Regional Authority in Cross Border Dynamics
A study of the Öresund Committee’s formal authority between the years 2003-2007
Abstract

The Öresund Region is a historical cross border region working over the national borders of Sweden and Denmark. The regional administration, the Öresund Committee, is the only political forum that encompasses the whole region and serves its interests collectively. Not only is it cooperating with the national governments but also has a close relationship with the Nordic Council and especially with the European Union. According to a method developed by Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks and Arjan H. Schakel, it is possible to retrieve a Regional Authority Index which mirrors the formal authority of a region. The method is evaluated in accordance to the complications of the Öresund Region’s dual nationality and finds that the Öresund Committee has a rather concealed role with greater indirect impact than it is given credit for. However, in terms of formal authority, the Öresund Committee has a weak position and shares no rule with higher political entities, such as the Danish, Swedish and European central administrations.
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1. Introduction - The Emergence of Regions

European Union has experienced an undeniable trend in its evolutionary process: the growing conceptualisation of the regional entity. The Westphalian nation-state is no longer the most obvious or dominating desire of the European Union. Instead, the tendency to emphasise the region as the focal point of operation has begun to compete with the spotlight on larger national arenas. Such cooperation has been able to grow by means of Community initiatives such as structural funding with the aspiration of a productive future.

Regions are emerging with the lust to expand and disregard their overshadowing national characteristics. Seeing that in international arenas, different nations have different interests therefore within a national arena, regions opt for their specific needs. Moreover are the historical regions that have been divided by national lines which have created unnatural divisions for the population. In the case of the Öresund Region, history provides a well-established agenda for the area to operate on a joint basis and serves every possibility for amounting to distinction.

Scholars who investigate the field of regions have developed several approaches within the field of European Studies. Among the ideas, decentralization of states and multi level governance are two prominent features in this domain. They are important sources of inspiration for the Regional Authority Index (RAI) that is an innovative manner by which it is possible to measure the formal authority exerted by a region. With regards to a newly instigated time of raising regional relationships, this study will conduct an examination of a unique and promising region, namely the Öresund Region.
1.1 The Öresund Region

The area that constitutes the region Öresund is situated on and around the sound named Öresund on the south west tip of Scania province of Sweden and the Eastern area of Zealand of Denmark. This particular area has a vivid historical past since it has always been a heavily travelled section in the Scandinavian ring, both in terms of crossing waters and travelling by water. Trade and contact has always been a common for the population of the region. Due to the attractiveness of the prevalent land as well as rich soil, struggles to conquer this area have always been intense, especially between Denmark and Sweden.

Since Öresund is a much travelled passage, toll taxes have brought much income to whoever ruled this area. In the 17th century, the current Scania area included Halland and Blekinge and was Danish territory which meant that the Öresund water was entirely controlled by the Danes. Toll taxes on the sound allowed the Danish King to uphold a naval base which was their main instrument of power and safety. Centralization and continuous state-building was also enabled with the tolling income and the outcome of the rule of the Öresund sound made the Danish some of the most powerful territorial rulers in Europe at the time (Glete 1999, p.132). The Swedish were not blind to see the potential in the area and in 1658 the Roskilde Peace marked the Scanian accession to Sweden. Since then, the sound has remained the boundary between Denmark and Sweden.

Today the disputes over this turf have grown into a well-invested cooperation. On both sides of the sound, there is a cross border dynamic that is resulting in urbanisation and a steadily increasing population. Denmark is a member of the EU since 1973 yet Sweden joined as late as 1995. Up until this point, the discussions regarding building a bridge to connect the sound had been alarmingly many but the 1995 accession sealed the deal. The construction of the bridge was affirmed at this time and the impressive structure was finished in 2000. Connectivity within the region started to slowly prosper beyond its previous character. There are several reasons for the upbeat emergence of the Öresund Region which will be discussed later in the text.

The Öresund Region has since 1993 instigated a newborn devotion to creating an encouraging working climate and a productive area. The results have been hugely positive and much due to the formation of the Öresund Committee (ÖC), which is the only political entity that forms and operates in the entire region. Initially, it mainly focused on the Danish metropolitan area of Copenhagen and the city of Malmö but time passed and today the ÖC
involves up to 12 member organisations. Danish members are Region Hovedstaden, Region Sjælland, Københavns Kommune, Frederikssberg Kommune, Bornholms Regionskommune, Kommunekontaktråd Hovedstaden, and Kommunekontaktråd Sjælland. Swedish members are Region Skåne, Malmö stad, Helsingborgs stad, Lunds kommun, and Landskrona kommun (ÖC Member, 13.05.08). This organisation is divided up into components with various functions: The Presidency, the Executive board, the Committee and finally the administrative unit, the Secretariat (ÖC Org, 10.05.08). These functions are operated by politicians from both national systems. The rather complex functionality of the ÖC will be presented and discussed later on. The ÖC aspires to be a political platform and forum for regional actors and lobbyist of the region’s interest (ÖC Vision, 14.05.08).

The Öresund Region is tightly entwined with the European Union (EU) initiated project for cross-national developments, entitled Interreg where Öresund is granted the classification IIIA. EU structural funding assists the region to implement development projects, altogether with a sum of nearly 31 million Euros whilst the region as a whole has a total budget of approximately 62 million Euros (Inforegio 2004). The European Commission (2004) writes in their Inforegio Action Report that “the main objectives of the programme are to foster economic development and co-operation in the region concerned”. The Nordic Council is another vital part of the cooperation between the Nordic countries as it serves as a influential aid for collaboration among Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

In light of the Öresund’s emerging profile on a European as well as Nordic arena, the Danish capital is thriving whilst the Swedish is absent. Copenhagen lies as the heart of the Öresund Region with a booming metropolitan area. Moreover, the Danish political centre resides here and has its attention directed on the area. However, the intensity and muscle that the region is projecting is visibly absent in Stockholm. The distant Swedish political centre suggests a lesser interest in the Öresund compared to the Danish. As the region is growing in velocity, the discussion will lay on whether it will become a contender to the Swedish capital in terms of being the national window to Europe.
1.2 Scientific Problem

The purpose of this study is to examine what formal authority that the Öresund Committee encompasses as a regional administration between years 2003-2007. The measurement will be conducted by utilising the Regional Authority Index, by means of the categories self rule and shared rule. The ability to exercise legislative power, i.e. formal authority, and other possible exercised fields of influence in correlation with other actors, such as the Nordic Council, the European Union and relevant regional actors, will be considered.

1.3 Previous Research Showcase a Stronger Sub-National State

The concept of multi level governance was developed by several authors interested in the appearance of dominating sub-national levels in the EU; however, Liesbet Hooghe and Gary
Marks coined the expression (Hooghe & Marks 2003). They are the authors recognised for the model and even though it is criticised to be an approach rather than a theory, their ideas have been well-established in the field of European Studies.

Multi level governance was initially a response to and an attack on Andrew Moravcsik’s view of intergovernmentalism in the EU in the 90s. He argued that national interests and intergovernmental bargaining were the two most important components of national entities (Laffan in Richardson 2006, p. 42; Moravcsik in Richardson 2006, p.81). Furthermore, he argued that national preferences are issue-specific and do reflect upon national society in accordance to liberal intergovernmentalism. These ideas are strongly connected to the central governmental role of a nation whilst multi level governance focuses on the emergence of sub-national actors and entities.

In opposition to Moravcsik, multi level governance wants to emphasize the “unravelling of central state control” through allowing “decision makers to adjust the scale of governance to reflect heterogeneity” (Hooghe & Marks 2003, p.234; 236). Basically, this approach asserts that central decision making is stiff and does not mirror the national population’s wishes. Instead, the emphasis should be divided into several tiers of territorial administrations to better reflect and adjust to the wants of a country as a whole. Much worth to mention are the contributions to this polycentric governance theory by other authors such as Ian Bache, Arthur Benz, Daniel Elazar, Matthew Flinders, and Wallace Oates.

As discussed above, the emerging regions in the EU have resulted in new budding theories to explain the functionality of these arenas. Variants of regions have been presented as each area has specific characteristics that need to be nursed. The cross border region of Öresund is part of the regionalisation process in the EU and has received plentiful attention. It is an interesting and challenging unit to investigate due to its multinational personality but also creates a firm example of the current transformation in the EU.

1.4 Sources
The authors Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks have together spurred the field of European Studies, e.g. with the approach multi level governance. Accordingly, they have gained recognition of sorts and maintained an interest in the sub-national levels of the European sphere. After adding a member, Arjan H Schakel, they have recently published a new method to measure regional authority, the Regional Authority Index. They declare this a finished model but encourage readers to criticize the model because they reason that “[i]t has proved
easier to formulate hypotheses concerning [authority] effects of government structure than to test their validity” (Hooghe et al 2008a, p.1).

By applying the RAI method, it is possible to measure the functions of the regional administration, the ÖC, in comparison to central governmental structures. As mentioned, the cross border region Öresund involves two national governments, the Nordic Council and the EU. This requires the empirical material to be of various origins so that several perspectives can be accounted for. The collection of material will be publications and analyses from the ÖC, Interreg IIIA Secretariat, European Commission, the Nordic Council and other regional entities that are involved in projects with the ÖC. Complementing material are publications from the Organisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other Öresund-entities such as ÖresundDirekt.

