



Samenwerkingsverband
plattelandsgemeenten

Strategic Agenda

2018 - 2022

P10 Strategic Agenda

Introduction

P10 is a cooperation between large rural municipalities. This cooperation has been established in 2008 and consists of seventeen members (over 540.000 inhabitants¹). The daily board, which consists of four members, reports to the general board in which all members are being represented.

The P10-municipalities are characterised by a large area of land and the absence of an urban core. These characteristics create that these municipalities often have the same social tasks to ensure that the quality of life and vitality are preserved. By working together it is easier to share knowledge, but the municipalities have in this way also the mass they need to represent their common interests (lobbying).

Together we want to create the conditions that will ensure that our municipalities remain attractive in the future. At the same time, we want to use our space to contribute to the challenges that the whole of the Netherlands faces in the areas of climate adaptation, energy transition and circular economy. This is in line with the coalition agreement 2017-2021, in which the government devotes a great deal of attention to these issues. It wants to seize regional opportunities, for example by making regional adaptation possible.

P10 – An Analysis

The countryside offers calmness, space and nature. There is room for nature, recreation and space for extensive activities. This space also results in a low population density: while the average for the Netherlands in 2017 is 507 inhabitants per km², the average population density of P10 municipalities is 158 inhabitants per km². The countryside offers calmness, space and nature. An outlier is the population density of the municipality of Westerveld which has only 69 inhabitants per km² (source: CBS). Moreover, the P10 municipalities are relatively ageing (CBS 2017: the Netherlands 31.3%, P10 42.0%). A striking example is the municipality of Sluis where the ageing pressure will be 49.2% in 2017.

The number of facilities is decreasing, partly as a result of the expansion of healthcare, welfare and educational facilities. Moreover, not all facilities are available in the own municipalities. The distance to the general practitioner or the hospital, schools and the supermarket in rural municipalities is greater than average in the Netherlands. For example, in the municipality of Hollands Kroon the distance to the nearest hospital is

¹ AA en Hunze, Berkelland, Borger-Odoorn, Bronckhorst, Goeree-Overflakkee, Hof van Twente, Hollands Kroon, Hulst, Medemblik, Ooststellingwerf, Opsterland, Peel en Maas, Schouwen-Duiveland, Sluis, Tynaarlo, Midden-Drenthe en Westerwerf

about 20 km. Accessibility becomes more important in these areas than proximity. Most jobs can be found in (cyclically vulnerable) sectors such as hospitality, commerce and healthcare.

In many aspects the P10 municipalities do not differ from other rural municipalities, but i.a. demographic changes, such as population shrinkage and ageing, are more prevalent and visible. When facilities disappear and move to larger centres, they often move out of the P10 municipalities. This has a greater effect on accessibility for residents and recreational users than in the average rural community, which often does have a large (urban) core.

The analysis also shows that many arrangements and financial distribution mechanisms are detrimental to large rural municipalities. The distribution of public funds, for example, is often based on population, but does not take into account the size of the municipalities. P10 municipalities have relatively higher costs because they have due to their vastness and low population density relatively more sewerage, more local roads, more student transport, more green space and more small schools. This makes it more difficult for P10 municipalities to achieve the same quality as municipalities with the same number of inhabitants, but within smaller areas.

Vision

The characteristics of the P10 municipalities, such as lots of space and nature and a low population density, are often an advantage, but sometimes a disadvantage. We want to strengthen the advantages and reduce the disadvantages. We want to use focused policy to reduce the differences where we score lower than the Dutch average. Moreover, we want to strengthen the positive characteristics by, for example, improving cooperation with urban municipalities where there is often less space.

Based on this vision, we are working on the following programme lines:

- Attractive countryside;
- Tailor-made rural areas;
- Interaction with the city;

“A pleasant liveable and attractive countryside that, together with the city, offers room for new solutions!”

