purpose being to generate an understanding of how the application of futures approaches and methods can aid urban planning processes. Analysis of various aspects of these exercises, such as procedures, participation issues, time-scales and time-horizons, organisational matters, outcomes and outputs, was conducted to help the researcher to understand the practical issues that need to be addressed while developing the methodology. The results of the case study examination in the context of this thesis do not form any theory, nor are they treated as findings in their own right, but rather they constitute a building-block for the development of a suitable futures methodology.

There were six potential case studies identified in Dublin, but only five of them were examined in this thesis:
1. *Dublin 2020 Vision,*
2. *Dublin – a city of possibilities 2002-2012,*
3. *Development of community indicators for Ballymun,*
4. *Dublin-Belfast economic corridor,*
5. *Mobile and accessible Dublin.*

The first four were projects prepared and conducted by various agencies, institutions and organisations, while the fifth one was developed and carried out by the author of this thesis in order to test the preliminary model of the Prospective methodology. The first three studies represent different geographical levels within the city: city-region, municipality area and local community level, while the fourth project looked at the cross-border region. The sixth project identified, but not examined, was *Dublin City Foresight: A Scenario Approach.* This exercise was conducted by Sinead Branagh and documented in her Masters thesis. The fact that only five cases of the application of futures methods in the context of urban planning in Dublin were identified can be seen in two ways: as a limitation in the case selection or as a need for further research into this area.

Although, the cases vary in regard to many aspects, such as geographical scope, time horizon, participation, methodology and the range of issues, for which future is being explored, a number of shared experiences and lessons could be found. The differences as well as the common threads constitute important insights for development of methodology. They are discussed in detail in the next chapter. Here only general aspects of the cases are presented (Table 4.2).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical level</th>
<th>Dublin 2020 Vision</th>
<th>Dublin — a city of possibilities 2002-2012</th>
<th>Development of community indicators for Ballymun</th>
<th>Dublin-Belfast economic corridor</th>
<th>Mobile and accessible Dublin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time horizon</td>
<td>City-region</td>
<td>Local authority area</td>
<td>Community level</td>
<td>Regional and cross-border</td>
<td>City-region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17 years</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Up to 15 people</td>
<td>In different phases from:</td>
<td>Up to 50 people Community,</td>
<td>Up to 20 people</td>
<td>Up to 15 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>Business and academia</td>
<td>90 (P1) to 162,100 (P3) Whole range of different actors</td>
<td>local government and BRL</td>
<td>Academia, business and government</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sectors represented</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Prospective</td>
<td>Strategic visioning</td>
<td>Visioning method</td>
<td>Scenarios method</td>
<td>Prospective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>The whole city region</td>
<td>Economic, cultural and social strategy</td>
<td>Social, economic and environmental community indicators</td>
<td>Economic development of the region</td>
<td>approach</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.2 Description of case studies in regard to geographical level, time horizon, participation, methodology and scope**

Three methods of data collection were used, including observation, interviews and documentary research. As it was mentioned before, the author took an active part in three studies: *Dublin 2020 Vision*, *Development of community indicators for Ballymun* and *Dublin-Belfast economic corridor*. The participation in these exercises required a direct personal involvement of the author in activities carried out. The role of author in *Dublin 2020 Vision* can be described as a secretary function. Initially, she recorded the ideas that were generated during the workshop. During the next stage she was a ‘contact’ person, who kept records of the additional work and fed it back to the working group. She was also involved in the preparation of the first draft of the vision.

The author’s involvement in the *Development of community indicators for Ballymun* study was similar, although not as extensive. It included the participation in a series of organisational meetings and the preparation of the ‘future newspaper’ (included in Appendix 5) for the second workshop. The aim of the ‘future newspaper’ was to create a link between the first and the second workshop. The ‘newspaper’ comprised of five sections, each of which included articles portraying the five alternative futures scenarios created during the first workshop. In the *Dublin-Belfast economic corridor* study, the author was working together with other members of The Futures Academy on the project. She conducted strategic interviews, developed and distributed a survey, and took part in the development of scenarios. Personal involvement in these projects created a great opportunity for observation, which was recorded in the form of notes.
As the notes taken were strictly of factual nature, there was not much room left for bias.

The interviews were conducted with people who were involved in the organisation of or who participated in the exercises. Information additionally was gathered through examination of various documentary sources. In the case of *Dublin — a city of possibilities* 2002-2012 project the information was collected through interviews and documentary research. Each of the five case studies was investigated in order to address questions on:

- initiative/leadership,
- methodology,
- design of the process,
- participation,
- time-frame,
- time-horizon,
- project management,
- outcomes and outputs.

A different approach was applied for the examination of the *Mobile and accessible Dublin*, which, as mentioned earlier, was specially designed to test the preliminary model of Prospective methodology. The focus of the study was placed on the process and its various elements, such as structure, facilitation, timetable, stimulation of participants thinking and assessment of various techniques. The analysis of the case is based on the author’s observation, oral and written feedback from participants and various data collected during the exercise. The futures techniques used in this project are described in Section 4.3.4.

### 4.3.4 The questionnaire

The questionnaire of ways of approaching the future in the urban planning processes in Dublin was the only quantitative method used in this study. The data collected from the survey was complementary to the information gathered with the main research instrument, the in-depth interviews. Through the use of the questionnaire, the author attempted to collect additional more specific information about methods and types of
information utilised in urban planning processes. The questionnaire was addressed to people directly involved in planning and deciding about the future of Dublin, as the questions it contained were specifically designed to investigate the issue of methods and information. At first, the questionnaire was planned to be distributed among people representing six groups: senior staff in local authorities and City and County Development Boards, planning and development consultants, central and regional government, various governmental and non-governmental agencies, academia and community organisations. This idea was abandoned, because the respondents represented groups that were too diverse. Construction of one questionnaire that would not be too general and would appeal to all respondents seemed to be an extremely difficult, almost impossible, task. After reconsideration, the questionnaire was sent to people from two groups: people holding managerial positions in local authorities and City and County Development Boards (CDB) and planning and development consultants (the full list of the sample is included in Appendix 6).

The people to whom questionnaires were sent were identified using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is usually used in situations where the researcher has some knowledge about people or events and deliberately selects a particular sample, believing that this sample is most likely to produce the most valuable results. In the case of this research, it was recognised that people, who are most likely to have good knowledge of planning methods and information required for planning the future, were planners and decision-makers within the local authorities and City/County Development Boards, and people supporting them, such as planning consultants. A sample of 119 people was identified through the staff lists on the websites of the appropriate local authorities and CDBs, and in the case of consultants through the Irish Planning Institute membership list.

The questionnaires were distributed through the post. The researcher was aware of the weaknesses of mail survey, such as high likelihood of a low response rate and sample being more self-selective, as there is low control over who completes and returns the questionnaire and who does not. Each person was sent a copy of the questionnaire with personally addressed cover letter explaining the aims of the study. Despite the limitations of mail survey, at the time it seemed to be the most efficient way of distributing the questionnaire. If the survey was to be repeated now, the researcher
would consider using a web-based questionnaire or a combination of both web-based and mail, which became really popular only within the past year.

Out of 119 questionnaires sent, 32 were returned completed, which gives a response rate of 27%. In the research conducted on the response rates for postal surveys it was found that it is common to have response rates lower than 30%. The maximum level of response is usually around 60%. As well as the completed questionnaires, the researcher received correspondence from eight people stating that they do not feel competent to reply to the questionnaire. This has been treated as ‘response in itself’. If these letters were included with completed questionnaires the response level would increase to 34%.

Another important comment needs to be made on the self-selectivity of the sample. 92 questionnaires were sent to people holding senior positions in the four local authorities and the four County/City Development Boards, and 27 questionnaires were sent to planning and development consultants. Only 21% of responses came from local government, while consultants had a twice higher rate of 44%. The possible differences of opinion between the consultants and local government representatives are discussed in the next chapter.

The questionnaire included 13 questions (the copy of the questionnaire and the cover letter are presented in Appendix 7). Out of 13 questions, two had ‘open’ character and 11 had ‘closed’ character. Nine questions were ‘choose from a list of options’, however the last position in the list was an open space provided for respondent’s comments. Additionally two questions used the Likert Scale (degree of agreement and disagreement).

4.3.5 Futures methods and techniques

The researcher has personally applied futures methods and techniques in the exercise Mobile and Accessible Dublin, which was designed and conducted in order to test the preliminary model of the Prospective methodology. Among the futures techniques applied were: Prospective workshop, strategic conversations and environmental scanning. The author also actively participated in two studies, Dublin 2020 Vision and Dublin-Belfast economic corridor, in which futures methods and techniques were
employed. Although she performed strategic interviews and environmental scanning as well as participating in the Prospective workshop, the author did not design the methodology for these studies. Therefore, the methods used for their completion are not discussed in this chapter.

4.3.5.1 Prospective workshop

The Prospective workshop was the main method employed in the Mobile and Accessible Dublin project. The event took place over a day-and-a-half (3\textsuperscript{rd} and 5\textsuperscript{th} December 2002) and was facilitated by the author of this study. Its general structure was based on the five steps of the Prospective approach, presented below.

1. Formulation of the strategic question.
2. Gaining an understanding of the past and the present.
3. Exploration of possible futures.
5. Generation of recommendations and guidelines how to achieve the desired future state.

Techniques, such as structured brainstorming, mind-mapping and visioning were used to perform specific tasks during the exercise. The detail design of the workshop is included in Appendix 8.

Participants for the workshop were sought from among postgraduate students of urban planning and related fields and also between experts and opinion leaders in this topic. Finally, 10 people, who volunteered to take part in the exercise, participated in it.

4.3.5.2 Strategic conversations and environmental scanning

Strategic interviews and environmental scanning were employed as additional methods in the study. They were used to generate background information on the past developments, present situations and future possibilities in regard to land use and transportation in Dublin. This information was utilised during the workshop, and it was also used to write-up the results of the study.
One strategic interview with an expert on land use and transportation in Dublin was conducted. The researcher aimed to discover respondent opinions, experience, perceptions and aspirations in regard to the topic of the study – the relationship between land use and transportation in Dublin. The interview was based around the questions listed below.

- What is the relationship between transportation and land use in Dublin?
- What factors are responsible for the present situation?
- What are the critical points of present situation?
- What are the positive features of the present situation?
- What are the opportunities for the successful future integration of the two in order to achieve a sustainable city?
- What is your best dream for the city?
- What is your worst nightmare?

Environmental scanning involved the observation of what is happening in and around the area of concern. The researcher has followed an ongoing discussion on Dublin’s land use and transportation problems in the *Journal of Irish Urban Studies*, various official reports, the Irish media (TV, radio and newspapers). She attended a number of seminars and conferences on that subject and has also looked at what is happening in the European and global context (international journals, TV documentaries). Another angle of environmental scanning was the detection of existing trends and various developments, which could strongly influence the future of land use and transportation.

### 4.4 Methods of data analysis and presentation

The next chapter (Chapter 5) discusses the results of the investigation into the future-oriented thinking in current urban planning processes in Dublin. These results, emerging from the primary data analysis, are presented in two parts. The first part (Section 5.2) is based on data collected through in-depth interviews and the survey, and it examines present processes, in which the future of Dublin is being constructed. The second part (Section 5.3) presents the case studies of the application of futures methods in urban planning in Dublin. Here, the techniques used for data analysis and presentation are explained.
4.4.1 Data analysis methods

4.4.1.1 Analysis of qualitative data

There are numerous approaches and methods that can be applied for analysis of qualitative data. Bryman and Burgess (1994) discuss two general strategies for data analysis: analytic induction and grounded theory. Analytic induction is strongly linked to studies of social problems. Its objective is casual explanation, recognition of the ‘individually necessary’ and ‘jointly sufficient’ conditions for the appearance of some elements of social life. It involves gradual redefinition of the phenomenon that is to be explained and the explanatory factors. As the new cases are explored and the original hypothesis contradicted, the explanation is revised (Smelser and Baltes 2001). Analytic induction approach is quite rigorous, and that can possibly explain its rare use in data analysis (Bryman and Burgess 1994).

Grounded theory approach, more adaptable comparing to the analytic induction, involves “the discovery of theory from data” (Glaser and Strauss 1967:1). It provides the structure, often absent in other qualitative approaches, ensuring that flexibility and rigour are maintained. The theory developed from data explains categories, properties and the connections between them (Calloway and Knapp 1999). The approach used for analysis of the qualitative data in this study is based on the grounded theory. Although it is not the aim of this inquiry to develop a specific theory regarding the research problem, this approach is very useful for the structured analysis of various elements and factors that form and influence the ways in which the future is constructed in urban planning processes in Dublin.