The empirical material will be used to discuss the different categories of self rule and shared rule to help illustrate the reasoning for the scoring scheme. Publications by different organizational structures will provide different perspectives that are significant to the resulting outcome. Without a varied spectrum of sources, the result would more likely be unreliable, uninteresting and monotone.

1.5 Source Criticism

The basis to gather results of substance when applying RAI is to have diverse sources of empirical material. Since the cross border region’s administration is a mix of Swedish and Danish actors on local and sub-national levels, there are a multitude of sources to aggregate material. Yet these sources also hold a disparity in quality. In this case, while it is extremely important to allow the sources to speak for themselves one must keep in mind that they are already subjective to various degrees.

The documents collected from different organizations and institutions have an aspiration and intention for their references at all times, a hidden agenda some might claim. To validly apply the document data from the ÖC, it is fundamental to ponder that they may prefer to put themselves in a positive light in order to seem successful. Additionally, they perhaps will have a different view of their situation than an onlooker because “for some researchers [their] document represents a reflection of reality” (May 2001, p.182). Their particular reflection of reality may not be the same as a bystander which makes it my task to reflect upon the reflection made by the ÖC. An evaluation of a project may very well be very positive but for other involved actors the effects may very well be horrendous. On the other hand, worth
noticing is that the ÖC is affected and managed by several separate actors and may thus have pressure to produce balanced and preferably unbiased information.

It is essential to convey the Interreg IIIA Secretariat’s perspective that brings a European and supranational perspective which may apply pressure upon the ÖC to achieve certain goals. The European Commission is the dominating entity of the Interreg Secretariat, leaving them with a different viewpoint as well. Significantly, the Nordic Council provides a Scandinavian perspective since it has the interest of Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden at hand. Other local authorities in the area should also be included to have ÖC member perspective from below.

Lastly, non formal authoritative actors, such as market- and civil society actors, would be interesting to account for those affected by implementations made by the ÖC. However, in order to grasp an idea of the ÖC’s authority and influence, the RAI method does not allow room for all entities. Surely, these actors play a role in the influence that a region exercises but limitation will be set here to exclude these parts to make the measurement conceivable, also in regards to time.

The RAI is created by well-oriented European Studies scholars with awareness of the problematic issues in discussing new orders of governance. In their method to measure regional authority, they criticize their own previous statements and have proven to revise their results radically. In addition to self-scrutiny, they have investigated six other methods of decentralization measurement to see the differences in evaluation. This allows the authors to have a wide scope on weaknesses and strength as well as possibilities and musts of evaluation. The RAI-method can thus be regarded as a carefully fashioned system with high liability due to their thorough ex-ante investigation.

Moreover, the method will gain more bearing once the method has been applied and dissected by others other than themselves. As it is a newly introduced technique, this may lead to discrepancies in its framework that are oblivious to practitioners as us. Even though it was carefully developed, it needs to be examined further before it can be praised as thoroughly legitimate. The RAI will be applied to the best of our ability but adjustments may be made to make it correspond with our scientific problem and material.
1.6 Disposition

The introductory chapter has presented the scientific problem and the case study that will be evaluated against the RAI. The sources that will be handled have also been established as well as discussed in a critical manner.

Chapter two will present the RAI theory model and its underlying categories, self rule and shared rule. Their subcategories will also be established as well as a brief instruction on how to apply these to the empirical material. The concept of authority will be defined in order to debate it rightfully in the analysis. Limitation and advantages versus disadvantages of the RAI will also be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Chapter three is the analysis chapter that is divided into two sections with four respective sub-sections. The first section is self rule with the subdivisions institutional depth, policy scope, fiscal autonomy, and representation. The second section is shared rule with the subdivisions law making, executive control, fiscal control, and constitutional reform. These subdivisions are all attentively examined and marked in points according to the RAI while using relevant sources that involve the ÖC.

Final discussions bring in comparative data from other regions to establish the Öresund Region’s relative rank. Conclusions will be asserted in a closing chapter and reflections regarding the future of the ÖC will also be stated.

2. Theory and Method

The issues of theory and method form a close relationship and become entwined in this study’s framework. The Regional Authority Index (RAI) is an analytical framework from which this study will attempt to examine the Öresund Region as a case study. The RAI is the roster that divides the collection of the empirical material and discussion into parts. Therefore, there will be a combination of extracting empirical data and prescribing this data with interpretation. As a result, the RAI becomes the theory as it is the frame of reference that establishes which definitions and sets of values that are used in the handling of empirical material. It stabilises our theoretical approach in the sense that it formulates the assumptions and prerequisites that directs the structure of the discussion. The RAI also serves a method because it distinguishes what type of material to collect by addressing certain actions to be researched.
Consequently, the theoretical framework that will be used also appoints the methodological approach that assembles the collection of ideas implemented in this study. Since the method serves to estimate formal authority, it presents several pinpointed categories to investigate this matter. In this sense, it delivers the manner on what needs to be collected.

### 2.1 Theory: Epistemological Issues

The measuring method that retrieves a RAI is used by evaluating a region by gathering points in several different categories such as representation, fiscal autonomy and policy competencies. The average score can be measured against other scores of other regions to evaluate them against each other on an equal basis. This process may well be regarded as a system to retrieve rather quantitative results thus could be considered as a positivistic research technique. The results are retrieved by evaluating assumptions about regions in different categories by collecting empirical material that produce these assumptions.

On the other hand, quantitative results are produced and presented by the usage of empirical material that is, by my comments, not necessarily objective. In a truly positivistic spirit, the subject and object of knowledge should be separated and the observer should be truly uninvolved without any value judgements present (Delanty & Strydom 2003, p.13-14). However, this study’s does not validly recognize an entirely positivistic based approach and disclaim that the RAI method is purely positivistic.

Consequently, the empirical material used to establish the conclusions in the categories of the measurement method are collected from different agencies with different preferences and goal which makes it vital to take this specific instance in consideration. Thus, in a qualitative effect, it is essential to treat the data collected carefully because qualities of specific value-j judgements may have to be taken into account depending from which entity serves the information. Interpretative actions strongly infer that it is impossible to be free of value judgements and objectivity while handling any type of information, i.e. intended for a research problem such as in this text (Delanty & Strydom 2003, p. 85-86).

Max Weber was and still is a prominent figure in the interpretative tradition and believed in researching “social science [as] an empirical science” while he argued that this study could not be conducted from using a framework of analytical laws because these would make the research unintelligible (Weber in Delanty & Strydom 2003, p.89). Positivism and explanatory science could merely be considered to be accurate as far as rule of thumb. He regarded how the researcher would take on material and validate them as the most interesting aspect of research.
Ultimately, the Regional Authority Index does offer a positivistic explanation to a regional authority measure but hermeneutic handling of the material used to reach this explanation is equally important to the outcome of this research.

2.2 Method: Retrieving a Regional Authority Index

There is no ordinary means by which one measures authority in political science. However, the article “Measuring Regional Authority” by Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks & Arjan H. Schakel map out the primary components of a method that delivers a system by which it is possible to measure the formal authority of regional administrations. The method strictly discusses the formal authority of a regional government but dismisses involvement of cultural, social and economical perspectives that under some circumstances might endow posture to regional authority. It is challenging to measure the validity of such an abstract notion, authority, but the authors claim grasp the perception of regional authority through a regional index, the Regional Authority Index (Hooghe et al 2008a, p.10).

The challenge is to separate authority from the sources where it is assumed to be located. The method agrees that regional governments may have authority that is different from formal authority because formal authority does not necessarily tell us how influential a region is. If the actions of the ÖC are measured in terms of formal authority, it would not show the full influence the Committee exerts. Despite that the RAI method measures formal authority and not influence, influence will still be an element of our discussion. Influence can be described as “having an effect on the attitudes and opinions of other through intentional action – the effect may or may not be to change the opinion or to prevent a possible change” (Parsons 1963, p.38). Thus, if the ÖC has an effect on a central administration’s decision or process through intentional action, this study would constitute it as meaningful influence and therefore bring it up for discussion. It is the purpose of this study to use the RAI method to conduct an analysis of the underlying correlation between a regional administration and other actors in terms of formal authority with a parallel discussion on meaningful influence.

In order to fully appreciate the usage of this method, strict definitions are required to make an accurate estimation of formal regional authority. In this case, the unit of investigation has been entitled as a cross border region which makes it suitable to distinguish the difference, no matter how small it may be, between a region and a cross border region.

A region may be described as a distinct territorial unit that operates on neither local nor national governmental level but instead works as an intermediate. It distinctly has a regional
government that has legislative and/or executive institutions to operate authoritative decision making (Jönsson, Tägil & Törnqvist 2003; Hooghe et al 2008a). In addition, a cross border region has the specific distinction to that it has a “configuration that span[s] one or more state boundaries” (Jönsson, Tägil & Törnqvist 2003, p. 147). But like the region, it also has a distinct territory and is an intermediate between local and national levels. Also, it often has a strong background of stemming from both public and private local/regional actors (Jönsson, Tägil & Törnqvist 2003, p. 149).

