# The Openness Buzz in Metropolitan Regions: Swedish Regional Development Strategies

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## Abstract

In the networked information and knowledge society, we see a frequent use of the notions of "open" and "openness"; open source, open region, open economy, open government, open innovation. In parallel we can also observe changes of practises relating to how we produce and exchange products, information, knowledge and culture, enabled by the knowledge society, information technology and the Internet. This is the point of departure when this article examines how openness is interpreted and discussed in the three metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö in Sweden. Accessibility as a quality of openness is found to play a particularly important role. From an institutional perspective openness is mainly discussed in relation to governance and policy, although openness may also be related to norms and culture.

*Keywords: openness, open, planning, regional development, institutions, knowledge and information society*

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# 1.    Introduction

For the past half century the world has become more globalized, urbanized and interconnected than ever before. The flows of goods in terms of trade are steadily increasing, migration and tourism have been growing for a long time and the networked knowledge and information society has in many ways changed the way people interact and exchange information across distance. Through the Internet, smart mobile phones and new practices behaviour with regard to searching for information, communicating with friends and family, and doing business has changed. New modes of peer to peer creation, production and distribution give creative people access to a worldwide audience and market from day one, and news is spread internationally at a pace never experienced before. In many ways the world has become increasingly open.

This is also reflected in the wide variety of fields where reference to open and openness is made; open source, open access, open economy, open government, open health, open society, open region, open security, open innovation – just to name a few. Although we may sense the idea of openness, what is more precisely meant is often not explicit. Furthermore, the policy implications of these different meanings of openness may be very different; whereas openness in the sense of transparency may have certain policy implications, openness in the sense of diversity may have others.

This article is part of a research on the Openness buzz in metropolitan regions aiming at exploring the concept of openness and developing an analytical tool to analyse openness, a tool that may assist researchers, planners and policy makers in understanding and handling policy implications with regard to openness across different institutional, territorial and contextual settings.

The purpose of this paper is to explore how openness is understood and discussed in metropolitan regions by examining the regional development strategies in the three biggest metropolitan regions of Sweden: Stockholm (Stockholms län), Göteborg (Västra Götalandsregionen) and Malmö (Skåne). The research questions are the following:

1.    To what extent are wordings of openness used in the regional development strategies? (Frequency)
2.    In what field(s) are wordings of openness used in the regional development strategies? (Content and context)
3.    At what institutional level(s) are wordings of openness used in the regional development strategies?

In the next section, Theory and method, the analytical framework and an analytical tool for understanding openness based on economic geography, new institutional theory and literature on the networked knowledge and information economy is outlined. Methodological considerations are found in the second part of the Theory and method section. In section 3 the main results are presented. Section 4 consists of a discussion of the results in the perspective of the analytical framework outlined earlier, and in section 5 concluding remarks and avenues for further research are presented.

## 2.   Theory and Method

Theoretical inspiration for this paper is mainly drawn from two sets of literature. On the one hand literature exploring how societies develop, why different societies seemingly having the same preconditions for economic, social and political development may evolve differently (North and Thomas, 1973; Inglehart, 2000; Acemoglu and Robinson, 2013) and particularly the role of institutions as shaping of social, economic and political behaviour through formal and informal rules (North, 1990; Williamson, 2000; Ostrom, 2005). Another set of literature that has inspired this article is literature on the more recent development of the knowledge and information society and the implications thereof in different fields (Benkler, 2006; Chesbrough et al.2006; Jakobsson 2012; Lessig, 2006; Peters and Roberts, 2012).

The analytical framework for this article is based on an earlier paper by Lundgren and Westlund (2016) in which we identified four qualities of openness seeming to play a particularly important role and bestowed from new institutional theory as interpreted by Williamson (2000) offering an institutional scheme to illustrate how institutions evolve over time and influence human and organizational economic interaction.

*Four qualities of openness*

- Accessibility defines if something is accessible or not. In the networked knowledge and information economy accessibility has strong implications for enabling access to knowledge and information. It is also frequently used in planning and policy making where it aims at accessibility to different kinds of resources.

- Transparency refers to open information, open communication and accountability and has lately become more widely requested (Mörth 2009; www.oecd.org, www.opengovernmentdata.org/ www.opengovpartnership.org).

- Participation refers to participation of individuals or groups in different parts of society; i.e. economic, political, social and/or cultural. Participation is strongly linked to accessibility, and in the networked knowledge and information society to an increasing extent takes place through new channels and media.