At the beginning of the process of analysing data gathered from interviews and observation the author tried to immerse herself in this data. This involved looking through, reading and rereading notes and transcripts. In the next step, she read through each interview and observation document in order to identify individual sections of text describing various aspects of the research problem. These parts of the text were subsequently coded. According to Bryman and Burgess (op cit.), coding is a key step in the process of analysis. It can be described as “simply the process of categorizing and sorting data” (Charmaz 1983:111), while codes are used to “summarise, synthesise, and sort many observations made out of the data” (ibid:112). Coding
constitutes a link between data and conceptualisation (Bryman and Burgess op cit.). There are a number of different types of coding, for example open, axial, selective, factual, interpretive, and pattern analysis (Borgatti 2005, Kerlin 2002). The type of coding employed in this study can be best described as a combination of both open and factual. Open coding, also known as generative, conceptual or thematic, is often described as an ‘open’ process. It is ‘open’ in that the researcher tries to examine the data without making any prior assumptions about what she/he can discover. The factual coding represents ideas that are inclined to be more tangible, such as actions, definitions, events, properties, and settings processes (Kerlin 2002).

As a result of the coding process, a range of codes was developed. The codes were compared in order to find similarities and differences. Identification of similarities between codes allowed for the development of concepts, which then were incorporated into an emerging theme. These themes are presented in the next chapter.

4.4.1.2 Analysis of quantitative data

The data generated through the questionnaire has mainly a quantitative character. Microsoft Excel, a statistical package, was used to organise and analyse the data. As the first step, the author coded the information, which later was entered into the package. When all the data was entered it was cross-checked for possible errors. In the next step, simple statistical analyses were performed. Firstly, the results for each question were considered individually. They are shown in table and charts. In the last phase, correlations between different questions were sought. For example, as two different groups of people participated in a survey; people representing local government and private consultants, a comparison between opinions held by both groups was made.

4.4.2 Presentation of results

There are numerous ways that can be used to present qualitative data. Chenail (1995) listed a whole range of strategies that can be employed: natural, most simple to most complex, first discovered/constructed to last discovered/constructed, quantitative-informed, theory-guided, narrative logic, most important to least important, dramatic presentation, and no particular order. For the purpose of this thesis, the author has
developed an optimal way to present the data and the results of analysis. Chapter 5, discussing the results of the study, is divided into two main parts: (Section 5.2) *Constructing the future in the current urban planning process in Dublin*, and (Section 5.3) *Applications of futures methods in the urban planning processes in Dublin*. The two parts represent different aspects of the research problem and were also examined with the use of different methods.

The data gathered through interviews and the survey is used to formulate the main themes that emerged from its analysis. The information from interviews in the form of 'codes' is presented in non-numerical tables, while the results of quantitative analysis are shown in charts. This data is then discussed and analysed in the main body of text. The case studies are presented individually, but the description of each of them is based on the same structure. Some of the data is also used in the form of citations from interviews or documents in order to emphasise or support the argument being made.

### 4.5 Synthesis

The choice of the methodological approach for this study was carefully considered in the beginning of the study. It was recognised that a qualitative methodology would be most suitable, as the research dealt with ways of thinking, opinions, perceptions, attitudes and the future. The examination of methods and underlying factors that were used by actors and stakeholders in the creation of the future of a city was linked to the ethnomethodological approach. As the main focus of the research was placed on urban planning processes and the understanding of a number of different aspects of these processes was sought, the case study was chosen as the main strategy of inquiry. Crystallisation was chosen as the most appropriate approach in ensuring validity of data and research findings. The methods for the completion of individual objectives were chosen according to the tasks that needed to be achieved. The following methods were used: documentary research, qualitative methods (in-depth interviews, case studies and futures methods) and quantitative methods (survey).

Documentary research was used for the in-depth review of Futures Studies in regard to the concepts underlying the field, its origins, purposes, historical evolution, philosophical and epistemological foundations and methods. As the author was a novice to the Futures Studies field, this part of the study was essential to the further
evolution of her thinking. The literature search was also critical to the development of an understanding of how the approach towards the future has evolved in an urban planning context, and for carrying out comparisons between the ways of thinking about the future by futurists and planners. It was also the main method in the investigation of the international case studies, where futures methods were applied in urban planning processes. Finally, documentary research led to the identification of the gaps in knowledge related to the research question and the recognition of the weaknesses of the current planning approach towards the future.

The main method for collection of primary data were in-depth interviews with stakeholders, decision makers and planners in Dublin, who represented nine different sectors. The main aim of the interviews was to gain an understanding of how the future is being approached and constructed in the urban planning process in Dublin. The interviews allowed the author to discern the role of different people and organisations in shaping the future of the city; to explore what information is used at present and what information is required; to identify methods currently used for planning the future; and to establish the factors encouraging and impeding future oriented thinking. Data gathered during the interviews constituted foundations for drawing recommendations in regard to the transformation of the planning mindset towards a more future-oriented action.

The case studies were used for the investigation of the projects, in which futures methods were used in urban planning in Dublin. Five different projects were identified and each of them was examined in regard to their origins, methods employed, participation issues and outcomes and outputs. The results of this investigation were critical for formulation of the Prospective methodology model, as well as gaining an understanding of what are the critical issues in the application of futures methods in urban planning processes. Futures methods were used in this research in a project that aimed at testing in practice the preliminary Prospective model developed by the author.

The survey was the only quantitative method used in this study. It had a complementary role to the information gathered from the in-depth interviews, and was addressed to planners and decision-makers working in local authorities and to planning consultants. Its aim was to further explore the issue of data and methods employed to collect this data in the context of future-oriented planning. It enabled identification of the main types of information that is currently gathered and the types of information
that is required, but not collected. It also helped to determine what methods are currently used in the planning process and what is the role and place of futures methods in this context.
5. FUTURE-ORIENTED THINKING IN CURRENT URBAN PLANNING PROCESSES IN DUBLIN

5.1 Introduction

In the earlier chapter, (Chapter 3), the general evolution of the ways of approaching and constructing the future in urban planning processes was discussed. A number of aspects were considered: perceptions about the future; attitudes towards change and complexity; ways of thinking about the city and its various dimensions; methods and techniques used for the exploration of the future; and the people and institutions involved in the planning process. Also, common weaknesses in current planning’s approach towards the future were identified and examples of the application of futures methods in various cities were reviewed.

This chapter presents the results of an in-depth examination of the ways of thinking about and planning for the future in the urban planning processes in Dublin – the main case study city. The introductory information about Dublin, and the justification for its choice as the main case study city, was given in Chapter 4 (section 4.2.4). The chapter is based on the primary data collected by the author (the methods of data collection and analysis are described in Sections 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.4.1). It consists of the two main parts. The first part (Section 5.2) attempts to develop an understanding of how the future of Dublin is envisioned and planned in the current urban planning processes.

The following issues are examined.

- General attitudes towards the future held by decision-makers.
- Perceptions of planning and its relationship with the future.
- Various aspects of future-oriented thinking and planning, such as methods, information base, governance structures, planning issues, and key actors.
- People and organisations involved in the planning processes.
- Examples of long-term future-oriented thinking and action.
- Factors impeding and encouraging long-term future-oriented thinking in urban planning process.

The second part presents and examines five projects carried out in Dublin where futures methods were applied. The first three projects, Dublin 2020 Vision, Dublin – A City of Possibilities 2002-2012, and Development of community indicators in
Ballymun, represent three different geographical levels within the city of Dublin, respectively, the city-region level, municipal area and local community level. The fourth project, Dublin – Belfast economic corridor, has a cross-border regional character. The last exercise, Mobile and Accessible Dublin, differs from the first four projects because it was organised and conducted to test the Prospective methodology specifically for the purpose of this research. Each project is discussed within the same framework, which involves an evaluation of the following: the origins of the project, process and methodology, participation issues and outcomes and outputs.

5.2 Constructing the future in the current urban planning process in Dublin

5.2.1 General attitudes of decision-makers towards the future

The in-depth interviews conducted with decision-makers representing various sectors within the city enabled the author to identify their general opinions about the future-oriented thinking and planning. Three main types of attitudes were observed: strong support for future-oriented thinking and planning; neutral; and disbelief in the merit of thinking about the future.

Strong support for future-oriented thinking and planning. This view was characteristic of the majority of decision-makers interviewed. Strong emphases were placed on the need to have a long-term vision of the future, and the necessity to explore the consequences of policies and decisions that are being introduced at present. People holding this view represented all nine sectors: academia, local, regional and central government, various governmental and non-governmental agencies, planning consultants, community groups, developers and politicians.

Neutral. The attitude of these interviewees, who did not indicate their strong support for future-oriented thinking but neither they did disregard it, could be described as neutral. This attitude was far less frequent than those who supported futures thinking. It was observed among representatives of the community sector, local government, developers and various other agencies.

Disbelief in the merit of thinking about the future. This view was strongly expressed only by one interviewee representing politics. Lack of confidence in future-oriented
thinking was based on the belief that the most important consideration are present problems and issues, as these are the ones that matter for the electorate.

5.2.2 Planning and its regard to the future

Bracken (1981) distinguished four main ways in which the relationship between planning and the future can be described (this was discussed earlier in section 3.1). These are:

1. Planning for the present by reacting to past problems.
2. Planning to meet a predicted future.
3. Planning with consideration of a predicted future.
4. Planning by creating a desired future.

In the survey, decision-makers from the local authorities and private planning consultants were asked to indicate which of the above relationships is the most characteristic for planning in Dublin. Almost half of the respondents (43%) believed that planning in Dublin could be described as planning with consideration of a predicted future, while only 14% of respondents thought that planning is done by creating a desired future. For almost a quarter of respondents (23%) planning was based on reacting to past problems in order to fulfil present needs, and for another 17% of respondents planning aimed to meet a predicted future. One respondent held the view that planning activity was "a bit of a loose combination of 'reactions', consideration of a predicted future, but without sufficient research/information on the 'future'". Differences of opinions were observed between people representing local authorities and private planning consultants. 36% of consultants believed that planning is done by reacting to past problems, while only 14% of respondents from the local authorities shared this opinion. Almost half of local authority representatives (48%) considered planning to be done with consideration of the predicted future, while only slightly more than a third of consultants (36%) agreed with this view. The results illustrating the opinions of all respondents and the distinct views of local authority representatives and consultants are presented in Fig. 5.1.

The analysis of the attitudes of planners and policy-makers towards the future shows that there is a growing recognition of the importance of the long-term future-oriented planning and having a clear vision of the future development. However, only a small
number of practitioners believe that planning in Dublin is currently done by creating the desired future, and most views it as "planning with consideration of a predicted future". This points to an evident inconsistency between the aspirations and needs, and the reality. Interesting differences of opinions were noticed between the local authority officials and planning consultants. Consultants view the current urban planning processes in Dublin as more reactive in comparison to the local authority representatives. The author suspects that the difference of opinions may be a consequence of different perception of local authority activities - local authorities view their own work in more positive light than the planning consultants’.

The approach towards future practised in urban planning in Dublin

![Diagram showing the approach towards future in urban planning in Dublin]

**Fig. 5.1 Approaches towards the future by urban planning practitioners in Dublin**

5.2.3 Factors involved in future-oriented decision-making and planning

Urban planning and decision-making is a very complex process, which involves a whole range of interrelated factors. One of the objectives of this thesis was to develop
an understanding of the different factors involved in that process and the relationship between them. The author also tried to identify the existing gaps and needs related to these factors that should be addressed in order to ensure effective decision-making and planning in Dublin.

Building upon the information gathered through in-depth interviews six ‘factor’ categories were distinguished. These were:
1. governance,
2. planning issues,
3. information base,
4. methods,
5. collaboration, and
6. behavioural/ psychological factors.

5.2.3.1 Governance

The interviewees raised a number of issues that can be considered under the Governance category. Among them were:
- powers of local government,
- political accountability,
- fragmentation of local government,
- collaboration between the four local authorities operating in the area of Dublin,
- the balance of power between central and local government,
- the broad range of people and organisations responsible for the development of Dublin,
- lack of a person or an organisation being in charge of the whole city-region, and
- engagement of citizens in governance at the local level.

The majority of interviewees, when asked about what is required to ensure effective future-oriented planning and decision-making, responded that local government in Ireland needs to be strengthened, as, at present, its powers are too limited to ensure effective planning. This strengthening should involve the devolution of certain powers from central to the local level alongside changes in the ways of funding local authorities. Another very important issue identified was the need for greater political accountability at the city-region level. Many of the interviewees were in favour of
creating a position of a directly elected Mayor who would have responsibility for the whole city-region. Currently, each of the four city and county councils elects a Mayor from its members for a period of one year. Although councils and mayors have decision-making powers, they are rarely engaged in the preparation of policies and plans, which are usually devised by non-elected local authority officials. The interviewees believed that the creation of a position of a directly elected mayor, who would act in this capacity for a number of years, would increase the political accountability of local government.

Another important problem raised by a significant number of interviewees was the fragmentation of local government and dispersion of people and agencies responsible for the development of the city. Many respondents felt that there is no one person or organisation in charge of the entire Dublin area. They believed that in order to ensure effective decision-making it is necessary for the four local authorities (for some respondents also the neighbouring county councils) to collaborate much more closely on planning and development issues. There was a call for an integration of thinking between the four local authorities and other agencies responsible for development (e.g. Health Boards, Education agencies, transport companies and others). A significant number of respondents proposed the creation of a body, which would be responsible for strategic planning and development (in some cases, emphasis was placed on land use and transportation planning) for the whole region. Some respondents believed that this function could be part of a curriculum for a directly elected Mayor, others were in favour of the idea of the creation of a Greater Dublin Authority proposed by government in 2001 (this project has not being realised). In addition, one individual interviewed proposed the establishment of the position of a Minister for Dublin.

