



Regional Learning and Regional Results in Ribe County

The regional partnership with 7 partners was constructed especially for the Article 6 project. EU Vest knew all partners from other projects and relations, but it was the first time that all partners were put together in a partnership. It was the intention to create a holistic partnership with regional actors representing the labour market (AF), Education (SDU, EAV, AMU, CVU and VUC) and business development EU Vest. Moreover, the partners representing the educational sector, represents both higher education, secondary education, adult education and education in both business-, technical- and social fields.

All partners in the Danish partnership agree, that the broad inter-disciplinary co-operation is fruitful in many different ways.

First of all, the project has brought an awareness of the objectives of other participating organisations in the region, thus enhancing our possibility of regional cooperation. It also provided better understanding of the role of each participant in regional development activities and the tools available for that purpose. New possibilities for co-operation and networking between the partners have come up, which has already created new development projects within e.g. the Comenius programme, the Tempus programme and the national ESF.

Secondly, most partners have stressed that the project provide them with better information about what is going on in the region on a more strategic and political level, which helps them in their daily work and planning.

Thirdly, it is worth mentioning that on the regional level a major administrative restructuring is just about to take place in Denmark. New administrative regions will have the responsibility to take care of health and regional industry policy. In both areas the techniques used in the project will be useful. Since the knowledge of these techniques are now spread to a number of organisations in the region it is likely that politicians will be presented for these techniques from several different sources and therefore it is more likely that they will be used than if this was only mentioned from one or a few of the organisations previously using these techniques.

The new regions will have responsibility for health and regional industry policy, but will not have the right to set taxes for the purpose and therefore cannot very actively pursue these objectives in a concrete form independently of the priorities of central government. In such a situation what may become the most useful tool of the new regions will be their ability to provide the region with information and a set of indicative prognoses on the development. In that process the techniques developed in the project may very well be highly suitable.

Fourthly, a very concrete idea for a future Regional Key Competence in Ribe County – or even the new bigger region that Ribe county will be a part of, namely the Region of South Denmark – has been formulated within the Article 6 project. All partners have participated in discussions about the possibility to focus on Wellness as a new development area for the region.

Ribe county possess many strong resources and competencies within different areas, which seen in a holistic way can create a new industry with possibilities to create employment and economic growth. These resources and competencies are as follows:

- Strong experiences and highly qualified private consultancy enterprises within health and safety at work.
- Strong traditions for public / private partnership in the area of public health and health and safety at work
- Research- and educational activities in the area of public health



Regional Key Competencies

- a way to manage structural changes [AT6]

- Beautiful natural resources to promote “healthy tourism”
- Strong traditions for Lifelong Learning and Folk High Schools, which can be combined with healthy tourism.
- Educational activities within “wellness” tourism.

Three working groups have been created with partners from the article 6 project + some external relevant partners, with the main objective of developing a concrete proposal on how the region pro-actively can promote the development of a new regional development potential within three main axes:

- Conceptualising public / private partnership within wellness, with the possibility of creating an industry for project export to other countries.
- Developing consultancy concepts within wellness, public health and health and safety at work, with the possibility of creating concepts and services suitable for export.
- Developing a regional concept of “Wellness Tourism”, focusing on both the natural resources of the region, sports facilities, cultural activities and the strong Danish tradition for Lifelong learning and Folk High School.

In connection with the construction of the new administrative regions mentioned earlier, these new regions will have to undergo a serious regional strategic planning process, which also includes identification of future development areas and applying for national funds to support these development areas.

The work within the article 6 project, and especially the work that we are doing to identify and propose wellness as a new Regional Key Competence, will be an important part of this process. The intention is that it will become a highly prioritised part of the strategic plan for the new region, and that we in spring 2007 writes an application to receive national funding to support wellness as a development area in the new Region of South Denmark.

Some of the partners in the Danish partnership have also mentioned some specific outputs on an organisational level, which are worth mentioning here.

The University of South Denmark has for instance mentioned that the project has enhanced their knowledge of how to work with anticipation and regional key competencies on the organisational level. Since the University was formed with an objective including the support to regional development this is a focus area and any new information on strategies for dealing with this issue is useful. The project has also on a more specific level provided information, which is useful for their research and education. One of the research areas of the Institute is the stability of regional development and in this setting the methodology developed for the project and the case studies on good practices and successful development projects presented in the projects are highly useful.

It is also worth mentioning that CVU, University College West is in the process of applying the Danish Ministry of Education to become a “Competence Centre” for Sustainable Regional Development, where many of the ideas from the Article 6 project has provided them with inspiration, and where especially the ideas on focusing more on wellness as a regional development area is important to them.