- Sharing (or "shareability") is perhaps most strongly linked to the recent emergence of the networked knowledge and information economy. It includes sharing of goods and services, knowledge, information and culture, and has come to challenge established property models.

These four qualities of openness may also be expressed in terms of a supply and demand relation, where accessibility reflects the supply side whereas transparency, participation and sharing reflect the demand side.

*Four institutional levels*

The Williamson (2000) model of institutions offers an analytical tool to understand the impact of different institutional levels. The model is composed of four interrelated institutional levels:

I.  Embeddedness refers to culture, including customs, traditions, religion and social norms. These basic institutional foundations adapt and change very slowly, as long as from 100 to 1000 years.

II. Basic institutional environment refers to "the formal rules of the game", i.e. constitution, political system and basic legal and economic systems including property rights, human rights and the subsequently related political, legal and economic institutions and mechanisms for governance and enforcement. Also at this level institutions change rather slowly, 10 to 100 years.

III. Institutions of governance refer to "the play of the game". At this level the governance structure is highly dependent on institutions at lower levels. The time frame of change at this level is one to ten years.

IV. Short-term resource allocations refer to the daily operations of the economy within the framework of the other three levels. The time frame for adaptations or change is continuous.

| OPENNESS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Impact on qualities of Openness** | | | | |
| Institutional levels | Accessibility | Transparency | Participation | Sharing |
| I: Cultural embeddedness | | | | |
| II: Institutional environment | | SUPPORT/CONSTRAIN | | |
| III: Insitutions of governance | | | | |
| IV: Resource allocations | | | | |

*Figure 1: Connecting qualities of openness with institutional levels.*

When putting together qualities for understanding the phenomenon of openness with Williamson's model for understanding institutions and institutional change, we get a scheme where institutions at different levels can act to support or constrain different qualities of openness (see Figure 1, Lundgren & Westlund, 2016).

At the first institutional level, cultural embeddedness, some researchers claim we are actually witnessing the beginning of a shift in culture and social norms with regard to openness as a result of the networked information and knowledge society driven by technological and economic driving forces (Benkler, 2006; Jakobsson, 2012; Lessig, 2006; Peters & Roberts, 2012; Rifkin, 2014).

At the second level, the institutional environment is at focus; it is around issues of open source property and intellectual property rights (IPR) most of the discussions have come to deal with (Benkler, 2006; Chesbrough et al., 2006; Lessig, 2006), and with the relation between private property and common pool resources (Jakobsson, 2012).

The third institutional level that refers to governance structure and the fourth level that refers to resource allocations are intimately entangled. This is where organizational and business development take place and where the many applications of the networked information and knowledge society appear reinforced by technological and economic development (Benkler, 2006; Lessig, 2006) but also by public request for greater openness with regard to open data and enhanced accountability (Mörth, 2008; www.opendefinition.org; www.opengovernmentdata. org).

Although it is being acknowledged that it is through differences and interaction between institutions and organizations that institutions change (North, 1990), changes are often difficult to observe since they tend to take place incrementally rather than discontinuously. What is important in Williamson's hierarchical model of institutions is that it brings in a longer time frame and relates different levels of institutions to the notion of time.

Given the importance of the metropolitan regions in terms of population: the three metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö account for more than half of the Swedish population of 9.8 million inhabitants. (www.scb.se, 2015), being economic engines for the country attracting investments and human capital (Scott and Storper, 2007), hubs in global and regional networks of communication and information flows and centres for creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation (Jacobs, 1961; Andersson, 1985; Törnquist, 2004; Florida, 2010; Glaeser, 2011), an interesting and unexplored question is how the Swedish metropolitan regions interpret and deal with notions of openness in practise. Following general knowledge on what make metropolitan regions prosper, we could assume that they would discuss openness in relation to key factors to economic development such as trade, financial capital and human capital, but also openness in relation to new ideas to foster creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Another interesting question is whether this increased notion of openness mainly implies a change of practise that has to do with the new facilities brought along with new technology, or if we might see a change of culture and beliefs triggered by the networked information and knowledge society as suggested by Benkler (2006) and Peters and Roberts (2012) Sweden is a fairly homogenous country and despite differences in industrial history and culture, the three metropolitan re-

gions studied here share important similarities; they all have growing populations with increasing numbers of foreign born inhabitants and the industrial structure is based on a variety of industries with a growing knowledge and service sector. We can thus assume a similar pattern of how openness is interpreted and discussed in the metropolitan regions of our study.



