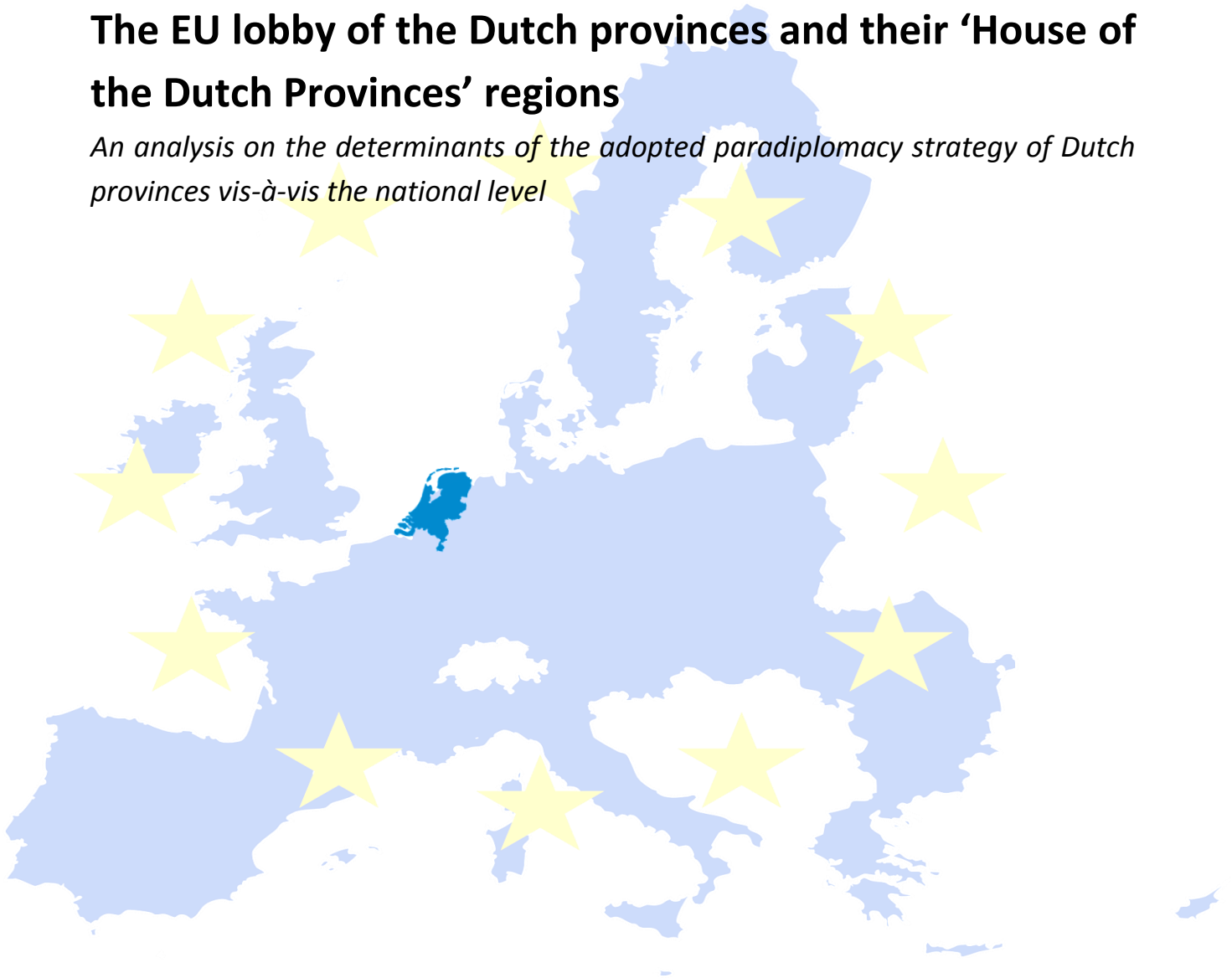


The EU lobby of the Dutch provinces and their 'House of the Dutch Provinces' regions

An analysis on the determinants of the adopted paradiplomacy strategy of Dutch provinces vis-à-vis the national level



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Summary

This thesis contains a case study on the determinants that influence the paradiplomacy strategy that Dutch provinces adopt vis-à-vis their member state, when representing their European interest. Because of the growing regional involvement in International Affairs, the traditional relationship between the sub-national authorities and their member states has been challenged. Both the sub-national and national level have been transitioning into a new role. This thesis aimed to contribute to the literature on determinants of paradiplomacy strategies (cooperative, conflicting and non-interaction paradiplomacy) that sub-national actors can adopt vis-à-vis their member state. The goal of the research is twofold: a) to gain insights in the reason why Dutch regions choose to either cooperative, conflicting or non-interaction paradiplomacy in representing their EU interests vis-à-vis the national level and b) to determine which strategies are most used and why. Corresponding to this goal the main research question is **“Which determinants influence the paradiplomacy strategy that Dutch provinces adopt vis-à-vis their member state, when representing their European interests?”** To answer the research question a qualitative in depth case study has been performed on two cases consisting of two House of the Dutch provinces regions and their respective provinces. An online survey, document analysis and two semi-structured interviews covering both cases were performed in order to gather the necessary data. Results show that generally the most used strategy is cooperative paradiplomacy, followed by non-interactive and the least used conflict paradiplomacy strategy. A ‘high openness of the national level to regional interests’ and being an ‘urban region/province with a high population density’ seems to increase cooperative paradiplomacy, while only slightly influencing non-interactive or conflicting paradiplomacy. Partisan congruence is high in the Netherlands, but proves to be the least important in explaining paradiplomacy strategy. The research finds that ‘coalition forming’ based on mutual problems instead of ‘political color’ is more important for determining paradiplomacy strategy. These ‘coalitions’ can also lobby against the state (conflict paradiplomacy), as long as it happens transparently and openly, without playing ‘dirty games’. Finally the research indicates the importance of ‘diplomatic tact or skills’ as an important determinant of paradiplomacy, especially for the way that ‘bypassing’ is experienced by the actor that is being ‘bypassed’.

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List of Abbreviations

AIV	Adviesraad voor Internationale Vraagstukken / Advisory Council on International Affairs
BNC	Beoordeling Nieuwe Commissievoorstellen / interministerial Working Group for the Assessment of New Commission Proposals
CBS	Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek / Central Bureau for Statistics
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
CMPR	Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions
CoR	Committee of the Regions
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives
EC	European Commission
EOBB	Europa Overleg Binnenlands Bestuur / 'Europe consultations'
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
HNP	Huis van de Nederlandse Provincies/ House of the Dutch Provinces
IBDT	Interbestuurlijke Dossier Teams / Intergovernmental dossier teams
IPO	Interprovinciaal Overleg / Association of Provincial Authorities
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MLG	Multi-level Governance
N	North-Netherlands
PR	Permanent Representation
SNN	Samenwerkingsverband Noord-Nederland / Northern Netherlands Alliance
SSE	Sub state entity
UvW	Unie van Waterschappen / Dutch Water Authorities
VNG	Vereniging Nederlandse Gemeenten / Association of Netherlands Municipalities
W	West- Netherlands

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Motivation for the research

The power of the national government as having the monopoly of the national position in the European Union (EU) policy-shaping processes, has been challenged by multiple other actors. Today big private (companies) and societal (interest groups) actors are increasingly involved at the supranational level (Peters and Pierre, 2001). Also the role of sub-national authorities has undeniably been increasing in Europe. These 'sub-national authorities' are defined as "the level of government and/or administration immediately beneath the state" and thus forms a 'third layer' within the EU political system, additionally to the national and supranational level of government (Tatham, 2018: 1). These sub-national authorities are not only striving for influence in the national arena, but also in the European arena, as EU legislation is affecting subnational authorities more and also more directly (Fiege, Gosselt, Linders and De Jong, 2016: 24). Also the Dutch sub-national actors (provinces and municipalities) must comply with the laws and regulations that are decided upon at the European level, and are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of many European rules and policies (HNP, 2018). In a 2013 interview with Volkskrant Magazine, Kim Putters (Director of the Social and Cultural Planning Office) emphasized the need to empower the growing influence that regional and local governments have, and the importance of regionally oriented governance. According to Putters, the state-level is losing power to both the European level (because of European Integration) and to the local and regional governments (because of regionalization). As Keating phrases it "Under present-day conditions, the state can no longer monopolize all relationships between its constituent territories and the outside, giving rise to complex patterns of paradiplomacy and inter-regional networking" (Keating, 2008b: 629). Paradiplomacy, according to Soldatos (1990:41) refers to "a coordinated decentralization process in foreign policy, whereby the federal government accepts, joins forces with the federated unit, coordinates or monitors subnational foreign-policy-making, and manages to harmonize the various transgovernmental activities with its own policies". Paradiplomacy is thus the diplomacy led by sub-national authorities parallel to their respective member states (Tatham, 2016).

In other words, sub-national authorities have found their way into the national and European arenas. However regional participation at the EU level is a rather young discipline and much still has to be learned.

1.1.1 Emergence of (Dutch) paradiplomacy

As mentioned above, due to regionalization, European Integration, and the fact that EU legislation increasingly affects subnational authorities, sub-national authorities are increasingly putting an effort into influencing both the national and European agenda's (Tatham, 2016). The interest of sub-national authorities in national and European decision-making can be lead back to 1960's, when a period of 'societal turbulence' started in Europe, which changed the traditional relationship between citizens and (sub-national) government. Figuee (2017) explains how the 1968 Revolt in Paris, the Prague Springtime and the demonstrations against the Vietnam War are all examples of "protests of the young generation to break up encrusted social, political, cultural and economic structures, and instigated a shift in the thinking of what a democracy should be like" (Figuee et al, 2016: 21). Also the Netherlands was 'gripped' by this turbulence characterized by the *ontzuiling*, a period in which "the old, traditional connections between interest groups and their (religiously, politically oriented) supporting 'pillars' were cut, that were previously embodied in countless, sharply separated associations" (Figuee et al, 2016; 20). With the Dutch *ontzuiling*, the breakdown of traditional factions and the removal of traditional religious barriers was a fact. These societal changes in Europe, and specifically the *ontzuiling* in the Netherlands, caused interest groups to have to 'take care of themselves' (as in case of the Netherlands the 'pillars' were no longer representing them) and to actively create their own policy to satisfy their interests (Figuee et al, 2016; Andeweg and Irwin, 2009). (Dutch) Citizens and interest groups thus became more and more insistent and strong-willed about their interests and were asking for more influence in political decision-making. Consequently, sub-national governments (Dutch municipalities and provinces) had to reconsider their relationship vis-à-vis their 'awakened' citizens, by looking for possibilities to place sub-national interests on the national and European agenda's and creating collaborative structures that seemed favourable at the European level (Figuee et al, 2016: 25). This process was fuelled by the continuing decentralization policy of the Dutch national government, with the purpose to increase efficiency by 'decentralizing' government tasks that were previously the responsibility of the national level, to the municipal and provincial level. The devolution of tasks caused the sub-national authorities to increase cooperation with other regions, and the national and European level to improve implementation of the devolved tasks and reduce costs (Andeweg and Irwin, 2009).

Figuee (2017) also explains how from the 'EU perspective', it was important to "involve every level of decision-making process in policy implementation, as legitimacy, effectiveness and visibility of the EU are guaranteed by the contributions of all actors" (Figuee et al, 2016: 25). Figuee (2017) describes how several important developments of European Integration 'drew' sub-national authorities into the

European arena: The European Regional Development Fund (1975), aimed at the promotion and development of poor regions in the EU which created an ‘opening’ to connect regional and local interests to European agenda’s. The Single European Act (1986) to create a free space for the internal market, including regions and the Maastricht treaty (1992) with the subsequent founding of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and finally the 2009 CoR White Paper (Const-IV-020, p. 7, 80th session), “which explains that the relation between multi-level governance and the principle of subsidiarity should be considered inextricable” (Figuee, 2017: 42, 83; Mastenbroek, Zwaan and Liefferink, 2013; de Rooij, 2002). Summarizing, these developments at the national and European level have caused (Dutch) sub-national actors to actively (want to) engage at the European level. Over the years the Dutch sub-national authorities have organized themselves in various structures to actively represent their European interests both through the national and European level.

In the Netherlands, municipalities and provinces are the sub-national governments which are anchored in the Constitution (Figuee et al, 2016)¹. The Netherlands consists of twelve provinces that all individually lobby for their own interests and EU funding, but are also represented in the Dutch umbrella organization ‘Interprovinciaal Overleg’/ Association of Provincial Authorities (IPO) that represents the joint interests of the provinces at the state level. These joint interests are then, for relevant topics, also represented in Brussels through the Committee of the Regions and the ‘Huis van de Nederlandse Provincies’/ House of the Dutch Provinces (HNP), which can be considered the ‘European’ department of the IPO. In the HNP however the twelve Dutch provinces have organized themselves into four regional offices instead of individually. These regional offices are the North Netherlands Alliance (SNN), the East Netherlands Provinces, the Randstad Region and the South Netherlands Provinces. Additionally to the provinces, the important Dutch cities are represented in joint constructions like Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG), the G4 (municipality of Amsterdam, Utrecht, The Hague and Rotterdam) and the G32 (100.000+ citizens municipalities), which also lobby their interest at the state and EU level. Both provinces and cities represent their EU interests through the supranational institutions (European Parliament and European Commission) and several EU networks (e.g. the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), which is the largest organization of local and regional governments in Europe) (IPO, 2018; HNP, 2018). The Dutch sub-national authorities can and do actively represent their EU interests indirectly through the national level, and directly at the European level, and

¹ The activities and structure of sub-national EU interest representation will be further explained in a separate context chapter.

thus do so through various organizations and channels. However, being active at the national and European level to represent EU interests, does not automatically equate being effective and influential at lobbying (Tatham, 2008). IPO advisor Hugo van der Baan recently stated: "It seems like everyone is lobbying along separate tracks: the provinces, the IPO the G4, The Hague. What is our influence in Brussels at all?", indicating the lack of coherence between all the sub-national actors in the Netherlands (IPO, 2018). Additionally the traditional relationship between Dutch subnational actors and the national government has been changing because of the consequences of Europeanization and regionalization (Tatham, 2016). Thus also in case of the Netherlands, it is clear that the Dutch sub-national authorities and national level are still trying to find their ways around this division of "power" between the regional level, national level and European level.

1.2 Problem statement

1.2.1 Goal of the research

Because of the growing regional involvement in International Affairs, the traditional relationship between the sub-national authorities and their member states has been challenged. Both the sub-national level, as the national level have been transitioning into a new role. Much could thus be gained for the Netherlands, and especially the Dutch sub-national authorities themselves, from gaining a better understanding of the Dutch sub-national interest representation at the EU level. Because of the scope of this thesis, this research focuses on the Dutch sub-national authorities directly under the national level: the Dutch provinces, their regional 'sub-groups in the NHP' and the representation of their European interests through the national and European level. Within the literature on regional integration and Europeanization there has been much discussion about the influence that sub-national actors have in the European arena, and whether this erodes the traditional 'gate-keeping power' of the state. Jeffery has defined the gatekeeping powers of the central government as "the capacity of the central state level to maintain a monopoly over the national position in the EU policy- shaping processes" (2000:5). Bache describes this gate-keeping power as the ability to "ensure its dominance in the influence to the EU decision-making process and to remain a strong position in terms of political, constitutional-legal and ultimately financial resources" (1999: 38). Traditionally this power was in the hands of the national government, who had the monopoly over the national position in EU relations. As sub-national actors gained influence and made their way to the European level, this challenged the traditional 'gate-keeping' powers of the member states. In this sense sub-national actors representing their interests at the EU level were thus 'bypassing' the state (Tatham, 2008). For a long time, there was an implicit

“amalgam” in the literature that assumed that paradiplomacy and ‘bypassing’ the member state are the same. However more recent literature has shown how paradiplomacy can also be led ‘in tandem’ with the state (Tatham, 2008). Therefore just because sub-national actors are active at the EU level in representing their EU interests, this does not necessarily mean that sub-national actors are bypassing the state, or that this challenges the gate-keeping powers of the member states (Callanan and Tatham, 2014). As there is clearly an increasing involvement of sub-national actors in international affairs, much research has been done on the *determinants of paradiplomacy* (Tatham: 2016). However because of this implicit “amalgam”, less research has been devoted to researching what the *determinants of different paradiplomacy strategies* are. Tatham and Callanan (2014) and Tatham (2016) have determined several interaction strategies that sub-national actors can adopt vis-à-vis their member state. In performing paradiplomacy, subnational actors can either work *in tandem with* the state level on EU topics (cooperative paradiplomacy), or go *against* the EU position taken by the state level (competing paradiplomacy) in representing their EU interests. This is also considered ‘bypassing’ the member state. Lastly sub-national actors can chose to adopt a non-interactive paradiplomacy strategy, in which sub-national actors represent their EU interests *without* the member state (Callanan and Tatham, 2014). There are thus several paradiplomacy strategies that sub-national actors can adopt vis-à-vis the member state to represent their EU interests, but relatively little research has been done on determinants of these specific *strategies* of paradiplomacy (Tatham, 2016). Literature that attempts to do so is either quantitative and compares between regions of different member states (i.e. trying to explain differences between regions based on differences between members states), or qualitative, but not including the Netherlands. The determinants of the different ‘types’ or strategies of paradiplomacy have thus not yet been researched specifically within the context of the Netherlands, and also not specifically comparing between regions within the same member state. This leads to the following research question:

Which determinants influence the paradiplomacy strategy that Dutch provinces adopt vis-à-vis their member state, when representing their European interest?

