fairly high population density. In 1995, Northern England had the highest population density of the four regions: 381 persons per km², closely followed by the Netherlands with 372 persons per km². Switzerland and West-Sweden as a whole have a much lower population density, but the density figures in the most urbanised parts of these areas approach the overall figures for the Netherlands and Northern England.

The case study areas all have a poly-nucleated settlement system, without a primate city that dominates the region in all respects. An equivalent of metropolises like London or Paris is lacking. Instead, each of the regions contains a number of relatively small cities that have gradually grown together into a network configuration. The area’s population is spread quite evenly over the several cores of this network. Each core within the network has its own economic specialisations that are largely complementary to each other. The poly-nucleated configurations in the case study areas are:

- The Randstad and its wide surroundings in the Netherlands;
- The ‘Transpennine’ zone with the metropolitan regions of Merseyside, Greater Manchester, and South- and West-Yorkshire in Northern England;
- The Mittelland in Switzerland, an urbanised zone stretching from Geneva to Basel between the Jura and the Swiss Alps;
- The border-crossing Öresund region, partly located in West-Sweden (with Malmö and Lund on the Swedish side, and Copenhagen on the Danish side of the Öresund as its major centres).

Although the regions have reacted to socio-cultural and demographic developments in different ways, the main trends of the last 30 years have basically been the same in all of
Among the many trends that influenced population distribution in each of the case study regions are:

- Mobility trends, such as the continuous increase of car possession and car traffic;
- Demographic trends, such as the rapidly dropping birth rate and the decrease of average household size;
- Socio-cultural trends, such as the increase of foreign migration;
- The changes in internal migration behaviour resulting from the above-mentioned factors.

A major difference between the case study regions Netherlands, West-Sweden and Switzerland on the one hand, and Northern England on the other hand, is the recent economic development. All case study regions suffered from severe economic crises following the two oil crises of the 1970s, and again in the early 1990s. While the Netherlands, Switzerland and West-Sweden have shown a steady economic growth in the late 1990s, Northern England is still struggling with the negative effects of de-industrialisation. The largest share of recent economic growth in the UK has been concentrated in the South East. The effects of this difference in recent economic development between Northern England and the other case study areas on population distribution trends might make a comparison between the case study areas on the effects of national urbanisation policy on population distribution problematic.

Another difference between the case study regions lies in the housing preferences of their populations. In Northern England, the most preferred living environment is the countryside. People who want to leave the large cities show a tendency to move across relatively long distances to the non-metropolitan countryside (Champion, 1992). In West-Sweden, on the contrary, the peripheral countryside has suffered continuous population loss in recent decades. While the countryside is valued highly positive by the majority of the English, the Swedes have negative associations with countryside life and prefer being close to cities (Nyström, 1996). Switzerland and the Netherlands are in-between these two extremes. However, these differences in housing preferences do not seem to have led to large differences in population distribution trends, as will appear in Chapter 7.

### 5.3.3 Methods of data collection

At the start of the international comparison, the knowledge available about the three foreign case study areas was minimal. When the Netherlands is compared internationally, the United States and the United Kingdom are the most common countries of comparison. In the case of the UK, the focus is most often on London and the South East region. Switzerland and West-Sweden were hardly studied by Dutch geographers and planners in the past. Therefore, the help of local specialists on population distribution and planning matters in Switzerland, West-Sweden and Northern England was needed.

Initially, one or a few 'key persons' were contacted in each of the case study areas. These persons were known to have done several studies on topics related to this study in the recent past. In addition, the key persons had access to national and regional databases of population development that could serve as an empirical basis for the study of trends in population distribution.

Each of the case study areas was visited to gather data on recent dynamics in population distribution and the forces behind these dynamics. The key persons provided a first
general introduction to the case study area. They also helped to gather literature references and a network of specialists on physical planning (academics as well as people 'in the field'), migration, demography, geography and regional economy in the case study areas. As many specialists as possible were interviewed within the limited time period available. The information gathered in these interviews, including ideas for field trips and many useful literature references, provided useful extra information that certainly could not have been gathered from the literature. After returning to the Netherlands, the key persons were contacted once more and asked for their comments on the case study draft. This was a very useful insider's check on the validity of the conclusions that certainly contributed to the objectivity of the observations.

The most important aspects of the planning systems considered in the comparative study were:
- The dominant government level: national, regional, or local;
- The dominant spatial concepts used in population distribution policy, as an expression of the relative importance given to concentration and dispersion of people, work and services;
- Other policies determining government power in physical planning: policies related to the land market, housing, infrastructure and regional economic development;
- The relative powers of government, private parties and lobby groups. This last point is especially important in the case of Northern England, where lobby groups like the Council for the Protection of Rural England and the House Builders Association have powerful positions in the planning debate.

5.3.4 Obstacles towards a 'working' comparison

In the process of realising the comparative study in practice, numerous obstacles occurred. One of the major obstacles was already mentioned above: the fact that a comparison on the basis of strategic plans with a national or regional scope was impossible because these plans appeared to be available in the Netherlands only. Another, also earlier mentioned obstacle was the contrasting economic development of Northern England vis-à-vis the other three case study areas in the 1990s. The comparative study was complicated even more because of problems connected to administrative and political boundaries.

First, two of the case study areas are countries, while the other two are regions within countries. In the case of the Netherlands and Switzerland, national developments and policies could be used as reference point. However, in the case of Northern England and West-Sweden, the regional developments and policies always had to be interpreted in the context of national developments and policies, including physical planning policy. As will appear in the case study reports of these areas, the development of population distribution of these areas was to a considerable extent influenced by other parts of the country, most notably the metropolitan region of the nation's capital (London and Stockholm, respectively) that attracted many migrants from the case study areas.

Second, also within the case study areas administrative boundaries caused problems. The municipality appeared to be the lowest administrative level on which population growth figures could be compared between the four areas for the entire research period. Unfortunately, the number of municipalities differed immensely between the four areas. In the end year of the comparative study of population distribution trends, 1995, only
Northern England (90 municipalities) and West-Sweden (87 municipalities) came very close to each other in this respect. The Netherlands counted 633 municipalities in 1995, and Switzerland had no less than 3021 municipalities. Since the total surface of the case study areas is more or less the same, this implies that the size of the municipalities differs considerably between the case study areas. Shifting the focus of the study from individual municipalities to municipality types largely solved this problem. Since the main goal of this study is to discover the general recent trends in population distribution, the type and location (part of large-city agglomerations or outside of them) of the municipality are more important than municipality (area) size. In each of the case study areas, a typology could be found which classified municipalities into metropolitan, (medium-sized and small) urban, suburban and rural groups. In this way, it was possible to compare trends like suburbanisation and urban-rural migration between the four case study areas. The problem could have been solved 'the other way round' as well, by increasing the local units in the Netherlands and Switzerland. But this would without doubt lead to very heterogeneous local units in both these countries, and a loss of valuable information on the municipality level.

A totally different obstacle hard to solve refers to the relative powers of government, private parties and lobby groups in the planning process. The relevance of this aspect of planning systems becomes especially clear when studying the case of Northern England. Lobby groups are constantly involved in the planning process and this is reflected in the eventual plans. For example, the persistence of British national and regional planners to hold on to the Green Belts is mainly due to the continuous lobby of the Council for the Protection of Rural England. In this way, a broad consensus on planning goals is reached on the national, regional and local level. The involvement of lobby groups might contribute strongly to the eventual effectiveness of growth management policies in Northern England. This is a factor that cannot be left out of the comparative study, but unfortunately, it is also a factor that is hard to make operational.

5.4 Evaluation of Dutch national spatial mobility policy

The analyses described in the sections 5.2 and 5.3 are both concentrated on one specific aspect of national urbanisation policy: attempts to influence population distribution through physical planning. Another aspect of national urbanisation policy that has gained an increasing importance in the Netherlands since the 1960s is spatial mobility policy. Spatial mobility policy involves attempts to influence the mobility behaviour of individuals and organisations through physical planning. The type of mobility most directly connected to population distribution is daily mobility. As already mentioned in Chapters 2 and 3, population distribution and daily mobility can be considered as two sides of the same coin. When people change their residence, this inevitably has consequences for their daily mobility pattern. People will either try to relocate their daily activities as close to their new residence as possible, or choose to travel longer distances to realise their daily activities. The possibilities of people to travel (time, vehicle possession, money, etc.) and their willingness to travel in turn also determines if people want to move, and if so, where they will move to. Therefore, it is also no coincidence that both population distribution and daily mobility have been central issues of concern in Dutch national urbanisation policy since the 1960s.

Those searching for any empirical basis for the current spatial scale of urbanisation, taking daily mobility as an indicator, encounter severe problems. There are data available
from in-depth studies on people's mobility behaviour (for the Dutch case, for example Dijst, 1999 and Smit, 1997), but these studies are generally based on small samples of a few hundreds or thousands of respondents, either living in one or a few small geographical areas or belonging to specific professional or socio-economic population categories. The conclusions of these studies are impossible to generalise on a national or sub-national level. On the other hand, several countries undertake studies of daily mobility behaviour of their population regularly. The samples taken in these studies are generally fairly large but the data gathered are not very detailed. These studies lead to vague general statements on 'the' daily mobility behaviour of 'the' population, without being able to specify differences between population categories, regions or types of living environments.

The ideal empirical data set to study daily mobility behaviour on the spatial scale of daily urban regions is yet to be formed. The data set coming closest to the ideal situation in the Netherlands so far is the Research on Mobility Behaviour of Statistics Netherlands. This is a yearly study on daily mobility patterns of the Dutch population. Respondents are asked to register all trips they undertake on a given day. For each trip, the respondent is asked to fill out the location of departure and destination, the time needed for travelling, the motive of the trip and the type of vehicle used. The response is spread out across the country as equally as possible and all days of the week and of the year are equally represented. To control for inequalities still present in the sample, a number of weighing factors is added to the data set. These weighing factors allow to base generalising statements on the mobility behaviour of the Dutch population. An additional advantage is that comparison through time is made possible. Since 1995, the data sample of the Research on Mobility Behaviour is enlarged considerably, but with the correction of the weighing factors, the years before and after 1995 can be compared in a reliable way. Although the data sample of the Research on Mobility Behaviour is quite large, it is still too small to use it for analyses of daily mobility on the local (municipal) level. It is, however, possible to undertake an analysis on the level of daily urban systems. For these daily urban systems, as well as for those parts of the Netherlands not belonging to any daily urban system, the standard regional division of Statistics Netherlands in so-called COROP-regions is used. The resulting daily urban systems generally have a radius of 20 to 30 km from the largest central agglomeration (in some cases, there is more than one centre). The parts of the Netherlands that do not belong to daily urban systems are also divided into regions of a comparable size, again based on the COROP-regions. The resulting regional division of the Netherlands is presented in Figure 5.5.

In Chapter 8, data from the Research on Mobility Behaviour in the years 1987, 1992 and 1997 are compared, through which a period of 10 years is covered. The analysis is being undertaken at the national level and the daily urban system level. The data sample used is limited to the population of 12 years and older. Since 1995, the Research on Mobility Behaviour was extended to include also a large group of children up to 12 years. Since comparing one data set with young children (1997) with two data sets without young children (1987 and 1992) would most probably lead to false conclusions on daily mobility trends (considering that the daily mobility behaviour of young children differs markedly

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1) The COROP region is the statistical regional level applied as the NUTS-III level in European comparative statistics. In the following analysis, in some cases two COROP-regions were merged to come closer to the actual daily urban system. The regions not belonging to daily urban systems are also combinations of COROP-regions.
from that of the average population) the children under 12 years are excluded from the 1997 data set. The three data samples eventually resulting from this procedure contain respectively 10,000 households making about 90,000 trips in 1987 and 1992, and 60,000 households making 490,000 trips in 1997. The results of the time series analysis of daily mobility on both spatial scales will suggest that the assumption that urban fields or poly-nucleated urban regions are being formed or will soon be formed in the Netherlands is at least questionable, if not unrealistic.

Figure 5.5
Regions for the daily mobility analysis

Regions for the daily mobility analysis
The Research on Mobility Behaviour contains only very limited data on household categories. The only variables available are household income, occupational status of the respondent (employee or professional, full- or part-time), age group, educational level (highest level of education successfully completed) and household size (only expressed in number of persons, without any reference to the household type). Even with these variables, a regional analysis is problematic because of problems of statistical reliability on regional level. This means the regional analysis remains limited to aggregate data on trips made by people with very different lifestyles and opportunities. It could well be that certain specific professional groups or household types have action spaces coming pretty close to an urban field, while other groups stay much closer to home. Additional surveys would be needed to get a really ‘in-depth’ knowledge of mobility behaviour, to find out for example if long-distance travelling is growing among certain categories of household types or professions and if this is a national or a region-specific trend. However, the aggregate data on daily mobility produced by the Research on Mobility Behaviour are very useful for the question that Chapter 8 seeks to answer. While in-depth knowledge on the mobility behaviour of specific categories is valuable, an overview of the aggregate mobility of the population is probably at least as important to determine the future direction of urbanisation and spatial mobility policy. In the end, it is the combination of many individual and categorical mobility patterns that produces concentrations of mobility and interaction in functionally coherent urban regions. And rather than planning an urban region for small categories with a radically different mobility behaviour, urbanisation and spatial mobility policy should preferably concentrate on the design of urban regions that fit well to the mobility behaviour of the majority of its inhabitants.
CHAPTER SIX
THE INFLUENCE OF URBANISATION POLICY ON POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN THE NETHERLANDS

6.1 Introduction

As indicated in Chapter 5, the Dutch administrative system rests on a strong position of national government on the one hand and of municipalities on the other hand. This is also reflected in the physical planning system. The general division of tasks is that the national planners deliver the long-term national strategic plans that serve as a framework for the municipal planning actions on the local level. In-between are the provinces that are responsible for the regional plans. However, the position of the provinces is relatively weak compared to that of the national and local planners. Since the local plans have to fit in the regional plans, and these regional plans in turn have to be in line with the targets of national urbanisation policy, national control on local planning is quite considerable. The fact that no less than 84% of the municipal budget comes from national government transfers (Veer, 1997) strengthens the dominant position of the national government in Dutch physical planning even more – at least on paper. In addition, the strategic planning documents of the Dutch national planners since the 1960s clearly demonstrate a strong ambition of national planners to influence the direction of spatial development of the Netherlands. The reports tend to contain quite clear and concrete goals and accompanying targets, like the number of houses to be built on a certain location in a certain period. The combination of the highly influential position of the national government within the Dutch planning system and the high level of ambition in the national plans since the 1960s lead to the expectation that Dutch physical planning policy has actually been able to direct the development of urbanisation in accordance with the national plans.

In this chapter, an attempt is made to check whether this expectation is justified. To what extent has it been possible in the recent past to implement the national planning strategies on the local level? The answer to this question is sought in an empirical analysis of a core element of Dutch national physical planning policy: urbanisation policy. The results of this analysis are presented in section 6.6. Before turning to the empirical analysis, the sections 6.2 to 6.5 pay attention to the societal and political context in which Dutch national urbanisation policy was formulated and executed and give an impression of the historical development of Dutch physical planning and its central strategic concepts. The chapter will conclude with a short overview of the most recent developments in Dutch national urbanisation policy (section 6.7).

6.2 Development of population distribution in the Netherlands

6.2.1 Long-term development

One of the most striking features of the Netherlands in comparison to many other European countries is the absence of a ‘primate city’, a city that dominates the country’s urban system in terms of population size and economic, political and cultural functions. However, this was not always the case. The Netherlands was late to join the industrialisation process. This happened only in the second half of the 19th century. Until then, Amsterdam had been a ‘primate city’ in many aspects. For example, in 1795 its population was four times as large as the second largest city, Rotterdam. Furthermore, Amsterdam dominated the Dutch economy and culture, largely thanks to its strong
international position (Engelsdorp Gastelaars & Ostendorf, 1994). However, when industrialisation finally reached the Netherlands, it was especially Rotterdam that benefited from it. Through its favourable position in the Rhine Delta, Rotterdam rapidly developed as the main transit harbour for the German hinterland, most of all the rapidly industrialising Rhine-Ruhr area. At the same time, The Hague strengthened its position as the national political and administrative centre, while Utrecht became the main national distribution and logistics node. Amsterdam was left with only its roles as the main national financial and cultural centre. The four large cities as they are now known in the Netherlands are therefore a quite recent phenomenon, a situation that only came about in the late 19th century. In the same period, industrialisation also led to a rapid growth of new specialised industrial cities in the south and east of the Netherlands, like Eindhoven and Enschede.

Parallel to this redistribution of urban functions, the turn of the century also brought a first wave of sub-urbanisation around the Dutch cities, most notably around the large cities. Until the late 19th century, the Dutch settlement system was characterised by a clear dichotomy between the cities and the countryside. Then, this dichotomy started to fade, first through city extensions, later also through suburban growth in formerly rural villages (Hidding, 1997). Initially, the extent of this suburban migration remained quite limited since it was only affordable for the highest income groups. After 1900, with the help of considerable improvements of public transport, sub-urbanisation became possible for middle-income groups as well (Hoekveld & Deurloo, 1981). Most of the early suburbs were located in regions like the coastal zone of North and South Holland and east of Amsterdam (‘Gooi’) and Utrecht (‘Utrechtse heuvelrug’).

The severe economic crisis of the 1930s, World War II and the period of post-war reconstruction preliminarily stopped the sub-urbanisation process. In the late 1950s, a new upsurge of sub-urbanisation started. The large cities lost inhabitants with a constantly increasing pace. This time, the sub-urbanisation movement was more a middle class than an elite phenomenon. Suburban migration became possible for a larger share of the population due to rapidly rising household incomes, accompanied by the increasing affordability of the private car. Under these circumstances, the new suburban movement not only involved considerably more households than in the early 20th century, but it also took place across larger distances. The out-migrants from the large and medium-sized cities in the West of the Netherlands not only left to suburban locations near their cities of origin, but also to other parts of the country (Atzema, 1991). This sub-urbanisation trend was only partially compensated by the growing in-migration of foreigners, related to the recruitment of ‘guest workers’ from Mediterranean countries. At first, this new wave of sub-urbanisation was mainly a deconcentration of population, while economic activities remained concentrated in the large cities and regional centres. The dominant trend of sub-urbanisation around the large and medium-sized cities contributed to the formation and gradual extension of daily urban systems (Engelsdorp Gastelaars et al, 1980; see also Chapter 3).
6.2.2 Main trends since 1970

Table 6.1 shows the development of the number of inhabitants of municipality types in the Netherlands between 1970 and 1995. The municipality categories in this table are based on the typology introduced by the National Bureau of Statistics Netherlands (CBS) introduced after the Census of 1971 and used as the standard typology in all population statistics for more than two decades afterwards (see Appendix Map 1). The category 'rural' contains municipalities that had more than 20% of the working population in agriculture in 1971. In the category 'urbanised rural', agriculture is also a prominent sector in the local economy, but manufacturing and services have more importance. Municipalities are called 'suburban' when, in 1971, more than 30% of the working population was commuting to other municipalities. The growth centres are, because of their specific population development, added as a separate category. These are the locations selected by the Dutch national planners to realise the policy of 'concentrated deconcentration' that will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter (see also Chapter 4).

The four largest cities of the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht) experienced a huge population loss in the period 1970-1985. Actually, as mentioned before in section 6.2.1, this decline had already started in the 1960s. The most extreme population loss for the large cities was recorded in 1973, when Amsterdam lost 25,000 inhabitants and Rotterdam lost 20,000 inhabitants in only one year (Meulenbelt, 1997). Around 1985 the large cities started to gain inhabitants again. Their population grew quite considerably until 1995. Since then, the large cities once more experienced a slight population loss. The medium-sized cities (100,000 - 200,000 inhabitants) generally had a more positive population development than the large cities, but in the 1970s, also some medium-sized cities lost population. The period of population loss was shorter than that of the large cities, and the medium-sized cities lost a much smaller share of their population than the large cities.

Table 6.1
Population development per municipality type, Netherlands, 1970-1995; deviation from national growth rate

<table>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanised rural</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cities</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-100,000 Cities</td>
<td>-5.3</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>-15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-200,000 Cities</td>
<td>-14.4</td>
<td>-9.6</td>
<td>-6.8</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth centres</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>164.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NETHERLANDS</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The growth centres reached large population gains as was intended in the policy of 'concentrated deconcentration', especially in the period 1980-1985, when the building production reached its peak (Jobse et al., 1991). After the end of their 'growth task', some growth centres got a stagnating or even declining population. With the exception of the 'growth centres', most population growth occurred in the categories 'rural' and 'urbanised rural'. In general there seemed to be a strong relation between urbanity and population growth: the least urban municipalities experienced the fastest population growth. However, this was especially true for the period 1970-1975. After 1975, suburban and rural growth has been considerably less spectacular and the differences in population development with between rural, suburban and urban municipalities have been decreasing continuously.

The group 'suburbs' as a whole went through a considerable growth of inhabitants. However, this doesn't apply to all members of this group. The 'old' suburbs (the municipalities that started to receive out-migrants from the large cities in the 'first suburban wave' in the late 19th and early 20th century) have even declined between 1970 and 1995. Suburban growth is mainly concentrated in a newer group of suburban villages and small towns. These newer suburban municipalities can mainly be found at the outskirts of the Randstad, partly in areas that the government destined to be 'open', like the Green Heart (see section 6.4.1). In the table they are not only grouped in the category 'suburbs', but also in 'urbanised rural' and 'rural'. This is caused by the fact that the typology used here is based on the situation at the start of the research period. After 1970, a lot of former rural municipalities have acquired a more suburban character.

Within the municipality categories mentioned in Table 6.1, there is considerable variation in population development. Map 3 and 4 in the Appendix demonstrate this variation. Map 3 in the Appendix shows the geographic pattern of population growth in the Netherlands on the municipal level. Generally speaking, the pattern of growth and decline is fairly mixed. Concentrations of growth can be found mostly in areas just outside the Randstad ring of cities. These are the areas that in the 1960s and 1970s were called 'overspill regions' of the Randstad, indicating that these regions should provide housing for the out-migrants from the Randstad cities (see section 6.4.1). Apart from the growth centres, this includes municipalities close to growth centres, and several (suburban) municipalities around the large and medium-sized cities in the west, east and south.

When Appendix Map 3 is compared to Appendix Map 2, almost all these fast-growing municipalities appear to be located in the part of the country that was introduced as 'Central Netherlands' in Chapter 5. However, in the same part of the country, a concentration of declining municipalities can be found. These are the large and medium-sized cities and the 'older' suburban municipalities. The Randstad ring of cities, including most of the suburban municipalities between its cities, is dominated by the colour grey indicating population decline. Also in the other parts of Central Netherlands, in the provinces of North Brabant and Gelderland, cities lost population. Further concentrations of decline appear mostly in peripheral regions, most notably at the borders with Belgium and Germany and in the northern provinces.

Map 4 in the Appendix shows the population development on a regional level. The regional division used is that of the COROP-regions. This is one of the standard regional divisions that the National Bureau of Statistics Netherlands has used in its regional statistics since the early 1970s. The map shows that the population development of the
regions of the large cities is to a large extent determined by the performance of their central cities. The COROP regions of Amsterdam and Rotterdam as a whole only managed to grow slightly, while the region of The Hague even lost population.

Apparently, the growth in the surrounding suburbs and the growth centres of Rotterdam and The Hague could only compensate for the loss of the central cities, not contribute to an overall regional growth. The case of Amsterdam is different: only half of the growth centres for Amsterdam is inside the Amsterdam COROP region. The more distant growth centres are located in regions that rank among the fastest growers of the Netherlands. Meanwhile, the Utrecht region did much better than the other large city regions, scoring an overall growth above the national average despite the huge population loss of its central city. Again, some peripheral parts of the Netherlands appear as areas with a stagnating population growth.

Before turning to the analysis of the influence of national urbanisation policy on the population dynamics in the Netherlands since the early 1970s, the following sections will briefly describe the economic, demographic and socio-cultural context in which the Dutch national planners had to operate.

6.3 Economic trends influencing Dutch population distribution

Like all economies in Western Europe, the Dutch economy went through a major depression following the first oil crisis in 1973. This depression was worsened after the second oil crisis of 1979. In the same period, the process of economic restructuring (decline of the secondary sector, increasing importance of the service sector) also contributed to severe job losses. For the first time in decades, real household incomes were stagnating or even declining. In the second half of the 1980s however, the national economy started to recover. With the interruption of a new, but short crisis period around 1990, the main trend of the last decade is economic growth and a continuous increase of real household incomes. Figure 6.1 shows the development of the real gross domestic product of the Netherlands between 1970 and 1995 as an illustration of the above.

**Figure 6.1**
Development of the real gross domestic product of the Netherlands, 1970-1995 (yearly average growth per 5-year period in %)

![Graph showing economic trends](image)

In Chapter 2, the hypothesis was stated that economic growth is directly linked to suburban growth: when the national economy grows, the sub-urbanisation process will intensify and when the economy stagnates or declines, sub-urbanisation will slow down or even stop entirely. How well does this hypothesis apply to the recent development of the Dutch economy and population distribution? To get some insight in this possible relationship, the municipality types shown before in Table 6.1 have been aggregated into two types of municipalities. The categories ‘rural’, ‘urbanised rural’, ‘suburban’ and growth centres from Table 6.1 were merged into one category, ‘rural and suburban municipalities’. In Figure 6.2, the development of the rural and suburban population growth is compared with the development of economic growth, again with the yearly average growth of the real gross domestic product as an indicator for economic development. For the period from 1970 until 1985, the hypothesis seems to be supported: a decline in economic growth is paralleled by a decline in suburban growth. However, while economic growth recovers after 1985, suburban population growth keeps declining.

**Figure 6.2**
Suburban / rural population growth and economic development, Netherlands, 1970-1995

At the same time, the Dutch economy shifted its focus from a manufacturing-oriented to a service-oriented economy. This process already set in during the 1960s. As can be seen from Table 6.2, in 1968 already the tertiary sector exceeded the secondary sector in terms of the share of total employment. Afterwards, the share of tertiary jobs increased further to occupy almost two-thirds of all Dutch jobs in 1995. When the tertiary services and quaternary (government) services are taken together, it appears that almost 75% of all jobs in the Netherlands were in the service economy in 1995. Meanwhile, the share of jobs in the secondary sector decreased rapidly towards one of the lowest levels worldwide (OECD, 1997). It is this economic restructuring, combined with changes in the household composition of the population, that might offer an explanation for the recovery of urban population growth since the mid-1980s (see also section 6.4).

The restructuring of the Dutch economy affected different parts of the Netherlands in different ways. The functional urban regions of the large cities developed in markedly different directions in the 1970s and 1980s. Cheshire et al (1986) designed a ranking of 103 functional urban regions in EU countries based on a ‘problem score’. This problem score was measured through variables expressing unemployment rate, household income,
net migration and travel demand. Amsterdam was among the top-10 of functional urban regions in the period between 1971 and 1984. Utrecht (46th place) and The Hague (60th) had average scores and ranked in the ‘midfield’ of functional urban regions, while Rotterdam had a relatively high problem score and therefore ranked low on the list of functional urban regions (81st). A division of the research period from 1971 to 1984 into three sub-periods demonstrated that there was hardly any variation in the problem scores for the four Dutch functional urban regions during the 1970s and early 1980s.

Table 6.2
Share of economic sectors in total employment (in %), Netherlands, 1968-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>62.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaternary</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD (1997), Historical Statistics.

In a study of the economic vitality and development potential of urban regions, Louter (1999) makes clear that in the 1990s, the functional urban regions of Amsterdam and Utrecht were among the fastest growing parts of the Netherlands, while the regions of The Hague and Rotterdam clearly lagged behind. This study once more demonstrated that the Randstad could be divided in a ‘North Wing’ and a ‘South Wing’ in terms of labour market structure. Apparently, towards the end of the 20th century, this division within the Randstad resulted in a concentration of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the North Wing (information technology, consultancy, finance, trade and airport-related activities) and a concentration of declining sectors (port-related activities and government-related activities) in the South Wing. Although also in The Hague and Rotterdam a strong growth of commercial services has recently taken place, this could not compensate sufficiently for the job loss in the port-related activities in Rotterdam, and the job loss in government-related activities in The Hague resulting from several cutbacks and efficiency operations during the 1980s and 1990s. The most recent economic developments point at a further concentration of economic growth in the North Wing of the Randstad. The combination of a metropolitan business environment in and around Amsterdam, the central location of Utrecht and the strong growth potential of Schiphol airport have led to an acceleration of employment growth in this region in the 1990s (Ministerie EZ, 1999).

However, apart from the redistribution of economic growth within the Randstad, one could also speak of a redistribution of growth on a national level. The traditional dominant position of the Randstad as a whole within the Dutch economic system was increasingly challenged since the 1970s. Especially the areas just outside the Randstad, regions in the so-called ‘intermediary zone’ (between core and periphery), demonstrated an above-average employment growth. Parallel to this development, also some regional centres in the periphery had an above-average employment growth. This growth is often attributed to the relocation of companies from the Randstad because of problems with expansion and accessibility. This is certainly a part of the explanation, especially with respect to space-demanding activities within the industrial and logistics sector that deconcentrated to the edges of the Randstad and other parts of the country (Ministerie EZ, 1999). However, part of the success of these regions is certainly also explained by their own economic growth potential. For example, the southeast of the Netherlands became
highly specialised in knowledge-intensive industries like consumer electronics, car production and chemical industries. At the same time, a clear strength of the intermediary zone is its highly diversified economic structure (Louter, 1999). Furthermore, the government policy to stimulate the development of backward regions in the 1960s and 1970s might have played an important role: through investments in accessibility, service level and living environment, the government took away many of the objections of companies to settle in the intermediary and peripheral parts of the Netherlands (see also section 6.5.2). In addition, changes in location demands of companies were an important factor. The commercial services sector has much less specific location demands than most industrial companies, which might have resulted in a more equal distribution of economic activities across the country (Velden & Wever, 2000).

6.4 Demographic and socio-cultural trends

The mid-1960s marked the start of many societal transformation processes affecting the demographic structure of the Dutch population. The most important of these transformations was the growing differentiation of the population with respect to household types. Until the 1960s, the nuclear family was clearly the dominant household type. Since then, the emergence of various alternative lifestyles led to a decreasing share of nuclear households and a rapidly increasing share of one- and two-person households. Related to this process was a steep decline of the birth rate. These changes in the household structure were of course not unique to the Netherlands, but happened at the same time in most Northwest-European countries. However, the pace of these socio-demographic changes in the Netherlands was much higher than in most other West-European countries. This was due to the fact that - compared to other countries - Dutch society in the early 1960s was still relatively strongly based on traditional family values. In that respect, the transformation from a family-oriented to a more individualised society had a more revolutionary character in the Netherlands than in many other West-European countries (Meulenbelt, 1997; Bootsm a et al., 1993). A large part of the reason why Dutch society was hanging on to a family-oriented perspective relatively long should probably be sought in the unique societal system of 'pillarisation'. This was a segmentation of society along cultural dividing lines. Each of the 'pillars' (catholic, protestant, socialist and liberal) had its own organisations in almost every element of Dutch society during most of the 20th century. The process of secularisation that also gained momentum in the 1960s led to a diminishing influence of the catholic and protestant church on a large part of the Dutch population and therewith of their traditional moral values with respect to marriage, divorce, the family etc. With the process of secularisation, gradually also the Dutch 'pillarised' societal system disappeared. This led to more pluriformity in household types and lifestyles (Pater et al, 1989). To an increasing extent, people with comparable lifestyles tended to concentrate in certain segments of the housing market. Because of differences in space-time behaviour and different service demands that follow from it, each lifestyle leads to different preferences towards the living environment (Vijgen & Engelsdorp Gastelaars, 1992).

Under these circumstances of increasing individual freedom of lifestyle and a decreasing importance of societal norms, young people more and more tended to form a one- or two-person household in the first years after leaving the parental home. The automatism of starting a family as soon as a person left the parental house disappeared. Especially in the largest cities, the proportion of one-person households has increased a lot during the last decades: in the inner cities this household type even started to form the majority of the
population (Jobse & Musterd, 1992). Another rapidly growing group was the two-earner household. With the increase of participation of women on the labour market, also the proportion of two-earner households increased, contributing to a considerable growth of the share of 2-person households in general as well (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3
Share of household size types in the Dutch population, 1971-1995 (in %)

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 persons</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 persons</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 persons</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 persons or more</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Another consequence of the declined birth rate is the greying of the population. The effects of this process are still unclear, but it is certain that in the next decades, elderly people will become a more prominent group in the Dutch society. The extent to which this will also be noticed in changes in housing preferences of the population is doubtful. Although one might expect that the elderly often have quite specific demands of their living environment, recent research rather shows that the housing preferences of the elderly are not so different from those of other population categories (VNG, 1994). However, there is a considerable difference between elderly households and younger households with respect to the propensity to move. Elderly households (55 years or older) are generally moving much less frequently than younger households. Possible reasons for this difference are a higher level of satisfaction with the existing living environment among the elderly and the fear of losing the neighbourhood’s social network, a factor that is of more importance to elderly than to young households. Another reason is that quite often, a good alternative for the present residence is simply not available (Filius, 1994).

The increase of foreign migration also had consequences for population distribution. In the 1960s, because of a labour deficit, large amounts of labour migrants popularly known as ‘guest workers’ were attracted from Mediterranean countries. This was meant as a temporary solution, but the majority of guest workers stayed in the Netherlands. Since the mid-1970s, family reunification of the former guest workers increased the presence of especially the Turkish and Moroccan community considerably. Another important migration flow came from the former Dutch colony of Suriname, peaking after its independence in 1975, and from the Netherlands Antilles. In the last few years, foreign migration was to an increasing extent dominated by two other groups, strongly differing from each other in their reasons to migrate. The first of these groups consisted of migrants from industrialised countries. Within this group, especially the in-flow of migrants from member states of the European Union (EU) became of increasing importance, supported by several measures promoting the political and economic integration of the EU. However, the counter-flow of Dutch citizens to other industrialised countries more or less balances out the effects of this last category of in-migrants. Furthermore, a considerable part of the in-migration from the industrial countries is short-term rather than permanent (Van Amersfoort, 1991). The second group consisted of refugees and asylum seekers. The number of incoming asylum seekers fluctuated heavily, but the main trend was growth...
during the 1980s and early 1990s. However, in recent years the Dutch and EU regulations for asylum have been tightened considerably, leading to a sharp decrease of the yearly admitted number of asylum seekers in the Netherlands. The development of total in- and out-migration and the resulting net in-migration are presented in Table 6.4.

Except for the elderly, all of the above mentioned household types are considered to be more urban oriented in their housing preference than the traditional autochthonous nuclear family. This is not to say that groups such as young one- and two-person households or ethnic minorities exclusively prefer to live in cities, but rather that the share of people having an urban preference tends to be larger than among autochthonous family households. In addition, it should be said that in many cases, young households and households from ethnic minorities might prefer a suburban living environment too, but cannot realise their preferences. Factors like the large social housing stock, relatively high vacancy rates in certain parts of the cities and the provision of special accommodation for young 'starters' make the cities, and most of all the large cities, locations where young households and ethnic minorities have much more chances than elsewhere (Jobse & Musterd, 1992). The proportional increase of these groups could lead to a growing demand for apartments on urban locations and a decrease of sub-urbanisation in the near future. However, the urban-to-suburban migration flow is not likely to disappear or become meaningless. Meulenbelt (1997) and Musterd & Ostendorf (1998) indicate that it is more likely that to an increasing extent, a 'bi-polar' housing market will develop, in which both suburban and inner city locations are the most popular living environments, while the areas 'in-between' become less popular. Recent developments on the Dutch housing market indeed seem to point in this direction.

**Table 6.4**
In-migration, out-migration and net in-migration, Netherlands, 1970-1995 (yearly averages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Immigration, yearly average (x 1000)</th>
<th>Emigration, yearly average (x 1000)</th>
<th>Net immigration, yearly average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970-1975</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-1980</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1985</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-1990</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1995</td>
<td>114.6</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In Chapter 2 (section 2.4.3), following the argumentation of Everaers & Musterd (1994), a hypothetical link was proposed between three processes manifesting themselves in Northwest-Europe in recent decades: the recovery of urban population growth in the 1980s, the shift from a manufacturing-oriented to a service-oriented economy, and the continuous increase of the share of one- and two-person households in the population since the 1960s. In Figure 6.3, this line of thought is applied to the Dutch situation. The ‘urban population growth’ in this figure is an aggregate of the population development of the three types of
cities presented earlier in Table 6.1. The hypothesis seems to hold only for the period after 1985, when urban population first starts to grow again (1985-1990) and then accelerates its pace of growth (1990-1995). Between 1975 and 1985, however, urban population first reaches a zero growth, which is a clear recovery from the previous period of loss, but then falls back into a modest decline (1980-1985). This does not fit the hypothesis of Everaers & Musterd (1994) too well, although an alternative view could of course be that this slight backdrop of urban population development was only a short interruption of a long-term recovery trend. In addition, it could be argued that the modest recovery of urban population development in the late 1970s was mainly based on 'negative' reasons: under the circumstances of deep economic crisis, many urban households wanted to suburbanise, but could not afford it. In this period, although the share of small non-family households (with a more urban orientation) was already increasing rapidly, the traditional family household (with a more suburban orientation) still dominated Dutch society. In the second half of the 1980s, economic growth recovered, so much more households could afford to suburbanise again. However, meanwhile, the small non-family household had become the dominant group in Dutch society. The acceleration of urban population growth in this period was much more connected to a 'positive' choice for an urban living environment, amongst others by young non-family households.

**Figure 6.3**
Development of the share of service sector jobs, the share of one- and two-person households, and urban population growth in the Netherlands, 1968-1995

Based on data of Tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3.
Left axis: percentage scale for share of 1- and 2-p. households and service sector jobs.
Right axis: percentage scale for urban population growth.
The reappraisal of the inner city as a living environment manifested itself most of all in the large cities. Two processes in particular should be mentioned here. First, in the early 1980s, several Dutch geographers saw evidence for the process of 'gentrification' in the large cities, most of all in Amsterdam. Since the early 1970s, young households discovered some derelict inner city neighbourhoods as potentially attractive living environments. Old warehouses that lost their function were turned into luxury apartments and to a large extent sold to upper middle class households with a high profit (Cortiè & Van de Ven, 1981). This development was for some time seen as the starting signal of a large-scale upgrading of the inner city and 19th-century neighbourhoods, but this never really came about. However, a second development since the late 1980s contributed to a further reappraisal of urban living. In several large and medium-sized cities, old industrial and harbour sites were turned into high-density housing areas. With large luxury apartments in close proximity of inner-city amenities, especially young upper middle class households with a preference for urban living were targeted. The success of these projects was, and still is, overwhelming. The 'flagship developments' in this respect were the Eastern Harbour Area in Amsterdam and the 'Kop van Zuid' in Rotterdam. Both locations took the maximum advantage of another recent tendency in Dutch housing preferences: the increasing popularity of living on waterfronts.

An alternative explanation of recent dynamics in Dutch internal migration sees the Randstad, and most notably the large cities, as an 'escalator region', following the hypothesis of Fielding (1992; see Chapter 2). A longitudinal study of in- and out-migration of the Randstad between 1978 and 1990 showed that the Randstad region had a constant surplus of young in-migrants with an educational or a job-related migration motive. At the same time, older households, leaving the Randstad mainly to improve their housing situation, dominated the out-migration from the Randstad. This suggests that the Randstad functions as an 'escalator region' in the Netherlands, in which people enter the region at a young age, improve their educational level, start their labour market career and leave again when they managed to reach a higher status level (Nijstad & Hooimeijer, 1996). The escalator region concept certainly explains a significant part of recent Dutch migration patterns. However, the recent popularity of the Amsterdam and Rotterdam inner-city redevelopments among young 'upper middle class' households, that do not leave the city although they could easily afford it, does not fit well in this picture.

6.5 Dutch policies on planning, housing and regional development

6.5.1 The Dutch welfare state

The foundations of the modern Dutch welfare state were mainly established in the 1930s and 1940s. The Dutch government took several measures as a reaction on the crisis period of the 1930s and the following war years. Especially in the immediate post-war period, governmental interventions in the national economy and social security increased dramatically. Important sources of inspiration were the plea for government intervention to reach full employment and a stable economic development by Keynes, and the Beveridge report of 1942 that is considered as the 'blueprint' of the British welfare state (Veen, 1990; see also Chapter 7, case Northern England). Esping-Andersen (1990) characterises the Netherlands as a corporatist welfare state, although he also recognises some features of the social-democratic welfare state type.
In the early post-war period, the Netherlands could be described as a strongly planned society (Cammen & De Klerk, 1996). The Dutch government pursued a strict wage policy. This went along with considerable investments in key industrial sectors like steel, mining, and commercial services. The combination of limiting wage increases and the investments in industry had to make the Dutch industrial sector healthy and competitive again. The 1950s policy laid the foundations for the enormous expansion of Dutch economy in 1960s and early 1970s. In the early 1960s, the development of wages was released and a steep increase in average incomes followed. Since the severest poverty problems were apparently solved, the welfare state shifted in focus from the distribution of wealth to the distribution of welfare (Veen, 1990). This involved a further expansion of welfare state arrangements and caused a considerable rise in welfare expenditures.

The oil crises of the 1970s and following economic downturn led to a discussion about the limits of the welfare state. The welfare state was feared to have become uncontrollable and unaffordable. Critics claimed that the demands on welfare policy had become much too high. These problems were mostly linked to the supposed unique character of the Dutch welfare state, and solutions were also sought within the specific Dutch context. Only in the late 1980s was it recognised that welfare states in other Western countries suffered from comparable problems (Engbersen et al, 1993). In the 1980s and 1990s, considerable cuts in welfare state arrangements were unavoidable. Several state companies were privatised and there was a general tendency of withdrawal of the government in various fields of welfare policy.

The Dutch political system is characterised by a dominant position of the national state. The local level of government originally had a strongly autonomous position, but during the 20th century and especially since World War II government was increasingly centralised. On the one hand, several government tasks were transferred from the local to the national level. On the other hand, national and local policy actions became increasingly intertwined (Veldheer, 1989). Groenendijk (1998) mentions in this respect that one could speak of ‘co-governance’ of local and national government in most fields of policy. A decisive factor in the national-local government power relations is the fact that a very high share of local government funds comes from the national state. In the early 1980s, no less than 94% of local government funds consisted of money transfers from the national level. Probably even more significant was the nature of these money transfers: over 60% of it came from goal-specific funds (Toonen, 1981). Although the share of national transfers in municipal budgets declined significantly since the early 1980s, it was still 84% in 1996 (Veer, 1997). As Kloosterman and Lamboooy (1992, p. 127) effectively summarise: "The Dutch welfare state, therefore, is - generally speaking - locally administered, centrally determined, and nationally funded."

This does not mean that the municipality is only putting national policies to practice on the local level. Within the limits set by the national state, local governments can still pursue an autonomous policy. In this respect, the Dutch welfare state has often been described as a ‘decentralised unitary state’ (a.o. Toonen, 1981; Veldheer, 1989; Groenendijk, 1998). Among the policy fields where local influence is quite considerable are housing and physical planning policy. Furthermore, in recent years local autonomy has increased. Since the 1980s, the share of local taxes in the total municipal budget was raised, while the funding of municipalities from the national state level changed its character. The national funds for the municipalities have gradually become more 'general'
and less 'goal-specific', which gives local authorities more freedom to decide how to spend their money (Cammen & De Klerk, 1996).

The government level in-between, the provinces, is relatively weak both in political influence and financial means compared to the local and national government. Still, the provinces certainly also have their role to play in the Dutch welfare state. While the municipalities function as the primary administrative units in all matters that directly influence the daily life of its citizens, the provinces take care of coordination of municipal policies and advocating municipal interests on the national level (Wissink, 2000). Throughout recent decades, there has been a frequently returning discussion about the province's right to exist. Many suggestions have been made to either abolish the provinces or to rearrange their borders, because the provinces did not always seem to match the scale level of regional developments. Probably the most notorious issue in this debate was the formation of 'city provinces'. In the early 1990s, a new regional policy level of city provinces was proposed by national government as the solution to frequently occurring political conflicts, mainly between cities and their surrounding municipalities. City provinces were to be formed around the large cities Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague and also around several regional centers like Eindhoven and the 'twin city' Enschede-Hengelo. Meanwhile, however, all proposals for city provinces have been abolished or at least postponed, partly because of the opposition of suburban municipalities, but also partly because of strong opposition of the urban population. The proposals to install city provinces in the regions of Amsterdam and Rotterdam were subject to referenda in 1995. In both cases, the city province was rejected by more than 90% of the voters (Veer, 1997). Under these circumstances, it is understandable that new attempts for alternative regional policy arrangements are hardly discussed now. Instead, however, several urban regions formed voluntary cooperation arrangements to try to deal better with societal and political issues that go beyond municipal borders.

6.5.2 Physical planning, housing policy and regional economic policy

As mentioned in Chapter 5, Newman & Thornley (1996) categorise the Netherlands into the group of 'Napoleonic countries'. In general, the Napoleonic countries have a systematic planning approach based on a national law and a clear hierarchy in the division of planning tasks between the national, regional and local level. However, there is considerable difference between the countries of the Napoleonic group in the way this system is worked out in detail.

In the Netherlands, the national government is very influential in the physical planning system. It sets up reports on physical planning regularly. Especially since the 1970s, these reports contain very concrete directions about locations and amounts of houses to be built. Building outside these locations is generally severely restricted, at least on paper. However, the enforcement of physical planning policy in reality tends to be much less strict, as will be illustrated in the evaluation of planning success later in this chapter. Apart from the dominant national government, also local government has a powerful position in Dutch physical planning. This is a logical consequence of the overall design of the Dutch welfare state as a 'decentralised unitary state' (see section 6.5.1). In-between are the provinces that have planning on a regional level as their responsibility. However, compared to the national and local level, the position of the provinces in spatial planning is quite weak. Local plans have to be approved of by the provinces, and regional plans have to fit into the national planning principles (even though regional plans do not have to
be formally approved of by the national government). The Dutch planning authorities have some powerful instruments at their disposal that help to reach the ambitious planning goals considerably. Probably the most powerful tool is the dominant role of Dutch municipalities on the land market. Land is explicitly treated as a public good in the Netherlands (Dransfeld & Voss, 1993). The municipalities release land for development according to the preferred land uses they laid down in their local development plan.

Dutch physical planning has traditionally always been strongly intertwined with housing policy and regional economic policy. Especially the interconnectedness of physical planning and housing throughout the 20th century has been striking. Attempts of the Dutch government to 'regulate' urbanisation through housing already have quite a long tradition. The first attempts can be placed at the end of the 19th century. Industrialisation and a high natural growth rate had caused a rapid growth of urban population. This called for a huge effort: a large amount of new houses had to be constructed in a short period. The main concern of the real estate developers was maximizing their profit, while city governments were mainly aiming at providing as many new houses as possible. As a logical result, the attractiveness of the living environment and sanitary conditions of the resulting neighbourhoods were, generally speaking, very poor. Around the turn of the century, government and influential groups in society became convinced that better living conditions were necessary. The first official document resulting from this idea was the Housing Act in 1901. This document was meant in the first place to guarantee minimum quality of housing, but can also be seen as the first attempt to achieve control over urban growth (Faludi & Van der Valk, 1990).

In the period until World War II, the influence of municipal government on urban growth increased. Housing projects were more and more planned, on a municipal or sometimes even on a regional level. In 1924, at the annual conference of the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Association in Amsterdam, the idea of national planning aiming to preserve open spaces was launched. Some decades later, this would lead to the Randstad / Green Heart concept (Wusten & Faludi, 1992). The development towards a more controlled urban growth reached its transitory peak in 1934 with the Extension Plan of Amsterdam, which would dictate further development of Amsterdam in the next three decades.

After World War II, the main governmental concern was the recovery of the national economy and society. One of the biggest problems in this respect was housing. War damage and restrictions to building during the war had caused an immense housing shortage. This was increased by the rapid population growth in the post-war years. Traditionally, most economic growth was taking place in the western part of the Netherlands, with a concentration in the Randstad area. This area attracted huge flows of migrants from the rest of the country. Planners and politicians feared an overcrowding of the Randstad, contrasted with an almost empty periphery. This fear, which was expressed in the so-called 'doom scenario', could be visualised as "(...) an ocean of houses reaching from north to south and east to west" (Wusten & Faludi, 1992, p.22). The 'doom scenario', combined with an anti-urban bias, dominated the first attempts to physical planning on a national scale at the end of the 1950s. The main issue in the 'First Report on Spatial Planning' (1960) was therefore how to reach a more equal distribution of population and economic development throughout the country.
In the 'Second Report on Spatial Planning' (Ministerie VRO, 1966) the fear of an overcrowded Randstad and the anti-urban bias were still present. Another concern of national planners was sub-urbanisation. The concept of 'concentrated deconcentration' was launched to prevent two unwanted developments of the settlement system: uncontrolled suburban growth and further growth of the large cities. Especially the 'Green Heart', the agricultural area between the urban regions of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague (Figure 6.4), was to be kept 'empty'. The planners tried to promote a more equal spread of population and economic growth over the country, to release the pressure on the Randstad. Economic and population growth were directed 'outwards' to the outskirts of the Randstad and to other parts of the country. Government offices were replaced to the North, East and South and relocation of companies to these areas was encouraged by financial incentives. In this phase of the evolution of Dutch physical planning, regional economic development of relatively backward parts of the country also played a major role. The severe economic problems of areas that were hit by the deterioration of their traditional industrial base, like Southern Limburg (coal mining) and Twente (textile industry), were yet another incentive to stimulate economic growth outside the Randstad.

Figure 6.4 The Green Heart (south of Aalsmeer)

In the 'Third Report on Spatial Planning' (Ministerie VRO, 1974; Ministerie VRO, 1976), the policy of concentrated deconcentration was still the leading concept. To realise the ideas already put forward in the 'Second Report', 16 'growth centres' were appointed. The planners no longer tried to reach a more even distribution of population and economic growth across the country. Nevertheless, there was still a fear that the large cities might become too large and unliveable. Therefore a large part of the housing demand of inhabitants of the large cities was provided in the growth centres, which were almost all situated within or at the outskirts of the Randstad.

In the 1980s, the concept of concentrated deconcentration was left behind. The concept was quite successful in resolving the housing shortage of the Randstad, but not all goals of the policy were reached. While a huge group of households was moving to the growth centres, companies were not following them. Therefore, many of the new inhabitants of the growth centres kept working in or near the large cities and increased their commuting
distance. This commuting generally occurred by car, which caused an increase of traffic jams around the large cities. This was one of the most important reasons to reconsider the policy of concentrated deconcentration (see section 6.6.1 and 6.6.4 for a more detailed discussion). Also, the municipalities of the largest cities wanted to stop the outward flow of middle-income households because they feared the cities would eventually become concentration areas of lower income households. The city municipalities considered a mix of different income groups a more desirable situation and wanted to build for middle- and higher income groups within and near the cities. National physical planning was redirected to building 'compact cities' (Ministerie VROM, 1983; Ministerie VROM, 1990). Housing and economic developments were to be concentrated within and around large and medium-sized cities. This was a remarkable shift in the planning doctrine: the compact city, which in the Second Report was considered an impossible and unwanted phenomenon, was turned into the ultimate planning goal in the Fourth Report. The Randstad was also placed in a more positive light: it was recognised as 'the motor of the Dutch economy'. By trying to divert economic growth away from the Randstad, the Dutch economy as a whole might have been damaged. The peripheral regions were not completely 'out of sight', but their economic development was no longer subsidised by the national government.

In the following section, the above brief general overview of the development of Dutch physical planning policy will be analysed in more detail. Most attention will be paid to the efforts to influence population distribution. The analysis will focus on the period between 1970 and 1995. The main aim of this analysis is to evaluate the success of Dutch population distribution policy. 'Success' in this case is measured through the degree to which the actual development of Dutch population distribution developed in accordance with the development planned by the national government.

6.6 Between planning visions and urbanisation reality: an evaluation of the results of national population distribution policy in Central Netherlands

A general problem with the evaluation of government policy is that the eventual policy targets cannot be quantified. This problem certainly applies to Dutch national population distribution policy as described in the national reports of physical planning since the 1960s (Nozeman, 1986). The area with the most consistent and concrete population distribution policy since the 1960s is the Randstad and its 'overspill areas' in the provinces of Flevoland, North-Holland, North-Brabant and Gelderland. The analysis presented in the following sections will be focused on this area, which will be referred to as 'Central Netherlands' (see Appendix Map 2).

Section 6.6.1 will briefly summarise the main targets of national population distribution policy for Central Netherlands throughout the period from 1970 until 1995. In section 6.6.2, the actual population development in the municipality types targeted in the national population distribution policy will be analysed. This results in a confrontation between policy targets and actual developments in section 6.6.3. An additional evaluation of national population distribution policy, based on the typology of policy situations presented in section 5.2 (Figure 5.2), is discussed in section 6.6.4.

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6.6.1 Main targets of national population distribution policy in Central Netherlands

In the period between 1970 and 1995, the historical development of national population distribution policy in the area of Central Netherlands could roughly be divided into periods of five years. In each of these five-year periods, one policy report dominated national urbanisation policy in general, and national population distribution policy in particular. In the period 1970-1975, the most influential document was the Second Report on Spatial Planning, published in 1966. In this report, the concept of 'concentrated deconcentration' was introduced as the central concept for population distribution policy. Concentrated deconcentration served two main policy targets. On the one hand it was meant to prevent a too large loss of green and open space to urban sprawl. On the other hand, the concept presented an alternative to large-scale growth of the large and medium-sized cities. To realise the concept of concentrated deconcentration, the national government selected a number of 'overspill centres' around the large cities Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. These overspill centres, meant to provide housing for a large part of the out-migrants of the large cities, were mostly located in the areas directly north, northeast and south of the Randstad. These locations were chosen to prevent the 'Green Heart', the relatively sparsely populated area enclosed by the Randstad ring of cities, from losing its agricultural character. At the same time, the large and medium-sized cities of the Randstad itself were limited in their growth opportunities. Buffer zones were installed between the Randstad cities to prevent them from growing into one urbanised whole. In addition, the Second Report mentions the major cities of North Brabant and the region of 'Central Gelderland' (with the cities Arnhem, Nijmegen and Ede) as potential overspill locations for the out-migration of the large Randstad cities. The Randstad and these urban areas were separated from each other through a 'central open space', in which population growth was supposed to be limited. Some central nodes were selected to cater for the population growth in this central open space (Ministerie VRO, 1966).