*Figure 2:* Location of the three study regions

## Method

The unit of analysis in this study are the regional development strategies of Stockholm, Skåne and Västra Götaland; "Regional development plan for the County of Stockholm, RUFS 2010" (2010), "The Open Skåne 2030" (2014) and "Strategy for growth and development in Västra Götaland 2014-2020" (2014).

According to a government regulation (SFS 2007:713) all Swedish regions are obliged to elaborate a regional development program outlining a vision as well as goals for the region to strengthen growth and development on a long and medium term horizon. These documents are interchangeably called regional development programs (RUP) or regional development strategies (RUS). Since the term regional development strategy is more frequently used, and used by both Skåne and Västra Götaland, this is the term consequently used in this paper. The Stockholm region uses the term "regional development plan", since the Stockholm regional development strategy also contains a physical regional plan in accordance to the Planning and Building Act and special legislation that applies only to the Stockholm region.

The activity being carried out working with the regional development strategies is usually called regional development planning. The strategies are elaborated by the assigned regional development authority in

each region in a process involving many local and regional stakeholders. The regional strategies usually serve as a joint regional strategy and platform for other sector strategies and action plans to be based upon. The strategies have shown to have a strong communicative impact, although compliance with the regional development strategies is not mandatory for local authorities or other actors (SOU 2015:59).

Despite relying upon the same government regulation the length of the regional development strategies show a large variety: Stockholm 261 pages; Skåne 52 pages; and Västra Götaland only 12 pages. This can only partly be explained by the Stockholm regional development strategy also containing a regional physical plan. Despite the difference in length, the selected documents should be regarded as equivalent since these are the formally adopted documents for each of the regions according to the regulation (SFS 2007:713). To deal with the problem of different length of the documents, complimentary analysis of words per page was made. In this study the English translation of the documents has been analysed. However comparisons with the Swedish version of the documents have been made to capture wordings that were considered problematic from a translation point of view.

The method used is text analysis of both quantitative and qualitative character. Text analysis can be categorized into two main purposes; to systematize or to critically evaluate (Esaiasson et al., 2012). The intention in this paper is to systematize, clarify and classify how openness is interpreted and discussed in the regional development strategies. The text analysis has been made in three steps: 1) Frequency analysis; 2) Content and context analysis; and 3) Analysis of institutional levels, aiming at answering the three research questions (see Table 1).

| Research questions | Type of text analysis |
|---|---|
| 1. To what extent are wordings of openness used in the regional development strategies? | Frequency analysis (quantitative) |
| 2. In what field(s) are wordings of openness used in the regional development strategies? | Content and context analysis (qualitative) |
| 3. At what institutional level (s) are wordings of openness used in the regional development strategies? | Analysis of institutional levels (qualitative) |

**Table 1:** The text analysis approach

*Frequency analysis*

In the first step, the frequency of using openness and related wordings was calculated in the three regional planning documents. The search words, here called wordings of openness, were based on the analytical tool lined out in Lundgren and Westlund ( 2016):
- Openness, open/-s/-ed/-ing/-ly
- Accessibility, access/-es/-ed/-ing/-ible
- Transparency, transparent
- Participation, participate/-s/-ed/ing
- "Shareability", share/-s/-d/-ing

Other wordings that seemed related to wordings of openness were noted. This approach of successive development of sampling follows the recursive and reflexive movement between concept development, data collection, analysis and interpretation often used in ethnographic content analysis or ECA (Bryman, 2008). The main question in this phase of the study was quantitative: How frequent is the use of wordings of openness in the texts?

*Content and context analysis*

In the second step a content and context analysis was conducted serving to identify whether wordings of openness referred to one or several thematic fields. In this step the search words used in step 1 were complemented by wordings that seemed related to openness and occurred at a high frequency in step 1. The wordings added to the initial wording of openness were:
- Clear/-er/-est/-ly
- Common
- Cooperat/-e/ -es/-ed/-ing/-ion
- Collaborat/-e/ -es/-ed/-ing/-ion

The fields of reference were identified along with a thorough reading of the texts with the aim of laying out a map where all the sentences could be attributed to a field of reference. The fields of reference the wordings were classified into were:

1)  People, inhabitants, visitors, backgrounds
2)  Physical resources and attributes, incl. infrastructure and trans ports
3)  Economic resources and attributes incl. labour market and housing market
4)  Social resources and attributes incl. social services and health care
5)  Environmental resources and attributes
6)  Knowledge, education, information
7)  Culture, creativity, innovation
8)  Governance, decision making, implementation

The main question to the texts in this step was: In what field(s) are wordings of openness used? This step implied working with sentences rather than singular wordings and in many cases the use of wordings of openness referred to several fields. For example the sentence "In the open Skåne, everyone has access to high-quality culture, recreation, transport, leisure activities, nursery and school, health services, elderly care and education." (The Open Skåne, p 9). One sentence may therefore have been attributed to more than one of the eight fields of reference. In this step all sentences where wordings of openness were used were analysed. Through this analysis it was possible to get an overview whether openness and related wordings were spread into a number of fields or were restricted to singular fields. However it was not possible to quantify an exact number of attributions of a singular wording to a singular field of reference.