The goal of the research is twofold: a) to gain insights in the reason why Dutch regions choose to either cooperate, conflict or non-interact in representing their EU interests vis-à-vis the national level and b) to determine which strategies are most used and why.

In order answer the research question some guiding sub-questions (SQ) have been developed:

1. Through which channels can sub-national authorities lobby their EU interests?
2. What interaction strategies are there, and how can they be measured (paradiplomacy)?
3. To what extent does the perceived openness of the national level to regional interests, influence which interaction strategy is deployed?
4. To what extent does the 'urban/rural divide' influence which paradiplomacy strategy is deployed?
5. To what extent does partisan congruence determine which interaction strategy is deployed?
6. How can the 'new' relationship between Dutch sub-national actors and their member state be improved?

1.3 Relevance of the research

1.3.1 Scientific relevance

This thesis is scientifically relevant for several reasons. While the literature on interest group influence beyond the state is abundant, it generally overlooks one type of group: that of regional authorities. Within the existing literature much has been written about the growing interest of sub-national actors in EU developments or the 'emergence of paradiplomacy', while less attention has been given to the question why such actors mobilize in the first place, and to the extent to which subnational actors are active in seeking to influence the EU legislation process (Tatham, 2015: 387; Fairbass and Jordan, 2004). Much research has been done on the determinants of paradiplomacy in general, while less research has been done on the determinants of the different *strategies of paradiplomacy*. The discussed "amalgam" in the literature has lead scholars to assume that paradiplomacy automatically means 'bypassing' the member state, thus leading attention away from the different 'strategies' of paradiplomacy, which have recently been described by Tatham (2016). This thesis adds to the literature by taking these determinants from the literature and 1) testing whether they also explain different forms of paradiplomacy and 2) if they are also relevant in the specific context of the Dutch provinces lobbying at the EU level. This thesis also aims to either 'deepen' the understanding of already found determinants of paradiplomacy and to add new determinants that influence paradiplomacy strategies to the literature. Additionally, much of the literature on territorial interest representation focuses on comparisons of regional mobilization between countries (i.e. European member states), while only little research can be found on the differences in EU mobilization between the regions in the Netherlands. This thesis aims to contribute to the existing literature of regionalization and Europeanization of

specifically the Netherlands, taking into account its unique context. Following this line, there is only little research on the changing relation between the sub-national entities on one hand, and the member states on the other. How do these two layers of government interact? How did their relationship adapt? How can sub-national authorities improve their relationship vis-à-vis their member state in this new role? This thesis hopes to add to the literature by providing insights into such questions, focusing on the case of the Netherlands. Finally, because much of the research on regional EU interest representation is, with some exceptions, is over a decade old (Tatham, 2008). However the European Union is constantly evolving, and so is the role of regional actors within the European Union. Therefore this thesis adds to the existing literature by providing new 'modern' insights that might contradict or add to some of the older findings.

1.3.2 Societal relevance

“What happens in Paris is home news in the Netherlands within minutes [...] The Union is for us what the central government in The Hague used to be [...]. Europe is our neighbourhood”, is what Marc Chavanness, Europe correspondent of Dutch newsmagazine *De Correspondent* (2015) stated. His words immediately indicate the societal relevance of this research: The impact of Europe on sub-national actors is big. The Committee of the Regions estimates that up to seventy percent of European legislation is implemented by sub-national authorities (Raad voor het Openbaar Bestuur, 2013). Therefore the rules that the European Union makes are of big influence on the policy of the Dutch sub-national actors and its citizens. Globalization has led to a growing number of competences with the European Union. On the other hand the decentralization of competences from the national Dutch government to the sub-national level has happened. Responsibility for employment, health care and young people is being devolved to municipal authorities. Tasks in the fields of spatial planning, nature conservation, the environment and regional economic policy have been devolved in their entirety to the provinces. As the central government transfers more and more tasks, the provincial and municipal (sub-national) authorities are bearing a greater responsibility for implementing EU legislation (de Rooij, 2002; Mastenbroek et al, 2013). Therefore 'Europe' and its decisions have an increasing influence on sub-national actors, and consequently on its citizens. As has already become apparent Lobbying EU interests is a complex dance, and the Dutch sub-national actors yet have much to learn as right now 'a lack of coherence' is preventing them to use their new EU opportunities to the fullest (IPO, 2018; AIV, 2016). This thesis aims to provide a better understanding of which strategies the Dutch region's/provinces can follow in representing their EU interests and why, in relation to the national level. The societal relevance

of this research can then be found in an advice to sub-national actors in how to improve the position of sub-national actor's vis-à-vis their member state in the future.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of a theoretical and an empirical part. In chapter 2 the reader is introduced to the context of the Netherlands, discussing its structures and competences in relation to sub-national EU representation. Chapter 3 consists of a literature review on regional integration and Europeanization. Chapter 4 discusses the theory and determinants that seem to influence the chosen interaction strategy vis-à-vis the member state in context of the Netherlands. Chapter 5 discusses and reflects upon the chosen search design in terms of data collection, case selection and data analysis. Additionally the selected determinants are operationalized. In Chapter 6 the results are presented, analyzed and discussed. Finally, chapter 7 summarizes the most important conclusions and provides an answer to the research question. The research methods are reflected upon after which some scientific and practical recommendations will be provided.

Chapter 2: The Dutch context

This chapter aims to further explain the context in which Dutch provinces represent their EU interests, both through the national 'state' level and directly at the European level. Therefore the chapter starts with a short explanation of the administrative structure of the Netherlands, after which the Dutch provinces and how they can represent their EU interest through various channels.

2.1 The Netherlands: structures and competences

The governmental structure of the Netherlands portrays an interesting paradox. On one hand the Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy, which it has been ever since the adoption of the constitution in 1815. This means the King or Queen is the head of the Dutch state and forms the government together with the ministers; a centralized state. On the other hand the Netherlands is a decentralized democratic and unitary state, composed of municipalities (gemeenten), provinces (provincies) and waterboards (waterschappen) (VNG, 2018; CEMR, 2016). This means that the national state level, the twelve Dutch provinces, 380 municipalities and 22 waterboards cooperate to 'organize' society. The Caribbean Dutch territories (Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba) are special public bodies and cooperate in a way similar to municipal bodies. Each of these levels of government has their own responsibilities and tasks, with the central government providing unity through legislation and supervision. Daily practice involves all government levels. Municipal and provincial authorities derive their autonomous tasks and power from the constitution, the Municipalities Act (Gemeentewet) and the Provinces Act (Provinciewet). The autonomous tasks and responsibilities of the water authorities are defined in the Regional Water Authorities Act (Waterschapswet) (AIV, 2016). These sub-national actors can engage in Europe through the central government (intra-state channels) and independently from the government at the EU level (extra-state channels) (Jeffery, 2000). Dutch subnational authorities are represented in the EU by various umbrella organizations, including the Association of Provincial Authorities (IPO), the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) and the Dutch Water Authorities (UvW) (AIV, 2016: 15). As this thesis focuses on the provincial sub-national actor and the representation of their interests at the EU level, we will not further discuss the municipalities and waterboards.

2.1.1 The Dutch provinces as sub-national actors

The Netherlands consists of twelve provinces, which are all different in population and size. Provincial authority rests with the Provincial Council (which is directly elected every four years) and with the legislative authority in the province. Depending on the size of the population, the size of the provincial Council can differ. The Provincial Executives, ranging from four to eight per province, are

responsible for preparing and implementing the decisions and orders of the Provincial Councils. They are also responsible for implementing national governments decisions, as far as they fall within the official responsibilities of the province (VNG, 2018). Provincial tasks are generally tasks that are considered too small for the government, but too big for the municipalities to perform. They task generally include spatial planning, (regional) traffic and (public) transport, environmental management, public housing, and preparing of regional plans. The provinces are also responsible for financially supervising municipalities and waterboards (Prodemos, 2018). The national government appoints a Kings’s Commissioner for each province who chairs the Provincial Council and Provincial Executive, which then plays an important role in the selection of the mayors of the municipalities in that province (VNG, 2018).

The Association of Provincial Authorities (IPO) is the platform for the Dutch provinces which represents the joint interests of the provinces in both national and European developments and decision-making processes, and has an office in both The Hague and Brussels. As mentioned before, this ‘Brussels’ department is called the House of the Dutch Provinces (HNP), and is based on the idea that the provinces have more ‘common than conflicting interests’ (HNP, 2018). These common interests are based on the agenda’s and issue priorities of the EU Institutions, the twelve provinces, and the IPO’s multiyear agenda. The chosen dossiers, based on these common interests, are then represented by the HNP on behalf of all twelve provinces. Of course not all issues and topics are equally important to the twelve provinces. In these cases, changing coalitions of provinces collaborate together on specific issues. The provinces are represented by four regional EU offices in the HNP (AIV, 2016: 21). The Western provinces Zuid-Holland, Noord-Holland, Utrecht and Flevoland are represented by the Randstad Region, the Northern provinces Groningen, Drenthe and Friesland by the Samenwerkingsverband Noord-Nederland (SNN), the Eastern provinces Gelderland and Overijssel by the East-Netherlands region and the Southern provinces Noord-Brabant, Limburg and Zeeland are represented by South-Netherlands. Each province is separately represented by one or a few representatives (HNP, 2018). Table 1 and figure 1 provide an overview of the twelve Dutch provinces and their respective EU ‘regions’ in the HNP.

Table 1: HNP regions and the provinces they include

Regio Randstad	Zuid-Holland, Noord-Holland, Utrecht, Flevoland
SNN	Groningen, Drenthe, Friesland
Oost-Nederland	Gelderland, Overijssel
Zuid-Nederland	Noord-Brabant, Limburg, Zeeland

Figure 1: The twelve Dutch provinces and their respective 'regions' in the HNP



2.1.2 Channels of interest representation

In the literature two broad channels or routs of mobilization can be determined (Högenauer, 2014). These channels are defined by Jeffery (2000:2) as 'intra-state channels' and 'extra-state channels'. Intra state channels correspond to routes available to regions to represent their interest through the national level (i.e. the member state), while extra-state channels correspond to routes that regions can access independently of the member state, directly at the EU level (Huwlyer et al, 2018: 756). Over time sub-national actors have intensified the usage of both intra and extra state routes (Tatham, 2008). The Dutch provinces can engage in Europe through the central government (intra-state channels) and independently from the government at the EU level (extra-state channels). The next section elaborates on the channels that are important for the Dutch provinces and their respective regions. Table 2 provides an overview on the intra- and extra-state channels that Dutch sub-national authorities can deploy.

Table 2: Intra and Extra-state routes (adapted from Huwylar, Tatham and Blatter, 2018)

Intra-state channels (through the member state)	Extra-state channels (independently and directly at the EU level)
Special consultative procedures (BNC, EOBB, IBDT'S)	Networks and associations (e.g. Vanguard initiative, CEMR and CMPR)
House of Representatives (parliament)	HNP 'Brussels office'
The states Permanent Representation	Committee of the Regions
The Commissions working groups	Direct contact with the European Parliament
The Councils working groups	Direct contact with the European Commission
The Council of Ministers meetings	Cooperation with other regional actors

Sub-national EU interest representation through the member state

EU member states can influence Commission proposals in the Council. Local and regional authorities in the Netherlands are mainly represented through their umbrella organizations, VNG and IPO. Since 2001 the VNG and the IPO have been involved in the preparation of the EU position through the *interministerial Working Group for the Assessment of New Commission Proposals* (BNC) (AIV, 2016: 15). The BNC has weekly meeting where new Commission proposals are discussed. The Working group drafts a first Dutch position for the Council, which is being sent to the Higher and Lower House of Dutch Government. For the IPO and VNG this is thus an important moment to give the national level an indication of possible financial, administrative and judicial consequences of proposals for the sub-national authorities (VNG, 2011). Moreover, the VNG, IPO and UvW take part in regular *'Europe' consultations* (EOBB's) with the Ministries of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and of Foreign Affairs. The goal is to inform each other on European activities (AIV, 2016; VNG, 2011). IPO and VNG are also involved with *intergovernmental dossier teams* (IBDT's) that coordinate different Dutch public authorities' input on EU dossiers and consists of representatives of ministries, sub-national authorities and -depending on the team- experts and other stakeholders (Mastenbroek et al, 2013; VNG, 2011). Following the adoption of the Local and Central Government Relations Code in 2013, the position of the local and regional authorities in relation to Commission proposals has now been formalized (AIV, 2016: 15). Subnational actors can also raise matters through *the House of Representatives*. Although parliament does not consult regularly with subnational authorities about EU dossiers, contacts and informal discussions do take place regularly on their initiative. Sub-national authorities are considered as stakeholders, who must all be treated equally. Although there is no formal relationship between the parliament and the sub-national authorities, they can be asked to attend hearings and technical briefings. In this way they can be involved and provide their perspectives if members of the Dutch parliament visit Brussels (AIV, 2016: 20). Additionally, every member states *Permanent Representation*

(PR) is involved in preparing work for the Council of Ministers as part of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER). The Dutch government can allow 'regional participation' in these meetings (Huwyler et al, 2018). During the preliminary stage the HNP works closely with the Dutch PR in the EU (AIV, 2016). When it comes to the European Commission, member states will for now remain the main contact point and are internally responsible for involving their regions. Whether sub-state authorities have access to the *Commission's working groups* thus depends on the member state's 'good will' (AIV 2016, Huwyler et al, 2018). This is also the case regarding access to the *Council's working group*. Since the Maastricht Treaty (1992), sub-state authorities can represent their member states in the *Council of Ministers meetings* in the fields of regional competence, but only after the state and sub-state authorities have reached a mutual position. However the *Council* focuses mainly on the other EU institutions and does not allow itself to be much influenced by representatives of the regions (AIV, 2016: 28; Huwyler et al, 2018).

Sub-national EU interest representation directly at the EU level

While sub-national authorities are represented in Brussels by the Dutch government in several ways, they can also lobby 'Europe' independently from their member state, in particular through associations and umbrella organizations and by participation in all kinds of consultations (AIV, 2016). Sub-national authorities are involved in *transnational networks and associations*, which provide the regions with opportunities to take advantage of shared interests when lobbying at the European level (Huwyler et al, 2018). Important networks are the Vanguard Initiative (regions dedicated to industrial innovation in Europe), The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the Conference of Peripheral maritime Regions (CMPR). These networks provide a 'bridge' between sub-national authorities and the European institutions (Vanguard, 2018; CEMR, 2018; CMPR, 2018; AIV, 2016). The *HNP 'Brussels office'* main role consists of representing and communicating the joint interests of the provinces to the Commission, European Parliament (EP) and support regional representatives in the Council and Committee of the Regions (CoR) (HNP, 2018; Huwyler et al, 2018). The provinces and municipalities are also directly involved through the *Committee of the Regions* (CoR). The 353 members are all representatives of local and regional authorities of one of the 28 EU member states. The Dutch delegation is entitled to 12 of the 353 seats. Six members (and six alternate members) are nominated by the VNG and the other six (and six alternates) by the IPO. The members are appointed for a term of five years by the European Council on the recommendation of the member states (Council for Public Administration, 2013). The CoR has many direct lines of communication of a formal and informal nature with the institutions in Brussels, at both a political and an administrative level (AIV, 2016: 25). Tatham

(2008) emphasizes the importance of CoR's consultation rights by the Commission; when the Commission looks for allies or inspiration for policy suggestions. Additionally, sub-national actors can lobby through the *European Parliament*, which is mainly the domain of the umbrella organizations, but individual regions also defend their interests in contacts with individual (or regional) MEPs. Regions also have direct contact with the *European Commission* in order to influence the policy-shaping process at its earliest stage (AIV, 2016; Huwyler et al, 208). This is especially done through the Directorate General in charge of specific cases, while direct with the Commissioner and her/his cabinet is more uncommon (Beyers, Donas and Fraussen, 2015). Finally, Regions can also form 'coalitions' and *cooperate with other regional actors*, ranging from business associations to local governments, to increase their influence on an issue (Huwyler et al, 2018).

The Dutch provinces thus have various channels or 'routes' both through the national level as directly and independently at the European level through which they can represent their EU interests. Now that we have discussed the Dutch context and channels for EU interest representation, the next section discusses the literature on sub-national EU interest representation.

Chapter 3: Literature review

This chapter describes the existent literature on regional involvement in the EU. The chapter begins by describing the dominant International Relations theories on regional integration, after which three different streams of literature are outlined. The last section focuses on literature on determinants of cooperative or conflicting paradiplomacy.

3.1 Theories of regional integration

Regional integration generally describes “the process of states entering into a regional agreement, in order to achieve specific, agreement-dependent goals through enhancing regional cooperation”. The EU’s regional integration is unparalleled by any other case, resulting in most theories of regional integration being specified to explaining European integration (Kleinschmidt, 2013: 4). In the literature three dominant theories can be found that influence this debate: the theory of neo-functionalism by Ernst B. Haas, (liberal) intergovernmentalism by Stanley Hoffman, and the theory of multi-level governance (MLG) by Gary Marks (Tatham, 2008; Kleinschmidt, 2013). Until the 1980’s the debate on explaining and understanding European integration was focused on the contrast between liberal intergovernmentalism and neo-functionalism. The neo-functionalist theory explains how international relations are not a zero-sum game, but mutually beneficial relations, where economic integration would automatically lead to political integration, therefore shifting ‘loyalties’ from the national to the supranational level (i.e. the European Institutions) (Jensen, 2010: 72-75). This theory is thus mainly about the relationship between the national and European level. As the literature on regional integration mainly focuses on the debate between liberal-intergovernmentalism and multi-level governance, and the focus of this research is mainly on the interaction strategy between the regional and the national level, we will not further elaborate on this theory. The next section will very briefly elaborate on the theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and multi-level governance.

