TRACK 12: TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE AND COHESION

THE TALE OF TWO REGIONS: PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE IN FINNISH REGIONAL PLANNING, DOES PLANNING CULTURE MATTER? (1051)

Hossam Hewidy[1*], Susa Eräranta[2]

*corresponding author

[1] Department of Architecture, Aalto University, Espoo, Finland; *hossam.hewidy@aalto.fi

[2] Department of Built Environment, Aalto University, Espoo, Finland

Abstract. Cities and regions encounter growing complexities in their operational environment, requiring an ability to acknowledge the accelerating change dynamics and uncertainties in their planning processes. Being formed of different municipalities and cities, regions are complex territories for planning by nature. This research builds on case studies of two neighbouring Finnish regions: Helsinki-Uusimaa and Southwest Finland. The research sets out to explore the role of planning culture in enabling a region that is sensitive to the increasing complexities and the consequent need for resilient knowledge practices in processes. The study combines semi-structured interviews with officials in regional planning bodies with document analysis. The findings highlight major questions of procedural resilience on regional level by simultaneously showing how available resources can affect integrating resilience in regional planning.

Keywords: Finland, Regional Planning, Planning Culture, Resilience

1. Introduction

Planning, in its different scales, is a future-oriented action by nature. Cities and regions encounter growing complexities in their operational environment, requiring an ability to acknowledge the accelerating change dynamics and uncertainties in their planning processes. Accordingly, dealing with uncertainty is essential, and the planning system should be equipped to adapt to constraints and shocks, be they economic, environmental, or social (e.g., Ahern et al., 2014). Thus, resilience has become a frequently discussed attribute in planning.

Thus far, resilience has been defined mainly as a substance-related concept, but it also has a procedural dimension with both of its sides influencing each other. The need for

procedural resilience increases in dynamic multi-actor settings. Being formed of different municipalities and cities, regions are complex territories for planning. In fact, conventional regional planning has been lately criticised to be defunct (Harrison et al., 2021). On the one hand, regions are spatially multifaceted and constantly in a state of flux (Allen et al.,1998). On the other hand, regional planning lays between two governmental scales, the national and the local, thus setting the agenda for regional planning is problematic (Friedmann & Weaver, 1979). With such a territorial and governing heterogeneity, regional scale is under-researched in planning studies (Purkarthofer et al., 2021). Therefore, research on system-centred and practice-oriented regional planning can provide valuable insights.

This research aims to open discussion of the diverse interpretations of procedural resilience in the context of regional planning. By focusing on the planning processes in two neighbouring regions in Finland: Helsinki-Uusimaa Region (HUR) and Southwest Finland Region (SFR). The paper contributes to the scholarly body studying regional planning by combining the perspectives of resilience and planning culture. Resilience includes properties such as connectivity, robustness, flexibility, persistence, and diversity (Ribeiro and Gonçalves, 2019), whereas planning culture is a multi-scale amalgamate of deep-rooted practices (Stead et al., 2015). The paper addresses the relation between procedural resilience, regional planning, and planning culture by raising the following question:

> *Can planning culture, in both regions, contribute to or hinder the integration of resilience properties in regional planning?*

The paper first explores the different definitions of resilience and planning culture. After that, it describes the methods and the cases and addresses the research questions. The paper concludes with implications for acknowledging procedural resilience as a key theme in regional planning.

2. Resilience: A Metaphor or a Theory?

Holling (1973) was the first to introduce the concept of resilience into ecology and described it as a measure of a system's ability to absorb disturbances applied to them without losing their relationships with their essential elements, and thus their attributes, prior to the disturbance. Disturbance applied onto systems can be sudden events, or gradually evolving (Pendall et al., 2010). Holling suggested that 'Resilience […] is a measure of the ability of these systems to absorb changes [...] and still persist' (Holling, 1973, p. 17). This was later referred to as ecological resilience (e.g., Holling, 1996). Swanstrom (2008, p. 2) states that 'resilience is more than a metaphor but less than a theory. Davoudi et al. (2013, p. 310) elaborate on this calling it 'conceptual framework'

that helps us think about processes such as climate adaptation in new ways that are more dynamic and holistic. However, in the paper at hand, the authors are not concerned with specific spatial/thematic processes, but approach resilience-oriented practices on a regional scale of planning as a procedural phenomenon.

In an economic crisis, the concept of regional resilience typically attracts attention. Thus, a few studies have urged an evolutionary approach to regional resilience, focusing on the long-term capacity of regions to construct their socio-economic structure (e.g., Christopherson et al., 2010; Simmie and Martin, 2010). Lessons from history can explain the ways regions have developed through new growth paths from pre-existing industrial and institutional structures towards regions providing opportunities but also still limiting the process of diversification (Boschma, 2015).

Social scientists understand resilience as the responsiveness of systems, or individuals and organizations, to shocks (Boschma, 2015). However, the concept of resilience raises a few debates. For social economists, the concept has little to add to the current concepts such as path dependence and lock-in (Hassink, 2010; Pike et al., 2010; Davies, 2011). Other scholars consider resilience not well-defined and fuzzy (Pendall et al., 2010) and thus need a concrete definition and clarity (Martin, 2012). In such a context, a question to be raised is how to relate resilience to regions? (Boschma, 2015).