In the third step an analysis was made based on Williamsons (2000) framework of institutional levels. To further operationalize the openness model suggested in Lundgren and Westlund (2016) the institutional levels were clarified by adding a description and a key idea to the respective levels (see Table 2). The sentences analysed in the third step were samples selected as examples in the second step of the analysis. In the third step an analysis of the impact of different institutional levels on wordings of openness was conducted. Also this step consisted of analysing sentences where wordings of openness were used (rather than singular words). The main question to the text was: What institutional level are the wordings of openness referring to?

| | |
|---|---|
| Level 1 (100 ys perspective)<br>Cultural embeddedness: Culture, customs, traditions, social norms and beliefs. | In this regional development strategy context geography, nature and urban structure are included on level 1.<br>**Key idea: culture** |
| Level 2 (10-100 ys perspective)<br>Institutional environment: Formal economic and political institutions/ settings, "the rules of the game". | Structures such as infrastructure and institutions are included on this level.<br>**Key idea: institutional structures** |
| Level 3 (1-10 ys perspective)<br>Institutions of governance: governance structure, "the play of the game". | **Key idea: governance/policy** |
| Level 4 (continuous)<br>Resource allocation: Daily operations. | Daily practice of individuals, firms and organizations.<br>**Key idea: day to day practice** |

*Table 2:* Operationalisation of the openness model

## 3.    Results

The frequency analysis shows that openness and related wordings are frequent in all three regional development strategies examined.

- The wordings of openness etc. are found abundantly in the regional development strategies of Stockholm (openness 23, open/-s/-ed/-ing/-ly 55 times) and Skåne (openness 5, open/-s/-ed/-ing/-ly 71 times), whereas in the Västra Götaland these wordings are not found. However when checking Västra Götaland's strategy in Swedish translation open/-s/-ed/-ing/-ly show up 4 times. In the Skåne strategy the word open is given the highest score of all words examined (65 times). It should be noted that the name of the Skåne strategy is "The Open Skåne" which might be part of the explanation for the frequent use of the word open in Skåne.

- As expected the wordings of accessibility etc. show up at a great frequency, in Stockholm 273 times making it the most frequent word. A ratio per page calculated show that Stockholm is using accessibility etc. more than one time per page, Skåne at almost 2/3 of pages and Västra Götaland at 1/3 of the pages.

- As perhaps expected the exact wordings of transparency etc. are found to a very limited degree. Clear etc. turned out to be too vague.

- Participation etc. show up frequently in all three strategies.

- Sharing etc. are used to a very limited degree in all three strategies, the majority of times referring to the noun as in share of, whereas what we are interested in is the verb to share.

- Of the related wordings that were added to the frequency analysis co-operation etc. and collaboration etc. come out high in all three strategies.

The content and context analysis conducted to determine the fields of reference, show that selected wordings were generally found in several fields rather than in one particular. Despite this we can detect certain patterns:

- The wordings of openness etc. are in the Stockholm and Skåne strategies mainly used in relation to the field people, inhabitants and visitors and to knowledge, information and culture, creativity and innovation.

- The wordings of accessibility etc. are frequently used in many different fields. An emphasis can be found of accessibility to different kinds of physical, economic or social resources such as in accessibility to communications, housing, employment, nature and culture.

- The wordings of participation etc. are in the strategies mostly used with reference to people, inhabitants and visitors.

- The wordings of common, cooperation and collaboration etc. are mainly used in relation to governance, decision making and implementation, but also in other fields.

Due to the low frequency of Transparency etc. and Sharing etc. these wordings are not included in the content analysis.

The purpose of the institutional analysis was to determine to what institutional level strategies are referring to? The classification into institutional levels, turned out to be complicated since many of the sentences could be connected to more than one institutional level. Although, from a methodological point of view, one should generally strive for categories that are mutually exclusive, in this case this is not achievable since the institutional levels are of a kind that rather build upon each other and are even expected to mutually reinforce each other.