The last issue regarding governance raised by interviewees was community engagement in decision-making and local governance. Representatives of local authorities and community organisations in particular expressed a view that there is a strong need for broader active participation of the community in local governance and decision-making. Although over recent years many initiatives were proposed and carried out in order to facilitate more meaningful community participation in local governance, one of the community representatives, based on his own experience, felt that there is a ‘huge reluctance’ from local government and other agencies to let the community participate in the decision-making processes. Another community
representative shared the same opinion to a certain degree, but she also emphasised
that in order for the community to be engaged in decision-making they need to learn
how to talk to and collaborate with other agencies in an appropriate manner. She
pointed out an example of successful community involvement in decision-making at
the city level - the Dublin Docklands Development Authority, which has seven local
people involved in the decision-making processes at the top level.

The issue of public participation in the urban planning processes in Dublin was also
addressed in a survey distributed between senior officials in the four local authorities
and the corresponding City/County Development Boards, and private consultants. The
respondents were asked to indicate, which of the given statements describes the public
participation in planning in Dublin most accurately. The results are presented in Table
5.1 and Fig. 5.2.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
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<td>There is none</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public is consulted, but does not have a real influence</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public has an opportunity to propose and develop their ideas and their voice is an important factor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 Public participation in the planning processes in Dublin

![Public participation in urban planning processes](image)

Fig. 5.2 Public participation in urban planning processes in Dublin

According to the views of the majority of respondents (65%), the public is consulted
but it does not have a real influence. One third of the respondents (32%) believed that
the public has an opportunity to propose and develop their ideas and their voice is an
important factor. None of the respondents agreed with the view that there is no public participation in planning processes in Dublin. One of the respondents, a representative of the local authorities, perceived public participation as reactionary, disproportional, influential and negative. Another respondent believed that: “consultation is generally undertaken to make people feel they have participated, but views were subsequently ignored in favour of clientalism”. Yet another person perceived the whole process to be developer-led.

Summarising, the issues recognised as important in ensuring effective future-oriented planning and decision-making include the structure, accountability and powers of local government.

5.2.3.2 Planning issues

The following factors will be considered in the ‘planning issues’ category:

- the nature of planning in Ireland,
- new challenges for planning,
- lack of effective planning at the regional level,
- the role of vision in planning, and
- the predominance of the development control function over the future orientation of planning.

Only a few interviewees spoke about the general nature of planning in Ireland. They considered it to be rather reactive and passive. One respondent, representing central government, expressed the opinion that currently Irish planning is in a process of transformation. It is being increasingly recognised that the traditional ‘predict and provide’ model is becoming less and less relevant, and that planning needs to take into consideration much wider trends at a global level. A number of respondents recognised new challenges facing planning activity arising from the globalisation process. A number of respondents emphasised that it is necessary to think about the future of Dublin within a global, national and regional context, and simultaneously acting in a local capacity. One interviewee pointed out that as the boundaries between administrative and economic regions are blurring, there is a need for greater correlation between these two types of regions.
Another issue raised by several interviewees was the lack of effective planning at the regional level. Although the strategic thinking at the regional level in the form of the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area was greatly appreciated, the respondents emphasised the lack of decision-making powers at that level. One of the academic representatives also pointed out the lack of a statutory agency, which would ensure the implementation of the Strategic Planning Guidelines.

A significant number of respondents highlighted a need for vision-led planning. Some of them perceived having a vision as one of the most important factors in future-oriented planning and decision-making. Quite common was the view that there is no clear direction for the future development of the Dublin metropolitan area. This opinion was expressed by representatives of community and governmental agencies, developers, politicians and consultants.

A few interviewees brought up the issue of the politicisation of development control functions. In the Irish system, council members are responsible for land-use zoning activity. Some respondents perceived this system as inappropriate, because decisions about zoning are often influenced by political will. In many cases, these decisions are made with a focus on future elections rather than on long-term development principles. Two interviewees, representing non-governmental organisations and a regional body, were in favour of the idea of transferring zoning powers to executive planners at the regional level. One of them, however, raised the concern that this would be a very unpopular political decision, and thus quite unlikely to be taken.

5.2.3.3 Information base

A very important factor for decision-making and planning is the information base. The interviewees were asked to share their opinions about the types of required information and its sources, reliability and quality. When analysing each interview individually, the author noticed a strong link between the positions held, the sectors represented by interviewees and the types of information they listed as required. For example, planners mainly gathered data on population, economy and social trends, while community representatives and a member of City Development Board emphasised the importance of information revealing inhabitants experience and perceptions of living in the city. Most of the information listed by the members of the Dublin Transportation
Office was related to distribution of population and employment and the travel patterns linked to them, while bodies, such as FORFAS and IDA, gathered data on the existing and required infrastructure that supports economic development.

The analyses of different types of information considered by the interviewees as necessary in urban planning and decision-making led to the establishment of a number of principal ‘information’ categories. These included:

- demography,
- economy,
- society,
- transportation and land use,
- infrastructure,
- best practice, and
- miscellaneous.

Data illustrating population changes was considered by a significant number of respondents as essential for planning. This data primarily embraced statistical information on population size and distribution (residency), age and gender structures, educational profile, family sizes and nationality. These types of data should be examined in order to observe the changes taking place and to detect new demographic trends. In addition, information illustrating economic activity was listed by many respondents as important. This includes data on different types of economic activity and their geographical distribution, employment, skills and resources requirements, and local, national and global trends influencing economic development. A number of interviewees emphasised the need to explore the connection between the economy and culture and also a need for a greater understanding of the relationship between planning and market forces.

An important part of data-bases informing planning decisions is data on society, which comprises issues, such as housing, education, crime, health, ethnic structures, and poverty. A number of respondents pointed out a need for more information on perceptions about living in the city and recognition of citizens values, aspirations and wishes for the future of the Dublin. One of the interviewees observed that there is a gap between perceptions and the reality described by statistical information. She supported her view with the example of crime levels in Dublin, which according to statistics are relatively low, but nonetheless citizens do not feel safe. Consequently,
actions undertaken looking only at the statistical information would be quite different than if qualitative forms of data, encompassing opinions and perceptions, as well as statistics-based quantitative data were taken into consideration.

Another type of information was related to transportation and land use. Data on traffic, public and private transport, land use patterns and housing densities were listed as required mainly by planners and representatives of various organisations, such as DTO and IDA. Some respondents emphasised a need to monitor and evaluate the consequences of various transport and land use policies that are being introduced. Interviewees, representing developmental agencies, such as IDA and FORFAS, indicated a need for data on the existing and required infrastructure that supports the development of business.

A number of respondents considered examples of ‘best practice’ from other countries and cities as good sources of inspiration and innovative ideas for planning in Dublin. One of the respondents raised a concern related to the ‘best practice’ examples. He pointed out that people often look at models of ‘best practice’ without considering them within their specific context, and brought up the example of Helsinki - a city that by many is seen as a case of successful planning that could be an inspiration for Dublin. However, one of the main features of planning in Helsinki is the fact that the city owns most of its land, while in Dublin only a scattered array of small holdings of land belong to the local councils. Therefore, certain planning solutions applied in Helsinki cannot be adapted for Dublin due to different land ownership structures.

The ‘miscellaneous’ category embraces all the other types of information, which could enhance the information base for the urban decision-making and planning. One of the interviewees pointed out the need to do comparative studies of urban hierarchies in different countries in order to gain an understanding of the development of cities within their national framework. Another respondent proposed carrying out comparisons between different cities of similar size to Dublin to establish the factors that contribute to the development of successful urban regions. A significant number of interviewees held the view that more important than the generation of data was gaining an understanding of various issues. Among the issues, of which understanding of should be sought, the following issues were identified.

- Understanding of the ‘bigger picture’ and the global trends.
• A need to comprehend past planning processes and systems, which were created as their effect, for example the housing system.
• Looking at present processes as a consequence of certain past planning policies and a result of institutional influence.
• Exploration of trends and the impacts of policy.

The respondents pointed out a whole range of information sources, which are used by decision-makers and planners. These include: census; specialised surveys; published reports and consultation papers; communication between people and organisations; and other sources. Census, listed by a significant number of respondents, seems to be one the main sources of information.

Many organisations carry out their own research in the form of various specialised surveys. These studies are usually specially designed in order to obtain data, which is not available from any other source. For instance, DTO carries out traffic assessments, public transport surveys, research on commuting distances and land use surveys. Among other identified types of research were: building condition surveys, Environmental Impact Survey, house counts and house price surveys.

Many decision-makers use various reports as a part of their information base. These include: forecasts prepared by ESRI and other research institutes, government reports on forecasts and government policy, research publications, housing statistics, reports created by local councils, studies and bulletins. Another group of reports are consultation papers on new planning and development policies issued by government departments.

A significant number of respondents listed various forms of communication between people and organisations as an important source of information. For example, involvement with different groups and agencies and listening to the voices of the community was very important to community representatives; communication with policy-makers at different levels (local authorities, national government) as well as attending seminars, conferences and keeping in touch with important players was a good source of information for developers; for the representative of a business association (IBEC) - networking with other business organisations, such as Chambers of Commerce or DCBA, was an important way of exchanging information. Planners often collect data from practitioners and businesses (e.g. agents, valuers, professional
consultants), whilst the IDA collaborates closely with universities in regard to skills and research needs assessments.

Other sources included: knowledge built upon experience, analysis of different documents (such as developments granted planning permission), commissioning of research to outside research agencies and private consultants, knowledge generated by universities, drawing on knowledge of experts, studies conducted by library staff members (for DCBA), newspapers, anecdotal information, gossip, rumour and the Internet.

Opinions on the availability, reliability and quality of information accessible to decision-makers were quite diverse and in some cases downright contradictory. As stated earlier, the census is perceived as a good information source by many respondents. Only one interviewee, representing regional government, considered the census data to be less reliable due to its collection method – the survey is completed on Sunday in one place of collections, where a person happens to be on the night of the survey, which may lead to certain misrepresentations. Another respondent, from a local authority, noted that census information, although very valuable, dates very quickly.

The respondents varied in their views in regard to general data availability. Representatives of local authorities and governmental agencies (such as FORFAS) emphasised a need for more information while representatives from other governmental bodies (DDDA, IDA, NESC) believed that there is a sufficient amount of good data available. A number of interviewees raised the issue of fragmentation of information and the need for a better data management. There are numerous data sources, but there is no one single source or database, which would amalgamate all essential information. Another problem stressed by a number of interviewees is the lack of data at the local level and for given geographical areas. One of the respondents also noted gaps in institutional data, which could provide more knowledge on what is happening on the ground and how different policies are being implemented. Also, the difference between the amount of information available to private and public bodies was pointed out by one of the planners. On the base of his own experience, he argued that private companies, with which he has dealt, seem to be much more informed than people in his department in the local authority.
As with the case of availability, views on the reliability and quality of information were divided. Some interviewees (local authorities, central government) believed that reliability and quality of data is rather poor, while others (NESC, IDA) hold a view that the reliability and quality of data is satisfactory. One of the respondents observed that it could never be stated as a matter of certainty that information is reliable because it is a judgemental call.

Another aspect of the information base was the relationship between information and understanding. A number of interviewees emphasised that data and knowledge should be used to gain an understanding of different issues, such as the complexity of processes and trends, interactions between different elements, consequences of policies and decisions. One of the respondents was concerned that although there is a substantial amount of data available, this information still cannot change understanding of various issues. He also argued that the existing pool of knowledge is not well utilised.

The final, but nonetheless critical, point made by respondents was related to the role of information in decision-making and planning. Interviewees pointed out that many reports, policies and decisions are made upon the expertise and opinions of people preparing them and the data is used to illustrate them and to convince those whom they affect or serve. One of the respondents (FORFÁS) believed that there should be more data underpinning the reports and decisions.

The knowledge base of decision-making and planning was also the subject of two questions in the survey distributed among senior officials in the four local authorities and the four City/County Developments Boards, and private consultants. The respondents were asked to indicate what type of information ‘about the future’ is currently collected in order to assist planners and decision-makers, and what type of information ‘about the future’ would they consider as the most necessary for that purpose. The results are presented in Tables 5.2 and 5.3 and in Fig. 5.3. Both questions were multiple choice questions. The percentage value in tables (column 3) illustrates the percentage of all respondents that indicated a given type of information as collected or desired.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Type</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative information describing the present situation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrapolation of current well established trends</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimation of future activities, e.g. transport, housing, school needs and other</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on emerging trends, which may gain great importance in the future</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible future implications of new technologies, cultural and social trends for the urban space</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible future implications of new policies and decisions made</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs and wishes expressed by communities</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on global issues that may have a significant impact on Dublin and Ireland</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2 Types of information ‘about the future’ currently collected

Analysis of the questionnaires shows that estimation of future activities, e.g. transport, housing, school needs, was indicated by majority of respondents (81%) as a type of information that is being collected, but only 58% of respondents believed it to be the most desired information ‘about the future’. Among other types of information listed by more than half respondents as collected were: quantitative information describing the present situation (68%), needs and wishes of communities (58%) and extrapolation of current well established trends (55%). Only 39% of respondents thought that analysis of possible future implications of new policies and decisions were carried out, and even less people held an opinion that information on emerging trends, which may gain great importance in the future (35%) and knowledge on possible future implications of new technologies, cultural and social trends for the urban environments (32%) is being generated. Just 26% of respondents indicated that knowledge on global issues that may have a significant impact on Dublin and Ireland is collected. One person indicated that knowledge on political expectations is generated.