2.1 Cause vs Effect

The other question to be raised about regional resilience is the definitions of ’what is the cause’ and ’what is the effect’ (Boschma, 2015). The literature on regional resilience commonly discusses three approaches: the engineering-based concept of resilience (Fingleton et al., 2012), the ecological concept of resilience (e.g., Reggiani et al., 2002; Zolli and Healy, 2012) and the evolutionary approach to regional resilience (e.g., Christopherson et al., 2010; Clark et al., 2010; Pike et al., 2010; Simmie and Martin, 2010) (Appendix 1). Engineering-based resilience examines the ability of a system to return to an equilibrium state after a shock. The ecological concept of resilience refers to a new equilibrium state where a region can change its structure and function in the face of an external shock. Thus, there is ambiguity in such an approach that is based on multiple equilibria (Swanstrom et al., 2009; Zolli and Healy, 2012). To acknowledge the dynamic nature of the current operational environment, this paper defines resilience through its third conceptualization, the evolutionary approach. In the evolutionary approach, ‘resilience is considered as an ongoing process rather than a recovery to a (pre-existing or new) stable equilibrium state […]’ (Simmie and Martin, 2010, p. 31). Resilience thus refers to the ability of regions to create new growth paths as a counterbalance of decline or/and stagnation in their economy (Saviotti, 1996). In fact, regions cannot rely on their historical legacy to achieve successes in their futures (Swanstrom, 2008, p. 1).

2.2 Urban & Regional Oriented Resilience

The literature on regional resilience has mainly focused on the industrial composition of regions. For example, the dynamics of fall in demand and sensitivity of regions to shocks are sector-specific; thus, specialized regions are less vulnerable to sector-specific constraints due to being dominated by one principal industry (Boschma, 2015). The evolutionary resilience literature tends to associate regional resilience with adaptability (e.g., Pike et al., 2010). However, other scholars argue that adaptability is essential but not the sole condition for regional resilience; it is rather the capacity of regions to overcome the tension between adaptability (openness) and adaptation (control and efficiency) that measure resilience (Boschma, 2015).

Resilience-thinking has contributed to long-term regional research focusing on the performance of territories and their adaptability when exposed to extreme pressure and damaging events (Bailey & Turok, 2016). The major concerns of such research discuss how and why regional economies and local communities can respond to disturbances, namely the critical balance between change and continuity in the system (Turok, 2014). Mykhnenko (2016) examined how institutional capacity can be improved to allow regions, firms, and organisations to be better prepared for anticipated problems or disasters. There is a difference between a region's 'ability to respond' (resistance and recovery) and its 'adaptability and adaptive capacity' (related to reorientation and renewal) (Eraydin, 2016).

Planning authorities should be prepared for risk by developing adaptative and innovative planning strategies (Ahern et al., 2014). Resilience thinking challenges the suitability of blueprint planning (linear and static) for its rigidity to adapt with uncertainties and continuously changing risk profile (Appendix 2); thus, an essential paradigm shift is needed from blueprint planning to adaptive planning (Sharifi & Yamagata, 2018).

However, such a shift is conditional to an adaptive management strategy enhancing the collaboration between different stakeholders, getting them continuously involved in processes, and allowing feedback loops of learning and adaptation (Crowe et al., 2016). Such an institutional reform may enable the complex interrelationship in the structure of urban systems that interweave a wide spectrum of actors, functioning on multiple spatial and temporal scales (Sharifi & Yamagata, 2018). The paradigm shift and institutional reformation is simply what can be recognised as resilience-oriented planning.

To achieve urban resilience, the planning process should integrate the following principles: 'robustness, diversity, redundancy, flexibility, efficiency, modularity, and innovation (creativity)' (Sharifi & Yamagata, 2018, p.19). These were later extended by Ribeiro & Gonçalves (2019) to eleven characteristics in their more comprehensive and systematic literature review for urban resilience conceptual framework (Table 1).

Table 1. The main characteristics of urban resilience (adapted from Ribeiro & Gonçalves, 2019, p.7).

C**haracteristics**	**Description**
1.Redundancy	Existence of several functionally similar components, allowing the system to avoid failing when one of the components collapse.
2. Diversity	Existence of several functionally different components to protecting the system against the different pressures. The more diversity the system possesses, the better the ability to adapt to a wide range of diverse circumstances.
3. Efficiency	Positive relationship between the functioning of a static urban system in relation to the operation of a dynamic system.
4. Robustness	Ability to resists to attacks or other external forces. Robust design anticipates potential system failures, ensuring that failures are predictable, secure and not disproportionate to the cause.
5. Connectivity	Connected system components for support and mutual interaction
6. Adaptation	Ability to learn from experience and be flexible in the face of change.
7. Resources	Existence of resources that can be rapidly displaced to respond to disruptions and their effects.
8. Independence	Ability to operate for a continuous post-disaster period without relying on external physical intervention.
9. Innovation	Ability to quickly find different ways to achieve goals or meet their needs during a sock, or when a system is under stress. Innovation is critical to developing a city's ability to restore the functionality of critical systems under severely limited conditions.
10. Inclusion	Development of broad consultation and involvement of communities, particularly of the most vulnerable groups in the development of processes and plans. An inclusive approach contributed to a joint vision to build the city's resilience.

11. Integration	Integration and alignment between urban systems promotes stronger decision-making and ensures that all users / components mutually support each other for a common outcome. The exchange of information between systems allows them to function collectively and respond quickly through shorter response cycles across the city.