In 1974, the 'Orientation Report' ('Oriënteringsnota') appeared. This report marked the start of a period of ten years in which the Third Report on Spatial Planning was worked out. The Orientation Report set the stage for national urbanisation policy in the period 1975-1980. Many of the points of departure from the Second Report remained untouched. The main function of the Orientation Report was to announce concrete measures to realise the development of the overspill centres. The name of these centres was changed into 'growth centres' and the number of houses to be built in each of the growth centres was determined. The Dutch national government provided generous subsidies to encourage the housing production in the growth centres. Herewith, the policy of concentrated deconcentration was continued, although the focus within this concept shifted from deconcentration to concentration. The 'central open space' and the central nodes within this area remained in place, as well as the 'overspill regions' in which the growth centres were located (Ministerie VRO, 1974). In addition, the 'growth cities' were introduced. These were medium-sized cities in the intermediary and peripheral parts of the Netherlands that had to cater for the housing need of their own urban regions (Cammen & De Klerk, 1996). These 'growth cities' have continued their functions as regional centres of population growth in the 1980s and 1990s.

The 'Urbanisation Report', the second part of the Third Report on Spatial Planning, was published in stages between 1976 and 1979. This Urbanisation Report was the leading document in national population distribution policy for the period 1980-1985. Once more,
the policy of concentrated deconcentration was continued. However, for a part of the growth centres, an end date of their growth task was indicated. After 1985, these growth centres would no longer function as concentration locations for the overspill of the Randstad. This category of growth centres mainly existed of locations relatively far from the large cities (Nozeman, 1986). The end of their growth task followed from a redefinition of urban regions. The urban regions of the Urbanisation Report were considerably smaller than the urban regions used in earlier documents during the concentrated deconcentration era, resulting in some growth centres being located outside the newly defined urban regions. Another important policy change was that the ambition to stimulate population growth in the overspill regions at the expense of the Randstad was abandoned. Starting from the Urbanisation Report, Dutch national urbanisation policy aimed at a balance between in- and out- migration on the sub-national level (the regions West-, North-, East- and South-Netherlands).

In 1983, the ‘Structure Outline Urban Areas’ (Structuurschets Stedelijke Gebieden) appeared, a document that dominated national population distribution policy in the period 1985-1990. This report was an update of the Urbanisation Report. Although the Structure Outline took over most of the principles and policy ambitions of the Urbanisation Report, there were some marked changes as well. The Structure Outline announced a change of the central concept in urbanisation policy: from concentrated deconcentration to the ‘compact city’. Remarkably, this change of concept had no immediate consequences for the growth centres. Those locations that kept their growth task after 1985 according to the Urbanisation Report were also maintained in the Structure Outline. Meanwhile, the central nodes within the central open space disappeared as a separate municipality category in national population distribution policy. These central nodes were no longer seen as providers of housing for the population growth of the central open space (Ministerie VROM, 1983). This implied that the complete central open space was now treated as an area in which population growth should be restricted.

In 1988, the time was ripe for a new national report on physical planning, the Fourth Report. In a further elaboration of this document, known as the Fourth Report Extra (VINEX), the compact city concept was worked out into concrete measures (Ministerie VROM, 1990). More explicit than ever, the new policy aimed at limiting sub-urbanisation and urban sprawl. The national government once more selected locations where new housing should be concentrated. This time, however, the building locations were inside of, or directly bordering the existing built-up areas of large cities and regional centres. After decades of growth limitations, the Randstad was now encouraged in its population growth. Although the central open space was no longer mentioned as one entity, the largest part of this area was still targeted by a policy of restrictions to population growth. The Fourth Report Extra determined national physical planning policy in general, and population distribution policy in particular, in the period 1990-1995 as well as in the years immediately afterwards.

On the basis of the above brief summary of the main goals of national population distribution policy affecting Central Netherlands, and starting from the assumption that this national policy is indeed effective, scores could be given for the expected population development in municipality categories. Table 6.5 lists the scores for each municipality category mentioned in at least one of the reports described above. Three scores are possible: ‘growth well above the national average’, ‘growth close to the national average’.
and 'growth well below the national average'. These scores are based on statements made in the above-mentioned reports per five-year period.

**Table 6.5** Expected scores on index of population growth based on Dutch national population distribution policy, for municipality categories in Central Netherlands.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural municipalities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suburban municipalities</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large cities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other centres of urban regions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growth centres, end of growth task in 1985</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth centres, continued growth task after 1985</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth cities</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overspill areas Randstad</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>

Expected score on population growth index (in which national growth average = 100)

- growth well under national average (index score < 80)
- growth around national average (80 < index score < 120)
- growth well above national average (index score > 120)
*** no prediction possible (not part of national policy in this period)

**6.6.2 Dynamics of population distribution in Central Netherlands, 1970-1995**

In Table 6.6, the actual population development of the municipality categories targeted by the national population distribution policy for the region of Central Netherlands is presented. For each five-year period, population growth figures are indexed according to the population growth of the Netherlands as a whole.

Between 1970 and 1975, the population development of a number of municipality categories deviated remarkably from the national growth trend. The rural and suburban municipalities of Central Netherlands experienced a substantial growth. This was a continuation of a trend that had already started in the 1960s. Another trend that had been initiated in the 1960s, the rapid loss of inhabitants in the large cities, was maintained in the early 1970s. The growth centres already demonstrated a growth well above the national average, although the instruments to stimulate population growth through housing production were not in place yet. Other fast-growing categories were the municipalities in the central open space (not only the central nodes within this area) and the areas indicated as 'overspill regions' of the Randstad in the Second Report.

In the second half of the 1970s, the population growth of rural municipalities diminished considerably, but remained well above the national growth average. The growth cities, introduced in the Orientation report as centres of regional population growth, had to cope with a slight population loss instead. The large cities kept losing inhabitants, but the
regional centres showed a modest recovery. The population growth of the growth centres increased its pace. Population growth in the central open space clearly declined, while the central nodes within this open space maintained a stable development. The increase of population in the overspill areas continued, though at a much less spectacular level than in the early 1970s.

Between 1980 and 1985, the population increase of the growth centres reached a stunning peak. The large cities kept losing considerable amounts of inhabitants. The other categories all moved towards the national growth average.

### Table 6.6

Index of population growth per municipality category, 1970-1995, Central Netherlands (Population growth Netherlands = 100)

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<td>Rural municipalities</td>
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<td>-40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth centres, end of growth task in 1985</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1220</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth centres, continued growth task after 1985</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>1140</td>
<td>1610</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth cities</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central open space</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central nodes in central open space</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overspill areas Randstad</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From 1985 on, the growth figures of the growth centres dropped fast. This was most of all true for the growth centres that lost their task in 1985. This category even experienced a growth under the national average after 1990. The large cities enjoyed a growing population for the first time since the early 1960s. The smaller regional centres also fastened their population growth after 1985. The same was true for the central nodes in the central open space. In this period, the population increase of the growth cities was finally realised. Meanwhile, the growth figures of the rural and suburban municipalities hardly diverged from the national average.

### 6.6.3 Population distribution development as planned?

To what extent, then, could the Dutch national population distribution policy be considered successful? As discussed before in Chapter 5, there are various ways to answer this question. One of the available evaluation methods of planning success is based on the criterion of goal conformity. This criterion refers to the degree to which a certain project managed to reach its initial goals. In the recent past, most notably the Dutch policy of concentrated deconcentration has been judged on its goal conformity. More specifically, this analysis focused on the growth centres. The conclusions of this evaluation were very positive: the government succeeded to develop growth centres at the intended locations and close to half a million out-migrants of the large cities moved to these growth centres (Faludi & Van der Valk, 1990; Faludi, 1994).
Nevertheless, the question remains if the entire package of measures within the framework of Dutch national population distribution policy since the 1960s has been successful. Will the conclusions be just as positive if the population distribution policy as a whole, and not just the growth centres, are evaluated with the criterion of goal conformity? Such an analysis is presented for the region Central-Netherlands in Table 6.7.

For each five-year period between 1970 and 1995, the population development of the before-mentioned municipality categories has been confronted with the policy goals for this category. This leads to a judgement about the degree to which the actual population development has matched the policy goals. In the table, a ‘+’ indicates that the population development of a municipality category has been ‘as planned’, while a ‘-’ means that this was not the case. As this table reveals, the development of the growth centres between 1970 and 1985 was indeed a convincing success of Dutch national population distribution policy. After 1985, the category of growth centres that was supposed to end their growth task experienced a continuation of fast growth, but in the early 1990s the end of their growth task was apparently implemented successfully after all.

The periods 1970-1975 and 1975-1980 demonstrate the highest degree of goal conformity. In these periods, the central nodes in the central open space grew relatively fast, as projected in the relevant national planning reports (the Second Report on Physical Planning and the Orientation Report). The intended rapid population increase of the overspill areas of the Randstad was also realised. The aim to limit population growth in the large cities and smaller centres of urban regions seem to match with the loss of population in these cities. However, it is questionable whether the national government really wanted such a huge loss of inhabitants for the cities, most of all for the large cities.

Table 6.7
Goal conformity of national population distribution policy in Central Netherlands, 1970-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural municipalities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban municipalities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large cities</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other centres of urban regions</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth centres, end of growth task in 1985</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth centres, continued growth task after 1985</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth cities</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central open space</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central nodes in central open space</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overspill areas Randstad</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>+ 3</td>
<td>+ 4</td>
<td>+ 1</td>
<td>- 2</td>
<td>- 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CBS, De bevolking der Nederlandse gemeenten, 1970-1995; Table 6.5; Table 6.6.

+ = population growth of municipality category 'as planned'
- = population growth of municipality category not 'as planned'
*** = no score (not part of national policy in this period)
as took place in the 1970s. Elements of the national population distribution policy that were not successful were the growth restrictions on the countryside and in the suburbs in general, and the stringent growth restrictions in the central open space in particular. Despite the intention to limit population growth in 'open' agricultural and natural areas as much as possible, the central open space was one of the fastest growing parts of Central Netherlands.

In the 1980s, the national government seemed better able to curb the population growth of the countryside, the suburbs and the central open space. Still, the population of the central open space grew considerably faster than Dutch population as a whole, which means the criterion of goal conformity was still not met. Except for the earlier mentioned success in the realisation of the growth centres, the results of national population distribution policy were not convincing. The switch from concentrated deconcentration policy to compact city policy, as announced in the Structure Outline in 1983, could not yet be made during the 1980s. The growth centres with finished growth task indeed slowed down their pace of population increase, but at the same time, the intended recovery of urban population growth was a slow, hesitant process and happened at a too modest level. The growth cities, destined to cater for most of the population growth in their regions, only reached an above-average population growth in the second half of the 1980s, while they should have reached this goal already in the late 1970s. Furthermore, the central nodes in the central open space, paradoxically, experienced a faster growth after 1985 even though they were skipped as growth concentration locations in the Structure Outline in 1983.

In the period 1990-1995, the national planners finally had a set of instruments at their disposal to realise compact city policy 'on the ground'. The main instrument to realise the population distribution goals of compact city policy were the so-called 'VINEX-locations', large-scale new housing areas within and bordering to existing built-up areas of large and medium-sized cities. Nevertheless, population growth in the large cities and the other centres of urban regions was still lagging behind national population growth. Although urban population growth clearly recovered further, this is not enough to speak of 'goal conformity' because the cities were supposed to grow well above the national average. Meanwhile, the population growth in the central open space diminished further, but since it stayed well above the national average instead of well below (as intended in the Fourth Report Extra), this area still did not meet the criterion of goal conformity either. Although it is tricky to simply sum up the partial results of population distribution policy since the targets for each municipality category had a different level of priority for the national planners, it might still give an indication of the 'overall' result of population distribution policy. As can be seen from Table 6.7, the 1970s (and most notably the period from 1975 to 1980) appear as the most successful period of Dutch national population distribution policy in the region Central Netherlands. In this period the number of 'plusses' clearly exceeds the number of 'minuses', leading to a positive overall score. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the number of 'minuses' grows, eventually leading to a negative overall score.
In defense of the most recent phase of national population distribution policy that did not turn out very successful in the analysis above, planners could easily argue that the realisation of the compact city policy really got started only after 1995. Several years of negotiations and participation procedures were needed before the actual housing production at the VINEX-locations could commence. The real effect of the new housing areas of the VINEX-locations could therefore only be witnessed after 1995, and probably even in the first years after 1995 the visible effect would only be very modest. In other words, it is too early to judge upon the eventual degree of success of the compact city policy. This situation could be compared with the realisation of the growth centres that was already announced in the Second Report in 1966, but did not become reality before the late 1970s.

Does this mean that there is a good chance that the compact city policy will work out on the longer term? This is very doubtful. Apart from the start-up problems of the building activities on the VINEX-locations, the compact city policy of the Fourth Report extra also suffers from a considerable divergence between the planners' ambitions and feasibility of their plans. Contrary to this, ambitions and feasibility of the policy of concentrated deconcentration matched considerably better. This appears from an analysis using the typology of physical planning policy situations introduced in section 5.2 (Figure 5.2). In the following, the policies of concentrated deconcentration and the compact city are evaluated on the two dimensions of this typology:

- which party is expected to invest in the realisation of the goals of the urbanisation policy (the government or the market);
- which interests are mainly served through the urbanisation policy: individual or general (societal) interests.

Figure 6.5
Typical growth centre neighbourhood (Hoofddorp)
The policy of 'concentrated deconcentration' was introduced when the Netherlands experienced a huge population growth and suffered from a large and rapidly increasing housing shortage. In the early 1960s, it was expected that the Netherlands would have 20 million inhabitants by the year 2000. This meant an increase with about 8 million inhabitants in less than 40 years. Another concern of the national government was the high population density in the western part of the country. Meanwhile, especially in the West, housing demand became more and more suburban of character. Housing production outside of the cities would fit the population's wishes the most, but it was feared that this would contribute to a further acceleration of sub-urbanisation and a huge loss of open areas. If the national planners would not intervene, a dispersed suburban growth could easily lead to all urban areas in the West growing together. An amorphous megalopolis would be the end result (Engelsdorp Gastelaars & Ostendorf 1991).

This perspective functioned as a 'doom scenario' and formed the setting of the policy of concentrated deconcentration. The national government did not want further concentration, because this would be contrary to popular housing demands, but at the same time, urban sprawl was not an attractive foresight either. The logical compromise was a concentrated form of deconcentration. The plan was to stop urban growth, prevent urban sprawl and develop a number of new cities that could function economically independent from the large cities. The accompanying goal was to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants and most of all their housing situation, in the (large) cities as well as the new towns (Ostendorf, 2001). The production of suburban living environments in the new cities, often one-family houses with a garden and for a large part in the social rented sector, largely met the supposed housing demand of Dutch family households. Figure 6.5 gives an impression of a typical growth centre living environment: multifamily, low-rise row housing in a green setting. The new suburban neighbourhoods in the new cities were especially attractive for families from the lower and lower middle class that could not afford owner-occupied suburban housing outside the cities. It was expected that once the new migrants had settled, companies would follow them automatically so that enough employment would be provided.

In the 1970s, the policy of concentrated deconcentration did not work out as planned yet. As shown earlier in Table 6.1 and 6.5, sub-urbanisation peaked in the early 1970s and population growth outside the growth centres was, contrary to the plans, considerable. Housing production in the growth centres started only hesitantly, while building activity in other (suburban) locations was at a high level. After 1973, however, the first oil crisis resulted in a clear decrease of housing production. The housing market came under increasing pressure, leading to a rapidly rising price level. In 1979, under the circumstances of the second oil crisis, the Dutch housing market collapsed. The persisting economic uncertainty led to a stagnation of the owner-occupied housing market. This was the ideal moment for the government to give an extra impetus to the production of social housing, most of all in the growth centres. In 1980, the housing production in the growth centres gained momentum and in 1981 en 1982, the combined housing production of all growth centres reached its peak (Jobse et al, 1991).

The growth centres could be developed 'against the grain' because of the powerful role of the national government. The national planners did not only have the instrument of social housing, but also generous subsidies for the owner-occupied sector at their disposal. Especially on locations where land was government-owned, like in Flevoland, this made a large-scale production of affordable houses for a sizable share of the population possible.
The degree of goal conformity of the policy of concentrated deconcentration became very high in the early 1980s. The goals with respect to the amounts of houses to be built in the growth centres were easily reached. Faludi (1994, p. 493) was clearly impressed with this result: "most (new towns) exceeded their targets, and there are now more than half a million witnesses to the success of this policy, i.e., those people who have migrated to where successive government documents said they ought to go".

Meanwhile, however, the Dutch government was not able to improve the employment opportunities of the growth centres. Most companies were not interested in moving towards the growth centres that, in their perspective, were situated rather peripheral and the government did not have the instruments to force or persuade them. The effects were an enormous increase of commuter traffic across relatively large distances (from the growth centres to the large cities and their urban regions), worsening congestion around the large cities and a high level of unemployment in the growth centres. Furthermore, the large cities started to oppose to the policy of concentrated deconcentration because of the negative effects of their decreasing number of inhabitants. The feelings of dissatisfaction of the large cities were encouraged further because the economic crisis of the 1970s hit the large cities the hardest, while the slight recovery in the mid-1980s benefited mainly the medium-sized cities and large suburban municipalities. This set the stage for a new policy in which the compact city became the central urbanisation concept.

Summarising the above, the policy of concentrated deconcentration could be interpreted as a ‘trade-off’: the ‘doom scenario’ of urban sprawl had to be prevented without neglecting the popular housing demands. Considerations of desirability and feasibility balanced each other out, even though the accent was probably mostly on the aspect of feasibility through the production of large amounts of subsidised housing in the growth centres. Aspects of desirability dominated the employment policy for the growth centres. Companies were supposed to follow the migrating households to the growth centres, but this did not happen because most companies did not see any benefits in such a move. Despite the failure of this part of the policy, the role of the government in the period of concentrated deconcentration was particularly strong: the policy was largely ‘plan-conform’ as well as ‘goal-conform’.

Nevertheless, the image of growth centres as dormitory towns, growing commuter traffic and car use, environmental problems and increasing international competition between cities resulted in the compact city policy. The national population distribution policy now mostly aimed at the development of new housing and employment locations in and close to the cities. The main policy ambition changed into revitalisation of the cities. Compact urbanisation ought to prevent a new ‘doom scenario’: ever increasing traffic jams resulting in the large cities being virtually unreachable. The plan was to create compact cities; this was to be realised by locating new housing and employment locations in the cities, or as close to them as possible. Suburban housing areas and the development of office locations along highways did not fit into the compact city policy. The accompanying goals were to reduce individual mobility, or at least stop its growth, to protect the environment and to enhance prosperity (Ostendorf, 2001).

According to the national compact city targets set out in the Fourth Report Extra (Ministerie VROM, 1990), a large share of new housing construction should be realised in urban regions. Within those urban regions, two major types of concentration locations were highlighted; within the existing built environment of the cities, and just outside the
existing built environment of the cities. The latter type became popularly known as ‘VINEX-location’. The policy of the Fourth Report Extra (abbreviated in Dutch as VINEX) meant a break with the preceding policy in a number of respects. An important change was the more prominent position of the market sector in housing production. The targets that at least 70% of the new houses in the locations outside the cities, and at least 50% of the houses in the locations inside the cities, were supposed to be owner-occupied or private rental is exemplary of this. Implicitly, the more prominent role of the market sector also meant that the importance of housing policy as a regulating factor in Dutch physical planning policy diminished.

Apart from the reducing share of social housing, also a number of subsidies were abolished that were installed mainly to encourage the development of the growth centres. The reduction of funds for the growth centres seems a positive and logical step to encourage a more compact urban development. However, this decision was not followed by a comparable financial impetus for new housing locations in the compact city. The market sector was largely left to realise the targets for housing production as well as the attraction of new employment. This has to happen within a tight framework of conditions put forward by the national planners. Opportunities to build large residences are scarce and space around the houses is very limited. Housing density is fairly high, the amount of space around the houses is limited and plot sizes are quite small. Apart from the housing density, the site of the VINEX-locations outside the cities contributes to its rather uniform character. These locations are neither really urban nor really suburban. Furthermore, most of them are large extensions and this fact only already means that the new housing areas run a high risk of becoming monotonous. Figure 6.6 shows a typical example of an extension area built within the VINEX policy framework. Even though the areas themselves generally show a considerable variety in architecture and housing type (detached, semi-detached and low-rise apartment blocks), the areas seem to look almost identical throughout the country. Moreover, most VINEX areas are almost exclusively housing areas, which threatens to increase their monotonous character.

**Figure 6.6**
Large-scale VINEX extension area under construction (Hoofddorp)
The VINEX-locations that were planned to provide housing for suburban oriented households seem insufficiently able to meet their demands. An opinion frequently heard in public media, but increasingly also in the academic debate (Ostendorf, 1999; Dieleman, 1999; Aalst et al 1998) is that the houses offered in the VINEX-locations are generally speaking too small, too uniform and built in a too high density to attract the suburban oriented households. This even seems to hold true for those VINEX locations that are offered at more suburban locations within the urban regions. Figure 6.7 shows a typical example. In this neighbourhood, a part of the inhabitants could choose their own housing design, resulting in a rich variety in architecture. However, apparently the available plots were too small to allow for both a spacious dwelling and a spacious garden. Most inhabitants chose for large dwellings at the expense of garden space. It remains to be seen how long they will be satisfied with the end result. At the same time, the supply offered on VINEX-locations outside the cities does not meet the demand for urban living environments either: for this, most of the locations are too far from the central city and its city-specific services. On the contrary, the inner-city projects that are part of the VINEX program meet the high demand for inner city living very well. Projects like the Eastern Harbour Islands in Amsterdam and the ‘Kop van Zuid’ in Rotterdam offer high-quality, spacious apartments in high densities at a stone’s throw from the city centre. Initial fears that the (for Dutch standards) unusually high densities in these inner-city projects would scare potential buyers away were so far not justified. The owner-occupied and luxury rental apartments on the inner city sites were an instant success and the demand for this type of urban living environments appeared to be much higher than could be provided for. Still, looking at the overall preliminary results of compact city policy, one could not speak of a ‘trade-off’. The doom scenario of total congestion should be avoided by this policy, but the popular housing demands were not met sufficiently. The compact city, that was judged as not feasible in the era of concentrated deconcentration, was supposed to be realised after all in the 1990s. The market sector had to play the leading part in this policy, against its own preferences. In the compact city policy, therefore, considerations of desirability and feasibility were not balanced. The desirability of compact city development dominates the scene at the expense of feasibility considerations. The role of the national government in compact city policy was herewith quite weak.

Figure 6.7
Smaller-scale VINEX extension area in a suburban setting (Castricum)
6.7 Current and future developments in national population distribution policy: from compact city to urban network?

The development of national urbanisation policy in the Netherlands in the second half of the 1990s could be summarised with the terms ‘confusion’ and ‘lack of orientation’. There seemed to be only one broad consensus, namely that the compact city policy no longer matched the demands of the population and the national economy and that a new direction in national physical planning policy as a whole, and urbanisation policy in particular, was needed. The growing dissatisfaction about the direction taken in the Fourth Report Extra led to the announcement of a new national plan, the Fifth Report, in 1997. The negotiation and plan-making process towards this Fifth Report has been a long one and along the way, the eventual publication of the Fifth Report was more than once postponed. Finally, the policy document appeared in January 2001, but it was already heavily contested before it was even published.

The publication of the ‘New Map of the Netherlands’ in 1997 (Modder et al., 1997) more or less kicked off the debate. This ‘New Map’ was a visualisation of how the Dutch built environment would change when all building projects initiated within the framework of the Fourth Report Extra would be completed. The overall image presented was a country that rapidly lost its open space to new housing developments, traffic infrastructure and commercial estates. Surprisingly, this map provoked several shocked reactions although it was only showing locations of developments that were already determined by the national and local governments years ago. Apparently, not many people at that time realised what the overall effect of all building projects initiated with the Fourth Report Extra would be (Bontje, 1997).

The Department of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment organised a countrywide debate on the future spatial development of the Netherlands in 1997 as well. Under the header ‘Netherlands 2030’, scenarios were constructed of possible future designs of the Netherlands. Several experts from academic and private research institutes as well as lobby organisations could send in their future vision. Regional conferences were organised where all interested persons and organisations could give their opinion on the desirability and feasibility of the concepts proposed by these experts, the National Planning Agency and other departments of the national government. The debate resulted in four ‘perspectives’ for the possible future spatial development of the Netherlands:

- ‘Land of Cities’, a perspective based on the principles of strong concentration of urban development and keeping the countryside as open as possible;
- ‘Land of Flows’, a perspective that views water and traffic flows as the basic ordering principle in physical planning, aiming at a concentration of ‘high-dynamic’ functions along traffic axes and a connection of ‘low-dynamic’ functions to water flows;
- ‘Landscape Park’, a perspective that tries to weave city and landscape together to one integrated whole;
- ‘Palette’, a perspective in which freedom of location choice for citizens and companies stands central, along with a decentralisation of arranging competing claims for space to the regional and local level.

(Ministerie VROM, 1997)

The first reactions to the outcome of the ‘Netherlands 2030’-debate from the national planners indicated a strong preference for the perspective Land of Cities. This meant in
fact a continuation of the compact city policy. However, soon afterwards this opinion shifted in the direction of the Land of Flows – scenario. This happened under the influence of a strong lobby of the Ministries of Economic Affairs and Transport, business representatives and also some academic planners and economists. Both the Department of Economic Affairs (Ministerie EZ, 1997) and the Department of Transport (Ministerie V&W, 1995) published their own vision on the future spatial development of the Netherlands before the Netherlands 2030-debate had even started. The spatial vision of the Department of Transport supported the compact city policy, but wanted to extend this spatial concept to include locations with good connectivity along public transport axes between urban regions. The vision of Economic Affairs launched a spatial concept that was new in the Dutch planning debate: the corridor concept. In the vision of Economic Affairs, this corridor concept involved concentrated urban development along transportation axes. This version of corridor development could have two spatial forms: concentration of business locations at intersections of road, rail and/or water transport, or a more or less continuous built-up area along highways and/or railroads between urban regions.

In 1998, two advisory councils of the Dutch national government provided new incentives for the debate. The Council for Housing, Planning and Environment (VROM-Raad, 1998) supported the National Planning Agency in its preference for the Land of Cities perspective. The choice for a future urbanisation policy based on the Land of Cities perspective would do most justice to the conservation of what the Council described as ‘collective values’: cities with an attractive living environment and a historically grown identity on the one hand, and characteristic cultural landscapes on the other hand. Nevertheless, in the view of the Council, a few elements should be added to the Land of Cities approach. The advice contained a plea for a controlled development of corridors between the urban regions and between parts of the country. The combination of compact city development and controlled corridor development was baptised ‘Land of Cities Plus’. Other proposed changes included to trade nationwide generic concepts for region-specific ones and to pay more attention to the position of (parts of) the Netherlands in the wider geographic context of Northwest-Europe. The advice of the Council also marked the first mentioning in official policy documents of the urban field concept (see Chapter 3 and 8 for a more detailed discussion).

The other influential advisory report came from the Scientific Council of Government Policy (WRR, 1998). The central concern of this report was to what extent the Dutch approach of strategic planning was fit to meet the demands of the emergence of the ‘network society’ (see Chapter 2). In the view of the WRR, not only new spatial concepts were needed in future physical planning policy, but also a new approach of institutional arrangements. The council argued for the development of a ‘spatial development policy’, characterised by a more selective influence of the national government, a clearer coupling of spatial plans with spatial investments, and an explicit formulation of political goals combined with the introduction of new independent controlling agencies. The spatial development policy would consist of a strategic vision of the national government, the so-called ‘national main spatial structure’, which should offer the framework within which more detailed plans on a regional level should be developed. The size of these regions could then vary, depending on the planning subject. Temporary ‘ad hoc’ co-operations between regional and local organisations could be established to develop these more detailed plans. In this advice also, a clear preference was given to region-specific concepts for future urbanisation policy instead of the traditional national generic ones.
The advisory studies of the VROM-Raad and the WRR formed the basis of the ‘Startnota Ruimtelijke Ordening’ (Ministerie VROM, 1999a), the document in which the National Planning Agency put forward its principles of the future spatial development of the Netherlands until 2030. Therefore, the spatial development perspective chosen as the core of the report was ‘Land of Cities Plus’. In addition, a new urbanisation concept was launched as the successor of the compact city: the network city. Six regions, three in the Randstad and three in other parts of the Netherlands, were described as ‘network cities’ (see Chapter 3 and 8 for a more detailed discussion).

The ‘Startnota’ was initially meant to give an indication of what could be expected in the Fifth Report on Physical Planning. However, the reactions on the ‘Startnota’ from academic planners, planning practitioners on the regional and local level and members of the parliament were generally so negative, that the importance of the ‘Startnota’ rapidly diminished. The negative reactions were especially aimed at the network city concept. There was considerable confusion about the extent to which the network city should be seen as a functionally integrated unit. Another item of debate was the combination of continued compact city development and the introduction of corridor development. Many feared that the corridors, controlled or not, would seriously undermine the economic development of cities and their surrounding regions. This led the Minister of Physical Planning to exclude the corridor concept from the further plan-making process, as he indicated in a speech in early 2000. Instead, economic activities were to be concentrated around nodal points of infrastructure (Pronk, 2000).

Later in 1999, the National Planning Agency and the Minister of Physical Planning initiated a new round of debates. A regular meeting of key players in the Dutch national planning debate was introduced: the so-called ‘Polderoverleg’. All government departments involved in spatial development met with representatives of business, environment and consumer lobbies. In addition, all Dutch citizens were encouraged to fill out an enquiry about their preferences for the future spatial development of the Netherlands as a whole and of parts of the country. All this gave the strange impression as if the national planners still had no idea about the contents of the Fifth Report, despite all the earlier initiatives to gather opinions of politicians, project developers, lobby groups and citizens. In this phase, the aldermen of physical planning of the four largest cities found each other in a lobby for the development of Randstad and Green Heart into a ‘Delta Metropolis’ (Deltametropool, 1998). Soon, this lobby gained momentum and also medium-sized cities in the Randstad area became involved in it as well as influential consumer organisations and business and environmental lobby groups. The mayors of five cities in the province of North Brabant undertook a comparable initiative: ‘Brabantstad’.

Meanwhile, both within the Department of Physical Planning and in the parliament, criticism on the gap between the intentions expressed in national plans and actual planning practice grew considerably. The National Planning Agency published the first edition of a yearly check on the results of its national planning policy (Ministerie VROM / RPD, 1999). The outcome with regard to several restrictive policies within the framework of the Fourth Report Extra was mostly negative:

- In 8 of the 12 Dutch provinces, the share of newly built homes in ‘concentration locations’ decreased between 1990 and 1998, while this share was supposed to increase;
In 8 of the 12 provinces, the share of newly settled companies in ‘concentration locations’ decreased between 1990 and 1998, while this share was supposed to increase; 

- In most of the ‘restrictive policy areas’, that is, areas with limitations to new building activities defined in the Fourth Report Extra, the surface of urban land use and the number of postal addresses (as an indicator for building activity) increased considerably since 1990.

A parliamentary working group arrived at more or less the same conclusions as to the apparent lack of effectiveness of national urbanisation policy (Werkgroep Vijfde Nota, 2000). One of the key conclusions of this working group was that “physical planning policy stands or falls with good maintenance. The policy should be formulated in a maintainable way and the national government should have sufficient means and capacity of maintenance at its disposal” (p.293; translation by author). During the execution of the policy goals of the Fourth Report Extra, numerous examples of planning actions violating the policy goals appeared, mainly resulting from a lack of maintenance and the frequently occurring practice of leaving ample negotiating space to local and provincial planning authorities to adjust the national plans. The restrictive policy could not counterbalance the strongly increasing force of urban sprawl in the 1990s and suffered from several in clarities in policy goals and terminology. The most problematic issue, however, was that “restrictive policy is not a generally accepted norm but only one element in complex and lengthy decision making processes and negotiations. Restriction appears to be negotiable on any government level” (Werkgroep Vijfde Nota, 2000, p. 237; translation by author). Apart from various (often successful) attempts of regional and local governments to adapt restrictive policy measures in their advantage, also national policy measures were quite often violating the aims of restrictive building policy.

The preliminary outcome of the debate as presented in the finally completed Fifth Report in January 2001 (Ministerie VROM, 2001) seemed a clean break with compact city policy. The Fifth Report demonstrated a strong focus on enabling economic growth and international competitiveness, accompanied by a more liberal population distribution policy. The Delta Metropolis and Brabantstad lobbies proved to be successful, since both were adopted as national ‘urban networks’ in the Fifth Report. The consequences of the acceptance of the ‘Delta Metropolis’ as a planning concept for the Green Heart were not very clear. On the one hand, the Delta Metropolis concept implied that the areas formerly known as Randstad and Green Heart, should now be integrated into one network of cities and green recreational spaces. On the other hand, the Green Heart was destined to become one of the ‘National Landscapes’, and this meant a continuation or possibly even a further strengthening of building restrictions.

Urbanisation should mainly be regulated via a system of ‘contours’ (see figure 4.2). ‘Red contours’ were to be drawn around the existing built-up area of municipalities, indicating the area in which further building activities were allowed. ‘Green contours’, on the contrary, were to be drawn around areas were building activities were severely restricted. The areas that were left after drawing the red and green contours were supposed to get ‘light-green contours’, indicating that building would be allowed here, but only under certain conditions and to a very limited extent. The contours are to be drawn by the municipalities themselves and afterwards the provinces should determine them in their regional plans, ultimately in the year 2005.
The influence of the Ministries of Transport and Economic Affairs is clearly reflected in the outcome of the debate. A much-telling event in this respect is the fate of the plan of the Minister of Physical Planning to regulate urban extensions through the system of contours described above. Under heavy pressure of the ministers of Transport and Economic Affairs, who feared that this approach would cause a severe shortage of space for new infrastructure and economic activities, the light-green contours were left out of the Fifth Report. This implies that probably more than half of all land in the Netherlands will not be ‘contoured’ at all, which gives ample space for building activities and seriously undermines the effectiveness of the green and red contours. Apart from this, the fact that the municipalities can determine the contours themselves raises doubts about their effectiveness. Since most local authorities are generally growth-oriented (Werkgroep Vijfde Nota, 2000), they will be inclined to draw the red contours well outside the existing built-up area. In addition, in the period until 2005 (when the contours should be determined) the existing agreements of the Fourth Report Extra might be seriously challenged. How much value will be given to agreements reached in the framework of a policy (the compact city policy) that has already been largely pushed aside by the national planners? This gives municipalities the opportunity to start new building projects and more or less force a wider extent of the red contours afterwards. Since many members of parliament raised these and other objections to the concept of the Fifth Report, the eventual outcome of the debate is still undetermined.

6.8 Conclusions

When the phases in Dutch population distribution policy from the late 1960s until the mid-1990s are evaluated with the criteria of plan and goal conformity (section 6.6.3, Table 6.5), the policy of concentrated deconcentration appears as the most successful phase. Especially in the late 1970s the main planning targets of national population distribution policy were largely reached. The national planners wanted to channel suburbanisation from the large cities to a select group of locations, the growth centres. That a large amount of houses was built in these locations and that a large part of the migrants from the large cities actually moved to these houses can only be seen as a success of national population distribution policy. Nevertheless, even in this successful period some targets were not reached, of which the much too fast population growth in the central open space should be mentioned in particular. The shift from concentrated deconcentration to compact city has been much less successful. The slowdown of growth centre development was realised largely according to the plans and the cities finally started to grow again after decades of population loss. This urban growth, however, kept lagging behind national population growth. This was certainly not in line with the ambitions of compact urban development and urban revitalisation that, amongst others, implied a concentration of population growth in the cities. The gap between the ambition of the national planners and the actual development of population distribution grew larger during the era of compact city policy.

A second evaluation based on the typology of desirability and feasibility (Table 5.4 and section 6.6.4) once again singles out the policy of concentrated deconcentration as a reasonably successful policy. This success most of all refers to the housing goals. This part of the policy of concentrated deconcentration could be characterised as a ‘type 1’ situation in Table 5.4: the government invested in houses wanted by many households. The housing part of concentrated deconcentration was feasible and it is no surprise that the goals with regard to housing were easily reached. At the same time, the government
invested in a concentration of houses at locations that were in the general interest, which meant the policy in this respect also contained some characteristics of ‘type 2’. However, the national government did not invest in the employment part of concentrated deconcentration. The initiative in this respect was left to companies. Because relocation to the growth centres was not considered attractive by many companies (such a relocation would serve the general interest, but was not in the interest of individual companies), this part of the policy could be described as a ‘type 4’ situation. The employment goals of concentrated deconcentration, realising sufficient jobs in the growth centres to make them economically independent of the large cities, did not pass the stage of desirability and was not realised. The compact city policy as a whole is also an example of a ‘type 4’ situation: the market sector has to operate in the general interest. The compact city policy is not trying to ‘accommodate’, but is mainly ‘preventive’ of character. Desirability considerations dominate feasibility considerations. The earlier experiences with the employment part of concentrated deconcentration policy justify the expectation that the Dutch compact city policy is deemed to fail.

Apparently, this has also become the dominant opinion in the Dutch government and among the national planners. The strategy outlined in the Fifth Report seems to break radically with compact city development. Instead, ‘urban networks’ are chosen as the spatial and functional form of urbanisation of the next decades. Furthermore, the idea of a ‘national plan’ for the spatial development of the Netherlands seems to be left behind as well. More than ever before since the development of national planning, the initiative is left to regional and local governments. Still, however, the Fifth Report demonstrates a strong ambition of the Dutch national government to influence urbanisation through physical planning policy, and a firm belief that this is actually possible. The empirical analysis in this chapter already raised considerable doubts about the effectiveness of Dutch national urbanisation policy in the recent past, when ‘top-down’ planning control was supposed to be considerably strong judging from the very concrete directions given to regional and local government levels in the national reports. Still, on the local level, several developments that were not supposed to happen according to the national plans took place. How are national planners supposed to control local and regional development of population distribution if the influence of their plans is diminished even further? Is it fair to expect the lower-level governments to develop their plans in the common (national) interest?

While this chapter leads to some doubts on the degree of success of Dutch national urbanisation policy, it could still be that the Dutch results are much more positive than the results of national urbanisation policy in other countries, especially within Northwest-Europe. The following chapter will try to answer the question if differences in planning systems and (national) planning ambitions were reflected in different developments of population distribution. More specifically, Chapter 7 actually tries to find out whether physical planning has been able to influence population distribution dynamics in Northwest-Europe, and if this is the case, if the success of physical planning has been dependent on the planning system and the planning ambitions of the country in question.
CHAPTER SEVEN
URBANISATION TRENDS AND POLICIES IN NORTHWEST-EUROPE: AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

7.1 Introduction

In Chapter 6, the influence of national urbanisation policy on population distribution dynamics was evaluated for the case of the Netherlands. This was done in two ways: first, a confrontation of the actual population growth trends in municipality types with the targets for these municipality types in national urbanisation policy; second, an evaluation of the degree to which the ambitions of the national planners were feasible. The results of these evaluations suggested that it is only to a very limited extent possible to influence population distribution dynamics through national urbanisation policy. Furthermore, the degree to which Dutch national urbanisation policy was effective seemed to diminish considerably: while in the 1970s and early 1980s, the policy of concentrated deconcentration was at least partially successful and reached a part of its targets, the subsequent compact city policy appeared to be considerably less successful so far and is not expected to reach its targets in the coming years. Various societal changes were presented that were probably much more influential in the recent dynamics of Dutch population distribution: phases of economic growth and decline, the restructuring of the Dutch economy from a manufacturing-oriented to a service-oriented economy, the changing household composition with a rapidly growing share of small households and the increase of foreign migration (sections 6.3 and 6.4). These trends led to a growing demand for two types of living environments: suburban on the one hand, and central urban on the other. In section 6.6 it was argued that these demands were insufficiently met in the compact city policy since the mid-1980s.

This raises the question to what extent the positive image of Dutch national urbanisation policy in international literature is justified. The Netherlands have been described as 'the most planned country in Europe' (Dutt & Costa, 1985) and its planning system as 'planned' in the sense that the land use plans, most of all those on the municipal level, give a high degree of certainty to citizens and developers (Davies, 1989). Hall (1992) mentions the Dutch as being highly committed to the ideal of comprehensive planning. However, these positive comments all mainly referred to the most successful period of Dutch national urbanisation policy, the era of concentrated deconcentration. In more recent years, Faludi & Van der Valk (1994) as well as Dieleman et al (1999) admired the continuity of Dutch national urbanisation strategies and concepts since the 1960s, a continuity that might be seriously questioned because the shifts from concentrated deconcentration to compact city, and from compact city to network of cities, were actually quite radical breaks with the past (as was already discussed in Chapter 4 and 6).

The ideal situation to answer the question 'to what extent has Dutch national urbanisation policy been effective' would of course be that we would be able to compare the development of Dutch population distribution as it actually happened with national urbanisation policy, to what would have happened if there would not have been national urbanisation policy. Since this is clearly not possible, an alternative 'next-best' solution has been sought in a comparative analysis of population distribution trends and national urbanisation policies between the Netherlands and other parts of Northwest-Europe. The areas of comparison that were chosen for this analysis were Switzerland, West-Sweden
and Northern England. The rationale behind this choice was explained in Chapter 5. Shortly summarised, the areas of comparison experienced more or less the same economic, socio-cultural and demographic dynamics since the 1960s as the Netherlands, while they represent rather different planning systems in which the role of national urbanisation policy differs from that in the Netherlands. Furthermore, partly because of these different planning systems but also partly because of a different priority given to urbanisation policy and/or physical planning in general, the ambitions of national planners regarding urbanisation policy diverge from the Dutch situation.

In this chapter, the three case studies of the areas of comparison will first be presented individually in the sections 7.2 (Switzerland), 7.3 (West-Sweden) and 7.4 (Northern England). The chapter will then conclude with an overview of similarities and differences between the three cases presented in this chapter and the case of the Netherlands as presented in Chapter 6.

As will appear from the case study presentations, the national planning documents of the Netherlands are unique in at least one aspect. In the Dutch national planning documents, quite frequently planning goals are expressed in a very concrete way, including for example numbers of houses to be built, locations where to build them (regions or even municipalities or settlements), and a period of time in which they should be built. This degree of concreteness is not reached or even approached in the national planning documents of any of the other three countries involved in this comparative analysis. Therefore, unfortunately, the rather direct confrontation of policy targets and real developments could not be realised for the cases of Switzerland, West-Sweden and Northern England. The analysis of the effectiveness of national urbanisation policy for these cases will consequently have a more descriptive character. The international comparison rather serves to find out if the lack of such concrete targets in national urbanisation policy results in differences in urbanisation patterns between the case study areas. If the Netherlands, with its clear goals and intentions of national urbanisation policy, would demonstrate less urban sprawl than the other case study areas, this might be due to a more influential national urbanisation policy, considering the fact that each of the four case study areas is targeted by a national urbanisation policy that tries to work against urban sprawl. In addition, the comparison of two areas in which urbanisation policy is coordinated nationally (the Netherlands and Northern England) with two areas where lower tiers of government dominate while national planners merely have an advisory role (Switzerland and West-Sweden) might give some insight in the degree to which a successful national urbanisation policy is dependent on national coordination and control. The hypothetical expectation before the comparative analysis was undertaken was that national urbanisation policies could only be successfully implemented when they were coordinated and controlled on the national government level (see section 4.6.1 and 5.3.2 and Figure 5.3). If this hypothesis is valid, Switzerland and West-Sweden should show a larger divergence between national planning targets (as expressed in the advisory documents of the national planners) and the actual population distribution dynamics than Northern England and the Netherlands.
7.2 Case study Switzerland

7.2.1 Introduction

Before analysing the major recent trends in Swiss population distribution, it is probably useful to review some basic geographical and societal features of the country that have without doubt influenced the long-term development of its settlement pattern. First of all, the natural environment has contributed to the concentration of urban settlements in a relatively small part of Switzerland. The country can roughly be divided in three landscapes (see also Figure 7.2):

- The Jura, a mountainous area in the northwest, along the border with France;
- The Mittelland, a hilly landscape in-between the two mountain landscapes, which stretches itself in a diagonal zone from Lac Léman in the southwest to the Bodensee in the northeast;
- The Swiss part of the Alps, in the south and east of the country.

The Jura forms about 10% of the total area of Switzerland, the Mittelland 30% and the Alps 60% (Groenewoud & Hermans, 1980).

Figure 7.1
A typical example of the recent development of urbanisation in the Swiss Alps: a dispersed city in the valley enclosed by mountain ridges (Chur)

Because of quite obvious reasons, like the availability of arable land and accessibility, Swiss population has traditionally concentrated mainly in the Mittelland area. This is the region where the five largest Swiss towns (Zürich, Genève, Basel, Bern and Lausanne) are located. The Alp valleys are also quite densely populated. Especially due to spectacular improvements of accessibility by means of the construction of tunnels through the mountain ridges, Alp valleys in the south and east of the country have become much more attractive as a living environment. Figure 7.1 shows one of the cities exemplary for this development, the city of Chur, which grew rapidly in the second half of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, this growth took place in a largely unplanned fashion, resulting in a spread-out urbanisation pattern filling up most of the valley around Chur. This rapid urbanisation of the Alp valleys might be seen as one of the major planning problems in Switzerland. We will return to this issue in more detail later. Similar developments did
not take place in the Jura area and the mountainous parts of the Alps that are still very sparsely populated.

Another division possibly influencing the development of the settlement pattern is connected to the language regions. By far the largest part of Swiss population is German-speaking (63.7% in 1990). The second-largest language group is French-speaking (19.2%), followed by Italian-speaking (7.6%) and Rhetoroman-speaking (0.6%). The other 8.9% of Swiss population speaks foreign languages; this is the fastest-growing part of the population (Wachter, 1997). The language groups are quite strongly concentrated in their own respective regions. The French-speaking community is dominant in the west of the country (cantons Jura, Neuchâtel, Vaud and Genève). The Italian-speaking community is concentrated in the southern canton of Ticino. The small Rhetoromanic group is found in parts of the canton Graubünden. The rest of the country is largely inhabited by German-speaking Swiss, apart from two cantons where no language group is dominant: Fribourg and Valais (Schuler et al, 1997).

The language groups have shown markedly different demographic developments in the past. There used to be considerable differences in the fertility rates of the German-, French- and Italian-speaking regions. These differences have become much smaller in the
1990s, but still, the Italian-speaking region of Ticino has a markedly lower fertility rate than the rest of the country.

Also when political matters are concerned, the language groups appear to have huge influence. This is also true for the spread of religion groups. In 1990, 46% of Swiss population was roman-catholic and 40% protestant. Although like in many other European countries, the influence of religion on society has diminished in Switzerland in the last decades, several authors still mention religion as an important factor in explaining dynamics of the settlement system. The influence of religion is amongst others expressed in differences in fertility rates: the catholic regions, with the exception of Ticino, traditionally have a somewhat higher fertility rate than the protestant regions (Schuler, 1995; Schuler & Joye, 1995).

Last but not least, the political system of Switzerland should be mentioned here. Switzerland is a confederation, built up of 26 member states called cantons. The cantons have a high degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the federal government. For example, the cantons are completely or partly responsible for their own housing, physical planning, internal infrastructure, education and agricultural policy. Quite significant is the fact that around 50% of total taxes is collected by the cantons. In federal policy, high priority is given to redistributing national income and wealth over the cantons as equally as possible. These two features of the Swiss political system have certainly had a huge influence on the recent development of the settlement system. The high degree of autonomy of the cantons has, for example, made the construction of a national physical planning policy very complicated. The redistribution of income and wealth has since the 1960s led to some very influential government subsidy programs for regional economic development. Both physical planning policy and regional economic policy, and their influence on recent settlement system development, will return among the main explanatory factors for the recent development of the Swiss settlement system later in this chapter.

7.2.2 The Swiss urbanisation process

7.2.2.1 Historical development of the settlement pattern

Before industrialisation, the Swiss settlement system could roughly be divided in three settlement types: cities, villages and dispersed farms (Hofsiedlungen). Almost all of the cities were founded between 1100 and 1500: some of them, like Genève, Lausanne, Zürich and Basel, date back to the Roman Age. They had a market function, as well as a 'representation function' for the several aristocratic families owning parts of what is now called Switzerland. Important city foundings in the Middle Ages were those of Fribourg and Bern.

Between 1500 and the beginning of the 19th century the settlement system hardly changed. Urban population remained stable and in some cities even dropped a bit. The five largest cities in Switzerland were already the same as they would be in the 20th century: Zürich, Basel, Genève, Lausanne and Bern. Of this group, Basel and Genève were the dominant city centres; Zürich would claim its leading position in the Swiss settlement system later in the 19th century. The typical structure of this period was a network of relatively small cities at close distance of each other. A really dominant centre of the 'primate city' type was lacking. This was a logical consequence of the fragmented distribution of power in the area. Rural settlements were either villages (concentrations of
houses, farm companies and services) or dispersed individual farms. The settlement form depended on several factors, one of which was the possible use of farmland. In the Alps, the soil could be used for growing diverse crops as well as for cattle. In this situation, with a number of mixed farm companies, the village was the most suited settlement form. The villages in the valleys were combined with 'satellite settlements' (Nebensiedlungen) on the mountain slopes. On the contrary, in the Jura and the pre-alpine area, where monofunctional farm companies were the most common farm type, villages were much less present and the dispersed individual farm was the prevailing settlement type (Wachter, 1997). Other important explanatory factors for settlement type in the rural areas include natural dangers like avalanches (preferred settlement type: the village), the ethnic group (the Rhetoromans, for example, lived traditionally in villages) and the period in which an area became settled.

Until the end of the 19th century, Switzerland could hardly be called an urbanised country. Then a strong industrialisation took place, while in the same period the country became more connected to the international infrastructure network through the construction of first railways and later motorways. This led to a huge growth of cities. While total Swiss population became three times as large between 1850 and 1990, urban population became even six times as large. Especially the larger cities and their agglomerations (more than 50,000 inhabitants) grew fast in size and in number. The medium-sized cities (25,000 to 50,000 inhabitants) stagnated. The smallest cities (10,000 to 25,000 inhabitants) experienced a fast population growth (Cunha & Racine, 1997).

During the process of industrialisation, most industrial activities were located in or near to the already existing cities. But some new cities came into being. Two examples are La Chaux-de-Fonds and Le Locle in the Jura region, a region that became one of the focal points of Swiss industry. Another example is Herisau, one of the main concentration locations of the textile industry that dominated the economy of Eastern Switzerland. A lot of industrialising cities specialised in one or a few branches. At first, this strategy paid off in an immense growth of the local economy. When de-industrialisation started in the 1970s, however, these mono-sectoral cities were hit the hardest. The traditional centres, with their more diversified economic base, were much better able to deal with the economic crisis and restructuring of the 1970s and 1980s (Wachter, 1997).

In the last decades, the main trends were sub-urbanisation and peri-urbanisation: people as well as economic activities tended to move from the central cities to city extension areas, suburban villages and towns near the central cities, or even at relatively large distances of the traditional centres (Leresche & Joye, 1995). Cunha & Racine (1997) point to a transition from relative to absolute sub-urbanisation in the 1970s. Until about 1970, the city population and economy was still growing, but the suburbs were growing faster. After 1970, growth concentrated in the suburbs and cities started to lose inhabitants and economic activities. This development seems to be in line with the model of phases of urbanisation proposed by Berg et al (1982), discussed before in Chapter 2.

Like in many other European countries, the traditional concept of the 'city' has lost much of its relevance. The five largest cities have already been parts of extensive agglomerations for decades and also around some smaller cities agglomerations have been formed. In the cases of the Zürich region and the Lac Léman region (Genève, Lausanne, Vevey-Montreux and their surroundings), terms suggesting larger-scale urbanised areas like 'metropolitan region' and 'métropolisation' are used (Bassand, 1996; Bassand, 1997).
In the contemporary Swiss urban system, two main urbanisation axes can be traced (see Figure 7.2):
- North - South: Basel - Zürich - Lugano;
- Southwest - Northeast: Genève - Lausanne - Bern - Zürich - St. Gallen. Of these two axes, the Southwest - Northeast axis has traditionally been the most important and fastest urbanising one (Cunha & Racine, 1997). It is no coincidence that this axis coincides with the Mittelland region, the least mountainous part of Switzerland.

7.2.2 Main trends in population distribution since 1970

The 1970s showed a remarkable change in Swiss population growth. In the two preceding decades, Swiss population grew rapidly: 15% between 1950 and 1960, and again 15% between 1960 and 1970 (Schuler & Joye, 1995). In the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s, one could still speak of a traditional centre-periphery pattern in population development: the largest cities and their immediate surroundings grew the fastest, some medium-sized cities were also growing fast, while several peripheral areas were losing inhabitants. After 1965, sub-urbanisation became the leading trend. The largest cities started to lose population, first to their surrounding suburbs, later to more distant locations. The main trends of the 1970s were already recognisable: economic and population growth were gradually spread from the central cities to the suburban ring and semi-periphery, and from traditional industrial to upcoming service centres. Urban regions were spreading out more and more. Meanwhile, several peripheral regions were still losing inhabitants.

In the 1970s, Swiss population grew with only 1.5%. From 1975 to 1977, there even was a slight population decline (Calot et al, 1998). Some peripheral regions, mainly situated in the Alps, recovered from decades of population loss. The economic depression following the 1973 oil crisis especially hit the most heavily industrialised regions. In some of these regions, medium-sized and small cities could compensate partly for this by attracting service sector activities. The most peripheral industrial regions, situated in the Jura and the northeast, however, were going through a severe crisis period. The same was true for some Alp valleys that specialised in manufacturing (Schuler & Joye, 1995; Schuler, 1995). Between 1980 and 1990, Swiss population development has recovered remarkably again with a growth of 8%. This was caused by a slight increase in natural growth, but mostly by a rapid increase of immigration in the second half of the 1980s. Some of the larger cities, especially Genève, gained inhabitants again after a period of continuous population losses. Also some of the peripheral regions experienced a modest population growth in this decade.