Among the types of information ‘about the future’ that respondents considered to be the most desired were: knowledge on possible future implications of new technologies, cultural and social trends for the urban environments (71%), information on emerging trends, which may gain great importance in the future (65%), estimation of future activities (58%), information on global issues that may have a significant impact on Dublin and Ireland (58%), knowledge of possible future implications of new policies and decisions made (55%) and needs and wishes expressed by communities (52%). In addition, 52% of respondents indicated that an overall vision of the most desired future...
is needed. Information, such as **quantitative information describing the present situation** and **extrapolation of current well-established trends**, which were indicated by majority of respondents as collected, were considered by minority of them as desired, correspondingly 35% and 16%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative information describing the present situation</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrapolation of current well established trends</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimation of future activities, e.g. transport, housing, school needs and other.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on emerging trends, which may gain great importance in the future</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible future implications of new technologies, cultural and social trends for the urban space</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible future implications of new policies and decisions made</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs and wishes expressed by communities</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on global issues that may have a significant impact on Dublin and Ireland</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall vision of the most desired future</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.3 Types of information ‘about the future’ desired by decision-makers and planners**

Information 'about the future' - currently collected and desired

![Graph showing comparison between currently collected and desired types of information](image)

**Types of information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of responses</th>
<th>Currently collected</th>
<th>Desired</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a – Quantitative information describing the present situation  
b – Extrapolation of current well established trends  
c – Estimation of future activities, e.g. transport, housing, school needs and other  
d – Information on emerging trends, which may gain great importance in the future  
e – Possible future implications of new technologies, cultural and social trends for the urban space  
f – Possible future implications of new policies and decisions made  
g – Needs and wishes expressed by communities  
h – Information on global issues that may have a significant impact on Dublin and Ireland  
i – Other  
j – Overall vision of the most desired future

**Fig. 5.3 Types of information ‘about the future’ currently collected and desired**
Four respondents also added comments regarding desired information. These were classified as ‘other’. These comments were: “vision should include consideration of big ideas, such as 'centres of new urbanisation' undertaken in Barcelona”, “greater co-ordination of information and of planning by different agencies and disciplines”, “monitoring during the planning period; qualitative assessment of the urban environment current and proposed” and “dynamic modelling with a medium (15 year) to long-term (30-50 year) strategic horizon”.

5.2.3.4 Methods

Methods of planning were one of the elements of decision-making and planning processes that were not often discussed by interviewees. Very few people, representing central and local government, and governmental and non-governmental agencies (DTO, DCBA, DDDA, FORFAS), have raised this matter. Only one individual discussed methodologies in some detail. In the process of interviews analysis the following issues were classified as related to planning methodologies:

- the ‘predict and provide’ model,
- a need for new methods and techniques,
- mechanisms for translating strategic decisions to the local level, and
- monitoring and evaluation.

The ‘predict and provide’ model was described by one of the respondents as a traditional planning approach aiming to develop policy on the basis of evidence, usually gathered through an observation of historical trends in population, housing, transport, demands for infrastructure, education, leisure, retailing and the like. These trends would then usually be projected forward using different statistical methods and techniques of observation. The interviewee believed that it is becoming increasingly accepted that planning is no longer the ‘master’ force shaping urban environments, but instead urban environments are very responsive to much wider trends at a global level, for example economic, cultural, fashion trends and many others, as well as to the changing aspirations of local policy and decision-makers. Therefore, the old ‘predict and provide’ model is becoming less and less relevant as a key approach.

The decreasing relevance of the ‘predict and provide’ approach indicates that there is a requirement for new types of information and this has brought about a need for fresh
methods and techniques, which would complement the existing well developed 'predict and provide' tools. The following new methods should help:

- to map the changing aspirations and ambitions of policy and decision makers;
- to identify the global trends, which would have a strong influence and to examine their possible consequences;
- to explore how these trends interact;
- to look at different issues from a much broader perspective;
- to challenge the thinking of people involved in urban planning and decision-making, such as elected members, officials, business groups, community; and
- to channel stakeholders thinking into contemplating what future is desirable in the long-term perspective and what needs to be done in order to achieve that future.

One of the interviewees proposed that the scenario planning technique should be used more extensively in the urban policymaking and planning processes. They also suggested looking at the corporate sector in order to identify strategic methods that could be adapted and employed in urban planning.

One of the interviewees stressed the need for a mechanism that would allow translating strategic regional decisions and policies to the local level. They argued that actors operating at the local level often make decisions without being informed about the broader policy context and without considering how their local area interacts with other areas. Such situations can be the result of a lack of information and understanding of how the whole region, of which a given local area is a part of, works. Although usually the information is generated at local level, the broader knowledge and understanding can only be generated at higher regional level. A mechanism translating the strategic policy to the local level should use local information in order to create an understanding in two ways: bottom-up and top-down.

Monitoring and evaluation are another aspect that can be related to methods. A need for monitoring and evaluation was emphasised by a number of interviewees in relation to different aspects of planning. One of the local authority representatives stressed a necessity to monitor and evaluate policy impacts, using numerical indicators as well as carrying out qualitative analysis. He illustrated his point with the example of the 'Section 23' mechanism, which, in his view, was very effective during the early

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10 "Section 23" provides tax relief for the capital expenditure incurred on the construction, refurbishment or conversion of rented residential accommodation.
1990s in Dublin as a stimulant for development, but although at present it still fulfils a developmental role, it also has rather negative effects for housing affordability. Another respondent, also representing local authority, pointed out a need for monitoring and evaluation of various social schemes that have been introduced for a long period of time. The last respondent, who raised the issue of evaluation, believed that the evaluation process, although somewhat avoided in the public sector, should be an integral part of urban decision making and planning processes.

Methods were also one of the main subjects of the questionnaire distributed between senior officials in local authorities, City/County Development Boards and private consultants. The respondents were asked the following.

1. To identify which methods are used in current planning processes.
2. To describe advantages and disadvantages of traditional techniques.
3. To indicate what features are characteristic of the traditional methods.
4. To point out which of the futures methods are used in urban planning.
5. And to point out at which stage of planning process futures methods would be most appropriate.

Analysis of the results, demonstrated in Table 5.4 and Fig. 5.4(a), shows that the majority of respondents (74%) indicated demand estimation to be the method the most often used in the urban planning processes. Among other techniques, which are frequently employed were: quantitative forecasting methods (68%) and trends extrapolation (61%). According to the respondents scenario planning (19%) and visioning (23%) were applied the least often. Not much more than a third of respondents believed that models of urban systems (35%) and long-term projections (39%) are currently used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
<th>% of all respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Models of urban systems</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative forecasting methods</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trends extrapolation</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic Information Systems (GIS)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term projections</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand estimation</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario planning</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visioning</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4 Methods used in current urban planning processes
Fig. 5.4 Methods used in current urban planning: (a) overall number of responses; (b) percentage of responses for local authorities/CDBs and private consultants

The results were also analysed in regard to any possible differences of opinion between respondents from local authorities and private consultants (Fig. 5.4(b)). Noticeable differences of opinion were observed in only three cases. 83% of private consultants believed that quantitative forecasting methods and trends extrapolation were used, while only, correspondingly, 47% and 58% of local authority representatives held this opinion. Also, twice more private consultants (33%), in comparison to local authority representatives (16%), considered visioning to be used.

In addition to identifying the methods that are currently used in urban planning in order to generate information ‘about the future’, the respondents were also asked to describe their advantages and disadvantages. Respondents’ answers regarding the
advantages were classified into four groups: traditional methods provide important information on the existing situation; conventional techniques enable the identification of future needs and demands; traditional tools are seen as ‘tried and tested’ and reliable; and other.

*Traditional methods provide important information on the existing situation.* Exploration of the possible or desirable futures needs to be based on a good understanding of the present situation. Traditional methods provide decision-makers and planners with reliable baseline information upon which future can be predicted. They also give concrete facts and figures, which can easily be understood by elected politicians and the public.

*Conventional techniques enable the identification of future needs and demands.* Conventional techniques, such as quantitative forecasting, provide good information on lacking facilities and existing resources. Their application allows decision-making based on needs and demands, not simply on the fact that a given development is acceptable in principle.

*Traditional tools are seen as ‘tried and tested’ and reliable.* Traditional tools are usually trusted by practitioners and members of the public as they have been tested over the years. Their users find them familiar, straightforward and safe to use, and they are seen as particularly reliable in areas like transport and retail planning. The traditional ‘predict and provide’ approach is easy to understand for policy and decision makers.

*Other.* Among advantages that were classified as other were: traditional tools allow international comparisons and they tend to be robust in the short-term.

The disadvantages of conventional tools were classified into the following seven groups: tendency to concentrate on the past trends; reinforcement of a ‘medium’ projection; primacy of the short-term horizon; not providing for the development of a long-term vision; failing to accommodate changes in economic and social conditions; lack of innovation and flexibility; and other. Conventional methods can have a tendency to focus on the past trends without anticipating new trends. This, in planning, can lead to following the existing trends rather than imagining ahead. Current future forecasts tend to extrapolate the present situation and then concentrate around a ‘medium’ projection without giving much attention to other possible future
alternatives. This can lead to the reinforcement of a particular development option without much regard being given to new possibilities. As one of the respondents put it: "they do not challenge the status quo".

The time horizons used in traditional methods are rather short and are not robust in the long-term. The projects planned within short-time scales are usually small and relatively unimaginative. Major decisions made with a short-term framework can be defective and wasteful of resources. Conventional methods do not provide for the development of a long-term vision of urban areas. They can be in conflict with recommending policy directions leading to the achievement of an envisioned future. Traditional forecasting methods using current baseline data may not take into account changing economic and social conditions. They can also fail to accommodate global trends and transformations of the environment, technology, work patterns and the like.

Traditional techniques are not helpful in examining processes in an innovative way. They rarely lead to innovative methods of future planning and effecting change. They are also quite rigid, what is an obstacle while trying to approach the dynamics of the planning context. Conventional methods are limited in terms of changing circumstances, as they do not have the flexibility necessary to adapt to different situations. A number of characteristics were classified as other. Among them were: the lack of transparency and understanding of the forward planning processes by a wider range of people; the lack of a satisfactory level of engagement with the public; the absence of visualisation; traditional methods being overly quantitative and simplistic; a high dependence on up-to date information and the skills for analysis and understanding statistical data.

Respondents were not only asked to list the advantages and disadvantages of traditional ways of generating information 'about the future', but were also required to express their opinions as to whether these methods were participatory, holistic, transdisciplinary, long-term, medium-term, short-term, innovative, creative, normative, providing choice of alternative futures and having a global reference. Their opinions are presented in Fig. 5.5.
Fig. 5.5 Features characteristic for traditional ways of generating information 'about the future'

Traditional ways of generating information 'about the future' were perceived by a majority of respondents as participatory, short-term, medium-term, transdisciplinary and normative, while they are not viewed for the same extent as holistic, long-term, innovative, creative, providing choice of alternative futures and having a global
reference. More than half of respondents (64%) believed that conventional methods are participatory, while about a quarter of them (26%) did not share this opinion. The majority of respondents also thought that these methods were short-term (78%) and medium-term (65%). 9% of people did not agree with a statement that conventional ways are short-term and 29% did not view them as medium-term. The respondents had quite diverse views on whether the traditional ways are transdisciplinary – 45% of them agreed with this opinion while 29% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed. Normative was a feature, on which most of the respondents (43%) did not have any opinion, 38% ascribed this feature to be a characteristic of traditional methods and 19% of respondents did not agree with this view.

The characteristic that the most of respondents (74%) believed to not be a feature of traditional methods was the ability to provide a choice of alternative futures. Only 16% of respondents shared the opposite view. A significant proportion of respondents thought that conventional ways of generating information ‘about the future’ are not creative (65%) and innovative (64%), while only correspondingly 16% and 13% of respondents disagreed with this opinion. 58% of respondents did not perceive traditional methods as holistic, while 29% of them believed them to be so. Half of respondents (51% in both cases) thought that conventional techniques are not long-term and do not provide a global reference. 39% believed them to be long-term and 36% thought that they do have a global reference.

The employment of futures methods in urban planning processes in Dublin was another subject of the questionnaire. The results for this question are presented in Table 5.5 and Fig. 5.6. According to the respondents, alternative futures scenarios analysis was the most frequently used method, indicated by 35% of respondents. Among other methods, which were fairly often used were: visioning (29%), cross-impact analysis (26%) and environmental scanning (23%). The use of the Delphi method and qualitative trend analysis were pointed by only 10% and 13% of respondents respectively. According to the respondents two methods, the futures wheel and relevance tree, are not used in urban planning processes at all. Among other methods listed by the respondents were: strategic impact assessments, methods used for preparation of Strategic Planning Guidelines and a review.
Table 5.5 Futures methods used in urban planning processes in Dublin

The analysis of the results were carried out in order to verify whether there was any difference of opinion between representatives of local authorities/CDBs and private consultants in regard to the application of futures methods in urban planning in Dublin (Fig. 5.6(a)). In the case of four methods (visioning, cross-impact analysis, environmental scanning and qualitative trend analysis) private consultants indicated a higher rate of application of these methods than the representatives of local authorities.