However when comparing the three metropolitan regional development strategies we see a similar pattern emerging. Of the wordings explored, the wordings of openness etc. seem to be the most evenly spread out at all four institutional levels; culture, institutional structures, governance/policy and day to day practice. The first institutional level (culture) is referred to when it comes to openness etc. This level is also re-

ferred to when it comes to participation etc. For the rest of the examined wordings we find that these are most commonly represented at the third institutional level (governance/ policy), but also fairly often represented at the second (institutional structures) and the fourth institutional level (day to day practise). Although the results of the institutional analysis should be interpreted with caution due to reasons explained earlier, they may nevertheless be used as an indicator.

## 4. Discussion

The aim of this paper was to explore how openness is interpreted and discussed in the regional development strategies of the metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö. The frequency analysis showed that wordings of openness were used, but to a differing degree. One surprising result was that openness was not used in Västra Götaland, while it was very common in Stockholm and Skåne. When using the wordings of openness etc. the strategies were referring to a variety of fields, with an emphasis on people, inhabitants and visitors as in openness to people of different backgrounds and in relation to knowledge, information and culture, creativity, innovation as in openness to new ideas. A citation to illustrate this is from Skåne:

"In 2030, Skåne is open. Open to ideas, open to all people, and an open landscape. We welcome new people and new influences with open arms. We are the doorway to Sweden and the rest of the world." (The Open Skåne, p 8)

This emphasis on openness to people of different backgrounds and openness to new ideas is in line with what we would expect with regard to literature, depicting metropolitan regions as hubs for information flows, new ideas and economic development attracting human capital and creative and entrepreneurial activity. Thus, for metropolitan regions to be able to attract both people and ideas, openness to some degree seems to be considered as a requirment.

The wordings of accessibility etc. are frequently used in the Stockholm and in the Skåne strategies referring to many different fields, whereas much less frequent in Västra Götaland. As noted in the Stockholm strategy, accessibility may also be non-physical:

"For the non-physical aspects of openness and accessibility, RUFS 2010 (Regional development plan for the Stockholm region) contains commitments for creating attractive meeting places, removing obstacles to people being able to safely travel in the region, combatting discrimination, encouraging diversity and increasing confidence in the public sector. Altogether, these commitments are expected to contribute to increasing social mobility and social exchange between residents of varying backgrounds." (p. 198)

The frequent use of accessibility etc. and the reference to a variety of fields, give support to the thought that accessibility plays a particularly important role as an enabler of openness (Lundgren and Westlund, 2016). Benkler (2006) talks about a deep and structural change where

the quantity and quality of accessibility to new modes of interaction serve as a driving force in the networked information and knowledge society.

The wordings of transparency etc. were not frequently used and it may be argued that they are too theoretical to be found in this kind of documents. On the other hand, one could note that transparency seem to be a vividly used concept in discussions on governmentality at national and international levels (www.opengovpartnership.org). It may also be argued that that transparency etc. should rather be defined as accessibility to information.

Although the wordings of participation etc. were found in all three strategies, it was to a less degree than the top notes on openness etc. and accessibility etc. Most of the times it was with reference to people and inhabitants to participate in community and society and in many cases expressing the idea of an inclusive society.

When it comes to sharing etc. it should be noted that the increased attention to sharing comes from literature on recent developments of peer to peer production and collaborative commons emerging as a result of the networked information and knowledge society. Perhaps it is too early and/or these practices may still be too marginal to be expected to be found in regional development strategies of the kind explored in this study.

Collaboration etc and cooperation etc are used referring to governance, decision making, implementation, but fairly often also refer to other fields. Cooperation in different forms seems being crucial for the fulfilment of the strategies themselves:

"How well we succeed depends on how we make use of our potential, our ability to adapt, our capacity to see opportunities in new situations and how well we cooperate – in old and new constellations." (Västra Götaland, p 3)
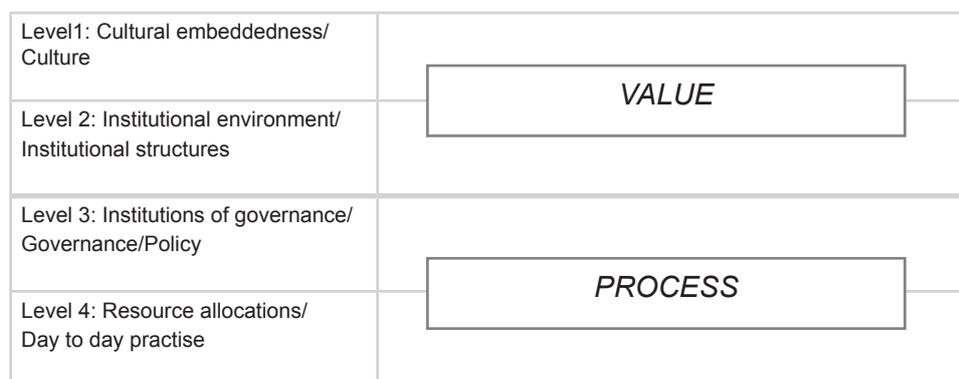
When it comes to the analysis of the connection between institutional levels and qualities of openness, a similar pattern was found. While the wordings of openness etc. were more evenly spread out between the four institutional levels, the remaining wordings were found centred around level 3 (governance/ policy). This result is not surprising with regard to the type of documents being explored, having as objective to map out a vision and a strategy for the region for the 10-20 years to come.

The interdependence between the institutional levels is illustrated in the model by arrows indicating that higher institutional levels impose constraints on lower levels, whereas lower levels influence higher levels by providing feedback (see Figure 1). In the context of the networked information and knowledge society this interdependency has also been highlighted by Benkler and Nissenbaum (2006) claiming that commons-based peer-production lead to certain beneficial values and virtues, which in turn reinforce commons based peer production.

Clearly, openness is a phenomenon with relevance to metropolitan regions and as we have seen different aspects of openness are discussed in the regional development strategies within a variety of thematic fields. It also becomes clear that in the metropolitan regional develop-

ment strategies wordings of accessibility etc. play a particularly important role referring to society enabling for individuals, groups/firms/ organizations and society to participate and/ or collaborate/cooperate in the development of society. As mentioned earlier this can also be expressed as a supply and demand relation, where accessibility to different kinds of resources reflects the supply side and participation and collaboration/ cooperation reflect the demand side.

Within planning there is a well-known discussion, to which a perhaps not too far fledged parallel can be drawn, namely to process vs value when discussing the concept of justice in planning. Campbell (2006) and Fainstein (2009) claim that just planning cannot only be dealing with just procedures, but also has to involve values as they are intertwined. Perhaps we can see a parallel here to the phenomenon of openness, process and value being intertwined. Within our institutional framework these dimensions are expressed at different interdependent institutional levels as made visible in Figure 3.

| Level1: Cultural embeddedness/ Culture | |
|---|---|
| Level 2: Institutional environment/ Institutional structures | *VALUE* |
| Level 3: Institutions of governance/ Governance/Policy | |
| Level 4: Resource allocations/ Day to day practise | *PROCESS* |

**Figure 3.** *The model of Williamson and the distinction between 'value' and 'process'.*

## 5. Concluding remarks

The aim of this paper was to explore how openness is interpreted and discussed in the regional development strategies of the metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö. Openness and related wordings are used with reference to a variety of fields and are influenced by different institutional levels. Openness etc. mostly refers to openness to people and openness to ideas which is in line with literature on the role of metropolitan regions as hubs for knowledge and for creative and economic development.

Some of the potential flaws and limitations of this study were already mentioned: the differences in length between the documents analysed, the difficulties involved with translations and the problems of finding clear cut ways of separating institutional levels. Despite these difficulties, the elaborated model contributes to analytical thinking in relation to how different time frames of different institutional levels impact on openness.

To further expand knowledge on how metropolitan regions perceive and discuss openness, but also how openness is implemented and effectuated, future empirical studies could aim at deepen knowledge on

openness at different institutional levels. By exploring discourses on openness by different actors within the metropolitan regions context, possible differences may be detected with regard to value (culture, institutional structures) and process (governance/policy, day to day practise). Forthcoming papers will focus on how openness is understood and discussed by the political parties and in the execution of openness in the political decision making process. The parallel between interdependencies between institutional levels and the discussion of value and process within planning is also a topic that may be further explored.

The legacy of this research is to contribute to knowledge of how the phenomenon of openness in the networked information and knowledge society is interpreted and discussed in metropolitan regions by providing an analytical model for the analysis. By using an institutional framework of Williamson (2000), the study is contributing to the desire for more empirical works of new institutional theory (Voigt, 2013) and by relating the model to the discussion of value and process within planning, a (possible modest) contribution to planning theory has been made. This research may assist researchers, planners and policy makers in their understanding of the phenomenon of openness in the networked knowledge and information society and the policy implications thereof.

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