Table 7.1 gives an impression of the population development of the 26 Swiss cantons from 1970 to 1998. The data of 1970 and 1980 are gathered in the Census that takes place every ten years; the 1998 figures result from a yearly estimate by the Swiss Bureau of Statistics. The above-mentioned huge difference in population development between the 1970s and the 1980s appears clearly in this table. The acceleration in national population growth in the 1980s has affected almost all the cantons. While 9 cantons registered a decline in their number of inhabitants between 1970 and 1980, only one canton (Basel-Stadt) had a population decline between 1980 and 1990. Almost all of the cantons had a more positive population development in the 1980s than in the 1970s; the only exceptions were Zug (same growth rate), Basel-Landschaft and Ticino (lower growth rate in the 1980s).
However, after 1990 the growth rate of many cantons fell back considerably once more. This was especially true for the cantons of the five largest cities. The declining growth rate was partly a reflection of a slower growth of Swiss population as a whole, but growth rates in the cantons with the largest cities (and to a lesser extent also cantons with medium-sized cities) declined more than in the rural and mountain cantons. Considering the period from 1970 to 1998 as a whole, there were striking differences in growth rates between the cantons. Growth rates ranged between $-18.9\%$ in the metropolitan canton Basel-Stadt and $+45.6\%$ in the rural and sparsely populated canton of Nidwalden.

Table 7.1
Population development per canton, Switzerland, 1970-1998 (growth in %)

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<td>Valais</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuchâtel</td>
<td>-6.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genève</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jura</td>
<td>-3.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SWITZERLAND**

|                 | 1.5 | 8.0 | 3.6 | 13.9 |


It is hard to find a 'logical' pattern in the growth performance of the cantons. For example, some of the 'metropolitan' cantons show a quite strong population growth while others grow only modestly or not at all. The very negative growth performance of Basel-Stadt compared to other metropolitan cantons (Zürich, Bern, Vaud and Genève) can be explained by the fact that Basel-Stadt consists of the city of Basel and only two other municipalities. Therefore, Basel-Stadt lacks the suburban 'hinterland' that the other metropolitan cantons have on their own territory. The suburbs of Basel can be found in
the adjacent canton of Basel-Land, one of the fastest growing cantons. The cantons of Vaud (with Lausanne) and Genève, however, grow much faster than the cantons of Zürich and Bern.

From the three landscapes mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the Jura region (cantons of Neuchâtel and Jura) lost quite some population in the 1970s and recovered from this loss only partly in the 1980s and 1990s. The Alps (cantons Valais, Ticino, Graubünden, Uri, Schwyz, Obwalden, Nidwalden) as well as the Mittelland (all other cantons) don’t show an overall pattern of growth or decline. It might well be that the cantonal level is not very appropriate for analysing regional variations in population dynamics.

Table 7.2
Population development in MS-regions, Switzerland, 1970-1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 fastest growing MS-regions</th>
<th>10 least growing and declining MS-regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nyon</td>
<td>Basel-Stadt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutschellen</td>
<td>La-Chaux-de-Fonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knonaueramt</td>
<td>Biel / Seeland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zürcher Unterland</td>
<td>Val-de-Travers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>La Vallée</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gros-de-Vaud</td>
<td>Zürich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morges / Rolle</td>
<td>Jura Bernois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthey</td>
<td>Glarner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sursee / Surtal</td>
<td>Grenchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricktal</td>
<td>Pays-d’Enhaut</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 least growing MS-regions</th>
<th>10 least growing MS-regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basel-Stadt</td>
<td>Neuchâtel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuchâtel</td>
<td>Vaud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bern</td>
<td>Valais</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bern</td>
<td>Vaud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bern</td>
<td>Vaud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


To look at regional variance in population development on a more detailed scale, it is possible to use data on the 106 so-called MS-regions. This is the most frequently used regional entity in Swiss statistics and research. 'MS' stands for 'mobilité spatiale' (spatial mobility). The MS-regions are based on a 'centre-periphery-approach', so most of the regions exist of a central place where work and services are concentrated and its surroundings. The borders of the regions are determined by looking at commuter traffic data. Only in areas where the largest cities are located there is a different approach: for example, the cities of Zürich and Basel form a region on their own, while their suburban surroundings are in separate regions. In table 7.2, the 10 fastest growing regions and the 10 regions with least growth are mentioned for the periods 1970-1998. The fastest growing regions were geographically strongly concentrated in two regions: at the borders of Lac Léman in the cantons of Vaud and Valais (Nyon, Gros-de-Vaud, Morges/Rolle and Monthey), and in the suburban surroundings of Zürich (all other regions mentioned). The 10 regions showing the most negative population development could be classified in three groups: large cities (Zürich and Basel), regions in the Jura with a concentration of manufacturing activities (La Vallée, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Grenchen, Jura Bernois, Biel.
The fast growth of the regions along the Lac Léman is especially a feature of the 1980s and 1990s, when no less than 6 regions in this area ranged among the ten fastest-growing regions of the country. Already earlier, in the 1970s, the region around Nyon started to grow extremely fast. This region, between the large cities of Genève and Lausanne, could take profit of the combination of being located close to two major employment centres and a very attractive living environment. The same explanation could be given for the neighbouring region of Morges / Rolle. A number of regions in the neighbouring canton of Valais (Monthey, Sion, Sierra, Brig, Visp) is also showing a marked population growth, especially in the 1980s and 1990s. These regions experienced a relatively high natural growth and a low level of out-migration. Other important factors in the growing attractiveness of the Valais regions are probably infrastructure improvements and the growth of tourism. Health and educational services also improved, helped by subsidies for regional development (see section 7.2.4).

Table 7.3
Population development per municipality type, Switzerland, 1970-1998; deviation in % from national growth rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large centres</td>
<td>-13.1</td>
<td>-8.2</td>
<td>-10.1</td>
<td>-31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-sized centres</td>
<td>-7.8</td>
<td>-7.5</td>
<td>-6.3</td>
<td>-23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small centres</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>-7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centres in periphery</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
<td>-9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburbs</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich municipalities</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peri-urban municipalities</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touristic municipalities</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing munic.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural commuter munic.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural mixed munic.</td>
<td>-2.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural municipalities</td>
<td>-10.9</td>
<td>-6.7</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
<td>-22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWITZERLAND</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


An alternative way of analysing population development is to look at trends in categories of municipalities. In the 1980s, a Swiss research group developed a municipality typology based on data of the Census of 1980. This typology has since then been widely used by researchers and government agencies. After the Census of 1990, the typology was slightly changed but the basic structure stayed intact. The municipality types were based on a centre-periphery-model, for which data on commuter traffic and the mobility pattern of students were used. Data on the socio-economic and demographic structure of the municipalities were added. This led to a typology with 22 municipality types (Joye et al, 1988; Schuler, 1994).

In table 7.3, the 22 types are aggregated to 12 groups of municipalities. Especially between 1970 and 1980, it is clear that the large centres and the rural municipalities had by far the most negative population development. Both groups recovered somewhat in the
1980s, showing some modest growth again, but were still the municipality types with the least growth. The modest recovery was followed by a new period of decline for all major cities except Genève in the 1990s. The 1970s were the decade that in general showed the strongest decentralisation trend. The striking feature of Genève’s recent growth is that it is almost exclusively caused by foreign migration, strongly connected to the concentration of international organisations in this city and its border location. At the same time, the canton of Genève had a negative net migration with the rest of Switzerland (Schuler & Joye, 1995). The medium-sized cities also suffered from a quite severe loss of inhabitants in the 1970s, but most of them managed to reverse this trend during the 1980s. Fast growers in this group are Baden, Montreux and Sion. Exceptions to this general growth trend in the 1980s are cities like Biel, Fribourg and Neuchâtel that kept losing inhabitants in the 1980s. As with the large centres, also the medium-sized centres could not maintain this positive development in the 1990s. The small and peripheral centres, however, almost all recorded a renewed population growth in the 1980s and 1990s. Although total Swiss population grew very slowly in the 1970s, the suburban and peri-urban municipalities showed a fierce growth in their number of inhabitants. Because Swiss population was almost non-growing, with both natural growth and foreign migration at a low level, the growth of the suburban and peri-urban population could only be caused by internal migration. These migrants were most probably coming from the centres and the peripheral areas (rural and rural-mixed municipalities).

To conclude this analysis of population dynamics of regions and municipality types, it can be stated that population growth has become more evenly distributed throughout the country and over the different municipality types. As follows from table 7.3, the differences between the fastest growers and the least growing or declining categories were much smaller in the period 1980-1990 than they were in the period 1970-1980, while in the 1990s the differences increased again only slightly. Maps 5 and 6 in the Appendix also demonstrate this tendency of a more equal distribution of growth over the country as well as the widespread recovery of population growth in the 1980s. The map of population growth in the 1970s (Appendix Map 5) is dominated by orange (decline) and yellow (stagnation or modest growth), while the map of the 1980s (Appendix Map 6) shows mainly yellow and green (fast growth). Comparing the two maps, the two concentration areas of population growth around Lac Léman in the southwest and around Zürich and the Zürcher See in the northeast appear as virtually the only areas with fast growth in the 1970s as well as the 1980s. Moreover, in the 1980s these concentration areas seem to have increased in geographic scope. The main locations of population decline, the Jura in the northwest and parts of the Alps in the south and east are also easy to trace.

7.2.3 Possible economic, demographic and socio-cultural explanations for recent Swiss population distribution dynamics

The recent development of Swiss economy shows many parallels with the Dutch trends discussed in section 6.3. Figure 7.3 shows the development of the Swiss real gross domestic product (GDP) between 1970 and 1995 as an indicator for economic growth and decline. The development of the real GDP between 1970 and 1990 almost follows the same pattern as that of the Netherlands. The only clear difference is that the depression in the second half of the 1970s was more extreme in Switzerland than in the Netherlands. While the Dutch economy stagnated shortly in the mid-1970s and started growing again before 1980, the Swiss economy suffered from several years of decline. However, in the
1980s economic recovery was quite spectacular, especially after 1985. In contrast to the Netherlands, where a short period of stagnation in the early 1990s was followed by a rapid recovery, the Swiss economy landed in a new depression period, though much less severe than in the late 1970s.

Figure 7.3
Development of real gross domestic product, Switzerland, 1970-1995 (yearly average growth per 5-year period, %)

Source: OECD Historical Statistics.

To what extent does this economic development correspond with the trend in suburban and rural growth? In Chapter 2, the hypothesis was raised that sub-urbanisation intensifies when economic growth is accelerating and that sub-urbanisation slows down or stops during a period of economic stagnation or decline. This hypothesis was tested for the case of the Netherlands in section 6.3 and seemed to hold for at least the 1970s, when suburban population growth (as an indicator for sub-urbanisation) slowed down parallel to the economic downturn following the 1973 oil crisis. In Figure 7.4, the hypothesis is tested for the case of Switzerland. The population growth in suburban and rural municipalities (a combination of all municipality categories except the centres from Table 7.3) is shown, together with the growth of the real gross domestic product (see also Figure 7.3). Although the differences in time periods in the two sources of data complicate the comparison of trends, the hypothesis seems to be supported by the data, most of all in the 1980s. Throughout the entire period between 1970 and 1998, suburban and rural population growth was rather fast, but it accelerated in the 1980s. This coincided with a decade of accelerating economic growth in Switzerland. The subsequent economic crisis in the early 1990s coincided with a slowdown of suburban and rural population growth. Still, in the 1990s as well as in the 1970s, suburban and rural growth was well above population growth of the cities as well as of Switzerland as a whole, which casts some doubt on the validity of the hypothesis for the Swiss case.

Considering the recent dynamics in economic structure, a first important remark is that the Swiss economy was dominated by manufacturing activities for a long time, at least until the start of the research period in 1970. Switzerland has a strong tradition in several forms of manufacturing. The country is internationally known for its chemical, machinery and watch industry. But like all Western European countries, Switzerland went through a process of economic restructuring in the 1970s and 1980s, in which the secondary sector lost its leading position in the national economy to the tertiary sector. In 1968,
manufacturing still accounted for 47% of Swiss employment, but in 1995, this share had fallen to 29%. Meanwhile, the tertiary and quaternary sector together increased their share of total employment from 44% to 67% (see Table 7.4).

Figure 7.4
Economic growth and suburban / rural population growth, Switzerland, 1970-1998

Especially the largest cities specialised strongly in producer services, with a prominent role for financial services. Leaders in this respect are the large cities Zürich, Basel and Genève, but also the regional centre of Lugano in Ticino. Lugano, as well as the whole canton of Ticino, has recently developed itself from a peripheral location to an important node halfway between the metropolitan centres of Zürich and Milan (Schuler & Joye, 1995). This development is largely connected to recent infrastructural improvements like the motorway and railway tunnels through the Alps from several directions. Other fast growers in the large and medium-sized cities were research & development, real estate, advisory agencies, and social services. A phenomenon quite typical for Switzerland is the strong growth of personnel services. This growth is largely caused by tourism and connected services, like retail, hotels, restaurants and travel agencies. In contrast to the producer services, the personnel services are growing the fastest at the outskirts of the large cities and in some Alpine towns (Cunha & Racine, 1997).

Although manufacturing has undoubtedly lost much of its importance to the Swiss economy, it is still relatively strongly represented compared to other European countries. Only Austria and Germany had a higher proportion of their working population employed in manufacturing in 1990, according to OECD-data. Several Swiss companies are still among the world leaders in their branch; examples are Novartis and Roche in the chemical industry, Nestlé in food and beverage and Alusuisse in metal industry. A large part of the work force of these huge manufacturing companies is working outside of Switzerland. But as long as the headquarters and main plants of these manufacturing companies stay in Switzerland, they make a huge contribution to Swiss national income. A further de-industrialisation of the country is to be expected in the near future, when competition from Eastern European countries will probably increase. The Swiss
manufacturing sector will have trouble in this competition because of the very high income level of its personnel (Wachter, 1997).

Table 7.4
Share of economic sectors in total employment (in %), Switzerland, 1968-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaternary</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD (1997), Historical Statistics.

Cunha & Racine (1997) have analysed the Swiss settlement system with respect to 5 components expressing the 'socio-economic strength' of places and regions. Among these components were the concentration of the dominant classes according to income, education and profession; the proportion of manufacturing and service activities in the local economy; and the proportion of skilled and unskilled personnel. Their results showed striking differences between the language regions. In almost all respects, the German-speaking part appeared to be the strongest socio-economic part of the country. A strong concentration of wealth could be found in the canton of Zürich, especially in the Zürich agglomeration, but also other parts of the German-speaking region were relatively wealthy. In the French-speaking part, some very wealthy regions appeared (with Genève even being the highest-scoring city in the country), but they contrasted to relatively poor areas. Wealth and work were heavily concentrated in the large cities and their surroundings. The Italian-speaking part shows the same pattern of wealth distribution, but as a whole is the poorest part of the country. On a national level, the largest cities clearly take the lead on all the analysed factors. This points to an enduring strength of the traditional centre-periphery pattern in the Swiss economy. An analysis of the most recent Census data on socio-economic population categories confirms this conclusion (Joye & Schuler, 1995). It appears that groups like managers, high-ranked officials and highly educated workers are still mainly concentrated in or close to the largest urban centres.

Turning to demographic factors influencing Swiss population redistribution, first the recent trends in natural growth should be mentioned. Following a period with a rapidly rising birth rate in the first half of the 1960s, the Swiss birth rate sank to a record low around 1980. The reasons for the steep decline in natural growth are familiar in most European countries: the growing participation of women on the labour market, accompanied by changes in attitudes towards the traditional 'automatism' of having children, the rising costs of raising children (education, medical care, etc.), and a shift in societal norms from large to small families (Wachter, 1997). With respect to the factor of rising costs of raising children, the economic crisis of the 1970s will undoubtedly have added to a trend of having less children. The declining birth rate is also expressed in the changing household composition of the Swiss population between 1970 and 1990, with a rapid rise of one- and two-person households at the expense of larger (family) households (table 7.5). This trend of a declining birth rate was accompanied by a continuous rise of life expectancy. Progress in Swiss health care has resulted in numerous successes in the battle against deadly diseases. People on average get much older now than they did some decades ago. Swiss life expectancy ranks amongst the highest in Europe and the world. Both trends lead to a 'greying' of the Swiss population. The possible effects of these
demographic developments on the population distribution throughout the country are not clear yet.

**Table 7.5**
Share of household size types in the Swiss population, 1970-1990 (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 persons</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 persons</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 persons</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 persons or more</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In Chapter 2, a hypothetical link was proposed between three processes manifesting themselves in Northwest-Europe in recent decades: the recovery of urban population growth in the 1980s, the shift from a manufacturing-oriented to a service-oriented economy, and the continuous increase of the share of one- and two-person households in the population since the 1960s. The possible interrelatedness of these three processes were analysed for the Netherlands in section 6.4 (Figure 6.3). The trend lines for the growing share of service jobs and the growing share of small households indeed suggested an explanation for the recovery of urban population growth in the Netherlands after 1985. How does this explanation apply to the Swiss situation? Figure 7.5 shows the development of urban population growth (derived from the growth rates of the municipal category ‘centres’ of table 7.3), the share of service jobs (the sum of the share of tertiary and quaternary sector jobs from table 7.4) and the share of one- and two-person households (table 7.5).

Unfortunately, data on household size after 1990 were not yet available, since these are based on the results of the 10-year Census and the results of the 2000 census will only be published after this book is finished. The rapid increase of both the share of service sector jobs and the share of one- and two-person households between 1970 and 1990 coincided with a spectacular recovery of urban population growth in the 1980s. This could imply that, with a certain time lag, the recovery of urban population was indeed linked to these economic and socio-demographic trends. However, the return of urban population loss after 1990 could not be explained through this complex of factors. As the share of service sector jobs kept increasing, the expectation would be that the urban population would keep growing as well, but this was clearly not the case.

It might be that service sector jobs in Switzerland have become less concentrated in cities and that the most recent growth of service sector jobs predominantly took place outside of the cities. This might also have had consequences for the migration patterns of the one- and two-person households, a large part of which exists of singles and two-earner households working in service jobs. Considering the increasing importance of tourism and tourism-related activities (which is a much more important part of the Swiss economy than of the Dutch) this seems a plausible explanation for the difference between the Swiss and Dutch trends. An alternative explanation could be that Swiss housing preferences are more suburban and/or rural than Dutch housing preferences, and that the rise of the urban population in the 1980s was only an exception to a long-term trend of deconcentration of
Figure 7.5
Development of the share of service sector jobs, the share of one- and two-person households, and urban population growth in the Switzerland, 1968-1998

Based on data of tables 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5.
Left axis: percentage scale for share of 1- and 2-p. households and service sector jobs.
Right axis: percentage scale for urban population growth.
Sources: OECD (1997), Historical Statistics; Wachter, 1997; IREC / Swiss Bureau of Statistics.

the Swiss population while in the Dutch case the urban recovery seemed to have a more structural character. A third factor that was possibly of influence was the different orientation of Dutch and Swiss national urbanisation policies in the 1990s: while the Dutch planners tried to develop the settlement system according to a compact building philosophy, the Swiss federal government was somewhere in-between a compact city and a network city approach and undertook less actions against urban sprawl (see section 7.2.4 for further discussion). However, since the Dutch compact city policy only started to be actually applied in the late 1990s and its eventual effectiveness tends to be doubted seriously (see section 6.6), the planning policy factor was probably less influential than the other explanatory factors proposed above.

With natural growth contributing only marginally, Swiss population growth since 1970 has largely been determined by foreign migration. In the 1970s, foreign migration reached a very low level, which was mainly due to the economic crisis of that decade. Added to the effect of economic recession, several civilian groups launched 'initiatives' to stop or diminish the inflow of foreign migrants to Switzerland. These initiatives (one of the possibilities of civilians to directly influence the country's politics) didn't reach a majority of votes, but led to government measures to limit foreign migration. In the second half of the 1980s, however, foreign migration rose considerably again. In the 1960s and 1970s migration was strongly connected to a labour market shortage. Migrants were mostly 'guest workers', destined to return to their home countries after a while. But a large part of them decided to stay on a permanent basis. During the 1980s, this led to an increasing migration of family members of the former guest workers (family reunification). The
largest contribution to foreign migration, however, consisted of seasonal labour migrants. The flow of asylum seekers and refugees also grew considerably during the 1980s and continued to do so in the 1990s.

**Table 7.6**

In-migration, out-migration and net in-migration, Switzerland, 1970-1995 (yearly averages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Immigration, yearly average (x 1000)</th>
<th>Emigration, yearly average (x 1000)</th>
<th>Net immigration (yearly average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971-1975</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>- 5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-1980</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>- 12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1985</td>
<td>105.6</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-1990</td>
<td>125.9</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1993</td>
<td>155.5</td>
<td>108.4</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Meanwhile, the proportion of people of foreign origin in the total Swiss population has risen steadily. Between 1980 and 1990, it rose from 14.8% to 18.1% (Schuler & Joye, 1995). This is a high proportion for European standards: the average in European Union countries in 1994 was just 4.7% (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 1997). The geographical distribution of foreigners shows the strong concentrations in large cities and their regions known of most European countries. The only exception to this is the federal capital of Bern, with a proportion of foreigners well below the national average. Other regions with relatively high concentrations of foreigners are tourist regions and border regions (Schuler et al, 1997). The huge regional differences in the proportion of foreigners are actually quite astonishing, when Swiss federal policy is considered: each year, foreigners that are granted a stay in Switzerland are distributed over the cantons in relation to their total population (Schuler & Joye, 1995). An exceptional case is the urban region of Genève. The location of several international institutions in Genève has led to a huge concentration of foreigners in this city and its surroundings. Added to this is the fact that the city is directly on the French border. The agglomeration of Genève includes not only Swiss, but also French territory, and has a lot of daily transnational commuting as well as border-crossing migration movements. The same is true for Basel-Stadt, Basel-Landschaft, and Ticino, and to a lesser extent also for all other cantons with international borders.

Looking at differences in population dynamics between regions and municipality types, the 1980s and early 1990s showed a trend of continuously declining differences in population growth between regions and municipalities, mentioned earlier in section 7.2.2.2. This is largely due to changes in internal migration patterns. Schuler (1996) divided the 106 MS-regions (see also section 7.2.2.2) in 7 groups: large centres and surroundings, medium-sized centres, small centres, tourist regions, industrial periphery, agricultural-industrial periphery and agricultural periphery. In the 1960s, the overall migration pattern could still be characterised as a net movement from peripheral to central regions. In the 1980s, this pattern was reversed: the large centres and their surroundings now lost population to the periphery. During the 1980s and early 1990s, net migration of the 7 region types came very close to each other, so that population distribution throughout Switzerland seems to be stabilising. Added to this, a decrease in migration on
all spatial levels could be recorded: inter-municipal migration decreased with 4 % between 1965 and 1990, and migration between MS-regions even with 18%. Explanations for this downward trend of long-distance migration can be found in:

- The increasing participation of women on the labour market, which also increased the proportion of two-earner households. Two-earner households tend to participate less in long-distance migration, because this involves looking for two new jobs, instead of one in the traditional one-earner household.
- Longer educational careers of young people, in combination with a more decentralised educational system, has contributed to postponing the leave of the parental house for a part of the students, and migration within the region of birth (instead of leaving to large cities) for another part of them.
- The increasing availability of the private car, which makes longer commuter distances possible. This caused the disappearance of the traditional automatism of having to migrate when the work address changes. It also contributed to a decline of the part of Switzerland that could be called 'periphery'.

7.2.4 Government measures in physical planning and regional development

7.2.4.1 Historical development of Swiss physical planning

Most cantons have already known their own laws concerning physical planning for quite some time. Only in 1980, the parliament approved of a federal law on physical planning. This doesn't mean that before 1980, federal government was not active in the field of physical planning. Already in the 19th century, one could speak of a certain form of physical planning. The planning of these days was mainly serving industrialisation, infrastructure development and the creation of an internal market (only in 1848, Switzerland had become a unitary state; until then, economic transactions mainly took place on the level of the cantons). Other important issues were the control of natural hazards like floods, erosion and avalanches, and the development of hydropower plants. On the field of infrastructure, the extension of the national and international railway network and the construction of Alp transit routes were the top priorities (Lendi, 1996).

At the start of the 20th century, physical planning became more directed to the built environment. Especially the larger cities became active in physical planning. Along with a series of annexations of neighbouring communities, the first metropolitan planning concepts came into being. Also the first plans for Switzerland as a whole were launched. These took the shape of large-scale zoning plans. In the 1930s crisis period and the following war period, planning was for a while coupled to labour projects. The accent was shifted to self-sufficiency of communities, regions and the land as a whole (a 'neutral island' surrounded by states involved in World War II). During World War II, a start was made with a more extensive physical planning program. A central figure in this time was Armin Meili, who could be called 'the father of Swiss physical planning'. He set the stage for the further development of Swiss federal and cantonal urbanisation policy with his strongly anti-metropolitan stance. Instead of the development of one or a few big metropolitan centres in Switzerland, he preferred the integration of most of the Mittelland into a low-density urban network. With this viewpoint, Meili expressed the feelings of the majority of the Swiss population, which is often claimed to have a 'village mentality' (Rumley et al, 2000). In several cantons, physical planning became a more specialised activity; for example, in 1942 the canton of Zürich opened an office for regional planning (Degen, 1999). In the 1950s, some large-scale infrastructure projects were planned.
amongst which a network of 'Nationalstrassen' (national roads). The federal office of waterways and road construction played a major role in physical planning in this period. However, despite the growing influence of regional and federal governments, most planning activities (related to housing, increasing regional service levels, etc.) were still the responsibility of the municipalities, often in cooperation with neighbouring municipalities in the so-called 'Zweckverbände' (goal-specific cooperations).

In the late 1960s, a new planning philosophy emerged. Governments on local, cantonal and national levels were increasingly aiming to limit building activities in 'open' areas. The main reason for this was nature and landscape conservation. A strong lobby for stimulation of house-building production clashed with this philosophy of building restrictions in open areas. To meet both demands, planners aimed at building in and around existing cities and villages as much as possible. The explosive growth of land use of both housing and economic activities in the 1960s was behind attempts to strengthen the influence of physical planning on all government levels. Most of the cantons introduced new laws on building and planning around 1970. Although they differed considerably between cantons, Lendi (1996) sums up a number of goals that these new planning and building laws had in common: a separation between a land market of built-up zones and one of agricultural and natural zones; the coordination of locations of housing, economic activities and services; attempts to promote public transport; and the importance of an efficient use of available land.

A change in the civil code in 1969 forms the basis of the contemporary Swiss planning system. Federal government was obliged to draw guidelines, functioning as a framework within which cantons had to work out a more detailed physical planning. The planning activities of the cantons were to be directed to a functional use of land and an orderly distribution of settlements. Groenewoud and Hermans (1980) point to the unusual fact that with this, the main goals of planning policy were directly expressed in the civil code. Another striking feature is that according to this law text, population distribution has to be planned and ordered by the planners of the canton. This goal is even worked out more in detail: "(...) auf eine angemessene Dezentralisation der Besiedlung und der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung hin zu wirken" ('to aim for a fair amount of decentralisation of the built environment and economic development') (Groenewoud & Hermans, 1980, p. 17). With this text, the leading planning concept of federal and cantonal policy since the 1970s was introduced: the concept of 'centralised decentralisation'. With this paradoxical term, two planning goals were united in one policy: decentralisation to prevent the largest urban centres from becoming too large and dominant; and concentration of this decentralisation in a few selected regional centres, to prevent open areas from losing their openness to an unlimited sub-urbanisation. The policy intentions of the Swiss government in this period were very comparable to the planning policy of 'concentrated deconcentration' in the Netherlands. Furthermore, in the same law text, the importance of preserving natural landscapes is stressed, in the very clear formulation: "Die Landschaft ist zu schonen" ('the landscape should be spared') (Groenewoud & Hermans, 1980, p.17).

The first serious attempt of the federal planners to design a national planning strategy was launched in 1973. A working group of high officials of all federal ministries (the 'Chefbeamtenkonferenz') was asked to compose an overview of a possible spatial development of Switzerland in which all federal policy interests were balanced together with the investments needed to realise that spatial development. This working group attempted to translate the so far rather vague concept of 'centralised decentralisation' into
a set of practical planning measures. Its main result was a hierarchy of Swiss centres according their level of function provision, clearly inspired by Christaller's central place model (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, the working group advised to stimulate a replacement of economic wealth from the major urban regions towards the rest of the country through the development of regional centres, especially in the most peripheral parts of Switzerland. The report of the working group initially caused quite some commotion and discussion. However, eventually it did not lead to any concrete federal planning action. The federal government wanted to use the proposed model of centralised decentralisation for the further spatial development of Switzerland, in combination with a new federal law on physical planning. This plan was blocked by a referendum in 1976, in which a small majority of voters rejected the new law on physical planning and with that, also the implementation of the model of centralised decentralisation. A major reason for this rejection was the fear of cantons, businesses and civilians of an increasing influence of the federal state on economic activities and daily life (Rotach, 1999).

As mentioned earlier, in 1980 a federal law on physical planning was introduced after all, in which the philosophy expressed earlier in the 1969 change of the civil code and the plans of the 'Chefbeamtenkonferenz' were worked out in more detail. The law obliged the federal government to make guidelines for physical planning and update these guidelines regularly. Also, federal government is supposed to coordinate planning actions of the cantons. The cantons each make their own planning and building laws and zoning plans. The plans of the cantons are the most important in the Swiss planning system: they are legally binding for all municipalities within the cantons. The cantonal plans have to be approved of by federal government. The municipalities have to make detailed land use plans for their territory. In some cases, if municipalities are too small to do this by themselves, it is also possible to work together in this with neighbouring municipalities. In large parts of Switzerland, planning regions were established to coordinate municipal planning activities on a regional level.

It is important to note that it was not only this federal law on physical planning that was introduced very late compared to most other European countries. The cantons were also quite powerless in Swiss planning for a long time. In the canton of Zürich, for example, the first cantonal plan could only be adopted in 1978 and the first plans for sub-regions of the canton were approved of as late as 1982 (Degen, 1999). Considering the explosive growth of rural and suburban municipalities in Switzerland in the 1970s (see section 7.2.2.2), these first attempts of cantons to reach an orderly development of the regional settlement system were far too late to prevent a huge loss of open land to suburbanisation. In the 1970s, the choices between population growth and protecting open landscapes were mainly taken on the municipal level, and apparently in many cases the municipalities preferred population (and economic) growth. Moreover, the newly built houses were generally spread out across the municipality's surface to a high extent. According to Degen (1999), it was not until the 1990s that cantonal and federal government took concrete measures to prevent further population sprawl. Until then, municipalities mainly built according to the wishes of the majority of the Swiss: one-family houses on spacious plots in rural areas. While the division between building and non-building land might seem a potentially very powerful planning instrument, municipalities tended to draw the boundaries of the building land so sparsely around the already existing built-up area that deconcentration was in many cases encouraged instead of prevented. Alternative possibilities like row houses or detached houses at shorter
distances suffered from a highly unpopular image for a long time, and only became more fashionable around 1990.

On the federal level, the most important recent product is the document 'Grundzüge der Raumordnung Schweiz' (basic principles of Swiss physical planning), published in 1996. In this document, four planning strategies are launched:

- Rearrangement of urban space: the strengthening of the coherence of the Swiss urban system to a network of cities, improving the built environment and the economy of the cities, and limiting the extension of agglomerations.
- Improvement of the situation of agricultural areas: central issues here are protection of cultural landscapes, stimulating ecology-friendly tourism, and stimulating the development of regional centres.
- Nature protection: keeping open areas as open as possible, protection of ecological systems, and attempts to reintroduce diversity in land use.
- Integration of Switzerland in Europe: more cooperation in border regions and contributions to European planning activities. Related to this strategy, and to the one of the network of cities, is the idea that Swiss urban regions are too small individually to be able to compete within the European urban system. A combination of the main urban centres of the country and their surroundings, sometimes referred to as 'die Stadt Schweiz' (the Swiss City), would make much more chance in this competition (Bundesamt für Raumplanung, 1996).

These four strategies lead to a central planning philosophy that is aiming at a network system of urban, agricultural and natural spaces, a spatial development that makes a sustainable economic development possible, and a 'compact city'-building philosophy which seems to resemble recent planning policy in several other European countries, like the Netherlands.

7.2.4.2 Regional economic policy

Since its existence as a federal state, Switzerland has always been concerned with reducing regional differences in wealth and income as much as possible. One of the instruments to reach this goal is the 'Finanzausgleich'. The federal government redistributes money via a diverse set of instruments that include mechanisms of graduated subventions and differentiation in infrastructure improvements. In the 1970s, however, the federal government added a regional program to channel subsidy money more to the areas that needed it most. At first, these were exclusively peripheral mountainous areas. These areas suffered of continuous population losses, mainly caused by a shortage of employment opportunities. In 1974, the 'Investitionshilfe für Berggebiete' (IHG) was introduced. The federal government offered to subsidise investments in commercial and social services to a maximum of 25% of the investment costs. This subsidy was only available in a group of selected regions. The IHG was further extended with several arrangements for specific economic branches, like subsidies for renovation of hotels and credits for small companies in the IHG-areas. As a reaction to the economic crisis after 1973, additional arrangements were made for 'economically threatened regions', which were mostly regions with a heavy concentration of manufacturing. These regions were confronted with massive employment losses because of rationalisation of manufacturing companies and closure of branch plants.
The various instruments to stimulate economic development of (semi-) peripheral regions have led to some positive results: they contributed to more cooperation between municipalities within the IHG-regions and to major improvements in the service level of peripheral communities. However, another goal of regional policy, to bring about a growth of employment and wealth in the IHG-regions, was not reached. After 20 years of government subsidies, a large part of the IHG-regions was still markedly less wealthy than the more centrally located areas. The regions that seemed to profit the most from the regional development policy were 'semi-peripheral' regions located relatively close to the economic core areas. They came into reach of commuters working in the large cities and their surroundings and became more attractive for them as a living environment because of the increased service level and better accessibility. The most peripheral regions, for which the policy was actually meant, did not see much improvement in their situation (Messerli, 1996).

Regional economic policy can also be considered to work contrary to the goals of physical planning. While Swiss physical planning is organised around the concept of limiting the extension of agglomeration areas, regional policy seems to have stimulated the incorporation of semi-peripheral regions into these agglomerations. The further extension of agglomeration areas has contributed to an increase of commuter traffic, mostly by private car. The incorporation of mountain area settlements in agglomerations also meant a loss of natural land to housing and infrastructure. Because of this and a number of other reasons, regional policy was recently restructured. Stimulating innovative economic activities in the peripheral regions is now stressed more, while there is less federal government involvement in improving the service structure.

7.2.4.3 Physical planning on a regional level

As mentioned before, the cantons form the most influential government level in Swiss physical planning, but this situation only came into being in the late 1970s. The strategies of the cantons all have to be within the margins set by the federal guidelines, but this still leaves space for quite some differences in planning between the cantons. In the following, two examples of cantonal planning are presented to give an impression of the way cantons are trying to influence the development of their settlement systems.

The 'Raumplanungsbericht' of the canton of Bern, published in 1994, announced the following main goals for physical planning in the near future (Amt für Gemeinden und Raumordnung, 1994):

- 'concentrated deconcentration' as the central planning concept. This means stimulating the further development of the main centre Bern (Figure 7.6), the medium-sized centres Biel and Thun, but also the regional centres in the peripheral areas;
- coordination of building projects and traffic infrastructure, with a concentration of new housing, economic activities and recreational facilities around hubs of public transport;
- protection of natural landscape; 'ecologically sound' further development of the settlement system.

These goals were worked out earlier in three planning programs for public transport, economic development and housing. First, the development of public transport was outlined in the 'Bericht Berner S-Bahn / Siedlung' of 1992. The main goal of this program was to optimise the use of the Berner S-Bahn. The already existing regional train
connections were to be extended to an integrated network that served all main centres and most of the suburban communities in the region around Bern every half hour. The S-Bahn should then be able to be a serious opponent to the private car in the Bern region. Added to this are several attempts to improve the position of Bern in the international train network, for example the introduction of high-speed trains between Basel and Milan. Transfers between the regional and (inter) national train lines were to be stimulated (Meier, 1992; Regierungsrat, 1992). Indirectly, the promotion of public transport via the upgrading of the S-Bahn network should contribute to a decentralised settlement pattern with ‘Schwerpunkte’ (concentrations of population and economy). This is also combined with the regional development policy of (semi-) peripheral mountain areas. Better connections between the periphery and the large and medium-sized centres could put a stop to the continuous losses of population and economic activities in the mountainous periphery, and offer an alternative means of transportation able to compete with the private car.

With the second project 'Wirtschaftliche Entwicklungsschwerpunkte', the canton of Bern aimed at overall improvement of the regional economy to survive in national and international economic competition. Positive aspects of the canton like the central position within Switzerland and Europe, the presence of a highly educated work force, a large array of producer services and an attractive living and working environment should offer possibilities to attract companies to Bern and other central places in the canton. The additional labour should be concentrated around hubs of public transport, while the increase of motorized traffic should be limited as much as possible. The third project, 'Wohnstandorte', should solve the shortage of investors in the housing sector. The cantonal government has granted subsidies to produce large amounts of low-price housing in the regional centres. For investors willing to be active in housing projects in the regional centres, some of the legislation is relaxed and procedures are accelerated.

Contrary to the recent planning actions in Bern, the planning of the canton of Vaud does not show much concrete measures to be taken to influence the development of its settlement system. The overall impression of the ‘plan directeur cantonal’, outlining the main aims of cantonal planning (Canton de Vaud, 1987) is that most planning goals of the
Swiss federal government are translated to the cantonal level. The main concepts are strengthening of the regional centres and concentrated deconcentration of people, work and services. Like the federal government, the canton of Vaud considers a too dominant position of the large centres (in this case especially Lausanne) dangerous for the overall development of the canton. Because of this and because of attempts to upgrade the socio-economic position of relatively backward regions, new economic activities are specifically promoted in regional centres. However, where the canton of Bern seems to take the lead in promoting the realisation of compact building and sustainable regional development, the canton of Vaud leaves the initiative to the lower regional level, in the planning regions. However, the rapid growth of the MS-regions and municipalities around Lac Léman shown in Table 7.2 and Map 5 and 6 in the Appendix would suggest that the planning regions either did not discourage population growth between the large cities Lausanne and Genève, or were not very successful in it. In this respect, Rumley (1999) comments that recent cantonal planning in French-speaking Switzerland gave very little priority to the spatial pattern of urbanisation. Instead, the plans pay most attention to land use, protection of agricultural land and regional economic development. Moreover, the plans of the sub-cantonal planning regions are generally only indicative and put together by government officials not educated as professional planners, while the physical planning of the major cities is more local (municipal) than regional in character and does not recognise the reality of agglomeration formation. Nevertheless, Rumley (1999) also witnesses a recent upsurge of attention for urban and urbanisation problems brought about by the federal planning guidelines of 1996 and research into the process of ‘métropolisation’ (Bassand, 1997).

**Figure 7.7**
The protected landscape of Lavaux

A special concern in the canton of Vaud is the protection of the natural and cultural landscape around of the Lac Léman. In this respect, an exception to the negative conclusion above should be made for the region of Lavaux, which forms a successful example of landscape protection (Figure 7.7). The region is situated between the agglomerations of Lausanne and Vevey/Montreux. It threatened to become heavily urbanised in the 1970s. The characteristic landscape of the region, with small villages surrounded by vineyards along the mountain slopes, was under pressure. An initiative by ecological activists in 1977 (‘sauver Lavaux’) got a majority vote of the cantonal
population. As a result, in 1979, the canton of Vaud issued a law on the protection of the Lavaux landscape. The region should keep its agricultural character and the natural as well as the built environment were to be protected as much as possible. The region of Lavaux was also seen as a buffer between the urbanized regions of Lausanne and Vevey/Montreux (Département des travaux publics, 1993). The law had as a consequence that in the 1980s and 1990s, building activities in the region were very limited.

**7.2.5 The future: Swiss metropolises or 'die Stadt Schweiz'?**

Since the end of the 1980s, several Swiss authors mentioned a new phase in the urbanisation process. They labeled it 'métropolisation' (Bassand, 1997). Some researchers even foresaw the development of an 'urban field' that would include all of Switzerland, or at least the complete Mittelland area. Boesch (1996) represents this group with his statement that the Swiss Mittelland has become one physical and functional whole. He describes the area as 'garden city' of some 5 million inhabitants with a strong and internationally competitive economy. His vision seems to be well in line with the ideas of the federal government about the development of one functionally integrated 'Swiss city' in the Mittelland. A recent study of the Swiss urban system arrived at a comparable conclusion: according to Rumley et al (2000), the Swiss settlement system already functions as a functionally integrated urban system.

Others stuck to a somewhat more modest scale and pointed at two metropolises in the making. The first is the 'Métropole Lémanique', the region around the Lac Léman, with the urban regions of Genève, Lausanne, Vevey/Montreux and their surroundings. The urban regions along the lakeside are rapidly growing towards each other and are likely to become one urbanised whole in the near future (Leresche & Joye, 1995). Figure 7.8, showing the harbour of Ouchy with Lausanne in the background, makes clear what the major attraction factor to this region is: the cities and villages around Lac Léman are directly on the lakeside and have mountains nearby at the same time. Moreover, the region is well integrated in both the national and the international rail and road network and offers major employment concentrations in Genève and Lausanne.

The other potential metropolis is the Zürich region. The city of Zürich is already physically linked to a number of suburban communities around the Zürichsee and to the northeast in the direction of Winterthur. The local train network (S-Bahn) is serving an area extending about 25 kilometres from the city centre in all directions. The statistical metropolitan area of Zürich, based on intensity of commuter traffic, included almost the complete canton of Zürich and parts of Aargau, Thurgau, Zug and Schwyz in 1990, and the area continues to expand (Schuler et al, 1997).

Both in the Zürich region and the Lac Léman region, several functions on a national, international and even global level are located that can contribute to the growth of a truly metropolitan area. Cunha & Racine (1997) point at a third candidate-metropolis: the transnational urban region of Basel, Freiburg and Mulhouse. Already in 1980, Hall & Hay indicated a large part of the Swiss Mittelland as part of metropolitan regions. The Lac Léman area was considered as a part of a metropolitan area, stretching out across the French border to Grenoble and Lyon. The urban regions of Basel, Bern and Zürich were part of a metropolitan region together with Southern Germany (Stuttgart, München, Freiburg etc.). With these suggested metropolitan areas, Hall and Hay thought even more large-scale than the Swiss themselves. This might be way too far-fetched, but if the strong
tendency of population deconcentration will continue in Switzerland for some more
decades, the development of a nationwide functionally integrated urban region is a much
more realistic option in Switzerland than it is in the Netherlands.

Figure 7.8
Ouchy and Lausanne: part of the 'Métropole Lémanique'?

7.2.6 Concluding remarks

In the last few decades, the Swiss settlement system seems to have developed in a way
very comparable to that of the Netherlands. Both countries experienced a strong sub-
urbanisation process in the 1970s, followed by a modest recovery of the large and
medium-sized central cities in the 1980s. This recovery of the cities does not seem to
point at a 'back to the city'-movement, but (especially in the largest cities) is mainly
carried by an increase of foreign migration. In the meantime, the suburban and peri-urban
communities kept growing fast and the semi-peripheral rural areas showed a markedly
more positive population development in the 1980s than in the 1970s. Trends in the 1980s
and early 1990s seem to point at a more even distribution of population growth
throughout the country and in all municipality types, even though after 1990, the large
and medium-sized cities fell back from zero growth to decline once more and the
peripheral rural communities kept growing at a much lower pace than sub-urban and peri-
urban communities.

Metropolitan regions have continuously expanded between 1970 and 1990 and kept
expanding in the 1990s. Connected to this trend is the shrinking of the area that could be
called periphery. Large parts of the Jura and Alp landscapes are now integrated in the
agglomerations and metropolitan areas of large and medium-sized cities. Apart from this,
some agglomerations have grown towards each other and combined to polycentric urban
regions. Some observers even go as far as claiming that the Swiss Mittelland has become
one urbanised whole, the 'Swiss city'. This might be true when one looks at built-up areas,
but looking at functional coherence, the Swiss Mittelland still consists of a number of
agglomerations functioning quite independent from each other. The suggestion that the
regions around Zürich and Lac Léman are rapidly developing towards functionally integrated metropolitan regions, however, seems much more realistic on the short term. On the somewhat longer term, it might still be relevant to expect a further integration of the agglomerations of the Mittelland into one Swiss urban network. The recent exploratory study of the Swiss settlement and agglomeration hierarchy by Rumley et al (2000) gave some clear indications for a development in this direction.

The explanatory factors of recent changes in the Swiss settlement pattern are for a large part the same as they are in most Northwest-European countries. Changes in the regional, national and international economic structure, and changes in demographic and socio-cultural aspects of the Swiss population are reflected in changed migration patterns that in turn result in changes in the settlement structure. Concerning economic restructuring, it might be that de-industrialisation hit Switzerland harder than other European countries, for example the Netherlands, because Swiss economy was much more dominated by manufacturing than that of other Northwest-European countries. Added to this, manufacturing activity was in several branches geographically strongly concentrated. Regions like the Jura and Northeast-Switzerland, with concentrations of branches that were hit the hardest by economic restructuring, suffered a severe economic crisis in the 1970s. These regions recovered somewhat in the 1980s, amongst others helped by the regional economic policy of the federal government. However, especially the Jura region kept lagging behind in terms of population growth and economic development.

The federal government influence on population distribution appears to have been quite strong in the last few decades. However, this federal influence largely came from other policies than physical planning policy. The most influential part of government policy was the regional economic policy, existing of a diverse set of instruments aimed at redistribution of national income from rich to poor cantons and regions. In the 1970s, specific programs to stimulate the economic development of peripheral mountain regions and regions with a declining manufacturing sector were added to this general income redistribution program. In the end, these programs did improve the attractiveness of semi-peripheral regions, but apparently could not change much in the situation of the most peripheral regions. Federal physical planning seems to have increased its ambitions recently with the publication of the 'Grundzüge' in 1996. Central issues in this document, and in federal planning in general, are improvement of the strength of Swiss cities in the international economic competition, building in and directly around cities as much as possible, and protection of the natural environment. The first goal might be hard to combine with the other two planning goals. Apart from that, as ambitious as the 'Grundzüge' appear on paper, the actual results are very dependent on the willingness of the cantons to follow this federal policy. The Swiss political system gives a key position to the cantons in physical planning. The federal state has no legal instruments to force the cantons to follow the physical planning guidelines. The cantons can, within certain margins, decide about their own planning strategy, which could in the end be quite different from the federal one. The approach of the canton of Bern, in line with the ideas of federal planners and with concrete measures to reach urban extensions directly around existing centres and public transport nodes, promises a compact city development and a more prominent role for public transport in the near future. Other cantons, however, appear to be less concerned about the future of their settlement system. The example of the canton of Vaud illustrated that urban sprawl is not considered as an unwanted development everywhere in Switzerland. Moreover, also at the federal level coordination of policies with spatial effects was long absent. The regional economic policy, for
example, had the counterproductive effect that daily urban systems increased because parts of the semi-periphery became within reach of the large and medium-sized cities through infrastructure improvements. Meanwhile, federal physical planning tried to put a stop to urban sprawl but was hindered in this ambition by regional economic policy. In the late 1990s, at least this problem of coordination on the federal level seems solved: the most recent federal planning initiatives demonstrate an integrated approach to spatial developments instead of competing programmes of several departments. Still, the problem of the weak position of the federal government vis-à-vis the cantons remains. Without the strong national government level known in countries like the Netherlands, it will be difficult to reach a real national urbanisation policy in Switzerland.
7.3 Case study West-Sweden

7.3.1 Introduction

Sweden as a whole is a very large and sparsely populated country, and for this reason it is not comparable to the Netherlands on the topic of population distribution. The rough mountainous periphery in the north against the border with Norway forms almost the counterpart to the densely populated areas we are used to in the Netherlands. However, along the coast a considerable concentration of people can be found. The two areas that are by far the most densely populated parts of Sweden are the Stockholm metropolitan region and the west coast, with the metropolitan regions of Göteborg and Malmö.

The latter region is in another respect comparable to the Dutch situation. It can be considered as a polycentric urban region, lacking a really dominant centre (‘primat city’). Göteborg and Malmö are the two leading centres, but also a number of sub-centres can be found in the area, like Lund, Helsingborg, Halmstad and Borås. The region selected for the case study is situated between the Norwegian-Swedish border in the northwest, the Vänern lake in the north and the Baltic Sea in the south (see Figure 7.9). It comprises the counties Västra Götaland, Halland and Skåne. The county of Västra Götaland was formed in 1998 and is a merger of the former counties Göteborg och Bohuslän, Skaraborg and Älvsborg; Skåne was formed in 1997 and is a merger of the former counties Malmöhus and Kristianstad. As will appear from the analysis, it is a very diverse region in many respects. Before focusing on the case study region, the main national trends in population redistribution in Sweden will be discussed, as well as the economic, socio-cultural, demographic and policy processes that influenced these national trends.

7.3.2 National trends in the population redistribution of Sweden

Traditionally, Swedish population has been very unevenly distributed over the country. This has nowadays resulted in the fact that no less than 80% of the total population of Sweden lives south of the city of Uppsala, in an area that is approximately one-third of the total surface of the country. Also, around 50% of the Swedish population is concentrated within 30 km of the coast (Öberg & Springfield, 1997). The areas most densely populated can be found along the southernmost part of the coastline (Malmö - Karlskrona), the western coast between Malmö and Uddevalla, the region of Stockholm and Uppsala and between Stockholm and Göteborg. The area north of Uppsala is very sparsely populated. The settlement pattern of the north of Sweden mainly consists of small towns and villages dispersed across large distances. Only at the coast, some larger cities can be found. The process of urbanisation started late compared to other European countries. It could be considered to start in the mid-19th century, in close connection to the process of industrialisation and during a period of continuously rising birth rates in the cities. The contemporary Swedish urban system was for a large part formed in this period. It was not until the 1940s that urban population exceeded rural population (Nilsson, 1998).

Borgegård, Håkansson and Malmberg (1995) have studied the development of Swedish population distribution from a long-term perspective. When the period since the end of the 18th century is considered, deconcentration has been the main trend on a national level for a long time. In the 1930s, the trend changed into concentration: first within regions,
later also on a national level. In the 1950s, urbanisation was at a moderate level. The main migration pattern could be described as a step-wise migration from the countryside to regional centres, and from these centres to larger cities. In the 1960s, the urbanisation process accelerated. There was a strong tendency to move from the peripheral areas, especially the north, to the metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö.

In the 1970s, the fast growth of large cities stopped and turned into a loss of population. However, the metropolitan regions as a whole kept gaining inhabitants. In the mid-1980s, the large cities recovered and started growing again. Since then, the situation could be described as stable, with comparable population growth rates in urban as well as rural areas (Borgegård et al, 1995).
Table 7.7

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan centres</td>
<td>-8.2</td>
<td>-3.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>-4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large cities</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-sized towns</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing towns</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-2.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>-3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburbs</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanised rural</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>-2.6</td>
<td>-11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, 15-50.000</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, &lt;15.000</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWEDEN</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Sweden.

Table 7.7 shows the population dynamics of a number of municipality types from 1970 to 1995. The first half of the 1970s was characterised by a strong suburban growth. As in most other countries in Northwest Europe, Sweden's largest cities suffered severe losses of inhabitants. The fastest-growing areas were located directly outside of the largest cities. The metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö as a whole had a slight gain of inhabitants because the growth of the suburbs could compensate for the loss of the core cities. Between 1975 and 1980, the metropolitan centres kept losing inhabitants, but the score is much less negative. Also, suburban growth declined considerably.

Nowadays, according to official statistics, more than 80% of the Swedes are living in urban areas. Since the definition of an urban area in Sweden is very different from most other European countries, with a minimum of only 200 inhabitants and not more than 200 meter between houses as the only criteria (Pettersson, 1998; Helmfrid, 1996), it is hard to compare the degree of urbanisation in Sweden with other European countries through official statistics. A better indication for Sweden's degree of urbanisation is the fact that in the mid-1990s, about a third of the population was living in the three metropolitan areas of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö. Another third of the population lived in medium-sized cities and towns, while the remaining third lived in small towns and villages or dispersed in rural areas (Nyström, 1996).

The period since 1970 does not show one clear national trend. Concentration and deconcentration tendencies appeared simultaneously at different geographical levels. In the beginning of the 1970s, several Swedish and foreign researchers noticed a 'turnaround

¹ Typology used by 'Svenska Kommunförbundet', based on Census of 1990.
Criteria for municipality types:
Suburbs: more than 50% of workforce works in other municipality, more than 25% of workforce works in metropolitan centre (Stockholm, Göteborg or Malmö).
Large cities: 50-200.000 inhabitants, less than 40% of workforce in manufacturing.
Medium-sized cities: 20-50.000 inhabitants, less than 40% of workforce in manufacturing.
Manufacturing towns: more than 40% of workforce in manufacturing.
Urbanised rural: more than 8.7% of workforce in primary sector, 'urbanised area' 70% or more of total surface.
trend', in which the largest cities started to lose population and the suburbs and smaller cities grew considerably (Vining & Pallone, 1982; Nyström, 1992; Borgegård et al, 1995). This process was labeled 'counterurbanisation' or 'the green wave'. But since then, the pace of suburban and rural growth has declined, while the largest cities started growing again since the 1980s. Between 1980 and 1985, Swedish population growth was at an extremely low level. The population of Stockholm started growing again, while Göteborg and Malmö were still losing inhabitants. From 1985 on, metropolitan growth accelerated in Stockholm and also Göteborg and Malmö reached positive growth rates again. The metropolitan growth almost reached the same level as the growth of the suburban population. The manufacturing towns appear to perform quite bad, as well as the rural municipalities. The latter are almost all situated in the northern periphery.