Liberal Intergovernmentalism & Multi-level Governance

The intergovernmentalism theories share a state centric concept of the EU, which is based on the realist assumption that the central state is the dominant actor in international relations: central government according to this theory is ‘gatekeeper’ in EU relations (Peters and Pierre, 2001; Marks, Hooghe and Blanks, 1996). The member states thus have a strong and autonomous position by which they determine the nature and pace of integration (Hoffman, 1996; Kleinschmidt, 2013). Sub-national

governments are recognized but have limited control and are certainly not able to bypass their national government at the EU level: the member state as the dominant actor has a final say on national input towards the European level, and thus has 'gate-keeping' power in International Relations (Tatham, 2008; 2010).

Multi-Level Governance was first proposed by Marks (1993) as a useful concept to create a better understanding of the decision-making dynamics within the European Union, as a reaction to the dominant theories of neo-functionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism, which in the 1980's did not longer fully grasp the complexity of EU decision making structures. MLG, opposing to liberal intergovernmentalism, assumes that central government has to share decision-making power with a multiplicity of actors, under which sub-national actors. Policy is drawn up in cooperation between all three layers of government (regional, national and European), in which actors are interdependent. This thus challenges the 'gate-keeping' capacity of the central government. In this perspective national governments remain important, but are not the only significant actors to influence multilateral policy outcomes (Tatham, 2016; Hooghe 1996; Marks et al, 1996).

3.2 Literature on regional integration

Much has been written on regional integration, 'Europeanization' of regions and generally on the interaction between regionalization and European integration (Tatham, 2018). The two dominant theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and MLG have divided the literature in two major streams when it comes to the question of *how much influence regions could (and should) actually have on the European level, and whether representing their interest directly at the EU level would erode the 'gate-keeping power' of the member states*. Jeffrey (2000: 5) has defined this 'gatekeeping power' as "the capacity of the central state level to maintain a monopoly over the national position in the EU policy shaping processes". The following section will discuss these streams in literature.

A first stream of literature follows the theory on MLG, which describes how sub-national entities have little by little gained more influence in the political, economic, social and cultural arenas, which eroded the power of the state. Marks (1993: 401-402) characterized the result of MLG as "centrifugal process in which decision-making is spun away from member states in two directions": on one hand to the supranational level as national actors give away more competences to the EU-level (EU integration), and on the other hand to the sub-national level (Europeanization of the regions) through

regionalization (Hooghe, 1996). Consequently the member state loses power to both the European level and to the regional and local level, and is no longer the gate-keeper of EU-relations (Borrás-Alomar, Christiansen and Rodríguez-Pose, 1994: 27,28). Keating and Hooghe describe how this opened up a 'second front' for sub-national actors to challenge the member state at the European level (2006: 272). Tatham (2008) discusses how authors in this stream discuss concepts of a Europe *of* the regions (Loughlin, 1996; Mazey, 1995), *with* the regions and *with certain* regions (Hooghe 1995, 1996; Hooghe and Marks, 1996) or *through* the regions' (Kukawa, 2001). Tatham (2008) summarizes how events from that time influenced this 'regional enthusiasm': "the 1988 reform of the Structural Funds Programme, the creation of the Committee of the Regions, the introduction of the subsidiarity principle in the Maastricht Treaty, the revision of art. 146 of this same Treaty into art. 203 (allowing regional ministers to participate in Council of Ministers meetings), the concomitant waves of decentralization processes in many member states, and, more generally, talk about 'Europeanization' and multi-level governance" (Tatham, 2008: 494; Borrás-Alomar, Christiansen and Rodríguez-Pose, 1994: 27).

A second stream of literature argues against the loss of the power of the state, and therefore follows the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism. They emphasize how the regions/ sub-national actors don't form a 'third level' in the European Union, as they are too heterogeneous and don't have a common view on their mode of interaction. For example Bach (1999) argues how the central government remains the dominant actor in terms of political, financial and constitutional-legal resources, in all stages of the policy process including policy implementation, and thus acts as an "extended gatekeeper". Keating (2008b) states regions have in common "only that they are not states". He argues how a 'Europe *of* the Regions' does not reflect reality in relation to the actual developments, and agrees more with the notion of 'Europe *with* the Regions', as there have been developments of integration and regionalization. (Keating, 2008b: 633; Borrás-Alomar et al, 1993: 51). This second stream is thus less optimistic about the role that regions can play on the European level, calling it a 'misperception' and emphasize that instead of bypassing the state regions could best achieve their European interest directly through the member state (Tatham, 2008).

A third stream of literature takes a more neutral stance, by providing a 'middle ground' between the two above described streams. It argues how there is increasingly and observably more involvement of sub-national actors at the European level (Tatham, 2016: 5). The stream focuses on fixing an often occurring "amalgam" in the literature: it is often assumed that if actors attempt to

influence EU policy directly at the EU level (also called paradiplomacy), this would automatically equal 'bypassing' the national government, thus threatening its gate-keeping power (Tatham, 2010: 77). However, even though regions could now access new partners and new ways of funding, this does not necessarily imply that the 'gate-keeping' power of the nation-state diminishes. The fact that subnational actors are active in the European arena, does not necessarily mean that they are attempting to bypass the state, as subnational actors could also perform paradiplomacy in tandem and thus let jointly with the state (Tatham, 2010, 2016; Jeffrey, 2007; Blatter, Kreutzer, Renti and Thiele, 2008). More recent literature seems to increasingly accept this 'middle ground' stream as "there is no evidence that mobilization of regions implies the bypassing of the central state" (Beyers, Donas and Fraussen, 2015: 604; Tatham, 2008, 2010, 2016; Huwyler et al, 2017).

The different waves of research seem contradictory and emphasize that scholars are divided when it comes to the question of how much influence regions could (and should) actually have on the European level, and whether representing their interest directly at the EU level would erode the 'gate-keeping power' of the member states, and that different authors have reached different conclusions regarding this question. Apart from this debate, a large amount of literature on sub-national involvement in the European Union focuses on determinants of active, successful or influential EU interest representation by regional actors. Especially the last proves to be a problem, as "interest representation and influence are not synonymous: whilst the former is a necessary condition for the latter, it is by no means sufficient" (Tatham, 2008: 494). Being active in representing EU interests does not necessarily guarantee desired results for sub-national actors. The next section will elaborate on factors that are to have an influence on 'active, successful or influential interest representation'.

3.3 Determinants of cooperative and conflicting paradiplomacy

There is an overlap between the literature of MLG, regionalization and Europeanization which focuses on ways to create active participation of regional interest in the EU policy process, which formed an extensive addition to the MLG-framework (Keating, 2008a). As has become clear from the three above mentioned streams, much has been written about the growing interest of sub-national actors in EU developments. Less attention has been given to the question why such actors mobilize in the first place, and to the extent to which territorial actors are active in seeking to influence the EU legislation process (Fairbrass and Jordan, 2004).

When representing their EU interests, sub-national actors can do so through various intra-state (through the national level) and extra-state channels (independently at the European level) (Jeffrey, 2000). It is clear that both routes are increasingly being used by sub-national actors (Tatham, 2014), but the literature is divided when it comes to the question of which channel is used more. While Jeffrey (2000) and Hogenauwer (2014) argue for the importance of intra-state channels, Hooghe and Marks (1996), Beyers et al (2015) and (Huwyler et al, 2018) find that extra-state channels are used more frequently. Sub-national actors can thus represent their interest through intra- and extra state channels, and can do so in harmony or disharmony with the member state (Soldatos, 1990). Cooperative paradiplomacy is then understood as sub-state interest representation in tandem with the member state, while bypassing or conflicting paradiplomacy is understood as sub-state interest representation against the member state (Tatham, 2010, 2014). Tatham (2016) later adds non-interaction paradiplomacy in which the sub-national and national level are simply 'indifferent' towards each other's activity. This happens when a topic is regarded as irrelevant and negligible by one of two levels (Tatham, 2016: 17). Callanan and Tatham (2014) point out the need to understand the motives of sub-national actors to choose either intra- or extra state channels, and why actors choose to pursue a conflicting or cooperative interaction strategy versus the state. Indeed when we look at the literature, various authors have tried to determine factors that explain paradiplomacy in general. Tatham has recently linked most of these factors to explaining conflicting, non-interactive or cooperative paradiplomacy (2016). The results are sometimes contradicting, in which the biggest difference can be found between older (more or less until 2000) and more recent (after 2000) research. This literature review discusses the most prominent and widespread determinants of paradiplomacy in European affairs, with a specific focus on the relationship between sub-national authorities and the national level.

Resource richness: According to Blatter et al (2008) the resource richness of a regions would increase the chance of bypassing behavior as influencing the EU level becomes easier, but according to Callanan and Tatham (2014) this is not necessarily the case. More recently, Beyers et al (2015) conclude how other factors than resources are more interesting in explaining which 'venues' sub-national actors lobby. Tatham (2016) concludes how "although resource based explanations of cooperative and non-interactive interest representation were unconvincing", but do seem to play a role in predicting the frequency of conflicting interest representation" (Tatham 2016: 78).

Absolute and relative size: Nielsen and Salk (1998) state that relatively large regions compared to their member state are more likely to pursue their goals through the national level, as they can influence

their national level because of their relative size. This also works the other way around: relatively small regions might have to take it to Europe, as they are relatively powerless within their national system. De Rooij (2002) finds that *relative size of the region* can be an asset and has a positive influence on how active the region is in representing EU interests. Based on a literature review Fleurke and Willems (2006) claim that larger regions, in comparison to smaller ones, have increased their direct communications with the Commission, therefore bypassing central government. More recently, Beyers et al (2015) conclude how other factors than resources are more interesting in explaining which 'venues' sub-national actors lobby. Tatham (2010, 2016) concludes that both absolute and relative size are insignificant when it comes to explaining cooperative and non-interaction paradiplomacy. Relatively big regions are however less inclined towards conflict paradiplomacy than relatively small regions compared to their member state.

Strong/ Weak regions: Bache, George and Rhodes (1996) argue that *weaker regions* will use intra-state channels more often and are not likely to bypass national government, as they lack the financial resources, while (Figuee et al, 2016) argues the opposite; how (economically) 'weaker' regions especially take it to the European level because they are not being taken seriously at the national level. Tatham (2010) imposingly finds that this is not an important explanatory factor. In line with the 'strong regions/ weak regions' argument Nagel and Olzak (1982) argue that there is a *tension between rural/urban regions*, as rural areas are easier to overlook by the national level, which would increase 'bypassing' behavior. In this case the 'urban' regions are considered to be important or 'strong' in comparison to the 'rural' regions. Nagel and Olzak (1982) additionally that suggests that higher *population density levels* in regions makes the mobilization and interaction of stakeholders stronger, thus making it easier to pressure the national level into including their regional interests. Tatham (2015) concludes how more 'populous' regions wield more regional influence in the EU. Tatham (2016) includes 'population density' as a variable to measure the whether 'the urban/rural divide' influences paradiplomacy and concludes this is not a significant factor.

Devolution of powers: the degree of decentralization of the political system in a member state, is argued to increase EU interest representation by sub-national actors (Marks et al, 1996; Hooghe and Marks, 1996; Hooghe and Keating, 1994); the more power has been devolved from the member state to the sub-national authorities, the more they would seek to be active at the European level, therefore seek to bypass the member state (Hocking 1997; Goldsmith 1993). Pollack (1995) argues that how well member states can maintain their gate-keeping power depends on pre-existing power distributions

between the sub-state and national level in member states. Also Bache et al (1996) argue how domestically institutionally weak regions will have problems to bypass central government, while domestically institutionally strong regions have become important actors in the European arena. In this 'old' literature it is clear that sub-national actors being active at the European level is still seen as 'bypassing' the member state. More recently, Tatham (2016) concludes how devolution of powers does not have a significant influence on conflict paradiplomacy (i.e. bypassing), but does lead to more cooperative paradiplomacy. He explains this "RegLeg" effect by saying that more devolved regions with legislative power have different relation with their member state characterized by "strong coordination structures [...] and inclusiveness by the centre" and consequently have a "predominance" for cooperative behavior at the European level (Tatham: 106).

Partisan Congruence: Marks (1996) and Keating (1999) describe how the relationship between sub-national authorities and the national level are 'highly partisan' and can become easily entangled in party-political conflicts. Bauer (2006), Jeffery (2007) and Callanan and Tatham (2014) argue that political incongruence (i.e. the opposition being in government at the sub-state level) between state and sub-state levels increases bypassing behavior, but decreases cooperative paradiplomacy. Tatham (2016) recently argues that partisan incongruence does not significantly influence conflict paradiplomacy, but does decrease cooperative paradiplomacy. Both older and more recent literature thus agrees on the significance of the determinant partisan congruence in explaining paradiplomacy.

Length of 'exposure' to the integration process: Marks et al (1996) and Blatter et al (2008) argue the lengths of 'exposure' to the integration process of a member state (i.e. being a EU-member state), has a positive influence on cooperative paradiplomacy, as the European "informal rules, codes of practice and collective understandings of appropriateness would" nudge actors to cooperative, because conflicting paradiplomacy could result in loss of reputation and social disapproval (Tatham, 2016: 56). Tatham (2010, 2014, 2016) concludes that this EU exposure factor is not a significant in determining the frequency of cooperating or conflicting paradiplomacy.

Interest compatibility: Callanan and Tatham (2014) argue how interest compatibility or incompatibility is likely to affect the state-sub-state relationship. If interests are compatible, this would lead to more cooperative paradiplomacy. They additionally find that compatible interests are expressed through intra- and extra- state channels, while incompatible interests are expressed more likely expressed through extra-state channels (2014: 205-206). Tatham concludes that if both sub-national actors and member state give 'high priority of preference' to an issue, this increases cooperative and decreases non-

interaction paradiplomacy, while not influencing the frequency of conflicting paradiplomacy much. However if the member state gives 'high' priority to an issue (independent of priority given by sub-national actor) this significantly increases cooperative paradiplomacy, while also decreasing the frequency of non-interactive and conflicting paradiplomacy (Tatham 2106: 92).

The authors thus don't all seem to agree on what factors have an influence on cooperative or conflicting paradiplomacy. Some of the more recent literature (especially Tatham's articles) has contradicted some older findings from before 2000. However, almost all literature aims at explaining the differences between activeness between regions of member states, and only little research has been done comparing between regions within a member state. Donar and Beyers (2013) and Greenwood (2011) emphasize that understanding the domestic context is crucial for understanding specific mobilization strategies. It is therefore important to understand the Dutch domestic relationship between the sub-national actors and their member state (Tatham, 2014: 195). Therefore the next section looks at literature that focuses specifically on the Netherlands.

3.4 Literature focusing on The Netherlands

Not much literature can be found on the EU mobilization and its determinants that focus specifically on the Netherlands, as most research focuses on cross-country comparisons. However some authors can be found that focus only on the Dutch sub-national actors. De Rooij (2002) researched why some municipalities are constrained in using EU opportunities while others are not and found that the size of the municipality matters (the bigger the better) and to lesser extent the socio-economic position of the municipality. Mastenbroek et al (2013) find that provinces mainly focus on preventing regulatory "constraint" and problems that could arise while implementing EU legislation, and less on realizing their own policy agenda at the EU level. The research of Figuee et al (2016) on 'regional public affairs activities in The Netherlands' shows that it is hard for sub-national actors to find recognition for regional issues on the national level. More specifically they find how the Dutch urban regions interests (also known as the Randstad Regions) are being favored over the 'other' regions regional interests. These dominant "high-profiled regions" prevent the 'other' regions from gaining ground at the national level, and therefore have to take it to the European level, where they are 'more welcome'. Also at the European level however, the state-interest of the national level has to be 'overcome' (figee et al, 2016:24).

To summarize, when it comes to explaining regional integration the dominant theories of intergovernmentalism and multi-level governance have competing views on the power of regional actors and their influence on the gate-keeping power of member states, and so do the three waves of literature when it comes to the question of how much influence regions could (and should) actually have on the European level, and whether representing their interest directly at the EU level would erode the 'gate-keeping power' of the member states. Additionally there seems to be a clear divide when it comes to 'older' (before 2000) and more recent literature when it comes to the whether a determinant is found significant to influence paradiplomacy. Tatham (2016) is the only author to extensively research the influence of most determinants on the *different types of* paradiplomacy. Finally, most of the literature focuses on cross-country comparisons *between* regions within different member states, which is why many factors can't explain differences between regions *within* the same member state, and generally the lack of literature focusing on sub-national EU mobilization specifically in the Netherlands. Therefore the literature indicates the need to further investigate determinants of the different interaction strategies (thus competing of cooperating with the Dutch national level) when representing their EU interests, *between* Dutch regions.

Chapter 4: Theoretical framework and hypotheses

The next section first discusses the dependent variable. This section first elaborates on the debate between MLG and liberal intergovernmentalism in the context of older and newer literature on paradiplomacy. Then dependent variable 'deployed interaction strategy' the (cooperating, conflicting or non-interactive strategy) is discussed. Second, the independent variables are discussed. The sections starts by explaining which determinants will in in- and excluded. After which the chosen determinants 'the perceived openness national level to regional interests', 'the rural urban divide' and 'partisan congruence' are discussed. For each independent variable, hypotheses are developed regarding their expected influence on paradiplomacy strategy.