![Chart showing Futures methods used in urban planning (a)]

**Fig. 5.6(a) Futures methods used in urban planning processes in Dublin**

Only in the case of Delphi method more representatives from local authorities than private consultants indicated the use of this technique in planning. Exceptionally large divergences of views were observed for two methods – environmental scanning and
qualitative trend analysis. 42% of private consultants claimed that environmental scanning is used in the planning processes in Dublin, while only 11% of people in local authorities shared this opinion, and again 25% of private consultants indicted qualitative trend analysis, while only 5% of people from local authorities pointed out the same method.

**Futures methods used in urban planning (b)**

![Chart showing methods used in urban planning](chart)

**Methods**

**Fig. 5.6(b) Futures methods used in urban planning in Dublin – difference of opinion between local authorities representatives and private consultants**

The last question of the survey related to methods aimed to determine during which phases of urban planning process effective methods generating knowledge ‘about the future’ are required the most. The results for four phases (urban research, policy development, decision-making and implementation) are presented in Table 5.6 and Fig. 5.7. Three quarters of respondents believed that effective methods for generating information ‘about the future’ are mostly required in the policy development phase. The requirement at the decision-making stage was indicated by almost half of the respondents (48%) and urban research by just over one third (35%). The respondents perceived the implementation phase as the stage at which sufficient information ‘about the future’ is least required.
Table 5.6 Requirement for effective methods generating knowledge ‘about the future’ in particular phases of the urban planning process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban research</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy development</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation phase</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods generating information 'about the future' and the planning process

Fig. 5.7 Need for effective methods generating knowledge ‘about the future’ in particular phases of the urban planning process

Methods generating information 'about the future' and the planning process

Fig. 5.8 Requirement for effective methods generating knowledge ‘about the future’ in particular phases of the urban planning process – opinions of local authority representatives and private consultants
Again, differences of opinion between local authority representatives and private consultants were identified (Fig. 5.8). Both groups identified policy development as the phase in which effective methods for generating information 'about the future' are the most required. Differences of opinion were observed for two phases: urban research and decision-making. 58% of private consultants claimed that these methods are required in urban research, while only 21% of local authority representatives agreed with them. On the other hand, 58% of local authority representatives believed that these techniques are needed at the decision-making stage, while only 33% of private consultants agreed with this view.

5.2.3.5 Collaboration between the actors

Another important element of future-oriented decision-making and its relationship with planning processes is collaboration between the stakeholders representing various sectors and engagement of the community. The interviewees that discussed this issue represented politics, central government, developers, community and non-governmental business associations. Most of them believed that there is a need for a greater collaboration between all actors involved in development of the city. The respondents held the view that actors should form a kind of a partnership, which would work on setting a direction for future development, agree a shared plan to achieve the desired future state and co-operate on the implementation of such a plan. One of the respondents pointed out difficulties in cross-sectoral co-operation between various agencies. Using his own experience, he claimed that some organisations do not want to collaborate with others (e.g. the education sector) on broader regional issues, while others try to develop joint initiatives (e.g. health boards). The demand for an effective communication between agencies involved in the development of the city was pointed out by a number of interviewees. One of them indicated the need for a structure, which would provide a platform for discussions about the future of the city and its various aspects. Such a structure would also allow sharing knowledge between stakeholders and learning from each other in relation to various aspects. The last issue that can be related to collaboration is the involvement of the community in urban decision-making and planning processes. This aspect was already discussed under the 'governance' category in Section 5.2.3.1.
5.2.3.6 Behavioural and cultural factors

Several interviewees, representative of community and politics, discussed issues related to future-oriented decision-making and planning that can be described as behavioural or cultural factors. One of them stressed that policy and decision makers need to be constructive and objective. They also emphasised the importance of being able to listen to different voices and opinions. Another interviewee pointed out that the majority of decision-makers are still very short-term in their thinking. They also claimed that there is a ‘strange mindset’ among decision-makers, which can be described as non-willingness to accept existing problems and to start addressing them. They stressed that despite the vast amount of information showing the unsustainable development patterns, policy and decision makers do not seem to change their understanding of the existing situation and do not try to adjust their actions accordingly.

5.2.3.7 Factors involved in future-oriented planning – synthesis

Analysis of the in-depth interviews with stakeholders in Dublin has resulted in the identification of a range of key aspects of future-oriented urban decision-making and planning. Among these aspects were governance, planning factors, information base, methods, collaboration between actors and behavioural and cultural issues. Interviewees presented a strong belief that in order to strengthen future-oriented planning it is necessary to strengthen local government powers, which, in Ireland are quite limited. Two issues were especially important – the creation of direct political accountability for the entire city and the establishment of more effective finance raising capacity. Another important issue was fragmentation of local government (four local authorities functioning in Dublin) and lack of integration in the thinking and acting of the various actors and stakeholders that have an influence over the city’s development. However, it needs to emphasised that this problem is not only a characteristic of Dublin but of many other cities in the world. The last, but not least factor was the engagement of local communities in planning and decision-making. In the respondents opinion the public is being consulted but do not have real influence over decisions. There are very few examples at local level, for which this statement is untrue, such as the participation of local communities in decision-making at the Dublin
Docklands Development Authority and, partially, the engagement of local citizens in the Ballymun Regeneration Programme.

Current planning in Ireland is characterised as rather reactive and passive, however, it is being recognised that it is in the process of transformation. The transformation of mindset is arising from the fact that planners and decision-makers increasingly realise that the planning context, both local and global, is continuously changing. There is recognition that globalisation, the emergence of the knowledge economy and other major transformations have significant impacts on the city and these wider trends need to be considered and addressed. Another important aspect of planning is the lack of strong regional governance structures that would have executive power. Although good strategic thinking is performed at regional level, it cannot be implemented because executive powers are mainly held by local or central governments. The respondents strongly believed that planning should be vision-led, and that there was a need for the establishment of a clear direction for the future development of metropolitan Dublin.

Information base is another key factor in future-oriented planning. It has been observed that there is a strong correlation between the type of information that is collected or required and the organisations and sectors the respondents represented. Also the perception of data reliability and availability showed a similar correlation. Among the types of data considered to be essential for planning were demographic and economic data. Observation of changes and trends in this type of data was crucial for the planning activity. Also, information portraying society, transport and land use and representing best practice was found to be important. The analysis of types of collected information pointed out that planning is still largely functioning within the ‘provide and predict’ framework, however, the types of data listed as required confirms the earlier statement that planning is in the process of transformation. An interesting observation made by a number of interviewees was that information should be used to develop a better understanding of problems, trends and changes – the abundance of information is useless if it does not provide a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

The methods used in current planning processes reinforce the view that ‘predict and provide’ approach is still the dominating planning approach. There is a recognition that new methods are needed in order to explore and identify global trends and their
interactions; map the changing aspirations of policy and decision-makers; challenge the thinking of people involved in planning processes; and channel stakeholders thinking into contemplating what future is desirable in the long-term perspective and what needs to be done to achieve it. Traditional methods are seen as providing important information on the existing situation and as 'tried and tested' and reliable. They enable the identification of future needs and demands and are robust in the short-term. But they also tend to concentrate on past trends, reinforce a 'medium' projection, and focus on short-term horizon. They do not provide for the development of a long-term vision, fail to accommodate changes in economic and social conditions, and lack innovativeness and flexibility. Current planning methods are seen also as participatory, short-term, medium-term, transdisciplinary and normative, but they were not creative and innovative and were not providing choice of alternative futures. The employment of futures methods in planning processes in Dublin was rather low. Among the methods mainly used were scenario planning, visioning, environmental scanning and cross-impact analysis. Planning consultants applied futures methods more often than representatives of local authorities. The application of futures methods was mainly required in policy development and decision-making processes.

Agreement was reached among many interviewees that there is need for a greater collaboration between all actors involved in the development of the city. Such collaboration should involve setting a direction for the future development of the city, agreeing a shared plan to achieve the desired future and co-operation in regard to the implementation of such a plan. Also there is a demand for more effective communication between various organisations and agencies involved in the development of the city.

The last, but not least aspect of future-oriented planning was the play of various cultural and behavioural factors. It was pointed out that many decision-makers are still very short-term in their thinking and some of them are not willing to accept the existing problems and start addressing them. It was believed that policy and decision-makers need to be more constructive and objective, and also they should listen to different voices and opinions to inform their thinking.
5.2.4 Actors involved in the planning processes

The development of urban regions is influenced by a wide range of various factors and associated actors. The in-depth interviews conducted with different stakeholders in Dublin aimed at identifying people, organisations and other actors, who play an important role in, and have influence over the development of the city. The author also attempted to determine agencies and individuals that perform future-oriented thinking and planning in Dublin. Four categories of actors that have a strong influence over the development of the city were established in the process of interviews analysis. These included:

1. Individuals.
2. Organisations and agencies.
3. Interest groups.
4. Factors.

The same categories, excluding the factors, were used for the classification of actors performing future-oriented thinking and planning in Dublin.

5.2.4.1 Actors playing an important role in the development of the city

The respondents listed sixteen individuals, who in their opinion have a strong influence over the development of Dublin. They are presented in Table 5.7.

It is important to observe that out of the sixteen individuals identified only two were indicated by more than one interviewee. John Fitzgerald was listed by twelve respondents and Owen Keegan by two of them. Seven individuals listed by interviewees were working in Dublin City Council, three of them were in the central government at present or in the past, three of them were acting politicians, two were working in governmental agencies and one represented the community sector.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Fitzgerald</td>
<td>Dublin City Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen Keegan</td>
<td>DCC, Director of Traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie Ahern</td>
<td>TD, Taoiseach - the Irish Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brendan Kenny</td>
<td>DCC, Assistant City Manager for Housing, Social and Community Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie Haughey</td>
<td>Former Taoiseach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Barrett</td>
<td>DCC, City Architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Connolly</td>
<td>Dublin Inner City Partnership, Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick Gleeson</td>
<td>DCC, City Planner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eoin Ryan</td>
<td>Fianna Fail, MEP for Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Humphreys</td>
<td>DCC, Labour Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kieran McGowan</td>
<td>Enterprise Ireland, member of the Executive Board, former IDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Transport</td>
<td>at the time of the interviews, Séamus Brennan, TD, was the Minister for Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padraic White</td>
<td>Rail Procurement Agency, Chairman, former IDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Maloney</td>
<td>DCC, Executive Manager for Central Area, now Chief Executive of DDDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Finnegan</td>
<td>Director of the Dublin City Development Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruairí Quinn</td>
<td>Labour TD for Dublin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.7 Individuals with a strong influence over the future of Dublin**

The list of organisations and institutions, which according to the respondents have a strong influence over the development of the city, included 20 actors. These are presented in Table 5.8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An Bórd Pleanála</th>
<th>Chamber of Commerce</th>
<th>CIE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City/County Development Boards</td>
<td>Dublin City Business Association</td>
<td>Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin City Community Forum</td>
<td>Department of Trade and Employment</td>
<td>Dublin Transportation Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Transport</td>
<td>Development agencies</td>
<td>DDDDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin City Council</td>
<td>Garda</td>
<td>IBEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDA</td>
<td>Local authorities</td>
<td>National government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political leaders</td>
<td>UCD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.8 Organisations with strong influence over the future of Dublin**

Eight out of twenty organisations listed were indicated by more than one respondent. Dublin City Council was pointed out by nine interviewees, while five respondents mentioned local authorities in general. Out of the four local authorities operating in Dublin area, only Dublin City Council was indicated by its name. Many interviewees (6) perceived national government as an important player in development of Dublin. In addition, three business associations were listed more than once: Dublin Chamber of
Commerce (4), Dublin City Business Association (2) and IBEC (2). Three people indicated DTO and two the City/County Development Boards.

Interviewees also listed a number of actors that were classified as interest groups. These are presented in Table 5.9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politicians</th>
<th>Developers</th>
<th>Consultants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business groups</td>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>Young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executives ‘behind the scenes’</td>
<td>Decision-makers in regard to transport</td>
<td>Combination of different interest groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community groups</td>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>Unions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planners</td>
<td>Immigrants</td>
<td>Champions and leaders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.9 Actors classified as interest groups

Fifteen interest groups were identified, out of which nine was indicated by more than one respondent. Eight respondents perceived politicians as having a strong influence over the development of the city. A significant number of interviewees (7) believed that developers are important players in the city. Five respondents said that it is a combination of influences from different interest groups. The business sector also appears to be perceived as an important player as five respondents indicated it. Three people saw the community groups and consultants as being influential. Young people, citizens and planners were listed as playing an important role by two respondents.

The fourth group was comprised of various factors, which play an important role in the development of Dublin. The respondents identified eleven factors (Table 5.10).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strong economy</th>
<th>demographic change</th>
<th>market forces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>international influences</td>
<td>foreign investment</td>
<td>commercial interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coming from USA and UK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transport policy</td>
<td>EU</td>
<td>tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication industry</td>
<td>globalisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.10 Factors playing important role in the development of Dublin

Out of eleven factors listed by the respondents only two were indicated by more than one person. Among them were EU and foreign investment, which were listed by two interviewees.