2.3 Obstacles Facing Resilience-Oriented Planning

The concept of regional resilience has been criticised for several reasons. First, there is a need to integrate both short-term and long-term capacity, the former enabling the system to absorb the shocks and the latter to develop new paths of growth (Martin & Sunley, 2013). Accordingly, understanding of how a region develops new growth paths is essential (Boschma, 2015). Second, there is a need for revisiting the understanding of the capacity of regions to overcome the differentiation between adaptability and adaptation (Boschma, 2015). Third, 'resilience' has been further criticized for being more descriptive than explanatory (Christopherson et al., 2010). In such context, literature can be misleading if regional adaptability is associated with new growth paths detached from their past considering that the path dependency will only cause problems of adjustment (Magnusson & Ottosson, 2009; Henning et al., 2013). Fourth, there is a disproportionate focus on hastily responding to the consequences of crises and the subsequent recovery, with ignoring the fundamental factors producing or sustaining crisis-inducing conditions (Davidson, 2010; Mckeown et al., 2022). Fifth, most frequently resilience plans are firmly bound to both political and institutional dynamics that could take over enduring civic engagement procedures and endorse selective visions anticipating the future, departing from the existing power relations and ignoring community voices (Pitidis at al., 2023). Sixth, a few scholars call for research informing the practice to investigate the contextual governance particularities and pre-existing governance models that sustain reproduction of traditional and obsolete planning approaches, ignoring the resilience narratives as a transformative agent of change (Porto de Albuquerque et al., 2021). Finally, there is an extensive agreement that the resilience literature has hardly drawn the attention to the role of institutions and the state (e.g. Swanstrom et al., 2009; Bristow, 2010; Hassink, 2010; Wolfe, 2010; Pike et al., 2010; Davies, 2011).

3. Planning Culture

Spatial planning policies and processes across Europe are experiencing reforms in response to a range of challenges such as, economic reforms, demographic change, economic globalisation, sustainable development, and climate change (Healey and

Williams, 1993; Stead, 2013). Thus, it is important to discuss planning culture to understand the reflectivity of spatial planning bodies to these challenges. Recently, a scholarly body has emerged with an interest in examining planning cultures and traditions in relation to the planning system evolution (Stead et al., 2015). Some scholars have drawn the attention to the relationships between planning cultures and planning systems to demonstrate how culture may influence planning practices in terms of decisions and outcomes (Stead et al., 2015; Knieling & Othengrafen, 2009; Othengrafen, 2010; Othengrafen & Reimer, 2013; Taylor, 2013). Other authors have explored planning systems and the existence of different traditions or styles of planning in Europe, and whether such traditions can affect the choice of distinctive sets of policy or/and instruments (Albrechts & Balducci, 2013; Faludi, 2000; Nadin & Stead, 2013). Interestingly, Knieling & Othengrafen (2015) issued their triad 'culturized planning model' of three planning dimensions: 'planning artefacts', 'planning environment' and 'societal environment'. The first dimension refers to the scope of planning, the organisation of the planning process and the physical urban developments. The second dimension refers to the core values and conception of planning, and accordingly the type of actors who may access the planning process. The third dimension underlies norms, and perceptions of a particular society; thus, it is more general.

In studying spatial planning, systems, policies and processes in European countries, it is obvious that the concept of culture specifies supplementary knowledge as it mostly focuses on the 'taken-for granted assumptions' or/and 'unwritten patterns of power' underlying such policies, and their outcomes (Booth, 1993; Knieling & Othengrafen, 2015). Thus, 'planning culture' as a notion can be considered a unique subculture because the involved actors and processes are conditioned by the planning system, acting through several aspects such as addressing problems, using certain rules, interpreting planning tasks, recognising and addressing problems as well as following specific procedures, and methods of public participation (Neuman, 2007). However, it is not only the institution that draws and creates the planning culture but also the culture of individual planners, as humans. For example, Sanyal (2005, p. xxi) states that the term planning culture 'means the collective ethos and dominant attitudes of planners regarding the appropriate role of the state, market forces and civil society in influencing social outcomes.' Therefore, it could be argued that planning as a profession is understood as the cultural community of a subculture of the 'built environment professionals', 'who produce and share cognitive frames, practices, knowledge, beliefs, norms and rules, values and codes' (Othengrafen, 2010, p. 89). However, a couple of important criticisms can be addressed in the body of literature studying urban culture. On the one hand, the studies that have considered the issues of planning cultures or traditions in relation to planning systems have primarily focused on the implications for the process of planning (e.g., policy instruments, governance modes) rather than the

outcomes of planning in terms of spatial development or/and physical patterns that can be witnessed in reality (Stead et al., 2015). On the other hand, there is a lack in studying planning histories and their impact on the nature of planning and its evolution (ibid.).

This paper interlinks to the main characteristics of the Finnish planning system to its specific subculture: 'the planning environment'. In Finland, the rational planning approach witnesses an ongoing process to be replaced by communicative planning (Eräranta et al., 2015). However, current operationalisation of communicative planning concerns mostly negotiations with landowners and developers; risking ignoring users' demands (Hewidy, 2022). Furthermore, planning culture in some parts of Finland can still be described as a mixture of rationalist and collaborative planning (Bäcklund & Mäntysalo, 2010). Therefore, influential participation is not built into the culture of planning (Kahila, 2013). Moreover, the embeddedness of the dominance of expert knowledge over citizen knowledge noticeably positions the lay people as an object of planning, not as an active participating subject (Niitamo, 2020). Furthermore, planning bodies should reorganise their resources to empower participatory planning (Mattila, 2018; Niitamo, 2020). Mattila et al. (2021) argue that there is a gap between participatory methods and scientific knowledge in Finnish planning. This paper has no intention to offer a meticulous restatement of discourse on planning culture. The planning culture, as a concept, can still clarify (1) the reflectivity of Finnish spatial planning to resilience and (2) the difference between the approaches used by each region under study.