Figure 7.10

Looking at the regional distribution of population growth and decline, the growth regions appear to be mainly concentrated in the south, while stagnation and decline are mainly a problem in the northern regions. When the county level is analysed (Figure 7.10), four of the fastest-growing counties appear to be part of the case study region West-Sweden (see also Figure 7.9), which indicates that this region as a whole is one of the 'growth poles' in Sweden. Especially the population growth in the county of Halland is remarkable. The other obvious growth region is situated on the east coast, in the counties of Stockholm and Uppsala. The counties losing population are all in a more or less peripheral location in the northern or southeastern part of Sweden. The county of Västerbotten is an exception: the rather fast population growth in this county can almost totally be attributed to the university town Umeå.
7.3.3 Population redistribution in West-Sweden since 1970

The case study region West-Sweden had a slightly faster population growth than Sweden as a whole. Within the region, there were considerable differences in growth performance between sub-regions and municipality types, as will appear from the following tables. Like on the national level, also in West-Sweden population growth came almost to a standstill between 1975 and 1985, but accelerated again afterwards.

As already shown in Figure 7.10, the county of Halland had a population increase that is quite exceptional compared to other counties. Within West-Sweden, it is by far the fastest-growing county. All other counties scored just above, or just below, the national growth rate in the period from 1970 to 1995 (table 7.8). However, within the counties of Göteborg och Bohuslän and Malmöhus, two regions had an even faster growth than Halland county. These are the urban regions of Göteborg and Malmö, consisting of the suburban municipalities directly adjacent to the cities. In the case of the Malmö region, also the medium-sized town of Lund is included. Especially in the period 1970-1975, growth was exceptionally strong in these urban regions. The obvious losers are the two metropolitan centres Göteborg and Malmö. Although growth returned after 1985, the two cities lost almost 5% of their population between 1970 and 1995. Their growth trend is very comparable to the trends of the largest cities in the cases of the Netherlands and Switzerland.

Table 7.8

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kristianstad</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malmöhus</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halland</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Göteborg och Bohuslän</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Älvsborg</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skaraborg</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Göteborg and Malmö</td>
<td>-5.8</td>
<td>-3.4</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>-4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban region Göteborg1)</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban region Malmö2)</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-SWEDEN</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWEDEN</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Sweden.
1) excluding the municipality of Göteborg; urban region definition of Statistics Sweden, based on Census 1990.
2) excluding the municipality of Malmö; urban region definition of Statistics Sweden, based on Census 1990.

In table 7.9, developments on the municipality level are presented in categories of population size. The categories are based on the number of inhabitants in 1970. The two cities with more than 250,000 inhabitants, Göteborg and Malmö, form the only category that had less inhabitants in 1995 than in 1970. The large cities with 100,000 to 250,000 inhabitants also lost population between 1970 and 1980, but recovered enough since then to have a slight growth over the whole 25-year-period. Curiously, the other categories all
have a comparable growth rate. Fluctuations between the 5-year periods are quite strong. Between 1970 and 1980 the smallest municipalities (less than 25,000 inhabitants) received the strongest growth, but in the period 1990-1995 the picture is turned around: the smallest municipalities have become the least growing categories.

Table 7.9
Population growth per municipality size category, West-Sweden, 1970-1995 (growth in %).

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 200,000</td>
<td>-5.8</td>
<td>-3.4</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>-4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-200,000</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-100,000</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-50,000</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-25,000</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 10,000</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST-SWEDEN</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Sweden.

A typology based on a combination of population size and economic characteristics (table 7.10) reveals that there is one more category that has a growth well below the West-Swedish average: the manufacturing towns. However, compared to the national picture (table 7.7), this category is doing relatively well. More surprisingly, also the 'urbanised rural' category had a short period of population decline, although only very slightly, in the beginning of the 1980s. The suburbs once again appear as the fastest-growing category. The period 1970-1975 accounts by far for the largest part of suburban growth. Afterwards, the suburbs remain the fastest-growing group, but the difference with the other groups is much less. They are followed by the diverse category 'other, less than 15,000 inhabitants'. This category includes municipalities that are not of an explicitly rural, suburban or manufacturing character.

In Map 7 in the Appendix, the geographical pattern of growth and decline is visualised on the municipality level. It should be noted that the Swedish municipalities are fairly large compared to the municipalities of the Netherlands and certainly Switzerland, and that within them, large variations in population size and growth can be observed. Still, an analysis on the municipality level gives a rather good indication of geographical concentration of growth and decline. This is certainly the case in the West-Swedish region, where municipalities are, for Swedish standards, quite small in area. Two municipalities with an exceptional growth rate appear clearly on the map: Kungsbacka, directly south of Göteborg, and Vellinge, directly south of Malmö. A relative concentration of declining and stagnating municipalities can be observed in the northeast (county Skaraborg) as well as, to a lesser extent, in the southeast (county Kristianstad). The concentration of growth in the suburban areas of Göteborg and Malmö is also clearly visible. Apart from Kungsbacka, the municipalities of Halland county did not grow exceptionally strong, contrary to what might be concluded from the earlier table on counties (table 7.8).
Table 7.10
Population growth per municipality type, West-Sweden, 1970-1995; deviation from growth rate West-Sweden in %

<table>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Göteborg &amp; Malmö</td>
<td>-8.5</td>
<td>-4.6</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>-17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburbs</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large cities</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med.-sized cities</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuf. towns</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-3.3</td>
<td>-5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanised rural</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
<td>-2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, 15-50,000</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, &lt; 15,000</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST-SWEDEN</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Sweden.
Typology used by 'Svenska Kommunförbundet', based on Census of 1990.
(for definition of municipality types, see table 7.7)

The general picture of population redistribution in West-Sweden is one of deconcentration, like in the cases of the Netherlands and Switzerland presented earlier. However, an important difference is that deconcentration in West-Sweden takes place across smaller distances: it is mainly a shift in population growth from the central cities to their immediate surroundings. While the population deconcentration process in the Netherlands and Switzerland also affected rural areas outside the functional urban regions, this was not the case in West-Sweden. The distribution of population growth in West-Sweden suggests two major migration movements: deconcentration within the metropolitan regions of Göteborg and Malmö, and a net migration from the inland forest and rural areas towards the western coast, most notably to the metropolitan regions of Göteborg and Malmö.

7.3.4 National economic, socio-cultural and demographic trends influencing Swedish population distribution

The economic development of Sweden shows parallels with the other countries involved in this study. As in most European countries, the most powerful force of the last decades was the focus shift of the national economy from manufacturing to service activities. Recent employment growth in Sweden has been highly concentrated in the labour market areas of the largest cities. These are the regions with the best abilities to attract economic activities related to the growth of the (commercial) service sector. Especially Stockholm and Göteborg experienced a strong growth of total employment in the 1980s: 16% in both metropolitan regions, well above the national average of 9%. Malmö performed less well, but also slightly above the national average, while employment growth was also strong in regional centres. Especially rural, sparsely populated areas and locations of heavy industry suffered from a stagnating employment growth (Persson & Wiberg, 1995). The
development of the Swedish economy between 1970 and 1995, with the growth of the real gross domestic product as an indicator (Figure 7.11) is quite comparable to the cases of the Netherlands (Figure 6.2) and Switzerland (Figure 7.3) presented earlier. The major difference with the Dutch economic development is the period from 1990 to 1995. While in the Netherlands this was a period of recovery, in Sweden it was the most severe crisis period since World War II, expressed in a zero growth of the real GDP. The Swedish crisis came at the same time as the Swiss crisis, but it had a very different background. While in Switzerland, the economic crisis of the 1990s could largely still be attributed to the drawbacks of de-industrialisation, in Sweden the crisis was mainly due to severe cutbacks in government spending and government employment an issue that will be discussed in more detail later.

Figure 7.11 Development of real gross domestic product, Sweden, 1970-1995
(yearly average growth per 5-year period, %)

![Bar chart showing growth rates]

Source: OECD (1997), Historical Statistics.

As was done earlier for the cases of the Netherlands and Switzerland, the hypothesis that accelerations and stagnations of economic growth are directly related to the pace of suburban and rural population growth will now be tested for the case of West-Sweden. Figure 7.12 shows the development of suburban and rural population growth in West-Sweden between 1970 and 1995, as well as the development of the real GDP as an indicator of economic growth in Sweden. Contrary to the Netherlands and Switzerland, in the West-Swedish case the suburban (category 'suburbs' in table 7.10) and rural (all other non-urban categories in table 7.10) population growth are shown separate since their growth trends diverged considerably.

The exceptionally high growth rate of the suburbs of Göteborg and Malmö in the early 1970s is highlighted once more. After 1975, suburban growth plummeted but has stayed on more or less the same level since then. Between 1975 and 1995, suburban growth continued irrespective of the Swedish economic situation. It could well be that the economic figures used here, those of Sweden as a whole, are very different from those of West-Sweden and that there would be a stronger relationship between economic growth and suburban growth when the West-Swedish figures would have been used, but these figures were unfortunately not available. The growth pattern of the rural municipalities
seems to be following the economic growth and decline trend more, though with more extreme ups and downs. An exception to this rule was the period 1975-1980, when rural growth accelerated while economic growth slowed down.

A remarkable feature of Swedish economy has long been the high proportion of government employees in the workforce (table 7.11), especially in the female workforce (Abrahamsson, 1993). This proportion was raised even further from the 1960s on, through the regional policy that created additional jobs in local governments in the Northern periphery as a means to stop economic decline and population loss see section 7.3.6). A huge growth of the welfare state was made possible under the conditions of the strong economic growth in the ‘Record Years’ of the 1960s (Persson & Wiberg, 1995). Government functions were decentralised to the regional and local levels and university colleges were started in regional centres. Also, the level of health care services was improved. This partly took away the necessity for young people to move out of their region for higher education. Another effect of the regional policy was that it enabled people to move to the countryside without missing too much of the services they were used to in the cities (Borgegård et al, 1995).

**Figure 7.12**

![Graph showing economic growth and suburban/rural population growth](image)

Based on data of Table 7.10 and Figure 7.11; sources: OECD (1997). Historical Statistics; Statistics Sweden.

However, in the early 1990s it was recognised that the unique high level of the Swedish welfare state could no longer be maintained. A large number of jobs was lost when the Swedish government tried to transform the welfare state into a more cost-efficient form. A striking difference between Sweden and the Netherlands is the most recent economic development. In Sweden, the early 1990s were "(...) the end of an epoch of unprecedented economic growth and welfare state politics" (Elander & Montin, 1994). No less than about one tenth of all jobs were lost between 1990 and 1995 (Andersson, 1997). Also in Sweden, from 1995 on there has been a significant recovery of the national economy, but it was only modest compared to other European countries. The welfare state system was seen as the major cause of the recession: "The welfare state was thus not only challenged
on ideological grounds, as it always had been, it was now challenged for fundamental economic reasons" (Andersson, 1997, p. 1). Several scientists and politicians saw Sweden as a state rapidly approaching bankruptcy (Elander et al, 1997). Also, the strong dependency of the national economy on a small number of multinational companies appeared to be a threat to economic growth (Persson & Wiberg, 1995). This led to severe cuts in public budgets in the 1990s. The retreat of the welfare state was encouraged by the centre-right coalition governing Sweden from 1991 to 1994, which tried to solve the economic problems with a neo-liberal policy (Persson & Wiberg, 1995). This resulted in a decrease of the budget deficit of the state, but also in a large number of jobs lost in the public sector. The most severe consequences were for the peripheral municipalities in the North, where a lot of public sector jobs created in the 1970s were now lost. Meanwhile, the metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö managed to attract more jobs and increased their dominance in the national economy.

Table 7.11
Share of economic sectors in total employment, Sweden, 1968-1995 (in %)

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaternary</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: OECD (1997), Historical Statistics.

From a socio-cultural and demographic point of view, the most influential force in recent changes in Swedish society has been foreign migration. It has also been a major force in population growth: for example, between 1973 and 1992, foreign migration and children born of foreign migrants together accounted for no less than 80% of total population growth in Sweden (Borgegård et al, 1998). At the end of 1997, of a total population of 8.8 million people, 950,000 were born abroad (Statistics Sweden, 1998). Table 7.12 shows the development of the in-migration, out-migration and net in-migration of Sweden between 1970 and 1998. Already shortly after World War II Sweden started recruitment of foreign workers to solve the labour shortage of its industry. The first wave of immigrants came from Italy, Hungary and Austria. From the 1950s on, immigration from Norway, Finland and Denmark increased considerably following the introduction of the common Nordic market. This measure meant citizens of the Scandinavian countries had the right to work and settle in all countries of the agreement. Especially migration from Finland was very strong during the 1950s and 1960s. Around 1970, measures were taken to limit labour-related migration from Finland. In the 1960s, agreements on labour recruitment were additionally made with Yugoslavia and Turkey. The migration flow caused by these agreements was fairly small. Labour recruitment was only done for a short period and already stopped in 1971. However, it attracted a lot of migrants in a later stage, connected to family reunification and 'chain migration'. From the mid-1970s on, refugee migration became a more and more important flow within total foreign migration (Lundberg Lithman, 1987). In the beginning of the 1990s, foreign migration reached a historically high level. Between 1985 and 1994, 400,000 foreign migrants entered Sweden, and in 1993 and 1994 alone there was an in-migration of more than 100,000 foreigners (Andersson, 1997). Unfortunately, this large inflow coincided with the grave economic crisis of the first half of the 1990s. This crisis especially hit the foreign migrants, most of all the 'non-Nordic' groups.
The refugee migrants as well as the labour migrants and their families concentrated strongly in the three metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö. In the mid-1980s, Swedish government considered a more equal spread of refugees preferable and introduced the 'Whole of Sweden strategy'. Each municipality received a share of the inflow of asylum seekers. Lots of municipalities, especially in peripheral areas, welcomed this strategy because it might solve the problems of continuous population loss and empty flats, and it added some new jobs (Andersson, 1996). The policy was stopped again in 1994. Although many migrants moved from their arrival location to the metropolitan areas in a later stage, the 'Whole of Sweden strategy' has certainly had consequences for the geographical distribution of foreign migrants over the country (Borgegård et al, 1998).

Table 7.12
In-migration, out-migration and net in-migration, Sweden, 1970-1998 (yearly averages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Immigration (x 1000)</th>
<th>Emigration (x 1000)</th>
<th>Net immigration (x 1000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970-1975</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-1980</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1985</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The process of individualisation, which occurred all over Europe since the 1960s, has been powerful in Sweden as well. Already in the mid-1980s, the one-person household became the largest household group in Sweden (table 7.13). In 1945, Sweden counted 300,000 one-person households, or 14% of all households; in 1990, there were 1.5 million one-person households, which was 40% of the total amount of households. A household group almost as large were the childless couples (1.2 million), while all types of families with children together accounted for 1.1 million households (Öberg & Springfeldt, 1997; Nyström, 1996). The one-person household is strongly concentrated in the largest cities as well as the university towns. Apart from a growing group of young people living alone after leaving the parental home, there is also a growing number of widowed men and women which contributes to the continuous growth of one-person households.

How does the growth of small households and the declining share of larger (family) households relate to the West-Swedish dynamics in population distribution? In Chapter 2, a hypothesis was proposed in which the growing share of one- and two-person households, the growing share of service sector jobs and the recovery of urban population growth in the 1980s were considered as interrelated processes. This hypothesis was tested earlier for the cases of the Netherlands (Figure 6.3) and Switzerland (Figure 7.4). Figure 7.13 shows the development of urban growth in West-Sweden and the development of the share of one- and two-person households and service sector jobs in Sweden as a whole. Again, because West-Swedish developments in economic and household structure might have diverged from the Swedish average, this might trouble the testing of the hypothesis, but West-Swedish figures were not available.
Table 7.13
Share of household size types in the Swedish population, 1970-1990 (in %)

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 persons</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 persons</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 persons</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 persons or more</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The hypothesis that a more service-oriented economy and a growing share of small households contribute to urban population growth seems to be supported for West-Sweden, although the very sudden recovery of urban population growth after 1985 seems to contrast with the very gradual rise in both the share of service sector jobs and the share of small households. This might be explained by the very specific trends in service-sector jobs in Sweden. Due to the expansion of the welfare state at the local level in the 1970s, new service sector jobs were created not only in the cities, but also in the central places of rural (peripheral) municipalities. In this respect, a move from the rural periphery to the cities or metropolitan areas was not necessary to get a service sector job.

Figure 7.13
Development of the share of service sector jobs and the share of one- and two-person households in Sweden, and urban population growth in West-Sweden, 1968-1995

Based on data of tables 7.10, 7.11 and 7.13.
Left axis: percentage scale for share of 1- and 2-p. households and service sector jobs.
Right axis: percentage scale for urban population growth.
However, since the growth of service sector jobs since the 1980s was more one of tertiary sector jobs than of quaternary sector jobs (see table 7.11), and since the growth of tertiary sector jobs was highly concentrated in the large and medium-sized cities in the 1980s (Persson & Wiberg, 1995), for the period since 1985 the hypothetical link between urban population growth, more service sector jobs and a growing share of small households seems to fit the West-Swedish population dynamics better.

To conclude this overview of the main socio-cultural and demographic trends in Sweden, another notably influential process in Sweden is the growth of female participation in the labour market. Sweden is known for a high participation rate of women, one of the highest in the world. This is not only caused by a successful emancipation movement, but was also strongly connected to the growth of the public sector in the 1970s and 1980s (see section 7.3.6.1). A large part of the additional jobs created by the Swedish government on the regional and local level was occupied by women (Abrahamsson, 1993). Unfortunately, the economic crisis of the 1990s caused the loss of a lot of these jobs, especially in the peripheral municipalities. The increasing participation of women was also in another way connected to the growth of the public sector: the Swedish welfare state provides excellent child care facilities, which make the combination of child-raising and work for two-earner households a lot easier.

7.3.5 Regional economic, demographic and socio-cultural development of West-Sweden

The case study region West-Sweden exists of a number of regional labour markets functioning largely independent of each other. It cannot (yet) be considered as one whole in economic terms.

A feature that almost all sub-regions had in common until quite recently was the importance of the shipbuilding industry. The major locations for shipbuilding were Göteborg, Uddevalla, Malmö and Helsingborg. The shipbuilding industry was one of the branches most severely hit by the economic crisis of the late 1970s. In the 1990s, almost all shipbuilding activities have been closed down. In Göteborg and Malmö, there are only some maintenance yards left. There were more manufacturing sectors in the region severely hit by economic restructuring of the 1970s and 1980s. Malmö suffered huge job losses in textile, food, shoes and tobacco industry. The food industry is the only branch that more or less survived the restructuring and is still present. Göteborg and its surroundings are internationally known for their automobile industry. Volvo (Göteborg) and Saab (Trollhättan) have a long history of car-production in the region. The automobile industry did not escape the economic crisis either, but nevertheless, it is still a very dominant branch in the economy of the Göteborg region.

In general, the development of the Göteborg region since the 1980s can be described as a transformation from a manufacturing-dominated to a high-tech-dominated regional economy. A clear representative of this development is Ericsson, which has its main

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2) This section is largely based on interviews with academic researchers (the departments of human and economic geography of the universities of Lund and Göteborg) and local and regional government officials (Göteborgs Regionen Kommunalförbundet, Länsstyrelsen Västra Götaland, municipality of Malmö, Region Federation Council Skåne). See ‘acknowledgements’ for further details.
production and research activities in the city. This company has managed a huge growth in the 1990s thanks to its prominent position on the telecommunications market. Another major factor in recent economic growth in the Göteborg region is the harbour (Figure 7.14). In the 1970s and 1980s a large number of jobs were lost here, but in the 1990s growth returned. The harbour strengthened its position as the largest harbour of Scandinavia and improved its position within Europe. Especially container shipping has developed positively in the 1990s.

While Göteborg and its immediate surroundings managed to compensate job losses in heavy industry with job gains in high-technology industries, municipalities at the outskirts of the Göteborg region did not. Small cities and villages with a local economy heavily dependent on one or a few large industrial companies suffered severe job losses when these companies closed down or cut jobs. An example is the city of Uddevalla. Volvo closed down a large car-assembly plant here in 1990. The plant was replaced with another car-assembly company, partly owned by Volvo. This new plant offered much less jobs than the old plant, which meant a severe hit for Uddevallas economy. Other examples can be found further away from Göteborg, in the north of Alvsborgs county and in Skaraborgs county.

Figure 7.14
The harbour of Göteborg

In the case of the region Malmö-Lund, the integration into one labour market region is a very recent phenomenon. Traditionally the cities were more competing than cooperating. The local economy of Malmö, traditionally dominated by manufacturing, shipbuilding and harbour activities, is of a very different character than that of Lund. Lund has a large university and a considerable number of regional service activities, like a large hospital. The service sector has long been severely underdeveloped in Malmö because most regional services were already available in Lund. In this respect, the local economy of Malmö is very different from that of Göteborg, which is the clear centre of its urban region. This was also expressed in the development of employment in the last decades. This situation is now gradually changing, with Malmö attracting some additional service activities. An important event for Malmö was the opening of a university college in 1998.
It is very small in scale, but the fact that Malmö has academic education now is already considered as a major improvement. Another potential factor in the future growth of the Malmö economy is the recently created new county of Skåne. Its main offices are located in Malmö. With the perspective of a more important role for the regional level in the Swedish political system in the future (Modin & Aring, 1998), this might work out very positive for the city.

Still, Lund has the most potential for attracting activities in the fields of technology and research. In the 1980s, the 'Ideon' project was started. A science park was created to attract research companies to the city and improve cooperation between the university and private companies (Figure 7.15). This project has grown into a major success. Especially the pharmaceutical research activities have been 'booming' in recent years. More science park sites have been created and the project was extended to Malmö as well. In the 1970s, large numbers of graduated students from Lund University left the region and moved to the Stockholm area because of the better career perspective. This outflow of highly educated people stopped during the 1980s. It seems that the Skåne region is better able to provide them with jobs than in the past. The 'Ideon' science parks project might be an important factor in this development. Recently, a cooperative project has been initiated with the Copenhagen metropolitan region to form 'Medicon Valley', meant to form the major Scandinavian concentration of biotechnology, medical research and pharmaceutical industry (Copenhagen Capacity & RFC Skåne, 1998).

Figure 7.15
Ideon Science Park, Lund

The area between the two metropolitan areas, Halland, has traditionally been dominated by rural and forestry activities. One of the largest employers in the county is the paper factory in Hylte, the easternmost municipality. Another prominent economic activity in the region is energy production, with the largest nuclear power plant of Sweden near Varberg and a large and growing number of windmills along the coast. The coastal cities in the region managed to attract employment not only when the national economy was flourishing but also during the crisis of the early 1990s. There is a strong recent growth in the number of small-scale companies settling in Halmstad, Varberg and Falkenberg (county of Halland, 1998). Kungsbacka has increased its number of jobs as well since the
1970s, but this is strongly linked to the development of the Göteborg region, while the other cities in Halland realise their growth largely independent of Göteborg.

Recently, large investments have been made in traffic connections within West-Sweden. Top priority was given to the poor road and rail connection between the metropolitan regions of Göteborg and Malmö. Curiously enough, despite the fact that Stockholm is much further away, the connections of both cities with Stockholm have traditionally been a lot better than between Göteborg and Malmö themselves, along the Swedish Westcoast. The most striking example of this is the railway connection, which is still only one track over a large distance. In a few years, this connection will finally be two-tracks. This will especially improve the high-speed train services considerably. The construction of the bridge-tunnel-connection across the Öresund between Copenhagen and Malmö, however, is considered to be the most promising infrastructural development. Together with improvements in the motorway along the Westcoast, the 'Scanlink' between Copenhagen and Oslo that was already discussed since the mid-1980s is finally coming about. Regional politicians and companies, most of all in Skåne but also more to the north, have high expectations of the positive effects that this new connection could have on the regional economy of West-Sweden.

As already mentioned before (section 7.3.4), the largest cities received a more than proportional share of foreign migration to Sweden. In Göteborg, around 25% of the population is a non-Nordic immigrant of the first or second generation. The migrants were most of all attracted to these cities because of the job opportunities and the relatively cheap housing. Jobs were available in the harbours, the shipbuilding industry, the automobile industry and in Malmö also in the food industry. Most of these industries suffered from a severe crisis in the 1970s and 1980s. This caused a fast growth of unemployment in Göteborg and Malmö. The foreign migrants, most of all those from the non-Nordic countries, were significantly worse off in this respect than Swedish-born people. The non-Nordic migrant groups are within Göteborg and Malmö concentrated to a high extent in a few neighbourhoods. Most of them live in the high-rise apartment blocks built in the 'Million Homes Program' (see section 7.3.6.3). Apart from Göteborg and Malmö, concentrations of foreign migrants can also be found in medium-sized cities like Helsingborg, Lund and Borás. The medium-sized cities show more or less the same picture, with the largest concentration of foreign migrants in the high-rise neighbourhoods of the 1960s and 1970s.

But also when foreign migration is excluded, the two large cities have a positive net migration again since the mid-1980s. Internal migrants, native Swedes as well as foreign-born people, consider the Göteborg and the Malmö region as 'escalator regions' (Fielding 1992; see Chapter 2) within West-Sweden and also on a national level, although to a lesser extent than the Stockholm region. However, the upward income mobility aimed at with a move to the metropolitan regions is almost only reached by the native Swedes. Most foreign migrants don't succeed in improving their situation by moving from another Swedish location to the metropolitan regions (Andersson, 1996). Especially young people in their twenties and thirties are moving to Göteborg and Malmö. A major attraction factor in Göteborg are the University of Göteborg and Chalmers technical university, which have grown quite rapidly in recent years and together had about 41,000 students in 1997. In Malmö, the in-migration of young people is more connected to job opportunities. With the recent opening of a university college, it is to be expected that more young people looking for higher education will come to Malmö as well. Within the Malmö
region, it is Lund with its large university (36,000 students in 1998) that has recently attracted most young migrants. In both Göteborg and Malmö, also the presence of headquarters and important regional offices of large firms, and the employment opportunities in regional government attract migrants from other parts of West-Sweden and from other Swedish counties. Despite the large inflow of young people, a process of greying of the population can be witnessed in West-Sweden, most of all in the large cities. Families with children have left the cities to a large extent. This is especially true for Malmö. A major explanatory factor for this is the housing stock, which is very one-sided. Malmö is built in a highly compact way and its housing stock exists almost exclusively of multi-family dwellings. People looking for one-family detached houses were forced to move out. This is much less the case in Göteborg, which has extended in a less compact way. The fact that Göteborg has some of its suburbs on its own territory, as a result of annexations in the early 20th century, gives the city an advantage to Malmö when the attractiveness for households with children is concerned.

A growing group of pensioners is moving from other Swedish counties to the West-Swedish coast, with a strong preference for the county of Halland. Among Swedes who stay in Sweden for their summer holidays, Halland is the most popular destination. Its main attractions are the sea, the sand beaches and the climate, which is warm for Swedish standards thanks to the influence of the Gulf Stream. Along the beaches, a lot of summerhouses can be found. In recent years a fairly large group of retired people and people close to retirement chose to convert their summerhouses to permanent residences. But also for people in working age, Halland offers good opportunities. Halland might be an example of the 'strategic location' that is often mentioned by respondents in migration research. By settling here, the migrants "(...) have access to more than one local labour market within commuting distance" (Pettersson, 1998, p. 3). But it is questionable if the travel time to the 2 metropolitan regions of Göteborg and Malmö is not a bit too long for this. Probably, most in-migrants choose one of the two metropolitan regions to be closest to. However, this might change in the near future as a result of infrastructure improvements (see section 7.3.8).

Even within the relatively densely populated and fast growing region West-Sweden, areas can be found with problems of continuous population loss, especially of young people (in their twenties and thirties). These areas are located in the north and east of Skåne and in the north and east of Västra Götaland (the former counties of Älvsborg and Skaraborg, but also parts of Bohuslän). Also elderly (65+) leave these areas to a large extent. In Skåne, there has been a long tradition of a net migration from east to west. Despite huge investments in regional infrastructure and public services in the eastern part of Skåne, this migration has continued. In Västra Götaland, the main migration flow is from the semi-peripheral areas in the north (Bohuslän) and east to the Göteborg region. The migration from the rural periphery to the metropolitan and smaller urban regions is a phenomenon that could be witnessed in Sweden as a whole since the 1960s as well. Swedish housing preferences tend to diverge from most other Northwest-European countries in this respect. The rural and forest areas at some distance of the cities, usually quite popular destinations for foreign tourists, are seen in a quite different light by many Swedes. These areas are rather associated with unemployment, lack of activity and social life, darkness and lack of services than with the attractiveness of their landscape (forests and lakes). Those that are still attracted to the landscape features of their rural place of origin prefer to have a summerhouse there instead of living there permanently. Interestingly, both Bohuslän and east-Skåne have recently attracted foreign migrants. The Bohuslän region has recently
received a considerable group of Norwegians who bought summerhouses there or converted these into permanent residences. The same development occurred in east Skåne with German and Danish migrants. The houses in both areas are relatively cheap compared to the neighbouring countries.

7.3.6 Swedish policies on housing, planning and regional development

7.3.6.1 The Swedish welfare state

The Swedish welfare state has its roots in the 1880s, but started its extension in the 1930s. The extension of the Swedish welfare state was tightly connected to the Social Democratic Party, which gained power in the early 1930s and remained in government for most of the time since then. The Social Democrats introduced an economic policy based on the ideas of Keynes to deal with unemployment and underemployment. This economic policy formed the base of the social welfare policy. The Swedish welfare state arrangements cover a broad field and partly overlap with policy measures in the sphere of economic, industrial, labour market and housing policy (Forsberg, 1986). The philosophy on which the welfare state is based includes a firm belief in the necessity of planning and regulations and a trust in science as a method to solve social problems (Nyström, 1996).

In the 1960s and early 1970s, there was a strong focus on central and national planning. The term 'social engineering' was frequently used to describe the main aim of the welfare state. A hierarchical classification of centres was used as a leading planning principle for social policy. The main targets of welfare state arrangements were employment, services, housing and a good natural environment. In the 1970s and the early 1980s, the public sector grew immensely. Several government functions were decentralised to regional centres, accompanied by a drastic reorganisation of the local government level in which municipalities of a considerably larger size were created. This was done to reduce pressure on the Stockholm region, but also to promote the development of the semi-periphery and the periphery (section 7.3.6.4). The growth of public sector contributed to an enormous increase of the female workforce. In the 1980s local self-government was introduced as the new main principle. National social planning and control were considered outdated. National planning even got a worse image after the collapse of communist governments in Eastern Europe, and the severe crisis of the Swedish welfare state itself in the early 1990s. 'Laissez-faire' and sectoral planning came in the place of 'social engineering' (Borgegård & Håkansson, 1997; Persson & Wiberg, 1995).

The role of municipalities and counties in the Swedish political system has always been particularly strong. The autonomy of these local and regional government levels is considered a very important principle, not to be challenged by national policy decisions. Especially the position of the municipalities has been strengthened even more since the 1980s. Municipalities and county councils have taxation authority and elected representatives who can make decisions about their territory. On the county level there is also a county administration that forms the regional representation of the national state (not elected but appointed by national government). The county council and the county administration cover the same geographical area, but have different responsibilities. The county administrations are responsible for state assignments in the county like regional social planning and the coordination of state, county and municipal government services. The county councils decide about health care, public transport, business development, culture and social activities. Since 1996, an experiment is taking place in some counties to
transfer tasks from the county administration to the county council. Among the counties in the experiment are the West-Swedish counties Skåne and Västra Götaland (Nilsson, 1998).

7.3.6.2 Physical planning

Considering the strong national state intervention in nearly all fields of social policy, one would also expect a prominent role of the national government in physical planning and urbanisation policy. However, this is not the case. There is no such thing as a national plan for Sweden and there is no national policy on urbanisation either. The autonomy of municipalities, mentioned above, is above all expressed in physical planning. One could even speak of a municipal planning monopoly: the only government level authorised to take planning measures on a municipal territory is the municipality itself (Alfredsson & Wiman, 1997). The most important plan in Sweden is the municipal comprehensive plan, in which land and water use within the municipality are indicated (Holm & Fredlund, 1991). The status of this plan is advisory. Municipalities also make development plans that are legally binding. They regulate building locations, building height and size and the distribution of functions. In the National Planning and Building Act of 1987, the position of the municipalities was strengthened even further: the structure plans of the municipalities no longer needed to be approved of by national government. The only aspects of land use planning which are considered national issues are infrastructure and natural resources. This municipal autonomy is a very recent phenomenon. In the early 1970s still, municipalities were merely the local branches of the national government in most fields of policy. The national state transferred earmarked funds with strict conditions about how activities should be planned and conducted. Most policy was part of five-year-programmes thought out in Stockholm. There was only very little room for municipality-specific policy. This kind of policy ended when at the end of the 1970s, state deficits were growing steadily and the impossibility of general planning models became apparent. The disparities between the municipalities were too large to apply a nationwide planning in a successful way (Westman, 1991; Persson & Wiberg, 1995).

Nevertheless, the national government is still very active in physical planning. In contrast to the Netherlands and England, the national government cannot decide on land use within the municipalities. Still, the municipalities are obliged to base their land use plans on the Planning and Building Act and the Natural Resources Act (Jauhiainen, 1998). The Natural Resources Act focuses on the protection of public health, physical environment, biological diversity and the conservation of natural resources. In this act, situations are clarified in which the national government should decide on planning issues. This includes for example location decisions about large industrial complexes and power plants. The Natural Resources Act contains geographical guidelines for the conservation of land and water, and 'areas of national interest' that resulted from a national discussion on physical planning in the 1970s (Holm & Fredlund, 1991). The Planning and Building Act concerns the practical framework for physical planning. It determines the requirements for municipal and regional plans (Alfredsson & Wiman, 1997). Apart from that, Swedish government has an influential advisory board on planning and housing issues: 'Boverket'. The planning division of this organisation monitors and evaluates the application of the Planning and Building Act and the Natural Resources Act in planning activities of the municipalities. However, even on the rare occasions that the national government becomes directly involved, municipalities could block national decisions by means of a veto (Alfredsson & Wiman, 1997).
Boverket also recently prepared a national planning advice for the beginning of the 21st century, called 'Sweden 2009'. In this advisory vision, infrastructure is seen as a prerequisite for urban and regional development. In 'Sweden 2009', the country is imagined as an archipelago of urban regions within a sea of forests and rural areas. The urban regions should be more strongly connected and the transport means chosen for this is high-speed rail transport. This should change the 'islands' into more integrated labour market zones of a larger scale. Apart from this strategy for further economic growth, other points that are emphasised are 'the town-country symbiosis' (improving the connection between town and countryside, integrating countryside elements into cities) and strengthening the diversity of settlements (Nyström, 1996). The vision 'Sweden 2009', however, is merely an advisory project. The concept of 'pearls and strands' (the urban regions and their connections) can only be realised when the municipalities want to invest in it. The national government has no means available to encourage the realisation of the vision.

7.3.6.3 Housing policy

For a long time, Swedish housing policy was above all a policy to solve the housing shortage. In the 1980s, the focus shifted to quality of housing and living environments instead of quantity. This shift logically followed from the fact that in the beginning of the 1980s, the housing shortage was as good as solved. In 1965, this was certainly not the case yet. The social-democratic government launched an ambitious project that should put an end to the housing shortage. The 'Million Homes Programme' aimed at building a million houses in a period of ten years. This goal was eventually not reached, because the programme had to be stopped a bit earlier than expected under the influence of a major recession in 1974, and because a sizable number of dwellings were demolished in the same period. But still, a net gain of about 650,000 dwellings was produced between 1965 and 1974. The achievement of the Million Homes Programme becomes even more impressive when the total Swedish housing stock in 1965 of about 3 million houses is considered. The kind of housing that it produced, however, has been criticised heavily by Swedish scientists and politicians since the 1970s (Holm & Fredlund, 1991).

A major criticism to the housing produced by the Million Homes Programme is that it lacks diversity. This the logical consequence of a programme based on assumptions of basic needs for housing, services and leisure that all people were supposed to have in common. The lifestyle that was considered 'general' was a family with one male wage earner and his wife staying at home and taking care of the children. Furthermore, the construction of the houses and their environment was organised to enable maximum production speed and efficiency. Another important principle explaining the monotony is that the design of the building blocks was oriented to the possibility of repetition on all sites of the programme (Holm & Fredlund, 1991; Nyström, 1996). The Million Homes Programme indirectly had a considerable influence on population distribution. The building projects of the programme were spread all over the country, but the largest projects were located in or close to the largest cities and industrial towns. So, although it was certainly not the aim of the programme, it could be stated that the Million Homes Programme has contributed to a 'compact city' development. In the 1980s and 1990s, the large estates of the Million Homes Programme more and more became concentration areas of non-Nordic foreign migrants and other lower income groups. This was considered an undesirable development by the government. In most of the large estates
measures have been taken to improve their attractiveness. Most of the measures were physical improvements of the buildings and their surroundings. The main aim was to increase diversity in the household structure in the estates. In many cases, this aim was reached, but new problems were also created. Because rents were raised considerably by the renewal activities, many lower-income households were forced to move out (Nyström, 1996).

In reaction to the problems with the large-scale housing projects, there was a major shift to small-scale projects in the late 1970s and the 1980s. Most building activities were taking place on infill sites in the largest cities. Most of these sites had become vacant after extensive demolishing activities. In addition, a large part of the early-20th century housing stock was renovated. There was a striking increase of housing production at the end of the 1980s, set in motion by strong economic growth. But the deep recession of the early 1990s virtually put a stop to housing production in Sweden.

7.3.6.4 Regional economic policy

The part of welfare policy with undoubtedly the most far-reaching effects on national population distribution has been the regional economic policy that has been carried out since the 1960s. The main reason for this policy was the wish of Swedish government to decrease regional economic and social inequality. This goal was combined with attempts to stop the dramatic population loss in the peripheral areas. The most targeted area was the northern periphery, an area dominated by agricultural land, mining activities and rough mountain ridges. Since the 1970s, new problem areas for regional economic policy have been added as a result of the decline of traditional industries. The approach of regional development has predominantly been based on a hierarchy of central places following the ideas of Christaller (1933). Investments for the development of the periphery were concentrated in regional centres. The growth of employment and the improvement of the service level in these centres should be to the benefit of the surrounding region.

The development of the regional centres was promoted in various ways. One of the most important was the opening of universities and 'höskolan' (university colleges) in centres of peripheral regions. This was supposed to diminish the outflow of young people looking for higher education and career perspectives. Some of these new universities have been remarkably successful; the most striking example is Umeå University, opened in 1965 and now one of the largest institutes for higher education in Sweden. Apart from the university, numerous 'spin-off' activities have settled in Umeå as well, contributing to a steady growth of jobs and population in the leading city of the northern periphery. In the 1970s, regional economic policy existed for a large part of decentralisation of government functions. The transfer of national government jobs from Stockholm to regional centres and the assignment of new tasks for local and regional government would contribute to employment opportunities in the periphery. At the same time it was meant to release pressure on the 'overheated' economy of the Stockholm region.

Traffic infrastructure has always been another top priority in the regional economic policy of the Swedish government. Infrastructure improvements were seen as the best means to reach economic growth. In the post-war period, huge investments have been made to improve road, rail and air connections within the country and across the borders. Recent investments in infrastructure point to the fact that the philosophy 'better infrastructure
means economic growth’ is still popular in Swedish politics. Public transport took, and still takes, a quite prominent place in this policy. There is even a guarantee in the Swedish civil law that all citizens are entitled to good public transport. Buses and trains reach as good as any settlement in the country, even in the northern periphery. Another striking phenomenon is the frequent use of air traffic by Swedes for inland travels. Almost every regional centre has its own airport. With the enormous distances between cities, the plane offers a logical alternative, especially for business travellers.

One of the main goals of regional economic policy was to stop the continuous loss of population of the peripheral rural municipalities in the north. Looking back on the period since regional policy started, however, this aim has been reached only partially. Population growth in the north has concentrated more and more in a few regional centres, while the peripheral rural municipalities kept losing inhabitants (Pettersson, 1998). Regional policy had negative consequences for the attention in government policy for the largest cities: "Since the 1960s, investments in regional policy have gradually increased in scope, while political interest in urban policy has dwindled. Influential political circles are clearly inclined to place these two policy areas in an adversarial relationship. Investments in urban policy have been considered as counteracting the goal of achieving regional balance, a goal that had been a lodestar for regional policy” (Nilsson, 1998, p. 383). Recently, the balance has been turning in favour of urban policy, though. While national funds for regional policy have been diminished since the 1990s, Sweden uses large benefits out of the EU Structural Funds to continue the promotion of peripheral development. Most money of the EU goes to the sparsely populated areas, but also funds are used for example for the road and rail connection across the Öresund. At the end of the 1990s, regional imbalances in Sweden are growing rapidly again despite all efforts of regional policy. The metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö are the fastest-growing regional economies, while the other regions stagnate or decline.

7.3.7 Housing, planning and regional development in West-Sweden

For a long time, an obstacle for regional development and regional planning in the metropolitan areas of Malmö and Göteborg was the administrative situation in these areas. Malmö and Göteborg were not included in any county council, and added to that, their metropolitan region was spread out over different counties. In Göteborg and Malmö, regional planning is supposed to be coordinated by an association of local authorities. This is a voluntary association without statutory rights to make decisions. The mergers of counties to the new counties Västra Götaland and Skåne, with the inclusion of Göteborg and Malmö in these counties, has improved the circumstances for regional planning (Nilsson, 1998). Stockholm did not have the above-mentioned problems: here, the county council already functions more or less as a metropolitan government for a long time. Considering this difference, it is no surprise that the Stockholm metropolitan area has a long tradition of regional plans, while Göteborg and Malmö have shown almost no activity in regional planning. There exists a regional plan for Göteborg, made in 1982. However, this plan was never used in practice and was not taken seriously at all by the municipalities of the region. A clear example is the municipality of Lerum, where between 1986 and 1996, around 50% of new housing construction was built outside the

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3) This section is largely based on interviews with academic researchers (the departments of human and economic geography of the Universities of Lund and Göteborg) and local and regional government officials (Göteborgs Regionen Kommunalförbundet, Länsstyrelsen Västra Götaland, municipality of Malmö, Region Federation Council Skåne. See ‘acknowledgements’ for further details.

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areas destined for housing in the 1982 regional plan. A new attempt will probably be made in the next few years. However, for many municipalities this would probably require a quite radical attitude change towards planning across municipal borders. As Persson and Wiberg (1995, p. 104) indicated, "(...) it is very common for local comprehensive plans to neglect intermunicipal problems."

An example of the possible consequences of a lack of regional planning can be found in Skåne. In the 1990s, a number of large-scale shopping malls were built at several locations spread out across the region. The development was more or less spontaneous and uncoordinated. It made clear once again that municipalities in the region could do whatever they thought right for their own development, without accounting for possible negative consequences for the region. The county planning authorities lacked the means to put a stop to the continuing development of new shopping malls. This event has even almost led to a serious international conflict with Denmark that was not pleased with the large-scale retail centres just across the Öresund because of possible severe competition for the Copenhagen city centre. Another area where a stronger regional planning might have been practical is Bohuslän. This is the region between Göteborg and the Norwegian border. For many years there has been a discussion about whether or not to build a highway through the area. This would make the region less isolated and bring improved connections with the flourishing economy of the Oslo region. Bohuslän has already attracted some Norwegian investments that brought some new jobs. Also, the area is popular among cross-border migrants. The demand for a highway is increasing both because of the settlement of the migrants and because of the new companies. On the other hand, the landscape of Bohuslän is highly appreciated by inhabitants and the county government. The decision about whether or not to build the highway has so far been postponed.

On the local level, the recent development of a more positive view of the largest cities was welcomed in Göteborg and Malmö. In 1990s, both cities received generous subsidies out of national government funds to solve their social and economic problems. The main targets of the new Swedish urban policy were fighting unemployment and preventing ethnic and socio-economic segregation. Large investments were also made to promote the growth of new economic branches that had to replace shipbuilding and other heavy industries as job providers. This growing attention of the national government for Göteborg and Malmö resulted from a report by a government commission on metropolitan regions at the end of the 1980s. The commission concluded that the economic prospects for the Göteborg and Malmö were negative and that development should be stimulated with government funds (Nilsson, 1998). In both metropolitan centres as well as in the medium-sized cities, the main problem areas are the large high-rise estates of the Million Homes Programme. There have been large-scale renovation projects since the 1980s, but still, there is a lack of variation in the apartments. Inhabitants as well as people living elsewhere in the cities often experience the public space around the flats as highly unattractive and unsafe. Figure 7.16 shows one of the high-rise estates of the Million Homes Programme in Lund. As can be seen from the picture, the apartment blocks tend to be surrounded by extensive green spaces that might look attractive during the day, but could be much less nice to cross at night. Especially the suburban area of Angerled near Göteborg has a bad reputation. It is now seen as a 'planning disaster'. This is not only because of the design of the estate and the concentration of social problems there, but even more because of its isolated location. Angerled was supposed to be a sub-centre of a
much larger extension of Göteborg, including large-scale business sites. Nowadays, only half of the planned Angered has actually been built. The area reserved for commercial development is still for the largest part empty, because businesses are not willing to relocate to this site.

**Figure 7.16**
High-rise estate in Lund, one of the projects of the Million Homes Programme

Most of the recent planning in Göteborg and Malmö concerned locations in or near the historical city centre. On the one hand these were urban renewal projects on infill sites. On the other hand, both cities built new residential and office complexes on the waterfront, in former harbour areas. Inspired by successes in several cities in the Northeast of the US, the UK and elsewhere in continental Europe, Göteborg transformed its former docklands (Norra Ålstranden) into an attractive living area with a mix of residential, employment and service uses. The docklands were largely deserted in the 1970s, when almost all shipbuilding and repair firms closed down. The docklands area was redesigned as a city of small industrial villages, in which the former factories are reused to a large extent as offices, hotels and exhibition spaces (Caldenby, 1997). Comparable projects, though on a much more modest scale, can be found in other harbour cities like Halmstad and Helsingborg. Malmö will build a new extension in the southwest of the city, in connection to the Öresund bridge opened in summer 2000. Göteborg has no large-scale extension plans in the near future, which might have something to do with the recent negative experiences with Angered and surroundings.

Apart from the earlier mentioned negative consequences of regional economic policy for the largest cities (section 7.3.6.4), regional economic policy has not been very influential in West-Sweden. The only part of regional economic policy also applied to the region was the university college programme. New university colleges were opened in Halmstad, Borås, Skövde and Kristianstad. All of them were very small in size, so the impact of the new colleges has so far not been as dramatic as with the larger universities in Umeå, Karlstad, Växjö en Örebro, for example. But the university colleges certainly added to the attractiveness of the cities for young people. They partly took away the necessity for young people looking for higher education and careers to move to Göteborg or the Malmö / Lund region.
7.3.8 The future of the Swedish West Coast

According to several politicians and scientists in the region, the future perspective for the Swedish West Coast is to a large extent related to the Öresund bridge-tunnel connection (Figure 7.17). The road and railway connecting the Copenhagen and Malmö/Lund region were opened in the summer of 2000. This produced a quite spectacular gain in travel time between the Danish and Swedish side of the Öresund. The bridge-tunnel connection is part of a more general intensified cooperation between the Copenhagen region and the county of Skåne. Politicians in Copenhagen and Skåne hope that the new connection will contribute to the formation of one integrated labour market region. Most attention in this cooperation goes to research and education. Roskilde, Copenhagen, Malmö and Lund are considered as a part of what regional politicians call the 'Knowledge Axis', a concentration of research and education activities in and around the large universities of the region. The earlier-mentioned Ideon science parks in Lund and Malmö are important elements of this 'axis'. Further aspects of the region that are considered advantages in the competition with other European metropolitan regions are the high education level of its personnel, the high level of consumer and business services, the cultural amenities and the relatively clean natural environment (Ministry of the Environment, 1993).

Quite often, the Öresund region is presented as being already one functionally integrated whole. A striking example is the 'Medicon Valley' project. This is a cooperation of several government and academic organisations at both sides of the Öresund, launched by Copenhagen and the regional council of Skåne. The project aims at an increase of foreign investments in biotechnical, medical and pharmaceutical industries in the region. It is partly sponsored by the Interreg-programme of the European Union. In its brochure, 'Medicon Valley' is significantly presented as one region. The division of the region over two countries separated by the Öresund is not seen as problematic, because "(...) soon the two parts of the region will be linked together by a bridge/tunnel. The permanent link will reduce the transport time from coast to coast (...) to a few minutes" (Copenhagen Capacity & RFC Skåne, 1998, p. 12). Still, the Öresund might remain a barrier to intra-

Figure 7.17
The bridge across the Öresund, part of the bridge-tunnel link between Copenhagen en Malmö
regional transport as long as a toll is required every time the bridge and tunnel is used. Another barrier to the integration of the Öresund region is the division over two countries, with two legal and administrative systems differing from each other in quite some aspects. An example of the problems this might cause are the shopping centres mentioned in section 7.3.7.

It is not to be expected that the Swedish West Coast will soon grow into one functionally integrated region. The two metropolitan regions Malmö / Lund and Göteborg have so far operated largely independent of each other. Their economies have traditionally been more competitive than complementary. The improvement of infrastructural connections between the two large cities might lead to some increase in contacts but both cities seem to aim more at improving their contacts with cities abroad than with each other. In contrast to the Netherlands and Switzerland, discussions on the possible formation of an ‘urban field’ or ‘network city’ along the Swedish West Coast have not started yet.

What both metropolitan centres might reach in the near future, though, is a considerable gain in their relative importance in the Swedish urban system. Malmö, and to a lesser extent Göteborg, are situated much closer to the leading economic and political centres of the European Union than Stockholm is. Maybe in the somewhat further future, the regions Malmö / Lund and Göteborg will grow into one functionally integrated region after all. The continuation of the strong growth in population and economy of the in-between county of Halland and the construction of a high-speed rail connection through the coastal region can contribute to the two cities getting relatively closer to each other. The Öresund region around Copenhagen, Malmö and Lund has a more realistic perspective of urban field or network city formation on a short term. The integration of this region, however, will be dependent on the further political integration of the European Union and the diminishing of political differences between the Danish and the Swedish side of the Öresund.

7.3.9 Conclusions

West-Sweden experienced a quite modest population growth since the 1970s, a reflection of the stagnating population growth in Sweden as a whole. The process of population redistribution shows features quite similar to the cases of the Netherlands and Switzerland. The largest cities lost a considerable amount of inhabitants between 1970 and 1985, but recovered spectacularly afterwards. The municipalities dominated by traditional industry had more problems to recover from population loss. The fastest growers were the suburban regions of Göteborg and Malmö. The county of Halland, between Göteborg and Malmö, also experienced a steady growth, although at a much lower level than the suburban areas. The diversity in growth performance is an expression of the general diversity in West-Sweden. The case study area is not one region, but rather a collection of regions of a very different character. The area contains two metropolitan regions, some concentrations of manufacturing activities and rural areas that are still quite sparsely populated. The rural areas can be further divided into areas that attract many tourists and are rapidly urbanising, and areas with a semi-peripheral character.

In the 1970s the main migration flows were from the large cities to the suburbs in the immediate surroundings of the cities, and from the most peripheral parts of the countryside towards the metropolitan regions. In this respect, the West-Swedish process of population deconcentration was different from that of the Netherlands and Switzerland,
where also more peripheral rural areas were involved. The main explanatory factors for this difference are probably the preference of most Swedes to live not too far from urban centres (with the peripheral rural and forest areas having quite negative associations of unemployment, lack of services, silence, darkness and the like), and the strong concentration of employment growth of commercial services in and close to the major urban centres. Many Swedes that moved from the countryside to the urban regions in the 1970s combined a permanent residence in the suburb with a summerhouse in their area of origin.

During the 1980s, the large cities received a net migration gain again. This was largely caused by the increase of foreign migration, which was mainly directed to the largest cities. Despite the attempts of the Swedish government to spread migrants over the country in the 1980s and 1990s, the non-Nordic groups are still heavily concentrated in the largest cities. Other groups, mostly young singles and childless couples, found their way to the cities. For them, the metropolitan regions of Göteborg and Malmö function as 'escalator regions'. The migration flow to the suburbs did not stop, but it was of a much lesser extent than in the 1970s. The (semi-) peripheral agricultural areas still lost inhabitants to the metropolitan regions. This was partly compensated by a modest inflow of Norwegian, Danish and German migrants settling in the countryside. The problems of population loss of the large cities were connected to the economic restructuring of the 1970s and 1980s. Especially the crash of the shipbuilding industry, a very dominant branch in the local economies of Göteborg and Malmö, caused large job losses. The shipbuilding industry also disappeared in smaller cities like Helsingborg, Landskrona and Uddevalla. Other branches contributing to the crisis situation were the textile and food industry. The situation of the harbours and in the car industry was also problematic for some time, but these branches managed to recover in the 1990s and are still large employers.

Of the policy fields mentioned in this chapter, the housing policy was the most influential on urbanisation trends in West-Sweden. The Million Homes Programme produced large new estates in Malmö, Göteborg and Lund and several smaller estates in medium-sized cities. Unintentionally the programme contributed to a compact-city-like development because of the location of the largest estates in or close to the largest cities. Unfortunately, almost all of these estates developed into concentration areas of social problems. More recently, infrastructure improvements also played an important role in West-Sweden. The Öresund bridge, opened in 2000, is expected to change traffic with the European mainland dramatically and increase the functional links with the Copenhagen region on the opposite side of the Öresund. Within the region, the connections between Malmö and Göteborg are being upgraded. This might contribute to the integration of the West-Swedish coastal area into one urbanised region. There was also some influence of regional economic policy, although this was above all directed to the North of Sweden and much less to the West. New university colleges were opened in a number of medium-sized West-Swedish cities. Young inhabitants of these cities did not have to leave to the large cities for their higher education anymore. The size of these colleges, however, is very limited.