In the following I will examine the notion of formal authority and present self rule versus shared rule and their subcategories. The subcategories are replicated exactly as described in the article “Operationalizing Regional Authority” by Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks and Arjan H. Schakel.

### 2.2.1 Authority

Our study wishes to “measure the extent to which a regional government exercises formal authority” (Hooghe et al 2008a, p.6). Distinguishing between the concepts formal authority, authority and power is valuable to the accuracy of the forthcoming discussion. We seek to investigate formal authority, not general authority or power.

Nonetheless, according to the authors the concepts behind the RAI are as follows: Formal authority is described as authority exercised in legislating rules, e.g. in constitutions and legislative documents. Authority, in turn, is merely legitimate power that is binding due to accepted principles of governance (Dahl in Hooghe et al 2008a; Hooghe et al 2008a, p.6). Lastly, power is the ability to make another actor to do something they would not necessarily do or to have the ability to change behaviour (Pettiford & Steans 2005).

Max Weber (1983, p.144) writes that authority does not include power or influence but instead, authority is the prospect of having specific or all orders followed by a certain group of people. A vital element of authority is legitimacy and to have legitimacy is the ability to produce decisions that are abided. Conclusively to summarize the definitions provided, this study follows the assertion that formal authority is to have the legitimate ability to produce legislative decisions that are binding principles of governance and followed by a certain group of people.

Formal authority is dissimilar to the actual strength of a regional government because formal authority does not necessarily express a complete notion of how much command a regional government actually exerts. To discuss general regional authority of the Öresund
Region, it would be essential to include other aspects such as partisanship, public opinion and corporate actors that take a lot of space on this particular regional arena. Otherwise, the outcome would be incomplete. However, since general authority is too wide-ranging and cannot be measured through the RAI this study will continue focusing only on formal authority. Importantly, this shall not be confused with forthcoming text where we will momentarily refer to formal authority by simply stating authority.

2.3 Framework: Self rule versus Shared Rule

The first point in measuring regional authority is to divide regional authority into the two categories self rule and shared rule. Although the domains are interconnected through political participation and other spheres of action, it is important to analytically divide them to fully evaluate the realm of authority that the region exercises. The category self rule clarifies the region’s independent ability to make decisions at a distance from central control and to which extent the regional decision making process is developed (Hooghe et al 2008a, p.7). The latter domain, shared rule, displays the region’s capacity to shape central decision making. Both of these categories in turn are subdivided into four areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self Rule</th>
<th>Shared Rule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Depth</td>
<td>Law Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scope</td>
<td>Executive Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Autonomy</td>
<td>Fiscal Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation</td>
<td>Constitutional reform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These sub-categories enable us to measure to which extent different individual capacities are facilitated in a region. A regional government is seen as a territorial jurisdiction with a certain degree of authority over certain actions and it is up to this method to specify the territorial scope and in which spheres of authority and action this is exercised. In this fashion, one can individually assess pieces of what can be summed up as the abstract quality, regional authority.

2.4 Self Rule

The four categories that are evaluated in self rule are institutional depth, policy scope, fiscal autonomy, and representation. These are then divided into different classifications of points where the criteria for each point are specified in the following charts. All charts are made
accessible by the articles series regarding the method of extracting regional authority developed by Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks and Arjan H. Schakel.

**Institutional Depth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>No functioning general-purpose administration at the regional level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A deconcentrated, general-purpose, administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A non-deconcentrated, general-purpose, administration subject to central government veto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A non-deconcentrated, general-purpose, administration not subject to central government veto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This category evaluates to what extent a practicing self-government exists in a region. The spectrum of which a regional administration rules itself may be none to complete autonomy from the central government. The administration cannot be assigned a specific or special task, but must be general purpose. Deconcentration in this category refers to a regional administration that is subordinate to the central administration (Hooghe et al 2008b, p.2). Furthermore, in order to score highly on this scale, the region must be able to lawfully use ex-ante and ex-post control against the central entity (Hooghe et al 2008b, p.4).

**Policy Scope**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>The regional government does not have authoritative competence over economic policy, cultural educational policy or welfare state policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The regional government has authoritative competence in one of the following areas: economic policy, cult-educational policy, welfare state policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The regional government has authoritative competencies in at least TWO of the following areas: economic, cultural education policy, welfare state policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The regional government meets the criteria for 2 and is endowed with at least two of the following: residual powers, regional policy force, authority over own institutional set-up, authority over local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The regional government meets the criteria for 3 and has authority over immigration or citizenship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This grouping assesses the regional authority in regards to policy making. It discusses to which extent the region may influence the range of policies present. There are three groups to be evaluated:

- Economic policy: regional development, transport including roads, environment
- Cultural-educational policy: schools, universities, vocational training, sports, libraries
- Welfare policy: health, hospitals, social welfare, pension, social housing
If the regional authority is involved in more than one area, one must evaluate whether the regional government has constitutive or coercive influence. To be rated highly on this scale, the region must have authority in regards to immigration and citizenship.

**Fiscal Autonomy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>The central government sets the base and rate of all regional taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The regional government sets the rate of minor taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The regional government sets the base and rate of minor taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The regional government sets the rate of at least one major tax: personal income, corporate, value added or sales tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The regional government sets the base and rate of at least one major tax: personal income, corporate, value added, or sales tax</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This category is the most complicated to estimate due to its deceiving branches of information. According to the instigators, public spending is not relevant to this chart yet tax revenue is. Public spending is not applicable due to the fact that in some countries welfare benefits are determined at the central level and distribute to the regional level to implement. In these cases, the sub-national administration will seem spend large amounts while actually it is a central decision based on an expensive welfare system (Hooghe et al 2008b, p.8-9).

The aim of this category is to assess the fiscal autonomy without necessarily looking at revenues or spending. The sub-national government’s discretion over revenue in OECD reports is applied. The information from OECD is simplified by evaluating it from an annual measure in separate levels of government that are close to the sector that is wished to measure (Hooghe et al 2008b, p.10). The tax portfolio should be assessed as a whole by reading minor and major taxes and as such determines unilateral revenues. The three key elements are tax autonomy, co-decision on national tax regimes and intergovernmental grants (Swenden in Hooghe et al 2008b, p.11).

**Representation**

The category estimates to what extent regional actors may select regional office holders. It is divided into two separate sub-categories, namely legislative and executive. In the case of selecting an executive, it is evaluated if it is by regional or central or by a dual cooperation (Hooghe et al 2008b, p.12).
Legislative/Assembly

0: The region has no regional assembly
1: The region has an indirectly elected regional assembly
2: The region has a directly elected assembly

The assembly the legislative division and is defined as “a self-standing institution with a fixed membership using parliamentary procedures to make decisions” (Hooghe et al. 2008b, p.12). This does exclude committees which are seen as secondary central units. The scale asserts the capacity to choose legislators by either direct or indirect election in the region.

Executive

0: The regional executive is appointed by central government
1: Dual executives appointed by central government and the regional assembly
2: The regional executive is appointed by a regional assembly or directly elected

An executive is “a decision making body that has the task of putting laws into effect” (Hooghe et al. 2008b, p.13). The task is to assess how this decision making body is chosen and if it is by regional or central government or a collaboration of the two.

2.5 Shared Rule

Most regions are not completely self-ruled but share their decision making power with a central government at the national level. The four components that evaluate a region’s sovereign stamina are law making, executive power sharing, fiscal control and constitutional reform.

Law Making

Score 0.5 points for each of following characteristics.

- Regions are unit of representation in legislature, i.e. the distribution of representation is determined by regional weights, rather than ‘one citizen, one vote’ in the country as a whole
- Regional governments designate representatives in the legislature
- Regions at a given level have majority representation in the legislature
- Legislature with regional representation has extensive legislative authority, i.e. it can veto ordinary legislation or it can be overridden only by a supermajority in the other chamber
The importance of this category is to estimate regional input that is to what extent regional representatives are included in the national legislature. Furthermore, to what degree this input is evaluated and the authority the region has in putting in a veto on decisions are other estimates that lead to high scores. Basically, regions can shape legislature in two ways, namely “regions may frame the principle of representation, or regional governments themselves may be directly represented in the legislature” (Hooghe et al 2008b, p.16). Regional representation based on relative population is strictly excluded as an influence and scores zero points on this scale.

**Executive Control**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>No routing meetings between central government and regional governments to negotiate policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Routing meetings between central government and regional government without legally binding authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Routing meetings between central government and regional governments with authority to reach legally binding decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regional powers and national powers and the division of executive authority are the matter concerned in this category. These meetings score highly if they are routine and not sporadically inclined but also as well as conclusive as in decisions must be taken within these meetings.