4.1 Dependent variable: deployed strategy of interest representation

4.1.1 Fixing the 'Amalgam'

Much has been written on the assumed interaction between sub-national actors and their member states. The early literature on sub-national mobilization on the EU level, stemming from the 'MLG versus liberal intergovernmentalism' debate, portrayed involvement as an 'either... or' question; either cooperating through the members state or bypassing at the European level. An increase in the power of sub-state actors would equate the decrease in power of member states, thus harming its gate-keeping power (Tatham, 2016: 2). It was then automatically assumed that if sub-national actors would represent their EU interests independently from the member state directly at the EU level, thus through extra-state channels, this was considered 'bypassing' the state (Tatham, 2008). Thus sub-national actors could either cooperate, as in not surpass the national level, and if they did take it to the European arena, it was automatically considered 'bypassing' the member state.

More recent literature however argued how being active at the European level and through extra-state channels does not automatically mean bypassing the state, as paradiplomacy can also be conducted in tandem with the national level (Tatham, 2010; Callanan and Tatham, 2014). What is considered 'bypassing' changed over the years. Now bypassing is understood as representing EU interests independently from the state and towards the attainment of non-compatible objectives on the same EU topic (Callanan and Tatham, 2014: 194). More recent research by Tatham (2010, 2014, 2016) has however showed that viewing paradiplomacy as either bypassing or cooperating with the national level, is too simplistic. He argues how these two options are "far from being mutually exclusive" (2010: 77). Tatham argues how the interaction patterns between the sub-national, national and European level

is “non-deterministic and hence varying” (2016: 6). Therefore instead of just cooperating or bypassing, sub-national actors can follow multiple interaction strategies vis-à-vis their member state, ranging from more conflicting or confrontational strategies to more harmonious strategies, in order to reach their EU-objectives (Tatham, 2016).

4.1.2 Cooperating, bypassing or conflicting interaction strategies

In their research Callanan and Tatham (2014) distinguish between three types of strategies of paradiplomacy: conflictual, non-interactive and cooperative paradiplomacy. Conflictual paradiplomacy is understood as the sub-state interest representation against the position taken by the member state. This can be considered ‘bypassing’ in the most extreme sense. Non- interaction is understood as sub-national actors representing their interests without the state, thus independently from the state (but not necessarily against the position of the state). Lastly cooperative paradiplomacy is understood as the sub-state interest representation in tandem with the member state (Tatham, 2016). An overview of the three types of interaction between the sub-state and national level is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Paradiplomacy strategies sub-national actors’ vis-à-vis member state, Tatham (2016)

Adopted paradiplomacy strategy sub-national actor vis-à-vis the member state			
	Conflict	cooperation	Non-interaction
Member state	Lobbying for outcome A	Lobbying for outcome A	Lobbying for outcome A
Sub national actor	Lobbying for outcome B	Lobbying for outcome B	Lobbying for outcome A or non-A

A sub-national actor can thus determine an interaction style or ‘strategy’ based on whether the policy objectives between the sub-national actors are similar or dissimilar. When the objectives are similar, and the sub-national actor works in tandem with the state level, this indicates a ‘*cooperative*’ interaction *strategy*. As was explained in the context chapter, the Dutch provinces are represented at the national level through the IPO for their common interests and through the HNP for their common European interests. Provinces can influence the official Dutch position on new Commission proposals through the BNC fiche. If the state and the sub-national authorities agree on EU priorities and position they want to take, this can be considered “working in tandem” with the state. When the objectives are dissimilar, but the sub-national actor still works with its member state, this still indicates *cooperative* interaction *strategy*. This is the case when sub-national authorities don’t agree with the EU position the national level wants to take, but decides not to lobby against the taken position. A reason could be that

the sub-national authorities don't think 'it's worth it', as they don't want to damage their relationship with the national level. Thus sub-national actors might sometimes give in to national governments view for various reasons. *Non-interaction strategy* is understood as sub-national actors representing their interests without the state, thus independently from the state (which could be similar or dissimilar). In theory such a pattern is most likely to occur when the member state is indifferent towards the sub-national actors interest. Tatham (2016) explains how "Indifference by the member state towards the activities of one of its SSEs can usually be considered as the member state's lack of concern for the SSE's counter-lobbying because the SSE is regarded as irrelevant and negligible, because the member state has no or little interest in the policy issue, or because there is little at stake at European level and, therefore, little to win or to lose" (Tatham, 2016: 17). Last, when the objectives are dissimilar and the sub-national actor works without the member state, this indicates the *conflict strategy*. Here the sub-national actors and the member state thus have different positions on the same topic and both keep to those positions in representing them at the EU level (Tatham, 2016: 17).

Tatham has recently (2016) researched this relation between what he called 'sub-state entities (SSE's)' and the state level, using this distinction between cooperative, conflicting or non-interaction strategy vis-à-vis the member state. He argued that "If the pattern is one of conflict, one can conclude that the authority of central government has been seriously challenged, both domestically and externally. [...] However, if the pattern is one of cooperation, theories arguing that SSEs dangerously challenge the international autonomy of the state would fail to be substantiated. [...] Finally, the assumption that the interest representation activities of both levels interact in a particular way might be spurious: it is possible that both levels act separately and independently (i.e. non-interaction)" (Tatham, 2016: 6). His research concludes how the pattern of interaction between SSE's and states is rarely that of conflict, and tends to either be cooperative or non-interactive (Tatham, 2016: 14). His research is very extensive and includes both a large N quantitative study, and a qualitative design. However the Netherlands is not included in the qualitative design. Therefore this thesis aims at testing whether the same results are true for Dutch sub-national actors interaction strategy vis-à-vis their national government.

4.2 Independent variables: determinants or paradiplomacy strategy

4.2.1 Selection of independent variables

As discussed in the literature review, several determinants of paradiplomacy have been researched. However their influence on specifically conflictual, non-interactive and cooperative paradiplomacy has been neglected as a consequence of their “amalgation” (Tatham, 2016: 49). Tatham (2016), building on his previous research (Tatham, 2008, 2010; Callanan and Tatham, 2014; Tatham, 2015) is the first author to test whether all these most prominent determinants are also specifically influential on the different strategies of paradiplomacy. Tatham’s ‘mixed methods’ study consisted of a large-N quantitative research on 104 regions (of which seven were Dutch), and a qualitative research on the United Kingdom, Scotland, France and Austria. Therefore his research is only partly generalizable to the Netherlands, as the Dutch context was not specifically taken into account. This thesis aims to build on Tatham research by researching whether some of his determinants are indeed also influential in the specific case of the Netherlands. Other determinants were excluded because they have already repeatedly been proven insignificant by recent literature. In the literature the following determinants have been found relevant: resource richness, absolute or relative size, strong/weak regions (urban/rural divide and population density taken into account), devolution of powers, partisan congruence, the length of exposure to the integration process and interest compatibility. The next sections discuss which determinants have been excluded and which will be included in this research, based on the literature review.

The determinants ‘*resource richness*’ will not be included as it does not seem a very important determinant based on the literature. Also the determinant ‘*absolute or relative*’ size has not been deemed important in explaining various forms of paradiplomacy. Additionally, difference in size between the Dutch provinces (also when considered in their HNP regions) are negligible, as they are all more or less the same in size. Therefore this determinant will not be considered in this research. The determinant ‘*length of exposure to the integration process*’ will not be included in this research as recent literature has repeatedly concluded that this is not a significant factor. The determinant ‘*level of devolution*’ therefore is significant in explaining differences in paradiplomacy between member states, but in case of this research can’t explain differences between Dutch provinces as they all experience the same devolution and legislative powers. Therefore this determinant will not be considered in this research. The determinant ‘*interest compatibility*’ has (unsurprisingly) proven to be significant in explaining paradiplomacy strategies. If the state and sub-state level have the same issue priority (i.e.

their interests on an EU topic are compatible) this has a positive effect on the frequency of cooperative paradiplomacy. This determinant will not be included in the research as it seems too much of ‘an open door’. Instead this research looks at it in a slightly different way: the ‘openness of the national level to regional interests’ and the way this is perceived by the sub-national authorities is thought to influence paradiplomacy. This will be further elaborated upon in the following sections. *Partisan Congruence* has proven to be significant in explaining paradiplomacy strategies in various studies. However this determinant has never been researched for specifically the Netherlands as it seems less relevant for a country with a multiparty system, which forms the specific reason to include it. It will be explained why in the following sections. The determinant ‘strong / weak’ regions will not be included, as research on this determinant considers strong ‘regions’ as regions with legislative power, and weak regions as lacking legislative power. The Dutch provinces all have the same amount of legislative powers and according to Tatham “awkwardly fall in between the two ideal point at each spectrum”, therefore no hard distinction can be made. This thesis will however further research the ‘urban/rural divide’, which will be further elaborated upon in the next sections.

4.2.2 Openness national level to regional interests

Beyers and Kerremans (2012) argue that access points at the European level are only targeted after the ‘easier’ access points ‘closer to home’ have been targeted. This implies that sub-national actors would rather mobilize through the national level, through networking with national officials, than through the European level. If however the national level does not agree with the EU position taken by sub-national level, sub-national actors will then ‘bypass’ by taking it to Brussels (Eising, 2004; Greenwood, 2011). Also Callanan and Tatham conclude that conflict paradiplomacy or bypassing is rarely the preferred option but rather a ‘fall back’ option when home channels are considered blocked or inefficient. Most subnational actors prefer cooperative paradiplomacy, since EU interest representation is expected to be more efficient when it is supported by the member state (2014: 202). In line with this observation Tatham (2016) argues how “the openness of the center to stakeholder interests” can potentially influence the adopted interaction pattern (Tatham, 2016: 26). Tatham concludes that if both sub-national actors and member state give ‘high priority’ to an issue, this increases cooperative and decreases non-interaction paradiplomacy, while not influencing the frequency of conflicting paradiplomacy much (Tatham 2106: 92). The openness of the national level to regional interests is thus thought to influence the adopted strategy (cooperative, conflicting, non-interactive) vis-à-vis the member state. How receptive the member state is towards regional interests thus seems to influence whether sub-national actors feel like they have to bypass their member state at

the European level. If sub-national actors feel taken seriously by the national level, they are more likely to adopt a cooperative interaction strategy vis-à-vis their member state. Contrarily, if the sub-national actors feel like their interests are not being taken seriously (i.e. feeling neglected) they are more likely to adopt a conflicting interaction strategy. Similarly, if sub-national actors feel like the national level is not open to their interests, this might also lead to an increase of non-interaction paradiplomacy.

The perceived level of openness of the national level to regional interests is thus thought to influence whether sub-national actors have a more cooperative, conflicting or non-interactive strategy of EU interest representation. This leads to the following expectations:

H1: The higher the perceived level of openness of the national level to regional interests, the more likely sub-national actors will adopt a cooperative strategy vis-à-vis the member state.

H2: The lower the perceived level of openness of the national level to regional interests, the more likely sub-national actors will adopt a conflicting or non-cooperative strategy.

4.2.3 The urban/rural divide

In line with the previous determinant 'perceived level of openness of the national level to regional interests', Nagel and Olzak (1982) argue that there is a tension between rural/urban regions, as rural areas are easier to overlook by the national level, which would increase 'bypassing' behavior. They additionally suggest that higher population density levels in regions makes the mobilization and interaction of stakeholders stronger, thus making it easier to pressure the national level into including their regional interests. Tatham (2016) includes 'population density' as a variable to measure the whether 'the urban/rural divide' influences paradiplomacy and concludes this is not a significant factor. However Figuee et al (2016) basically conclude the opposite and describe how 'dominant high-profiled regions' in the Netherlands can relatively easy mobilize their interest through the national level as they are prioritized, in comparison to the 'other' regions. It is described how the 'dominance of the Randstad' suppresses the interests of the other regions in the north, the east and the south of the country. These "These regions have to use all possible Public Affairs instruments to create countervailing power towards Randstad dominance" (Figuee et al, 2017: 32). Figuee et al (2016) also describe how these 'other regions' have to take it to the European level, where they are more welcome. However, also at the European level the 'other' regions have to overcome the 'dominant national interests of the member state'. Their research indicates that the Netherlands has a strong center-periphery distinction, in which the 'Urban' Randstad Region is prioritized over the other more rural regions. Although Tatham (2016)

concludes that this rural/urban divide is not significantly influential on conflict, non-interactive and cooperative paradiplomacy, there are strong indications in Figue's (2017) research that this is the case for the Dutch regions in the Netherlands.

Whether regions/ provinces are considered urban/rural is thus thought to influence the deployed strategy (cooperative, non-interaction, conflicting paradiplomacy). The following expectations can be drawn:

H3: The more urbanized regions are, the more likely their sub-national actors are to adopt a cooperative strategy vis-à-vis the member state

H4: The more rural regions are, the more likely their sub-national actors are to adopt a conflicting or non-interaction strategy

4.2.3 Partisan congruence

Marks argues how "relations between subnational and central government can easily become entangled in party-political conflicts" (1996: 411). Also Keating (1999) argues that the relationship between central and sub-national authorities is 'highly partisan' and that governments are wary of anything that could give the opposition parties a platform. Bauer (2006) argues how differences between the political leadership in the regional and national level could influence whether a region tends to cooperate or bypass the national level. More recently Callanan and Tatham (2014) conclude how political incongruence (i.e. the opposition being in government at the sub-state level) between state and sub-state levels increases adopting a bypassing strategy, while decreasing cooperative strategy. Also Bauer (2006) argues how differences between the political leadership in the regional and national level could influence whether a region tends to cooperate or bypass the national level. However the Netherlands was not included in either of these studies. Huwyler et al (2018) conclude that the greater the partisan congruence between the national and regional level of government, the greater the use of the 'gate-kept channels' by the regions, indicating performing paradiplomacy in tandem with the member state (Huwyler et al, 2018; Keating et al, 2015). Tatham (2016) concludes how the lack of partisan congruence decreases cooperative paradiplomacy, while increasing non-interactive paradiplomacy compared to sub-state authorities where this is not the case. Being governed by "main state-wide opposition party" does however not significantly increase conflicting paradiplomacy (Tatham,

2016: 73). Seven Dutch regions (of a total of 104 participating regions) were included in this research². There thus seem to be a significant relationship between partisan congruence and the selected paradiplomacy strategy adopted by the sub-national actor vis-à-vis the member state. However 'partisan congruence' as a determinant has been purposely left out in research focusing on the Netherlands so far. Van Hout (2015) argues how in the Netherlands "both the central state government and the subnational governments are always based on a coalition. Therefore no clear contrast [...] in respect to party politics can be made in the first place" (2015: 13). The Netherlands has an electoral system of proportional representation, which means that many political parties are represented in the Second Chamber of government. No political party in the Netherlands has ever gained an absolute majority in the Second Chamber (there are 150 seats, thus a party would need 76 seats). Therefore after each election two or more parties will have to form a coalition (Andeweg & Irwin, 2014). It is therefore often said, that in case of the Netherlands, it is more important for a political party to win the bargaining process than the elections (IPP, 2008). It is therefore true that the connection between partisan congruence and paradiplomacy seems more significant for member states having a simple two-party system, as there would be a clearer contrast of positions towards subjects. However it has never been researched. Consequently instead of being sure that in case of the Netherlands this would not be a significant factor, the determinant is until now excluded based on a 'hunch' instead of facts. Additionally Tatham (2016) states how his results on partisan congruence also apply to "coalition governments where decisions are taken on a case-by-case basis to assess the degree of congruence or incongruence", but then unfortunately does not further explain or justify this notion (2016: 111). Finally, we could argue that especially in broad coalition government systems (with possibly a high level of party political similarity between the sub-national level and the national level) like the one in the Netherlands it would be easier to adopt a cooperative strategy as with many included political parties, it would be easier to find common ground on EU issues. The other way around a low partisan congruence between the sub-national and national level could lead to a more conflicting or non-interactive strategy.

Therefore this research does include the determinant 'partisan congruence'. Based on the abovementioned arguments we can thus create the following expectation:

² Regions included are Oost-Nederland, Arnhem/Nijmegen, Flevoland, Utrecht, Agglomeratie 's-Gravenhage, Groot-Rijnmond, Zuid-Limburg (Tatham, 2016: 59). His definition of region is thus much broader than the one used in this research, which only includes provinces and their HNP regions.

H5: The greater the partisan congruence between the Dutch sub-national actors and the national level, the more a cooperative strategy is used in representing EU interests.

H6: The lower the partisan congruence between the region/province and the national level, the more a non-interactive or conflicting strategy is adopted.

4.3 Conceptual framework

Based on the theoretical framework and the formulated hypotheses, figure 2 illustrates the general conceptual framework with the determinants that are thought to influence the deployed strategy of paradiplomacy. Table 4 provides an overview of the expected influence of the independent variables on the *specific* type of paradiplomacy.