Physical planning has not been practised on the geographic scale of West-Sweden at all and not in 'sub-regions' either. Some attempts have been made in the Göteborg region, but this happened on a voluntary basis and did not lead to concrete results. Since the late 1970s, the dominant level in Swedish planning is the municipality. The municipal planning monopoly and the lack of a strong regional planning sometimes cause problems
on the regional level, for example with the shopping malls in Skåne and the highway through Bohuslän. The influence of urbanisation policy on West-Sweden has been very limited under these circumstances. Maybe the creation of the new counties of Västra Götaland and Skåne, and the transfer of responsibilities to the county councils, will lead to a more influential regional planning in the near future.
7.4 Case study Northern England

7.4.1 Introduction

In regional policies and government statistics, England is generally divided into eight 'standard regions'. The case study area Northern England (Figure 7.18) consists of three of these standard regions: the North East, the North West and Yorkshire & Humberside. The case study area borders on Scotland in the north, and Wales and the Midlands in the South. It is an area rich in diversity in landscape, degree of urbanisation and population density. The major conurbations of Northern England are almost all concentrated in the south of the area. Merseyside and Greater Manchester have grown together into one polycentric urbanised area in the 20th century. The metropolitan areas of West and South Yorkshire, with Leeds and Sheffield as its major centres, have also grown close to each other. These two concentrations of urbanisation are only divided from each other by the Pennine hills. Another, relatively isolated major concentration area is found on the northeast coast: the Tyne & Wear conurbation, with Newcastle-upon-Tyne as its major centre. Apart from that, there are a number of smaller conurbations and 'freestanding' towns in the case study area.

However, although the population density and degree of urbanisation in the area as a whole are fairly high (with 380 persons per km², the population density is even slightly above the density of the Netherlands), large parts of Northern England are not urbanised at all. By far the largest part of the surface of Northern England is covered by countryside and nature. Four National Parks (Northumberland National Park, Lake District, North Yorkshire Moors and Yorkshire Dales) and part of a fifth (the Peak District) are located in the area.

Like in the earlier case study on West-Sweden, a large part of population distribution trends in Northern England can only be explained when they are placed in their national context. The same goes for the factors influencing shifts in population distribution. The national context becomes even more significant when one focuses on the influence of planning policy on population distribution. The UK planning system has a relatively strong national level, while the regional level is quite weak. Most of the planning measures taken in Northern England in the post-war period were eventually decided on in London, with the regional planning offices (especially in the 1980s and early 1990s) functioning mostly as regional 'branch offices' of national planning policy (Baker, 1998; Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). In recent years, the position of the regional government level in general, including regional physical planning, has been considerably strengthenend, but during the period under study here (1970-1995) the national planning level dominated the scene in Northern England to a large extent. For this reason, in the following also a lot of attention will be paid to the national context in which the regional development of Northern England is taking place. This national context is in most cases the United Kingdom. In the following section, however, the focus will be on England.
Figure 7.18
Case study area Northern England with major cities and main spatial planning concepts
7.4.2 Population redistribution in England since World War II

Although migration between England and the rest of the UK is considerable in size, it is traditionally quite evenly balanced. In the period from 1981 to 1994, the yearly figures were around 100,000 out-migrants and 100,000 in-migrants. By far the most significant form of migration in England is internal migration (Champion et al, 1998). This makes it more useful to look at England as a national context for population distribution trends in the case study area Northern England, then to the whole of the UK. In this section, the post-war development of English population redistribution will be briefly outlined. After that, the main trends since 1970 (the research period for the case study area) will be described in more detail.

The most powerful long-term shift in population distribution within England is the continuously growing 'North-South divide'. The South (the standard regions South East, South West and East- and West- Midlands) has for decades increased its share of the total population while the share of the North (North West, North East and Yorkshire & Humberside) declined. The South East attracted a large flow of in-migrants for a long time out of all the other English regions. Until the 1950s, these migrants were especially attracted to London, but during the 1950s also the suburban areas around London gained inhabitants. Other long-term trends that continued in the early post-war years were the movement from rural to urban areas, and the 'counter-flow' from urban cores to suburbs (Lawton, 1973).

From the late 1950s on, decentralisation became the dominant trend. The South East still experienced a strong growth, but this growth was concentrated outside London. The city of London itself lost a large share of its inhabitants, a trend that continued until the early 1980s. At the same time, the other metropolitan cities in England also started to suffer from migration deficits. The outflow to the suburbs was no longer offset by the inflow from the rural areas. The worst performing cities were found in the North. The cities of Manchester, Newcastle and Liverpool each lost about 18 % of their population between 1961 and 1971 (Champion, 1976). Towards the end of the 1960s, the deconcentration trend strengthened even further. The loss of inhabitants started to strike the wider surroundings of the metropolitan cities then too, so that complete metropolitan areas

| Table 7.14 |

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Sources: OPCS Monitor PP1 84/2, 27 March 1984; PP1 94/1, 15 Febr. 1994; PP1 96/2, 29 Aug. 1996.
experienced population loss (Hall et al., 1973). This decline of the metropolitan cities and their surroundings was accompanied by a declining growth of the larger non-metropolitan cities. The locations with strong population growth were small cities and rural areas. The cities with less than 50,000 inhabitants managed to increase their growth rates while the larger cities suffered declining growth. The English rural areas experienced a growth of 9% between 1951 and 1961, but doubled their growth rate to 18% between 1961 and 1971 (Champion, 1976). The major contribution to the accelerating growth of rural areas came from the ‘rural-urban fringe’, the rural areas located near the metropolitan regions. The remoter rural areas only experienced a modest growth, and in some cases still a population loss (Lawton, 1973).

The population development of England as a whole since 1970 has contrasted sharply with that of earlier decades. In the 24-year period from 1971 to 1995, total population growth was only 5.4% (see Table 7.14). In the 10-year periods of 1951-1961 and 1961-1971, the growth rate was 5.4% and 5.7% respectively (Champion, 1976). Especially in the 1970s, English population growth slowed down remarkably to an almost zero level. From the 1980s on, growth rates recovered only slightly. The English growth trend since 1971 is not only very different from earlier decades, but also from recent trends in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden. Compared to these countries, English population growth was only very modest.

As follows from Table 7.14, population growth was very unevenly distributed across England. East Anglia, the South West and the East Midlands had a growth well above the national average, while all the other regions grew less than the national average. By far the largest differences in growth performance were reached in the early 1970s. East Anglia stands out with a growth of almost 7% in this 5-year period. Afterwards, the regional growth rates came closer together. The Northern regions, especially the North West and North East, lost inhabitants in the 1970s and early 1980s. These regions recovered somewhat afterwards, but still lagged behind compared to the growth rates of other regions.

Table 7.15
Population growth per municipality type, England, 1971-1995 (growth in %)

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<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>27.4</td>
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<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remoter largely rural</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ENGLAND                   0.5     0.3     1.1     1.8     1.5     5.4

Sources: OPCS Monitor PP1 84/2, 27 March 1984; PP1 94/1, 15 Feb. 1994; PP1 96/2, 29 Aug. 1996.
For an analysis at the local level, the administrative level that is most useful for time-series analysis is the local district. The English local districts are fairly large and especially the rural districts are often quite diverse in character. Nevertheless, the Office for Population and Census Statistics (OPCS) constructed a typology of local districts that has been widely used in government statistics and scientific research since it was launched in the mid-1970s. This typology was constructed through cluster analysis (Webber & Craig, 1976; Craig, 1984). The local districts were first divided into 'metropolitan' and 'non-metropolitan', with Inner and Outer London as separate categories. The 'non-metropolitan' districts were grouped in more specific types. The eventual typology of the non-metropolitan districts exists of a division in cities, mixed urban-rural and rural areas. Exceptions were made for three categories with specific labour market and population characteristics: 'industrial districts', 'port, resort and retirement districts', and 'districts with new towns'. The latter category contains the planned growth centres appointed by the British government. Their functions were either to provide housing and work for the overspill of the metropolitan areas, or to promote the redevelopment of former concentration areas of traditional industry (see section 7.4.5.2 and 7.4.5.4).

The main trends since 1971 have been the decline of the metropolitan population and the growth of the rural population (table 7.15). Especially in the early 1970s, the metropolitan areas were hit by severe population loss, while the rural areas were growing at quite high rates. In the 1980s, most metropolitan areas managed to reverse this negative trend. Especially the London population grew considerably from 1986 on. The other metropolitan areas on average only managed to stop population loss and keep their

Table 7.16
Population growth in Northern-English standard planning regions and counties, 1971-1995 (growth in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Manchester</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
<td>-2.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merseyside</td>
<td>-4.6</td>
<td>-4.0</td>
<td>-3.4</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>-14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheshire</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumbria</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancashire</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyne &amp; Wear</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-2.7</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumberland</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire &amp; Humberside</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Yorkshire</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yorkshire</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humberside</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Yorkshire</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTHERN ENGLAND</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: OPCS Monitor PP1 84/2, 27 March 1984; PP1 94/1, 15 Febr. 1994; PP1 96/2, 29 Aug. 1996.
population stable. The rural districts have seen a steady growth of population during the entire period from 1971 until 1995, although they never reached the high growth rates of the early 1970s anymore. The port, resort and retirement districts follow a slightly different trend, with a peak in growth rates in the early 1980s, but their growth rate over the whole period is very comparable with that of the rural areas. Another fast-growing category are the districts with new towns. The effect of the end of new town policy in the 1970s (see section 7.4.5.4) is noticeable, with some time lag, in the rapidly declining growth rates over time.

7.4.3 Population redistribution in Northern England since 1971

As mentioned before (table 7.14), the regions included in the case study area Northern England recorded the lowest rates in population growth of all English regions since the 1970s. Within these Northern regions, however, growth trends were very diverse. Looking at the smaller-scale government level of the counties (table 7.16), it becomes obvious that also within Northern England, areas of growth can be found.

The most obvious picture that appears from table 7.16 is the division between metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties. The metropolitan counties of Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Tyne & Wear suffer severe population losses in the 1970s. During the 1980s, Greater Manchester and Tyne & Wear show a somewhat more positive trend, but the Merseyside area keeps losing inhabitants. The other two metropolitan counties, South and West Yorkshire, also lose inhabitants in the 1970s but their development is markedly less negative than that of the other metropolitan counties. Meanwhile, almost all of the non-metropolitan counties experience a continuous growth. The strongest growers are the county of Cheshire, close to the metropolitan areas of Merseyside and Greater Manchester, and the predominantly rural counties of Northumberland and North Yorkshire.

Table 7.17
Population growth per municipality type, Northern England, 1971-1995; deviation from growth rate N-England in %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal metropolitan</td>
<td>-5.4</td>
<td>-3.2</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other metropolitan</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-metrop. cities</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial districts</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distr. with new towns</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port, resort &amp; retirement</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed urban-rural</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remoter largely rural</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N - ENGLAND</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(growth in %)

Sources: OPCS Monitor PP1 84/2. 27 March 1984; PP1 94/1. 15 Febr. 1994; PP1 96/2. 29 Aug. 1996.

As a result of the relatively poor population growth in Northern England as a whole, almost all the municipality types within the case study region have growth rates well
below those of England as a whole, as can be seen when the municipality categories of Table 7.17 are compared to those of Table 7.15. The non-metropolitan cities hardly manage to reach positive growth rates in the 1980s and 1990s, in contrast to the non-metropolitan cities in England as a whole. The new towns also perform less positive in Northern England than in England as a whole. A part of the explanation for this is the fact that the new town of Washington is located in the local district of Sunderland, which unfortunately is put in the 'other metropolitan districts' category. The local district of Sunderland consists of two very different parts: the city of Sunderland, with severe population losses during the 1970s, and Washington New Town, built in the 1960s and grown very rapidly since then. Nevertheless, Northern England shows exactly the same division of growth and decline as England. The most rapid growth was reached in the most rural areas, and the most urban areas suffered the most rapid decline. Once again, the first half of the 1970s stands out as the period in which the 'urban-rural shift' of population growth peaked.

The different growth trends of local district types resulted in a geographically very uneven distribution of population growth across Northern England as well, as is demonstrated in Appendix Map 8. The colours black and grey, indicating severe decline, are almost exclusively present in the metropolitan areas of Liverpool, Manchester and South and West Yorkshire in the south of the case study area, and on the north-east coast where the Tyne & Wear metropolitan region (Newcastle) and the agglomeration of Cleveland (Middlesbrough) are located. The colour green, representing fast growth, surrounds these two concentrations of decline and occupies almost all other local districts of Northern England, the majority of which are (urbanised) rural of character.

**Table 7.18**
The ten fastest growing and the ten fastest declining local districts in Northern England, 1971-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fastest growing districts</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>distr. type</th>
<th>change 1971-95</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Yorkshire</td>
<td>remote rural</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selby</td>
<td>mixed u - r</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blyth Valley</td>
<td>industrial</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holderness</td>
<td>remote rural</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryedale</td>
<td>remote rural</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halton</td>
<td>new town</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glanford</td>
<td>remote rural</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorley</td>
<td>industrial</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hambleton</td>
<td>remote rural</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congleton</td>
<td>mixed u - r</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fastest declining districts</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>distr. type</th>
<th>change 1971-95</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>princ. metrop.</td>
<td>-22.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>princ. metrop.</td>
<td>-21.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowsley</td>
<td>other metrop.</td>
<td>-20.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>other metrop.</td>
<td>-18.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scunthorpe</td>
<td>industrial</td>
<td>-15.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Tyneside</td>
<td>other metrop.</td>
<td>-12.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easington</td>
<td>new town</td>
<td>-11.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td>other metrop.</td>
<td>-10.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>princ. metrop.</td>
<td>-9.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheffield</td>
<td>princ. metrop.</td>
<td>-8.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: OPCS Monitor PP1 84/2, 27 March 1984; PP1 94/1, 15 Febr. 1994; PP1 96/2, 29 Aug. 1996.
7.4.4 Possible economic, socio-cultural and demographic explanations

7.4.4.1 National economy

The development of the UK economy between 1970 and 1995 was quite different from that of the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden. Economic growth in the early 1970s was much less spectacular, and the decline between 1975 and 1985 was only a gradual one. A remarkable growth recovery was reached in the UK in the second half of the 1980s. However, this recovery was only short-lived, because economic growth after 1990 was at the lowest level in the entire 25-year period under study (Figure 7.19).

Figure 7.19
(yearly average growth per 5-year period, %)

![Graph depicting the development of real gross domestic product, UK, 1970-1995.](image)


Since the Industrial Revolution started in Britain, the country has the oldest industrial heritage in the world. As a consequence, Britain was also one of the first to suffer from the industrial crisis and one of the countries hit most severely by it. In the 19th century, Britain was the world’s leading nation both in economic and political terms, but from the end of this century onwards its economic and political power have declined rapidly. Already in the early 20th century, one could blame Britain for not adapting enough to changes in the world economy. The British government and leading entrepreneurs cherished their industrial pioneering sectors, while the negative consequences of a lack of technical education and a ‘disdain for trade’ were not recognised (Allen, 1979). The consequences were severely felt during the 1930s depression, especially in the regions that specialised in textiles, steel, shipbuilding and coal export. There were some success stories as well, like London’s continued dominance on the worldwide financial market until the mid-1960s (when New York took over). In general, however, the decline of Britain’s economic and political importance continued after World War II when most of its African and Asian colonies became independent. The UK preferred contacts with its former colonies in the Commonwealth above integration in the European Common Market during the 1950s and 1960s: “Like many observers, UK leaders failed to appreciate that the greatest potential for post-war expansion lay in the trade of industrial goods between industrialized countries.” (Champion & Townsend, 1990)

De-industrialisation in the UK has taken place more rigorously than in any other European country in the 1970s and 1980s. This process had a high price: the net loss of no
less than 2.8 million manufacturing jobs between 1971 and 1989. The rapidly declining share of the secondary sector and the equally rapid expansion of the tertiary sector appear clearly in table 7.19. Another interesting feature shown in this table is the development of the quaternary (government) sector. The share of government jobs grew until 1985, when it was relatively high compared to other European countries. After that, the share of quaternary jobs dropped by one-third in only ten years. It is very likely that this resulted mainly from the severe cuts in the government budget under the Thatcher regime (see also section 7.4.5).

Table 7.19
Share of economic sectors in total employment (in %), UK, 1968-1995

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaternary</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD (1997), Historical Statistics.

A major contribution to the massive job losses in the secondary sector came from a small group of trans-national corporations and nationalised companies. The worst case was British Steel where 77,000 jobs were lost between 1976 and 1981 only (Champion & Townsend, 1990). Apart from British Steel, also several other nationalised companies lost thousands of jobs. Nationalisation of manufacturing was seen by the post-war Labour government as a means to control and develop the economy in the public interest. This strategy was generally not very successful in that it did not contribute to a rise in productivity and efficiency. Most of the companies nationalised in the immediate post-war period were privatised (like British Steel and the national railways) or closed down (the coalmines) by the Thatcher government in the 1980s, which led to severe job losses.

Within the EC, the UK as a whole had the highest rate of officially registered unemployment in 1982. Among the EC’s Functional Urban Regions with the worst economic performance in the 1980s (measured by unemployment rate, income, migration and demand for visitors’ travel), the UK was over-represented with 5 of the 10 worst regions in 1984: Liverpool (103 and last), Sunderland (102), Glasgow (101), Belfast (100) and Newcastle (97) (Cheshire et al. 1986). Since the early 1980s, the socio-economic situation in Britain's largest cities has improved considerably, especially in London. London managed to attract major investors in the service sector during the 1980s and is still one of the most wanted locations for headquarters of multinational corporations. The other metropolitan cities of the UK booked successes as well, amongst others helped by the restructuring projects of the Urban Development Corporations (see section 7.4.5.5), but were generally less fortunate than London. The traditional 'North-South divide' in economy and wealth was once more strengthened in the late 1980s and the 1990s.

Figure 7.20 compares the development of suburban and rural growth in Northern England with the economic growth and decline of the UK between 1968 and 1995. The figures for 'suburban and rural growth' shown here represent the aggregate growth of the categories 'industrial districts', 'districts with New Towns', 'port, resort and retirement', 'mixed urban-rural' and 'remoter largely rural', the individual growth rates of which were already presented in table 7.17. The comparison between the growth trends of the Northern English non-urban population and the economic development of the UK is made to test
the hypothesis that suburban and rural growth accelerates when economic growth increases and slows down in periods of economic stagnation or decline (see Chapter 2 and section 6.3, 7.2.3 and 7.3.4 for the cases of the Netherlands, Switzerland and West-Sweden). As in the case of West-Sweden, national economic data have to be compared to regional population data since regional data for the northern English economic development were unfortunately not available. Nevertheless, the acceleration and deceleration of suburban and rural population growth in Northern England seems to correspond to a considerable extent to the ups and downs in the economic development of the UK since 1970.

**Figure 7.20**


Based on data of Table 7.17 and Figure 7.19; sources: OECD (1997), *Historical Statistics*; OPCS Monitor PP1 84/2, 27 March 1984; PP1 94/1, 15 Febr. 1994; PP1 96/2, 29 Aug. 1996.

### 7.4.4.2 Regional economy of Northern England

The transformation from a manufacturing-oriented to a service-oriented economy has seriously affected the population distribution in the UK. The population loss of the northern regions of England in the 1970s can for a large part be attributed to de-industrialisation. Already in the 1970s, Lawton pointed at the negative effects for North-England of the shift away from the traditional industries: “More mobile, technologically-based and assembly-line industries which demand access to labour and markets rather than to power or raw materials have broken the dominance of the nineteenth-century industrial regions and drawn population to Greater London and the Midlands” (Lawton, 1973, p. 75). Since the earliest days of the Industrial Revolution, the economic development of large parts of Northern England has been dominated by manufacturing.

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4) Apart from the literature references, this section is largely based on interviews with academic researchers (the geography and planning departments of the Universities of Newcastle, Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool), local and regional government officials, and representatives of lobby groups (North of England Assembly of local authorities, Government Offices for the North East and North West, Council for the Protection of Rural England and House Builders Federation). See ‘acknowledgements’ for further details.
Numerous locations in the North became highly specialised in one or a few branches over the years. Local and regional specialisations until the 1970s included shipbuilding (Newcastle/ Tyneside, Sunderland, Middlesbrough), harbour trade (Liverpool, Hull), fishing and fish industry (Hull), coal mining (various areas across the North), military equipment (Cumbria), steel (Sheffield and Teesside), and textile (Lancashire, Manchester, West Yorkshire). Unfortunately, all of these branches went through severe decline in the course of the 20th century. Already in 1930s, parts of the North were seen as ‘problem areas’ and this negative image has not changed much since then. The two areas with the most severe economic problems were, and still are, the Merseyside metropolitan region and the North East. Both regions already appeared as concentration areas of population decline in section 7.4.3.

The Merseyside is still a problem area despite being targeted by all regional development programmes since the 1930s. In the 19th century, Liverpool was one of the leading harbours in the world. Its growth was based on trade with North America and the British colonies in Africa and Asia. It was also one of the largest concentrations of manufacturing in the world. Most of the manufacturing activities were directly connected to harbour trade. But already at the start of the 20th century, the dominant position of the Liverpool harbour disappeared. The UK trade became more Europe-oriented and North America lost importance as a trade partner. With the independence of most British colonies, another major export and import market for Liverpool products declined rapidly. Liverpool appeared to be on a too peripheral location for successful trade with the European continent and even within the UK, its position was quite peripheral. Today, there is not much left of the once so proud harbour area: "Liverpool is the archetype of the city which grew furiously to meet a particular need, and, that need having disappeared, has collapsed on itself" (Middleton, 1991). Although Liverpool and the Merseyside region have certainly improved their socio-economic situation from the 1980s on, amongst others helped by the Merseyside Development Corporation and the settlement of branch plants of multinational firms, the region still has to cope with a negative image that keeps many investors away.

The North East was also once a successful and innovative industrial region. From the 1930s on, however, the industrial specialisations of the region became outdated. For a large part of the post-war period, the North East was one of the main targets of the British regional economic policies. The North East became a 'state managed region' (Hayward & Tomaney, 1996). The North East attracted a number of large foreign investors in the 1970s and 1980s. The British government tried to create favourable conditions for foreign investors in this region to create new jobs. Apart from that, the economic regeneration policy for the North East aimed at ‘spin-off’ activities linked to the foreign branch plants. New jobs were highly needed since both coal mining and shipbuilding, until well in the 1970s the dominant sectors in the regional economy, suffered from closures and huge job losses. Another part of the economic regeneration policy stimulated a shift in investments of British companies from the South to the North (Buswell et al, 1987). This also contributed to new job creation, but additional investments from abroad were necessary to counterbalance the job loss in the declining industries. Initially, the foreign investors were mostly USA-based firms, but in the 1980s, firms from Southeast-Asia became the dominant group. Already in the 1970s, the dependence of the North East on foreign capital was questioned. Several academics feared that foreign investments would create a vulnerable branch plant economy dominated by unskilled and unstable employment. The fear about unstable employment proved to be partly justified: in the 1980s, there was a
tendency of disinvestments of USA firms in their North East branch plants, and in the 1990s the closures of the Siemens and Fujitsu branch plants caused huge job losses. Nevertheless, foreign investment continues to play a decisive role in the economic development of the North East and has led to some remarkable successes in long-term job creation as well (Hudson, 1995; Burge, 1998; Hayward & Tomaney, 1996).

To a slightly lesser extent, also the South-Yorkshire region was confronted with serious economic problems. A striking difference with all the other North-English metropolitan areas is that the first oil crisis (1973) hardly affected South-Yorkshire. However, the aftermath of the second oil crisis hit the region harder than any other metropolitan region. Especially in the steel industry that dominates the central city of the region, Sheffield, many thousands of jobs were lost in the early 1980s. To make things worse, the coal mining industry in the neighbouring towns of Barnsley and Doncaster collapsed almost entirely.

The other metropolitan areas in Northern England also went through a crisis period since the 1970s, but their future perspectives seem considerably more positive than those of the Merseyside and Tyne & Wear regions. Recently, especially the metropolitan centres Leeds and Manchester have shown clear signs of recovery. Leeds has strengthened its regional centre function by attracting some large employers in the spheres of financial services, consumer electronics and government. The city, and the metropolitan region of West-Yorkshire in which it is situated, did not attract as many regional development funds as other metropolitan regions, but apparently Leeds managed to escape from economic crisis on its own strength. Another successful economic activity in Leeds is tourism. Much attention is paid to industrial heritage, following the example of the neighbouring city of Bradford that also reached considerable success with this form of urban tourism (Haughton et al, 1994). Manchester attracted many new jobs in various branches within the service sector as well from the 1980s on. After the recession hit Manchester hard as well, the city regained optimism gradually during the 1980s. The Greater Manchester County Council set the stage for a wave of new investments by starting up ambitious projects like the exhibition centre G-Mex. During the 1990s, a new wave of investments occurred which was largely connected to the attempts of Manchester to become host of the Olympics. The Olympic bid failed, but the urban regeneration projects linked to it were still implemented (Bristow, 1994). The presence of an international airport gives Manchester an important advantage in its economic development vis-à-vis the neighbouring Merseyside region.

A powerful trend that could be recognised all over Northern England since the early 1980s is the development of large-scale out-of-town shopping centres. The best-known examples are the Metro Centre in Gateshead (until quite recently the largest shopping centre in the UK), Meadowhall near Sheffield, White Rose Centre near Leeds, and Trafford Park just outside the city centre of Manchester. During the 1980s, the Conservative government stimulated the development of out-of-town shopping centres. In some cases, like the Metro Centre, it was part of a strategy to create new jobs in a declining manufacturing area. However, the negative effects of the shopping centres on retail in the city centres soon became obvious. In the 1990s, the focus shifted back to investments in inner-city shopping areas. These investments sometimes took the shape of exactly the same large-scale shopping centres, only at a very different location: in the middle of the city centre. Examples of this ‘counter-attack’ on the out-of-town shopping centres can be found in Newcastle (Eldon Square) and on several locations in Leeds.
development of new out-of-town shopping centres has in the meantime been restricted severely.

To conclude this brief overview of economic developments, attention should be paid to the rural areas. Although the vast majority of jobs are located in the metropolitan areas, a considerable part of the North-English population is working in the semi-peripheral and peripheral rural areas. Agriculture, as everywhere in Northwest Europe, suffered from severe job loss in recent decades. To make things worse, another large-scale job provider in the non-metropolitan part of the North East, coal mining, collapsed entirely in the 1970s. Another rural part of Northern England, the county of Cumbria, enjoyed a more favourable employment situation until the early 1990s thanks to a thriving military equipment industry. However, the end of the Cold War led to plant closures and massive job losses in this area as well. Alternative job providers were sought, and found, in tourism and food industry. The food industry has the advantage of producing a highly diverse set of products, which promises continued growth in the near future (Ward & Lowe, 1998). The harbour city of Hull is hoping to profit from a growing food industry as well, promoting itself as a 'food technopole'. Furthermore, the rural areas in Northern England have recently experienced an upsurge of foreign tourism, focused on Roman and medieval heritage and the romantic image of the traditional English countryside. Northern England is also in the rich possession of a number of national parks, of which the Lake District belongs to the major tourist attractions in the UK. The income generated by the spending of tourists and the capital of well-off people migrating from the cities make the rural areas to the part of Northern England which in the end might have the most positive outlook for the near future.

7.4.4.3 Socio-cultural and demographic changes in the UK and Northern England

Foreign migration accounts for most of the population growth of the UK in the 1980s and 1990s. The in-migration surplus from the early 1980s on was a major change for the UK after the strong net loss in the 1970s (Table 7.20). As in most European countries, the vast majority of the in-migrants settled in the largest metropolitan areas, especially in the core cities of these areas. A striking feature in the UK situation is the contrast between London and the other metropolitan centres. Especially for the non-white immigrants, London has traditionally been a strongly preferred destination. This is expressed in statistics on the distribution of non-white ethnic groups in the UK. According to Census data, in 1991 no less than 21.6% of all non-whites in the UK lived in Inner London, while an additional 23.2% lived in Outer London. This high overall figure for London is connected to specific minority groups. Black Caribbeans, Black Africans and Bangladeshis are heavily concentrated in the London metropolitan area; however, other ethnic groups like Indians and Pakistanis are distributed more evenly across the country (Radcliffe, 1996). Apart from the non-white groups, mainly from the countries of the 'New Commonwealth' (former colonies of the UK, gaining independence after World War II), the UK also receives a sizable immigrant flow from other European countries. The European migrants

5) Apart from the literature references, this section is largely based on interviews with academic researchers (the geography and planning departments of the Universities of Newcastle, Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool), local and regional government officials (North of England Assembly of local authorities, Government Offices for the North East and North West) and representatives of lobby groups (Council for the Protection of Rural England and House Builders Federation). See 'acknowledgements' for further details.
are distributed quite evenly across the UK. However, all migrant groups have shown a clear preference for the metropolitan areas (Champion et al., 1996).

The metropolitan areas in Northern England were also once a major attraction area of foreign migrants. The attraction was mainly caused by the employment opportunities in the traditional manufacturing industries. A large part of the foreign migrants came from Ireland. After the decline of the traditional industries in the post-war period, foreign migration to the Northern cities declined dramatically. In recent years, the share of ethnic minorities in the Northern metropolitan areas population is on the rise again, but it is still only slightly above, and in some cases even below, the English average (Radcliffe, 1996). For Northern standards, the cities of Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds contain considerable concentrations of ethnic minorities, but their share of the total population is only a fraction of that in London.

### Table 7.20
In-migration, out-migration and net in-migration, UK, 1970-1998 (yearly averages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Immigration, yearly average (x 1000)</th>
<th>Emigration, yearly average (x 1000)</th>
<th>Net immigration, yearly average (x 1000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970-1975</td>
<td>205.3</td>
<td>255.7</td>
<td>-50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-1980</td>
<td>186.6</td>
<td>207.7</td>
<td>-21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1985</td>
<td>186.4</td>
<td>214.0</td>
<td>-27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-1990</td>
<td>235.6</td>
<td>200.6</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1995</td>
<td>243.2</td>
<td>220.7</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
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</table>


Alongside with the increasing share of ethnic minorities, the UK population changed radically also in terms of household composition. As in the three other countries discussed earlier, the average household size in the UK dropped rapidly since the 1960s. This process was combined with a gradual increase of the proportion of one- and two-person households at the expense of the proportion of larger (family) households. As in the cases of the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden, also in the UK the one-person household was the most rapidly growing household type (Table 7.21).

Among the native British population, the two main trends throughout the last decades have been a North-to-South shift and an urban-rural shift. ‘The South’ (including the regions South East, South West and East Anglia) has already for many decades experienced a net migration gain from ‘The North’ (the rest of England, Scotland and Wales). Recently, this shift from North to South has especially been a strong trend among young, highly educated people. The most popular destination for young highly educated migrants is the South East, and London in particular. The South East has been labelled an ‘escalator region’: the region attracts a more than proportional share of the ‘potentially upwardly mobile’ young adults through migration, and promotes these migrants at rates significantly higher than in other regions (Fielding, 1992). The escalator region-concept
could partly explain the difference in recent growth performance between London and the other metropolitan areas. All UK metropolitan areas, including London, have to deal with continued flows of out-migrants to the suburbs and rural areas, but apparently, London can compensate for this outflow partly by attracting young highly educated people. The other metropolitan centres have much less success in this respect, although each of the metropolitan centres certainly acts as a magnet to young people looking for education or jobs in its own region.

Despite the apparently increasing attraction of metropolitan areas, most of all London, for foreign migrants and young highly educated people, there still exists a steady 'counter-flow' of migrants moving from the (inner) cities to the suburbs and the countryside. After a long period in which the metropolitan areas gained population at the cost of the non-metropolitan areas, in the 1960s the picture was turned around. The rural areas, including the areas remote from the metropolitan centres, started to attract considerable amounts of migrants from the metropolitan areas. Most of them were young families and people close to or past retirement. This trend continued until the mid-1970s, when migration to the rural areas became much less intensive. From the late 1980s on, however, urban-to-rural migration accelerated once more (Champion, 1992).

In the 1980s and 1990s, there has been a debate among UK geographers about whether this increase in urban-rural migration represented a new trend in population distribution, or was only a temporary break of the long-term trend to increasing concentration. Some migration researchers, most notably Champion, saw the urban-rural shift as a new trend in population distribution. This trend was labelled 'counter-urbanisation', defined as a growth of the population of the non-metropolitan areas at the expense of the population of the metropolitan areas (see Chapter 2). Champion saw counter-urbanisation as a cyclical process, in which the ups and downs in urban-rural migration were linked to economic growth and decline, demographic trends, and interestingly also the urbanisation policy of the UK government (Champion, 1989). One of the researchers seeing the urban-rural shift as only a short-term break with the long-term urbanisation process was Cheshire, who judged the recovery of population growth in the metropolitan centres in the 1980s as the start of a new growth period for the cities (Cheshire, 1995).

The challengers of the counter-urbanisation hypothesis in the UK might find some support in the seemingly strong interrelatedness between economic restructuring, socio-demographic restructuring and urban population growth that Figure 7.21 suggests. In this figure, the hypothesis is tested that the growing share of service sector jobs and the growing share of one- and two-person households were the major explanatory factors for the recovery of urban population growth since the mid-1980s in Northwest-Europe (see

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 persons</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 persons</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 persons</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 persons or more</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Champion, T. et al (1996), The population of Britain in the 1990s, p.76.
Chapter 2, and section 6.4, 7.2.3 and 7.3.4 for the cases of the Netherlands, Switzerland and West-Sweden). When only looking at the trendline of urban population growth, the recovery after 1985 looks impressive. However, if also the growth percentages are taken into account, the urban recovery appears to be not more than the end of a period of decline, and certainly not the start of a period of growth. Between 1986 and 1991, the urban population of Northern England (the local district categories ‘principal metropolitan’, ‘other metropolitan’ and ‘non-metropolitan cities’ from table 7.17 taken together) remained as good as stable, and between 1991 and 1995 there was only 0.2% growth. As demonstrated earlier in table 7.15, the recovery of urban population growth that seemed to occur in the UK in the 1980s was mostly a recovery of London’s population growth and was hardly shared in the other metropolitan regions. Meanwhile, the rural areas have shown the fastest rates of population growth over the entire period of 1971 to 1995. A striking phenomenon, judging from tables 7.15 and 7.17, is that the more rural districts demonstrate a considerably higher growth rate in recent years than the mixed urban-rural districts, which suggests that the urban-rural shift has gained power and out-migrants of the cities move across quite long distances. In the end, therefore, for Northern England the counter-urbanisation hypothesis seems more valid than the idea that this process was only a short-term break of a long-term urban growth trend.

**Figure 7.21**
Development of the share of service sector jobs and the share of one- and two-person households in the UK, and urban population growth in Northern England, 1968-1995

Based on data of tables 7.17, 7.19 and 7.21.
Left axis: percentage scale for share of 1- and 2-p. households and service sector jobs.
Right axis: percentage scale for urban population growth.
7.4.5 British policies on housing, planning and regional development

Physical planning measures to influence population distribution in the UK cannot be rightly understood without some knowledge of the political context in which planning policy took place. British planning has traditionally been quite closely interrelated with housing policy and regional economic policy. Therefore, before turning to physical planning, a short outline of the British housing and regional policy will be given. First, some of the main characteristics of the British welfare state, the context in which all these policies took place, will be described.

7.4.5.1 The British welfare state

The 1942 Beveridge report is generally considered the 'blueprint' of the British post-war welfare state. In this report, the key aim of the welfare state was defined as providing 'social security', meaning the prevention of poverty, for all citizens (Lowe, 1993). In this respect, the British welfare state type has different intentions than the Swedish and Dutch version of the welfare state. While the British welfare state requires the state to guarantee all citizens a 'national minimum of civilised life', the Swedish and Dutch welfare state types require the government to reduce inequalities of wealth and power. The British welfare state type could be described as a 'social security state', while the Swedish and Dutch type could be labelled 'social welfare states' (Furniss & Tilton, 1979).

Government investments in economic development have long been a prominent feature of British welfare state policies. Instruments to promote economic growth were nationalisation of manufacturing companies and government funds to encourage investment in economically backward regions in Scotland, Wales and North-England (see section 7.4.4.2, 7.4.5.2 and 7.4.6). Other important activities within the broad field of welfare state policies were housing and physical planning. These two policy fields coincided regularly, especially in the case of the construction of New Towns. Most of them were meant to provide housing for the out-migrants from London and other metropolitan cities. Some of the new towns had the main purpose to contribute to the revitalisation of the economy in areas struggling with industrial decline; in these cases, the construction of the new towns was a complicated combination of housing, physical planning and regional economic policy. The position of the social rental sector on the UK housing market has recently been much more modest than in most continental European countries. Only directly after World War II, there was considerable activity in the social housing sector, mainly because of a huge housing shortage. But afterwards, the role of social housing has gradually declined to a quite marginal level (see section 7.4.5.3).

The Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher is often held responsible for the 'dismantling' of the British welfare state. However, this process already started before Thatcher came to power. It is true that the Conservatives accelerated the dismantling process considerably (Pierson, 1994), but already in the mid-1970s, it has been the Labour government that decided to abandon the goal of full employment. The British welfare state was then thought to be in deep crisis. Before, the welfare state system was organised around the belief of Keynesian economists that governments could and should always guarantee a high level of employment. This demanded huge government investments in crisis periods. The negative effect of these investments was a high level of inflation, and they did not solve the unemployment problem either (Lowe, 1993). Still, there was a major difference between the Labour government of the mid-1970s and the Conservatives
gaining power in 1979. The Labour stance was that a more complex society needed more government intervention and that the market was imperfect. The 'New Right' wanted to minimise government intervention and saw the market as the solution to the economic crisis: "The stated aim of this government was to attack the whole concept of the post-war welfare state and replace it with a more market-oriented approach" (Newman & Thornley, 1996, p. 111). However, this attack on the welfare state has apparently been not very successful. From a comparative study of the Reagan administration in the US and the Thatcher administration in the UK, Pierson (1994, p. 5) concludes that "(...) the welfare state stands out as an island of relative stability. Compared with the preceding decades, moreover, the 1980s did not bring particularly radical change in social policy". Although some sectors, like housing, suffered dramatic cutbacks, the overall impact of the politics of retrenchment during the Thatcher regime has actually been quite modest. At the end of the 1990s, the basic structure of the British welfare state is still very much like it was in the 1940s (Lowe, 1993).

In the following sections, the policy fields within the UK welfare state with the most direct influence on population distribution will be briefly discussed. Although the policy fields often overlapped or coincided, they will be treated separately on the level of the UK. After discussing the UK regional economic policy, housing policy and physical planning policy, the focus will be on the effects of these policies in the case study region Northern England.

7.4.5.2 Regional economic policy

In the grave depression of the 1930s, the 'regional problem' appeared on the agenda of the UK government. The parts of the country that were most heavily specialised in traditional industries like coalmining, shipbuilding and engineering started to suffer severe job losses. Most of these specialised industrial regions were located in Northern England, Wales and Scotland. Already before the 1930s, wealth was clearly concentrated in South of England, but the depression increased the gap between 'the North' (Northern England, Wales and Scotland) and 'the South' considerably. The UK government wanted to stimulate the economic development of the disadvantaged areas of the North, which led to a series of measures in regional economic policy since then (Hall, 1992).

In the early stage of regional policy, out-migration of the depressed areas was encouraged. Later in the 1930s, more constructive measures were taken, including training schemes for the unemployed and attempts to attract new industrial development. These measures did not lead to a noticeable decline of unemployment in the problem regions, most of all because entrepreneurs were not keen on settling in the problem regions (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). Therefore, in the 1940s, the Barlow commission advocated a more active role of the UK government in the distribution of industrial population. In the end report of this commission, the basics of British post-war planning were presented. The Barlow report was a combination of physical and economic planning measures. The planning policy set out in the report should lead to the solution of two problems: the regional disparities in economic development and the fast and uncontrolled growth of the conurbations. The recommendations concerning the first issue were to change the employment structure of the problem regions of the North, making their economic structure more diversified so that the regions would not be totally dependent on declining industries anymore (Hall, 1992). For the UK in general, a sprawl of industries was seen as a desirable development. As a part of this sprawl policy, a part of the New Towns (see...
also section 7.4.5.5) was designated in declining industrial areas to promote the regeneration of these areas (House, 1973).

In the post-war period, regional economic policy has taken various forms and gone through ups and downs, largely connected to changes in political power. Labour governments, trying to reach a more equal distribution of wealth, tended to give a high priority to the economic development of problem regions. Conservative governments on the other hand appeared to be more focused on promoting the development of successful regions and cities, which in their view would be the best strategy for the economy of the UK as a whole. Apart from that, there were numerous changes in the geographical area in which measures were taken; in some periods, the problem regions as a whole were targeted; in other periods, the approach was more directed to the parts of the region with the most serious problems. A clear continuity in regional policy was lacking (Hall, 1992).

In the 1960s, a revival of regional economic planning took place when the economic planning regions were installed. For each of these regions, economic planning councils set up 'strategic plans'. The eventual plans were highly ambitious but never resulted in concrete policy measures (Baker, 1998). During the 1970s, the usefulness of the strategic plans was questioned increasingly. At the end of the 1970s, the strategic plans were no longer used in regional economic development. Parallel to the development of strategic regional plans, national policy initiatives aimed at the problem regions were considerably increased in scope. In the early 1970s, all of the UK except the South East, South West and East Anglia was assisted with national government funds for economic regeneration. A powerful combination of instruments in this period was the 'selective employment tax', meaning that manufacturing was taxed much less than tertiary sector activities, together with the 'regional employment premium' for manufacturing in the problem regions (Hall, 1992). After the Conservatives regained power in 1979, the assisted areas were considerably reduced in size. Once again, regional economic policy was concentrated on the areas in most serious need. The tax and premium measures mentioned above were already stopped in the mid-1970s due to EU regulations. A new attempt to reach economic regeneration was to attract foreign investors to the problem regions (see section 7.4.4.2). Regional economic policy has still not faded away completely, but has become much less extensive now than it was in the early post-war years, and in the 1970s. A fortunate development for the problem regions was the growing involvement of the EU in economic development via the European Regional Development Fund since the 1980s, which partly compensated for the cutbacks by the UK government (Champion & Townsend, 1990).

Over the years, the various forms of regional policy have certainly created jobs that would otherwise not have been created in the problem regions. Nevertheless, the sad conclusion after over 60 years of regional policy is that the problems of the economically disadvantaged areas in Northern England, Wales and Scotland are still largely unsolved. The newly created jobs could not compensate for the enormous job losses in the traditional industries. The 'North-South divide' is still a fact and will probably remain in the foreseeable future.

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7.4.5.3 Housing policy

The British housing policy in the period immediately after World War II was dominated by two huge problems: housing shortage and poor housing quality of many urban neighbourhoods. Several inner cities were devastated by air strikes during the war. Additionally, rapidly rising birth rates and higher housing quality demands made the housing shortage even larger. In the inner city slum areas, the pre-war tradition could be labelled the 'sanitary approach'. The government attempted to improve amenities and to regulate overcrowding. It proved very difficult to reach these goals in a housing market dominated to a large extent by the private sector (Atkinson & Moon, 1994). Slum clearance as a means to improve housing quality was first mentioned in the Housing Act of 1930, but started on a large scale only after the war. For decades, the solution to unsatisfactory housing conditions was simply to demolish slum areas and build new housing complexes afterwards: "Inherent in the approach was a belief that, simply by eradicating all the unsanitary housing, a once-and-for-all solution could be achieved. There was, however, a gradual realisation in the 1950s that the housing condition problem was not disappearing (....). Given the cost of the clearance programme and its increasingly apparent futility in the face of the persistence of poor housing, it was inevitable that the 'physical approach' would begin to be questioned" (Atkinson & Moon, 1994, p. 25). From the mid-1960s onwards, the focus shifted from clearance to renovation of old slum housing.

The main solution for the housing shortage was initially to build large projects on greenfield sites: city extensions and the earlier mentioned New Towns. In the newly constructed housing, the public sector was much more prominent than before the war, especially in the late 1940s and early 1950s when about 80% of housing construction was in the public sector. But private (owner-occupied) housing reclaimed its dominant position from the late 1950s onwards. The Conservatives increased the prominent role of owner-occupied housing even more in the 1980s. The housing policy of the Conservatives focused on promoting owner-occupied housing, revitalising the private rented sector and minimise local authority housing provision. A prominent feature of Conservative housing policy was the 'Right to Buy initiative', in which tenants were offered the chance to buy their house for much less than the market price. According to the Thatcher government, local authority housing was only to be provided for those who really needed it (Pierson, 1994; Atkinson & Moon, 1994).

An important connection between housing policy and physical planning is made via the Household Projections, which are published every four years. The amount of houses to be built in each region and local district draws heavily on these Household Projections. The Household Projections of 1992 caused a heated planning debate, since they implied 4.4 million new households should be provided with a house in the following 25 years (Breheny & Hall, 1996). We will return to this issue in the next section.

7.4.5.4 Physical planning: national urbanisation policy

Several British cities were amongst the first in the world to develop comprehensive plans on a neighbourhood and city level. The need to plan was initially caused by the rapid changes in the built environment through industrialisation, and the social and hygienic problems of overcrowding in the cities. Out of urban planning, the first attempts to plan developments on the larger scale of regions and the entire country were gradually
developing during the first half of the 20th century. A milestone in the evolution of British planning was the Barlow Report of 1940, which constituted the philosophical basis for all British urban and regional planning since then. This report presented the three basic principles of British physical planning that remained valid for three decades: physical containment of the large cities, protection of the countryside and the construction of comprehensively-planned new communities (Hall et al., 1973). Of these three principles, the first two are still valid today; the third one, the construction of New Towns, was abandoned as a planning goal in 1974, although the possibility to restart such a programme is still mentioned in planning discussions regularly. The stress on the containment of urban growth was a reaction to the rapid sprawl along roads and railways, leading to huge losses of agricultural land, especially in Southern England (Hall, 1992).

In England, the local authorities decide about which developments are allowed to take place and issue local development plans regularly. The national government supervises the local planning actions. Since the late 1980s, this is done via legislation and a series of 'planning policy guidance notes'. These documents are each devoted to a certain topic relevant for planning decisions. Parallel to this, the national government also started to issue 'regional planning guidance notes' which are meant to set the regional framework for local planners. In the near future, regional planning might become more independent from national planning after all, as an effect of the devolution process started by the Blair administration (Baker, 1998). The national government also decides on appeals against local development plans. All this means that although the local authorities make the plans for their territory, in the end it is the national government that is the most influential planning authority in England (Newman & Thornley, 1996). In contrast to the Netherlands, however, the English land market is dominated by the private sector. The government sees land as a commercial good and leaves land transactions entirely to the free market. The major exception to this rule are the Urban Development Corporations, set up in the 1980s to redevelop derelict harbour and industrial sites in the cities (Dransfeld & Voss, 1993).

Another striking feature of the UK planning system is the huge influence of a number of interest groups and lobbies. The most powerful of those groups are the Council for the Protection of Rural England and the House Builders Federation. Also organisations of planning academics and practitioners like the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Town and Country Planning Association have an important role in the UK planning debate.

Following the recommendations in the above-mentioned Barlow Report, in the post-war years 14 New Towns were developed throughout Britain. Eight of them were located on the outskirts of the London metropolitan area. The New Towns in the London area were all meant to provide housing and working locations for the overspill of London. In other locations, New Towns sometimes had different purposes (see section 7.4.5.1 and 7.4.6). All of the New Towns started in the late 1940s were entirely new settlements of a modest size, with around 50,000 inhabitants. This modest size can be traced back to one of the most important inspirations for the New Town planners: the garden city. Like Ebenezer Howard at the start of the century, the New Town planners stressed that the new settlements should be limited in size, so that the countryside was within reach for all inhabitants (Ward, 1993). In 1952, an additional programme of ‘Town Expansion Schemes’ was launched to regulate large-scale expansions around existing settlements (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997).
In the 1960s, a second generation of New Towns was planned. Most of these New Towns were not new settlements, but expansions around existing towns or villages. Another major difference with the first generation was the size: the plans of the second generation New Towns aimed at settlements of 100,000 to 200,000 people. Just like in the Netherlands, in the early 1960s alarming projections were issued concerning the population growth of the UK. In 1960, the UK was thought to have 64 million people in the year 2000, while in 1965 this figure was even raised to 75 million based on the high birth rate of the early 1960s (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). Added to this, the first signs of a considerable growth of foreign migration and a decrease of average household size were already noticed. This called for a huge effort in housing construction. A new generation of New Towns was a logical planning outcome. Most of the second generation New Towns did not even come close to their ambitious goals regarding population size in the end. After the steep decline in natural growth in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the population projections were revised downwards drastically. This caused the eventual New Town projects to become considerably more modest in size than initially planned (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). The further construction of New Towns was more or less stopped in the mid-1970s, and the Expanded Towns programme was gradually phased out. An important additional reason for this was the shift in attention to the problems of declining urban population and decaying inner city neighbourhoods (Hall, 1992).

Figure 7.22
The historic centre of Durham: a ‘World Heritage’ site surrounded by a Green Belt

While the development of new settlements was abandoned as a planning target in the 1970s, two other principles from the Barlow report have survived until today: the separation of conurbations and the protection of the countryside. The spatial concept developed to prevent conurbations from growing together was the Green Belt. Together with the New Towns, the Green Belt formed the UK version of the policy of concentrated deconcentration that later reappeared, in different shapes, in other European countries like the Netherlands and Switzerland. The Green Belt is a zone around a metropolitan area where building activities are severely restricted with the aim to keep the zone ‘open’. The first Green Belt was designated around London. Later, all other metropolitan areas were also restricted in their expansion possibilities through Green Belts. Some smaller,
freestanding towns, like York, Oxford and Nottingham, were also surrounded by Green Belts. Dispersal of population and economic activities around these smaller cities is thought to harm the unique historic character of their medieval city centres. Another example of a smaller city surrounded by a Green Belt is Durham, shown on Figure 7.22. This Green Belt has been installed as early as 1996, in response to a campaign of local citizens who feared that without planning protection, the city would disperse and eventually merge with neighbouring settlements. Throughout the years, the Green Belts were also seen to serve additional aims, like promoting urban regeneration, providing urban inhabitants with close-by access to the countryside, preserving the special character of historic towns and defining the borders of urban and metropolitan regions (DOE, 1995).

The need for and effectiveness of Green Belts is continuously debated. Regularly, planning researchers argue that Green Belts rather promote further deconcentration than prevent it. People and companies wanting to move out of the metropolitan core are generally not allowed to build in the Green Belt. This often means that the out-migrants ‘jump over’ the Green Belt and settle in rural or suburban areas still within reach of the cities. This migration over longer distances generates a growth in mobility that is not in line with the current stress in UK planning policy to aim at compact city growth and urban regeneration. Still, the UK government seems determined to stick to the Green Belt concept: “The essential characteristic of Green Belts is their permanence. Their protection must be maintained as far as can be seen ahead.” (DOE, 1995). The national planners are supported in this stance by the lobby of the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

In direct connection with the Green Belt policy is the aim to protect the character of the countryside. The national planners have several strong instruments at their disposal to protect the ecologically and culturally most valuable parts of the countryside. The best-known examples are National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coasts. In National Parks, building projects are restricted to a minimum. In the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Heritage Coasts the restrictions are less, but building projects have to fit in with the existing character of the area. Initially, the National Parks were managed and planned by the local districts in which they were located. Since 1995, each of the parks has its own independent National Park authority, which is now the only local planning authority in the National Park area. The National Park authorities have to issue a management plan, which includes decisions about which building developments are allowed to take place. The two main purposes of National Parks, on the one hand preservation of natural beauty and on the other hand the promotion of the economic and social well-being of its inhabitants, have proven hard to combine (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). In recent years, the protection of the natural environment was emphasised most, but this purpose is under increasing pressure from the continuously growing number of tourists. Nevertheless, tourism is the major job and wealth provider in the National Park areas, which places the planning authorities for a dilemma hard to solve.

In the post-war period, the focus of countryside planning policies has long been on these designated parts of the countryside. In the most recent planning policy guidance on the countryside, however, the UK government states: “The priority now is to find new ways of enriching the quality of the whole countryside whilst accommodating appropriate development, in order to complement the protection which designations offer” (DOE, 1997, p. 6). The intention of the government is clearly to keep the countryside as much in
its ‘original’ state as possible. The above statement leaves a lot of space open for different interpretations, most of all concerning the question which development is ‘appropriate’. The experience of the preceding decades has shown that with increasing household incomes and mobility, it is hard to counteract the strong trend of people wanting to move out to a house in the countryside. As demonstrated in section 7.5.2, both the mixed urban-rural districts and the remoter rural districts were among the fastest-growing district types in England between 1971 and 1995. With the projected growth of the UK population with 4.4 million new households between 1991 and 2016, the pressure on the countryside will undoubtedly increase further. In addition, also economic growth in the countryside has in recent decades outpaced the economic development of the metropolitan areas. Some of the effects on the countryside as summarised by the Council for the Protection of Rural England (1996, p. 5) are totally opposed to the protectionist intentions of the national planners:

"11,000 hectares of countryside is being built on every year (...) in the last 30 years, an area of rural tranquility almost the size of Wales has been lost (...) CPRE estimates that rural traffic growth could be as much as 96-164% between 1994-2025. This compares with 57-87% for the same period for all roads."

In the planning policy guidance on the countryside, no instruments are provided with which the planners could prevent undesired developments in the parts of the countryside that are not belonging to the designated areas like National Parks. It will be largely up to the local governments to decide how they interpret the rather vague national policy intentions.

In the Household Projections 1992, a growth of 4.4 million new households before 2016 in England is foreseen. The publication of these Household Projections shook the English planning community. The question arising from this was not only how to provide all these new households with satisfactory housing, but even more where to build these houses (Breheny & Hall, 1996). Large parts of the country’s territory are subject to severe building restrictions, being part of a Green Belt, National Park, Area of Outstanding Beauty or Heritage Coast. Especially the usefulness of holding on the restrictions to build on Green Belt land is seriously questioned. On the other hand, the huge amount of vacancies in urban areas and the availability of several infill sites on former industrial land could provide in a large part of the need for new housing projects. The issue how to provide the expected household growth with enough and adequate housing has dominated the UK planning discussion in recent years, most of all in crowded regions like Greater London, the North West, and West Yorkshire.