A number of respondents distinguished groups that should be playing an important role in the development of the city, but in their opinion do not currently do so. Among the actors listed by interviewees as non-influential are: the people of Dublin (2),
government, business, politicians, the Gardáí, local authorities, community, planners, state agencies and media.

5.2.4.2 Actors performing future-oriented thinking and planning in Dublin

Interviewees identified eighteen individuals that in their view perform future-oriented thinking and planning. These are presented in Table 5.11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Fitzgerald</td>
<td>DCC, City Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick Gleeson</td>
<td>DCC, City Planner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Henry</td>
<td>DTO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Ratcliffe</td>
<td>The Futures Academy at DIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Maloney</td>
<td>DCC, Executive Manager for Central Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Connolly</td>
<td>Chairman, Dublin Inner City Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eoin Ryan</td>
<td>Fianna Fail, MEP for Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruairi Quinn</td>
<td>Labour TD for Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Humphreys</td>
<td>DCC, Labour Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Finnegan</td>
<td>Director of the Dublin City Development Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brendan Kenny</td>
<td>DCC, Assistant City Manager for Housing, Social and Community Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dermot Lacey</td>
<td>DCC, Labour Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Barret</td>
<td>DCC, City Architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamus Brennan</td>
<td>TD, Minister for Transport at the time of the interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geraldine Walsh</td>
<td>Dublin Civic Trust, Chief Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Ryder</td>
<td>Eason, Managing Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Martin</td>
<td>Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Coffey</td>
<td>DCBA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.11 Individuals performing future-oriented thinking and planning

Out of eighteen people that were listed only four were indicated by more than one interviewee. John Fitzgerald was listed by seven people, Dick Gleeson by five and John Henry and John Ratcliffe by two. It was observed that eleven individuals were found on both lists – people who play an important role in the development of Dublin and people who are performing future-oriented thinking and planning.

The interviewees listed twenty-two organisations and institutions, which in their view were performing future-oriented thinking and planning. These are presented in Table 5.12.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DTO</th>
<th>Dublin Regional Authority</th>
<th>Dublin City Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The four city and county development boards</td>
<td>Dublin Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Strategic Planning Guidelines team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDA</td>
<td>DCBA</td>
<td>DDDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central government</td>
<td>NESC</td>
<td>ESRI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government</td>
<td>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment</td>
<td>Higher Education Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPA</td>
<td>NRA</td>
<td>Dublin Bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORFAS</td>
<td>The four local authorities</td>
<td>Department of Taoiseach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Institute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.12 Organisations performing future-oriented thinking and planning**

The respondents listed twenty two organisations, which in their view performed future-oriented thinking and planning with fifteen listed by more than one interviewee. The Dublin Transportation Office was indicated by the highest number of respondents (7), followed by the Dublin Regional Authority (6) and Dublin City Council (5). Four people indicated the four local authorities operating in Dublin region and the Dublin Chamber of Commerce. Three people pointed out specifically the team that prepared the Strategic Planning Guidelines, which is a part of Dublin Regional Authority, and the IDA. Organisations such as DCCBA, DDDA, NESC, ESRI, EPA, NRA as well as the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Governance and central government in general, were listed by two interviewees. Eleven organisations were identified as playing an important role in the development of the city as well as performing future-oriented thinking and planning. Among them were: central government, DCBA, DDDA, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Department of Environment, DTO, Dublin Chamber of Commerce, Dublin City Council, Four City/County Development Boards, IDA, Four Local authorities.

The number of interest groups indicated by the interviewees as performing future-oriented thinking and planning was smaller than the number of interests groups having an important influence over the development of the city (15). The respondents emphasised that future-oriented thinking is usually done by representatives of certain groups, rather than by most people, who could be described as belonging to a given interest group. Representatives of the following groups were perceived as thinking strategically: planners, developers, academics, community groups at the local level, politicians and business. A number of respondents raised an issue of the poor connectivity between the organisations and people performing the future-oriented
thinking and organisations and people having real influence over the development of the city. Many of the interviewees who raised this problem believed that organisations/people who think strategically and who have a strong vision usually do not have any influence or executive power to realise this vision.

5.2.4.3 Actors involved in planning processes - synthesis

There is a whole range of individuals, institutions, agencies and interest groups that are involved in the development of a city. Analysis of the interviews led to the identification of four categories of actors that have a strong influence over the development of the city: individuals; organisations and agencies; interest groups; and factors. 16 individuals named as having strong influence over the future of the city represented local authority, politics, central government, Irish Development Agency and local community. Among the institutions strongly influencing the future of Dublin were central government agencies, local government organisations, business associations, development agencies established by the central government, Garda and universities. From a range of interest groups, politicians, developers and business had the strongest influence. Most frequently listed among the strongest influencing factors were EU and foreign investment. A number of sectors seem to not have any influence over the future of Dublin. None of the interviewees mentioned health sector agencies, religious orders, environmental organisations or the media. Also education, the police and the community seem to have rather limited influence, while local and central government, politicians, business people and developers are perceived as the strongest actors. This may lead to the conclusion that planning in Dublin is mainly focused on economic and infrastructural issues and to a lesser extent on the social and environmental aspects.

The comparisons of people who have a strong influence over the future of Dublin and people characterised as strategic thinkers showed that as many as 11 (out of 18) individuals are found on both lists. This could be explained in a twofold way – simply people who have strong influence on Dublin’s future are also good strategic thinkers, or perhaps some respondents believed that these two characteristics are somewhat linked. Dublin Transportation Office, Dublin Regional Authority, Dublin City Council and Dublin Chamber of Commerce were perceived as the organisations with the strongest future orientation. Again, 11 (out of 22) organisations were identified as both
playing an important role in the development of the city and performing future-oriented thinking and planning. There were no specific interest groups identified as performing strategic thinking, but rather the respondents believed that representatives of certain groups were thinking strategically. One of the main problems pointed out in regard to this topic was the fact that the people/organisations who think strategically and who have a strong clear visions for the future usually do not have any influence or executive power to realise these visions.

5.2.5 Examples of future-oriented thinking and action

One of the purposes of the in-depth interviews was to discern what was regarded by interviewees as good past and present examples of future-oriented thinking and planning in Dublin. An analysis of the interview transcripts led to the establishment of two main categories and several sub-categories under which the examples were classified. Although the question specifically aimed at detecting ‘good examples’, many respondents answered it by discussing what was in their view an example of bad future-oriented planning. These were included under each category or subcategory. In the process of analysis three main categories were established:

1. policy,
2. specific projects,
3. other.

5.2.5.1 Examples of future-oriented policy

The examples of future-oriented policy were divided into and discussed under five subcategories:

- planning,
- local governance,
- economic/industrial,
- education,
- social.

Planning policy. The interviewees pointed out a number of good examples of future-oriented thinking. One of the oldest examples reached as far back as the 18th century,
when according to one of the respondents planning had a coherent vision and it was underpinned by classical education. Also the creation of integrated plans in the 19th century and in the beginning of the 1900s was praised by several interviewees. An example of such planning, which was pointed out a number of times, was the Wide Street Commissioners, as a specific project. Among other examples of good future-oriented planning listed by the respondents were: building of high quality social housing on large scale in the 1940s and emergence of centres like Ranelagh and Ballsbridge, which an interviewee described as examples of “successful spontaneous or market led planning”.

The more recent examples of good future-oriented planning policy include: policy promoting mixed land use patterns introduced in the last 10 years, the processes of redevelopment of rejuvenation of urban areas and the introduction of local area management by local authorities. Also, on much broader scale, the development of strategic regional policy in the form of Strategic Planning Guidelines and investments made by the central government in order to provide good international connectivity for Dublin through global crossing.

The number of negative examples of future-oriented planning policy identified by the interviewees was almost equal to the number of positive examples. One of the respondents talked about the UK model of planning promoting separate land use patterns that was unquestionably followed in Ireland. During the early industrialisation phase workers used to live in a close proximity to industrial plants, what in most cases meant living closely to a ‘dirty, smelly factory’. Their aspirations to move away from the industrial areas was realised with the development of mass transportation and the establishment of a formal planning process, which facilitated separation of land uses. Although in Ireland there was no heavy industry and, therefore, there was no reason for the introduction of separate land uses, Irish planning policy has followed the UK model, as it became ‘the way to do things’. Another example of a bad planning policy, given by the same interviewee, was related to the new road standards developed in the 1980s. The respondent raised a point that instead of fixed standards, which do not leave any room for creativity and innovation, only the general design and layout principles should be set. These principles should determine a required outcome, for instance safety for children, but should also allow architects and engineers to develop
their own ways to achieve these outcomes. Then, a local authority should examine a
given design in order to verify whether it meets the requirements.

Among other negative examples, were the road proposals as part of DTS of (1971)
which would, if implemented, have destroyed huge parts of the built fabric of the city;
the removal of tram and railway lines from the streets of Dublin in the 1950s and the
preparation of a regional planning study without considering transportation (plans
prepared by the Eastern Region Development Organisation, 1985). The interviewees
also criticised the preference for separate land uses and the lack of identity of many
residential areas. One of the planners claimed that Dublin has lost the integrity of
urban space due to little value being placed on the inner city and urbanism in general,
and a lack of co-existent urban lifestyles visible in inhabitants preferences for suburban
houses with front and back gardens. A number of respondents raised an issue of
recognition of Dublin’s specific role in Ireland’s urban hierarchy by national policy.
They criticised attempts to equalise Dublin, considered as the main economic engine,
with the rest of the country.

Local governance. A number of good examples of future-oriented policy were related
to local governance. Several respondents, representing community, politics,
governmental agencies and national government, praised the establishment of City and
County Development Boards by central government for various reasons. The boards
are seen as mechanisms for making the local authorities examine the broader picture
and to allow different stakeholders to meet and talk about the future as well as acting
as a platform for interactions between different interest groups. The people involved in
the establishment of the boards found it to be a good lesson in developing such
structures. In general, the structures of the boards and the whole process of developing
the future vision were seen as good. One of the interviewees also noticed positive
changes in the way local authorities operate. He claimed that local authorities became
“more responsive, more adaptive, more ready to change”, “can respond quicker” and
are “better structured and organised”. Another respondent regarded the preparation of
Strategic Planning Guidelines as a good platform for frequent meetings between City
and County Managers.

Economic, educational and social policy. The examples of good future-oriented
economic and industrial policy include the tax based schemes used as instruments in
redeveloping derelict areas in the city, e.g. Temple Bar and IFSC, and the IDA policy
attracting direct foreign investment. The respondents pointed out, in particular, the low corporation tax as an effective tool in attracting direct inward investment, targeting high-tech sectors, such as the IT and pharmaceutical sectors in the 1970s and 1980s, and joint strategic thinking between the IDA and universities to generate a qualified workforce suitable for knowledge based industries. Another example of good future-oriented educational policy was the programme introduced by the Higher Education Authority, which required each university to undergo an internal assessment process in order to establish its specific strategic priorities. As a consequence of this programme, several key pieces of research infrastructure were built, such as the Dublin Molecular Biology Lab at Trinity College.

Respondents pointed out only two examples that can be regarded as examples of social policy. One of them was the recent trend of setting aside more funding for social capital projects, such as crèches and community centres. The other was related to an agreement of the social partnership called “Sustaining Progress”, which brings more long-term thinking into the social partnership structures.

5.2.5.2 Projects arising from good future-oriented decisions

Many respondents, when asked about examples of good future-oriented thinking and planning, listed various projects which were the result of good strategic decisions. The most frequently listed projects were various urban regeneration schemes such as Irish Financial Services Centre (IFSC) (pointed out by 7 respondents), Temple Bar (5), rejuvenation of O’Connell Street (4), regeneration of Docklands (3), HARP (2) and Digital Hub (2). The physical regeneration of these areas was combined with attempts to develop new economic functions for them. For instance, the creation of the IFSC aimed to develop a new economic sector in Dublin – for financial services; Temple Bar was designated as a cultural quarter and the Digital Hub as a multimedia centre. Another example of an infrastructural project aiming to develop a new economic sector was the building of the National Digital Park at City West in order to attract science and high-tech industries. Unlike the previous examples, this was not a regeneration project.

The interviewees identified also a number of strategic infrastructural decisions. Among them were the decision to construct the M50 (motorway, ‘C’ shaped ring road around
Dublin), building the airport in its current location, construction of LUAS and the Port Tunnel, and the Dublin Bay project (cleaning up of Dublin Bay, including upgrading of the existing treatment works). Several respondents mentioned the coherent visions for the city prepared by Wide Street Commissioners and the activity of the former Rathmines and Rathgar Urban District Councils. Respondents named also two specific development plans, which they considered to be examples of good future-oriented thinking. These included the before mentioned Strategic Planning Guidelines and the Myles Wright’s Plan (Dublin Regional Advisory Plan) for Dublin in 1967. The final two projects, which were considered as good examples of future-oriented thinking and action, were: Greater Dublin ‘Prospectives’ Society — a series of meetings involving various people engaged in the planning and decision making processes in Dublin initiated by The Futures Academy in order to start debate on the future of the city; and the introduction of Quality Bus Corridors by Dublin Bus, which led to significant improvement in bus transport.