3.1 Municipalities, Regions & State

The balancing of the regional structure in Finland has been emphasised by major political forces aiming to support the peripheral regions and promote equal opportunities across the country (Pelkonen, 2016). Thus, studies show the result of such regional balancing policy as the levels of gross domestic product (GDP) and income per capita converged between Finnish regions between 1930s–1980s. However, since the 1990s, such indicators have started to diverge and the regional disparities have grown (e.g., Ezcurra & Rapún, 2006; Kangasharju and Pekkala, 2004). Furthermore, Finland as a Nordic welfare state has witnessed another major shift through transformation towards a more competitiveness-oriented, market-, and economy- state model (e.g., Julkunen, 2001; Patomäki, 2007). Another major effect on the regional structure is the displacement of the political centre of gravity towards the right. Finally, there is no harmonised policy interlinking state and municipal level, specifically in the capital region (Pelkonen, 2016) where calls have been made for the state to accelerate the metropolitan policy and set measures promoting the region's international position and growth (Hautamäki & Ranta, 2011). Earlier signals of such a conflict already emerged in

the late 1990s between the state and the capital region cities (Pelkonen, 2016). Thus, it could be briefly stated that there is

- a realistic perception towards the regional disparities
- a relevant switch from welfare state to a more market-, and economy- state model
- different pace of the performance of the state and municipalities and thus variation in priorities.

In recent years, instruments for Strategic land use, housing and transport planning on city-regional scale (MAL) have been established as a response to the identified needs.

4. Methods

Often, there are no direct guidelines to follow, but addressing procedural resilience is driven by planning culture, which is embedded in and structured by each context of planning. For this reason, this research used content analysis of relevant planning documentation together with nine semi-structured interviews to explore and compare the perspectives of procedural and cultural resilience of regional planning processes in two regions of Finland: Helsinki-Uusimaa Region (HUR) and Southwest Finland Region (SFR). The two regions were selected based on their relevance to the theme as major growth hubs in Finland. Comparing the two neighbouring regions allows acknowledging the impacts of differences in circumstances, localities and contexts to explore how resilience-related practices in each planning organisation are driven by their planning culture.

In this research, focus is put on the analysis of the expert interviews. The interviewees represented civil servants and elected officials in the two regions. The experts were identified through a snowball sampling technique, expanding the sample through referrals from interviewees. All interviews lasted between 60–120 minutes, were held online, recorded, and transcribed. The interview questions were developed based on a review of the literature and considered the definitions, institutional settings, and substance-related issues of resilience in each region. The interviews aimed to gather insights from experts with a range of perspectives and experience in regional planning processes - either as organisers, planners, decision-makers, or users of the plans.

Data from the case studies and expert interviews were analysed using content analysis. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, pseudonyms were used in all transcripts and publications. Data was stored on a password-protected computer and only accessible to members of the research team.

5. Case Description

In Finland, regional councils are legally mandated, with their primary source of funding being their member municipalities. The country has a total of 18 regional councils, charged with the tasks of long-range regional land-use planning, as well as promoting local and regional interests. The highest decision-making bodies within the councils are the Regional Assembly and the Regional Board to which all officials are politicians elected by the member municipalities for a fixed term of four years. Regional councils are responsible for the regional land use plans that serve to establish the guiding principles for urban structure and the use of areas designated for specific purposes.

This study is based on case studies of two Finnish regions, Helsinki-Uusimaa and Southwest Finland, which are adjacent to each other (Figure 1, Appendix 3). Uusimaa comprises 26 municipalities and has a population of a little over 1.7 million while Southwest Finland has 27 municipalities and a population of approximately 481,000. Both regions have coastline along the Baltic Sea and encompass diverse spatial areas, including major urban centres, smaller towns and villages, agricultural areas, and islands.

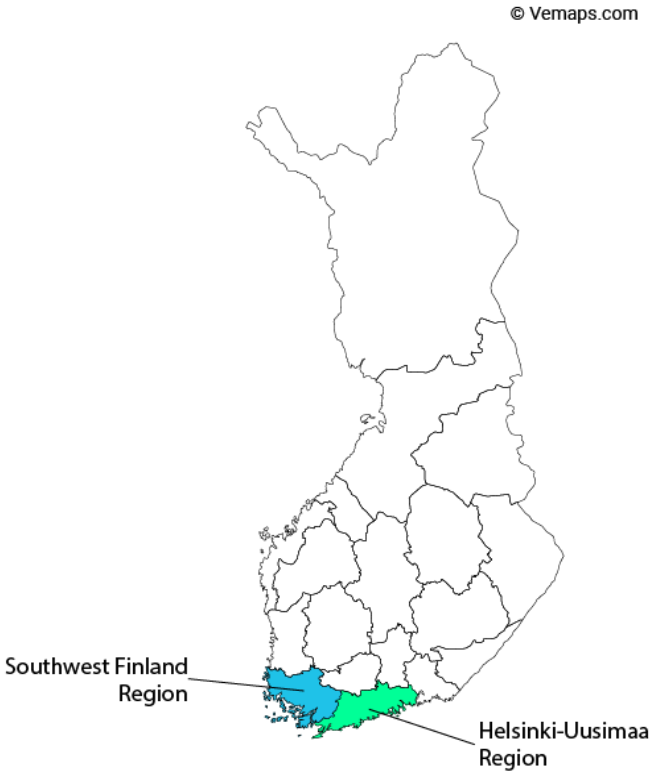

Figure 1. Location of the case areas in Finland.

5.1 Helsinki-Uusimaa Region (HUR)

The Helsinki-Uusimaa region is currently experiencing rapid growth due to migration, making it one of the fastest-growing regions in Europe. As the location of the country's capital city, Helsinki, the region has long been recognised as a hub for international competitiveness, research, and development.