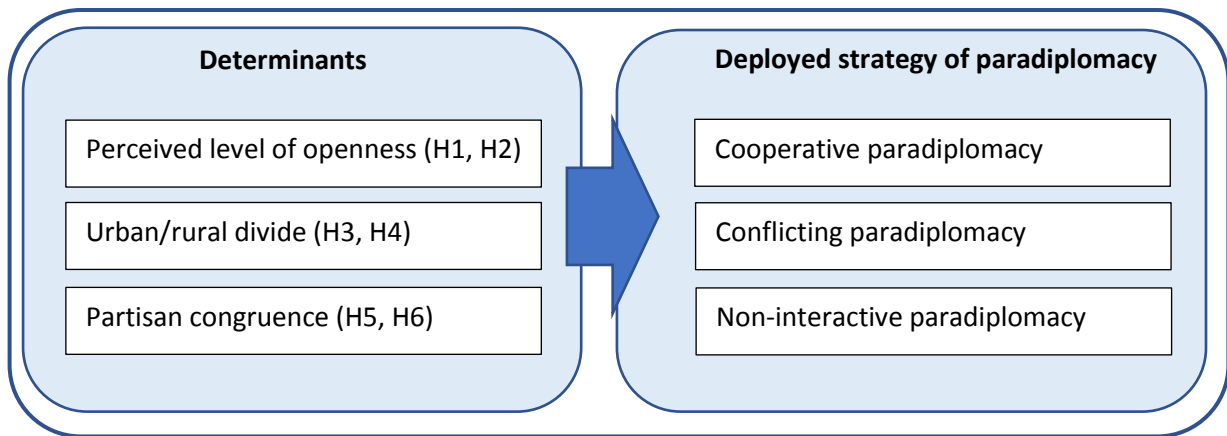


Figure 2: The conceptual framework

Table 4: Expected influence independent variables on dependent variable(s)

Independent variables ↓	Dependent variable →	Conflicting paradiplomacy	Cooperative paradiplomacy	Non-interactive paradiplomacy
Openness national level to regional interests		-	+	-
The Urban/Rural divide		+	-	+
Partisan Congruence		-	+	-

These are certainly not the *only* determinants of the deployed strategy of paradiplomacy, but these are the only determinants that will be considered in this research, based on the justification as described in subchapter 4.2.1. The next chapter discusses the chosen methodology and operationalization of the determinants.

Chapter 5: Methodology and operationalization

This chapter discusses the chosen research design, research methods (data selection, case selection and data analysis) and the operationalization of the chosen conditions based on the theoretical framework. Lastly the used methods will be reflected upon by discussing its reliability and validity.

5.1 Research design

According to Ragin (1994: 26) a research design is “a plan for collecting and analyzing evidence that will make it possible for the investigator to answer whatever questions he or she has posed”. In order to answer the RQ both qualitative (Small-N) and quantitative (Large-N) methods could be used. In *qualitative research*, the two most common methods are co-variational analysis and congruence analysis. The co-variational analysis approach “presents empirical evidence of the existence of co-variation between an independent variable X and a dependent variable Y to infer causality” (Blatter and Haverland, 2012: 33), while the congruence approach uses case studies “to provide empirical evidence for the explanatory relevance or relative strength of one theoretical approach in comparison to other theoretical approaches” (Blatter and Haverland, 2014: 144). In *quantitative research*, the two most common methods are cross-sectional observation design or time-series design. The cross-sectional observation design focuses on variation across individual (spatial) units, while the time-series design focuses on variation within a single unit at different moments of time (Kellstedt and Whitten, 2013: 84).

In order to answer the main question posed in this thesis insights are collected through qualitative research methods (Small-N research). In comparison to quantitative methods, qualitative research is better fit to address research questions that aim for an in-depth understanding of a specific phenomenon, which can't be incorporated by numbers and statistics alone (Collis and Hussey, 2003; McNabb, 2008). In this thesis, qualitative methods are useful because it takes the complex nature of interest representation into account, including the specific context of the selected cases. Additionally, according to Blatter and Haverland (2012) small-N research is more able to achieve concept validity than large-N research, because it focuses on only a few cases, which allows variables to be conceptualized in ‘complex and multidimensional ways’. Therefore in this thesis qualitative small-N research in the form of a case study will be conducted (Williams, 2007). A case study is the in-depth examination of a single instance of some phenomenon and produces context dependent knowledge, and has the distinctive ability to deal with multifarious evidence (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001; Flyvbjerg, 2006).

As mentioned above, there are several approaches to doing a multiple case study, of which the congruence and co-variational analysis are most common. Based on the literature review and the theoretical framework, a co-variational analysis fits best. Even though a congruence analysis is also a possibility, because of the competing theories of Multi-Level-Governance and liberal intergovernmentalism, but this has already been done multiple times in prior research. The results are generally the same: aspects of both theories can be found in the researched cases, making it hard to prove the explanatory relevance of one theory over the other. Additionally the theories don't provide specific determinants of paradiplomacy strategies, but rather explain regional integration. The co-variational analysis fits better with the research question **“Which factors determine the interaction strategy that Dutch regions follow when representing their European interest?”** as the best way to answer this question is by researching and presenting empirical evidence of the existence of co-variation between an independent variable X (determinants of paradiplomacy) and a dependent variable Y (deployed strategy of interest representation) to infer causality. Therefore in the next section the co-variational analysis, as described by Blatter and Haverland (2012) will be further explored.

5.1.1 The Co-variational Analysis

This approach to small-N research compares different cases by systematically comparing the variation of the features in two ways: either a method of difference or a method of agreement is used as advocated by Mill and described in Blatter and Haverland (2012). In the method of difference none but one independent variable is the same, while in the method of agreement all but one independent variable are the same. There are also different modes in which the comparison can be made: spatial, temporal or both. When a case is both temporal and spatial a cross-sectional-intertemporal comparison is concluded. When a case is temporal but not spatial an intertemporal comparison is conducted. When a case is not temporal but spatial a cross-sectional comparison is used. Lastly, when a case is neither temporal nor spatial a counterfactual comparison is conducted (Blatter and Haverland, 2012).

Prior knowledge and theories have several functions in the co-variational analysis: 1) identifying concepts and definitions of variables 2) providing information on expected relationships between the independent and dependent variables, 3) this prior knowledge can then also be used to identify rival of other explanations, and finally 4) prior research can be used as an indication for operationalization of the independent, dependent and control variables (Blatter & Haverland, 2012).

According to Blatter and Haverland (2012) a co-variational analysis lastly is often outlined in the following way:

1. An introduction in which the research question and relevance are described is outlined.
2. A separated theoretical section in which hypotheses, the relation and direction between the dependent and independent variable is discussed.
3. The measures for the dependent, independent and control variables are outlined (operationalization).
4. Based on the first three steps, the cases are then presented that have different scores on the independent variable and similar scores on the control variables.
5. Measurement is conducted after which data analysis is presented based on the method of difference.
6. The discussion of results, including the generalization and further implications of results are defined

Now that the first two steps of the process have been completed and a qualitative case study design, in the form of a co-variational analysis has been selected, we move on to the third phase: the operationalization of variables. Following the steps as outlined by Blatter and Haverland (2012), this is necessary to select the proper cases.

5.2 Operationalization of variables

In order to measure the chosen conditions empirically, they need to be translated into measurable units. In the section below all variables are operationalized. First the dependent variable is operationalized, after which the independent variables will be considered. All the questions in the operationalization are derived from the literature discussed in the theoretical framework. The open character of the questions creates space for the 'inductive part' of the research.

5.2.1 Dependent variable: interaction strategy vis-à-vis the member state

To measure the dependent variable 'deployed strategy' of paradiplomacy it is important to determine the amount of cooperation, conflict or lack of interaction between the state and sub-state level in lobbying their EU interests. A simply measuring 'paradiplomacy' does not give the necessary answers as to which strategy has been followed by the subnational actors, this thesis thus follows three dependent variables instead of one. The information on the different strategies is unlikely to be found

from document analysis alone, which is why this information had to be gathered through survey-data. This thesis follows the operationalization used by Tatham, (2016). The survey asked about the frequency of these three outcomes on a five-point likert scale ranging from never to always. *Conflicting* interest representation was operationalized as representing interest which are different from the position taken by the member state. *Non-interactive* interest representation was operationalized as representing interests without interacting with one’s member state. *Cooperative* interest representation was operationalized as representing interests with one’s member state to achieve similar outcomes.

The goal of measuring the dependent variable is a) to determine which strategy is most used, and b) if differences in can be found between the cases. Table 5 presents an overview of the operationalization of the dependent variable ‘deployed strategy of sub-national interest representation vis-à-vis the member state’.

Table 5: Operationalization dependent variable; strategy of sub-national interest representation

Dependent variable: strategy of sub-national interest representation			
Indicator	Definition	Data source	Operationalization
Form	Conflicting paradiplomacy: representing interest which are different from the position taken by the member state	Survey-data	Likert scale (from ‘never’ to ‘always’)
	Non-interactive paradiplomacy: representing interests without interacting with one’s member state	Survey-data	Likert scale (from ‘never’ to ‘always’)
	Cooperative paradiplomacy: representing interests with one’s member state to achieve similar outcomes	Survey-data	Likert scale (from ‘never’ to ‘always’)

In Appendix A the survey question can be found that were used to measure the dependent variable. The next section discusses the operationalization of the determinants that are thought to have an influence on the dependent variable ‘deployed strategy of paradiplomacy’.

5.2.2 Independent variables: determinants

This section discusses the operationalization of the independent variables; perceived openness national level to regional interests, the urban/rural divide and partisan congruence. All the questions in the operationalization are derived from the literature discussed in the theoretical framework. The open character of some of the questions creates space for the ‘inductive part’ of the research. In this way the research is ‘open to’ the unforeseen determinants or explanations that were expected based on the

literature review and theoretical framework. In Appendix A the survey and open questions can be found that were used to measure the independent variables.

Perceived Openness national level to regional interests

Based on the literature, the perceived level of openness of the national level to regional interests is thought to influence whether sub-national actors have a more cooperative, conflicting or non-interactive strategy of EU interest representation. How receptive the member state is towards regional interests thus seems to influence whether sub-national actors feel like they have to bypass their member state at the European level. If sub-national actors feel taken seriously by the national level, they are more likely to adopt a *cooperative interaction* strategy vis-à-vis their member state. Contrarily, if the sub-national actors feel like their interests are not being taken seriously (i.e. feeling neglected) they are more likely to adopt a *conflicting interaction* strategy. Similarly, if sub-national actors feel like the national level is not open to their interests, this might also lead to adopting a *non-interaction strategy*. As ‘openness’ is thus more an informal access than a formal access, it is hard to measure and see in policy documents. Therefore this indicator will be measured as ‘the perception on’ the openness of the national level to regional interests, from the perspective of the sub-national actors.

The goal of measuring this independent variable is to determine whether differences in the perceived openness also lead to different adopted strategies of paradiplomacy. Table 6 presents an overview of the operationalization of the dependent variable ‘perceived openness national level to regional interests’.

Table 6: Operationalization of the variable ‘perceived openness national level to regional interests’

Independent variable			
Indicator	definition	Data source	Operationalization
Openness national level to regional interests	Perceived openness of the national level to the interests of the provinces from the perspective of the sub-national actors	Survey, interview data, or critical research reports	5 point likert scale

The urban/rural divide

According to the literature there is a tension between rural/urban regions, as rural areas are easier to overlook by the national level. It is argued that ‘dominant high-profiled regions’ in the Netherlands can relatively easy mobilize their interest through intra-state channels, in comparison to the ‘other’ regions, which therefore have to take it to the European level. This focus of the national level on the Dutch urban west, also called the Randstad region, positions non-Randstad regions ‘on the sidelines’. The rural/ urban divide between provinces/ regions is thus thought to influence which

paradiplomacy strategy is adopted. It is expected that the Urban West regions have a more cooperative strategy with the national level, while the ‘other’ more rural regions have a more conflicting or non-interactive strategy vis-à-vis the national level. Although the levels of urbanization can to a certain extent be measured by ‘population density, as Tatham (2016) did, the ‘urban/ rural divide’ is also a ‘subjective feeling or perception’ which could be based on centuries of division and thus incorporated into the culture. For example the regular earthquakes in the province of Groningen resulting from the the extraction of natural gas had led many inhabitants of the province to think the urban regions only care about what is good for “The Netherlands Ltd Company”, which is a ‘hard money driven business’ (Figuee et al, 2016: 32). How is being thought about the urban/rural divide is thus also thought to influence the paradiplomacy strategy. Therefore, apart from taking into account the relative population density in the regions, provinces, this research also considers the ‘perceived’ urban/rural divide, in an open question to the interviewees.

The goal of measuring this independent variable is to determine whether differences in the (perceived) urban/ rural divide of regions also leads to different adopted strategies of paradiplomacy. Table 7 presents an overview of the operationalization of the dependent variable ‘urban/rural divide’.

Table 7: Operationalization independent variable 'urban/rural divide'

Independent variable			
Indicator	definition	Data source	Operationalization
Urban/ rural divide	Differences in population density between provinces, but also the extent to which this tension is ‘perceived’ to be ‘real’ and influential by the sub-national actors.	Survey, interview data, or critical research reports	Open questions about how the respondent perceives this tension and its effects on his/her region/province

Partisan congruence

According to the literature differences between political leadership in the regional and national level could influence weather a region tends to cooperate or bypass the national level. It is expected that if provinces have political leadership with opposing priorities than the national state level, this could result into ‘bypassing’ the national level on those priorities. On the other hand, if the provincial political leadership is similar to the national political leadership, it could be expected that the sub-national actors have a more cooperative strategy towards the member state. There thus seems to be a

significant relationship between partisan congruence and the selected paradiplomacy strategy adopted by the sub-national actor vis-à-vis the member state.

The goal of measuring this independent variable is to determine whether differences in partisan congruence between provinces also lead to different adopted strategies of paradiplomacy. Table 8 presents an overview of the operationalization of the dependent variable ‘partisan congruence’. The operationalization was taken from Huwylar et al (2018).

Table 8: Operationalization of independent variable 'partisan congruence'

Independent variable			
Indicator	definition	Data source	Operationalization
Partisan congruence	Congruence between the party coalitions of the regional and national level.	Policy documents, data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) + open question in the interviews	continuum ranging from complete incongruence to perfect congruence, we measured partisan congruence on a 3-point likert scale where 1 indicates no party overlap between both levels, 2 indicates partial overlap (when some parties appear at both levels and others only at one), 3 indicates the same coalition at both levels

5.3 Research methods

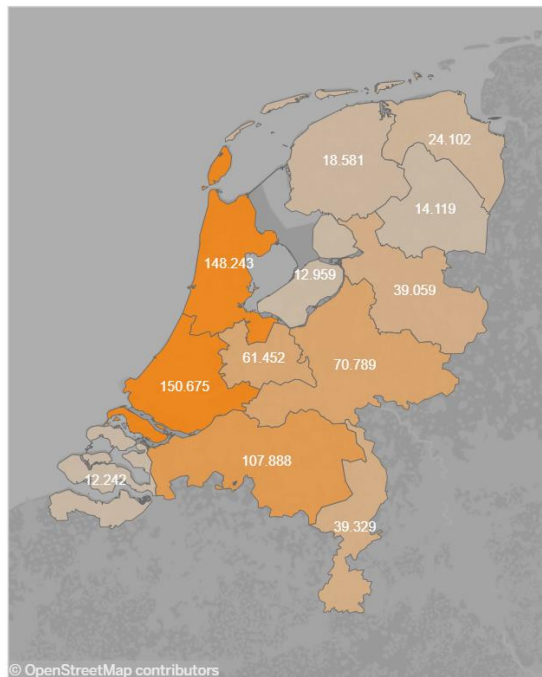
Now that all the variables have operationalized, the this section discusses the research methods. In accordance with the chosen research design, appropriate cases were selected to gather and analyze the data from. This section discusses the case selection, data collection and data analysis.

5.3.1 Case selection

This section discusses the case selection. As has already been discussed in chapter 2, the Netherlands consists of twelve provinces, which for representing their EU interests are represented in the HNP where they are divided into four sub-regions. As this thesis focuses on the ‘lobby of the provinces for their European interests, this research focuses on the Dutch provinces and their respective HNP regions. As mentioned before, the Randstad region or ‘Urban West Provinces’ are the ‘economic

heart' of the Netherlands. As it is expected that the interests of these provinces are more seriously considered than those of the 'other' Dutch regions, it is logical to compare the Randstad Region with the least economically important region in the Netherlands, which is the Noord Nederland region (The Northern Netherlands) (HNP, 2018). As can be seen in figure X, the gross regional product (GRP) of the regions in the Netherlands differs considerably. This picture shows that the GDP is highest in the provinces of mostly Noord-Holland (148.243) and Zuid-Holland (150.675). The GDP is considerably lower in the Northern Netherlands provinces of Groningen (24.102), Friesland (18.581) and Drenthe (14.119). Additionally the Randstad region is one of the biggest economical urban regions in Europe (comparable to London and Milan), which makes it more interesting to compare as they might also be favored on the European level (CBS, 2008).

Figure 3: Gross regional product (GRP) of the Dutch provinces (2016)



Therefore the case-selection of this thesis consists of the Randstad Region and its provinces (Zuid-Holland, Noord-Holland, Flevoland and Utrecht) and the SNN Region and its provinces (Friesland, Groningen and Drenthe). Together they represent half the Dutch provinces and half the HNP regions. It will be taken into account that the province of Flevoland, just like the SNN provinces, has a low GDP. Table 9 provides an overview of the selected cases and their provinces. Figure 4 shows the selected regions and their provinces.

Table 9: Selected cases for research

HNP regions	Included Dutch provinces
Randstad Region	Noord-Holland Zuid-Holland Utrecht Flevoland
SNN Region	Friesland Groningen Drenthe

Figure 4: Geographical location selected Regions and their provinces



Now that the case-selection has been discussed, the following section discusses the data collection.

5.3.2 Data collection

According to Yin (2003), A ‘good ‘qualitative case study design includes different sources of data collection, such as interviews, observations and documentation, which help the researcher to gain perspectives from a wide variety of sources (Yin, 2003: 85,86). However in case of ‘interest representation’ it can be difficult to find hard data. This is because “interest representation is a mostly intangible activity: it mainly consists of sometimes formal but usually informal meetings, telephone conversations, email exchanges and corridor discussions” (Tatham, 2010: 81). This is why, in addition to content analysis, an online survey was sent to all individuals from the Randstad region, SNN and their respective provinces that are related to the subject of ‘sub-national authorities EU interest representation’. As it is a well-known fact that lobbyist or EU representatives are very busy people, a survey was thought to be the most feasible way to collect data, as respondents might be too busy to give interviews and also within the scope and time constraints of this thesis project. In total the survey stayed open from 24-05-2018 until 10-07-2018, thus for a total of fifty days. In this period thirty-one possible respondents were approached (and reminded) to fill in the survey, which was estimated to take around one minute to fill in (in reality the average was around three minutes). Of these thirty-one approached respondents, sixteen filled in the survey. However, six of these sixteen respondents had to be excluded as they were involved in the region, but represented cities or municipalities instead of provinces. As the respondents themselves also realized this, they did not further fill in the survey.

