

Key findings from the REKENE project

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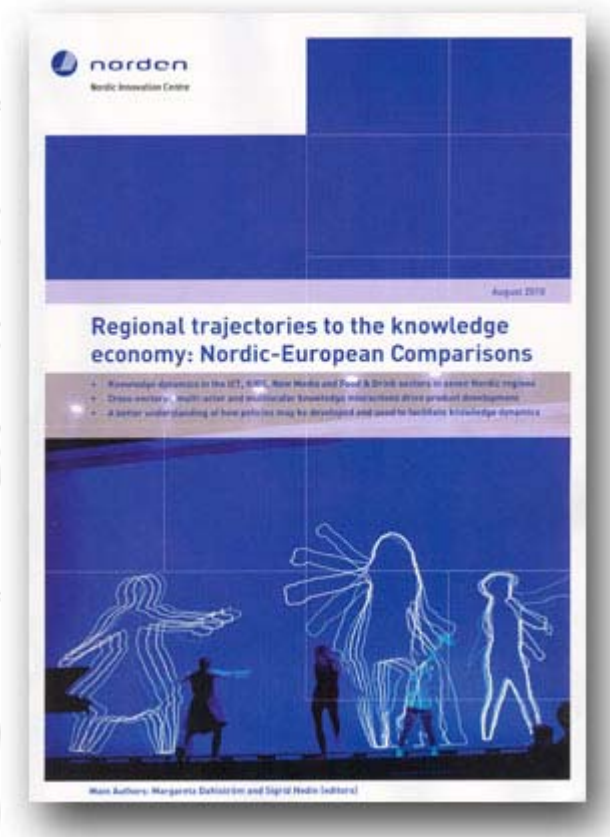
*Knowledge dynamics in regional economic
development 24-25 August, Stockholm*



Project results

Regional trajectories to the knowledge economy - Nordic-European comparisons

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Outline

- Key findings about knowledge interactions
- Knowledge anchoring
- Nordic European Comparisons
- Policy conclusions and considerations

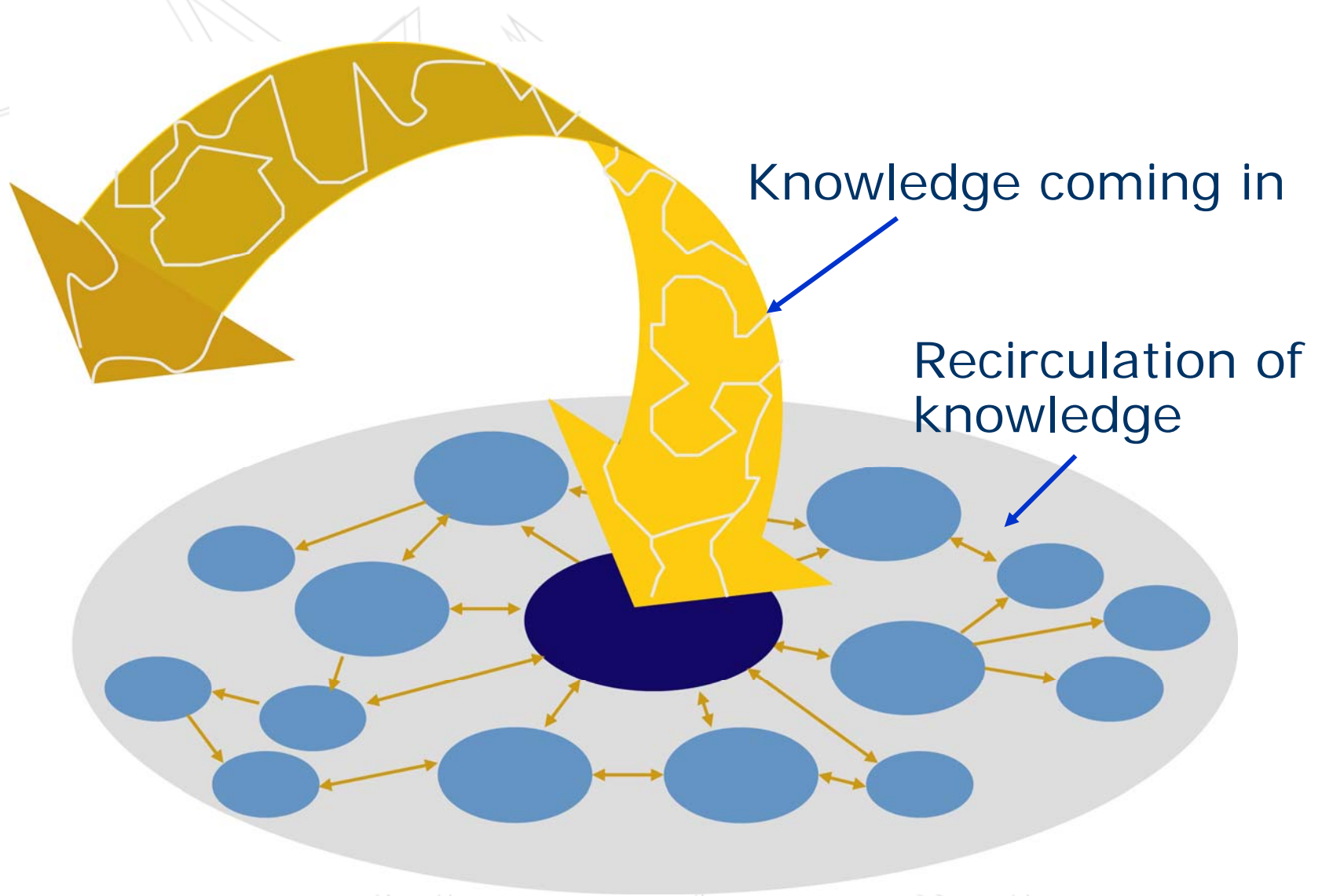
Key findings about knowledge interactions

- *Cross-sectoral knowledge interactions* are innovative and drive product development.
- *Multiscalar knowledge interactions.* A region is not a closed container. Actors utilise extra-regional knowledge when needed.
- *'Multi-actor' knowledge interactions.* Many types of actors are involved in knowledge interactions.

