

TiF in a global context: What is  
the greater vision?

*Cliff Hague*



# What is TiF aiming to do?

*“TiF will investigate the concepts of attractiveness, image and identity, further involve citizens and make them more aware of design in places and spaces. We will investigate these aspects in perspective of immigration and business development.”*

(TiF project application).

# TiF will

- Develop an Attractivity Barometer.
- Create new narratives for rural regions in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR).
- Combine the work on attractivity and on the narratives to create future scenarios for all the regions in the project.
- Connect the idea of attractivity to ideas from urban design. “The project assumes that Face Lifting public spaces, both symbolic and real, give added value to the concept of attractiveness”.

# **TiF idea 1: – Attractiveness helps grow the local/regional economy**

- **job opportunities + houses + leisure facilities = net in-migration (retention + attraction of people)**

And

- **net in-migration = more jobs.**

## **TiF Idea 2: – Better images and branding can make places more attractive**

*“Rural BSR is in need of new post-industrial narratives. The narratives should not only be based on the ancient and industrial identity, the close contact to natural landscape and farming, but also include contemporary industries, ideas and visions. The narratives should promote the regional strengths and contemporary success stories should be told.”*

# Different situations require different strategies

- Poor facilities with a favourable image: improve the product, rather than promote it.
- A favourable image and good facilities - only market to the level required to maintain this situation.
- Good facilities with an un-deserved poor image or a weak /non-existent image - promotion and marketing required. (Ahworth and Voogd, 1994).
- Jensen-Butler (1999) argued that a measure of equity is necessary to avoid a negative image

# **TiF Idea 3: Design of the public realm can make a town more attractive**

*“The project idea is not to copy and paste big city solutions into smaller places That would be very ignorant. However, learning from the best and sharing ideas with other areas in the same situation can give new and better solutions. Buildings, parking places, parks, squares, pavements, lightscape, pedestrian streets and more, are all elements which can be solved with good or bad quality.”*

# **TiF Idea 4: Visionary and inclusive governance is important to delivery of more attractive places**

- Partners in TiF will create scenarios and discuss these with local and regional stakeholders.
- But what will be done after the consultation on the scenarios is completed?

# TiF's vision

- Our towns and regions will be better able to attract and retain people if the partners in TiF are able to brand their places as combining traditional strengths with new economic situations.
- To do this they need to include local and regional stakeholders in the formulation of strategies and designs.

# The wider context 1: the Baltic Sea Region

All projects expected to contribute to:

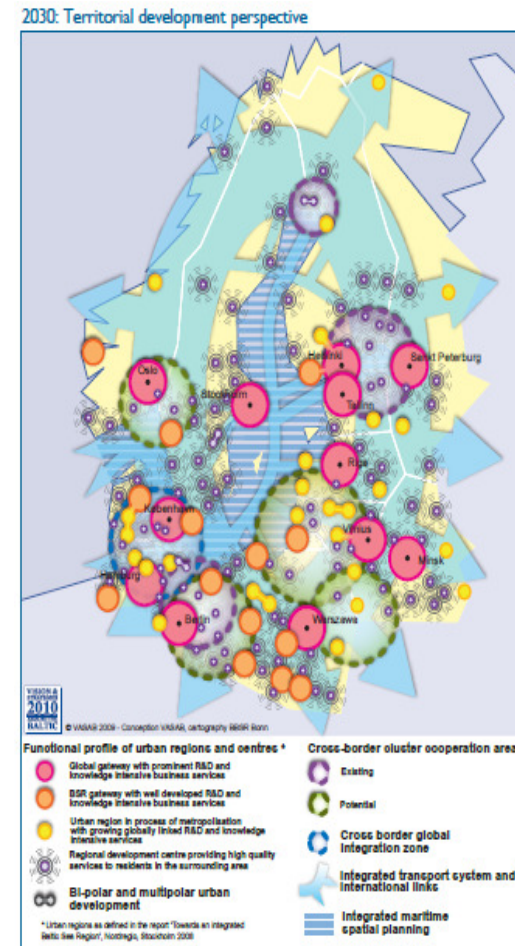
- Increased political recognition of projects results
- Increased sustainability of transnational co-operative networks
- Unlocked public /private investments
- PLUS practical results.



# VASAB Long Term Perspective

Advocates urban-rural partnerships, which include:

- joint work on economic development, branding and marketing, and
- promotional events to foster common regional identity.



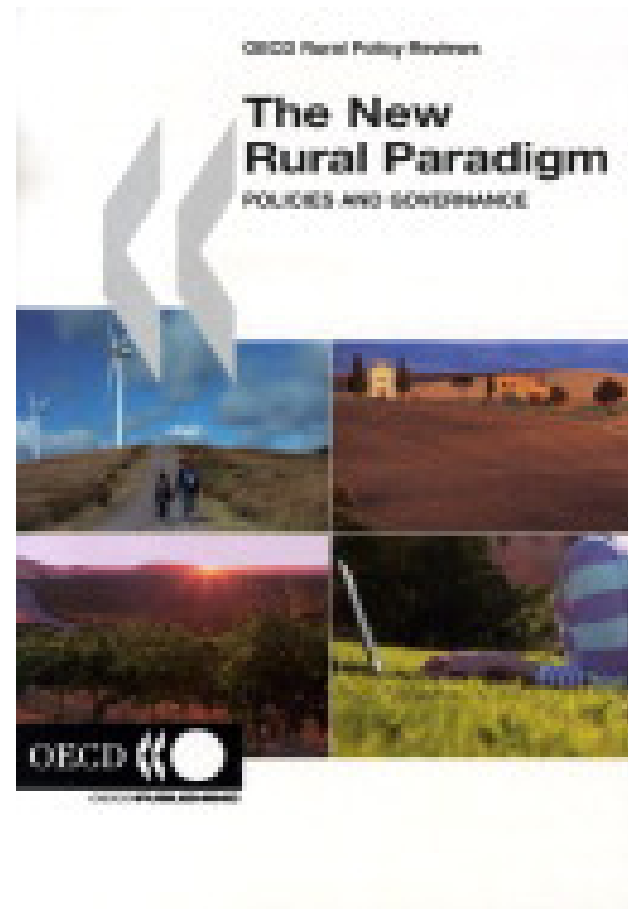
# The wider context 2: The Leipzig Charter

- Gives high priority to “creating and ensuring high quality public spaces” in cities.
- Says that public spaces and urban landscapes “are important for attracting knowledge industry businesses, a qualified and creative workforce and for tourism”.



# The wider context 3: Re-interpreting Rural Regions

- “A focus on local specificities as a means of generating new competitive advantages, such as amenities (environmental or cultural) or local products (traditional or labelled).”
- “A shift from a sectoral to a territorial policy approach.”



# **The wider context 4: Market forces and economic crisis**

- Small, weak rural labour markets (exacerbated by return-migration);
- Dependence on SMEs that are vulnerable when credit is hard to get;
- Limited governance capacity in rural regions;
- Public services provide professional employment and incomes (and spending) in rural regions, but are vulnerable to cutbacks as governments seek to reduce deficits.

# Towards a Vision

Recognise impacts of external factors... BUT

- TiF is in tune with BSR, EU & OECD strategies
- Local areas can shape their futures
- Governance and innovation is important
- Identify and build on the comparative advantages and development opportunities amongst the partners, separately and collectively
- TiF creates new knowledge – use it!