In Appendix C a list can be found of approached respondents. Table 10 provides an overview of the respondents and which region or province they represent. Of the ten respondents, seven represent the Randstad region or a province within the Randstad region, and three represent SNN or a province within the SNN region.

Table 10: Respondents per case

Cases	Respondents per case
Randstad region	1
Noord-Holland	1
Zuid-Holland	3
Utrecht	1
Flevoland	1
SNN	2
Friesland	1
Drenthe	-
Groningen	-
total	10 respondents

The province of Friesland and Drenthe were unaccounted for in this research. The in depth interview with a respondent from SNN provided some clarity for the lack of respondents: the Northern provinces barely or do not lobby individually for themselves and mostly leave the EU lobbying to SNN. This is consistent with the HNP website where most of the respondents were gathered from. While the provinces of the Randstad Region had *at least* one representative, the provinces of the SNN region did not. Unfortunately this has led the results to be less valid for the specific provinces of SNN. For some of the region or provinces the opinion of one respondent now represents their entire region or province. Therefore the results are only to a limited extent generalizable to the selected cases. However, still a pattern can be found, which could be further investigated in future research. This will be elaborated upon in the last chapter. The survey was the most important for measuring the dependent variable, as the three strategies could not be determined through document analysis. This is also partly the case for the 'perceived openness national level to regional interests' variable. However the survey did not influence measuring the 'partisan congruence' and 'the rural/ urban divide'. For all three independent variables, enough additional information could be found through document analysis and through the conducted interviews.

Two face to face semi-structured interviews (with in total three respondents) were held to gain more in depth insights in the determinants that influence the strategy selection, and to control for the information found in the policy documents and online survey. One respondent represents the SNN region, and the other two respondents represented the province of Zuid-Holland (Randstad Region) in a double interview. Both of these respondents have also filled in the online survey.

Document analysis was performed on the EU-strategy reports from the IPO, the HNP, the four offices of the IPO, the individual reports written by the Dutch provinces, and other critical reports that could be found. Appendix C provides a list of used documentation.

5.3.3 Data analysis

The research design in this thesis is based on qualitative methods in the form of a co-variational analysis, in which the major part of the data is collected through an online survey, document analysis, and in depth semi-structured interviews as supplementary and controlling mechanism. Therefore the method for analyzing consists of a deductive design of codes that is drawn from the variables in the operationalization, and an inductive approach that is data-driven to cover for unforeseen connections that were not included in the theoretical framework. Appendix D illustrates the used coding scheme.

Now that the research design has been elaborated upon, the following section discussed the limitation of the research, by taking the reliability and internal and external validity into account.

5.4 Limitation of the research

5.4.1 Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which the same results can be obtained if the research is repeated. The results have to be independent of the researcher. However, the methodological choice to perform qualitative research through interviews may result in an observers bias (Babbie, 2013). Additionally some determinants are measured as the 'perception on' instead of measuring 'factual knowledge'(perceived openness of the national level to regional interests and the perceived urban/rural divide). The respondent's answers thus provide a subjective answer which is perceptible to change. The reliability is guaranteed as much as possible by recording and transcribing all interviews, using a coding scheme and a semi-structured topic list, which are included in the Appendix.

5.4.2 Internal and external validity

According to Blatter and Haverland small-N research is better able to achieve concept validity than large-N research because “focusing on a few cases allows variables to be conceptualized in complex and multidimensional ways” (2012: 34). Indeed, the determinants were measured taking into account the unique Dutch context. Internal validity relates to the degree to which the results are attributable to the measured determinants, and are not caused by extraneous conditions, which could allow for alternative explanation as to what caused the deployed strategy of interest representation (Babbie, 2013). To create validity the method for analyzing consists of a deductive design of codes that are taken from the determinants in the operationalization, and an inductive approach that is data-driven to cover for unforeseen connections that were not included in the theoretical framework. In order to enhance internal validity the determinants were operationalized in a clear and transparent way. External validity relates to the extent to which the results of the study can be generalized to groups or contexts beyond those of this research (Babbie, 2013). Generalizability is generally weak in case study designs as cases are very context specific: the results can only to a certain extent be generalized to other settings. Due to time constraints this thesis researched only half of the Dutch provinces within half the Dutch HNP regions. As this research only focuses on the Netherlands, the results can be generalized to similar cases in the Netherlands (i.e. other Dutch provinces), but not to other EU member states. To improve external validity additional cases have to be analyzed, and more data will have to be gathered, as this research was only based on limited data (due to lack of respondents and time constraints) (Blatter and Haverland, 2012: 34).

Chapter 6: Results and analysis

In this chapter the results and analysis of the research are presented per variable. The chapter aims to find a relation between the independent variables (openness national level to regional interests, Urban/rural divide and partisan congruence) and the deployed strategy of paradiplomacy (conflicting, cooperating or non-interactive strategy) vis-à-vis the member state. First, the results regarding the dependent variable are presented and discussed. Second, the results regarding the independent variables are presented and then discussed. For every independent variable the results are presented in a table, after which they will be analyzed, and the hypotheses based on the theoretical framework will be discussed.

6.1 Dependent variable: deployed interaction strategy vis-à-vis the member state

As discussed in the theoretical framework sub-national actors have several interaction strategies they can deploy when representing their EU interests vis-à-vis their member state: cooperative strategy, conflicting strategy or non-interaction strategy. In order to test the hypotheses it is important to first determine the dependent variables for the two selected cases (Randstad Region and its provinces and SNN and its provinces). As described in the previous chapter, the dependent variable (deployed strategy) was determined through a survey on a five point likert scale, ranging from always to never. Three statements have been used to determine the frequency of a cooperative, conflicting, or non-interaction strategy of the sub-national actors vis-à-vis the member state. These can be found in Appendix A in survey question three, four and five. The goal of measuring the dependent variable is a) to determine which strategy is most used, and b) if differences in can be found between the cases.

As was discussed in the research design, all provinces are accounted for except the province of Drenthe and Groningen. According to the interview with the SNN respondent, this is because the Northern regions do not or only rarely lobby EU interests individually and let SNN take the lead in this matter. This is different than the Randstad Region provinces, that all have at least one official European Lobby representative.³ Table 11 provides a quick overview on the possible strategies. The results from the survey regarding the deployed strategy per province/region are presented in table 12.

³ All representatives for all provinces and regions can be found on the website of the HNP.

Table 11: Strategy regarding EU interests representation vis-à-vis the member state (Tatham, 2016)

Strategy regarding EU interests representation vis-à-vis the member state	
Cooperative	Region/province represents <i>similar</i> interests to that of the member state <i>in collaboration with</i> the member state.
Conflicting/ bypassing	Regio/provinces represent <i>dissimilar</i> interests from the position of the member state and thus lobbies <i>without</i> the member state for a conflicting interest (thus lobbying against the state)
Non- interaction	Regio/provinces represent <i>similar or dissimilar</i> interests to that of the member state, <i>without</i> (i.e. independently from) its member state (this is most likely when the topic is regarded as irrelevant or negligible by the state).

Table 12 provides an overview of the frequency of the paradiplomacy strategies per Region and province. As discussed in the methodology, for the Randstad region, Noord-Holland, Utrecht, Flevoland and Friesland only one respondent has filled in the survey. This will be further elaborated upon in the final chapter. This table presents the individual answers of all ten respondents.

Table 12: Frequency of conflicting, cooperative and non-interactive paradiplomacy

Deployed strategy	Conflicting	Cooperating	Non-interactive
Randstad region	Sometimes	Often	Rarely
Noord-Holland	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes
Zuid-Holland	Sometimes Rarely Sometimes	Often Often Sometimes	Often Rarely Sometimes
Utrecht	Sometimes	Often	Often
Flevoland	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
SNN	Often Sometimes	Sometimes Sometimes	Sometimes Sometimes
Friesland	Sometimes	Sometimes	Often
Drenthe	-	-	-
Groningen	-	-	-

As can be seen from the tables, all three strategies are used simultaneously by both regions and provinces at the same time. All sub-national actors sometimes have a **conflicting relation** vis-à-vis the member state when it comes to interest representation, thus representing a different position on EU-matter than the position taken by member state. When asking the respondents for examples of such a

situation, two matters were mentioned. Central government and the regions have differing views on matters relating to the multiannual budget, and the reform of agricultural policy (AIV, 2016). Although sometimes regions/provinces take a different stance on an EU-subject than the member state, this is generally not experienced as problematic by the regions/ provinces. As one respondent said “We might not agree on everything and if we don’t agree we have no problem taking a different position. However this does not mean that we don’t still cooperate on eighty percent of all other matters” (respondent Zuid-Holland). This feeling is shared by other respondents and formally institutionalized in the ‘*agree to disagree*’ arrangement in the Local and Central Government Relations Code of 2013 (AIV, 2016; respondent Zuid-Holland). Especially in the Randstad Region and its provinces the relation vis-à-vis the national government is more often **cooperative** than conflicting. Especially in areas relating to environment and infrastructure generally little disagreement between sub-national actors and the central government exists (AIV, 2016). Another ‘best practice’ of cooperative strategy is the collaboration on the European Biodiversity Strategy 2020, in which provinces and the ministry of Economic Affairs collaborate in an IBDT⁴. Sub-national actors and the central government both indicated that the collaboration is going well (BZK, 2015:5). This reflects that the relationship between the sub-national actors and the national level is generally positive. As for the **non-interaction strategy**, sub-national actors do also represent their similar EU interest without interacting with the member state. There is no coherent line in the responses, ranging from rarely to often, with a clear ‘sometimes’ middle ground. It could be that this is very dependent on the subject/ area that is being lobbied. For example when provinces or regions are lobbying for EU funding on projects, the member state has less of an incentive to be involved. The sub-national actors generally don’t need to coordinate such matter through the member state.

Summarizing, all strategies are used by all sub-national actors simultaneously. Generally cooperative paradiplomacy is the most used strategy, followed by non-interaction and lastly conflicting paradiplomacy. These results are in line with the conclusions of Tatham (2016), which also determined that conflict strategy is ‘rarely’ used in comparison to the other two strategies. The Randstad Region and its provinces generally use more of a cooperative strategy than the SNN region and its province. Sometimes a conflicting or non-interactive strategy is deployed as well. Here there is not a significant difference between Regions/provinces. Although the connection is not very strong, to a certain extent it can be argued that regions/ provinces that ‘often’ have a cooperative strategy vis-à-vis the member

⁴ See context chapter and the list of abbreviations for a reminder of what an IBDT is.

state, have slightly less of an non-interaction or conflicting strategy. Now that it has been determined which paradiplomacy strategies are most used and by which regions and provinces, the next section discusses the results of the three ‘independent variables’ and their corresponding hypotheses, in order to reach a conclusion to whether these determinants seem to have an influence on the deployed paradiplomacy strategy.

6.2 Independent variables: determinants of paradiplomacy strategy

Table 12 provides an overview of the results of the influence of the determinants on the adopted paradiplomacy strategy of the sub-national actors vis-à-vis the member state, thus corresponding with the hypotheses in this thesis.

Table 13: Results: the influence independent variables on the dependent variable(s).

Deployed strategy		Conflicting	Cooperating	Non-interactive
Randstad region		Sometimes	Often	Rarely
Noord-Holland		Sometimes	Often	Sometimes
Zuid-Holland		Sometimes Rarely Sometimes	Often Often Sometimes	Often Rarely Sometimes
Utrecht		Sometimes	Often	Often
Flevoland		Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
SNN		Often Sometimes	Sometimes Sometimes	Sometimes Sometimes
Friesland		Sometimes	Sometimes	Often
Drenthe		-	-	-
Groningen		-	-	-
Determinant	hypotheses	Conflicting paradiplomacy	Cooperative paradiplomacy	Non-interactive paradiplomacy
Openness to regional interests	High openness (H1)		+	
	Lower openness (H2)	+/-		+/-
The urban/ rural divide	Urban regions (H3)		+	
	Rural regions (H4)	+/-		+/-
Partisan congruence	High partisan congruence (H5)		+/-	
	Low partisan congruence (H6)	n/a	n/a	n/a

The higher the level of *openness of the national level to regional interest*, the more a cooperative paradiplomacy strategy is adopted. Lower the openness of the national level to regional interests, leads to slightly more conflicting or non-cooperative paradiplomacy strategy. When it comes to the *rural/urban divide*, the more urbanized a region/provinces is, the more likely a cooperative

strategy is adopted. As a region/province is more rural, this leads to slightly more conflicting or non-interaction strategy. Finally, the data on partisan congruence is contradicting. While partisan congruence does seem to lead to more cooperative paradiplomacy, no evidence on the importance of the determinant can be found in the document analysis or interviews. As partisan congruence is generally high in the Netherlands, no statement can be made on the effect of low partisan congruence on paradiplomacy. The following sections will further elaborate on the results.

6.2.1 Openness national level to regional interests

The level of perceived openness of the national level to regional interests influences whether sub-national actors have a more cooperative, conflicting or non-interactive strategy of EU interest representation. **The higher the perceived level of openness of the national level to regional interests, the more sub-national actors will have a cooperative strategy and The lower the perceived level of openness of the national level to regional interests, the more sub-national actors will have a conflicting or non-cooperative strategy.** Two survey statements, measured on a 5 point likert scale, were dedicated to testing these hypotheses. These can be found in Appendix A in question six and seven. Together they give an indication on the perceived openness of the national level to regional interests. Table 14 shows the results for the perceived openness national level to regional interests.

Table 14: Perceived openness national level to regional interests

Perceived openness national level to regional interests	Ability to influence through national level	Being taken seriously by national level
Randstad region	Oftentimes	Oftentimes
Noord-Holland	Oftentimes	Oftentimes
Zuid-Holland ⁵	Oftentimes Oftentimes	Oftentimes Oftentimes
Utrecht	Sometimes	Oftentimes
Flevoland	Rarely	Sometimes
SNN	Oftentimes Oftentimes	Oftentimes Rarely
Friesland	Never	Sometimes
Drenthe	-	-
Groningen	-	-

The ability to influence through national level: making no differences between cases, 55,6 % of the respondents perceives that the province/region can **often** influence the position of the national level

⁵ The third respondent for Zuid-Holland skipped these question in the survey.

regarding EU-issues. For 22.22% of the respondents this is only **sometimes** possible, while for 11.11% of the respondents this is **rarely** or **never** the case. Generally we can thus conclude that the sub-national actors positively perceive their ability to influence the national opinion on EU-matters. Comparing between cases, we can see that the Randstad region and its provinces are generally more positive than the SNN regions' and its provinces are when it comes to the ability to influence through the national level. Within the Randstad region, this is easier for the provinces of Noord-Holland and Zuid-Holland (often), while Utrecht and Flevoland are less optimistic (sometimes and rarely). Within the SNN region there is a clear difference between the opinion of SNN itself, which is very positive (often), compared to Friesland which is very negative (never) about their ability to influence through the national level.

Being taken seriously by national level: making no differences between cases 77.78% of the respondents feels their EU interests are **often** being taken seriously by the national level, compared to 22.22% who feels they are **sometimes** being taken seriously by the national level. The subnational actors thus generally have a positive opinion of how seriously the national level takes their EU-interests. Comparing between cases we can see that the Randstad region and its provinces are generally more positive than the SNN regions' and its provinces are when it comes to being taken seriously by the national level. Within the Randstad region all provinces except Flevoland feel they are often taken seriously. Within the SNN region there is a clear difference between the opinion of SNN itself, which is very positive (often), compared to Friesland which is less positive (sometimes) about how seriously the national level takes their EU-interests. An explanation can be found in the interview with the SNN representative, who explains that the provinces rarely lobby themselves and leave this mostly to SNN. The Northern provinces, compared to the Randstad Region provinces do not have an official representative that makes sure the position of their province is included. Instead SNN representatives represent all provinces at the same time. This possibly resulted in the less positive opinion of Friesland compared to SNN (interview SNN, 2018; HNP, 2018). Summarizing the results we can thus conclude that generally the sub-national actors perceive that the national level is often open to their regional interests, with the Randstad region and its provinces being more positive than SNN and its provinces. However it has to be noted that SNN is very positive in comparison to the province of Friesland. When comparing these results to the strategy chosen by the subnational actors, we can start discussing the hypotheses.