**Fiscal Control**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Regional governments or their representatives in the legislature are not consulted over the distribution of tax revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regional governments or their representatives in the legislature negotiate over the distribution of tax revenues, but do not have a veto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Regional governments or their representatives in the legislature have a veto over the distribution of tax revenues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Just as in fiscal control in self-rule, fiscal control in shared rule is by no means less complicated. Taxation is a matter of legislative or executive shared rule. Regional governments may influence the taxation procedures directly through meetings or indirectly through their assembly or legislature that hold regional representation.
**Constitutional Reform**

| 0: | The central government and/or national electorate can unilaterally change the constitution |
| 1: | A legislature based on the principle of regional representation must approve constitutional change; or constitutional change requires a referendum based on the principle of equal regional representation (i.e. approval in a majority of regions) |
| 2: | Regional governments are a directly represented majority in a legislature which can do one or more of the following: |
|     | - Postpone constitutional reform |
|     | - Introduce amendments |
|     | - Raise the decision hurdle in the other chamber |
|     | - Require a second vote in the other chamber |
|     | - Require a popular referendum |
| 3: | A majority of regional governments can veto constitutional change |

Constitutional reform sets an important ability aspect in regional authority as it is not merely concerned with decision making but goes beyond this entity to distinguish where authority is allocated. Regional authority scores on the extent that they are required for national constitutional change. This is measured by the regional necessary involvement and power to veto constitutional change (Hooghe et al 2008b, p.22).

2.6 **Limitations of this study**

The RAI is constructed and constricted to measure one region’s formal authority, meaning in a political, institutional and legislative perspective. The categories discuss democratic representation, fiscal autonomy, institutional decision making and influence on policy implementations. In this respect, the categories involve the competencies of the region in terms of authority and influence on formal and institutional matters. Left out of discussion are factors such as identity, civil society and pure economics because they allow us to look at other aspects than mere formal authority. Economics are faintly discussed in the effects the region has regarding the taxation system. It strictly discusses the components involved in a region’s government formal authority, not authority in a general sense.

It is decisive to distinguish between sub-national levels. Sub-national levels are different under different national governments and the RAI method does not allow local government influence to determine regional authority. The entire focus of this measurement method is regional authority whereas other methods of decentralization do take local and other sub-national governments into account. Nevertheless, the Regional Authority Index captures several intermediate regional levels but excludes levels with an average size under 150,000 people. These are factors that make distinct features against the concept of decentralization.
The result may then be that countries with only one sub-national level of government, namely local, will suffer from withdrawn points.

Since our case study, Öresund, passes over national borders it is categorized as a cross border region. However, how to apply the RAI in the case of a cross border region is not defined directly by Hooghe, Marks and Schakel. Öresund does not compile into the category of being an asymmetrical or special autonomous regions which are the other options other than region. Due to this, we will make adjustments in the discussion but consider the Öresund Region a ‘regular region’. Therefore, due to the Öresund’s complex nature of having both Sweden and Denmark as the two national entities involved, this study will have to take in two central governments’ standpoints and collaborations, such as the Nordic Council. In addition, the supranational shadow of the EU will be considered.

The study will be limited to the years of 2003 to 2007. The Öresund Bridge opened in the year 2000 resulting in an increase of commuting across the Sound. Several important events happened in 2003 to mark the future of the region. Firstly, it was the 10 year anniversary of the ÖC. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) produced a report on the Öresund Region for future measures. A new tax agreement was implemented and a new program period with the Interreg IIIA Secretariat had just begun the previous year, signifying much change in the region.

2.7 Advantages and Disadvantages

The method has so far been tested on 42 countries by its authors in the first publication of the RAI. Since it is a new framework, it has not yet been scrupulously measured and practiced so it must be implemented watchfully. However, the authors have consulted other specialists within the methodological field to find sufficient criticism. Arjan H. Schakel has conducted a comparison of seven different methods. He distinctly writes “I am interested in systematic sources of bias or error – not random error” that methods like RAI have done in the past (Schakel 2008, p. 11). This initiative suggests the method has been meticulously plotted upon its publishing.

The method includes short discussions on other types of regions, namely asymmetrical and special autonomous regions. Still, it does not thoroughly do so for one to understand these special variations of regions completely. There is a short definition of how these types of regions differ from ‘regular regions’ and how to instead implement the measurement if measuring an asymmetrical region. Nonetheless, the definitions are wide and leave the reader
with a range of options. With such an open scope to use the method, there is a great possibility to fault while investigating which is both negative and positive. Negatively, it may be difficult for the practitioner to narrow the scope of the investigation. Positively, it is possible to have tally the material with different approaches which may lead to interesting results rather than a tightly structured frame.

Another aspect that may serve equally ambivalent in the concluding outcome is the fact that the RAI is not specifically limited to measuring European regions. Instead, it has already been applied to nations such as the USA and Australia. This establishes that it has a flexible character because there are numerous prerequisites for all regions that measured.

3. Analysis

The forthcoming analysis will be divided into two chapters, self rule and shared rule which are then divided into four respective subsections. These subsections are in turn discussed with relevant material and examples in attempt to make a suitable assumption that will score points in accordance to the Regional Authority Index (RAI). A multitude of perspectives on each issue will be accounted for with the aim of making a suitable estimation for each subsection. Each point collected proves stronger formal authority within the region and the regional administration, the Öresund Committee (ÖC). Latterly, the results will be charted and compared against scores of other regions to understand its relative rank.

3.1 Self Rule

Formal regional authority is measured in self rule in the categories: institutional depth, policy scope, fiscal autonomy and representation. These categories discuss to what extent the regional administration exercises formal authority and influence on its own as a political entity and within its regional area.

3.1.1 Institutional Depth

The institutional depth of the Öresund Region lies in the hands of the ÖC. The ÖC is a functioning political organ that involves both local Swedish and Danish politicians to work together at this particular regional level despite their other key positions within other regional
arenas. The administration is hierarchically subordinated to the Swedish and Danish national central government level and does not have any official authority (OECD, 2003). However, it can be officially constituted as a regional administration because it is the only political platform that gathers the region as a whole.

The initial purpose of the ÖC was to create a forum or network for politicians in the local and regional entities but it has grown into a strong policy network organisation. It is highly involved in regional projects, partly due to the regionally enthusiastic big brother, the European Union (EU). According to its own description, the ÖC wishes to be a political platform or forum for local and regional administration (ÖC Org, 05.10.08). In the ÖC Constitutional Charter (§1 & §2, 2007), it is written that “the [ÖC] is a political platform for local and regional governments, that shall collaborate to ensure legitimacy […] in the entire region” and that “the [ÖC] operates to endorse common cross border interests by corresponding to national and international governments” [own translation]. It provides an agenda for the ÖC’s motivation but not essentially the position it holds in reality and in relation to national and supranational governments.

Moreover, the ÖC does have the components of self-governance such as a building, personnel and budget. The ÖC is constructed by four entities that form decisions regarding the Öresund Region and constitutes the regional administration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The ÖC Chairman</th>
<th>The Executive Committee</th>
<th>The Öresund Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 chairman and 1 vice chairman, chairmanship rotates annually</td>
<td>12 politicians, 6 Swedish and 6 Danish 4 meetings / year</td>
<td>36 publicly elected members, 18 Swedish and 18 Danish 2 meetings / year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Secretariat is located in the Danish capital, Copenhagen, and is the body that serves the task of implementing political decisions. The Secretariat mainly has the assignment to serve the political cooperation within the divisions as well as implementing decisions made. Besides this, it hosts the Interreg Secretariat for EU programme Interreg IIIA Öresund, Interreg IVA and ÖresundDirekt (ÖC Org, 10.5.08). The other divisions within the ÖC consist of politicians that take place as the executive chairman within working groups and the Committee itself. Each member administration, e.g. Fredriksborg Kommune, Region Skåne, Malmö stad, has a fixed number of members attending the meetings. They summarize 36
chair members who collectively form the ÖC. Furthermore, each national country has two officials who serve as observers during these assemblies (ÖC Member 13.05.08).

The Öresund Committee has its managing authority situated in Denmark that eagerly collaborates with NUTEK, the Swedish agency for economic and regional growth, which is the paying authority who expends the costs requested from the Secretariat (Inforegio 2004). The furthered cross border collaboration is partly due to the European Commission proposal to contribute to the development in the region by financing through the programme Interreg IIIA, a Community Initiative Programme and more specifically is an inter-regional program. The most recent program period ended in 2007 and on March 28, 2008 the new Interreg IV A started (ÖC Org, 10.5.08). Around half the financing is contributed by the EU and other proceeds are forwarded by the Nordic Council and other social and economic partners as well as non-governmental organisations in the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal authority</th>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional administration i.e. Region Skåne</td>
<td>Öresund Committee</td>
<td>ÖC Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local administration i.e. Communes, Amts</td>
<td>Regional decision group</td>
<td>Interreg Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, the Öresund is a general-purpose jurisdiction entailing it has more than one specific policy area. The ÖC is assigned a variety of tasks to manage i.e. economic growth and labour market competition, environment, identity-building. It is many times emphasized in media as the promoter of identity-building and labour-market but there is a wide range of policies that are operated on (OECD, 2003).

The ÖC is a transnational forum and managed by national government actors of difference degrees, despite the fact that they reside on different national borders. The overshadowing EU functions as a boost in realizing regional developments that the national administration cannot or does not promote as vigorously. The regional collaboration is much in gratitude to the

### The ÖC Decision Making Process

(Hall, Sjövik & Stubbergaard, 2005, p.36)
involvement and support of the EU cohesion policy that uplifts regional cooperation to promote arenas of social and economic growth.