The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Land Use Plan extends until the year 2050 (Figure 2). The plan has four primary targets: steering sustainable growth and a regional balance, facing climate change and the sustainable use of nature and natural resources, increasing welfare and attractiveness, and enabling sustainable competitiveness. The plan is structured into two levels: a strategic structural plan that covers the entire Helsinki-Uusimaa region, which is then complemented by three phased regional land use plans for the Helsinki Metropolitan Region, as well as Eastern and Western Uusimaa.

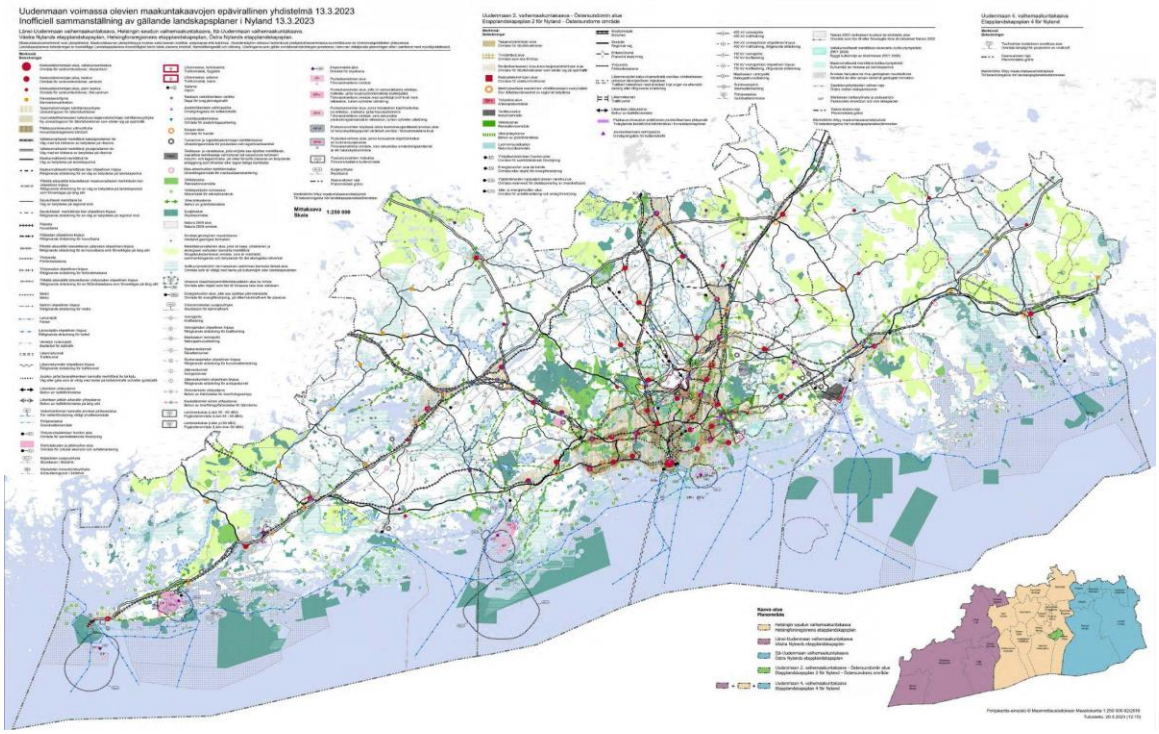

Figure 2. Unofficial combination of current regional plans of the Helsinki-Uusimaa Region (Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, 2023).

5.2 Southwest Finland Region (SFR)

Southwest Finland Region is projected to experience population growth in the near future as one of the four regions in Finland expected to do so. Southwest Finland is a typical European medium-sized region, characterized by a larger city region surrounded by a more rural-like area of influence.

The Regional Land Use Plan for Southwest Finland (Figure 3) has been developed in stages based on different areas, supplemented by theme-specific phased regional plans. Currently, the regional plan consists of seven component plans, which are all at least partly in force simultaneously.