7.4.5.5 Regional and urban physical planning

In the UK planning system, the regional level has traditionally been considerably weaker than the national and local levels. Still, there have been serious attempts to plan at a regional level in the past decades. The heyday of regional planning was the period from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, when the regional economic planning councils set up a series of ‘strategic plans’ (see also section 7.4.5.2). The strategic plans were mainly about economic development, but also included several measures in the sphere of infrastructure and housing development. Amongst others, the strategic plans indicated preferred locations for the development of New Towns and other sites of projected urban growth. However, the regional level of government that was needed to carry out these over-
ambitious strategic plans never came about, and towards the end of the 1970s the interest in regional planning faded away almost completely (Hall, 1992; Baker, 1998).

At the end of the 1980s, regional physical planning got a new impetus through the instrument of regional planning guidances. These guidances were meant to set out the main principles of the future spatial development of the regions as preferred by the national government. First, the Secretary of State responsible for physical planning issued a draft version of the regional planning guidance. After receiving comments from the region (generally through the association of local authorities in the region involved), the Secretary of State would issue the final version. Although regional planners and stakeholders had the chance to comment on the regional planning guidances, the eventual guidance still mainly had the character of national planning policy applied on a regional level. Local structure plans and development plans were expected to fit in the framework that is stated in the regional planning guidances. In this way, local planning takes place under considerable national control (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). Since the start of the Blair administration in 1997, several initiatives were taken to transfer political responsibilities from the national to the regional level. As a part of this 'devolution' process, the procedure of regional planning guidances was also changed. The region itself is given more responsibility for the regional planning guidance. The association of local authorities writes the draft version and the Secretary of State is only involved in the final version of the document. If the Labour devolution programme will be implemented completely, the regional planning powers will extend further in the next years. Recently, Regional Development Agencies were set up. Initially, these agencies are only meant to encourage regional economic development, but it is intended that the agencies will also get physical planning responsibilities later. In the near future, regional planning might be carried out by the Regional Development Agencies in cooperation with the yet to be formed regional chambers, in which representatives of regional commerce and local authorities will be gathered (Baker, 1998).

The only areas where regional planning really seemed to get established during the 1970s were the metropolitan regions. In 1974, metropolitan county councils were installed in all metropolitan areas of the UK. The Greater London area already had a metropolitan council much earlier. However, all of the metropolitan county councils were abolished in 1986, which virtually brought an end to coordination of planning measures on the metropolitan level. The UK government issued a number of 'strategic planning guidances' for some of the metropolitan regions at the end of the 1980s, but these were merely advisory statements. The Conservatives considered the metropolitan tier of government 'wasteful' and 'unnecessary' (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). Their approach of urban problems was mainly aimed at encouraging private sector initiatives. One of the main vehicles to redevelop derelict urban areas through private investments was the Urban Development Corporation (UDC). During the 1980s, eleven UDCs started their activities on several locations within all metropolitan areas of the UK. Another initiative to revive decayed city areas were the enterprise zones, where private investments were encouraged through tax relief and more relaxed planning controls (Hall, 1992).

The UDCs were given extraordinary powers in acquiring land and controlling and determining land use within their territory. The UDC could simply acquire any piece of land located in its designated area. A striking feature of the UDC is the absence of any obligation to justify its planning decisions to local governments. The only tier of government the UDC had to justify its planning actions to was the national government.
This was part of the overall Thatcherite strategy in which local government influence was diminished in all possible respects. In addition, much of the normal participation possibilities of the local inhabitants did not apply to UDC projects (Newman & Thornley, 1996). Especially in the London Docklands area, this has led to some serious clashes between the local governments situated there and the UDC. The UDCs in the provincial conurbations tried to attune their actions more to local government planning and the needs of the local population (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). In the late 1990s, most UDCs ceased to exist because they were installed for only a limited period.

The results of the UDCs at the end of the 1990s are impressive when the changes in the physical environment of the once derelict UDC areas are considered. The UDCs were helped in reaching their results by the recovery of the UK economy in the second half of the 1980s (Hall, 1992), but much of their success can also be attributed to the special planning powers and the entrepreneurial, target-oriented approach of the development corporations. However, the results are much less convincing with respect to the needs of the local population. The UDCs produced large amounts of luxury apartments and fancy office complexes, but these apartments and offices were mainly to the benefit of people coming from outside of the cities. A positive effect of the UDC actions is that many city centres have managed to attract considerably more investments and acquired a more positive image to the outside world. In several cities, the UDC results inspired local governments to set up public-private partnerships aiming at improving the city centre (Newman & Thornley, 1996). Indirectly, the local population has maybe benefited from the UDCs after all, for example through an increase of day tourism and shopping expenditures in the city centres.

Apart from the encouragements of private investments through UDCs and enterprise zones, a series of government funding programmes has been targeting the inner cities since the 1970s. The Labour government started the Urban Programme in 1977 to solve the problems of concentration areas of 'multiple deprivation' in the inner cities. The Thatcher government taking over in 1979 continued this programme, though on a more modest financial basis. New additional initiatives were taken when Labour took over power again in 1997, resulting in the 'Urban Renaissance' programme in 1999 (Urban Task Force, 1999). The effect of all these programmes has so far been doubtful (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). Especially in the metropolitan areas of Northern England, the problems of deprivation proved to be persistent.
7.4.6 Housing, planning and regional development in Northern England

In Northern England, 7 locations have been designated as New Towns in the post-war period. These New Towns were concentrated in two areas: the (former) coal fields of the North East, and in the zone surrounding the Merseyside and Greater Manchester metropolitan regions in the North West (see Figure 7.18). The New Towns in the North East were not primarily meant to provide housing for the out-migrants of the Tyne & Wear metropolitan region. Their main aim was to provide an attractive living environment for the miners, working in the coal mines around Durham, and their families (Newton Aycliffe, Peterlee) and, later, to give an impetus to the regeneration of the Tyne & Wear region after the decline of shipbuilding and coal mining (Washington). Figure 7.23 shows Newton Aycliffe as an example of the first generation of New Towns, built in the immediate post-war period. Typical features of this and other New Towns built in this period are its small scale, dominance of low-rise row housing and the abundance of green surrounding the dwellings. The New Towns in the North West were mainly built to provide housing for the overspill of Greater Manchester and Merseyside. In addition, these New Towns were destined to grow into new concentrations of employment in the service sector. In the case of Warrington, this aim was reached. The other New Towns were less fortunate in this respect. Central Lancashire is the primary regional example of a New Town downsized considerably after the 1965 population projections proved to be much too high (see section 7.4.5.4). This New Town was planned to grow with no less than 250,000 inhabitants, but eventually came no further than a growth of about 20,000 people.

Figure 7.23
Newton Aycliffe New Town

5 Apart from the literature references, this section is largely based on interviews with academic researchers (the geography and planning departments of the Universities of Newcastle, Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool), local and regional government officials (North of England Assembly of local authorities, Government Offices for the North East and North West) and representatives of lobby groups (Council for the Protection of Rural England and House Builders Federation). See 'acknowledgements' for further details.
In the largest urban centres, the most radical changes in the built environment were realised through the Urban Development Corporations. During the 1980s, the UDCs Tyne & Wear, Teesside, Sheffield, Trafford Park, Manchester City Centre and Merseyside were set up. Most of them have already ended their activities or will do so in the coming years. The UDCs mainly aimed at large-scale office developments and luxury apartment buildings. The UDC-projects certainly led to remarkable results in turning the formerly run-down industrial and harbour areas into attractive places to live and work. In some cases, like the Albert Dock in Liverpool (Figure 7.24), the UDC projects resulted in popular tourist attractions generating money for the city centres. However, especially in the Northern-English cities with their large proportion of low-income households, it is questionable whether the UDCs have really been beneficiary to the local population. As mentioned before (section 7.4.5.4), in general the UDCs acted totally independent of any local government influence. Only in the Tyne & Wear area, the UDC decided to arrange a voluntary cooperation with the local authorities (Thomas, 1997). However, even in this case the eventual benefits for the local population might be questioned. Figure 7.25 shows one of the major results of the UDC Tyne & Wear, the redevelopment of Quayside in Newcastle. The physical appearance of the riverside clearly improved and the riverside has become accessible for pedestrians across a large distance, while it used to be private business property. However, directly behind the glossy-looking built environment of Quayside, the traditional working class neighbourhoods did not change their appearance much, while the population of these neighbourhoods hardly saw any improvement in their living environment.

Figure 7.24
Albert Dock, Liverpool

A form of urban regeneration that has probably been more beneficial to the urban inhabitants were the community initiatives. Especially in Liverpool, many community initiatives came into existence in the late 1970s and early 1980s to renovate and redevelop slum areas, set up by the inhabitants themselves, supported by government. The effect of these community initiatives should not be over-estimated, since they were usually limited to a few streets or housing blocks only. The problems of the inner cities could not be solved by the community initiatives alone, although they certainly made a useful contribution (Middleton, 1991).
Since a large part of Northern England is heavily urbanised, it logically also contains a series of Green Belts, meant to contain further urban extension. All Northern-English Green Belts together comprise approximately 5,400 km$^2$ (DOE, 1995), more than one-eighth of the total surface. The metropolitan areas of Tyne & Wear, Merseyside / Greater Manchester, and South and West Yorkshire are surrounded by Green Belts, as well as the freestanding cities of York and Durham. In Newcastle and York, new large-scale housing and commercial developments on green belt land were recently granted permission. York defended the new housing project on Green Belt land because it was a project with affordable housing much needed for the city, and it would better to build this in the Green Belt than 'jumping over' the Green Belt for it. A further proposal to build on Green Belt land was approved by the local district council of Barnsley. Some local governments are creative in planning new city extensions on green belt land under the labels of 'search space' or 'area of potential development in the longer term' (CPRE, 1999).

Figure 7.25
Quayside, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

National Parks cover an even larger share of the Northern-English surface. The case study area has the Northumberland, Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and North Yorkshire Moors National Parks within its boundaries, as well as a part of the Peak District National Park. The National Parks cover extensive areas of extremely low population density and relatively unspoilt nature, Figure 7.26 shows one of these areas, the Northumberland National Park near the English-Scottish border. In addition, several 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty' are designated around the Yorkshire Dales National Park, as well as a number of 'Heritage Coasts' in Yorkshire and close to the Scottish border (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1997). Altogether, a significant part of Northern England is in some way protected from large-scale building projects that could damage the ecological and cultural values of the countryside. Building projects in the National Parks, including tourist facilities, are seriously restricted. The Lake District National Park is one of the major tourist attractions of the UK, not only for British, but also for foreign tourists. Every year, millions of tourists visit the Lake District. While mass tourism has brought jobs and money to the Lake District, it also threatens to damage the natural environment of the area. This has recently provoked a heated discussion between planners, environmentalists
and local inhabitants and entrepreneurs about the question whether a further growth of tourism should be prevented or promoted.

A factor that makes urban containment a very different goal to reach in the parts of Northern England outside of these protected areas is the backward economic position of the largest part of the region. Numerous locations within Northern England have been targeted with regional development projects in the post-war period (see section 7.4.5.2). Still, the economic problems of the North are far from solved and more regeneration initiatives are underway. Investments in new employment often collide with physical planning strategies like compact city development, protecting the countryside and reducing mobility.

**Figure 7.26**
Northumberland National Park

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**7.4.7 The future of Northern England**

Having read through the above analysis of recent population trends, the socio-economic and socio-cultural development of Northern England, one might wonder what could be the future perspective of the case study region. The recent development of Northern England does not lead to very promising perspectives at first sight. Of course, within the case study region, areas of prosperity can be found, most of all in the urban-rural fringes around the metropolitan centres and in the more remote rural districts of North-Yorkshire. Still, the overall image of the regional development perspectives, especially that of its major cities, appears to be rather negative.

Recently, the solution to economic development problems of the Northern-English metropolitan regions has been sought in corridor development. A lobby group of Northern-English entrepreneurs and regional politicians promoted the integration of the so-called TransPennine corridor. This corridor is said to consist of the metropolitan regions of Merseyside, Greater Manchester, and South- and West-Yorkshire, and the recently booming harbour city of Hull. In addition, smaller-scale corridors between metropolitan areas and their hinterland have become quite fashionable in the regional planning debate. In the mind of the lobbyists, the TransPennine area is only a part of a supposed large-scale corridor in which the region could form "(...) a landbridge between
the USA and Ireland and Northern Europe on a trade corridor opening up by a unified
Germany, developing markets in Eastern Europe and the introduction of Scandinavian
countries into the EU” (Baker, 1996, p. 1). The lobbyists have not yet managed to
convince the national planners to include the TransPennine corridor concept in their
planning strategy and it is not to be expected that this will happen in the near future. The
promotion of corridor development would be in sharp contrast with the national policy to
keep metropolitan areas separated from each other through Green Belts. As mentioned
before (section 7.4.5.4), it is not likely that the Green Belt policy will be abandoned soon.
Moreover, the TransPennine corridor crosses the Peak District National Park, a landscape
of high natural and cultural value in which building is restricted to a minimum.

Another heavily debated issue is connected to the alarming Household Projections of
1992. Although household growth in Northern England will probably be much lower than
in South England, still a considerable share of the projected 4.4 million new households
until 2025 will have to be provided with housing in Northern England. In combination
with the strong preference of the national planners to hold on to a compact city policy (at
least in Northern England), and the large areas covered by Green Belts, National Parks
and other measures of development restriction, this is causing severe problems.
Development pressure concentrates on the one hand in the built-up area of the
metropolitan regions, restrained by the Green Belts, and on the other on the popular and
unprotected rural districts in North Yorkshire. In recent years, the tendency seems to be
that on the local level, the lobby for new ‘greenfield’ developments is gaining ground on
the counter-lobby of protectionists of the countryside. Examples of this were mentioned
earlier with respect to the Green Belts of Newcastle, York and South Yorkshire (section
7.4.6). This puts the policy set out in the regional planning guidelines in Northern
England, aiming at compact cities separated from each other by Green Belts, under
serious threat.

7.4.8 Conclusions

The fourth case study area, Northern England, differs markedly from the other three areas
in its population development: the total population of the area declined while all the other
areas experienced a considerable growth. This happened in the context of slow growth of
England as a whole, with growth concentrated in the southern half of the country.
Nevertheless, the growth pattern of municipality types in Northern England shows a
picture already quite familiar from the cases presented earlier: decline in the largest cities,
especially in the 1970s, and strong growth of rural areas. Once again, the early 1970s
appear as a period of rapid deconcentration. Like in the other three case study areas, this
was a trend that already started during the 1960s. The recovery of the largest cities is also
visible in Northern England, but this recovery was only very modest: the decline of
population was stopped, but still growth was absent. Some of the principal metropolitan
cities still suffered from a declining population even in the early 1990s. The major reason
for this is probably the economic structure of the Northern metropolitan cities. Although
all English cities suffered from deindustrialisation, the Northern cities were hit most
severely. In contrast to London, these cities generally did not manage to attract enough
employment in the service sector to compensate for the heavy job losses in
manufacturing.

British planning policy in the post-war period has set the example for a number of other
European countries, with long-lasting famous concepts like the Green Belts (still
maintained) and New Towns (until 1974). The severe building restrictions in Green Belts still appear to be quite effective; it is likely that the poor growth performance of the category 'other metropolitan districts' is probably partly explained by the impossibility to build on Green Belt land. Although the British planning system provides no direct legal powers to the national and regional government to force local governments or private builders to follow their building philosophy, this apparently is a policy that is generally agreed with on the local level as well. Recently, however, frequent violations of the Green Belt borders could be observed in Northern England. The British government has the intention to hold on to the Green Belts, although this seems to have the adverse effect that people who want to leave cities move even further into the countryside than they might have done when the Green Belts would have been absent. Local governments sometimes used (or maybe one should say abused) this argument to get permission for building extensions on Green Belt land.

Building in the countryside in general was restricted as well, but this did not stop the rural areas, especially the areas at some distance of the conurbations, to be the fastest-growing part of Northern England. This might be due to the rather vague criterion of 'appropriate development': building in the countryside is only allowed if it fits into the existing built and non-built environment. Apart from this, in regional planning guidances quantitative targets for housing production are set for planning regions, including percentages of houses to be built on 'brownfield' (within the existing built environment) and 'greenfield' sites. Although with these housing targets, an attempt is made to coordinate housing production and location on the regional level, in practice it has proven to be hard to realise this regional coordination. As already mentioned above, the national and regional planners have no legal powers to force local governments to adapt their planning policies to the regional and national targets and guidelines. Several local governments preferred population growth above protection of the countryside and allowed housing projects where the national and regional planners would not like them. The effect of abolishing the New Towns policy is clearly visible in the declining growth rates from the late 1970s on. The promotion of compact city building since the late 1970s has not led to a real recovery of the largest cities in Northern England yet, and it is questionable if growth will be reached in the future as long as the cities do not manage to attract new employment in branches with a promising future.
7.5 The four case studies compared

At the end of this chapter, after the discussion of the three case studies Switzerland, West-Sweden and Northern England, a comparison of these three cases with the case of the Netherlands presented in Chapter 6 should be undertaken. In each of the case studies, some remarks about similarities and differences between the Netherlands and the other three areas were already made. This section summarises the main similarities and differences between the case studies in terms of population distribution trends and the influence of national urbanisation policy on these trends.

In all four case study regions the main trend in population distribution since the early 1970s has been deconcentration, with the strongest population growth in the suburban and rural areas. Even when urban population growth recovered, it was still at a considerably lower level than the growth of the suburbs and rural areas. To a large extent, this trend seemed to occur independent of the planning context. It happened in countries with a strong, and in countries with a weak government influence on land use, and at first sight, it did not seem to matter much whether the national, the regional or the local level was dominant in the planning system. This is not to say that the effects of national urbanisation policy were not noticeable at all since the 1970s. However, generally speaking national urbanisation policy in all four case study areas has at best managed to have only a modest influence on the actual development of urbanisation, much smaller than the influence of the economic-technological, demographic and socio-cultural processes described for each of the cases in Chapter 6 and 7, and probably also much more modest than the national planners wanted this influence to be. National urbanisation policy certainly did not manage to change the dominant trend of population distribution dynamics in each of the four case study areas: deconcentration.

For the period between 1970 and 1995, most similarities in population distribution trends were found for the cases of the Netherlands, Switzerland and West-Sweden. In each of the three areas, a huge population loss of the large and medium-sized cities in the 1970s was followed by a renewed growth of these cities in the 1980s. While in the Netherlands and West-Sweden, this revival of urban population growth gained strength in the early 1990s, Switzerland experienced a new decline of urban population after 1990, though much less dramatic than in the 1970s. Sub-urbanisation was an extremely powerful trend in the 1970s, lost some power afterwards, but never completely disappeared. The rural areas close to the cities demonstrated the highest growth figures from the 1970s onwards. The fact that the Netherlands, Switzerland and West-Sweden had very different planning systems, resulting in differences in the ambition level of their (national and regional) growth management policies, did not seem to cause significant differences in the distribution of their population. The exception to the rule were the late 1970s and early 1980s, when the Dutch government managed to catch a part of the out-migration of the large cities in growth centres. However, even during this relatively successful period of Dutch planning, sub-urbanisation outside of the growth centres and loss of open space continued.

The case of Northern England demonstrated a quite different trend, especially with respect to the development of the largest cities and their metropolitan regions. In contrast

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to the other three cases, the large and medium-sized cities in Northern England showed hardly any recovery in their growth figures in the 1980s and 1990s. This difference between Northern England and the other three case study areas was mainly due to the recent economic development: while the metropolitan regions of the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland have regained economic growth in the 1990s, the metropolitan regions of Northern England kept suffering from a stagnating economy. The New Towns in Northern England managed to catch only a small portion of the out-migration to suburban and rural areas. The only parts of Northern England with rapid population growth were the rural areas at some distance of the largest cities. While in the other case study areas the suburban parts of metropolitan regions caught a considerable part of urban out-migration, in Northern England population loss was rather a problem of metropolitan regions as a whole.

With respect to the national urbanisation policies of the four case study areas, an interesting parallel was found in the spatial concepts used. In all four areas, a strong preference for compact-city development was demonstrated in national planning documents during the 1990s. This did not always mean that compact-city extensions were actually built in the end. Only in the cases of Northern England and the Netherlands the intention to build compact cities was expressed in concrete planning measures 'on the ground' taken by all levels of government (national, regional, and local). In West-Sweden, compact-city development was (and still is) promoted by the national government, but recent developments on the local level seem to go in the opposite direction. There are certainly municipalities (most of all the cities) that try to promote compact building, but these are relatively isolated attempts of individual municipalities instead of an integrated compact city approach for the entire case study area or parts of it like the metropolitan regions of Goteborg and Malmö - Lund. National planners do not have tools to enforce their planning guidelines on the municipal level, while regional planning is almost non-existent. In Switzerland, planning powers are concentrated on the regional (canton) and local (municipal) level. While some cantons share the vision of the federal government and aim at compact cities, other cantons take no action at all against urban sprawl.

The hypothesis that national urbanisation policies would work better in countries with a strong planning control of national government can only partially be supported with the data presented in this chapter. This hypothesis seems only valid for specific types of national urbanisation policy, not for national urbanisation policy in general. Looking at the results reached with policies of 'concentrated deconcentration' in the UK (Northern England) and the Netherlands), the effect of national urbanisation policy appeared to be quite noticeable. Also in the era of concentrated deconcentration, national urbanisation policy did not manage to reach all its goals, but at least some of its goals were reached. Compact city policy, however, has been far less successful so far in all four case study areas, independent of their planning system and ambitions in (national, regional or local) urbanisation policies. Apparently it was easier for the national planners to stimulate a concentration of growth on suburban locations than to develop compact cities: the 'New Towns' and 'growth centres' were meeting the housing demands of a larger share of the population than the compact city locations. While the growth centres and New Towns managed to catch a part of the suburban out-migration, the compact city policy was not sufficiently able to change overall migration trends from sub-urbanisation to re-urbanisation.
The examples of the Netherlands and Northern England have shown that physical planning can certainly have some influence on trends in population distribution. Without the growth centres and New Towns, sub-urbanisation to other locations and urban-rural migration in the Netherlands and Northern England would probably have been much stronger. The Green Belts and National Parks in Northern England and the Green Heart in the Netherlands made some difference, too. From these examples, one might be tempted to conclude that the Dutch and British policies on deconcentration have been successful: they led out-migrants to the places where the government wanted them, or (in the cases of the Green Belts, National Parks and Green Heart) kept them out of areas where the government did not want them. This approach seems to have been slightly more effective in Northern England than in the Netherlands: while the Green Belts and National Parks population growth has been quite modest, the Green Heart was one of the fastest-growing parts of the Netherlands in terms of population growth. However, also in the Green Heart case it is likely that population growth would have been much stronger if the restrictive policy for this area had not existed. Nevertheless, sub-urbanisation to 'unwanted' locations and urban-rural migration could not be stopped by these policies entirely. Apparently, as mentioned before, it was much easier to stimulate growth through national urbanisation policy than to restrict it, not only in the Netherlands but also in other parts of Northwest-Europe. In the case of the Green Belts, a negative effect was probably that longer-distance migration from cities to remoter rural areas was encouraged. In this case, a strict anti-sub-urbanisation policy in some areas (the Green Belts) may have led to an adverse effect elsewhere (more intensive urbanisation of remoter rural areas). In addition, an unforeseen and probably also unwanted effect of the Dutch and British deconcentration policies was that they contributed to the coalescence of monocentric urban regions into larger-scale polycentric urban regions. This resulted in an increase of daily mobility distances, most of all for commuter traffic. We will return to this issue in more detail in Chapter 8. A comparable statement could be made for Switzerland, where the development of regional centres and peripheral regions was encouraged. The main result of that policy was that the least peripheral parts of these regions were included in the functional urban regions of large or medium-sized cities, causing a sharp increase in traffic intensity and serious congestion problems around the cities. At the same time, the most peripheral regions kept lagging behind, so the original intention to encourage economic growth and wealth in these areas was not reached.

The switch to compact-city policy was a response to a renewed popularity of inner city living, especially among young people, in the early 1980s, but also to the negative effects of urban sprawl in terms of congestion, environmental pollution and deteriorating urban neighbourhoods. The various forms of compact-city policy have hardly reached notable results so far. In most European countries the population development of large cities recovered in the 1980s, but growth remained well under the national or regional average, as could be seen from the four case studies. The recovery of urban growth was only to a very modest level connected to housing renewal and new building projects in or near the cities. The switch to compact-city policy coincided with the rising proportion of small, urban-oriented households, the increase of foreign migration (mainly focused on cities as well), the economic downturn in the late 1970s and early 1980s (discouraging suburbanisation), and the shift from a manufacturing-oriented to a service-oriented economy, from which especially the large cities and their agglomerations profited.

So, looking back on the last three decades of the 20th century, the conclusion of the comparative study should be that the influence of physical planning policy on population
distribution cannot be denied, but was very limited. Economic, demographic and sociocultural processes have probably contributed much more to the development of population distribution in Northwest-Europe since the 1970s. The conclusions already reached after studying the case of the Netherlands in chapter 6 can be reconfirmed for Northwest-Europe as a whole with the three additional case studies. Another important implication of this comparative analysis is that the highly positive image of Dutch national urbanisation policy in the international planning literature appeared to be largely undeserved. The effectiveness of Dutch national urbanisation policy is not considerably higher than in other parts of Northwest Europe. So the positive image with which this book started (Chapter 1) appears to be a false image indeed. Looking at individual settlements, as most foreign observers seem to do, the Dutch planning system and most of all its national urbanisation policy seems to have a tight grip on Dutch society. However, when the recent development of all these individual settlements is aggregated and compared to what should have happened according to the national urbanisation plans, it appears to be a totally different, much less successful story. The comprehensive set of plans on the national, regional and local level might suggest that what is planned nationally will be carried out locally, but in reality, there is a huge divergence between national plans and local realities.

Several academic geographers and planners have recently suggested that the deconcentration trend will continue in the coming decades and that eventually the formation of large-scale, low-density urban fields in Northwest-Europe might become a reality after all. With such viewpoints the academic geographers and planners managed to convince government planners in the Netherlands and other European countries to reconsider their urbanisation policies and think of new concepts to deal with urban fields. As was argued in Chapter 6 and 7, a considerable gap already seems to have formed between urbanisation policy intentions and the preferred living environments of the majority of the inhabitants of the Netherlands as well as of the other three case study areas. While the settlement system in which people live and work is of a highly poly-nucleated nature in all four case study areas, the dominant spatial concept that planners use in these areas is still the compact city, situated in a monocentric urban region. If deconcentration continues while the planners stick to the same compact city concept, the gap between urbanisation policy and actual settlement behaviour might become too wide and planning might lose its societal relevance.

A planning concept that tries to bring spatial order in Northwest Europe on the scale of an urban field, possibly bridging the gap between individual and collective spatial preferences, presents a huge challenge to planners in the coming decades. Maybe the ‘urban networks’ concept that seems to come in fashion in the Netherlands and Switzerland might be a step in the right direction. However, this also brings us back to the question of the appropriate scale for further functional integration of urban regions, raised in Chapter 3. Does a network of cities on a national level (Switzerland) or even at the level of a sub-national poly-nucleated urban region (Delta Metropolis and Brabantstad in the Netherlands) make sense as the central planning concept in national urbanisation policy? This question could be answered in different ways depending on the criterion of functional coherence one takes to define urban regions. In Chapter 8, the daily mobility behaviour of people is taken as the point of departure to judge the usefulness of the ‘urban networks’-concept for the further spatial development of urban regions in the Netherlands.
CHAPTER EIGHT
RECENT TRENDS IN DAILY MOBILITY IN THE NETHERLANDS AND THEIR POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR SPATIAL MOBILITY POLICY

8.1 Introduction

In the empirical analysis presented in the preceding chapters (Chapters 6 and 7), most attention was given to urbanisation trends in terms of population distribution and residential mobility and the measures within urbanisation policy aimed at influencing these trends. In this chapter, the focus will shift to another factor determining the urbanisation process: the development of daily mobility patterns. Population distribution, residential mobility and daily mobility are processes that are tightly connected, as was argued before (Chapters 2 and 3). In the urbanisation policy of many countries, and certainly also in the national urbanisation policy of the Netherlands, this is recognised. Therefore, the central concepts used in the Dutch urbanisation policy since the 1960s have always been intended as expressions of both population distribution and daily mobility goals. The Dutch government did not only have the ambition to influence where people settled, but also tried to influence people’s daily mobility behaviour (see also Chapter 4).

In the theoretical debate on urban form and scale level of urban regions, discussed in Chapter 3, countless spatial concepts and models have been introduced throughout the twentieth century. Gradually the focus of these concepts shifted from separate models for the city’s internal structure and the functional relationships with the surrounding region, to integrated models of urbanised regions in which the dichotomy between city and hinterland disappeared. Two of the concepts of the latter category have recently gained considerable popularity among Dutch spatial planners: the ‘urban field’ (as introduced by Friedmann & Miller, 1965) and the ‘network city’ (Lambooy, 1991; Batten, 1995). In an advisory study for the forthcoming Fifth Report on Spatial Planning, the formation of urban fields in the Netherlands was mentioned as "(...) the most far-reaching spatial development confronting the planning governments in the next decades" (VROM-raad, 1998). The network city was introduced as the most suited alternative for future spatial development in several government documents outlining the preliminary thoughts on the contents of the Fifth Report (Ministerie VROM, 1999a). Both concepts, already introduced in Chapter 3, share a focus on spatial patterns of interaction and a rejection of traditional centre-periphery relationships within urban regions. However, while in the urban field people and economic activities seem to be distributed in such a diffuse way that centres can hardly be distinguished, the network city still contains clear clusters of people and economic activities. Furthermore, the network city seems to refer to a considerably lower scale level, at least in the interpretation of the Dutch government. The examples that the Dutch Department of Physical Planning gives to illustrate the meaning of its network city concept suggest an average radius of about 20 to 30 kilometres (Ministerie VROM, 1999a). This would roughly coincide with the daily urban systems traditionally used in geographic research since the 1970s, or in some cases a combination of some of these daily urban systems.

Some Dutch academic geographers and planners have recently claimed that daily urban systems are no longer relevant and functional entities are being formed at a much higher scale level, using terms like ‘urban field’ and ‘polynucleated urban region’ (Salet & van Engelsdorp Gastelaars, 1996; Dieleman & Faludi, 1998). However, this claim of larger-scale urban regions has not been backed up by empirical evidence so far. This chapter
attempts to provide an empirically based criticism of the urban field hypothesis, and with that, it also questions the shift of the national planners from the network city to the largerscale (national) urban networks in the Fifth Report (Ministerie VROM, 2001). It argues that the daily life of the Dutch still largely takes place within the limits of the traditional daily urban systems. For this purpose, data on the daily mobility behaviour of the Dutch are analysed. Daily mobility behaviour can be considered as a useful indicator of the active spaces of people. A geographic area in which a strong concentration of individual action spaces occurs might be considered a functional entity of daily life or, in other words, a daily urban system, as was already argued in Chapter 3. The source of the daily mobility data used in the following analysis is the yearly Research Daily Mobility Behaviour. The strengths and weaknesses of this data source were already presented in Chapter 5.

In the following sections, recent trends in daily mobility behaviour are presented on three scale levels:

- National trends in trip time, trip distance and motives of trips, indicating whether or not a trend towards longer travelling times and distances has occurred in the Netherlands in recent years (section 8.3);
- Trends on the regional level (daily urban systems), with a focus on the share of trips staying within the regional borders as against the share of trips from one region to another. The central question here is if the regional entities chosen for the analysis, based on traditional scientific and statistical definitions of daily urban systems from the 1970s and 1980s (see Chapter 5), are still realistic functional entities for daily life (section 8.4);
- Trends within the regions; three regions will be presented as examples of recent trends in daily mobility between sub-regions of daily urban systems (section 8.5). While section 8.4 tries to answer questions concerning the current scale level of urbanisation, section 8.5 will focus on possible recent changes in the internal traffic relations of urban regions.

Before turning to the analysis of recent trends in daily mobility, the next section will briefly summarise the main objectives of spatial mobility policy in the Netherlands since the 1960s. The concepts of concentrated deconcentration and the compact city that were already discussed in Chapter 6 as the central concepts of population distribution policy, also functioned as the core of Dutch spatial mobility policy. The urban network, introduced in the Fifth Report as the new central concept for Dutch urbanisation, focuses even more than its forerunners on the spatial pattern of daily mobility.

### 8.2 Policy response to urbanisation and daily mobility trends in the Netherlands: from compact city to urban network?

In the recent past, the Dutch has shown a continuous ambition to limit daily mobility growth through spatial planning measures. The Dutch government, and most notably the Department of Physical Planning, has treated daily mobility as a problem for a long time. One of the most important aims of Dutch spatial planning since the 1960s, therefore, has been to reduce daily mobility as much as possible. This was most of all true for automobile traffic. Although spatial mobility policy (the spatial planning measures with respect to daily mobility) has undergone some marked changes through time, it contained some clear continuous elements: the aim to reduce car mobility, the aim to limit growth of inter-regional mobility, and several attempts to plan daily urban regions as closed systems
(Martens, 2000). Another continuous element in spatial mobility policy was the stress on measures to influence home-to-work traffic, while other forms of daily mobility like shopping and recreation were discussed much less.

In the 1970s, the leading planning concept in which these mobility aims were to be realised was ‘concentrated deconcentration’. This involved an attempt to direct the massive out-migration from the large cities to a number of selected locations called ‘growth centres’. The growth centres were supposed to become the centres of their own daily urban systems, independent of the already existing daily urban systems of the large cities. This goal was never reached. The policy of concentrated deconcentration was only a partial success: a sizable share of the migrants from the large cities indeed settled in the growth centres, but employment growth was far too modest to provide the new inhabitants with work (see also Chapter 6). Therefore, the majority of growth centre immigrants kept working in the large cities or their immediate surroundings. Instead of the creation of new small-scale daily urban systems around the growth centres, the policy of concentrated deconcentration contributed to a considerable enlargement of the daily urban systems of the large cities.

In the 1980s, a new central planning concept was launched: the ‘compact city’. One of the main reasons to trade the concentrated deconcentration policy for the compact city policy was the development of daily mobility behaviour, especially the steady growth of car use for home-to-work traffic. To avoid further growth of traffic jams around the largest cities, new housing and commercial developments were to a large extent planned within, or just outside the cities. The results of compact city policy have not been very convincing so far. While the housing component of the compact city policy could still be considered partially successful (in the sense that a large part of new housing production is currently built on the intended locations), this cannot be stated for the location policy for economic activities. Efforts to attract more employment to the (inner) cities and close to railway stations and to stop the decentralisation trend of companies have led to some successes. However, the main reason for this policy was to decrease the need for commuter traffic across longer distances, most notably by car. A recent analysis of the location policy within the overall compact city strategy shows that mobility trends were hardly influenced by this policy: only the end destination of the home-to-work trips changed, but car use and travelled distance hardly decreased (Martens, 2000).

A recent advisory report of the Council for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment urged the national planners to give up their ambition to reduce (car) mobility through spatial planning measures (VROM-raad, 2000). Nevertheless, with the introduction of the network city concept (Ministerie VROM, 1999a), the ambition to reduce or stabilise daily mobility seemed to play an even more prominent role than in earlier spatial mobility policies. However, several geographers and planners doubted the usefulness of the network city as a planning concept since it would refer to a functional entity that, in their view, no longer existed. These geographers and planners claimed that daily urban systems were something of the past and we should turn to larger-scale concepts like the urban field and the poly-nucleated urban region. In essence, the concepts they used were based on the same assumption as the network city, giving a central position to interaction patterns between cities and their surrounding regions. However, the scale level the government initially wanted to connect to the network city concept was considerably more modest than that of the urban field and poly-nucleated urban region.
A confusing element of the preparing documents for the Fifth Report was that parallel to the promotion of the network city, the urban field is presented as the major development to be expected in the next decades (Ministerie VROM, 1999a). In the eventual Fifth Report (Ministerie VROM, 2001), the national planners gave up their resistance to largerscale urbanisation concepts after all. They traded the ‘network city’ for the ‘urban network’ (see section 4.5 and 6.7). The following empirical analysis will give some insight which of the two concepts deserves the most central place in future urbanisation and spatial mobility policy, provided that these policies are intended to influence existing trends in daily mobility and action space.

8.3 Recent national trends in daily mobility in the Netherlands

In many recent theoretical contributions on the relevant geographic scale of urban regions as functional entities (see Chapter 3), two general trends in daily travel behaviour are implicitly assumed: people are willing to spend more time travelling, and their travel distances tend to increase over time. These claims, however, are often not backed up by empirical evidence. To what extent can the supposed recent trends towards longer travels in time and distance be found in the Netherlands? Are there indications that daily mobility patterns tend to change towards a considerably higher scale level as is presupposed in recent claims of the formation of urban fields in the Netherlands? (Salet & van Engelsdorp Gastelaars, 1996; Dieleman & Faludi, 1998)

8.3.1 National trends in trip time and trip distance

The time-series analysis of the Research Daily Mobility Behaviour from 1987 to 1997 does not demonstrate a trend towards longer travelling times. Table 8.1 rather suggests a very stable distribution of daily trips across the time categories. A clear concentration of trip times appears in the categories between 5 and 45 minutes. In several studies on travel behaviour in the recent past, the trip duration of 45 to 60 minutes appeared as a ‘threshold’ of acceptable travel time irrespective of the transport means available (Dijst & Kapoen, 1998; Schafer, 1998; Rietveld, 2000).

Table 8.1
Number and share of trips per travel time category, 1987, 1992 and 1997 *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel time</th>
<th>1987</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nr. of trips (x 1,000,000)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Nr. of trips (x 1,000,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5 minutes</td>
<td>1071.1</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>1120.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 minutes</td>
<td>3178.4</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>3402.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15 minutes</td>
<td>2730.5</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>3052.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-20 minutes</td>
<td>2349.2</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>2611.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30 minutes</td>
<td>1642.0</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>1859.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-45 minutes</td>
<td>1607.8</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>1855.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-60 minutes</td>
<td>719.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>841.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-90 minutes</td>
<td>759.8</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>891.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-120 minutes</td>
<td>272.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>355.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 min. or more</td>
<td>370.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>355.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>14701.6</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>16345.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Categories ‘no trip made’ and ‘travel time unknown’ excluded from the analysis.
Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands, own calculation
The figures in Table 8.1 seem to indicate the lasting validity of this threshold. In absolute numbers, the time categories above 45 minutes all show a marked increase. However, the share of these time categories in the total amount of trips hardly increased: while in 1987, 14.5% of all trips took 45 minutes or more, this only increased to 15.1% in 1997.

Figure 8.1 presents the relative growth of the number of trips per time category expressed in index scores with 1987 as the year of reference. The fastest growing category is ‘90-120 minutes’, which increased with 60% between 1987 and 1997. However, as was shown in Table 8.1, as a share of the total amount of trips this increase is actually quite marginal. The increase of the time category ‘5-10 minutes’ with 40%, and the increase of the categories ‘10-15 minutes’ and ‘15-20 minutes’ with about 20%, are in the end much more significant for the development of total daily mobility.

Figure 8.1    Index of number of trips per time category, 1992 and 1997 (1987=100)

![Index of number of trips per time category, 1992 and 1997 (1987=100)](image)

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands, own calculation

While a trend towards considerably longer trip times apparently did not take place, it is still possible that a trend towards longer trip distances took place. One could suppose that people were able to bridge longer distances within the same travel time in 1997 than in 1987. This could be caused by faster means of transport becoming available. Another possibility is that already existing means of transport have become available to larger parts of the population, increasing their potential action space (the spatial entity in which a person could travel considering the available technological possibilities and physical constraints). In the period studied, no revolutionary changes in the means of transport took place in the Netherlands. However, the other factor mentioned could certainly have played a role in changes in daily mobility behaviour. A larger share of the Dutch population indeed got access to the fastest means of transport available for daily traffic, the private car and the train.

The number of cars in use (the so called ‘active fleet’ of cars) increased substantially in recent years. In 1986, about 4.6 million cars were in use in the Netherlands. This number rose to almost 6.3 million cars in 1999 (Statistics Netherlands, 2000). This contributed to a fast growth of kilometres travelled in cars (either as driver or as passenger): the estimate of the total distance travelled in cars rose from 72.4 million km in 1987 to 92.5 million km in 1998 (Statistics Netherlands, 1999).
For a specific sub-group of the population, the students of academic and polytechnic institutions, the introduction of a public transport year ticket in 1989 contributed to a substantial increase of public transport use. The extent to which this has led to changed travel behaviour in terms of distances travelled is not entirely clear. The public transport year ticket, which gave students free access to all forms of public transport throughout the Netherlands, took away financial problems for students that wanted to keep living in their parental home and commute to and from the education institute on a daily basis, even if their parental home was far away from the location of education. Although the arrangement of the public transport year ticket became much less generous some years later, with limits to the hours and days on which free travel was provided, it remained a major factor in the travel behaviour of students.

How did these developments affect the daily mobility behaviour of the Dutch population as a whole expressed in distances travelled? From the above, one would expect a substantial increase of long-distance trips, both in absolute and in relative figures. Table 8.2 shows that this increase has only occurred in absolute and not in relative terms. Again, like in Table 8.1 with the trip times, the dominant trend that shows up for the period between 1987 and 1997 is stability.

Table 8.2 Number of trips and percentage per distance category, Netherlands, 1987, 1992 and 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance class</th>
<th>1987 no. of trips (x 1.000.000)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1992 no. of trips (x 1.000.000)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1997 no. of trips (x 1.000.000)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1 km</td>
<td>2282.4</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>2282.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>3205.3</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2.5 km</td>
<td>3983.4</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>4167.5</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>5374.1</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5-5km</td>
<td>2633.7</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>2780.2</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>3242.5</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 km</td>
<td>2532.5</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>2707.9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>2997.6</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20 km</td>
<td>2135.8</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>2406.0</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>2675.6</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30 km</td>
<td>865.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>923.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>1086.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-50 km</td>
<td>678.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>841.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>989.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 km or more</td>
<td>783.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>998.4</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1144.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>15894.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>17108.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>20714.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands, own calculation.

While the number of long-distance trips has indeed grown rapidly, the share of these trips in total mobility hardly changed. The total number of long-distance trips, as well as the share of long-distance trips in total mobility, is still very modest compared to those over shorter distances. A clear illustration of this is that the share of trips between 0 and 20 km hardly showed any change between 1987 and 1997. In 1987, 85.4% of all trips were less than 20 km; in 1997 this was still 84.5%.

Figure 8.2 shows an index for the number of trips, with 1987 as the year of reference. The total amount of trips has grown 30% between 1987 and 1997. The table shows at the same time that this growth can be found in all distance categories. However, the most rapid increase can be found in the shortest distances (0 – 2.5 km) and in the longest distances (from 30 km), with all categories in-between lagging behind.
The rapid growth of long-distance trips shown in Figure 8.2 might suggest that inter-regional traffic between the traditional daily urban systems has grown considerably. However, like we saw earlier for travel time in Table 8.1, the absolute number of trips in the longest distance categories was still on a very modest level compared to the short- and medium-distance trips. Apparently, the growth of long-distance trips is a reflection of the general growth in mobility rather than a trend towards travelling across larger distances.

While the results on trip time and trip distance on the one hand seem to deny the urban field hypothesis, which assumes a considerable scale enlargement of daily life, they also indicate that the ambitions of compact city policy to reduce daily mobility have failed. The number of trips has risen explosively between 1987 and 1997, despite the fact that during this entire period the compact city was the dominant planning concept. The specific ambition to reduce the need to travel across long distances by planning both new housing and new employment locations close to each other has apparently hardly affected the daily mobility behaviour of the Dutch. On the contrary: although the share of long-distance trips remained stable, the number of trips in the longest distance categories rose substantially.

**Figure 8.2** Indexed total number of trips per distance category, 1992 and 1997 (1987=100)

![Indexed total number of trips per distance category, 1992 and 1997](image)

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour. Statistics Netherlands; own calculation

The distance of a trip is strongly related to its motive. In the Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, eight motives for making a trip are distinguished. The average distance for each of these motives and its development through time between 1987 and 1997 are presented in Figure 8.3. Shopping stands out as a typical short-distance phenomenon. The fact that about 25% of all trips registered in the enquiry are shopping trips explains for a large part the lasting high scores on the shortest distance categories in the tables presented above. All other categories, with the exception of ‘touring and hiking’ (the low average distance of which is largely explained because most of these trips are either by foot or by bicycle) have an average distance between 15 and 25 km.

‘Business visits’ have a relatively high average distance compared to the other categories. However, only 4% of all trips are business visits, so the effects on total mobility are only
modest. The fastest growing average distance is in trips for education. A crucial factor in this fast growth was without doubt the introduction of the public transport year ticket for academic and polytechnic students in 1989. Additional proof for the assumed relationship between the introduction of this year ticket and the growing average distance of education trips is found when the means of transport per motive are considered. The share of trips for educational motives undertaken by train is much higher than for all other motives and increased considerably between 1987 and 1992. Since only about 5% of all trips are education-related, this fast growth did not contribute much to the overall growth of the distance travelled per trip either.

Figure 8.3 Average distance per motive, Netherlands, 1987, 1992 and 1997

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands, own calculation

8.3.2 Differences between population categories

So far, trends in the daily mobility behaviour of the Dutch population in general have been presented. However, it is often stated that daily mobility behaviour differs immensely between sub-groups of the population. The Research Daily Mobility Behaviour contains only scarce information on the personal and household characteristics of the respondents. Information on characteristics that are often said to determine differences in daily mobility behaviour between population categories is only provided for a part of these characteristics. First, the Research Daily Mobility Behaviour does not contain the variable ‘profession’. It is often stated that certain specific professional categories like high executives and salesmen have a daily mobility behaviour that differs significantly from the majority of the population. These professional groups are often claimed to travel across much larger distances than most people do on a daily basis (a.o. Dieleman & Faludi, 1998), although this claim is generally not based on empirical evidence. Second, the variable household type was only introduced in the Research Daily Mobility Behaviour in 1995. Therefore, it is not possible for the period 1987-1997 to check to what extent earlier research results on daily mobility for specific household categories in specific locations (for example Dijkstra, 1999; Smit, 1998) can be generalised for the Netherlands.
The variables that are available to analyse possible differences in daily mobility behaviour between population categories are:

- household income, with 5 income categories, a category 'no own income' and a category 'income unknown';
- education level, which indicates the highest educational degree reached (4 levels distinguished);
- labour market status, which differentiates between working and non-working population (jobless, disabled, retired, students), and full-time and part-time workers;
- age group, with 12 categories in 1987 and 1992, and 13 categories in 1997 (when the age group '65 years and older' was split up in '65-75 years' and '75 years and older').

The Research Daily Mobility Behaviour demonstrates a striking similarity in travel patterns (distance and time) between income groups. The shares of total daily mobility per distance and time category of the income groups almost never diverge more than 2 or 3% from the average of the total population. There is only one exception to this rule: the lowest income category is strongly over-represented in the shortest distances and times (0-1 km and 0-5 minutes) in 1987 and 1992, scoring more than twice the national average. However, in 1997, their score has dropped to only slightly above the average of the total population. Furthermore, the scores of the lowest income group on long-distance travels hardly diverge from the higher income groups. The almost average score of the lowest-income groups in 1997 is contrary to what one might expect. A low income could be expected to form a constraint to travelling, especially for long-distance travels. One could suggest that the lowest income category is a very diverse group, including jobless, retired, low-wage workers and students, with diverging travel patterns that might 'level each other out'. Nevertheless, the differences in travel behaviour between the categories of the variable labour market status are actually rather small. Jobless people score higher than working people on shortest distances and times of travel in each of the sample years, but the difference is only marginal. People running their own household as main activity stay more at home than the other categories, but again, the differences are only small and the scores hardly change between 1987 and 1997.

Only in the longest distance category (50 km or more), there seems to be a relation between education level and distance travelled: the higher the education level, the more trips made of 50 km or more. The difference between the category 'academic or polytechnic' and the lower educational levels increased over time for this longest distance category. The other distance categories and the variable travel time hardly show any difference between the educational groups. As to age groups, the category 65 years and older is clearly over-represented in 'no trips made'. While the other age groups all have 2 to 5% of the respondents in this category, it is 10-11% in the age group 65 years and older. This percentage, however, slightly decreased towards the average between 1987 and 1997. The youngest age group in the sample, the 10- to 18 year-olds, are slightly over-represented in the shortest distances and travel times, while the 20- to 30-year-olds are slightly over-represented in distance category '50 km or more'. However, once again, the differences between the sub-groups are generally negligible.

The variable household type, only available for 1997, does not lead to large differences between sub-groups of the population either. Households with young children (0-12 years) tend to travel across shorter distances and during shorter time periods than
years) tend to travel across shorter distances and during shorter time periods than households with older children and households without children. The most logical explanation is that parents have to bring their children to school and that they are expected to be home when the children finish their school day, which almost excludes the possibility of long travels for at least one of the parents. However, the differences between the household types are generally quite modest. All in all, the household characteristics available in the Research Daily Mobility Behaviour hardly seem to play any role in the daily mobility behaviour of the Dutch population.

8.4 Inter-regional and intra-regional trends

The relatively modest reach of most daily trips already indicated by the national analysis is confirmed when one turns to the regional level. The vast majority of daily trips apparently still take place within the borders of relatively small regions. Table 8.3 presents the share of trips with both departure and arrival location within the borders of the same region, following the regional division introduced in Chapter 5 (Figure 5.5). This share declined in almost all regions between 1987 and 1997. However, the decline was only a slight one. In some regions, there was even a modest increase of the share of trips within regional borders between 1992 and 1997. Therefore, looking at total daily mobility, there are no signs of a significant increase of inter-regional traffic that would indicate the formation of urban fields or something alike in the Netherlands.

Table 8.3 Percentage of trips within regional borders, 1987, 1992 and 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>89.2 Breda</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>87.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>89.1 Tilburg</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>82.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>85.5 Den Bosch</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>83.8</td>
<td>83.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>81.7 Eindhoven</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>88.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rest of Randstad</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>81.6 Maastricht/Heerlen</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>92.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Groningen</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>87.3 Northern N-Holland</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeuwarden</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>88.1 North Netherlands</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enschede/Hengelo</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>92.3 East Netherlands</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>85.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zwolle</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>81.0 North-Limburg</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>88.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnhem/Nijmegen</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>84.7 Zeeland</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>93.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands, own calculation

The share of daily mobility crossing regional borders is largely aimed at the directly neighbouring regions. In most cases, the border-crossing share of daily mobility is spread out over a number of neighbouring regions, leading to negligible scores for each region of arrival. Only in a few cases, more than 5% of the total daily mobility of a region is directed to one specific other region. These cases are listed in Table 8.4. The high level of interaction from Northern North-Holland to Amsterdam stands out especially. This involves not only traffic to the central city of Amsterdam, but even more to the regional centres Alkmaar and Hoorn, located in the northern part of the Amsterdam region. These regional centres were included in the daily urban system of Amsterdam when they were selected as 'growth centres' to provide housing for the out-migrants from Amsterdam in the 1970s (Engelsdorp Gastelaars & Ostendorf, 1994). However, alongside their new role as growth centres, Alkmaar and Hoorn remained the centres of their own daily urban systems (partly situated in the daily urban system of Amsterdam, but also partly in the region of Northern North-Holland) as well. Typically, this intensive relationship of daily
interaction is one-way traffic; the counter-flow from the Amsterdam daily urban system to Northern North-Holland is less than 2% of total daily mobility with departure in the Amsterdam region.

On a somewhat more modest level, several parts of the Randstad show interaction of a considerable intensity, too. The traffic relationships between the daily urban systems of The Hague and Rotterdam intensified slightly and the same goes for traffic from Utrecht to Amsterdam. Furthermore, the special position of the region ‘Rest of Randstad’ should be noted. This region is surrounded by the daily urban systems of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. The region has gradually intensified its daily mobility relationships with each of the surrounding daily urban systems, although interaction with The Hague and Amsterdam is on a somewhat higher level than that with Utrecht and Rotterdam. Outside of the Randstad, some relatively intensive inter-regional traffic relationships appear between the daily urban systems of regional centres and regions not belonging to any daily urban system according to the regional division used in this analysis. The majority of these inter-regional trips are between municipalities just inside and just outside of the daily urban systems. Apparently, in these cases, the borders of the daily urban systems chosen do not reflect the actual daily urban system, which probably is either a bit larger, or a bit smaller.

Table 8.4 Most intensive inter-regional daily mobility relationships, 1987, 1992 and 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region of departure</th>
<th>Region of arrival</th>
<th>% of total daily mobility of region of departure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern N-Holland</td>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zwolle</td>
<td>East-Netherlands</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>North-Netherlands</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeuwarden</td>
<td>North-Netherlands</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Randstad</td>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnhem/Nijmegen</td>
<td>East Netherlands</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Randstad</td>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands, own calculation

As noted before (section 8.3.1), the distance travelled is strongly related to the motive of the trip. The high scores for intra-regional traffic are largely due to a few motives generally characterised by short-distance trips. The most important of these motives is shopping. In each of the regions, more than 90% of all shopping trips take place within the regional borders, in most cases even within the municipal borders, and this figure remained almost unchanged between 1987 and 1997. As noted before, about one fourth of all trips are shopping-related, which means this category has a strong influence on the overall scores of daily mobility. Two other trip categories strongly dominated by short-distance trips are ‘touring and hiking’ (predominantly trips made by foot or by bicycle) and ‘other motives’. This last category is of course very heterogeneous, but amongst others, it includes visits to administrative municipal services and basic health care facilities, typically taking place close to home.
The trip motives with the most frequent inter-regional trips are home-to-work trips, business visits and trips for education. More or less the same inter-regional streams as presented above in Table 8.4 appear as the most intensive ones for each of the motives. For **inter-regional business visits** it is hard to discover any clear trend. Most inter-regional relationships seem to have remained fairly stable in intensity, while some others demonstrate a rapid increase and some have decreased slightly. However, because of the relatively low share of business trips in the available data, the figures on the regional level become rather unreliable, being based on a very small number of respondents.