Even though the ÖC tries to reach a cooperative status between two national interests, it remains hierarchically subordinate to the Swedish respective Danish government, even though it is not a central government outpost. It may receive aid from local and regional offices in both Sweden and Denmark but it still does not serve as a nationally central government station because it does not receive missions and assignments from them. Then again, the ÖC does respond to decisions implemented by either governments so in that sense it reacts to the national administration. However, since the ÖC is not funded directly by national governments it cannot be a central government outpost. It is funded by the Nordic Council, the EU and its member organizations.

According to Thorbjörn Lindhqvist, a member of the ÖC, the ÖC has no formal power but is an important influence on decision-making which is of great significance in order to bridge gaps in the region (Jacobsson 2008). Such a statement implies that the ÖC may not have a formal power to implement choices on a national arena. Although, due to its many members in local, regional and EU networks, the ÖC has great power as an advisory, influential and decision-making entity because there is no other unit present that equally gathers the Öresund Region on a political level.

As a result, the Öresund scores 1 point on being a general-purpose jurisdiction with a deconcentrated administration because even though it is not a national government initiative it nevertheless has a central administrative major that project guidelines for it to work under, namely the Swedish and Danish national administrations as well as the EU administration. It also has the paraphernalia, such as buildings and staff, of central government outpost.

3.1.2 Policy Scope

The category ‘policy scope’ assesses what responsibilities and how involved a regional government is within economic, cultural-educational and welfare policy. Surely, the ÖC is involved in all these sectors but as previously mentioned above, the administration has little or no formal authority. Does the ÖC actually have authoritative competences to make policy changes happen? The mission is not merely to measure spontaneous influence but how well policies implemented by the ÖC are received and adopted in constitutions and legislative documents.
Through the Interreg programme, the region has benefited from the cohesion policy of the EU. Through vast funding, it has become possibly to execute transnational projects in an assortment of disciplines and these projects are in the realm of economic, cultural-educational and welfare policy. The Interreg IIIA Secretariat, which is hosted by the ÖC, provides annual reports of all the projects that have been consented for execution. The reports are meticulously divided into several chapters which specify the areas of contribution, e.g. development in physical and administrative structures, development of an economic and socially functioning region and development of collective identity and attractiveness for other actors. Each chapter presents the projects individually under sub-headings such as purpose, ambition, target-group, cross border significance, partners, expected results, and final results. It describes the various projects and is a good presentation of what has been accomplished in different undertakings within the region.

In the 2005 annual report presented by ÖC, a characteristic Interreg project, 2005-176, aspired to improve the region’s infrastructure and urban development. By mapping the regional area’s features, they wished to create a mutual frame of reference that would actively be used as a tool for future city planning in the fast growing region. The target group was of wide range; regional, local and national actors on all levels and kinds were welcome to adhere to the project. The span of the project measured from June 15, 2005 until December 31, 2006 and ended up involving as many as 26 actors. Half of the budget was sanctioned by Interreg but the other half came from public aid such as Skånetrafiken, Vägverket, Banverket and various local communes. Some of these actors can be defined as direct governmental entities, i.e. Vägverket and Banverket but Skånetrafiken is a local body directed by Region Skåne. Accordingly, the project was initiated by the ÖC and developed by the Interreg Secretariat and joined by Swedish and Danish national, local and regional actors. It can be concluded that the ÖC did in this case have an influence in this particular policy decision making.

Involving actors on a national level means that the ÖC must have influenced the national level. The national level was initially not addressed in the first outline of the project but instead the focus was on regional development. So, the new policy strategy on infrastructure was initially independently employed but contributions were made by national entities, both of Danish and Swedish land, implying that the region exercised meaningful authority to central sovereign government(s).

The ÖC instigates many projects due to their leading role as a funding unit, but nonetheless, many of the actors involved in the actual application of the new policies are other actors, such as Danish or Swedish regional or local units. These contributors to projects are
often already members of the ÖC and they are legitimately exercising authority but which they have received or gained through the Committee. It could be assumed that these actors would not have been able to implement changes or such developments if they had not had the ÖC, who serves as a catalyst in many assignments. EU funding is helping the ÖC and its members to take the necessary next step that would not been possible otherwise. Generally the EU funded Interreg provides half of the budget and public aid through other actors provides the other half.

De facto, the ÖC does provide possibilities for the region to activate projects and influences the transnational policies already set by Swedish or Danish national, regional or local units. Furthermore, since the ÖC is a collective unit of two national arenas and work together in the interest of promoting the cross border region, it is not possible to argue that they make authoritative decisions because the project results only “constitute meaningful influence” within and onto policies. Since national, regional or local entities are involved in the projects their policies are shaped from the results of the projects, despite that the ÖC does not hold formal decision making power which is a uplifting quality for the ÖC to have.

The ÖC does not legally hold any authoritative power but it can, by the involvement of other actors, ensue projects with meaningful results that change policies. The RAI states that it disregards “policy responsibilities that are not exercised independently by regional governments” (Hooghe et al 2008b, p.6). Since the ÖC’s members are local and sub-national units that also join in the projects, many of the projects may be seen as “exercised independently”. However, those projects that involve other actors not members of the Committee should be discounted. As a result, the ÖC has authoritative competence in policy areas even though some project influences are disregarded. These qualities do not compound to gain any points in this category hence the ÖC scores 0 points because it does not have authoritative competences.

3.1.3 Fiscal Autonomy

Public spending and tax control is a deceitful issue to because the regional administration has two national arenas to take into account. In this category, features such as tax autonomy and co-decision on national tax regimes are central aspects to discuss (Swenden in Hooghe et al 2008b, p. 11). It is essential to distinguish the extent that ÖC has authority over its tax regimes and not focus on central government decisions that are distributed to a sub-national entity. In other words, the Swedish respective Danish government or the EU may provide a
tax budget that must be implemented by the Öresund Region and this bearing does not score any points.

In an OECD report from 2003, the taxation issue is central to the analysis because of the fairly new instigated institutional cooperation in the region. In effect, Sweden and Denmark have separate tax systems that share great similarities but the national border divides and creates difficulties in the free movement of capital and services in the region. The consequence is an encouragement in creating a new taxation regime to regularize the administrative efforts. The OECD-report presented two aspects, namely that there is a strong trend towards working in Denmark and living in Sweden. Secondly, the trend concerning administrative snags and lack of transparency of the system creates obstacles for new companies to set up in the region. The report reads “Both the taxation symmetry and tax administration works against a harmonious integration”. The 2003 OECD report asserts that the Öresund Region suffers from not having a common taxation system.

According to SKAT, the Danish tax office, a person crossing the borders for work respectively living, pays income tax in the country where one works. To ease the misunderstanding of such issues, SKAT has a branch, SkatÖresund, that works as a management connecting members of each national entity by providing checklists and help (SKAT, 2008). Generally, the rules of taxation are as explained in the following: There are differences in being completely or partially obliged to pay income tax. If one lives for six months or more in Denmark respectively Sweden, one becomes completely duty-bound to pay full taxes in the working area, both for income made in the nation and outside of the nation. If one lives less than six months or in the other nation, it is not required to pay full levy. Furthermore, it is possible to be taxed according to the “gränsgångarregeln”, which can roughly be translated as the cross-bordering-rule. This means that it is feasible to be taxed in the working-nation, based on that you make minimum 75% of your income in this nation. However, the national authorities for the country one works in may not tax the individual on other incomes. Deductions can also be for travelling and other expenses. (ÖresundDirekt 2007). These are general rules opted by the Nordic Council to suit a Nordic agreement concerning the mutual labour market to avoid double taxation on income and wealth (Nordic Council, Skatt, 1996).

The above explanation is merely an unbelievably rough summary of the reality that nestles the national tax administrations that operate in the Öresund Region. Despite the many sources that facilitate help and assistance in these issues, it is hard to find it anything but problematic. Tax deductions, local taxes, national taxes, regional taxes and minimum taxes
provide a tangled web of uncertainties that proves the 2003 OECD report quite right in that the Öresund Region has an inharmonious handling of tax administration. However, the Nordic Council’s “gränsgångarregel” extends over the Nordic countries that attempt to harmonize the taxation issues somewhat.

A problematic aspect of paying income taxes in one country and living in another brings about the aspect of paying local charges. A person who pays taxes in Denmark may be living in Malmö and thus uses the local facilities which leave an uneven distribution of usage and reimbursing citizens. Many reports provided from the ÖC and regional entities, describe the tendency for living in Sweden and working in Denmark than the other way around (Örestat 2005). This is an issue of consequence which urges for a resolution in a more even taxation system, in relation to the Öresund Region, which again confirms the 2003 OECD report’s gist on inharmonious taxation.

The Öresund Region has a specific regulation in the Swedish constitution that regards both the Danish and Swedish constituency (SFS 2000:142). It revolves around the Öresund bridge, completed in 2000, and establishes the relationship in terms of the taxes to be placed on the fees on passengers traverse the national lines. Even though the taxes are commonly decided, it is the national central government that has the final say in the verdict. The decision regarding the law was made by the Danish and Swedish government in agreement and did not involve a ÖC representative. Input on this fiscal matter that involves the region was not exercised.