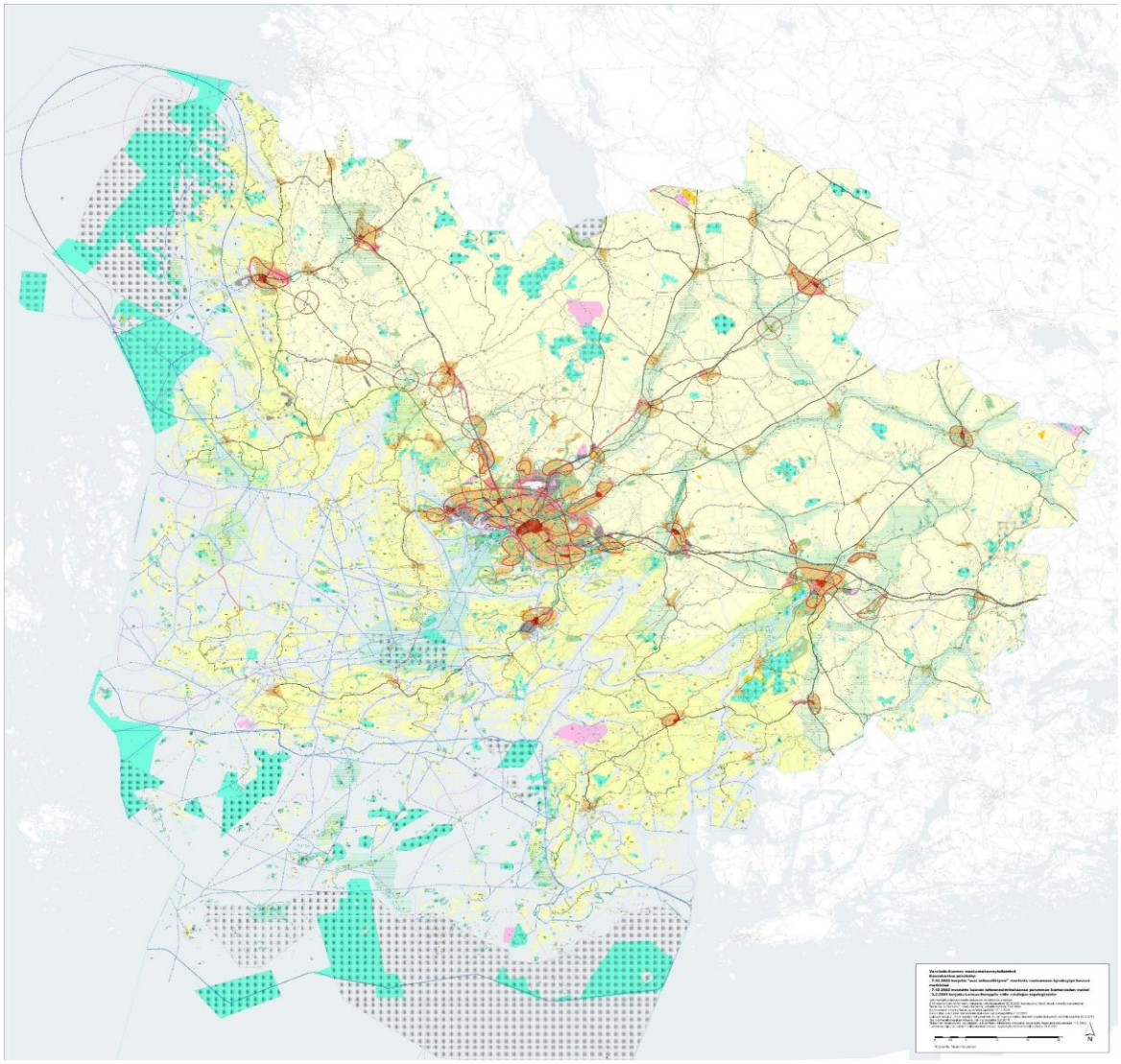

Figure 3. Unofficial combination of current regional plans of the Southwest Finland

Region (Regional Council of Southwest Finland, 2022).

6. Findings

The interviews in both cases revealed that there is no well-defined definition of resilience in common use. Whereas the broad definitions of resilience usually entail perspectives beyond environmental sustainability, interviewees from both HUR and SFR considered resilience mostly as an environmentally aligned concept that deals for example with adaptation to climate change and measures taken to prevent biodiversity loss. Some of the interviewees even suggested that resilience is currently utilised more as a tool for regional and city branding and organisational identification than as a way of steering the actual planning solutions and processes. This was also suggested as a reason for not having an acute interest in defining the concept in a more precise manner. Similarly, interviewees from HUR suggested that resilience is strongly intertwined with the targets and indicators of planning. A plan can only be as resilient as the indicators chosen to measure the solutions.

6.1 Resilience as a Process of Systematic Foresight and Iteration

Despite the differences in the context, the interviewees from both HUR and SFR shared an understanding of resilience as a future-driven concept that requires iterations over time. Interviewees from both regions described that regional planning itself is an iterative process, as it is never started from scratch, but is always founded on already existing areas and infrastructure. Due to the systematic iterative practices, the process also stays resilient as it can acknowledge changes in the operational environment as they take place, also providing adaptive capability for planning through the ability to learn from experiences. Concerning foresight, the importance of willingness to change and learn was highlighted as an important factor in addition to institutional practices and planning culture:

> I always want to start about the mentality, mindset, and governance. What do those mean. Because those explain what has happened and what can be achieved even when there is a need to make giant leaps. (Elected official 1, HUR)

Based on the information gathered from the interviews, HUR has systematic and robust practices for including foresight, iteration, and peer learning during their regional planning processes. For example, the impact assessment process is built in a manner, which enables more detailed assessment in each round of planning. The iteration process is strongly linked to the strategic nature of the regional plan. During the iterations, a balance between target-oriented steering and strategic flexibility is sought and tested through concrete cases, as well as experiences from previous rounds of planning. HUR explained that they invite external experts to evaluate the existing and

ongoing plans to identify outdated elements in the plans as well as to improve the quality and credibility of the plan through external revisions, future panels, and shadowing at multiple phases of the process.

In SFR interviews, the conclusions differed suggesting that in the future especially comprehensive plans are needed to bring together all themes, avoid suboptimisation and ensure resilience. Moreover, the discussion focused more on the interpretation of already existing plans, of how to interpret old plans through the new strategic targets in a way that they would stay strategically resilient over council terms without a need to reopen the plan every time the operational environment changes.

SFR further pointed out that iterations also have restrictions and especially themes that were difficult to decide in previous rounds, should not be reopened in the near future:

> Of course, we have themes that cannot be opened. Should not be opened. Already approved. For example, some new rail corridors. It is there [in the plan], fixed. It is better not to open for discussion until it is built. (Civil servant 5, SFR)

6.2 Resilience as Nurturing of Trust, Acceptability and Solidarity

In addition to the collaborative practices during iterations, interviewees from both regions pointed out that collaborative practices support procedural resilience, acceptance, and solidarity.

Regarding procedural resilience, the ability to share and store information was mentioned as an essential element. For example, HUR has well established methods for steering the process as well as making memos and storing information so that the process is not dependent on single individuals and their knowledge. The situation in SFR is considerably different due to scarce resources. In SFR, the interviewees explained that having such ‘safety’ practices in place is not possible due to the low number of individuals and resources available. However, what was missing in resources, was compensated through close and trustworthy relations with other actors.