For the same reason, some caution is in place when **trips with an educational motive** are considered. Education shows the most spectacular growth of inter-regional trips. In almost all regions the share of inter-regional trips for education jumps several percentage points between 1987 and 1992 and continues to grow at a more modest rate until 1997. As indicated before, this must be largely attributed to the introduction of the public transport year ticket for academic and polytechnic students in 1989. Therefore, the most intensive cross-border traffic for educational motives takes place from regions without universities and polytechnics, to regions with universities and polytechnics. The extreme case is again the region of Northern North-Holland: in 1997, no less than 44% of all trips with educational motives had a destination outside the region. This traffic flow was almost exclusively directed to the daily urban system of Amsterdam, which consists of 2 universities and 3 polytechnics while Northern North-Holland has none of both types of educational institutes.

Since **home-to-work trips** are represented in the Research Daily Mobility Behaviour to a much larger extent than business visits and education, somewhat more firm statements about inter-regional traffic are possible for this trip category. Figure 8.4 shows those cases in which the share of inter-regional commuter trips in the total amount of commuter trips exceeded 10% in at least one of the years 1987, 1992 or 1997. Again, the traffic flow from Northern North-Holland to the daily urban system of Amsterdam is way ahead of all other inter-regional flows. Between 1987 and 1997, the dominant trend seems to be stabilisation rather than growth. Although the absolute numbers of commuters between regions have grown considerably, the share of these cross-border commuters in total commuting traffic per region has in most cases only grown with a few percentage points, while in some cases it even declined slightly. Apart from the earlier mentioned remarkable cross-border flow from Northern North-Holland to Amsterdam, all Randstad regions apparently are involved in quite intensive commuter relationships. However, the commuter flows indicate that the Randstad does not function as one labour market region. There are intensive commuter relationships between Utrecht and Amsterdam on the one hand, and between The Hague and Rotterdam on the other hand. These commuter flows were found in earlier studies as well, indicating the lasting division of the Randstad in at least two labour market regions, the North Wing and the South Wing (Knol & Manshanden, 1990; Cortie et al, 1992). Commuter traffic between this North and South Wing was, according to the available data, still on a very modest level in 1997 and did not show much increase compared to 1987. A region complicating this division of the Randstad in a northern and southern part, however, is the region ‘Rest of Randstad’. This region has strong commuter links to the daily urban systems of both Amsterdam and The Hague.

The daily mobility trends from 1987 to 1997 discussed here suggest that the functional entities in which daily life takes place hardly changed. The traditional daily urban systems
still include the vast majority of all daily mobility in the Netherlands. The traffic flows
across the borders of these daily urban systems grew only slightly. There were clear
differences in distance travelled and the share of inter-regional traffic between the trip
motives. Business visits, commuter traffic and educational trips generally have
considerably longer distances, and a much higher share of inter-regional trips, than
shopping, visits to basic services and recreational trips. Some intensive inter-regional
links could be demonstrated between neighbouring regions. However, even for these
regions, as for the motives with the longest distances, a clear majority of trips stays within
the regional borders. Apparently, the traditional notion of the daily urban system is far
from outdated.

Figure 8.4 Highest scores on inter-regional commuter traffic, 1987, 1992 and 1997

![Graph showing highest scores on inter-regional commuter traffic, 1987, 1992, and 1997.]

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands, own calculation

8.5 Mobility trends within the daily urban system

The notion of a ‘network city’ also involves intensifying interactions between locations
within the network city region, and the emergence of sub-centres that challenge the
importance of the main centre in the region. The central issue in this section is to what
extent a trend towards intensification of the traffic links between the several parts of the
daily urban system, indicating the possible formation of a network city on the scale of the
daily urban system, can be found on the basis of the Research Daily Mobility Behaviour
dataset.

Unfortunately it is not possible to analyse the local (municipal) level. For each trip in the
dataset, the municipality of departure and arrival are available. However, the number of
trips and respondents per municipality is generally much too low to treat their behaviour
as ‘representative’ for the municipality. As the closest approach to the actual interaction
between locations within the daily urban system, it is possible in some of the mobility regions to analyse the traffic between sub-regions. Again due to problems with the amount of trips per category, it is only possible to analyse the total of trips made; if the trip motives are studied separately the amount of trips per motive per sub-region becomes too small to make reliable statements. In the following, the total daily mobility between the sub-regions of daily urban systems will be presented for three regions: the daily urban systems of Amsterdam, Utrecht and Arnhem / Nijmegen. In each of these regions, a polycentric division of functions has gradually emerged in recent decades. Each of these regions was presented as a ‘network city’ in the ‘Startnota’ (Ministerie VROM, 1999a), although in the case of Amsterdam, the network city as proposed by the national planners was smaller than the actual daily urban system.

8.5.1 The daily urban system of Amsterdam

The daily urban system of Amsterdam (figure 8.5) extended considerably in the 1970s and 1980s, when the policy of concentrated deconcentration was put into practice (see Chapter 4 and 6). The most distant growth centres Alkmaar, Hoorn, Lelystad and Almere, were integrated in the outer ring of the Amsterdam daily urban system. The growth centres closer to Amsterdam (Purmerend and Haarlemmermeer) became part of the inner suburban ring. As mentioned before, the policy of concentrated deconcentration was only a partial success: the planned amounts of houses were produced at the intended locations, but the employment growth of these growth centres did not match the growth of the local labour force by far. A large share of the new inhabitants of the growth centres kept working in the Amsterdam agglomeration, leading to intensive daily commuter traffic between the growth centres and the Amsterdam agglomeration (Engelsdorp Gastelaars & Ostendorf, 1994). The growth centres also kept their function as regional centres for their immediate surroundings.

The Amsterdam agglomeration is still the clear centre of the daily urban system of Amsterdam in terms of employment, transport connections, luxury goods and cultural facilities. Within this central agglomeration, however, the distribution of functions has become increasingly polycentric. The dominant position of the city centre has faded away since the 1960s. New sub-centres include:

- Schiphol Airport, which has grown explosively in terms of passenger and goods transport and is one of the major employment locations of the Amsterdam region (Figure 8.6);
- Hoofddorp, the major core within the growth centre Haarlemmermeer, that (contrary to most other growth centres) managed to attract many offices because of its favourable location close to the airport and to Amsterdam;
- the ‘south axis’, situated along the Amsterdam ring road between Schiphol Airport and Amsterdam Southeast and destined to become the most important economic centre of Amsterdam (Figure 8.7);
- Amsterdam Southeast, initiated as a high-rise extension of Amsterdam in the 1960s. The area suffered from a negative image as a problem accumulation area for a long time. However, while most of the social problems have remained in the high-rise estates, another part of Southeast has become a popular office location and consists of a rapidly developing recreational complex;
- Teleport, a concentration of telecommunications and ICT companies on the western edge of Amsterdam (Figure 8.8);
- the harbour, which has moved more and more towards the west and out of the city because the expansion necessary to handle large carriers was not possible within the city's built-up area.

**Figure 8.5**
The daily urban system of Amsterdam
Figure 8.6
Schiphol Airport, rapidly growing subcentre in the Amsterdam daily urban system

Figure 8.7
Amsterdam – South Axis

Figure 8.8
Amsterdam – Teleport: new office developments surrounding the remains of an agricultural settlement
The once separate daily urban systems of Haarlem and Umond have gradually become intertwined with the Amsterdam daily urban system. The villages around Haarlem are already a popular destination for suburbanites from Amsterdam since the late 19th century and many Amsterdammers visit the beach resorts west of Haarlem in summer. Umond has been a concentration area for industrial employment since the 1920s, possessing the largest steelworks of the Netherlands (and one of the largest of Europe). However, the decline of heavy industry since the 1970s has caused huge employment losses in the Umond region. Although the steelworks and related industries are still a major job provider for the area and for the surrounding regions, Umond gradually grew more into a suburban area for people working in Amsterdam or Haarlem.

The network city region of Amsterdam as proposed in the 'Startnota' (Ministerie VROM, 1999a) included the largest part of this daily urban system. However, the more distant growth centres were not included in the initial network city definition. Considering their strong commuter ties with Amsterdam the former growth centres and their immediate surroundings should certainly be considered as a part of the Amsterdam region. Table 8.5 shows surprising trends in daily mobility behaviour between the sub-regions. In the period between 1987 and 1992, the dominant trend is clearly deconcentration. The share of trips within the borders of the sub-regions decreases dramatically for all of the sub-regions. The daily traffic links between the sub-regions intensified and the share of trips across the borders of the daily urban system increased, too. However, between 1992 and 1997, all these trends were reversed.

**Table 8.5**

Daily mobility between sub-regions of the Amsterdam daily urban system, 1987, 1992 and 1997 (share of total daily mobility of region of departure, in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Region of destination</th>
<th>Agglo A'dam</th>
<th>Inner ring A'dam</th>
<th>Outer ring A'dam</th>
<th>Agglo Haarlem</th>
<th>Inner ring Haarlem</th>
<th>Outside DUS A'dam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Region of departure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Agglo A'dam</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inner ring A'dam</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outer ring A'dam</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>2.3</td>
<td>74.5</td>
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<td>7.0</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>5.4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Agglo A'dam</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>14.9</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
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<td>11.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
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<td>7.0</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Agglo A'dam</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inner ring A'dam</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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<td>11.8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Outer ring A'dam</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>12.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Agglo Haarlem</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inner ring Haarlem</td>
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<td>2.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands; own calculation.

The daily travel relations between the agglomeration and suburban ring of Haarlem on the one hand, and the agglomeration and suburban rings of Amsterdam on the other, seems to be mostly 'one-way': there are much more daily trips from the Haarlem sub-region to the
Amsterdam agglomeration and suburban rings than vice versa. More or less the same goes for the daily travels between the suburban rings of Amsterdam and the Amsterdam agglomeration. In terms of daily travels, the Amsterdam agglomeration apparently retained its dominant position within the daily urban system.

8.5.2 The daily urban system of Utrecht

The daily urban system of Utrecht (figure 8.9) is located in the centre of the Netherlands. This is not only true in geographic terms, but also refers to the position of this region in the national transport network. The city of Utrecht is the most important node of the Dutch rail network and is one of the main centres in the highway network as well. The Utrecht agglomeration is traditionally known for its concentration of goods distribution companies. Utrecht city also has the largest university of the Netherlands. Around this university, located on the eastern edge of the city since the 1970s, a concentration of research and development employment has emerged (Figure 8.10). Other sub-centres

Figure 8.9
The daily urban system of Utrecht
Figure 8.10
Utrecht – Uithof: a booming research and development centre at the eastern edge of Utrecht

Figure 8.11
The historic city centre of Utrecht
within the Utrecht agglomeration include the growth centres of Nieuwegein and Houten. Nevertheless, the city centre has remained a major employment concentration as well. Around the central railway station, the headquarters of the Dutch Railways, a large exhibition and conference centre and a shopping centre are large job providers. The historic city centre next to this complex (Figure 8.11) attracts many tourists and day visitors as well. Largely due to its central location and its position in the Dutch road and rail network, the Utrecht region has been one of the fastest growing regions in population and employment since the 1960s. Gradually the Utrecht daily urban system has therefore become intertwined with the daily urban system of a nearby regional centre, Amersfoort. This city, in its turn, also grew rapidly since the 1970s. Amersfoort was stimulated in its growth through the policy of concentrated deconcentration in the 1970s. When this policy was abandoned in the 1980s, Amersfoort was still allowed to grow, this time as a regional centre in the compact city policy. The city’s special status in both policies resulted in a considerable growth of population and employment opportunities, both in the city itself as in its agglomeration.

The recent trends in daily mobility (Table 8.6) show a confused picture in which the sub-regions seem to move into different directions. People travelling from the agglomeration of Utrecht show a tendency to cross the boundaries of both the agglomeration and the daily urban system more and more. The inner suburban ring of Utrecht showed the same tendency between 1987 and 1992, but between 1992 and 1997, this sub-region developed in the opposite direction: a larger share of trips within the sub-regional boundaries and less trips across the borders of the daily urban system. The outer suburban ring of Utrecht seemed to become more oriented to the Utrecht agglomeration between 1987 and 1992, but afterwards the share of trips from the outer suburban ring to the central agglomeration declined again. At the same time, the daily travel stream to regions outside the Utrecht daily urban system intensified. Meanwhile, the agglomeration of Amersfoort remained a clearly recognisable sub-region within the larger whole of the daily urban system of

Table 8.6

Daily mobility between sub-regions of the daily urban system of Utrecht, 1987, 1992 and 1997 (share of total daily mobility of region of departure, in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Region of destination</th>
<th>Agglom Utrecht</th>
<th>Inner ring Utrecht</th>
<th>Outer ring Utrecht</th>
<th>Agglom Amersfoort</th>
<th>Outside DUS Utrecht</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Agglom Utrecht</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inner ring Utrecht</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outer ring Utrecht</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agglom Amersfoort</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Agglom Utrecht</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inner ring Utrecht</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outer ring Utrecht</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agglom Amersfoort</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Agglom Utrecht</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inner ring Utrecht</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outer ring Utrecht</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agglom Amersfoort</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands; own calculation.
Utrecht. The daily traffic links between the Amersfoort and Utrecht agglomerations became only slightly more intense, with considerably more traffic from Amersfoort to Utrecht than vice versa. Nevertheless, the share of daily travels from Amersfoort to the other sub-regions of the daily urban system is considerably larger than the links to other daily urban systems and regions. The share of trips crossing the daily urban system boundaries is substantial from each of the sub-regions, but in most cases, it is spread out over several regions of destination, leading to marginal scores for each of these destinations. This is even true for traffic to the sub-regions of the Amsterdam daily urban system that is often said to have very intensive daily travel relations with the Utrecht daily urban system (Knol & Manshanden 1990, Cortie et al, 1992). The shares of trips departing from each of the Utrecht sub-regions to the agglomeration and the inner suburban ring of Amsterdam did not show a marked increase over time and were still no higher than 2 to 3.5% in 1997.

Figure 8.12
The daily urban system of Arnhem - Nijmegen
8.5.3 The daily urban system of Arnhem / Nijmegen

The urban regions of Arnhem and Nijmegen, in the East of the Netherlands, are recently more and more seen as one functional regional unit (figure 8.12). The two central cities, very comparable in their number of inhabitants and economic importance, were each other's rivals for a long time. In recent years, however, the cities try to combine their strengths. Arnhem, Nijmegen and 23 other municipalities cooperate intensively in a regional agency ('KAN'-region - 'Nodal point Arnhem-Nijmegen'). The Arnhem - Nijmegen region was also presented in the 'Startnota' as one of the network city regions (Ministerie VROM, 1999a), and this eventually led to the status of 'national urban network' in the concept – Fifth Report as well (Ministerie VROM, 2001). The region is often said to have a strategic position, located along road, rail and shipping routes between the Rotterdam harbour and the German Rhein-Ruhr region (Dieleman & Faludi, 1998). In the Fourth Report, it was considered as part of a 'Central Netherlands Urban Ring', a combination of the Randstad and the major cities in South- and East-Netherlands (Priemus, 1998; Ministerie VROM, 1988). However, this concept disappeared soon after it was introduced and was not mentioned anymore in the pdate of the Fourth Report, the Fourth Report Extra (Ministerie VROM, 1990).

Despite the region's own ambitions to be an 'urban node' of national or even international importance and the acknowledgement as a administrative and functional entity by the national planners, the actual level of functional integration is doubtful when measured in terms of dailyt mobility patterns. Judging from the Daily Mobility Behaviour survey, the agglomerations of Arnhem and Nijmegen are still clearly present as separate and largely independent units. Table 8.7 demonstrates that the daily traffic connections between both agglomerations have slightly intensified. Nevertheless, most daily travels are taking place within the agglomerations. The suburban ring is more oriented towards Arnhem than towards Nijmegen but it has rather intensive links to both agglomerations. These daily traffic streams from the suburban ring to the agglomerations hardly changed between 1987 and 1997.

Table 8.7  Daily mobility between sub-regions of the daily urban system of Arnhem - Nijmegen, 1987, 1992 and 1997 (share of total daily mobility of region of departure, in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Region of destination</th>
<th>Agglo Arnhem</th>
<th>Agglo Nijmegen</th>
<th>Outer ring Arnh/Nijm</th>
<th>Outside DUS Arnh/Nijm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Region of departure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agglo Arnhem</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agglo Nijmegen</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outer ring Arnh/Nijm</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Agglo Arnhem</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agglo Nijmegen</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outer ring Arnh/Nijm</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Agglo Arnhem</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agglo Nijmegen</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outer ring Arnh/Nijm</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Daily Mobility Behaviour, Statistics Netherlands; own calculation.
The share of trips across the daily urban system borders increased for all of the sub-regions. The most frequent destinations are the directly neighbouring regions: the daily urban system of Den Bosch, and the regions Northern Limburg and East-Netherlands. The links with the Randstad, that are often said to have intensified considerably recently, were still very weak in 1997 according to the Research Daily Mobility Behaviour data.

8.6 Conclusions

The time series analysis of data from the Research Daily Mobility Behaviour presented here gives no indication of the existence of large-scale functional entities coming close to the urban field or poly-nucleated urban region in the Netherlands. It rather suggests that the daily life of the vast majority of the Dutch is still taking place within the borders of daily urban systems with a radius of 20 to 30 kilometres. The development of the current daily urban systems of the largest cities was stimulated by the policy of concentrated deconcentration of the 1970s and early 1980s. During this period, the Dutch spatial mobility policy had a considerable influence on the development of urban regional form and size. However, this influence was clearly not in line with the ambitions of the spatial mobility policy. While the intention was to create new largely independent 'closed' daily urban systems around the growth centres, the end result was that the growth centres and their surrounding regions were included in the daily urban systems of the large cities. Instead of creating new small daily urban systems, the policy of concentrated deconcentration produced a further enlargement of the already existing daily urban systems of the large cities and worsened the traffic congestion around the large cities.

While changes in daily mobility patterns in the 1970s and early 1980s must have been quite spectacular (the data of this period to check this assumption are unfortunately not available), the period since 1987 that is analysed in this study is characterised by stability. The vast majority of daily trips continued to take place within the borders of the daily urban systems that were already formed in the 1970s. The ambitions of compact city policy to reduce mobility in general and commuting traffic within the daily urban systems specifically are not reflected in the daily mobility trends. Meanwhile, inter-regional traffic between the daily urban systems has increased since the late 1980s, but only slightly. The data clearly demonstrate a strong increase in mobility, but it was more an increase in terms of the number of trips than in terms of the distances travelled. There are considerable differences in the distance travelled between the motives of trips. Commuter trips, business visits and trips for education tend to cross regional borders much more than trips for shopping and recreation. However, for most regions, also for commuter, business and education trips, crossing regional borders is not common.

Looking at the recent trends in daily mobility, the urban field as defined by Friedmann & Miller (1965) has little relevance for the Dutch urbanisation and spatial mobility policy of the near future. The urban field refers to travel behaviour that can hardly be imagined in the Dutch context in the foreseeable future. A much more relevant concept is the network city. In preparatory documents for the Fifth Report on Spatial Planning, the network city was introduced as the possible central concept for future Dutch urbanisation and spatial mobility policy. The network city, when applied at the scale the Dutch planners seemed to prefer then (Ministerie VROM, 1999a), refers to a realistic scale level of daily life. It comes close to the daily urban systems used as a basic regional entity in this chapter, functional units within which most daily mobility still takes place.
However, looking at the internal structure of the daily urban systems, the strongly polycentric nature and functional coherence that is assumed in the network city concept do not always appear very clearly. The internal coherence of the daily urban systems of Amsterdam, Utrecht and Arnhem / Nijmegen, presented as case studies in section 8.5, was not that strong as the term 'network city' might suggest. In each of the daily urban systems, the sub-regions still functioned as largely independent entities, with most daily traffic staying within the sub-regional borders. Especially the agglomerations within the daily urban systems (Amsterdam and Haarlem, Utrecht and Amersfoort, and Arnhem and Nijmegen) did not show very intense daily traffic relations. Furthermore, while the daily traffic ties between the central agglomerations and the inner suburban ring are rather intensive, the outer suburban rings demonstrate much less interaction with the central agglomeration and with the inner suburban ring. However, the traffic relations between the sub-regions are generally more intensive than the traffic relations of each of the sub-regions with other regions, outside of the daily urban system. Apparently, based on the mobility data studied in this chapter, the daily urban systems should be understood as a collection of rather loosely connected sub-regions instead of one functionally coherent entity.
CHAPTER NINE
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:
THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF DUTCH NATIONAL URBANISATION POLICY

9.1 Introduction

Since World War II, the Dutch national government has demonstrated a constant concern with the spatial development of the country. A national physical planning policy was gradually designed that is considered as one of the most influential and effective in Europe. An important element of this national physical planning policy has always been urbanisation policy. This involves attempts to determine the dynamics in the distribution of population and activities across the country through physical planning measures. The Dutch national urbanisation policy was built up around a number of constant core concepts of which the combination of 'Randstad' and 'Green Heart' has become internationally well known. However, there were also several changes in the urbanisation strategy through time: from a strong stress on deconcentration (on a regional as well as a national level) in the 1960s and 1970s, via a period of compact city development in the 1980s and 1990s, towards a new preference for deconcentration (this time only on a regional level) at the start of the 21st century.

The Dutch physical planning policy system and strategy is already in debate for many decades, but never has the discussion been so intense as in the last few years. More and more, the effectiveness of national planning has been questioned. The results of Dutch national physical planning policy in general, and urbanisation policy in particular, lead to serious questions about the relevance of national plans for the spatial development of a country or region.

In this final chapter, we will first return to the main research questions put forward in Chapter 1:

1. To what extent did Dutch national urbanisation policy influence the most recent developments in Dutch population distribution?
2. To what extent did Dutch national urbanisation policy influence the most recent developments in Dutch daily mobility patterns?
3. To what extent are the recent developments in population distribution and the influence of urban policy on these developments in the Netherlands different from the experiences of other Northwest-European countries?

The results of the analysis of the effectiveness of Dutch urbanisation policy with regard to population distribution (Chapter 6) and daily mobility (Chapter 8) and the international comparison of the Netherlands with Switzerland, West Sweden and Northern England (Chapter 7) contributed to answering these questions. However, since it is fully acknowledged that it is not possible to determine the exact influence of physical planning measures, the conclusions drawn in this chapter (as well as those drawn in earlier chapters) are largely tentative of character. In addition, the results of these analyses and the theoretical discussion of the chapters 2, 3 and 4 might contribute to a reflection on two additional subjects with large relevance for the future development of Dutch national urbanisation policy:
• Is it possible to realise a pattern of urbanisation in accordance with a strategy outlined in a 'national urbanisation policy'? If it is, what are the conditions that decide about the (potential) success of national urbanisation policy?
• Starting from the answers to the earlier questions and looking at the most recently published national physical planning report (the Fifth Report on Physical Planning), what can we expect of the influence of Dutch national urbanisation policy on the development of the settlement pattern in the next decades?

9.2 Dutch national urbanisation policy and its effects on population distribution

In Chapter 6, the goals of Dutch national urbanisation policy with regard to the dynamics in population distribution were evaluated. This was done in two separate, but complementary analyses. In the first of these analyses, the actual development of Dutch population distribution was confronted with the development one could expect on the basis of the goals set out in the key documents on national urbanisation policy. The area chosen for this analysis was Central Netherlands (see Appendix Map 2), since this was the area where most of the measures of national urbanisation policy concentrated on and where (at least on paper) the most consistent urbanisation policy was implemented since the 1960s. Municipal population growth rates were used as an indicator for the dynamics in population distribution. These trends were then compared to the developments that should have taken place according to the goals of Dutch national urbanisation policy. The main goals to be evaluated were derived from the national planning documents that set the scene for national urbanisation policy between 1970 and 1995 (see Figure 5.1 and section 6.6.1) and, as far as possible, translated into expectations of 'growth', 'stability' or 'decline' for each municipality type that was targeted by national urbanisation policy.

The comparison of the actual development of Dutch population distribution between 1970 and 1995 with the expected development based on the goals of national urbanisation policy in Chapter 6 (section 6.6.3) led to three major conclusions:

1. The degree of success of Dutch national urbanisation policy, expressed in the degree to which the actual dynamics in population distribution matched the goals of national urbanisation policy, seems to have decreased over time;
2. The period in which Dutch national urbanisation policy was most successful was between 1975 and 1985, when the growth centres were realised within the framework of the policy of concentrated deconcentration.
3. However, overlooking the period between 1970 and 1995, Dutch national urbanisation policy might have succeeded in changing the course of population development in some municipality types (most of all the growth centres), but did not manage to change the overall trend of urban sprawl.

In an alternative evaluation of Dutch national urbanisation policy, the degree to which the goals of national urbanisation policy were feasible was the central issue. This evaluation largely answered the question why the policy of concentrated deconcentration was more successful than can reasonably be expected of the current compact city policy. Since the eventual effects of compact city policy on Dutch population distribution can not yet be overseen, as a large part of the building projects within this policy's framework are still to be finished in the next 5 to 10 years, an evaluation of the feasibility of the compact city policy is more useful than an evaluation of the effects this policy already might have had on recent population distribution dynamics.
Concentrated deconcentration was quite successful in reaching its population distribution goals because in this policy, the national planners provided a generous supply of housing of the type that was asked for by many households. Therefore, the national planners were able to combine general societal interests (avoiding urban sprawl by concentrating suburban extensions in a few locations) with the individual interests of households that wanted to leave the large cities. The success of concentrated deconcentration policy between 1975 and 1985 was raised further through the deep recession of the Dutch economy in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and the crisis on the owner-occupied housing market that was one of its results. By making large investments in the construction of social housing on the growth centre sites directly after the housing market crisis of 1979, the Dutch government was able to speed up the housing production in the growth centres considerably and attracted many people to these houses that might have bought a house elsewhere otherwise. Meanwhile, however, the national planners were far less able to get grip on the developments outside of the growth centres. In the second half of the 1970s, sub-urbanisation decreased considerably but was still at a quite high level. The 1980s brought a further decrease of sub-urbanisation, but this was probably more due to the worsening of the economic recession than to the effectiveness of national urbanisation policy.

Contrary to the policy of concentrated deconcentration, the compact city policy strongly focused on housing production on locations in the general societal interest. While the inner-city redevelopment locations still met the housing demands of urban-oriented households, the vast majority of houses was (or will soon be) realised on locations just outside the already existing built-up areas of the large and medium-sized cities. These housing areas, the VINEX locations, as they were initially planned, were probably not ‘urban’ enough for the urban-oriented households, and not ‘suburban’ enough for the suburban-oriented households. Considering the tendency of the Dutch housing market in recent years to become increasingly bi-polar of character, with a suburban and a central-urban ‘peak’ (Meulenbelt, 1997; Musterd & Ostendorf, 1998), a concentration of building activities in-between these two peaks seems problematic. In recent years, attempts have been made to adapt the VINEX locations into more suburban, lower-density housing areas to try to meet the demands of the suburban-oriented households to a larger extent. This might increase the success of VINEX areas on the housing market, but the unavoidable consequence will be that the targets with regard to the number of dwellings to be realised on VINEX sites will not be reached and that more houses would need to be built on alternative locations that are not in line with the intentions of compact city policy. Furthermore, the housing demands of the urban-oriented households threaten to be met even less than before.

More in general, both the results of concentrated deconcentration policy and the expectations about compact city policy seem to suggest that it is much easier to reach success with a policy that encourages housing production (and through that, population growth) than with a restrictive policy. Even during the period of concentrated deconcentration, that is often perceived as highly successful (Faludi & Van der Valk, 1990; Dieleman et al, 1999), one could only speak of a partial success. While the realisation of the growth centres largely went according to plan, the policy goals in other locations were not reached. This is most of all true for the building restrictions in the ‘Central Open Space’ and within this area, in the ‘Green Heart’ in particular. As Table 6.5, 6.6 and 6.7 showed, the municipalities in the ‘Central Open Space’ were among the
fastest-growing municipalities in the 1970s, well above the national average while they should have shown a growth pattern below the national average.

9.3 Dutch national urbanisation policy and its effects on daily mobility

Unfortunately, data on the development of daily mobility in the Netherlands could only be acquired for the period from 1987 to 1997. It would have been interesting to compare the daily mobility behaviour ‘before the growth centres’ with that ‘after the growth centres’. Nevertheless, the situation in 1987 (just a few years after the end of concentrated deconcentration policy) and the development since then as presented in Chapter 8 were sufficient proof of a failure of concentrated deconcentration policy in terms of its spatial mobility goals. The growth centres should have become the activity centres of their own functional urban regions. This goal was to be reached by providing employment and services in the growth centres to such an extent that both the growth centre inhabitants and the population of its immediate surroundings did not need the large cities for work, education, shopping and/or recreation. Instead, the growth centres have become integrated into the functional urban regions of the large cities. The daily traffic relationships between the growth centres and ‘overspill regions’ on the one hand, and the large cities on the other, are among the most intensive daily mobility relationships in the Netherlands. This is largely due to the fact that the development of employment and services in the growth centres, especially the most distant ones, has for a long time lagged behind their population growth. Most growth centres caught up on these deficits during the 1980s and 1990s (Bruinse & Knol, 2001). Meanwhile, however, a large share of the growth centre inhabitants had found a job in or near the large cities, or continued the job they had before in the large city from where they moved to the growth centres. This produced intensive commuter relationships between the growth centres and overspill regions and the large city agglomerations. Most of the commuters travelled by car. The growth of car traffic was not sufficiently recognised as a potential cause for congestion yet in the 1970s. Several growth centres were not connected to the national railway system until a large part of the housing construction had already been completed, while road connections were in place much earlier. The result can be seen every working day in the form of traffic jams around the large cities, steadily growing in length and number.

Instead of acknowledging the considerable scale enlargement of the functional urban regions of the large cities, caused by a combination of increasing car possession and car use and urban sprawl and further encouraged by concentrated deconcentration policy, the national planners decided to choose for smaller-scale urban regions in the compact city policy. While the functional urban regions of the large cities had already expanded to areas with a radius of about 20 to 30 km in the 1980s, the functional urban regions mentioned in the Fourth Report had a radius of about 10 to 15 km. The distant growth centres fell outside of this radius as well as a large part of the former overspill areas. The intensive functional relationships that had grown between the growth centres, the overspill areas and the agglomerations of the large cities since the 1970s were largely denied in the compact city policy. Instead, some of the more distant growth centres were still considered to be the centre of their own functional urban region. Regarding the distribution of activities, one of the major instruments of compact city policy was the policy of so called A-, B- and C- locations for companies, in which new companies were preferably concentrated on locations within the large and medium-sized city agglomerations that were easy to reach by public transport. In combination with the concentration of new housing areas in or close to the large and medium-sized cities (the
VINEX locations), this should have led to shorter commuter distances and a decreasing share of car travel in total commuting. However, as was already demonstrated in a recent evaluation of spatial mobility policy (Martens, 2000) and is once more confirmed by the analysis presented in Chapter 8, neither of these goals was reached. The policy might have led to slight changes in the destination of commuters within the agglomeration, but they were still travelling mostly by car and instead of a decrease in commuting distance, the most recent trend is a further increase. The aim to concentrate employment in or near large and medium-sized cities in itself could of course have reduced commuter distances considerably if the people working in these companies would have lived in or near these cities. In reality, a considerable share of the employees of these companies came from more distant locations, most frequently by car, and this took away much of the logic and effectiveness of the ABC-location policy.

In the process towards the Fifth Report, it looked at first like the Dutch national planners had found the right concept to deal with present-day problems of daily mobility. In a pre-study of the Fifth Report, the 'network city' was introduced as the possible new strategic spatial concept (Ministerie VROM, 1999a). This network city had a radius of 20 to 30 kilometers, more or less matching the size of the regions used in the daily mobility analysis of Chapter 8. However, this concept was criticised by many as being based on an old-fashioned interpretation of daily functional relations in the Netherlands. Therefore, the network city was traded for a larger-scale entity. In the Fifth Report, 'urban networks' were introduced as the new strategic spatial concept for Dutch national urbanisation policy. This concept presupposes a high degree of functional integration of once separate daily urban systems into new, larger-scale polycentric urban regions. With the urban networks, the Dutch national planners react to the supposed trend towards considerably larger daily trip distances that is thought to take place. The national planners especially expect this higher scale level of urbanisation within the 'national urban networks' that are envisaged in the West and South of the country: the 'Delta Metropolis' and 'Brabantstad'. However, as the results of the daily mobility analysis in Chapter 8 shows, there is hardly a sign of the supposed trends of scale enlargement of urban regions and longer trip distances. It is true that daily mobility has increased markedly since the mid-1980s. However, this was much more an increase of the number of daily trips, than of trip distance. Instead of a trend towards scale enlargement of people's daily 'action spaces', therefore, the dominant trend seems to be a stabilisation and intensification of the already existing daily urban systems. Within these daily urban systems, the pattern of daily trips has gradually become more and more complex, with the emergence of various sub-centres next to the traditional centres. With regard to the most recent changes in Dutch national urbanisation policy, one could therefore conclude that while the compact city policy was based on unrealistically small daily urban systems, the urban networks policy seems to be based on unrealistically large daily urban systems.

9.4 Dutch national urbanisation policy in a Northwest-European perspective

The ultimate test for the influence of national urbanisation policy on the Dutch urbanisation process would of course have been to compare the existing situation with a national urbanisation policy, to a situation in which there would not have been a national urbanisation policy. This, of course, is impossible: national urbanisation policy is strongly interrelated with both its societal context and with several other policies, which means that national urbanisation policy cannot be seen as a completely independent, isolated variable.
The 'next best option' used in this study was to compare the development of urbanisation in the Netherlands with that of other countries without a national urbanisation policy or with another approach of national urbanisation policy. This comparative analysis also served to explore whether urbanisation policy on a national level is more or less effective than urbanisation policy on a lower (regional and/or local) level, and if the ambition level of governments to influence urbanisation in general (on whatever government level) is reflected in the eventual influence on urbanisation. The areas chosen for this comparative study were Switzerland, West-Sweden and Northern England. A detailed account of the criteria for the selection of the areas of comparison was given in Chapter 5. Summarised very briefly, the main criteria were that the areas of comparison were, like the Netherlands, part of Northwest-Europe and therefore largely experienced comparable changes in their economic, socio-cultural and demographic structure (Hall, 1993; Champion, 1992); that each of the areas contained a highly decentralised settlement system; that the areas of comparison each formed an example of a different type of planning systems, according to the typology of European planning systems of Newman and Thornley (1996); and that there were considerable differences between the case study areas in the ambition level of national planners with regard to national urbanisation policy.

Before starting the international comparison, the expectation was that Northern England and the Netherlands would demonstrate much less urban sprawl than Switzerland and West-Sweden. This expectation was based on two assumptions:

- Urbanisation policy can indeed influence national and regional urbanisation trends;
- National or regional effects can only be reached when such a policy is coordinated on the level of a country or region.

Northern England and the Netherlands were both affected by a national urbanisation policy throughout the entire research period (1970 to 1995). In both cases, the entire case study area was targeted with the same urbanisation policy, coordinated by the national government. The combination of the formal division of tasks, with a strong position of national government in the planning system, and a high ambition level of the national planners leads to the expectation of a considerable influence of national urbanisation policy in both the Netherlands and Northern England (see Figure 5.4). Of these two, it could be expected that in Northern England the 'match' between national planners wishes and the real development of population distribution would be slightly better than in the Netherlands. While in Northern England one could speak of a planning system that is predominantly 'top-down' in character, the Netherlands shows a combination of a strong national level and an almost equally strong local level (the 'decentralised unitary state').

Switzerland and West-Sweden lacked such a unity in urbanisation policy. In Switzerland, the federal government published advisory visions on the desired development of urbanisation in the 1970s and 1990s. However, the eventual planning actions were left to the cantons. Each of the cantons enjoyed considerable liberty in determining whether a urbanisation policy was required and if so, what this policy should be. In West-Sweden, planning actions were even further decentralised, to the local level. Municipalities have always had a strong position in Swedish politics in general, including physical planning, but since the 1980s, one could even speak of a 'municipal planning monopoly'. While Switzerland still has plans on the regional (cantonal) level, West-Sweden lacks planning
coordination on both the national and the regional level. Although the possibility that regional governments choose comparable or even identical urbanisation policies independently of another, or that they agree on a joint urbanisation policy, should not be excluded, it is not very likely that 26 regional governments (the 26 cantons of Switzerland) will do this. It would be even less likely that 89 local governments (the 89 municipalities of West-Sweden) would come to comparable or joint urbanisation policy measures. It is much more likely that each of these regional or local governments will choose its own urbanisation policy that mainly serves to safeguard the regional or municipal interests. In such a situation, the various local and/or regional urbanisation policies will often work against each other. The net effect on the settlement pattern and population distribution of the country or region as a whole will probably be either negligible, or counterproductive, promoting developments that are undesirable from a national point of view.

However, although some different accents were found in the population distribution dynamics of the case studies, the main trends were very comparable. Deconcentration dominated the scene in all four case study areas since the 1970s. The deconcentration process was at its strongest in the early 1970s. Cities, especially the largest ones, lost huge amounts of inhabitants during the 1970s but recovered somewhat in the 1980s and 1990s. Still, even while urban growth recovered, it stayed well under the national growth average, while suburban and rural growth was generally well above the national average. Within these shared general trends, two differences worth noting occurred in the geographic scale level of population deconcentration. First, in West-Sweden, deconcentration mainly took place in the immediate surroundings (agglomerations) of the large cities, while in the other three areas it was much more widespread, most of all in Northern England and Switzerland. In the West-Swedish case study, two possible reasons were given for this difference: the quite negative image of the countryside as a living environment in West-Sweden, and the fact that many Swedes own holiday homes in rural or forest areas, which largely takes away the need to look for a permanent residence outside the urbanised areas. In the other case study areas, the holiday homes phenomenon is much less widespread, which is amongst other reasons due to a lack of space to provide these holiday homes on a large scale. Therefore, when people want to escape from hectic urban life in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Northern England, they will more often choose to leave urban areas permanently instead of only for the summer months. Second, while in the other case study areas cities experienced a real recovery in the 1980s with a new period of population growth after decades of decline, the cities in Northern England only managed to reach a zero growth or a reduction of their negative growth rates. This happened in the context of a stagnating population growth in Northern England as a whole, while population growth in the other case study areas was fairly strong during the entire research period.

Looking at the case of Northern England, the earlier statements on the possibilities of national urbanisation policy to influence population distribution dynamics seem to be reconfirmed. Like in the Netherlands, the most successful part of British national urbanisation policy was the realisation of strong growth in a selection of locations, in this case the New Towns. The attempts to limit growth around the large conurbations through Green Belts and the restrictive building policy on the countryside in general were far less successful. The instrument of Green Belts may have led to less construction in the targeted areas, but it did not stop the trend of population deconcentration and it may even have contributed to urban-rural migrations across longer distances ('jumping over' the
Green Belts). Because of the failure of the restrictive part of national urbanisation policy, the result of British national urbanisation policy as a whole was fairly poor despite the realisation of the New Towns. When the other two case study areas, largely lacking national urbanisation policy, are added, the extent to which national urbanisation policy can really change the dynamics in population distribution seems to become even more marginal. Apparently, while national urbanisation policy certainly had some effects on the development of population distribution in the Netherlands and Northern England, it was not sufficiently capable to counterbalance the economic, socio-cultural and demographic processes that contributed to the recent changes in population distribution.

9.5 Effective national urbanisation policy: realistic challenge or impossible ideal?

In section 9.2, one of the main conclusions was that the effectiveness of Dutch national urbanisation policy seems to have decreased considerably after the strategic concept of concentrated deconcentration was traded for the compact city. The most important reasons for this decline in effectiveness were probably the increasing gap between policy intentions and popular housing demands, and the too ambitious ideas about the extent to which physical planning could counterbalance economic, socio-cultural and demographic trends. The policy of concentrated deconcentration was executed under much more favourable conditions than the compact city policy. The slump in the owner-occupied housing market in the late 1970s provided space for the mass production of social housing in the growth centres. The location of these new dwellings in a suburban setting at relatively low costs, mostly aimed at the traditional nuclear family that was still dominating Dutch society though it was gradually losing ground, meant an almost perfect match of housing provision and housing demands. A comparable success might have been expected from compact city policy when it was introduced in the mid-1980s. Again, the circumstances seemed perfect for the type of policy proposed: the Netherlands experienced a severe economic crisis and the awareness of environmental and mobility problems (pollution, congestion, energy consumption) increased. In addition, the continuously rising share of young small households and ethnic minorities, both groups with a more urban orientation than nuclear family, seemed to favour success of this policy. One might therefore wonder why the compact city policy did not work out at all, while the concentrated deconcentration policy can at least still claim that it was partially successful.

Already during the era of concentrated deconcentration policy, stimulating growth appeared to be much easier than restricting growth. Therefore, when the focus shifted more from ‘growth encouragement’ to ‘growth restrictions’ in the compact city policy, a decline of success was the logical outcome. Maybe it would have been better to encourage larger-scale new housing construction within the existing built environment of the cities, to an even larger extent as already happened in the compact city policy, in combination with new housing areas in some suburban locations. This might have been more successful in terms of meeting housing demands than the current attempt to offer suburban housing close to the existing built environment. From the outset, the VINEX locations at the city edges seemed to miss both the demands of urban oriented households (too ‘suburban’) and those of the suburban-oriented households (too ‘urban’). In the process from national plan to local execution, most VINEX locations were adapted towards the suburban demands, so with considerably lower housing densities, meaning much less houses will be realised there than initially planned. In this way, the Dutch national planners reacted to a change in the economic climate from recession to growth in
the 1990s. However, apart from the fact that the compact city policy could impossibly meet its initial quantitative housing targets anymore, the success of the VINEX locations became threatened even more because their realisation took too much time. The compact city policy was already announced in a national planning document (the Structure Outline Urban Areas) in 1983, became official national urbanisation policy in 1988, but the first VINEX houses were not produced until 1995. While negotiations on the exact locations, the number of houses to be built, the minimum size of the plots, the connections to public transport and the building contracts were still underway, many alternative new housing projects could be realised at other (suburban and rural) locations. These alternative locations contributed to a further deconcentration of population, and even though this was clearly opposite to the aims of compact city policy, these projects were still allowed.

To make the realisation of compact city policy even more complicated, the policy conditions changed drastically as well. In the 1990s, the traditional connection between physical planning and housing policy was largely lost when housing corporations were privatised and the national government started to encourage an increase of the owner-occupied sector at the expense of the social housing sector. Also on the land market, the traditionally strong position of the Dutch government (especially the municipality) was challenged. Private developers managed to acquire large plots of land on locations where the VINEX housing areas were to be realised. This gave the private developers a powerful position in the negotiations about the realisation of the VINEX projects, and also made it possible for them to force their proposals for adaptation of the VINEX areas (larger plots, lower density) through. The national government did not act to prevent this tendency, because it fit quite well in its general aim to decrease its own role in new housing construction and to encourage a larger participation of private parties. This new political viewpoint came about within the broader context of the decreasing popularity of the idea that Dutch society could be re-created through policy ('maakbare samenleving').

The division of responsibilities within the Dutch planning system might be another source of problems. Traditionally, both the national and the local government level have an influential role in the Dutch planning system. National planners cannot simply impose their plans on local governments and they never intended to try this either. In this respect, the degree to which national policy intentions have in the recent past been expressed in very concrete targets, including the exact building locations and the amount of houses to be built, is striking. To foreign observers, this might have produced the image that the Dutch national government decides on its own where new construction takes place but this is definitely not what happens in reality. In the case of the Fourth Report Extra, for example, the details of housing quantities and locations were determined in covenants between national, regional and local governments. These covenants were reached after a long process of negotiations. However, even this agreement between all government levels involved could not guarantee the realisation of the urbanisation policy targets. The Fifth Report marks a transition in the Dutch planning system that seems almost revolutionary. The national ambitions still seem to be on the same high level as before, if not even higher. However, the implementation and execution of the planning measures to realise these high ambitions are left to the regional and local government level too a much larger extent than before. Also, the possibilities of non-governmental parties to participate in the planning process have increased considerably.

As more parties claim their role in Dutch spatial development (ministries and national, regional and local lobby groups representing various parts of Dutch society, often with
conflicting demands), the need for a coordinating organisation is increasingly felt. Instead, the National Physical Planning Agency gradually seems to have lost its grip on the planning process. The first version of the Fifth Report led to much confusion about the current ambition to direct the spatial development of the country on the national government level. On the one hand, there are still lots of highly ambitious plans in the Fifth Report, which seem to indicate that the national planners still feel the ambition to exert influence on the future spatial development of the country. On the other hand, the responsibility for the eventual execution of these plans is in many cases given to other parties involved in the planning process, especially to the lower tiers of government.

9.6 Future perspectives for Dutch national urbanisation policy

The government proposal for the Fifth Report, published in January 2001, led to several negative and disappointed reactions from members of parliament, various advisory commissions, lobby groups and the popular media. Reading through the main targets of national urbanisation policy, one could question the consistency of the policy and the extent to which all these targets could actually be reached. Although in the process towards this report, the minister of physical planning repeatedly claimed that choices had to be made, the end result rather looks like an attempt to please all parties involved in the planning process. Regarding the national urbanisation policy, two key elements are the ‘contours’ and the ‘urban networks’.

The contours are a potentially very strong instrument to limit further extension of built environment and loss of open land. The draft version of Fifth Report contained ‘red’, ‘green’ and ‘light green’ contours, while in the eventual government proposal, only the red and green contours were left. This would mean that about 60% of the surface of the Netherlands would end up outside both types of contours in the so called ‘balance areas’. It is very unclear what is supposed to happen in these ‘contourless’ areas. Furthermore, the drawing of the contours is left to municipalities that can change them every 5 years. This leads to the question how much power is left for this instrument in the end. More clarity on the status of the contours would be welcome. In fact, if the instrument of contours would be used to its full potential, only one type of contours would be needed. This could be done in two ways. First, the national government could decide to implement only the ‘red contours’. These red contours would then simply indicate the difference between building land and non-building land. All land that would fall outside the red contours should be prevented from any building claim. This difference between building and non-building land is already implemented for some decades in Switzerland. The Swiss experience, however, learns that this division only works when the contours are not open to any re-negotiations or exceptions. An alternative option for the national government is to implement only the ‘green contours’. Areas within these green contours should be prevented from any building claim, while areas outside these green contours could get any possible function. Inspiration for such an approach might be found in the UK, where National Parks are protected through tight building restrictions.

Another crucial element of the intended future national urbanisation policy is the new strategic concept of urban networks. With the introduction of this concept, the tendency towards a further scale enlargement of Dutch urban regions since the 1970s finally seems to be acknowledged. However, the concept as it seems to be interpreted by the national planners so far suffers from many serious problems. First, the scale of the ‘national urban networks’ should be reconsidered. This scale does not seem to relate to daily mobility.
patterns very well. As the analysis of recent trends in daily mobility in the Netherlands on a national and regional level in Chapter 8 demonstrated, the ‘national urban networks’ are far too large to match daily mobility patterns of the majority of the population that are supposed to live, work and recreate in them. Functional relationships at this scale level seem to exist only for business travellers and people with high incomes, that can afford to live in one city (or suburb), work in another, go out in yet another city and recreate regularly rather far from their home. Which are the arguments of the national planners for the choice of these large-scale national urban networks? Do they want to adapt Dutch infrastructure to the needs of ‘the happy few’? Do the Dutch planners foresee a considerable scale enlargement of daily life for the average Dutch in the next decades? If so, would it not be more advisable to introduce measures to prevent this from happening? After all, when services like work, shopping and recreation would be distributed on the scale level of the national urban networks, the development of urban fields might become reality. One might wonder if this is an attractive perspective for the Netherlands.

The ‘regional urban networks’ seem much more relevant for the daily life of their inhabitants. In their geographic scope, they more or less match the ‘network cities’ that were proposed earlier in the process towards the Fifth Report (Ministerie VROM, 1999a). However, in the Fifth Report there are so many regional urban networks that most of the country is covered with them, which makes the relevance of these networks as a strategic spatial concept doubtful. Do the national planners really want to include almost all possible locations in the Netherlands in one of the networks? How could this be combined with the ‘national landscapes’ that are supposed to be safeguarded from urban sprawl and with the limits posed to building activities with the red contours? In addition, also for the regional urban networks, it is totally unclear in what way they will be ‘applied’ in the further spatial development of the Netherlands. Will activities be spread within these networks so that each network offers a complete collection of living environments, employment and education opportunities and consumer and commercial services? Does this then also mean that people will have to travel longer distances to get the services they need, because these services might be offered in only one location within the network (because the places in the network should be complementary)? Is the further increase of daily mobility that this might produce, and which will probably mostly exist of car mobility, desirable? One of the major driving forces behind the compact city policy was (and still is, as long as the Fifth Report is not politically accepted) limiting further mobility growth, especially the growth of car mobility. There were valid arguments for such a spatial mobility policy in the late 1980s and early 1990s and considering the rapid growth of car use since then, these arguments only gained in validity. Simply putting the goal of limiting mobility growth aside would not be logical and desirable in the light of the continuity of Dutch national urbanisation policy.

Turning from the content of the proposed policy to the way in which it should be realised, more possible problems seem to arise. The decentralisation of planning responsibilities might bring planning ‘closer to the people’. The other side of the coin, however, is that it will be more complicated to reach an overarching national planning strategy. In Chapter 7 (section 7.5) and section 9.4, the comparison of national urbanisation policies led to two major conclusions: first, that national urbanisation policy at best managed to have only a modest influence on the actual development of urbanisation; second, that the most successful national urbanisation policies found in the international comparison were policies that were coordinated on the national government level. More specifically, the British New Town policy as well as the Green Belts and National Parks could at least be
seen as partially successful, and the same goes for the Dutch policy of concentrated deconcentration. As the examples of Switzerland and West-Sweden proved, when the national government level does not provide a national framework for urbanisation policy, there will generally be large variations between regions and/or municipalities in the extent to which urbanisation policy is pursued, as well as in the targets of these urbanisation policies. It can hardly be expected that a large collection of regional or local governments will reach a consensus on one urbanisation strategy. More likely, each of these regional and/or local governments will defend their own interests and these interests will often be conflicting, resulting in developments that are not in the 'national interest'. The examples given in Chapter 7 (in West-Sweden, the competition between municipalities for shopping malls in Skåne and the problems with the construction of a highway in Bohuslän, and in Switzerland, the contrasts between the ‘laissez-faire’ urbanisation policy in the canton of Vaud and the compact city policy in the canton of Bern) should give cause to serious concern about the kind of urbanisation policy that a lack of national coordination could produce. Recent developments in the Dutch planning debate give rise to comparable concerns. Looking for example at the most recent plans of a collective of ‘Randstad governments’ (provinces and large cities), building activities in open areas are enthusiastically encouraged. The vision of the Randstad governments, 'Towards a blue-green Deltametropolis', describes even those areas that are protected as ‘national landscapes’ in the Fifth Report as potential building sites (Koper, 2001).

Especially in a small and densely populated country like the Netherlands, there will continue to be a need for national government involvement in spatial development. Contrary to the dominant trend of government withdrawal in various policy fields, including physical planning, since the 1980s, maybe the time has come for a return of more intensive involvement of national government in spatial development. However, to have more chances on success than during the eras of concentrated deconcentration and the compact city, this involvement should probably be much more selective than before. Instead of aiming for a comprehensive national planning programme, it might be much more productive to select a number of key issues. The ideal national urbanisation policy would be one that:

- chooses a limited amount of clearly defined priorities;
- makes clear why these priorities were chosen (which collective interest is served with the policy?);
- includes clearly defined and realistic policy targets, instruments to realise these targets (for national, regional and local planners), and control mechanisms to check if the efforts of national, regional and local planners are sufficient to reach the targets;
- offers a national framework of the desired future development of urbanisation, but also offers regional and local planners chances to work out these national priorities in regional and local programmes within this national framework that connect to the regional and local 'identity' and needs as much as possible.

One of the key issues that might be selected for such a future Dutch national urbanisation policy is to prevent the further loss of rural and nature areas to urban sprawl. Judging from the reactions to the first versions of the Fifth Report and from the political, scientific and societal debate of the past decades, this is a policy goal that can count on much support in Dutch society. To prevent or limit further urban sprawl, the instrument of contours offers a promising perspective, but only if they are really enforced and maintained and not open to any compromise. The contours could of course be revised
after some time but this period should be quite long to make the instrument effective (so not every 5 years as is now planned, but for example 10 years). If the current practice of allowing all kinds of exceptions to national, regional and local plans continues, physical planning will be taken less and less seriously and eventually lose its relevance in Dutch society.

In the future national urbanisation plans, the demands for housing, recreation, employment and infrastructure should still be met as much as possible, but limits should surely be considered as well. Within the limited space of the Netherlands it is simply impossible to meet all demands for space. Therefore, national planners should also sometimes dare to say ‘enough is enough’ and the demanding parties will sometimes have to accept ‘no’ for an answer. Not everyone can live wherever he or she wants and sometimes, a ‘second-best’ option should be taken for granted. To get this message across, the national planners have to communicate better to the public about the ‘national’ or ‘common’ interest that they try to meet with their plans, why this is something different from the sum of all individual interests, and why all people will be better off when these common interests will continue to form the core of the Dutch national urbanisation policy of the future.
SAMENVATTING EN CONCLUSIES

Inleiding

Sinds de Tweede Wereldoorlog heeft de Nederlandse nationale overheid een continue betrokkenheid getoond bij de ruimtelijke ontwikkeling van haar grondgebied. Geleidelijk werd een nationaal ruimtelijk beleid ontwikkeld dat als één van de meest invloedrijke en effectieve in Europa beschouwd wordt. Verstedelijkingsbeleid is altijd een hoofdingrediënt van dit nationaal ruimtelijk beleid geweest. In het kader van het verstedelijkingsbeleid werd en wordt gepoogd om de spreiding van bevolking en activiteiten via maatregelen van ruimtelijke ordening te sturen. Het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid is opgebouwd rond een aantal min of meer constante strategische concepten, waarvan vooral de combinatie van Randstad en Groene Hart internationale faam heeft verworven. Er waren echter ook aanmerkelijke koerswijzigingen in de nationale verstedelijkingsstrategie: van een sterke nadruk op deconcentratie (zowel op nationaal als op regionaal niveau) in de jaren ’60 en ’70 van de 20e eeuw, via een periode van compacte stadsontwikkeling in de jaren ’80 en ’90, naar een hernieuwde voorkeur voor deconcentratie (nu echter alleen op regionaal niveau) aan het begin van de 21e eeuw.