In view of a perspective looking merely at formal authority, the Öresund Region may not have any fiscal control. In regards to influence on taxation, a variation of opinion can be argued for. However, the options to this variation have barely been presented and our sources show it is only through informal public dislike for the bureaucracy.

Therefore, this category the ÖC scores 0 points because it lacks complete authority and influence on taxation measures. Fiscal control in the Öresund Region as a whole is exerted and regulated by central governments with cooperation of respective regional offices.

3.1.4 Representation

Assembly

Representation is measured in how a region may elect its regional office holders. The category is divided up into two entities: executive and assembly, which consists of legislators. The description of how to evaluate this category was very limited, especially regarding
distinctions between assembly and committee. According to Hooghe, Marks and Schakel (2008b, p.12), an assembly is “a self-standing institution with a fixed membership using parliamentary procedures to make decisions”. In the same paragraph, an express declaration is directed as it also written that this “excludes committees, which are subordinate bodies”. This would immediately denote that the ÖC receives 0 points for its designation. Yet, let us investigate the matter further before finalizing the category evaluation.

According to the Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics (2003, p.92), the term committee is referred to as “a small group of people whom a larger group has delegated the power to act or formulate recommendations”. The dictionary continues to explain the term assembly as “a law-making assembly of elected members in a formally equal relationship to one another” (OCDP 2003, p.305). One difference between an assembly and a committee seems to be the ability to make a lawful decision. A committee can merely offer recommendations and consultative advice because they are a subordinate body while an assembly may execute decisions as they are a self-standing institution with a membership.

In the case of the ÖC, the relationship across borders was a regional initiation and neither produced by the EU nor the central Swedish or Danish governments so it was not originally delegated power by a larger entity but was merely a collaboration. In 1993, when the ÖC started, the mayors of Malmö respectively Copenhagen were head of the political forum (ÖC History, 13.05.08). However, as time has passed, the EU and the central government administrations have become involved in the cooperation. As previously mentioned, the ÖC has been working underneath the EU as a host for the Interreg IIIA projects up until 2007 and is starting a new Interreg IVA project as of 2008 (Interreg IVA 2008). Moreover, the central governments are involved in terms of creating prosperous cross-border solutions through the Nordic Council.

The ÖC does make decisions on projects that take place in the region through the Interreg IIIA project as discussed in the previous policy chapter. Since they are the hosting body, they do have decision-making power in implementations of projects that go on to influence important central governmental choices. Furthermore, it does have a fixed membership to the EU where it is an important body as an administrator and mediator for the Öresund Region, especially on the topic of Interreg. The decision making power of the region was realized by the EU but has also grown with the involvement of the Nordic Council.

Those residing in the Committee are indirectly elected regional assembly, consistent with the scoring 1 point in the category we are discussing. To explain in depth, the ÖC consists of 36 publicly elected politicians from both Sweden and Denmark. They are chosen by one of
the 12 member organizations to represent their particular arena, and each representative has a suppliant. Each representative has one vote and decisions are taken by simple majority. The number of representatives for each constituency is decided on the basis of population, but each nation has a fixed number of 18 representatives (ÖC Member 13.05.08).

Ultimately, the region remains a promoter of its area because it voices and endorses the general well-being. It is a regional planning body concerning the growing cross-national interest to merge the borders. It is in their role to improve regional development plans, integration policies and enhancing relationships over the borders across several, if not all, policy fields (ÖC Vision, 14.05.08). Surely, it is mainly a consultative body but it is a unit which is not disregarded, especially not by the EU. It is not a general committee that merely operates under a larger group as a consultative role but has decision-making powers in the Interreg project and holds a valid voice in the Nordic Council, especially through the newly established “gränsregionalt politiskt forum”, roughly translated as the cross-border-region political forum (Nordic Council, 2005). A shortage of breath may be the fact that the region does not represent itself in any of the central government meetings, such as the EU or Swedish or Danish Parliament (ÖC Org, 10.5.08).

The largest downfall, as expressed by Hooghe, Marks and Schakel (2008b, p.12) is that the ÖC does not have a majority of central government appointees. In fact, the central governments are only allowed to have observers to take part of meetings conducted by the ÖC which means none of the representatives are central appointees (ÖC Member 13.05.08).

The ÖC scores 1 point in this category on the basis of having a majority of indirectly elected regional assembly and non-existing central appointees because it is not a subordinate body according a general definition but exercises more influence than a merely consultative body.

**Executive**

An executive is defined as “a decision making body that has the task of putting laws into effect” and is “appointed by central government, the regional government or both” (Hooghe et al, 2008b, p.13). Since there are several components to the ÖC, it is vital to first establish what constitutes the executive power.

The Öresund Secretariat works as the general administrative unit of the body known as the ÖC. It is responsible for implementing the tasks decided upon by the ÖC and its smaller preparatory branch, the executive agency (ÖC Charter, §7, 2007). The Öresund Secretariat corresponds partially to the definition provided earlier as it has decision making qualities as
well as implements other decisions made the executive agency or the ÖC, as well as hosts the Interreg Secretariat. As it is the supervision and managing body of the Öresund, it does only do that. It does not partake in the decision making process and cannot be regarded as the main executive.

The ÖC with its 36 members with decision making authority plus the Secretariat form an executive body. The Secretariat is employed by the ÖC and the ÖC are nationally and regionally elected members. In this sense, the ÖC scores 2 points as “the regional executive is appointed by a regional assembly or is directly elected” (Hooghe et al, 2008b, p.12). However, the high score, despite the lack of ties to the national governments, is unusual yet it is not addressed by Hooghe, Marks and Schakel for which reason we leave the scores as they are.

3.2 Shared Rule

Regional authority is measured in shared rule by the categories: law making, executive control, fiscal control and constitutional reform. These categories discuss whether the regional management, the ÖC, may delegate any authority on the decision made by central government which are the Swedish respectively Danish government and the EU. Hooghe, Marks and Schakel affirm that there is a trend that regions with low scores in self rule score immensely poorly in the shared rule category. This persists in our study which leaves the text briefer than the previous. Furthermore, the shortage of applicable material from the national administrations leaves the following discussion abstracted at times.

3.2.1 Law Making

The primary requirement for a region to validly participate in this category is that it is represented in national legislature and preferably so in the upper chamber. Furthermore, two ways are described as to how a region may affect legislature that is by framing the principle of representation or by being directly represented in the legislature (Hooghe et al 2008b, p.16). The Öresund Region does not meet the primary criteria because it is not represented in the Danish nor the Swedish national legislature thus cannot be rewarded any points. The characteristics that allow one to collect points involve having a regional representative in the upper chamber.
The Swedish Parliament, Riksdagen, is unicameral and the 349 members are elected through popular vote on a proportional representation. The Danish Parliament, Folketing, is also unicameral and consists of 179 members on a popular vote (SFS 1974:152; Folketing, 2008). Yet despite the openness in both Danish and Swedish Parliament for visitors to come and listen to debates in the chamber, the ÖC disappoints on the fact that it does not hold a direct representative that is accountable for pursuing the region’s interest. This is in difference to e.g. the United States, where each state holds a number of representatives according to population and also two senator, independent of population numbers. Regional representation is not divided up in this manner in neither Denmark nor Sweden.

Instead, in both nations, the decisions made regarding the Öresund Region seems to be directed through the national board that handles foreign respectively EU questions. Consequently, the decision making power is delegated to the EU which in turn leaves the region abandoned by both national entities. Through the Interreg project, the division between the national entities is merged. No other organizational structure commits as much focus on the Öresund Region as the ÖC by hosting the Interreg project.

On a supranational level, the EU does not hold a formal regional representative either. It is mainly through the Interreg project that they hold a profile because of its immense success in rewarding projects. However, other projects conducted through the ÖC are with organisations such as the Association of Border Regions, European Spatial Planning Observation Network, Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas, and the OECD (ÖC Coop, 14.05.08).

In the category shared rule, the Öresund Region scores on none of the subcategories. The ÖC is not a unit of representation in the national legislation, it does not assign representatives, it cannot hold a majority representation in the legislature and it has no legislative authority on the national or supranational arena.

### 3.2.2 Executive Control

In shared rule, shared executive control is best shown through meetings and preferably so routine meetings, writes Hooghe, Marks and Schakel (2008b, p.19). The degrees as to how authoritative or legally binding these meetings are scores highly on the scale. Purely consultative meetings do matter and may score points because the importance is that they in fact take place. The Öresund Region holds internal routine meetings but the largest congregation is known as ‘Öresundsting’.
The ÖC arranges annually an event called ‘Öresundsting’ which can be more or less translated as the Öresund session or sitting. Every year a different theme is discussed with an emphasis on furthering integration in the regional area of Öresund, e.g. in 2004 it was infrastructure, in 2005 culture and in 2007, there was an accent on labour market (ÖC Ting, 14.05.08). National delegations, boards and ministers, local and regional politicians as well as private and corporate actors are invited to discuss, inform and educate in Öresund interests. It is an attempt to fuse loose ends and bring awareness to the dynamics of this specific region.

