



A tool for the economic ambition of Randstad Holland

Strengthening the international competitive position, and improving the quality of life in Randstad Holland are the central aims of local and regional government who have come together in the Regio Randstad partnership. Competitive strength and quality of life are partly determined by legislation at national and European level. But decentralised government can itself offer a remarkable contribution in the fields of spatial planning, urban development and living conditions, traffic and transport, the development of green spaces, rural development, economic matters, education, social services and culture.

Economic success, and therefore prosperity, in Randstad Holland depends on attractiveness of the area, the capacity for innovation amongst enterprises and institutions and on labour participation. The Randstad Economic Strategy (2004) contains numerous projects and measures which boost competitiveness.

There is no lack of ambition: a top-five position within Europe. But where does Randstad stand at present? And is the goal in sight or are we losing ground? The Randstadmonitor has been created in order to answer this question.

Randstadmonitor 2004

The numbers tell the tale

Europe's economic power resides mainly in its metropolitan regions. They represent its engines for growth. This also applies to the Netherlands. Regio Randstad has asked TNO Inro to compile a top 20 of European metropolitan areas, from 2004 onwards. It contains a benchmark for Randstad Holland against an international background. Randstadmonitor 2004 is a summary of this publication, aimed at local, regional and national government. It offers a clear and realistic picture of Randstad Holland's international competitive position. The conclusions could support policy decision making in Randstad Holland.

Trends are important

Variables such as competitiveness and quality of life only become meaningful when Randstad Holland is compared with other metropolitan regions in Europe. Comparison should take place over a number of years: trends are more significant than snapshots. Regio Randstad has therefore commissioned the TNO publication to be compiled annually. Every second year the data will be summarized in the Randstadmonitor.

Contents of Randstadmonitor 2004

Randstadmonitor comprises three sections. The first section gives an overall picture of the competitive position of Randstad Holland. The second section

compares Randstad Holland with 19 metropolitan regions in Europe and with the average of the EU 15 in relation to some thirty indicators and crucial data. The third section focuses on the various areas which comprise Randstad Holland. They are compared with regard to quality of life, amongst other things. Unfortunately, there are no comparable data available for this at an international level.

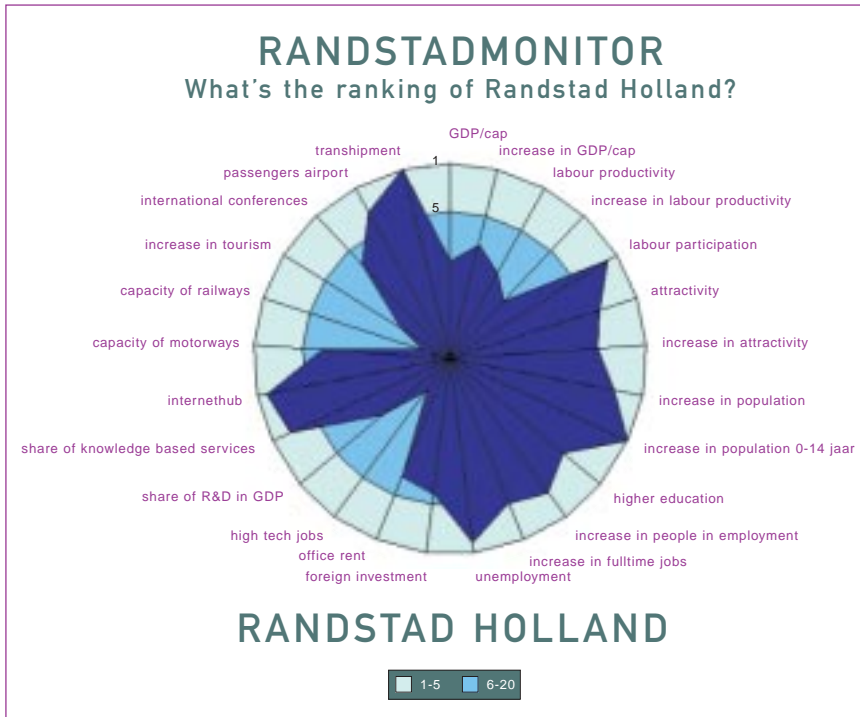
Statistical data

TNO Inro has collected the data for the Randstad-monitor mainly from public data. This data has been available for a number of years and for all comparable European regions. Main sources include Eurostat, OECD and the Central Bureau for Statistics in the Netherlands (CBS); the figures have generally been processed by TNO Inro. Careful estimates were made where up-to-date statistics were not available.

Selection of metropolitan regions

TNO Inro has selected the twenty metropolitan regions which most often feature in the many monitors and statistics already available. Within the possibilities of the statistical data, borders of metropolitan regions have been drawn up in such a way as to create regions with a metropolitan heart, and lower population density in the surrounding area. Selection was amended only where the functionality of the statistics demanded this, as was the case with ports, for instance.

The twenty regions are London, Paris, the Ruhr, Milan, Madrid, Berlin, Manchester, Barcelona, Frankfurt, the Flemish Diamond of Brussels, Antwerp and Ghent, Rome, Hamburg, Lisbon, Vienna, Stockholm, Munich, Copenhagen, Lyon and Dublin, as well as Randstad Holland.



Randstad Holland in a nutshell

Randstad Holland's ranking amongst twenty metropolitan areas based on 25 indicators and crucial data is shown in a single web diagram. This shows the region achieving a top five position on only a few indicators. They relate to labour participation, attractiveness for foreign enterprises, young and growing population, low unemployment, knowledge services and external links through Rotterdam port, Schiphol airport and Internet hub. At first sight this would seem positive, but a comparison over time shows weakening, rather than strengthening of the position. The aim of a place amongst the top five European regions has therefore not yet been realised.

The available statistics also allow us to compile such a diagram for the remaining 19 metropolitan regions. This makes it easy to see which are the "metropolitan tigers".

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Randstadmonitor 2004 can be downloaded from, or ordered via www.regio-randstad.nl

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