Attractive countryside

In order to live, work and recreate well in municipalities with relatively few inhabitants and a large surface area, it is necessary for the countryside to remain an attractive region for residents, businesses and tourists. A very important component in this is the accessibility of facilities and businesses. Fast internet and full coverage of mobile telephony are needed as a basic facility, for residents and businesses. For a well-functioning economy, both physical and digital accessibility is of the utmost importance.

Objectives and aspirations:

More room for experimentation in the field of mobility issues (smart mobility, public transport, student transport, Wmo-transport, etc.), which provide optimal physical accessibility at acceptable costs;

- By 2020, the P10 municipalities will belong to the region with a 98% mobile coverage and broadband internet (2020: 30 Mbit/s, 2025: 100 Mbit/s);
- More room for experimentation in the field of smart homes and innovative digital services;
- Create smart combinations of services and mobility concepts as much as possible.

Tailor-made countryside

For the P10 it is crucial that financial and legal regulations allow tailor-made solutions for municipalities with relatively few inhabitants and a large surface area. The vastness and lack of an urban core means that social issues have a greater impact than in an average rural community.

A good example is the way in which secondary education is financed. This is done on the basis of the number of pupils, whereas P10-municipalities are confronted with a decreasing number of pupils. This has consequences for the continuation of secondary education. Or think of the high costs for P10 municipalities in terms of spatial planning or infrastructure, as well as for utilities, care providers, transport organisations cetera. In the P10 municipalities, the (digital) accessibility and availability of facilities are therefore under pressure. It is not the number of hectares or the number of inhabitants that should be central, but the quality and accessibility of facilities in the region, for example within the social domain and in the field of education.

The P10 needs sufficient room and customisation in financial and statutory regulations to solve social issues.

Objectives and aspirations:

- Financial customization within the municipal fund to create room for solutions to P10 challenges;

- Customisation in the Environmental Act ("Omgevingswet") to create leeway for P10 developments, for example by making a substantial contribution to the National Environmental Vision.

Interaction with the city

Countryside and city complement each other in many areas. Thinly populated areas with small cores provide the desired calmness and space for the city-dweller, but they also provide economic resources such as food, nature and recreation. On the other hand, the cities have great added value for the countryside, for example through their economic and cultural facilities. The P10 wants the countryside and the city to engage in a dialogue on the basis of equality and content regarding cooperation. At the level of the direct environment, but also at the level of the whole of the Netherlands. The countryside can become the bearer of new economic developments, of food production in the region, for generation of sustainable energy and for climate adaptation. Moreover, it offers innovative, small-scale and landscape interesting living and working environments to the city. The interaction implies that cities by making use of these, contribute to economic activity, quality of life and facilities in the rural regions.

Objectives and aspirations:

- Dialogue with urban municipalities, with an emphasis on mutual interests in the interaction between urban and rural areas, for example in the field of energy transition.
- Make a substantial contribution to national governmental tasks such as the new Climate Act.

From vision to results

The activities of the P10 focus on knowledge sharing and lobbying. By sharing knowledge, the P10 municipalities learn from each other and from other organisations. Through lobbying activities the P10 wants to influence the policy of other governments. This mainly concerns the national government, but also the provinces and the European Union (e.g. agricultural policy) can be involved. Lobbying is not only about receiving, but at least as much about offering. The P10 demands a lot to maintain and strengthen an attractive and liveable countryside, but it can also offer a lot, especially in the area of climate and energy.

We keep a close eye on whether a subject is typically P10 or is of particular interest to one or more municipalities. In other cases, an interest can be better represented by, or together with, other organisations. Among other things, we see the following organisations as strategic discussion partners for the realisation of our objectives: VNG, various ministries, provinces, G32, IPO, LTO, UvW, Vereniging van Plattelandsgemeenten, Landelijke Vereniging van Kleine Kernen, K6 (network of the provinces with one or more of the shrinking regions). As we see it, within a few years the P10 will be known as an organisation that cannot be ignored as soon as the interests of the countryside are at stake.

Implementation

This strategic vision has been developed for the period 2018-2022. On the basis of this vision, an implementation programme is drawn up for each year, with one member of the Executive Board and one programme coordinator associated with each programme line. The annual report will report on the results.