Het Nederlandse planningssysteem en de planningsstrategie zijn al decennia lang onderwerp van hevige debatten, maar nog nooit was de discussie zo intens als in de afgelopen jaren. De effectiviteit van ruimtelijke ordening wordt hierbij steeds meer betwijfeld. De uiteindelijke resultaten van het Nederlandse nationale ruimtelijk beleid in het algemeen en het verstedelijkingsbeleid in het bijzonder leiden tot grote vraagtekens bij de relevantie van nationale plannen voor de ruimtelijke ontwikkeling van landen of regio’s, zowel in Nederland als daarbuiten.

In deze studie is de invloed van het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid op de ontwikkeling van de spreiding van bevolking en activiteiten in Nederland sinds de jaren ’60 van de 20e eeuw ter discussie gesteld. Hierbij stonden de volgende vragen centraal:

1. In hoeverre heeft het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid invloed gehad op de meest recente ontwikkelingen in de Nederlandse bevolkingspreiding?
2. In hoeverre heeft het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid invloed gehad op de meest recente ontwikkelingen in de dagelijkse mobiliteit in Nederland?
3. In hoeverre zijn de recente ontwikkelingen in de bevolkingspreiding en dagelijkse mobiliteit en de invloed van het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid op deze trends in Nederland verschillend van de ervaringen in andere Noordwest-Europese landen?

De resultaten van de analyse van de effectiviteit van het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid op het gebied van bevolkingspreiding (hoofdstuk 6) en dagelijkse mobiliteit (hoofdstuk 8) en de internationale vergelijking van Nederland met Zwitserland, West-Zweden en Noord-Engeland (hoofdstuk 7) droegen bij aan het beantwoorden van deze vragen. De onderzoeksresultaten en de theoretische discussie in hoofdstuk 2, 3 en 4 geven echter ook aanleiding tot reflectie over twee andere thema’s die van groot belang zijn voor de toekomstige ontwikkeling van het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid:

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• Is het mogelijk een verstedelijkingspatroon te realiseren die voortkomt uit een 'nationale verstedelijkingsstrategie'? Als dit inderdaad mogelijk is, aan welke voorwaarden zou dan een dergelijke strategie moeten voldoen om succesvol te worden?

• Wat kunnen we verwachten van de invloed van het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid op de verdere ontwikkeling van het nederzettingenpatroon in de komende decennia als we uitgaan van de antwoorden op bovenstaande vragen en de plannen die de Nederlandse overheid in haar meest recente nationale ruimtelijke nota (De Vijfde Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening) aangekondigd heeft?

Effecten van het Nederlands nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid op de bevolkingspreiding

In hoofdstuk 6 werden de doelstellingen van het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid geëvalueerd. Dit gebeurde in twee afzonderlijke, complementaire analyses. De eerste van deze analyses betrof een 'confrontatie' van de daadwerkelijke ontwikkeling van de bevolkingspreiding met de ontwikkeling die men zou verwachten op basis van het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid. Het gekozen onderzoeksgebied voor deze analyse was 'Centraal Nederland' (zie kaart 2 in de bijlage), omdat de meeste maatregelen van het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid betrekking hadden op dit gebied en omdat hier (op papier ten minste) het meest consistente verstedelijkingsbeleid is gevoerd sinds de jaren '60 van de 20e eeuw. Gemeentelijke bevolkingsgroeiwijzers werden gebruikt als indicator voor de bevolkingsdynamiek. De trends in de gemeentelijke bevolkingsgroei werden vervolgens vergeleken met de ontwikkelingen die zouden hebben moeten plaatsvinden volgens de doelstellingen van het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid. De te evalueren doelstellingen werden afgeleid uit de nationale beleidsdocumenten die het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid van 1970 tot 1995 bepaald hebben (zie figuur 5.1 en paragraaf 6.6.1). Vervolgens werden deze doelstellingen voor zover mogelijk vertaald in drie mogelijke scores ('groei boven nationaal gemiddelde', 'groei rond nationaal gemiddelde' en 'groei onder nationaal gemiddelde'), voor elk van de gemeentetypes die door het beleid in hun ontwikkeling beïnvloed moesten worden.

De vergelijking van de daadwerkelijke ontwikkeling van de Nederlandse bevolkingspreiding tussen 1970 en 1995 met de verwachte ontwikkeling op basis van de doelstellingen van het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid in hoofdstuk 6 (paragraaf 6.6.3) leidde tot drie hoofdconclusies:

1. De mate van succes van het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid, uitgedrukt in de mate waarin de werkelijke bevolkingsdynamiek overeenkomstig de doelstellingen van het beleid plaatsvond, nam vanaf begin jaren '70 steeds meer af;

2. De meest succesvolle periode voor het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid was tussen 1975 en 1985, toen de groeikernen gebouwd werden in het kader van het beleid van 'gebundeld deconcentratie';

3. Als echter de gehele periode van 1970 tot 1995 beschouwd wordt, moet gesteld worden dat het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid er weliswaar in geslaagd is de bevolkingsontwikkeling van enkele gemeentetypes (vooral de groeikernen) te beïnvloeden, maar er niet in slaagde om de algemene trend van deconcentratie een halt toe te roepen.
In een tweede evaluatie van het Nederlandse verstedelijkingsbeleid stond de haalbaarheid van de beleidsdoelstellingen centraal. Deze evaluatie kon grotendeels verklaren waarom het beleid van gebundelde deconcentratie veel succesvoller was dan het compacte-stadbeleid uiteindelijk zal blijken te zijn. Een inschatting van de haalbaarheid van het compacte-stadbeleid is op dit moment zinvolder dan een evaluatie van de al bereikte effecten van dit beleid. De uiteindelijke effecten van het compacte-stadbeleid kunnen anno 2001 nog niet overzien worden aangezien een groot deel van de bouwprojecten pas over 5 à 10 jaar gereed zal zijn.

Het beleid van gebundelde deconcentratie haalde een aanzienlijk deel van de doelstellingen op het gebied van de bevolkingsspreiding omdat de nationale planners een grote hoeveelheid woningen aanboden waar veel vraag naar was. Zodoende bleken de nationale planners in staat om algemene belangen (het tegengaan van ‘urban sprawl’ door sub urbane groei) te concentreren op een beperkt aantal locaties) te combineren met de belangen van individuele huishoudens die de stad wilden verlaten. Het relatieve succes van het gebundelde deconcentratiebeleid werd vergroot door de diepe economische recessie in de late jaren ’70 en vroege jaren ’80 en de crisis op de koopwoningenmarkt die daaruit resulteerde. Door grootschalig te investeren in sociale woningbouw in de groeikernen direct na het instorten van de koopwoningenmarkt in 1979 kon de Nederlandse overheid de realisatie van de groeikernen aanzienlijk versnellen en veel huishoudens aantrekken die onder andere omstandigheden wellicht elders waren gaan wonen. De nationale planners bleken echter veel minder in staat om groep te krijgen op de ontwikkelingen buiten de groeikernen. In de tweede helft van de jaren ’70 nam het tempo van de ‘vrije’ suburbanisatie weliswaar af maar het was nog altijd hoog te noemen. In de jaren ’80 trad een verdere afname van de suburbanisatie op, maar dit was waarschijnlijk eerder het gevolg van de economische recessie dan van een effectief nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid.

In tegenstelling tot het gebundelde deconcentratiebeleid, concentreerde het compacte-stadbeleid zich sterk op bouwlocaties in het algemene belang. Terwijl de bouwlocaties in de binnensteden wel tegemoet kwamen aan de woonwensen van een deel de bevolking (de stedelijk georiënteerde huishoudens), werd het overgrote deel van de nieuwbouw op locaties net buiten de grote en middelgrote steden gepland. Deze zogenaamde VINEX-locaties waren in hun oorspronkelijke opzet in het algemeen niet ‘stedelijk’ genoeg voor de huishoudens met een stedelijke oriëntatie, maar ook niet ‘suburban’ genoeg voor de huishoudens met sub urbane woonwensen. Gezien de recente tendens van de Nederlandse woningmarkt die in toenemende mate twee pieken is gaan vertonen, namelijk een centrum-stedelijke en een sub urbane pick (Meulenbelt, 1997; Ostendorf & Musterd, 1998), lijkt een concentratie van nieuwbouw op locaties tussen deze pieken in problematisch. Recentelijk zijn veel VINEX-locaties aangepast in de richting van meer sub urbane woonwijken met lagere dichtheden in een poging meer tegemoet te komen aan de sub urbane woonwensen. Dit zou het succes van de VINEX-wijken kunnen vergroten, maar heeft uiteraard wel de consequentie dat het geplande aantal woningen niet meer gehaald wordt en dat er op andere locaties meer gebouwd moet worden, locaties die vaak niet goed aansluiten bij de uitgangspunten van het compacte-stadbeleid. Bovendien dreigen de woonwensen van de huishoudens met meer stedelijke woonwensen nog minder gehonoreerd te worden dan eerder al het geval was.

Zowel de resultaten van het gebundelde deconcentratiebeleid als die van het compacte-stadbeleid lijken te suggereren dat het veel eenvoudiger is om succes te boeken met een
verstedelijkingsbeleid dat woningproductie stimuleert, dan met een restrictief verstedelijkingsbeleid waarin nieuwbouw beperkt of zelfs verboden wordt. Zelfs in de periode van gebundelde deconcentratie die vaak als uiterst succesvol wordt gezien (Faludi & Van der Valk, 1990; Dieleman et al. 1999) kon men slechts van een gedeeltelijk beleidssucces spreken. Terwijl de groeikernen grotendeels volgens plan werden gerealiseerd, werden de beleidsdoelen op andere locaties niet gehaald. Dit gold vooral voor het restrictieve bouwbeleid in de ‘Centrale Ope Ruimte’, en binnen dit gebied met name in het ‘Groene Hart’. Zoals uit tabel 6.5, 6.6 en 6.7 gebleken is, behoorde de gemeenten van de Centrale Open Ruimte tot de snelste groeiers in de jaren ’70, met een groei ruim boven het nationale groeigemiddelde. Deze gemeenten hadden volgens het restrictieve beleid eigenlijk een bevolkingsgroei onder het nationale gemiddelde moeten hebben.

**Effecten van het Nederlands nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid op de dagelijkse mobiliteit**

De tijdreeksanalyse van de ontwikkeling van de dagelijkse mobiliteit in Nederland (hoofdstuk 8) kon helaas slechts gemaakt worden voor een periode van 1987 tot 1997. Het zou interessant geweest zijn om het dagelijks verplaatsingsgedrag ‘vóór de groeikernen’ te kunnen vergelijken met het dagelijks verplaatsingsgedrag ‘na de groeikernen’.

Desondanks geven de situatie in 1987 (slechts enkele jaren na het beëindigen van het gebundelde deconcentratie-beleid) en de ontwikkelingen daarna voldoende aanleiding om te constateren dat de mobiliteitsdoelstellingen van het gebundelde deconcentratiebeleid niet gehaald zijn. De groeikernen, met name de locaties die het verst van de grote steden verwijderd waren, waren bedoeld als activiteitencentra van hun eigen stadsgewesten. Dit moest bereikt worden door een niveau van werkgelegenheid en diensten in de groeikernen aan te bieden dat toereikend was voor zowel de groeikernbewoners als de inwoners van de omliggende gemeenten. Zodoende zouden deze groepen niet meer op de grote stad aangewezen zijn voor werk, onderwijs, winkelen en/of recreatie. In plaats van deze ontwikkeling zijn de groeikernen en hun omliggende gemeenten geïntegreerd geraakt in de stadsgewesten van de grote steden. De dagelijkse verplaatsingsrelaties tussen de groeikernen en ‘overloopregio’s’ enerzijds en de grote steden anderzijds behoren nu tot de meest intensieve dagelijkse verplaatsingsrelaties in Nederland. Deze ontwikkeling is vooral te wijten aan het achterblijven van de groei van werkgelegenheid en dienstenaanbod bij de explosieve bevolkingsgroei van de groeikernen en hun regio’s. De meeste groeikernen slaagden er in de jaren ’80 en ’90 alsnog in deze ontwikkelingsachterstand ongedaan te maken (Bruijne & Knol, 2001). Ondertussen hadden vele groeikernbewoners echter al een baan gevonden in of nabij de grote steden of ze hadden besloten de baan te houden die ze hadden toen ze de grote stad als woonmilieu vervuilden voor de groeikern. Intensief woon-werkverkeer tussen de groeikernen en overloopregio’s en de grote steden was het resultaat. Het overgrote deel van deze forensen reisde per auto. De forse groei van het autoverkeer was niet voldoende voorzien in de ruimtelijke plannen in de jaren ’70 en het gevaar van congestie rond de grote steden werd onvoldoende onderkend. Enkele groeikernen werden pas aangesloten op het nationale spoorwegennet toen een groot deel van de huizen al gebouwd was, terwijl de aansluiting op het wegennet al veel eerder tot stand was gebracht. Het resultaat is elke werkdag te zien rond de grote steden: steeds meer en steeds langere files.

Hoewel men zou hebben verwacht dat de aanzienlijke schaalvergroting van stedelijke regio’s onder invloed van het toenemend autobezit en -gebruik en de aanhoudende
suburbanisatie (en verder aangemoedigd door het gebundelde deconcentratiebeleid) in het
nationale verstredelijkingsbeleid erkend zou worden, gebeurde in de jaren '80 precies het
tegenovergestelde. De nationale planners besloten het schaalniveau van de stadsgewesten
in hun beleid niet te vergroten, maar juist te verkleinen. Terwijl de stedelijke regio's van
de grote steden zich in feite al uitspreken over gebieden binnen een straal van 20 tot 30
km van de centrumstad, kregen de stadsgewesten in het compacte-stadbeleid een straal
van 10 tot 15 km. Een deel van de groeikernen en een groot deel van de voormalige
overloopregio's viel buiten deze beleidsafgrenzing van stadsgewesten. De intensieve
dagelijkse verplaatsingsrelaties die vanaf de jaren '70 tussen groeikernen en
overloopregio's en de grote steden waren ontstaan werden grotendeels ontkend in het
compacte-stadbeleid. In plaats hiervan werden sommige van de verder weg gelegen
groeikernen nog altijd beschouwd als het centrum van hun eigen stadsgewest. Eén van de
belangrijkste instrumenten wat betreft de spreiding van activiteiten was het beleid van de
A-, B- en C- locaties. Volgens dit beleid zouden bedrijven zich bij voorkeur moeten
vestigen op locaties binnen de agglomeraties van de grote en middelgrote steden die goed
bereikbaar waren per openbaar vervoer. In combinatie met de concentratie van
nieuwbouwwoningen in en nabij de grote en middelgrote steden (de VINEX-locaties) zou
dit beleid hebben moeten bijdragen aan een beperking van de woon-werkafstanden en een
afnemend aandeel van de auto in het woon-werkverkeer. Zoals een recente evaluatie van
het ruimtelijk mobiliteitsbeleid antoonde (Martens, 2000) en zoals nog eens bevestigd
werd door de analyse in hoofdstuk 8 zijn deze doelen niet bereikt. Het ruimtelijk
mobiliteitsbeleid heeft dan misschien enigszins bijgedragen aan wijzigingen in de locaties
van aankomst en vertrek van woon-werkverplaatsingen binnen de agglomeratie en het
stadsgewest, maar het overgrote deel van de forensen bleef per auto reizen en de
gemiddelde woon-werkafstand nam toe in plaats van af. De doelstelling om
werkgelegenheid in of nabij knooppunten van openbaar vervoer in of nabij de steden te
concentreren had natuurlijk kunnen bijdragen aan een afname van de woon-
werkafstanden en het autogebied als de betreffende werknemers ook in of nabij diezelfde
steden zouden wonen. In werkelijkheid woonde een groot deel van de werknemers van
deze bedrijven echter op enige afstand van de steden en reisde per auto, waarmee de
logica en effectiviteit van het ABC-locatiebeleid grotendeels verdwenen waren.

In de aanloop naar de Vijfde Nota leek het er in eerste instantie op dat de Nederlandse
planners het passende concept hadden gevonden om de huidige problematiek van
dagelijkse mobiliteit aan te pakken. In een voorstudie voor de Vijfde Nota, de Startnota
(Ministerie VROM, 1999a), werd de ‘netwerkstad’ geïntroduceerd als het mogelijke
nieuwe strategische verstredelijkingsconcept. Deze netwerkstad zou een gebied beslaan
met een straal van 20 tot 30 km, min of meer gelijk aan de omvang van de regio's die in
hoofdstuk 8 bij de analyse van dagelijkse mobiliteit gebruikt werden. Het concept werd
echter bekritiseerd omdat het te kleinschalig zou zijn en gebaseerd op een ‘ouderwetse’
interpretatie van dagelijkse verplaatsingsrelaties in Nederland. Het gevolg was dat de
netwerkstad deels ingevoerd werd voor een grootschaliger concept. In de Vijfde Nota
werden ‘stedelijke netwerken’ gepresenteerd als het nieuwe centrale strategische concept
voor het Nederlandse verstredelijkingsbeleid. Dit concept veronderstelt een hoge mate van
functionele samenhang tussen ooit onafhankelijk functionerende stadsgewesten, die
zouden zijn opgegaan in nieuwe, grootschaligere polycentrische stedelijke regio's. Met
het concept van stedelijke netwerken reageert de Nederlandse overheid op de door veel
wetenschappers en beleidsmakers veronderstelde trend naar aanzienlijk langere dagelijkse
verplaatsingsafstanden en een schaalvergroting van het dagelijks leven. Deze
schaalvergroting wordt door de planners vooral verwacht in de ‘nationale stedelijke

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netwerken’ in het westen en zuiden van het land: de ‘Deltametropool’ en ‘Brabantstad’. Zoals de analyse van dagelijkse mobiliteit in en tussen regio’s in hoofdstuk 8 echter aantoonde zijn er nog nauwelijks aanwijzingen dat deze trends van schaalvergroting en verlenging van verplaatsingsafstanden echt plaatsvinden. Het is waar dat de dagelijkse mobiliteit sinds de jaren ’80 aanzienlijk in intensiteit toegenomen is, maar dit betrof veel meer een toename van het aantal verplaatsingen dan een toename van de verplaatsingsafstanden. In plaats van een trend van schaalvergroting van de dagelijkse actieruimten van individuele personen en huishoudens lijkt de dominerende trend eerder een stabilisering en intensivering van de al bestaande verplaatsingsrelaties binnen stedelijke regio’s te zijn. Binnen deze stedelijke regio’s wordt het patroon van dagelijkse mobiliteit steeds complexer vanwege de opkomst van diverse subcentra naast het traditionele stadscentrum. Terugkijkend op het ruimtelijk mobiliteitsbeleid van de Nederlandse overheid van de laatste decennia zou men daarom kunnen stellen dat het compacte-stadbeleid gebaseerd was op onrealistische kleine stedelijke regio’s, terwijl het beleid van stedelijke netwerken juist gebaseerd lijkt op onrealistisch grote stedelijke regio’s.

Nederlands nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid in Noordwest-Europese perspectief

De ulitme meting van de invloed van het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid op het Nederlandse verstedelijkingsproces zou uiteraard zijn geweest om de bestaande situatie met een nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid te vergelijken met een situatie zonder nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid. Dit is natuurlijk onmogelijk: het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid is nu eenmaal te sterk verweven met de context van de samenleving en met diverse andere vormen van overheidsbeleid en kan dus niet als een volledig onafhankelijke, geïsoleerd opererende variabele beschouwd worden.

Een ‘next best’ optie die in deze studie gebruikt is (hoofdstuk 7) is de vergelijking van het verstedelijkingsproces in Nederland met landen waar ofwel geen nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid ofwel een ander wijze tot stand komt. Deze internationale vergelijking diende ook om meer inzicht te krijgen in de vraag of verstedelijkingsbeleid dat op nationaal niveau gecoördineerd wordt effectiever is dan verstedelijkingsbeleid waarin de nadruk op het regionale of lokale niveau wordt gelegd. Daarnaast stond de vraag centraal of de mate waarin overheden (op welk niveau dan ook) de ambitie tonen om verstedelijkings te sturen weerspiegeld wordt in de uiteindelijke beleidsinvoer op het verstedelijkingsproces. De gebieden die voor de internationale vergelijking werden gekozen waren Zwitserland, West-Zweden en Noord-Engeland. In hoofdstuk 5 zijn de voornaamste argumenten voor de keuze van deze vergelijkingsgebieden uitgebreid toegelicht. Kort samengevat waren de voornaamste selectietcriteriën:

- De gebieden maken evenals Nederland deel uit van Noordwest-Europa en hebben daardoor ook grotendeels dezelfde transformaties in hun economische, sociaal-culturele en demografische structuur doorgemaakt sinds de jaren ’60 van de 20e eeuw (Hall, 1993; Champion, 1992);
- Elk van de gebieden wordt gekenmerkt door een sterk gedecentraliseerd en polycentrisch nederzettingsysteem;
- Elk van de gebieden is een voorbeeld van een ander type planningssysteem volgens de typologie van Europese planningsystemen van Newman en Thornley (1996);
- Er zijn aanzienlijke verschillen in de overheidsambitie het verstedelijkingsproces met beleid op het nationale overheidsniveau te beïnvloeden.
Voorafgaand aan de internationale vergelijking was de verwachting dat Noord-Engeland en Nederland veel minder bevolkingsdeconcentratie en verspreide verstedelijking kenden dan Zwitserland en West-Zweden, een verwachting die gebaseerd was op twee aannames:

- Verstedelijkingsbeleid kan daadwerkelijk nationale en regionale verstedelijkingstrends beïnvloeden;
- Deze beleidseffecten op nationale en regionale verstedelijkingstrends kan alleen bereikt worden als het verstedelijkingselement op nationaal of regionaal niveau gecoördineerd wordt.

Zowel Noord-Engeland als Nederland kenden gedurende de gehele onderzoeksperiode (1970 tot 1995) een nationaal verstedelijkingselement. In beide gevallen werd één verstedelijkingselement voor het gehele grondgebied gevoerd, gecoördineerd door de nationale overheid. De combinatie van een formele taakverdeling waarin de nationale overheid een sterke positie innam en een hoog ambitieniveau van de nationale planners geeft zowel in Nederland als in Noord-Engeland aanleiding een aanzienlijke invloed van het nationale verstedelijkingselement te verwachten (figuur 5.4). Men zou kunnen verwachten dat de feitelijke verstedelijkingstrends in Noord-Engeland iets meer overeenstemmen met de door de nationale planners gewenste trends dan in Nederland. Terwijl Noord-Engeland namelijk een planningsysteem kent dat voornamelijk 'top-down' functioneert, kent Nederland een combinatie van een invloedrijke nationale overheid en een bijna even invloedrijke lokale overheid (de 'gedecentraliseerde eenheidsstaat').

Zwitserland en West-Zweden misten een dergelijk overkoepelend verstedelijkingselement. In Zwitserland stelde de federale overheid weliswaar richtlijnen voor de gewenste verstedelijkingsovertwikkeling op in de jaren '70 en nogmaals in de jaren '90, maar de bijbehorende planningsregelen werden overgelaten aan de kantons. De kantons kregen grote vrijheid in hun keuze voor het al dan niet voeren van een verstedelijkingselement en de inhoudelijke invulling en praktische uitvoering daarvan. In West-Zweden heeft de planning een nog meer gedecentraliseerd karakter waarbij sinds het begin van de jaren '80 zelfs gesproken kan worden van een 'gemeentelijk planningsmonopolie'. Terwijl Zwitserland nog regionale plannen heeft, mist West-Zweden planningcoördinatie op zowel het nationale als het regionale niveau. Hoewel het theoretisch denkbaar is dat regionale of lokale overheden onafhankelijk van elkaar tot vergelijkbaar verstedelijkingselement komen of dat ze informeel tot overeenstemming kunnen komen over een gezamenlijk verstedelijkingselement, lijkt het toch erg onwaarschijnlijk dat alle 26 kantons van Zwitserland dit doen. Het lijkt nog veel onwaarschijnlijker te zijn dat 89 lokale overheden (de 89 gemeenten van West-Zweden) tot vergelijkbare of gezamenlijke planningsinitiatieven kunnen komen. Veel waarschijnlijker is het dat elk van deze regionale of lokale overheden zijn eigen verstedelijkingselement kiest waarin de eigen belangen voorop staan. In deze situatie zullen de lokale en/of regionale planningsacties elkaar vaak tegenwerken en het uiteindelijke effect op de gehele regio of het gehele land zal verwaarloosbaar zijn, of het tegengestelde van wat in de plannen was beoogd.

Desalniettemin waren de recente trends in het verstedelijkingproces in elk van de onderzoeksgebieden in hoofdlijnen vrijwel identiek. Deconcentratie was de dominerende trend in elk van de vier onderzoeksgroepen sinds 1970, met een piek in de vroege jaren '70. De steden, en dan vooral de grootste steden, verloren een aanzienlijk deel van hun bevolking in de jaren '70, maar herstelden zich emigsszins in de jaren '80 en '90. Toch,
ondanks dat herstel, bleef de stedelijke bevolkingsgroei achter bij het nationale (Nederland en Zwitserland) of regionale (Noord-Engeland en West-Zweden) groeigemiddelde, terwijl de bevolkingsgroei in suburbane en rurale gemeenten ruim boven het nationale / regionale gemiddelde bleef.

Binnen deze overeenkomstige verstedelijkingstrends mogen twee verschillen in het schaalniveau van deconcentratie niet onvermeld blijven. Ten eerste vond in West-Zweden de bevolkingsdeconcentratie vooral plaats in de nabije omgeving (de agglomeraties) van de grote steden, terwijl de bevolking zich in de andere gebieden (met name in Noord-Engeland en Zwitserland) over een veel groter gebied verspreidde. In de case-study over West-Zweden (paragraaf 7.3) werden twee mogelijke redenen voor dit verschil gegeven: het negatieve imago van het platteland als woonomgeving in Zweden, en het grootschalige bezit van vakantiewoningen dat voor veel Zweden de behoefte aan permanente vestiging buiten de stedelijke regio's wegnemen. In de andere onderzoeksgebieden komen vakantiewoningen veel minder voor, onder andere vanwege het gebrek aan ruimte om vakantiewoningen op grote schaal aan te kunnen bieden. Als stedelingen in Nederland, Noord-Engeland of Zwitserland het hectische stadsleven achter zich willen laten zullen ze dus waarschijnlijk er eerder voor kiezen om de stad permanent te verlaten dan om dit alleen in de zomermaanden te doen.

Een tweede verschil is dat de steden in Noord-Engeland niet verder kwamen dan een stabilisatie van hun bevolking of een verkleining van hun bevolkingsafname in de jaren ’80 en ’90, terwijl de steden in de andere onderzoeksgebieden in die periode een hernieuwde bevolkingsgroei doormaakten (zie paragraaf 7.4). Dit hing sterk samen met een stagnatie van de bevolkingsgroei in de gehele regio Noord-Engeland terwijl de bevolkingsgroei in de andere onderzoeksgebieden sinds de jaren ’70 gedurende de gehele onderzoeksperiode vrij sterk was.

De case-study in Noord-Engeland lijkt de eerdere stellingname over de mogelijkheden om bevolkingsdynamiek via nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid te sturen te bevestigen. Evenals in Nederland was ook in Groot-Brittannië het stimuleren van sterke bevolkingsgroei in een aantal geselecteerde locaties (in dit geval de ‘New Towns’) het meest succesvolle deel van het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid. De pogingen om woningbouw en bevolkingsgroei rondom de stedelijke regio’s te versterken via de ‘Green Belts’ en het restrictieve bouwbeleid op het platteland waren heel wat minder succesvol. De ‘Green Belts’ hebben misschien wel bijgedragen aan een versterking van de bouwactiviteiten in de betreffende gebieden zelf, maar konden de trend van bevolkingsdeconcentratie zeker niet tegenhouden. Misschien hebben de ‘Green Belts’ zelfs een toename van de lange-afstandsmigratie van stad naar platteland bewerkstelligd, waarbij de migranten als het ware over de ‘Green Belts’ heen ‘sprongen’. Vanwege het falen van het restrictieve deel van het Britse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid is het resultaat van dit beleid, ondanks de realisatie van de ‘New Towns’, toch mager. Als de andere twee onderzoeksgebieden, waar niet of nauwelijks sprake was van nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid maar desondanks toch min of meer dezelfde verstedelijkingstrends optraden, hieraan worden toegevoegd wordt de mate waarin nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid veranderingen in de bevolkingsdynamiek kan bewerkstelligen alleen nog maar twijfelachtiger. Hoewel het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid in Nederland en Noord-Engeland zeker effecten heeft gehad op de ontwikkeling van de bevolkingspreiding, is dit beleid er blijkbaar niet voldoende in geslaagd een tegenwicht te bieden aan de economische, sociaal-culturele en demografische processen die tot de recente trends in de bevolkingsdynamiek hebben geleid.
Een effectief nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid: realistische uitdaging of onmogelijk ideaal?

Eerder werd geconstateerd dat de effectiviteit van het Nederlandse verstedelijkingsbeleid aanzienlijk afgenomen is sinds het strategische concept ‘gebundelde deconcentratie’ ingevoerd werd voor dat van de ‘compacte stad’. De belangrijkste oorzaken voor deze afnemende effectiviteit waren waarschijnlijk de groeiende kloof tussen beleidsintenties en woonwensen en te ambitieuze voorstellingen van de mate waarin ruimtelijke ordening een tegenwicht kan bieden aan de ruimtelijke effecten van economische, sociaal – culturele en demografische ontwikkelingen. Uiteindelijk werd het gebundelde deconcentratiebeleid onder veel gunstigere omstandigheden uitgevoerd dan het compacte-stadbeleid. De crisis op de koopwoningenmarkt eind jaren ’70 bood ruimte voor een massale productie van sociale woningbouw in de groeikernen. De locatie van deze woningen in een suburban omgeving, de lage huur- en verkoopprijzen en de doelgroep waarvoor gebouwd werd (de traditionele gezinnen die weliswaar een afnemend, maar nog wel dominant aandeel in de Nederlandse bevolking hadden) betekenden een bijna perfecte ‘match’ van vraag en aanbod. Een vergelijkbaar succes kon verwacht worden van het compacte-stadbeleid toen het in het begin van de jaren ’80 geïntroduceerd werd. Opnieuw *teken* de omstandigheden ideaal voor het voorgestelde beleid: Nederland had te kampen met een diepe economische recessie en milieu- en mobiliteitsproblemen kwamen steeds hoger op de politieke agenda te staan. Bovendien leek het toenemende aandeel van jonge kleine huishoudens en etnische minderheden in de bevolking, in beide gevallen groepen met een meer stedelijke woonvoorkeur dan autochton gezinshuishoudens, een succesvol compacte-stadbeleid aan te moedigen. Men zou zich daarom kunnen afvragen waarom het compacte-stadbeleid tot nu toe zo matig uit de verf kwam terwijl het beleid van gebundelde deconcentratie tenminste nog gedeeltelijk succesvol was.

Al in het tijdperk van de gebundelde deconcentratie bleek het stimuleren van groei veel makkelijker dan het afremmen ervan. Toen de nadruk in het ruimtelijk beleid verschoven van het aanjagen van groei naar het afremmen van groei was een afnemend beleidssucces dus een logische uitkomst. Het was wellicht verstandiger geweest om enerzijds grootschalige nieuwbouw binnen het bestaande stedelijke gebied meer te stimuleren en anderzijds nieuwbouw in enkele suburban gebieden toe te staan, in plaats van het grootste deel van de nieuwbouw in één type locatie, de VINEX-locatie, te concentreren. In hun oorspronkelijke opzet schoten de VINEX-locaties zowel aan de woonwensen van de stedelijk georiënteerde huishoudens voorbij (‘te suburbaan’) en aan de woonwensen van de suburbaan georiënteerde huishoudens (‘te stedelijk’). Tijdens het beleidsproces van nationaal plan naar lokale uitvoering werden de meeste VINEX-locaties aangepast om meer tegemoet te komen aan de suburban woonwensen. Dit leverde lagere woningdichtheden op en dus zullen onvermijdelijk minder woningen op de VINEX-locaties gebouwd worden dan eigenlijk de bedoeling was. Dit gebeurde in reactie op het economische herstel van Nederland in de jaren ’90. Naast het feit dat de oorspronkelijke kwantitatieve doelstellingen onmogelijk meer gehaald konden worden werd het succes van de VINEX-locaties ook bedreigd doordat hun realisatie teveel tijd kostte. Hoewel het compacte-stadbeleid in feite al aangekondigd werd in de Structuurschets Verstedelijkking in 1983, en officieel nationaal beleid werd in de Vierde Nota van 1988, werden de eerste VINEX-huizen op de buitenstedelijke locaties pas in 1995 opgeleverd. Terwijl de onderhandelingen over de exacte locaties, het aantal te bouwen woningen, de minimum kavelgrootte, de ontsluiting met het openbaar vervoer en de bouwcontracten nog volop bezig waren, konden veel alternatieve woningbouwprojecten op andere (suburban en
rurale) locaties gerealiseerd worden. De nationale overheid hield deze tendens niet of nauwelijks tegen, ook al was die duidelijk in strijd met de doelstellingen van het compacte-stadbeleid.

De realisatie van het compacte-stadbeleid werd nog lastiger doordat het politieke klimaat voor ruimtelijk beleid drastisch veranderde. In de jaren '90 verdween de traditionele sterke band tussen ruimtelijk beleid en volkshuishuishavingsbeleid grotendeels toen de woningcorporaties geprivatiseerd werden en de nationale overheid een groei van de koopsector aanmoedigde, ten koste van de sociale huursector. Ook op de grondmarkt werd de traditionele sterke positie van de Nederlandse overheid (met name van de gemeenten) bedreigd. Particuliere projectontwikkelaars slaagden er in grote stukken grond te bemachtigen op plekken waar de VINEX - wijken gerealiseerd moesten worden. Dit leverde de projectontwikkelaars een sterke positie op in de onderhandelingen over de realisatie van de VINEX - projecten. Vervolgens ontkwamen de gemeenten er niet aan om aan de voorkeuren van de projectontwikkelaars tegemoet te komen en de VINEX - plannen bij te stellen. Dit hield vaak in dat de bouwkavels groter werden en daarmee de woningdichtheid lager werd. De nationale overheid hield dit proces niet tegen omdat het goed aansloot bij haar plannen om het bouwen meer aan private partijen over te laten. Deze plannen pasten in de bredere context van de afnemende populariteit van de overtuiging dat de Nederlandse samenleving via sociaal beleid veranderd zou kunnen worden (de 'maakbare samenleving').


Dit levert een merkwaardige paradox op. Terwijl steeds meer verschillende organisaties een rol in het planningsproces gaan spelen, levert dit tegelijkertijd een groeiende behoefte aan coördinatie op. De Rijksplanologische Dienst, die normaal gesproken het meest in aanmerking komt voor een dergelijke coördinerende rol, lijkt echter geleidelijk haar greep op de Nederlandse ruimtelijke inrichting verloren te hebben. De eerste versie van de vijfde nota leidde begin 2001 tot veel verwarring over in hoeverre de nationale overheid nog invloed wil uitoefenen op de ruimtelijke ontwikkeling van Nederland. Enerzijds loopt de Vijfde Nota over van ambitieuze plannen, waarmee de nationale planners lijken aan te geven dat ze nog altijd de ambitie hebben om de toekomstige ruimtelijke ontwikkeling van het land te beïnvloeden. Anderzijds wordt dus de verantwoordelijkheid voor de
uitvoering van al die ambitieuze plannen grotendeels bij andere partijen, vooral bij de lagere overheden, gelegd.

**Toekomstperspectieven voor het Nederlandse nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid**

Het kabinetsvoorstel voor de Vijfde Nota, gepubliceerd in januari 2001, leidde vooral tot negatieve en teleurgestelde reacties in de Tweede Kamer, maar ook van diverse adviescommissies en lobbygroepen en in de media. Als de belangrijkste doelstellingen van het in de Vijfde Nota voorgestelde beleid beschouwd worden kan men zich afvragen in hoeverre er hier sprake is van een consistent beleid en in hoeverre de gestelde doelen daadwerkelijk gehaald kunnen worden. Hoewel de minister van ruimtelijke ordening in de aanloop naar de Vijfde Nota herhaaldelijk stelde dat er keuzes moesten worden gemaakt, lijkt het er in de uiteindelijke nota meer op dat men aan alle belanghebbenden tegemoet probeert te komen. De twee sleutelbegrippen in het voorgestelde nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid zijn de ‘contouren’ en de ‘stedelijke netwerken’.

De contouren vormen een potentieel zeer sterk instrument om de verdere uitbreiding van het bebouwde gebied ten koste van open ruimte te beperken. Een eerdere conceptversie van de Vijfde Nota bevatte nog ‘rode’, ‘groene’ en ‘lichtgroene’ contouren, maar hiervan bleven in het uiteindelijke kabinetvoorstel alleen de rode en groene contouren over. Hierdoor dreigt ongeveer 60% van het Nederlandse oppervlak buiten de contouren te vallen. In het jargon van de Vijfde Nota worden deze restgebieden aangeduid als ‘balansgebieden’. Het is zeer onduidelijk hoe deze gebieden zich verder zouden moeten ontwikkelen. Bovendien is men van plan de contouren om de vijf jaar door de gemeenten opnieuw te laten trekken. Dit roept de vraag op hoe krachtig het instrument van de contouren uiteindelijk kan zijn. Meer duidelijkheid over de status van contouren zou welkom zijn. In feite zou overigens, als het volledige potentieel van dit instrument benut wordt, slechts één type contour nodig zijn. Twee opties liggen hierbij voor de hand. De eerste optie is om alleen rode contouren rond het bebouwde en te bebouwen gebied te trekken. De rode contouren zouden dan de grens tussen bouwland en niet-bouwland aangeven. Alle grond die zich buiten de rode contouren bevindt zou dan moeten worden gevrijwaard van elke mogelijke bouwclaim. Een dergelijke benadering wordt al enige tijd toegepast in Zwitserland. De Zwitsers ervaring (paragraaf 7.2) leert echter dat een dergelijke toepassing van rode contouren alleen werkt als die contouren (na door gemeente en Rijk vastgesteld te zijn) niet langer ter discussie staan en zonder uitzondering gehanteerd worden. Een tweede optie is om alleen de groene contouren te trekken rond gebieden waar absoluut niet gebouwd zou mogen worden. Alle gebieden buiten de groene contour kunnen dan elke mogelijke functie krijgen, zo lang er binnen de groene contour maar niet gebouwd wordt. De strenge bouwbeperkingen in de Britse ‘National Parks’ kunnen voor een dergelijke benadering mogelijk inspiratie bieden (paragraaf 7.4).

Een tweede sleutelbegrip in het toekomstige nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid is het nieuwe strategische concept ‘stedelijke netwerken’. De introductie van dit concept in het Nederlandse beleid geeft aan dat de schaalvergroting van stedelijke regio’s vanaf de jaren ’70 nu eindelijk ook door de beleidsmakers erkend wordt. Toch is de interpretatie van het concept ‘stedelijke netwerken’ zoals het tot nu toe door de nationale planners gepresenteerd is in diverse opzichten problematisch. Ten eerste zou het beoogde schaalniveau van de ‘nationale stedelijke netwerken’ nog eens kritisch beschouwd moeten worden. Vooral bij de twee nationale stedelijke netwerken ‘Deltametropool’ (grofweg de vroegere Randstad en het vroegere Groene Hart) en ‘Brabantstad’ (een combinatie van de
vijf grootste Brabantse steden en hun regio's) lijkt de relatie tussen het geplande stedelijk netwerk en de dagelijkse mobiliteitspatronen ver te zoeken. Zoals de analyse van recente trends in het dagelijkse verplaatsingsgedrag in hoofdstuk 8 aangaf zijn de nationale stedelijke netwerken veel te groot ten opzichte van de regio's waarbinnen zich het overgrote deel van de dagelijkse mobiliteit afspeelt. Daarmee missen de nationale stedelijke netwerken directe relevantie voor de mensen die binnen deze gebieden wonen, werken en recreëren. Functionele relaties op het schaalniveau van de nationale stedelijke netwerken lijken vooral nog vrijwel uitsluitend te bestaan voor zakenreizigers en de hoogste inkomensgroepen die het zich kunnen permitteren om in stad (of suburb) A te wonen, in stad B te werken, in stad C uit te gaan en op nog eens een andere plek van huis te winkelen of recreëren. Welke argumenten hebben de nationale planners ertoe bewogen om toch voor deze grootschalige stedelijke netwerken als strategisch concept te kiezen? Willen ze de Nederlandse infrastructuur aanpassen aan de wensen van de ‘happy few’? Voorzien ze misschien een aanzienlijke schaalvergroting van het dagelijks leven van de gemiddelde Nederlander in de komende decennia? En mocht zo’n ontwikkeling inderdaad plaatsvinden, zou het dan niet verstandiger zijn om juist maatregelen te nemen om die ontwikkeling te voorkomen? Als de functies werken, winkelen en recreatie echt gespreid zouden worden op het niveau van de nationale stedelijke netwerken, zou dit kunnen leiden tot de ontwikkeling van diffuse stedelijke velden. Of dat nu zo’n aantrekkelijk perspectief is voor West- en Zuid-Nederland valt nog te bezien.

De ‘regionale stedelijke netwerken’ lijken beter aan te sluiten op het dagelijks leven van hun bewoners. Deze netwerken komen wat betreft hun geografische schaal dicht bij de ‘netwerksteden’ die eerder door de nationale planners als strategisch verstedelijkingconcept voorgesteld werden (Ministerie VROM, 1999a). In het kabinetsvoorstel voor de Vijfde Nota werden echter zoveel regionale stedelijke netwerken genoemd dat het grootste deel van Nederland ermee bedekt werd. Dit maakt de relevantie van de regionale stedelijke netwerken als strategisch ruimtelijk concept twijfelachtig. Willen de nationale planners dan (bijna) heel Nederland in nationale en regionale stedelijke netwerken verdelen? Hoe is dit te combineren met de ‘nationale landschappen’ die van iedere vorm van verstedelijking gevrijwaard zouden moeten blijven, en met de rode contouren? Bovendien is het ook voor de regionale stedelijke netwerken vooral nog zeer onduidelijk welke consequenties ze uiteindelijk voor de ruimtelijke inrichting hebben. Zouden de activiteiten verspreid moeten worden op het niveau van de regionale stedelijke netwerken zodat elk netwerk een compleet aanbod van woningebieden, werkgelegenheid, onderwijs, consumenten- en commerciële diensten bevat? Houdt dit dan ook in dat men soms verder zal moeten reizen voor bepaalde functies omdat die slechts op één plek aangeboden zullen worden (immers, de locaties binnen het netwerk zouden ‘complementair’ moeten zijn)? Is de verdere mobiliteitsgroei die dit in de hand werkt en die vermoedelijk vooral uit een groei van automobiliteit zal bestaan wel wenselijk? Een dergelijk beleid vaaet een radicaal andere koers dan het compacte-stadbeleid, waarin het beperken van mobiliteitsgroei en vooral de groei van automobiliteit één van de centrale beleidsdoelen vormde. In de jaren '80 en '90 waren er genoeg argumenten te vinden voor een mobiliteitsremmend beleid en gezien de snelle groei van het autogebied sindsdien hebben die argumenten in feite alleen maar aan kracht gewonnen. Het zou niet logisch en ook niet gewenst zijn om deze doelstelling eenvoudigweg te schrappen als men tenminste naar continuïteit in het verstedelijkingsbeleid streeft.

Nog meer problemen lijken op te doemen als men zich afvraagt hoe en door welke partijen het voorgestelde beleid gerealiseerd zou moeten worden. De decentralisatie van
Planningstaken zou het ruimtelijk beleid ‘dichter bij de burgers’ kunnen brengen. De andere kant van de medaille is echter wel dat het moeilijker zal worden om tot een overkoepelende nationale planningstrategie te komen. In hoofdstuk 7 (paragraaf 7.5) leidde de vergelijking van nationale verstedelijkingsprogramma’s tot twee belangrijke conclusies: ten eerste dat het nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid in de vier cases er hooguit in is geslaagd om een bescheiden invloed uit te oefenen op de verstedelijkingsstrends; ten tweede dat de meest succesvolle voorbeelden van nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid plaatsvonden met een aanzienlijke coördinatie op het nationale overheidsniveau. Dit gold met name voor het Britse beleid ten aanzien van de ‘New Towns’, de ‘Green Belts’ en de ‘National Parks’ en voor het Nederlandse beleid van gebundelde deconcentratie. Als er geen planningscoördinatie op het nationale niveau is zal de variatie tussen regio’s en/of gemeenten in het belang dat gehecht wordt aan verstedelijkingsbeleid doorgaans groot zijn, zoals werd geïllustreerd met de cases West-Zweden en Zwitserland. Het kan moeilijk verwacht worden dat een groot aantal regionale en lokale overheden overeenstemming bereiken over één verstedelijkingsstrategie. Het is veel waarschijnlijker dat ieder van die regionale en/of lokale overheden zijn eigen belangen vooropstelt en dat deze regionale en/of lokale belangen met elkaar in conflict komen, met vanuit nationaal oogpunt ongewenste ruimtelijke ontwikkelingen als resultaat. De voorbeelden uit de cases van hoofdstuk 7 (in West-Zweden de strijd tussen gemeenten om grote winkelcentra in Skåne en de problemen rond het aanleggen van een snelweg in Bohuslän; in Zwitserland de contrasten tussen het ‘laissez-faire’ beleid van het kanton Vaud en het compacte-stadbeleid in het kanton Bern) zouden aanleiding kunnen geven tot serieuze bedenkingen bij het verstedelijkingsbeleid dat bij het ontbreken van nationale coördinatie tot stand zou kunnen komen. Recente ontwikkelingen in Nederland zijn wat dit betreft ook zorgwekkend. Zo werd bijvoorbeeld in de meest recente plannen van een groep ‘Randstadoverheden (de Randstadprovincies en de grote steden) het bouwen in open ruimte van harte aangemoedigd. In de visie ‘Naar een blauwgroene Deltametropool’ van de Randstadoverheden werden zelfs gebieden die de nationale overheids ‘nationale landschappen’ ziet als potentiële bouwlocaties genoemd (Koper, 2001).

Juist in een klein en dichtbevolkt land als Nederland bestaat een blijvende behoefte aan betrokkenheid van de nationale overheid in ruimtelijke inrichtingsvraagstukken. Terwijl sinds de jaren ’80 in diverse beleidsvelden, inclusief de ruimtelijke ordening, sprake is geweest van een terugtrekkende overheidsinvolving in de ruimtelijke ordening, is het nu misschien wel tijd voor een hernieuwde intensieve bemoeiër van de nationale overheid in de Nederlandse ruimtelijke ontwikkeling. Om meer kans van slagen te hebben dan het gebundelde deconcentratiebeleid en het compacte-stadbeleid zou deze betrokkenheid echter waarschijnlijk meer selectief moeten worden. In plaats van op een allesomvattend nationaal ruimtelijk beleid te mikken zou het productiever kunnen zijn om een klein aantal speerpunten uit te kiezen. Het ideale nationale verstedelijkingsbeleid zou dan:

- Gericht moeten zijn op beperkt aantal duidelijk gedefinieerde prioriteiten;
- Gebaseerd moeten zijn op goede, duidelijke argumenten (duidelijk maken welk collectief belang met dit beleid gediend wordt);
- Helder gedefinieerde en realistische beleidsdoelen en instrumenten om deze doelen te bereiken (op nationaal, regionaal en lokaal niveau) moeten bevatten, terwijl ook voorzien is in mogelijkheden om de mate waarin die beleidsdoelen gehaald zijn te controleren;
- Een nationaal kader van na te streven toekomstige verstedelijkingswijze moeten bieden, waarbinnen regionale en lokale planners genoeg marge wordt geboden om deze nationale voorkeuren op een regionaal en/of lokaal specifieke wijze te zetten.
uit te werken zodat zoveel mogelijk aan de lokale behoeften en identiteit tegemoet gekomen kan worden.

Eén van de mogelijke speerpunten die voor een toekomstig nationaal verstedelijkingsbeleid in aanmerking zou komen is het tegengaan van verder verlies van agrarisch en natuurgebied aan verspreide verstedelijkning. Afgaand op de reacties op het kabinetsvoorstel voor de Vijfde Nota en het politieke, wetenschappelijke en maatschappelijke debat van de afgelopen decennia is dit een beleidsdoel dat in de Nederlandse samenleving op een brede steun kan rekenen. Het instrument van de contouren biedt hiervoor een veelbelovend perspectief, maar alleen als deze contouren daadwerkelijk streng gehandhaafd worden en er geen uitzonderingen of compromissen mogelijk zijn. Uiteraard zouden de contouren na enige tijd herzien kunnen worden maar de periode van handhaving zou lang moeten zijn om ze tot effectieve instrumenten te maken. In plaats van een herziening na 5 jaar zou wellicht 10 jaar een betere termijn zijn. Als de huidige praktijk van het gedogen van allerei uitzonderingen op nationale, regionale en lokale plannen blijft bestaan zal de ruimtelijke ordening op den duur steeds minder serieus genomen worden en uiteindelijk haar relevantie in de Nederlandse samenleving kwijtraken.

In de toekomstige verstedelijkingsplannen moeten de ruimte-eisen op het gebied van wonen, werken, recreatie en infrastructuur zoveel mogelijk tegemoet gekomen worden, maar hierbij zouden zeker ook grenzen gesteld moeten worden. Op het beperkte oppervlak van Nederland is het eenvoudigweg onmogelijk om alle ruimtevraag in tewillen. Daarom moeten nationale planners soms ook ‘genoeg is genoeg’ durven zeggen en moeten de eisende partijen soms ook ‘nee’ als antwoord accepteren. Niet iedereen kan leven waar hij of zij zou willen en soms zal men genoegen moeten nemen met een ‘tweede keus’. Om deze boodschap over te kunnen brengen zouden de nationale planners in het publieke debat duidelijker moeten uitleggen welk ‘nationaal’ of ‘gemeenschappelijk’ belang ze met hun plannen dienen, waarom gemeenschappelijke belangen niet hetzelfde zijn als de som van alle individuele belangen, en waarom uiteindelijk iedereen beter af is als deze gemeenschappelijke belangen het uitgangspunt blijven vormen van het Nederlandse verstedelijkingsbeleid van de toekomst.
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APPENDIX

Map section
Appendix Map 1
Municipality types in the Netherlands (1995)

Municipality types in the Netherlands (1995)

municipality types
- rural
- urbanised rural
- suburban
- small city (10-100,000 inh.)
- medium-sized city (100-200,000 inh.)
- large city (>200,000 inh.)
- growth centre

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Appendix Map 2
Central Netherlands and its municipality types

Central Netherlands and its municipality types

Municipality categories
- rest of Netherlands
- rural
- suburban
- large cities
- other centres urban regions
- growth centres (ending 1985)
- growth centres (continued after 1985)
- central open space
- nodes in central open space
- other central NL
- growth cities

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Appendix Map 3

Note: two municipalities, Almere and Zeewolde, did not exist (and had no inhabitants) yet in 1970; therefore these municipalities have no growth rate for 1970-1995 and no score in the map.

Appendix Map 4
Population growth of standard statistical regions (COROP), 1970-1995, in %

Population growth of standard statistical regions (COROP), 1970-1995, in %

Growth classes
in %
- 100 to 500
- 50 to 100
- 25 to 30
- 10 to 25
- 0 to 10
- -20 to 0
Appendix Map 5

Orange = decline, yellow = growth just above or just below 0; green = rapid growth.
Appendix Map 6
Population growth of Swiss municipalities, 1980-1990

Evolution de la population, 1980-1990
Appendix Map 7

Population growth of West-Swedish municipalities 1970 - 1995, in %

Source: Statistics Sweden.
Appendix Map 8

Sources: OPCS Monitor PP1 84/2, 27 March 1984; PP1 94/1, 15 Febr. 1994; PP1 96/2, 29 Aug. 1996; cartography: Department of Geography, University of Newcastle.
The Netherlands is internationally known for its strong tradition of physical planning. The country is often praised for the high degree to which planning targets are realised. One of the elements of Dutch physical planning that reached international fame is the national urbanisation policy. Since the 1960s, this was one of the top priorities in the planning policy programme. At first, the Dutch national planners tried to combine the protection of natural and agricultural areas with building for the suburban housing demand in the concept of ‘concentrated deconcentration’.

In the 1980s, the focus shifted to a concentration of new housing in and around cities: the ‘compact city’ policy. In 2001, the Fifth Report introduced a new strategic concept for national urbanisation policy: ‘urban networks’.

This book is about the degree to which the positive reputation of Dutch physical planning, especially with respect to national urbanisation policy, is justified. It reviews the most important factors determining the development of population distribution and daily mobility patterns, two of the central issues in Dutch national urbanisation policy since the 1960s. The contribution of national urbanisation policy to these developments is evaluated by comparing the targets expressed in national policy documents to the actual trends in local population growth and daily mobility.

In addition, the Dutch experience is placed in an international, Northwest-European perspective. This analysis also leads to the more fundamental question if urbanisation patterns can be planned on a national or regional level at all and how this should be realised.

Marco Bontje studied Urban Geography at the University of Amsterdam. This book is the result of a Ph.D. research project at the Amsterdam study centre for the Metropolitan Environment (AME) of the same university.