



Broad Regional Partnerships and Networks

- The tradition for co-operation in Ribe county

Since many years the tradition for co-operation in Ribe County has been characterised by the wish to find concrete solution to concrete practical problems. Hence, many regional actors have often been engaged in local and regional projects.

Ribe County has a long tradition for informal networks between local and regional enterprises, e.g. within the off shore sector, or enterprises which had many of their activities on the harbour. In older days, these networks had very strong power, because they consisted of people and / or enterprises, which gained a lot of money to the region, and therefore were very important actors for the development of the region.

Because of the "wild west" tradition, which has been characterised Ribe County since Esbjerg began to develop into a town, and the strong wish to solve problems internally in the region, politicians very often found financial support among these informal networks, when local and regional projects should be implemented.

This was also the case when the regional science park was established some 5 years ago. Personal contacts and meetings between politicians and the local and regional business environment, helped a lot to raise the needed capital to start the construction work.

The vision of creating broad regional partnership, is also the idea behind EU Vest, as almost all local mayors in the region take part in the political board. The regional council, which decide on and follow the overall work programme of EU Vest, is also very broadly represented with representatives from business, social partners, educational institutions, local chamber of commerce, politicians and civil servants, to get as many input to the work programme as possible. Last but not least, the underlying principle for the work in EU Vest is that we have to be very concrete and project oriented, and that our projects shall involve as many local, and regional actors as possible. Strategic projects and reports are not success stories in our region....!!!!

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The Danish partnership within the Article 6 project, is a good example on this way to work, and until now we have experienced a lot of good dialogue and common project development.

Many other networks exist in Ribe County, such as "The Environment Network"¹, "The Network of Co-operating Local Economic Developers"² and "The Social Network"³.

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¹ Network of public and private organisations that give extra attention to the environment.

² The Local Economic Developers from all municipalities

³ Network of public and private organisation that give extra attention to the implementation of the inclusive labourmarket