5.2.5.3 Other

This section presents issues related to examples of future-oriented thinking and planning, which were not easily categorised and thus not suitable to be discussed in the previous two subsections. It includes general comments of interviewees about future-oriented planning and observations about learning from the lessons from the past. Several respondents were critical about planning in Dublin in general as well as future-oriented planning. One of the interviewees (representing a governmental agency) said that there are many negative examples, which can be used to learn from the mistakes. Another respondent did not believe that “Ireland is good at strategic thinking”. Some people pointed out that there are examples of good practice at local level, but these projects are usually not future-oriented. Some interviewees identified Cork and Limerick as Irish cities characterised by good long-term future-oriented thinking and planning.

A number of interviewees also talked about the ability of decision-makers and planners to learn from the successes and mistakes of the past. Two respondents believed that planners rarely learn from the failures. One of them claimed that planners would have fixed images of the future, which do not change even if these futures never occur.
Another interviewee mentioned the reasoning process behind planning decisions. They gave an example of how planning dealt with the issue of the car when the cars started to become widely used. A growing number of cars and the increase in speed they could reach were recognised as a danger for people, and, therefore, a problem. Planners tried to tackle the dangers associated with car transport by slowing down the car, for instance by introducing cul-de-sacs in the residential areas. Solutions, such as cul-de-sacs slowed down the cars, but also created difficulties for other means of transport like walking, cycling and public transport. The interviewee emphasised that although the problem was recognised correctly the response to it was inappropriate – in his view instead of trying to slow down the car, planners should try to put the car in its proper place. The interviewee believed that these decisions were underpinned by a lack of full understanding of what was happening to the car and not looking at possible long-term consequences, which could be negative. Another respondent observed that isolated thinking in planning is changing. He believed that lessons from the past show that planners and decision makers need to address the real problems in a holistic way rather than to try to apply a ‘quick fix’, which may lead to more problems in the future.

5.2.5.4 Examples of future-oriented thinking and action – synthesis

The respondents have identified a range of examples of good future-oriented decisions, which were classified as policy, specific projects or other. Policy examples were related to planning, local governance, economy and industry, education and society, while specific projects represented mainly regeneration schemes and infrastructural developments. A number of interviewees brought up examples of the complete absence of strategic thinking in policy and decision-making. Recognising examples of future-oriented thinking as well as the consequences of the lack of strategic planning is important for learning from the past successes and failures. However, reasonable doubt in the ability of planners and decision-makers to learn from successes and mistakes of the past was also recognised. Also the views that Ireland is not very good at strategic thinking in general were detected.
5.2.6 Factors impeding and encouraging long-term future-oriented thinking

Another aim of the in-depth interviews was to identify various factors, which can impede or encourage long-term future-oriented thinking and planning. An understanding of the obstacles and how future-oriented thinking can be fostered was needed in order to address some of these issues in the development of the futures methodology. Some of the factors listed by the interviewees were already discussed in the earlier sections, but within a different context. In the previous sections, they were presented as a part of the general planning processes, while here, their role as an obstacle to, or a supporter of, future-oriented thinking and planning is considered. An analysis of the interviews led to the establishment of a number of categories for both types of factors – impeding and encouraging. These categories are presented in Table 5.13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of factors</th>
<th>Impeding future-oriented thinking and planning</th>
<th>Encouraging future-oriented thinking and planning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Governance</td>
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<td>Resources</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>Communication and collaboration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 5.13 Categories of factors impeding and encouraging future-oriented thinking and planning

5.2.6.1 Impeding factors

Governance. The governance category embraces factors identified by interviewees, which are related to political issues, local government structures and decision-making processes. Several respondents (representing politics, developers and governmental and non-governmental agencies) pointed out that the nature of the political system promotes short-term thinking as most politicians think about the future in the context of the next elections. A number of interviewees (from non-governmental agencies) claimed that central government does not perform strategic thinking and does not have a long-term vision for the development of the country. However, this view was not shared by some of the other respondents (governmental agencies), who believed that Irish government is good at making decisions about the future of the country. Three other obstacles identified by the interviewees included: central government blocking
development of a genuinely democratic and locally accountable system of local governance; difficulties with getting political support for strategic plans produced by, for example, administrators; and a lack of political accountability for the entire city.

One of the issues identified as an obstacle to future-oriented thinking and planning by a significant number of respondents (representing local authorities, community, consultants, and governmental agencies) was the fragmentation of local government structures in Dublin, and the competition between local authorities in the city region. Dublin consists of four independent local authorities, which are in competition for commercial investment – one of their main sources of funding. Pressure to raise funding can affect the decisions that are being made. As one of the interviewees put it:

"The only place where [local authorities] can raise money is from the commercial development, that then brings pressures to bear, where policy making and decision making are not always the wisest decisions. If you were go to extremes you could say that every county manager wants all jobs in his county and all the houses in another county, because each house costs them and each job brings them money."

This could be summarised by a comment of another interviewee, who believed that one of the major obstacles is lack of a well established system of local governance with its own taxation.

Another issue, pointed out by people representing governmental agencies and local authorities, was the tension within local authorities between the elected members and their officials, as often they represent different points of view regarding the same issue. One respondent claimed that managers are often being responsive to the council demands and sometimes support policies with which they do not fully agree. Several interviewees believed that a weak regional planning system is an obstacle for future-oriented thinking and planning. They pointed out the need for some kind of regional body, which would have an overview of the whole city region and the power to make and implement decisions. Another aspect raised by a respondent was the fragmentation of power not only between the local authorities, but also between different agencies responsible for development of the city. An example of such a situation is the fact that planners in local authorities do not have control over transportation, which is the responsibility of other bodies.
Several respondents identified factors that were impeding future-oriented decision-making. One of the issues raised was the fact that decisions are influenced by a range of pressures from different interest groups, often competing for influence and control to a certain extent. This makes the decision making process extremely complex. As one of the respondents from a governmental agency put it: "...while you may have an idea where you want to go as a policy maker, the reality is far more complex than just having a strategy and trying to implement it". This problem is closely connected to the issue raised by one of the local authority representatives. The interviewee said that the decision-making process is 'extremely consensus oriented', which makes it difficult to formulate clear strategic choices and to implement them. Another respondent believed that one of the obstacles preventing people from thinking strategically is the immediacy of present decisions and being too caught up in everyday duties.

**Resources.** Another group of factors identified as obstacles to future-oriented thinking and planning are issues related to resources, mainly time and funding. Some interviewees, representing governmental agencies, local authorities and developers, highlighted a lack of adequate funding for local authorities in general. This can be linked to the point discussed under the 'governance' category about the competition for funding between the local authorities and its influence on decision-making. A lack of adequate financial resources can also block decisions aiming to develop various forms of strategic infrastructure and other types of projects, such as social programmes. Several respondents (community, local authorities, developers and governmental agencies) pointed out the lack of time and resources allocated to perform long-term thinking. One of these also believed that, in some cases, there is no recognition that long-term thinking needs to be resourced.

**Behavioural and cultural factors.** The respondents identified a range of obstacles of behavioural and cultural nature. A number of interviewees believed that there is no tradition of long-term thinking in Ireland. One of them pointed out that there is little recognition of the importance for long-term future-oriented thinking; and another believed that some people do not advocate it, as it is too abstract and vague a concept for them to accept. Several interviewees identified the resistance to, and fear of change as one of the factors blocking future-oriented thinking. The list of other obstacles identified by the respondents includes the following.
- Strategic thinking is easier in difficult times, as it is easier to identify the problems and gaps, and the situation is more urgent.
- A lack of motivation to think strategically based on an attitude, which could be described as ‘what’s in it for me?’.
- A lack of responsibility for long-term thinking leads to a lack of involvement in it.
- People tend to act individually rather than collectively.
- People do not engage in long-term thinking as they are limited by time, pressure, workload and a necessity to respond to immediate problems on the ground.
- It is in the human nature to look short-term, at the immediate situation; therefore, not too many people feel a need to think about long-term future.

Methods. Another group of factors is related to the means and methods needed to perform long-term futures thinking and training. One of the interviewees believed that an important obstacle is the lack of a structured approach for long-term thinking in the planning system. Another respondent observed a lack of awareness of specific approaches and methods enabling decision-makers to perform long-term futures thinking and planning. Yet another individual pointed out that many decision-makers do not trust futures methods, such as the scenario planning method.

Other. The factors impeding long-term future-oriented thinking and decision-making classified as ‘other’ are related to leadership, information, communication, media involvement, existing strategies, and implementation issues. One of the interviewees (local authorities) argued that there is a lack of ‘critical leadership’, which would create a situation in which decisions are made without the necessary delays and then implemented. He criticised the very long time taken to make certain decisions, often years, which leads to a situation where, when a decision is finally taken, the reasons for making it are no longer relevant. He also pointed out a lack of strong decision-makers at the central government level. Two respondents (local authorities and a governmental agency) pointed out the lack of adequate information as an obstacle. Another interviewee (consultant) believed that planners are not equipped to communicate effectively with the wide range of other strategic players and stakeholders involved in decision making in the city. He also believed that planners fail to engage with the market as a force in order to bring about the desired changes.

A number of respondents raised the issue of the lack of media focus on Dublin, and the lack of Dublin’s own strong voice. This view was linked to a lack of a coherent and
integral governance of the city, which would give representation to Dublin as a whole entity, rather than its parts. Another respondent (governmental agency) pointed out the uncertainty attached to the existing policy documents setting the direction for long-term future development, such as National Spatial Strategy and Strategic Planning Guidelines. He claimed that these documents do not have the required legal legitimacy and as “they have not yet been structured” to a satisfactory level, “they leave things in an uncertain flexible manner” – a decision-maker can make a whole range of different choices and they still seem to be in line with the policy set by these documents. The last point discussed in this category was raised by one of the local authority representatives, who said that people usually agree on a broad strategy, but problems start to arise when the ways of implementing a given strategy are discussed.

5.2.6.2 Encouraging factors

Governance. One of the main recommendations for encouraging long-term future-oriented thinking and planning highlighted by a significant number of respondents was the establishment of some kind of body, which would be responsible for strategic planning for the entire city region. The interviewees agreed broadly on the remit and functions of such a body, but had different ideas with regard to its form. The following forms were proposed:

- powerful Mayor or governor, directly elected for a term of 5-7 years,
- Greater Dublin Area Authority (GDAA), the structure outlined in the Blue Book from March 2001 (New Institutional Arrangements for Land Use and Transportation in the Greater Dublin Area),
- Dublin Regional Authority comprised of elected councillors,
- Minister for Dublin.

Almost all respondents who indicated a need for such a body, believed that it should produce a long-term future strategy for the entire city region. Some thought that it should have powers envisioned in the Blue Book\(^{11}\). Others held the view that some of

\(^{11}\) New Institutional Arrangements for Land-Use and Transport in the Greater Dublin Area (2001) are referred here as the ‘Blue Book’. The powers envisioned by Irish Government for such a body included:

- the preparation and regular review of an integrated long-term (15 to 20 year) land use and transportation strategy for the region;
- the adoption of a medium term (5 to 7 year) transport implementation programme and short term (2 to 3 year) action plans;
the powers reserved for the County Development Boards should be transferred to that body, and that the Gardá, education and health agencies should also be accountable to it. The interviewees emphasised that such a body should be sufficiently funded.

Another issue related to governance raised by quite a significant number of respondents was leadership. Interviewees representing local authorities, governmental and non-governmental agencies believed that there is the need for strong leadership and commitment in setting the direction and taking important, and often brave decisions. Among other factors related to governance which could support future-oriented thinking and planning were: encouragement of politicians to think about the long-term future rather than just to focus on the next elections; and the introduction of a more direct form of accountability and devolution of powers to local authorities, including finance raising ability. One of the respondents pointed out the need for a system that would enable the translation of strategic principles into local decisions. Another interviewee (governmental agency) believed that a strengthening of the capacity of the central government would support future-oriented thinking and planning. One of the politicians emphasised that "strategic thinking does not need legislation, it needs decision-making."

Resources. Another group of factors identified by interviewees as being required in order to support future-oriented thinking and planning was related to resources. Most of the respondents that raised the issue of resources, believed that local authorities should be better funded in general. Some of them held the view that local authorities should be given proper budgets and powers to raise money through local taxation and an appropriate hierarchy of subsidiarity should be established. Others thought that there was a need for a change in investment spending. Some respondents pointed out that resources in the form of funding and time should be provided specifically for strategic thinking. One interviewee (local authority) also proposed that each

- monitoring the implementation of the strategy, programme and plans, using appropriate performance indicators;
- using its enforcement powers to ensure that the implementing agencies act in a way which is consistent with the strategy and that they deliver on the implementation programme and action plan targets;
- allocating finance to implementing agencies from a block grant provided by the Exchequer and from certain revenues generated by the transport system itself;
- carrying out works itself where it considers it more convenient, expeditious, effective or economical to do so; and
- promoting an integrated public transport network, implementing a range of detailed market regulatory powers, regulating fares and encouraging increased public transport use (DoELG and DoPE 2001).
organisation/agency should have a person or small team of people, assigned to explore long-term future possibilities.