In 2007, ministers from both national governments were invited to take part of hearings and discussion as well as parts of the Swedish respectively Danish royal family who symbolically mark the importance of the occasion. This year was a particularly progressive year in decision making as a declaration in interest of further integrating the labour market in the Öresund Region was endorsed. The declaration was signed by Swedish labour market minister, Sven Otto Littorin, and his Danish counterpart, Claus Hjort Fredriksen. In the declaration, it is among other points of action written that “we urge our respective governments to continue and further collaboration both among and with regional actors as the ÖC – in the issues that involve the trans-nationally commuting workers” (Declaration 2007). The document should be seen as an end product of an influential political lobby for the Öresund Region and the co-signing signifies that the annual meeting was legally binding to a certain degree.

The Öresundsting signifies a meeting to open discussion regarding the future of the Öresund Region but remains a very informal event in terms of meetings to discuss policy implementations and executive performance. Declarations have been made but decisions and laws are not made at these gatherings. Surely enough, interest and ambitions of the ÖC and the Öresund Region are expressed at these meetings that are in fact arranged by the ÖC. As regional pointers are presented and discussed, this could be regarded as a consultative meeting.

Moreover, influence is in some cases exerted from those entities that are involved in the ÖC, such as Region Skåne and other local entities. However, even though their interest is in the Öresund albeit their efforts to prosper regional growth, it is not the ÖC as an entity that exerts influence to the national state. In order for this study to validate points, the authority or influence on executive control in intergovernmental meetings much be exerted from the ÖC.

Although, another example that has been discussed in earlier subcategories is the fact that every time the ÖC holds a meeting, the national governments have an observer to monitor the summit. This suggests that the monitoring unit is placed to scrutinize interests expressed by
the ÖC which hopefully has a future impact on decisions. Yet again, this is not a argument in the case of distinguishing the ÖC’s authority, especially since this routine is not reciprocated.

To the point, the only routine meeting that the ÖC holds to express the Öresund Region’s interest is the publicly open ‘Öresundsting’. The national monitors at ÖC meetings are routine actions but cannot be regarded as a sign of sharing executive authority as this gesture is not reciprocated. The publicly open ‘Öresundsting’ is a debate forum and despite that no greater legislative documents have been written at this summit, this study rules on the meeting being consultative and having an annually routine thus awarding the ÖC with 1 very weak point.

3.2.3 Fiscal Control

Equally ambivalent as fiscal control in self-rule, this category remains problematic in terms of shared rule. Taxation issues linger complicated relationships between legislative and executive central rule. Regional governments may have direct or indirect input on issues such as tax revenues. In order to evaluate, the discussion may possibly revolve around intergovernmental meetings or central government meetings. The first step in the direction of scoring points is that the regional government is able to negotiate over the taxes with the central government. In order to score higher points, the regional government must have veto-rights over tax decisions.

Doomed ahead of time by Hooghe, Marks & Schakel (2008b, p.22), they write that regional and local governments in Sweden and Denmark do not fill the criteria for the category because they cannot legally commit their sub-national members in such actions as taxing their sub-national arenas. The reason for this is explained that central government are entitled to “take unilateral action and […] provides the central government with a lever for constraining sub-national spending” (2008b, p.22). This is correct because both Denmark and Sweden have a unicameral government assembly which does not allow regional representatives to put much pressure on the central government. As a result, pressure on fiscal matters is minimal. Instead, actions such as joint letters and pleas from the chairman and vice chairman of the ÖC are sent to the national councils in different matters but these are not as highly regarded as if sent by a foreign and/or regional ministry.

However, in the Interreg IIIA project initiative it is specifically written that there is a strong incentive to promote economic action in the area. The European Commission writes that there is desire to further economic growth over borders, in regions such as Öresund, because the socio-economic arena is already linked. With the intention of limiting as many
economic obstacles as possible, the Interreg IIIA project sees itself as a successful intervention to strengthen regional development (European Commission, 2000).

Also in the 2003 OECD report, there is a stout discussion that economic and taxation harmonisation should be a top priority on the agenda for the ÖC and its respective governments. Since then, the national governments have taken measures to merge the fiscal fronts of each side of the border. At the moment, the Danish and Swedish governments cooperate by also having an observer role through the Danish Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs, the Danish Ministry of Environment, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the County Administration in Scania (ÖC Report, 2005). These are indications of a stronger bond between governmental relations in the Öresund Region and especially central is the cooperation with the Danish Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs.

However, the observing role is not returned. A regional representative of Öresund is not present at the Danish respectively the Swedish assembly meetings. Actually, due to the dual nationalities that sum up the ÖC it may be problematical to recognise a regional representative that enters and penetrates two governmental spheres in regards to unwanted transparency of government negotiations.

Fiscal matters such as the distribution of tax revenues remain a quiet issue in the region. The only conclusion that is possible to take with the facts presented is that there is a need for furthered fiscal integration in the Öresund Region but yet this has been realized. There OECD presents a report asking for fiscal integration across borders, the European Commission states this to be their incentive in the region and the Nordic Council has already introduced measures to rid of difficulties such as double taxation. Despite the efforts, aspirations and modifications made, they do not facilitate the ÖC with any authority or any meaningful influence to make effective changes in terms of the economic matters in the area. Therefore, the ÖC receives 0 points in this category because the regional administration, the ÖC, and their representatives are not officially consulted or carry out negotiations on the topic of the distribution of tax revenues.

3.2.4 Constitutional Reform

This category researches whether and to what degree influences of a regional government or the regional electoral body are necessary for constitutional change. For higher points, the regional body of influence must be able to veto the constitutional change in question. A consultative body in circumstances of constitutional changes is not a valid role for regional
governments and will not collect any points accordingly. That would also be the case if a regional government is not able to alter a reformation presented by the central government.

The category is slightly broader than previous categories as it includes the influence the electoral body (e.g. regional voters and representatives). If the electoral body or their representative may block a reform, this stands for 1 point because the region has then effective pressure on the central governmental decisions. However, to score higher requires an active participation in the constitutional set up for the reformation.

As discussed in the previous chapters of shared rule, the ÖC does not have a regional representative in the national chamber, it does not exercise any fiscal control, and it does not directly make any laws in cooperation with the Swedish and Danish national authorities. However, one prominent subject of matter for both governments is the Öresund Bridge. Last year a revision was made to the agreement regarding the transportation possibilities across the bridge. The revision was to add that upcoming EU decisions shall be embraced and kept as a directive while maintaining the transportation connections across Öresund (SÖ 1991:21; SÖ 2007:9). This change is relevant and interesting due to many reasons.

Firstly, it reveals recognition for the Öresund Region itself because the region is addressed in the decision document. Secondly, the welfare of the region is increasingly instigated with new decision implementations. Finally, since the ÖC has growing performance possibilities thanks to EU funding, it subsists as truly an EU project. Seeing that Denmark and Sweden are agreeing on letting EU directives serve as a guide for the decisions made regarding the Öresund Bridge, this shows a growing tendency for some regional aspects to be mainly responsible under the EU. If this tendency grows and other aspects are enabled, this change in law could entail an increase of authority for the Öresund Region as well. In essence, this particular change in EU involvement regarding the Öresund Bridge might be a milestone that sets an example for future changes that will allow the Öresund Region and ÖC to attain more authoritative power.

The observer role that the national governments have in monitoring the ÖC and its action implies that at one point or another decisions and issues brought up by the national government serves the ÖC’s interest. In this case, the ÖC ought to be influencing decisions made without having an active or prominent role in the actual decision making process. Moreover is that the electoral body of the Öresund Region cannot be accounted as involved in this decision. Neither electoral body, the population, nor the regional representation, as in the ÖC administration, have any formal veto and does not provide a hurdle big enough to make the national governments forfeit.
Accordingly, the Öresund Region scores 0 points in shared rule in constitutional reform. The population has no right to vote to veto a constitutional reform and neither their representatives can do it for them. Constitutional reform is determined under national principles of reference and does not include a cross-national entity to influence or authorize their conclusions.

### 3.3 Comparative Scores and Final Discussion

The ÖC is assembled as the overlapping regional administration of the Öresund Region with the intent of working as a political platform to unite and simplify cooperation across the national border of Sweden and Denmark. The amount of authority exerted by the Committee has been measured through eight categories with a complementing discussion on meaningful influence. The following scores were collected in the categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self Rule</th>
<th>Shared Rule</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Depth</td>
<td>Law Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scope</td>
<td>Executive Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Autonomy</td>
<td>Fiscal Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation</td>
<td>Constitutional Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1+2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sum of points:** 4+1 = 5 points.

The Öresund Region holds a total of five points in formal authority but in order to be relevant, the results need to be put into comparison to other figures of the RAI. Since we have not evaluated other regions, the RAI results collected by Hooghe, Marks and Schakel will be applied. They distribute their scores as an average score of the total amount of regions within one country. A comparison with other regional scores will be accounted for in the following text to grasp the position that the Öresund Region possesses.