In contrast to the interviews in HUR, which emphasised diversity of resource-intensive and systematic collaborative practices, those in SFR provided examples of how to cope with systematic foresight and iteration procedures with scarce resources. In SFR, the scarce resources were also mentioned as a benefit, as everyone already knows everyone, and scarce resources force the experts to focus on collaboration instead of conflict-seeking. In fact, the interviewees were not able to remember many actual arguments between conflicting interests in the region:

> Are we not doing ambitious enough work? Or is it more that we have so scarce resources that we cannot waste them in arguing. So, we really need to cooperate,

> as we have so few experts here. We do not get anything done if we just argue about issues [with experts from the state level and other municipalities]. (Civil servant 2, SFR)

In relation to acceptance over time, interviewees from HUR explained that the collaborative multi-value sphere is a central element. For example, the interviewees described that it is important that the same elected officials decide on the start of a plan, set the goals for the process, steer the process and finally accept the plan so that the whole process is done according to the values set in the beginning. Another key issue regarding the acceptability of the plans was the language utilised. It is important to support the participants in finding relevant information in an understandable form to improve the justice of the process.

Furthermore, one interviewee suggested that resilience is not only about getting things done as efficiently as possible, but also about building a culture of solidarity to support more long-term change and resilience:

> I feel that it is important that people feel they are a part of the environment and a part of the society and have the feeling that they can influence. The feeling of having an influence in this society is important because that makes you support long term resilience. You will give your best to it. You will build, not destroy. I think we should do everything for that. (Civil servant 3, HUR)

Both regions agreed that municipalities are the main stakeholders as the owners of the regional planning body. However, the views on this differ at the municipal level. HUR municipal level representatives referred to good collaboration at the MAL (abbreviation of the Finnish terms: Land-use, Housing and Service Provision) level where experts from different organisations and backgrounds regularly discuss with each other in an equal manner without a formal hierarchical structure. It was further pointed out in the interviews that more collaboration with the regional level would be needed to increase the capability of the regional organisation to acknowledge the local needs and conditions.

6.3 Resilience as Integration, Persuasion and Commitment

Inadequate resources were mentioned as a reason for limited integration in SFR. Although having multiple experts join collaboration meetings would be ideal for overall knowledge co-creation, integration and testing of ideas, only one expert can typically attend due to scarce resources. Consequently, the discussion typically remains at a very concrete level and around themes that the participants themselves are working with at that specific moment, and does not extend to more holistic themes:

> Resources are very thin outside of the Helsinki metropolitan area. In the

> metropolitan region, there are loads of humans working on these [strategic planning issues]. There is always someone who is ready to take responsibility, but outside of that there is no time for strategic thinking. (Civil servant 6, SFR)

Both regions explained that resilience in regional planning is essentially about integrating the various pieces of information, differing targets and values, and expectable changes with each other into a single plan. However, when describing the integration, both regions mainly referred to coordination. For example, in HUR, the previous planning process included almost 200 studies, which were mainly utilised for filling in identified knowledge gaps in the process. Many of the studies were done by external consultants and steered by the regional planning organisation. As the HUR representatives explained, the steering of this multi-actor information process is a delicate act:

> The general plan is like a piano. And then this regional plan… It has a huge number of participants, themes, and scales. It is like organs that are in the cathedral. You are all the time playing and have all those little things that you have to pour out like this and then you have to step with your legs and remember also to turn the page. (Civil servant 1, HUR)

This coordination act was further described by the interviewees, suggesting that it is not as much about integrating knowledge between diverse experts but about coordinating the pieces of information that come from the experts:

> As a consultant, you are in a way sitting under the table. The clients are eating on the table and the pieces of bread are dropping on the floor. You get these pieces of information for the work you need to do. And you do it. But it is just a small part, a piece of the whole bread that is actually there on the table. But you cannot see it when you are a consultant. You just do your part as well as you can and give it back to the table where this one little piece is added. (Civil servant 1, HUR)

Hence, whoever has the coordinating role has also relational power in how the pieces are finally fit together, and much of the resilience resides in these coordination posts. It was pointed out that integration and boundary-crossing is not only a technical act, but also requires curiosity and willingness to learn new at the individual level as the operational environment is dynamically changing and the education and practices of the past do not offer needed skills for addressing the dynamics of the system.

For long-term resilience, this would also require that the integration and combination is done in the multi-actor sphere so that the values and targets cross the realm of planning also in a vertical manner - reaching beyond the regional scale. Interviewees from SFR provided an example of what might happen if the combination and integration is not done through a process that would also commit other actors to the stated targets and

provide direction for their interpretation:

> You can do these plans and things like that, but then you have the operational level and if there is a gap in the information, then the tree is cut. Even if the decision is that the tree is not cut. (Civil servant 4, SFR)

7. Discussion and Conclusions

In this study, we explored the role of procedural resilience and planning culture in the context of regional planning in Finland. The research focused on the cases of two neighbouring regions to examine the difference in planning culture of each region and thus the institutional sequence of actions and reflectivity to the knowledge complexity as well as the increasing need for resilience in the midst of the accelerating multiscale change dynamics that the regions need to acknowledge. The findings suggest that there is no established definition of resilience, but it is mainly interpreted as an environmental, sustainability or climate issue. The vague definition and operationalisation of procedural resilience suggests three main conclusions.