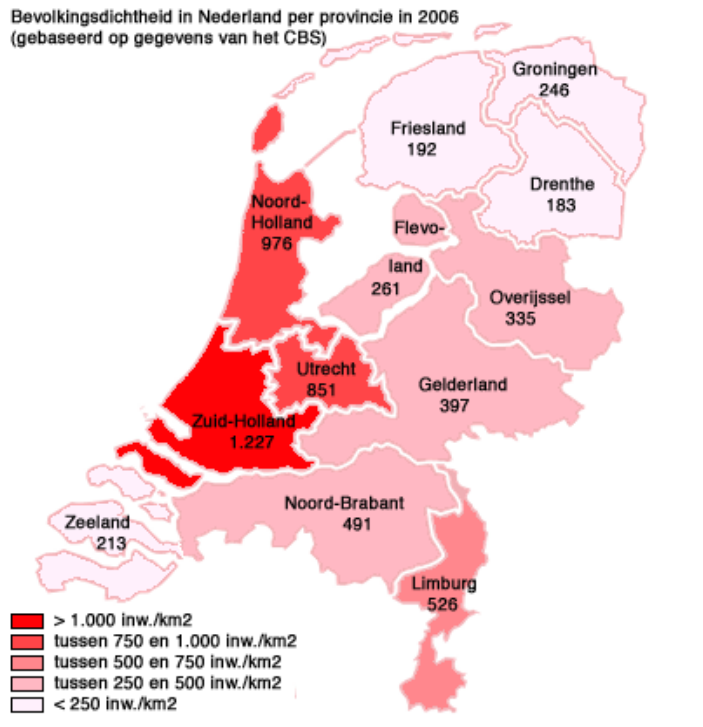
The Randstad region and its provinces generally perceive the national level to **often** be open to their regional interests, and also states that they are **often** cooperating with the national level. The SNN

region and its provinces have different perceptions on how open the national level is to their interests. While SNN is positive, the province of Friesland is less optimistic. Both the SNN and Friesland **sometimes** cooperate with the national level. The Randstad region and its provinces have a higher level of perceived openness of the national level to their regional interests than the SNN region and its provinces have. The Randstad region and its province also more frequently have a cooperative strategy compared to the SNN and its provinces. We could thus generally say that hypotheses one seems to be right: *the higher the perceived level of openness of the national level to regional interests, the more sub-national actors will have a cooperative strategy with the national level.* The question is if this difference also leads the SNN and its regions to have more of a conflicting or non-cooperative strategy towards the national level, than the Randstad region. The SNN region states to **often** have a conflicting strategy, while the Randstad region **sometimes** has a conflicting strategy. The Randstad region provinces generally **sometimes** have a conflicting strategy towards the national level, which is the same for Friesland from the SNN region. The SNN region states to sometimes have a non-interactive strategy, while the Randstad states that this is rarely the case. The Randstad region provinces however, don't seem to agree on the frequency of non-interactive strategy. The province of Friesland states to often use the non-interactive strategy. Although the argument is not very strong, we could agree that for now hypotheses two also seems to be right: *The lower the perceived level of openness of the national level to regional interests, the more sub-national actors will have a conflicting or non-cooperative strategy.*

6.2.2. Urban/rural divide

Whether regions/ provinces are considered urban/rural is thus thought to influence the deployed strategy (cooperative, non-interaction, and conflicting paradiplomacy): **The more urbanized regions are, the more likely to adopt a cooperative strategy vis-à-vis the member state (H3) and the more rural 'other' regions are, the more likely they are to adopt a conflicting or non-interaction strategy (H4).** These hypotheses were measured by looking at the population density (how many inhabitants/ km²), and comparing the 'urban/rural' regions and provinces to the adopted paradiplomacy strategies. Additionally the interviewees were asked about how they perceive this tension (Appendix A question nine). Figure 5 provides a visual representation of the population density in the Dutch provinces in 2006 (CBS).

Figure 5: Population density Dutch provinces in 2006.



For some reason, the Central Bureau for Statistics (CBS) of the Netherlands does not provide the numbers of population density per province any more, which is why 2006 is the last year that such a visual representation could be found. Instead the CBS separates the Dutch provinces in four clusters: Noord-Nederland (N), Oost-Nederland, West-Nederland (W) and Zuid-Nederland. For this thesis we will only consider the North- Netherlands (N) cluster and the West- Netherlands (W) cluster. In 2017, the N cluster had 1722 inhabitants of the total of 17082 inhabitants in the Netherlands, while the W cluster has 8126 inhabitants (CBS, 2018). We can thus clearly see an urban/ rural provinces divide and can assume that the visual representation as it is portrayed for 2006 would still look more or less the same. When asking the interviewees about this tension, the respondent of Zuid-Holland jokingly said “Its all jealousy” and went on to explaining how the Randstad region is just very important economically, which makes it logical that sometimes these regions are preferred. When asking the SNN interviewee, the respondent said that she does not really feel this tension, and that she understands how for example a new highway seems more important for the important junctions in the more urban areas, and also emphasizing the ‘economic importance’ of the region. However as SNN regions just have “bad luck” in the position that the national level takes, the respondent also explained how they thus took it to the

European level to try and make sure that the SNN regions are included in European Budgets as well. The SNN respondent might be giving a 'desirable answer', but the perceived tension is in no way as 'felt' as was the case in the research of Figuee et al (2017), where the urban/rural divide seemed really bad. Comparing the Urban Randstad regions to the Rural SNN regions and their paradiplomacy strategies, the urban regions generally have a more cooperative strategy (H3). However the more rural region and its provinces only slightly have a more conflicting and non-interactive strategy compared to the urban regions and its provinces (H4). Therefore we can accept H3: *The more urbanized regions are, the more likely to adopt a cooperative strategy vis-à-vis the member state*, but not H4: *the more rural 'other' regions are, the more likely they are to adopt a conflicting or non-interaction strategy*. But as there is a 'slight' influence it is not possible to fully reject H4 either. This rural/ urban divide should be further investigated including more cases and many more respondents.

6.2.3 Partisan congruence

According to the literature differences in partisan congruence between the regional and national level could influence the deployed paradiplomacy strategy. **H5: The greater the partisan congruence between the Dutch sub-national actors and the national level, the more a cooperative strategy is used in representing EU interests** and **H6: The lower the partisan congruence between the region/province and the national level, the more a non-interactive or conflicting strategy is adopted**. Table 14 provides an overview of the partisan congruence between the national level and the included provinces. The political leadership changed in 2017 and consists of a coalition between VVD (winning party), D66, CDA and ChristenUnie. The current Provincial leadership started in 2015 and will change in 2019. HNP regions itself do not have political leadership and are thus excluded. Figure 6 provides an overview of the biggest political party at the provincial level per province. Table 13 provides an overview on the partisan congruence between the regional and national level, based on the three biggest parties in that province (NOS, 2015). The partisan congruence was measured as 1: no overlap, 2: partial overlap or 3: total overlap (Huwyler et al, 2018).

Figure 6: Biggest political party per province at the provincial election 2015 (NOS, 2015)

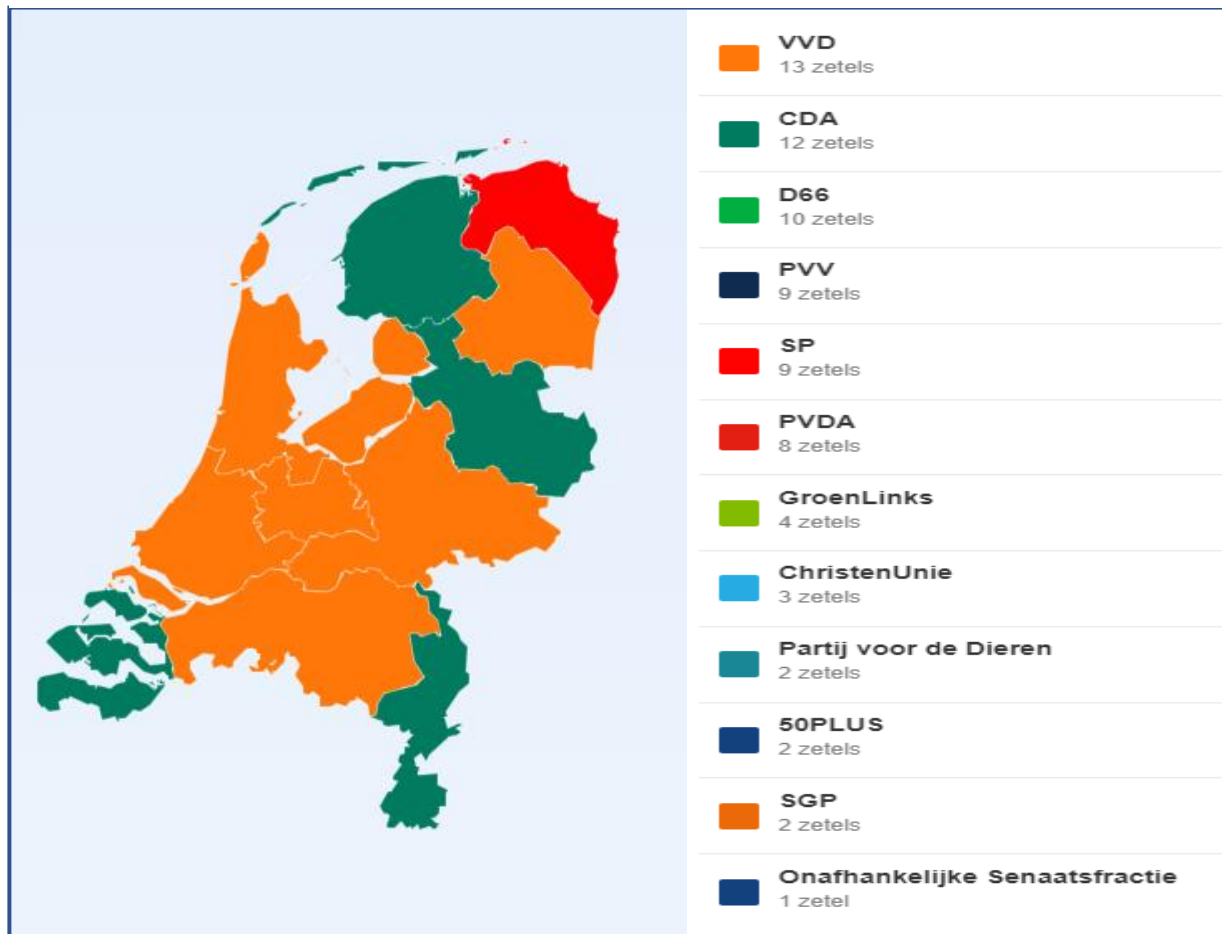


Table 15: Partisan congruence between regional and national level (NOS, 2015)

	Composition cabinet	Congruence with national level
National level	VVD, D66, CDA, ChristenUnie	-
Randstad region	-	-
Noord-Holland	VVD, D66, PVDA	2 (+)
Zuid-Holland	VVD, PVV, D66	2 (+)
Utrecht	VVD, D66, CDA	3 (+)
Flevoland	VVD, PVV, CDA	2
SNN	-	-
Friesland	CDA, PVDA, VVD	2 (+)
Drenthe	VVD, PVDA, CDA	2 (+)
Groningen	SP, PVDA, CDA	2 (-)

It can be seen from figure 6 and table 15 that no political provincial party has *no* overlap with the coalition of the national level. This was expected, as the Netherlands has a multiparty system, which increases the chances of having overlapping parties between the regional and national level. All provinces have at least two parties overlap between the regional and national level. The province of Groningen is the only party that has only one party in common (CDA) in the top three biggest parties. This indicates that generally the partisan congruence is high between the regional and national level in the Netherlands. Striking is that VVD (right wing party) is the biggest party in the whole Randstad Region, while for SNN all three provinces have a different biggest party in the coalition. Additionally the VVD is both the 'winning' party at the national level and in all the Randstad region provinces. The Randstad region and its provinces has a higher frequency of cooperative paradiplomacy, than the SNN region and its provinces. It could be argued that this is party influenced by the fact that the Randstad provinces have more political overlap between the regional and national level when it comes to having the same 'biggest' right-wing party VVD. In two cases the second biggest party is D66 for the Randstad region, which is also included in the national coalition. For the SNN region only Drenthe matches with the biggest party at the national level. Additionally all three provinces have PVDA as the second biggest party, which isn't included at the national level. When asking the interviewees about how they perceive the importance of partisan congruence, they argued that of course politics are important to a certain extent, but that this isn't crucial for collaborations at the EU level. According to both interviewees it is more important to 'have the same interests'. "it does not matter much from what party someone is, as long as you both want the same thing. Interest compatibility is thus more important. Also, as we have multi-party coalitions, you can almost always find a party at the national level that is willing to listen or shares the same interests" (respondent Zuid-Holland). The SNN respondent made a similar argument. According to the SNN respondent it is not so much about political configuration, but more about "forming coalitions" as "it makes no sense for a city or even a province to lobby at the European level alone, because you are just too small to make an impact. That is why it is so important to always be looking for collaborative partnerships, to lobby with a bigger front". The respondent also puts the Northern provinces into context within the Netherlands and Europe: "some people don't even know where the province of Friesland for example is situated, even within the Netherlands. This indicates the importance of forming coalitions with other parties, in order to be seen and heard at both the national and European level". The respondent explains how SNN therefore also stimulates the provinces (and also the cities) to look for other 'partnerships' to represent their EU interests, apart from SNN, for example with the border regions. Finally from the document analysis no indications could be found that

party political congruence is important in explaining paradiplomacy strategy. On the other hand multiple documents emphasize the need to form coalitions based on shared interests. The AIV (2016: 23) report explains how in case of the Netherlands “changing coalition of regions, depending on subjects” group together to reach their EU objectives. These coalitions are also leading “cross-border cooperation, extending beyond the border provinces”. The report “together strong in Europe” (BZK, 2015) emphasized how provinces are well connected through the IPO in the BNC procedure, and collaborate in IBDT’s with “partners” having the same priority on an EU issue, but also increasingly collaborate in cross-border structures through networks and bilateral cooperation (ROB, 2013; De Lange et al, 2015). A respondent for Zuid-Holland said “if you can find each other in a mutual challenge, even the most wonderful political ‘colors’ can form a coalition together”. Summarizing, based on the political party configurations from the NOS (2015) data and the survey data on paradiplomacy strategy, it can be argued that there is a positive connection between partisan congruence and deployed strategy of paradiplomacy. However, in the document analysis no support can be found for ‘partisan congruence’ importance, and both interviewees don’t think partisan congruence is very relevant and instead emphasize that forming collaborative coalitions based on mutual interests or issues are more important in explaining paradiplomacy. Therefore we cannot accept ‘partisan congruence’ (H5 and H6) as significant to influence the deployed strategy of paradiplomacy.

6.3 Discussion

Although only ten respondents could be included in the survey, we can indeed see some differences when it comes to comparing the SNN regions and its provinces tot the Randstad region and its provinces. Generally, the Randstad region and its provinces score ‘better’ on the dependent variable: cooperative paradiplomacy is more often adopted, while conflicting and non-interaction is adopted slightly less (but not significantly) in comparing to SNN and its province. The Randstad region and its provinces also score higher on the independent variables. Being ‘urbanized’, having a higher ‘partisan congruence’, and ‘perceiving to be taken seriously by the national level’ in comparison to the ‘North’ seems to positively influence adopting cooperative paradiplomacy. When comparing cases, the province of Flevoland can be considered the ‘odd man out’ in the Randstad region. The findings for Flevoland are more in line with SNN and its province, than with the findings for the Randstad. There has been some discussion in the Netherlands about the question of whether Flevoland can and should be considered

“Randstad”. As Flevoland is a very rural region with relatively few inhabitants it is also regularly not considered ‘Randstad’ by the media and even by the Dutch CBS (NRC, 2018; NOS, 2018).

It proves to be hard to determine whether sometimes an example given by the interviewees or found in the document analysis, can really be considered *conflicting paradiplomacy* (i.e. bypassing the state), or *non-interactive paradiplomacy*. For example according to the SNN interviewee, The EU has a transport-corridor policy, through which the EU funds important transport junctures in the EU. The Northern provinces are not included in such structures, and when lobbying the national level, the member state did not seem to think transport in the SNN region had priority over developing the Randstad region, as it is economically more important. The national level did not think it necessary to support SNN in asking the EU to incorporate a funding structure for regions like SNN as well. SNN then actively lobbied the EU, looking for partners, therefore lobbying against the position taken by the member state, but the member state seemed indifferent. Although this specific case fits better in the ‘non-interaction’ category, as SNN independently lobbied interests that the member state seemed to be indifferent about, it also partly overlaps with ‘conflicting paradiplomacy’. It seems like the distinction can be made based on whether the member state ‘cares’ or feels indifferent towards the subject. However, because of the time constraint, this research did not include the national level. Therefore ‘whether the member state feels indifferent’ is based on secondary information and subjective to observers’ bias (in case of interpreting what is said in the interviews). Generally ‘cooperative paradiplomacy’ is preferred by the regions and provinces. A Zuid-Holland respondent mentioned how “we collaborate on at least eighty percent of all matters”. However it must be taken into account that “social desirability effects” play a role. Sub-national actors might not want to negatively influence their position in relation to the member state, but also in relation to the other sub-national actors. This might partly have been an influencing factor in the (unexpected) reaction of the SNN interviewee when asking about the ‘urban/rural divide’ tension.

The determinants ‘perceived openness’, ‘urban/rural divide’ seem to provide a better explanation for cooperative paradiplomacy than for the other two forms of paradiplomacy, who are less influenced by this determinant. Of course the regions and provinces are dependent on the member state. Even though they have gained new competences and some influence at the European level, the regions still need the national level to a very large extent. In this sense the national level is still ‘a gatekeeper’ although a slightly less influential one than before. International relations, but also domestic relations are iterated games. This is reflected by a Zuid-Holland respondent who said “we work

in changing coalitions [...] one time you are collaborating with a certain region, the other time you are not. And all is fine as long as you are being transparent and don't play games. Of course you can get away with it some of the times, and then you might win. But you might need the same actor again in the future.. and then you really need to consider if it is worth it". This reflects how provinces and regions really consider their position towards each other as possible collaboration partners, but also in their relationship with the national level. The way in which is being bypassed also seems influential. Based on the survey, document analysis and interview, sometimes the sub-national actors take a different position and lobby against the position taken by the member state. This is not always considered a problem, as long as it is done 'transparently and openly without playing games'. Therefore we might have found a new determinant that we could call 'diplomatic skills'. This however is very hard to measure, which might explain why it wasn't included in previous research. Thus, while many determinants can be a good reason to look for 'coalitions or cooperation', the same determinants are less influential in determining conflicting paradiplomacy, as the consequences of bypassing on the future relationship between the sub-national actors and the member state could be harmed by it. We could argue that sub-national actors only bypass or adopt a conflicting strategy if the priority of the issue is crucial for the future development of the region.