Swedish regions or län, scored a total of ten points in the self rule category but none in the shared rule. Danish regions or amts scored equally many points, excluding regions such as Greenland and Faroe Islands that serve under the classification of special autonomoy regions. Areas such as fiscal autonomy and policy scope relied heavier on the län or amts actions than what the Öresund Region was able to exercise (Hooghe et al. 2008c; Hooghe et al. 2008d).
There is great variation in the results by other regions in Europe. There was a tendency for Western regions to score highly on both self rule and shared rule while Eastern and Central regions have little to no formal authority in both self rule and shared rule. There were no examples of countries that had weak points in self rule and shared rule. The strongest regions were allocated in federal countries, such as Germany and Switzerland who scored as much as a total of 19.5 points each. The United States of America and Australia were also provided as examples of countries with federal regions or states, and they scored as highly as Germany and Switzerland (Hooghe et al 2008d). By far, federal regions scored higher than non-federal regions. The Öresund Region that does not have a federal tradition scored poorly as the RAI pattern suggested.

Albania, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Romania were nations with regions of low scores in regards to both self rule and shared rule. A similar case to Öresund was the lowest level of Romanian regions, regiuni dez voltare, that scored four points in self rule and none in shared rule. As we discussed earlier, the point awarded to Öresund in shared rule had a relatively weak motivation. Their strongest points are in institutional depth and representation, but they do not exercise any shared power with the national government and depend greatly on money transfers from local, national and EU level (Hooghe et al 2008c; Hooghe et al 2008d).

A common trait for Central and Eastern European countries is their history of being a part of strongly centralized national entities or in other words, they subsists as post-communist countries. It seems as though countries with a past in the communist block remain fairly reluctant in the giving their regions more authority. Bulgaria and Rumania are the two latest accessions to the EU as of 2007 and at the time of their evaluation they were not members. Also, Lithuania has only been a member since 2004 and Albania since 2006. It would be interesting to re-evaluate these areas and measure the situation of their regional development in authority once they have been established in the EU for a number of years. Such an analysis could hopefully shine light on the impact of the European Union and the regionalization process and what kind of impact they have on formerly communist or strongly centralized states.

Sweden and Denmark have not shared the history of the former eastern block but do reign under a welfare state system, which in Scandinavia traditionally depends profoundly on a strong central administration in difference to other welfare states, such as Switzerland. Nevertheless, Öresund is part of two similar states with a unicameral strong state and receives a few points in self rule and nearly none in shared, just as other regions with strong centralized pasts. This also corresponds to where other Interreg initiatives are being executed,
not exclusively, but there is trend for Community Initiatives to emphasize region with former communist country borders.

The constantly developing arena in the Öresund Region points to an interesting development. Despite the lack of formal authority from the ÖC, it can be argued that there is a noticeable shift of focus from Stockholm to Copenhagen in the eyes of the Southern Swedes. The strong centralized state is not necessarily the deciding factor of a region’s future. In the case of Öresund, there is an emerging regional cooperation even if there is a lack of interest from the Swedish capital, in comparison to the Danish capital. New territorial grounds become attractive and new interests are formulated since the emergence of the Öresund Region. Perhaps this will be the case for Bulgaria and Romania as well.

4. Conclusion and Future Contemplations

The scores collected were greater in self rule that scored four points rather than in shared rule that merely gathered highly speculative 1 point. In self rule, the Öresund Committee (ÖC) received one point in institutional depth that proved it was a functioning administration at a regional level, a special case namely at a cross border regional level. This proved it was an established forum that expressed ideas to both national governments as well as the EU. The next subcategory, policy scope, presented that despite great preparatory work on outlines of upcoming policy decisions, the ÖC had next to no authority but merely the ability to influence them. To receive greater fiscal autonomy proved an aspiration of the ÖC and the Öresund Region but no authority was actually exerted in this field. Lastly, the functional administration confirms its functionality by having an indirectly elected regional assembly as well as a regionally appointed executive head.

In shared rule, little if not no authority or influence was applicable for the ÖC. Law making proved difficult for the ÖC because they were not represented or eligible to attend national meetings in neither Sweden nor Denmark. Executive control delegated one point as a result of having a rather informal but yet again annual consultative meeting by the name of ‘Öresundstinget’. Fiscal control was again confirmed to be a difficult frontier where the ÖC have great ambition to change and merge the national borders of Denmark and Sweden. The final category in shared rule was constitutional reform that did not allow the ÖC to collect any
points either. This was due to the two national administrations being able to implement new laws and decisions unilaterally, without the inclusion of the ÖC.

The results distinguish the ÖC as a rather non-authoritative institution as it has no qualities that describe it as an actual obstacle or aid for the national administrations in their task to govern two countries. If the Swedish or Danish government decides to form a new policy or legislative change, they have the legitimacy to unilaterally proceed with their mission without the consent or consultation from the ÖC. Fiscal control, executive control, policy scope and constitutional reform are considered national matters which are non-applicable for a cross border administration to discuss. The lack of legally binding meetings where such issues are discussed leaves the ÖC and its regional interests with restricted authoritative competences. However, the parallel discussion regarding the amount of influence displayed that there were alternate routes for the ÖC to apply pressure.

In the meetings conducted by the ÖC, each national government has monitoring units that are included in the summit. These monitors have been a reoccurring element in our discussion because where the ÖC failed to exercise authority, influence on national administrations could be argued for by adhering to the presence of the monitoring units. They serve as observers that examine and study the regional interests to then return back to respective governments to report on the most relevant issues. This observing entity bestow distinction to the region of Öresund, that can thus be regarded as a recognized administrative unit whose interests are at least marginally accounted for.

Another component that is crucial to the ÖC and its ability to influence decisions regarding their regional arena is their relationship to the EU. The EU has since almost a decade aided the region’s development and integration with upholding Interreg IIIA. This Community Initiative programme has been crucial to the possibilities put forth in region and discussion on the projects funded reveals regional efforts inspire national, local and regional actors on both sides of the national borders to partake. Interreg project results, that can only be instigated by the Öresund Secretariat, have announced needed changes or new implementations that are desired as well as required which have proceeded to be answered by national entities. This suggests a strong bond to the EU that has proved to serve as a regional integration catalyst when national administrations fail to aid.

This relationship between Öresund, national governments and the EU is noteworthy. The presented factors that are under interpretation suggest that the Swedish and Danish governments provide little direct support to the regional office, the ÖC. Instead, the supranational government, the EU, is allowing the region to prosper by implementing a cross
border programme with funding. Indisputably, Sweden and Denmark contribute by their national administrations as well as by cooperating through the Nordic Council but it repeatedly seems as though the little regional rule present in Öresund is established by the EU. An interesting example of this particular achievement is the 2007 legislative change for the Öresund Bridge to operate chiefly under EU decisions. If such a decision paves the way for forthcoming changes, the Öresund Region may gain authority in self rule.

An inference of the current situation distinguishes a pattern that cannot be left without commenting. The above argument claim that the EU is the driving factor in pursuing regional authority whilst the national administrations leave little decision making power to the Öresund. As a result, the Öresund is growing through the EU and gaining fields of responsibilities yet nothing of this sort is formally changing in the national arena. In essence, the region is becoming stronger due to the EU but the national channel is becoming weaker also due to the EU’s involvement. Peculiarly enough, the lack of formal authority does not allow the ÖC to delegate all regional issues through the Interreg Secretariat but they must be done so through the national government. I challenge this seemingly dead end behaviour and argue that the stronger the Öresund is getting through the EU, the weaker and lesser input it is able to delegate to the EU because of their weakened relationship to their national governments.

Future prospect of the ÖC may perhaps seem gloomy but this study wishes to assert the opposite. The structure by which the EU manages regions and regional interests involves the national government to a high degree. Yet the EU is showing a greater interest in putting regional spheres to the forefront of discussion. Thus, if the rigid structure pursues alterations that allow dual national regions to have a greater responsibility of their implementations then it would mean great things for the ÖC. Firstly, the ÖC does have the paraphernalia of being a functioning administration. Secondly, the region has already displayed through a decade long progress that it has a deafening desire to cultivate, expand, develop and intensify. Finally, the EU’s high involvement should establish the functionality and reliability of the ÖC so that it is not just disregarded as an unserious body of interests.

Upon change, the ÖC needs to confirm the determination of region by allowing a democratic influence by the population. At the moment, the ÖC is indirectly elected and fairly anonymous to the public. This is an important adjustment for creating more credibility for the regional administration. The ÖC should serve as a supporting entity, just as other local and regional offices within the national territory. To sustain the prominent potential that is
bestowed upon the Öresund, endorsement of the dual national region will have to be maximized.

Conclusively, between the years of 2003 and 2007 the formal authority of the ÖC proved to be so insufficient that it only establishes to the Regional Authority Index that it had the components of a regional administration’s paraphernalia. Formal authority in form of fiscal management and decision making abilities in constitutional reform and executive control were next to none. On the other hand, influence in both stronger and weaker variations are present in the ÖC but not adequate enough to count as having an overall meaningful influence on other administrations.

In brief, the Öresund Committee is an entirely functional administration with flourishing potential to become a regional governance unit with formal authority but that still has an indistinct but ambitious purpose.
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