First, resources (such as experts, expertise) (Ribeiro & Gonçalves, 2019; Sharifi & Yamagata, 2018) act as one of the main vulnerabilities and catalysts for procedural resilience. Time as a resource acts as a second main constraint for resilience in regional planning; the expectation that the same elected officials should steer the process from initiating the ideas to the ratification. Combined with the time factor, the lack of resources preventing communication and effective coordination between the different governing levels imposes another layer of complexity to procedural resilience in regional planning. Thus, the possible contextualisations of regional planning are not exposing the interpretations to cultural dimensions. Furthermore, evolutionary resilience is not a recovery mechanism for stabilising the system, but rather a continuous state (cf. Simmie & Martin, 2010). Accordingly, there should be a thread or backbone between the different rounds of elected officials to assure the continuous integration of resilience attributes into the planning processes and the new regional visions. Otherwise, the absence of such a thread combined with the vagueness of resilience's 'procedural' definition may lead to merely utilising the notion for city branding instead of steering the actual planning.

Second, specific properties of procedural resilience such as iteration, independency, redundancy, integration, inclusion, and diversity (Crowe et al., 2016; Pitidis at al., 2023; Ribeiro & Gonçalves, 2019) are vulnerable to a lack of resources. When resources are scarce, it is easier to commit to old decisions, since opening up the processes regarding challenging questions would be too resource-intensive, as the findings suggested. Due to scarce resources, collaboration is strongly target-oriented, reducing inclusion and

diversity in the processes. As well, when resources are scarce, integration is more likely to turn towards coordination of concrete short-term (rather than strategic long-term) issues.

Third, the lack of resources is not only a hindrance, but may further enforce cultural settings that support procedural resilience by generating efficiency, trust, connectivity, acceptability, long-term robustness, and solidarity between actors (Martin & Sunley, 2013; Ribeiro & Gonçalves, 2019). When resources are scarce, collaboration is more based on building a culture of solidarity to support long-term change and resilience.

The findings indicate that despite their differing contexts, the main elements of resilience are similar in both regions. However, the operationalisation of resilience and the meaning of planning culture differ depending on the availability of resources. The less resources available, the larger the importance of culture.

The paper calls for further research that rigorously studies two complexities. On the one hand, the question of power, especially between the state, regions and municipalities, needs to be addressed. There is a need for a harmonised and synchronised actionable knowledge flows between different governing levels. Some of the themes cannot be opened in the discussions between the different governing levels, which is based on an embedded power rooted in and structured by a dominant idea born to be implemented. On the other hand, although the literature informs of the rescaling of regions, none of the interviewees talked about the economic side of resilience. The literature mentions the growth of regional disparities; however, the topic is not among the possible interpretations of resilience understood in planning bodies. The taken-for-granted assumptions (cf. Knieling & Othengrafen 2015) motivate planners to think of resilience from the side of environment and mitigation but not economy.

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Appendix 1

Table A1 based on Yamagata & Sharifi (2018) Evolutionary* as in Davoudi et al. (2013).

Type of resilience	**Description**
Engineering	Accentuates reducing vulnerability to disasters by improving robustness of the physical infrastructure.
Ecological	Entails a more flexible & dynamic approach that recognises inadequacy of resistance and robustness characteristics for building urban resilience. It further promotes structuring safety margins into the design of the system allowing it to absorb initial shocks, retain functionality, and minimise overall losses.
Adaptive (also called Evolutionary*)	Facilitates appropriate interactions between slow and fast variables in the system allowing the system to smoothly alternate between long periods of stability and short periods of chaotic change, without losing its integrity and functionality. Social-ecological memory, self-organisation, and learning from the past are essential characteristics for achieving adaptive resilience. Transformability is what distinguishes evolutionary resilience from engineering and ecological resilience. It broadens the description of resilience beyond its meaning to incorporate the dynamic interplay between persistence, adaptability and transformability across multiple scales and time frames in ecological (natural) systems.

Appendix 2

Table A2 adapted from Table 1.1 in Yamagata & Sharifi (2018, pp. 23-24).

Planning Theme	**Conventional planning**	**Resilience-oriented planning**
Vision & Strategy	- Linear Static (blueprint) - Emphasis on eliminating risks - Recovery from disaster by equilibrium approach - Predict & Prevent approach	Adaptative through regular and iterative processes of monitoring and scenario making
Institutional Reform	- Sector-based - Using high technical language in communication - Top-Down - Limited share of private investment in urban infrastructure management (obvious in developing counters)	- Interactions between sectors (Interconnected and interdependencies) - Decentralized planning - Promotion of collaborative culture - Incremental and learning by doing approaches - Recognizes the significance of behavioural changes - Transparent decision making process - Communication using commonly understandable language - Strong public-private partnerships
Sectoral, spatial, and temporal interlinkages	- Failure to address interlinkages between different sectors and dimensions - Silo-based - Lack of understanding of spatial and temporal dynamics	-Not carried out in silos - Efforts to understand interconnections between different sectors - Emphasis on understanding spatial and temporal dynamics

Appendix 3

Table A3. Comparison of the case regions.

		Helsinki-Uusimaa Region (HUR)	**Southwest Finland Region (SFR)**
Region	**Inhabitants**	1,723,000	481,403
	Size	9,568 km²	10,910 km²
	Nr of municipalities	26	27
Organisation	**Employees**	appr. 80	appr. 70
Regional Assembly	**Nr. of elected officials**	83	104
	Largest parties	The National Coalition Party (23), The Social Democratic Party (14), The Greens (14)	The National Coalition Party (26), The Social Democratic Party (19), The Finns Party (16)
Regional Plans	**Plans in force (year of ratification)**	Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Land Use Plan 2050 (2023); Regional Land Use Plan for the Östersundom area (2021); Phased Regional Land Use Plan 4 – only markings for wind power (2020)	Regional plan for natural values and resources (2021); Phased regional plan for land use, services and transportation in urban areas (2018); Phased regional plan for wind power (2014); Regional plans of Loimaa region, municipalities of the Turku region, Turunmaa and Vakka-Suomi (2013); Regional plan for Salo region (2008); Regional plan for the Turku city region (2004)