The importance of these temporary coalitions between various actors seems to be a red line through the results and analysis. The provinces and regions are much more interconnected than was considered in this research. In the interviews, all three respondents emphasized how they constantly collaborate and form coalitions with the municipalities, different cities, coastal regions, safety regions and societal and business organizations. Therefore just considering the lobbying of the *provinces* might have been too simplistic, and should be considered more in relation with the other regions. In this way it was good to incorporate 'partisan congruence' as a determinant for the Netherlands, even though it had a multi-party system, because it has led to the discovery of the importance of 'coalition forming' to reach mutual goals. Just discussing paradiplomacy, or the relation of sub-national authorities in relation to the member state, does not fully incorporate the complexity of the Dutch EU lobbying activities, as it excludes the relationship of sub-national authorities vis-à-vis other regional actors. Also for the provinces, the IPO and HNP are one of many options when it comes to forming coalitions for mutual challenges. However, for the provincial level to influence the Dutch position on new Commission proposals, and to be included in otherwise 'gate-kept' supranational channels, the provincial level needs the national level. Therefore researching the relationship between the provincial level and the national level was still of importance.

Now that the findings have been discussed, the final chapter aims at answering the research question and providing advice on how to improve the relationship between sub-national authorities and the national level.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This final chapter presents the conclusion and discussion of the thesis. In the conclusion the most important results per condition are presented, after which the expectations are discussed and the research question is answered. In the discussion the used methodology is reflected upon, after which some practical and scientific recommendations will be given.

7.1 Answering the research question

Because of the growing regional involvement in International Affairs, the traditional relationship between the sub-national authorities (in this thesis Dutch provinces and their HNP regions) and their member states has been challenged. Both the sub-national level, as the national level has been transitioning into a new role. Much could thus be gained for the Netherlands, and especially the Dutch sub-national authorities themselves, from gaining a better understanding of the Dutch sub-national interest representation at the EU level. This thesis aimed to contribute to the literature on determinants of paradiplomacy strategies (cooperative, conflicting and non-interaction paradiplomacy) that sub-national actors can adopt vis-à-vis their member state. The goal of the research is twofold: a) to gain insights in the reason why Dutch regions choose to either cooperate, conflict or non-interaction paradiplomacy in representing their EU interests vis-à-vis the national level and b) to determine which strategies are most used and why. Corresponding to this goal the main research question was **“Which determinants influence the paradiplomacy strategy that Dutch provinces adopt vis-à-vis their member state, when representing their European interests?”**. To answer the research question a qualitative in depth case study has been performed on two cases consisting of two HNP regions and their respective provinces. An online survey, document analysis and two semi-structured interviews covering both cases were performed in order to gather the necessary data. Generally the most used strategy was cooperative paradiplomacy, followed by non-interactive and the least used conflict paradiplomacy strategy. A high openness of the national level to regional interests seems to increase cooperative paradiplomacy, while a low openness of the national to regional interests only slightly influences non-interactive or conflicting paradiplomacy. The urban/ rural divide seems significant as in that the urban regions with a high population density adopted more of a cooperative strategy than the rural less populated regions and provinces. This however also only slightly seemed to influence non-interactive or conflicting paradiplomacy. Partisan congruence makes sense based on the political configuration between the Randstad region and SNN region as the more ‘cooperating’ region also has a higher partisan congruence. However from document analysis and based on the interviews it does not seem to be a very influential determinant on the strategies. The research finds that ‘coalition forming’ based on

mutual problems instead of political color is important for determining paradiplomacy strategy. These 'coalitions' can also lobby against the state, or against each other for that matter, as long as it happens transparently and openly, without playing dirty games. This also indicates the importance of 'diplomatic tact or skills' as an important determinant of paradiplomacy, and especially the way that 'bypassing' is experienced by the actor that is being 'bypassed'. Figuratively stabbing each other in the back might lead to a short term win, but on the long term trust is harmed, which damages the forming of new coalitions of collaborative structures.

7.2 Methodological discussion

This section discusses whether the chosen research design and operationalization of conditions was sufficient to answer the research question.

A relatively big limitation of this research has been the lack of respondents from the online survey, especially in measuring the dependent variable (paradiplomacy strategy), as this could not be determined in any other way. Drenthe and Groningen are not individually represented, and only Zuid-Holland and SNN have more than one respondent that filled in the survey. This harms the reliability and validity of the research, as now the opinion of one or a few respondents represents the perspective for their whole province or region. In case of the independent variables, the performed document analysis and the held interviews largely compensated for the lack of survey respondents. They provided a control mechanism for the online survey and largely supported the survey results, which increases reliability and validity of the research. Even though it would have been better to include more respondents in the research, still some interesting findings and differences between Dutch provinces and regions were found, on which future research can be based.

Because of the scope and time constraints of this thesis, it was decided to focus on the relationship between provinces/regions vis-à-vis the member state only, not taking into account the municipal level or other regional actors. Retrospectively, this research could have paid more attention to the inter-connectedness of the provinces and region in relation to the whole network of actors, as this research concludes that collaborative coalition forming is an important part of the lobby of the provinces/regions of their European interests. Therefore, just considering the relation between sub-national actor and the national level, might have been too simplistic. Still, within the timeframe of the thesis writing process, it probably would not have been possible to perform an in depth analysis of this whole network and their inter-connectedness.

Generally, the operationalization of the conditions in order to verify the hypotheses and in answering the research question worked well. However in case of measuring the ‘perceived openness of the national level to regional interests’ and for the ‘urban/rural divide and its corresponding ‘tension’, it might have been better to include the perspective of the member state as well, as this thesis only provides the sub-national perspective. In future research this could be taken into account. This partly limits the quality of the retrieved data for the determinants. Finally, as the respondents are skilled diplomats and political beings, we have to take into account the social desirability effect. Respondents might have adjusted their answers in order to protect the reputation of their province or region, and to preserve their relationship with the national level and other regional actors.

7.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusion and discussion, some practical and scientific recommendations can be made.

7.3.1 Scientific recommendations

This thesis only researched the provincial level as sub-national actors. However as can be seen from the results and also from the respondents, it is too simplistic to only look at the provincial level as sub-state actors in relation to the member state as a ‘region’ is much more than only its provinces, and very closely collaborates with the VNG and the municipalities as well. As became clear from the last hypothesis, partisan congruence, it doesn’t really matter whether there is partisan congruence or not, as they focus not so much on political differences, but more on ‘mutual interests’ and then simply form a lobbying coalition with whatever party shares this interest. This can be with other provinces, or regions, but also with municipalities, coastal region, safety regions, and other regions, both within as outside of the Netherlands. For example in the interview with SNN it became clear how they collaborate a lot with the German ‘border’ provinces. Therefore in future research I would recommend to look at regions as ‘the whole that they are’ including regions ‘in a much broader sense’ and also ‘sub-national ‘actors in a much broader sense (thus also including municipalities, cities, and maybe metropolitan-regions). It would also be interesting to focus on this ‘coalition forming’ strategy as a determinant of paradiplomacy strategy vis-à-vis the member state, but also generally further explore how these coalitions are formed and what are favorable factors that increase ‘successful coalitions’ and what bottlenecks prevent coalitions from being formed. The results of this thesis showed the importance of ‘diplomatic skills’, and the importance of always collaborating in an open and transparent way. This could then also be taken into account. Additionally, there is no research on the more specific working of the BNC procedure, IBDT’s and EOBB’s. Gaining a better understanding of these Dutch intra-state channels actually work from both the sub-national and national perspective, and

learning how to improve these mechanisms, could give the two level a chance to improve their relationship when it comes forming a common position on EU matters. Finally, the results of this research are based on limited survey respondents and interviewees opinions, also not incorporating the national level. Therefore future research could also repeat this research, including more and/or different determinants, but this time incorporating all twelve Dutch provinces and their respective HNP regions. The research could be executed in order of a public institution (i.e. a ministry), which would increase the chance of respondents participating.

7.3.2 Practical recommendations

The practical recommendation is two-fold. On one hand the sub-national actors should actively increase and improve working together in ‘collaborative coalitions’ based on mutual interests and challenges. On the other hand sub-national authorities should fight for further institutionalization of their regional position on EU issues into Dutch Constitution.

Even though sub-national authorities really emphasize the importance of the above discussed ‘coalition forming’, various reports (AIV, 2016, BZK, 2015, Figuee et al, 2016) have still pointed out the lack of collaboration between regions, and how this could be improved. This would definitely strengthen the strategic lobbying position that sub-national authorities have to reach their EU goals, and thus is a ‘waste’ if not used to the full potential. Especially the ‘non-urban’ regions, that sometimes feel like they can’t compete with Randstad/urban regions, could really gain from adopting a more ‘collaborative attitude’. This conclusion is in line with the recommendations from the AIV (2016) report that also states that much can still be gained from improving collaborative structures as “too often subnational authorities, even when acting within umbrella organizations, keep representing their own regional interests and not the common interest” (AIV, 2016: 40). This hesitation towards cooperation with other sub-national or regional actors (as it might harm the own interests), prevents sub-national cooperation from being fully developed. Actively working on cooperative coalition structures would increase effective lobbying efforts, but can only work if sub-national authorities are willing to act as a representative of the whole of the collaboration, instead of representing their own interests.

To increase the ‘perceived openness of the national level to regional interests’, much can also still be improved when it comes to the available intra-state channels (i.e. representing EU interests through the national level). Already much progress has been made by involving the regions more in EU policy developments and decision-making (i.e the BNC procedure, IBDT’s, EOBB’s). These arrangements, as described in the Local and Central Government Relations Code, are however ‘non-binding’ and don’t

involve all relevant fields or issues that are important to sub-national actors (AIV, 2016). When comparing the Dutch sub-national actors to for example the German *Länder*, they have autonomous legislative competences that are laid down in the Constitution. The decisions that *Länder* make within their legislative competences are binding on the national authorities, when they determine their EU position regarding that topic (Tatham, 2016; AIV, 2016). In this sense the Netherlands still has miles to go. The AIV report introduces the idea of making sub-national authorities *quasi-ministries*, to help solve this problem (2016: 40). If the sub-national actors were to gain an official and legislative position, this would increase their involvedness in EU-matters through the national level, help to better coordinate a common position that is carried by both the sub-national and national level, and also force the national level to take the regional perspective on EU matters seriously, which could have a positive effect on cooperative paradiplomacy, while diminishing conflicting and non-interactive paradiplomacy. However, for institutional changes to happen, the sub-national actors are still very dependent on the 'good-will' of the national government. Therefore on the short term it might be better to focus on improving these 'cooperative coalition structures' (i.e. the first practical recommendation).

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Appendix A: List of survey-question and open question for interviews

Q1: In representing EU-interests the province/region lobbies through different channels. Through which channels do you lobby the most through the member state? (multiple answers possible)

Options: BNC, IBDT's, EOBB, House of Representatives (parliament), PR's, Council, 'other .. [open question]',

Q2: In representing EU-interests the province/region lobbies through different channels. Through which channels do you lobby the most directly at the EU level? (multiple answers possible)

Options: EP, Commission, CoR, networks, 'other .. [open question]'

Please describe your EU interest representation activity vis-à-vis your member state in general:

Q3: How often do you represent EU interests which are different from the position taken by your member state?

1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often. 5. always

Q4: How often do you work with your member state for similar EU policy outcome?

1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often. 5. always

Q5: how often do you represent EU interests without interacting with your member state?

1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often. 5. always

Please describe the perceived openness of the national level to regional interests.

Q6: The province is capable of influencing the position of the central government in EU affairs, for example through the BNC-procedure and the Intergovernmental dossier teams.

1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often. 5. Always

Q7: The interests of my region/province are taken seriously by the national level.

1. Never

2. Rarely

3. Sometimes

4. Often.

5. always

Open question for during the interview:

Q8: Do you have an example from your daily work in which the provinces were defending another standpoint than the central government at the EU level? If so, would you like to elaborate on this?

Q9: There is said to be a tension between the urban 'Randstad Region' and the 'other' or more rural regions, as the Randstad Region is being favored by the national level. Could you elaborate on this statement? (What do you think about this tension? Do you experience this tension in your daily work?)

Q10: Do you have anything else you want to tell me? Maybe you feel like I am forgetting something very important?

Appendix B: List of approached respondents for survey

Table 16: List of approached respondents ⁶

Represents	function
Regio Randstad	Representative Regio Randstad
Regio Randstad	Policy officer Regio Randstad
Regio Randstad	Coördinator Regio Randstad
Noord-Holland	Representative Provincie Noord-Holland
Noord-Holland	Representative Provincie Noord-Holland
Zuid-Holland	Representative Provincie Zuid-Holland
Zuid-Holland	Representative Provincie Zuid-Holland
Zuid-Holland	Head Internationale Affairs Zuid-Holland
Flevoland	Vertegenwoordiger Provincie Flevoland
Flevoland	EU Policy officer Provincie Flevoland
Utrecht	Representative Provincie Utrecht
SNN	Representative SNN
SNN	Representative SNN
SNN	Senior Public Affairs SNN
SNN	Mayor city of Leeuwarden
SNN	Alderman gemeente Groningen
SNN	Alderman gemeente Emmen
SNN/NG4	Representative NG4
SNN/NG4	Representative NG4
SNN/Wetusus & Watercampus Leeuwarden	EU Representative Wetusus & WaterCampus Leeuwarden
Noord-Holland	Gedeputeerde Noord-Holland Europa
SNN/IPO	Depute province of Groningen / SNN/IPO
SNN/IPO	Depute province of Groningen / SNN/IPO
SNN/IPO	Depute province of Groningen / SNN/IPO
SNN/IPO	Depute province of Groningen / SNN/IPO
SNN/IPO	Depute province of Groningen / SNN/IPO
Friesland	Depute province of Friesland / Portfolio 'Europe'
Friesland	Depute province of Friesland Portfolio 'Europe'
Friesland	Depute province of Friesland/ SNN
Drenthe	Depute province of Drenthe / Europa/ internationalisering
Drenthe	Depute province of Friesland / Coördinatie belangenbehartiging, lobby en externe betrekkingen

⁶ The names of the respondents were excluded from the final version of this thesis for reasons of anonymity and confidentiality.

Appendix C: List of used documents for document analysis

Table 17: List of used document for document analysis

Organization	Type of document	Title	Year
Huis Nederlandse Provincies (HNP)	Publication	Provincies op weg naar betere EU-regelgeving	2018
Interprovinciaal Overleg (IPO) / HNP	Report	Cohesiebeleid: een fundamentele pijler onder de Nederlandse regionale economie	2018
IPO/ HNP	Report	Nederlandse provincies voor betere EU-regelgeving	2015
Regio Randstad	Strategy document	Regio Randstad EUROPASTRATEGIE	2016
Regio Randstad	Report	RANDSTAD MONITOR 2017 RANDSTAD REGION IN EUROPE	2017
Noord Nederland (SNN)	Innovation agenda	Noordelijke Innovatieagenda 2014-2020	2015
Noord Nederland (SNN)	Strategy document	Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization (RIS3) Noord-Nederland	2017
Province Noord-Holland	Strategy document	Europastrategie Noord-Holland 2017-2021	2017
Province of Zuid Holland	Yearplan / policy document	Jaarplan 2017 Europastrategie Zuid-Holland	2017
Provincie Groningen	Agenda / policy document	AGENDA INTERNATIONALISERING PROVINCIE GRONINGEN 2016-2019	2015
Provincie Drenthe	presentatie	Europastrategie en EU-facetbeleid provincie Drenthe	2013
Adviesraad Internationale Vraagstukken	Advisory Report	Well connected? On relations between regions and the European Union	2016
Centre for European Studies	Report	Europa als kans: Better Regulation voor Nederlandse medeoverheden	2015
Raad voor het openbaar bestuur	Report	Met Europa verbonden. Een verkenning van de beteknis van Europa voor gemeenten en provincies.	2013
Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relation	report	Rapport Samen sterk in Europa	2015

Appendix D: Coding scheme for analysis determinants document analysis

Table 18: Used coding scheme for analysis

Determinant	Code ebbreviation	Dutch recognition words	English translation
Openness national level to regional interests	O	N.A. (asked in survey)	
Rural/ urban divide	RU	Centrum, periferie, bevolkingsdichtheid, aantal inwoners, spanning tussen Randstad, economisch hart van Nederland. Stedelijk(e), landelijk(e), Westen, Noorden, Oosten, Zuden,	Centre, periphery, population density, inhabitants, tensions between Randstad (region), economical heart of the Netherlands, urban, rural, North, East, South, West
Partisan congruence	P	Politiek, politici, coalities, verkiezingen, gedeputeerde, nationaal, regionaal, VVD, SP, CU, PVDA, D66, PVV,	Politics, politicians, coalitions, elections, national, regional, VVD, SP, CU, PVDA, D66, PVV,
'Other findings'	Extra	Coalities, samenwerken, samenwerkingsverbanden, cooperatie, netwerken, diplomatiek, skills,	Coalition, collaborating, collaborative, partnership, cooperation, association, alliance, diplomatic skills