Knowledge anchoring

- Knowledge interactions with actors in the region
- Active search for knowledge elsewhere
- Linking in to global knowledge flows – connecting with knowledge outside
- Making it coming to the region
- Recirculation of knowledge

Knowledge anchoring - Tapping into global knowledge flow



Knowledge anchoring channels

- Interactions between firm and organisations
- Job related mobility
- Acquisition of codified knowledge
- Events

Interactions between firms and organisations

- Inflow / recirculation of knowledge through direct interactions between firms e.g.
 - HRV Engineering a joint venture between engineering firms (Akureyri)
- Inflow / recirculation of knowledge through 'managed' activities, for instance
 - Cluster organisations, COMPARE (Värmland)
 - Networks; Culinary network (Zealand),
 - Projects; Regional Food Culture Zealand, research collaboration (Oulu South)
 - Science Park & Incubators; NOSP (Östergötland), STING (Stockholm), Växthuset (Åland), Inova (matchmaking) (Värmland)
 - Triple Helix cooperation

Job related mobility

- Inflow / recirculation of knowledge through for instance in-migration, movement of employees, project based and freelance work, etc
 - Visiting researchers (Elme Studio, Oulu South Region)
 - Multiple roles; guest lecturers, medical experts (Stockholm, Akureyri, Östergötland), dissimilar work and life experience (Stockholm)
 - Student placement (Oulu South region, Värmland)
 - Usage of external expertise, KIBS (Åland, Stockholm, Akureyri)
 - Spinn-off firms (incubators)

Acquisition of codified knowledge

- Accessing knowledge through books / publications, scientific journals and trade magazines (Oulu South)
- Internet (Zealand)

Events

- Fairs, conferences, seminars, study tours,
- Going out to events / organised in the region
- Organising events – policy and public actors
 - Workshops/seminars Compare (Värmland), Elme Studio (Oulu South region) ÅTC (Åland)
 - festivals; food festivals and fairs (Zealand) and New Media Meeting (Östergötland)
 - Visit to production; consumer-producer interactions (Zealand)

Conclusions knowledge anchoring

- HEI and R & D institutions important for all channels
 - Mediators
 - R & D projects
 - Multiple positions
- Networks are important
- Policy is important

Nordic European Comparison

- *National level* has a strong presence in the regional trajectories of knowledge interactions.
- In the Nordic regions, the *local level* is also important for knowledge dynamics.
- The *regional level* has gained importance regarding regional development and the knowledge economy.
- Many Nordic regions have small populations and struggle with large distances between major urban settlements. However, the small size and remoteness of some of the REKENE case studies provide no barrier for multiscale knowledge dynamics.

Policy – conclusions 1(3)

- *'Multi-actor' policies.*
 - Many different actors are involved in strategy and policymaking, for instance policy bodies, HE institutions, private firms and chambers of commerce (“triple helix”)
 - Partnerships and governance.

Policy – conclusions 2 (3)

- *Multilevel policies.*
 - There is a *Europeanisation of policies* that affect the areas outside the European Union.
 - In addition to the national policy level, policy bodies at the regional level are playing an important role in the development of policies for regional growth.
 - In the Nordic countries, the municipalities at the local level are significant actors.

Policy – conclusions 3 (3)

- *Policy focus on software.*
 - There is increasing attention to policies dealing with software factors such as training, education and business advice.
 - Knowledge generation and knowledge transfers are target areas for policies for regional development.

Policy considerations 1 (3)

- *The perception of knowledge and knowledge types*
 - Many of the policy instruments have so far focused on research, scientific knowledge and engineering.
 - Symbolic knowledge may have been underestimated in the knowledge economy and innovation discourses.
 - Increased attention to support the development of innovations related to new ways of selling, marketing or industrial design
 - A broader perception of important knowledge may imply that sectors now dominated by women may become visible in discussions of a knowledge-based economy.
 - Potential to build on the regional strengths by combining new sectors, knowledge types and geographies.

Policy considerations 2 (3)

- *Dynamics of knowledge dynamics*
 - development, generation and transfer of knowledge are processes that constantly are changing in terms of interactions and combinations of knowledge fields.
 - keep networks open, both in terms of actors, geography and the issues at stake.
 - provide opportunities for brokering, such as funding of platforms and networks where different actors can meet and interact
 - The 'triple helix' approach needs to be further elaborated.

Policy considerations 3 (3)

- *Supporting knowledge dynamics - 'one size does not fit all'*
 - Strategies and policy measures need to be adapted to the specific situation at hand.
 - Working with knowledge dynamics at a regional level is a fairly recent and evolving policy field and provides a golden opportunity for new politicians and practitioners to be brave

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