Behavioural and cultural factors. One of the respondents (community) was of the view that in order to promote long-term thinking and planning people should be encouraged to ‘think big’. This would require the development of a specific attitude based on belief that ‘everything is do-able’. The interviewee also stressed the importance of keeping an open mind and being able to listen to opinions and experiences of citizens. Another respondent believed that most people have the ability to think about the long-term future, but they need to be inspired to be more visionary. Yet another individual thought that showing people the possible future threats might encourage them to think about the future. Another factor identified by interviewees that would encourage future-oriented thinking and planning in Dublin was a sense of ownership of the city, a feeling of belonging and responsibility.

Methods and training. The interviewees identified a number of factors related to methods and training. Some respondents pointed out that in order to perform long-term future-oriented thinking and planning, decision and policy makers initially need to be aware of its importance and subsequently need to be trained how to do it. Therefore, there is a need for information and research on futures methods and their practical application in urban planning. One of the respondents believed that the scenario method would be a valuable technique, and another proposed a workshop framework, within which a small group of people could brainstorm on various future issues. Yet another person indicated a need for think tanks and debates that would engage the public attention. Among other needs identified by the respondents that can be discussed within the ‘methods and training’ category were:

- a need for a coherent approach to development;
- a need for detailed observation of international trends;
- a need for tools that would help to develop a better understanding of the cause and effect mechanism; and
- a need for techniques enabling future proofing of decisions.

Communication and collaboration. Communication and collaboration between decision-makers was another factor considered by the interviewees. They believed that in order to encourage future-oriented thinking, planning and decision-making the following needs should be addressed:
• establishment of a forum, where key stakeholders and decision makers could meet and discuss the future of the city;
• development of a platform for public input, where citizens could express their opinions, wishes and needs; and
• improvement of communication between various individuals and agencies responsible for the development of the city.
Several respondents proposed engaging media (television, radio, newspapers) in order to initiate a debate between policy and decision makers and the public on the future of Dublin.

Other. The ‘other’ factors identified by the respondents were related to the city having its own vision of its future development and Dublin having its own media representation. One of the respondents (governmental agency) believed that there is a need for a vision of the preferred future for the city, which would be prepared by the councillors in cooperation with the NSS team and other government departments and agencies. A number of other interviewees, representing local authorities and developers, pointed out that the city should have a mandatory long-term plan. Another issue recognised by a number of respondents was the need to develop Dublin’s own voice, to create a space for discussion on the future of the city. One of the interviewees proposed a television debate or programme as an example how this could be achieved. The final proposal on how to encourage future-oriented thinking and planning raised by a representative of local authority was to seek personnel with a capacity for strategic thinking and to appoint them to positions in which this capacity could be fully utilised.

5.2.6.3 Impeding and encouraging factors – synthesis

An important issue in understanding future-oriented planning and decision-making is the identification factors impeding and encouraging strategic planning. Both the impeding and encouraging factors detected in the course of this research were related to governance, resources, behavioural and cultural factors, and methods. Many of the issues recognised as impeding would be classified as encouraging if reversed.

Among the obstacles for future-oriented thinking are the nature of political system that promotes short-term thinking, the lack of a locally accountable system of local governance and difficulties in getting political support for strategic plans produced by
administrators. Another major barrier is the fragmentation of local government and competition between local authorities in Dublin as well as a lack of a strong powerful regional government that would be able to address the problems arising from the fragmentation of governance. Decision-makers and planners are also influenced by competing interest groups that try to pursue their own agenda. In order to avoid open conflicts, decision-making processes are 'extremely consensus oriented' and as a consequence impede formulation of clear strategic direction and its implementation. A number of solutions were proposed to overcome these obstacles. One of them was the creation of a body responsible for strategic planning for the entire city region. Another issue was creation of a platform where all actors and stakeholder within the city could meet, discuss the future of the city and develop a shared understanding of its challenges and opportunities. It is becoming increasingly recognised that collaboration and communication between stakeholders is the key to successful future development. Another solution was the strengthening of the strategic capacities within organisations responsible for the city's development. Also leadership and commitment were identified as important factors for promoting visionary thinking and the taking of difficult decisions.

It was recognised that the lack of necessary resources was one of the main obstacles for future-oriented planning and decision-making. The current structures do not provide the capacity for strategic thinking and existing work pressures do not allow many decision-makers to give time and resources to such activities, even if they recognise their importance. The lack of efficient strategic capacity within planning system can be linked with the lack of traditions in long-term thinking in Ireland as well as little recognition for the importance of strategic thinking. Therefore, in order to strengthen the strategic capacity it is necessary to emphasise its importance, inspire people to 'think big' but most of all to develop the ability to think about the long-term future, as for most people, it is not an inborn ability.

Another important obstacle is lack of a structured approach for long-term thinking in planning system. Many people involved in planning processes are not aware of specific methods and techniques that could assist them in strategic planning. Yet some of the futures methods are perceived as not trustworthy, vague and woolly. Therefore, in order to address this obstacle it is necessary to develop a structured, rigorous, systematic approach to future that could be used in planning processes. Planners and
decision-makers should be thought how this approach and specific futures methods and techniques could be used in their activities.

5.3 Applications of futures methods in the urban planning processes in Dublin

The second part of the chapter presents and reviews five initiatives, which took place in Dublin and in which various future-oriented approaches were used. Each project is discussed in relation to its four main aspects: the origins, the process and methodology, participation issues and outcomes and outputs. Table 5.14 presents the main characteristics of each project: geographical level, time horizon, number of individuals participating and the sectors they represent, the methodology and scope.

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<td>Social, economic and environmental community indicators</td>
<td>Economic development of the region</td>
<td>Integration of land use and transportation for the city of Dublin</td>
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Table 5.14 The main characteristics of the examined projects

5.3.1 Dublin 2020 Vision

5.3.1.1 Origins of the project

The Dublin 2020 Vision project was initiated and conducted by the Dublin Chamber of Commerce (DCC). DCC is a networking organisation representing the interests of the business community in Dublin. Its concern for Dublin’s development arises from the belief that if the city is working well it is a good place for business, and
correspondingly, if the business climate is healthy this is beneficial for the city. Therefore, for many years the Chamber has been an active promoter of policies and projects that would enhance city’s economic and social base. The Dublin 2020 Vision project was undertaken in order to set a new direction for the future development of the city. In recent years (late 1990s and beginning of the 2000s) Dublin has been greatly transformed as a result of the economic boom of the ‘Celtic Tiger’ era. The Chamber felt that after a period of unprecedented growth, the city has reached a ‘plateau’ stage and a new direction for its future development needed to be set. The lack of a governance structure that would provide a long-term strategic view for the future of Dublin in its regional boundaries prompted the Chamber to show leadership in long-term thinking. The organisation aimed to explore future possibilities and identify the most desired direction for the future development of the city. As one of the initiators of the project said: “We needed to know where the city is going in the future. We wanted to know how Dublin could look like and what we wanted it to look like.”

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<tr>
<th>Initiative/leadership</th>
<th>Internal initiative of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Prospective methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of the process</td>
<td>1 workshop followed by a series of working meetings and work done in small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Business community, people invited by the initiators of the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>Spring 2003 – April 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time horizon</td>
<td>2020 (17 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Project managed internally within the Dublin Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes and outputs</td>
<td>Document presenting the vision for Dublin 2020 Proposal for establishment of a forum for thinking and acting on the future for Dublin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.15 Dublin 2020 Vision – summary of the project**

Originally, the Dublin 2020 Vision project was planned as a review of the Dublin 2010 Vision prepared by the Chamber in 1996. Dublin 2010 Vision was developed in the mid 1990s when the city was struggling with a number of serious problems, such as high unemployment, high emigration and deterioration of many areas within the city. It was a manifestation of the Chamber’s view that a positive future for the city is possible. The document, produced over a period of 18 months, included short statements describing the desired states of various sectors of the city (e.g. transport, housing, employment, tourism and others) and the actions proposed in order to achieve this preferred future states. Many of the proposals included in the Dublin 2010 Vision
document were already realised and the Chamber decided that a new vision for the future of the city was needed. Initially the organisation planned to review the *Dublin 2010 Vision* document. But this idea was abandoned due to a number of reasons: the 2010 horizon was too close to the 2012 horizon of the vision prepared by the Dublin City Development Board; the period of 7 to 10 years was too short for delivery of large scale projects; and finally the Chamber, inspired by John Ratcliffe, decided to start a fresh process and look at the city at macro-level rather than at more specific problems and issues, as was the case for *Dublin 2010 Vision*.

5.3.1.2 Process and methodology

The process in devising *Dublin 2020 Vision* started at the beginning of 2003. It was initiated internally by the President and the Council of the Chamber. The process can be divided into three main phases:

1. Preparation.
2. Exploration of possible and desirable futures.
3. Networking with other actors and stakeholders and the launch of the vision.

The first preparatory phase involved discussions on a number of issues. Among them were: consideration of the existing documents and projects which looked strategically at the future of Dublin, e.g. *Dublin – A city of possibilities 2002-2012*, and their relation to the Chamber’s initiative; determining the time horizon for looking into the future; clarification of the aims of the exercise and the expected outcomes; choosing the methodology for the project. At this stage the ‘vision group’ was also formed and the contact and cooperation with The Futures Academy at Dublin Institute of Technology was initiated. The Futures Academy prepared the methodology for the second phase of the project – the exploration of possible and desirable futures.

The second stage, in which the preferred vision for Dublin in 2020 was developed, was key to the whole process. The exploration of the future commenced with the SWOT analysis for Dublin in the year 2015 prepared by the Futures Academy in April 2003. The next step was the Prospective workshop, which took place on 11th of June 2003. 14 people from the ‘vision group’ took part in the event, which was facilitated by three members of the Futures Academy. The structure of the workshop (Fig. 5.9.) was based on the modified “Prospective through scenarios” process.
The workshop began with agreeing the strategic question, which was used as a ‘guiding question’ throughout the workshop. The question was formulated into: “What set of policy themes and key priority measures should be formulated to create a preferred vision for the Dublin City region in 2020?" The first step in the exploration of the future was the identification of driving forces of change within six categories: economy, society, environment, governance, technology and demography. The main group was divided into smaller subgroups, within which members brainstormed on the driving forces of change within categories assigned to them. Next, within the same subgroups and within the same six categories, the specific issues and trends arising from the driving forces of change were identified.

![Diagram of process]

**Fig. 5.9 The structure of the Prospective workshop carried out in June 2003**

The whole group subsequently clustered the identified issues and trends into relevant themes. Initially there were 17 clusters created. These included: quality of life, life long learning, safety and security, cultural identities, accessibility and mobility, governance, sustaining business culture and competitiveness, clean and green, environmental resource management, Dublin as an attractive destination, planning and managing for growth, branding and positioning of Dublin, role of Dublin on the international scene, leadership, connectivity, creativity and innovation and social inclusion. Next, the group brainstormed on the clusters formed in the previous phase in
order to develop policy themes based on these clusters. Five policy themes were identified: the knowledge city, the great European City, infrastructure, sustaining business competitiveness and governance and leadership. These themes then became the ‘scaffolding’ for the final vision. The last step in the workshop involved proposing actions that should be undertaken in order to achieve the desired vision.

The policy themes developed during the workshop provided the basis for further elaboration of the vision. The main ‘vision group’ was divided into five subgroups. Each of these subgroups was working on one policy theme. The results of work of each subgroup were subsequently presented to the main group during three short meetings (approximately 2 hours duration) taking place on a monthly basis. Each of the elaborated policy themes was discussed by the main group to ensure that they are stretched out and elaborated as far as possible. The last step in the phase of exploration of possible and desirable futures was the development of a scenario illustrating a pessimistic future for Dublin in 2020. The scenario was created during a short brainstorming session attended by the members of The Futures Academy and one member of the ‘vision group’.

The information collected during the Prospective workshop was recorded by The Futures Academy in the document “Dublin Chamber of Commerce: Scenario Workshop”. This document was later communicated to the ‘vision group’. During the process one member (the author) of the Academy became a ‘secretary’ and was responsible for drafting the vision document, bringing together working documents produced by the subgroups and recording comments on the policy themes generated by the main group.

The last phase of the process involved networking with key stakeholders in the Dublin region and launching and promoting the vision. The networking with various actors in the region was parallel to the process of exploration of the future and development of the vision. The Chamber understood that in order to achieve the desired future state it is necessary to bring the main actors into the process. The organisation was seeking support for their initiative from the Dublin City Manager, the Tánaiste (Ireland’s Deputy Prime Minister), Dublin City Lord Mayor, Chambers of Commerce in the Dublin region, IBEC and other business organisations. Another activity in this phase was the identification of the channels for communicating and promoting the vision. Television and newspapers were recognised as possible means
for making the vision known to majority of citizens. Initial contacts were made with representatives of media, but to date no further developments on this issue has been observed.

The vision document was launched on the 10th of May 2004 at the Dublin City Council meeting. The Chief Executive and the former president of the Chamber made a presentation to the Councillors and the City Manager. They described the vision as a starting point for a debate on the future of the city and called for the establishment of a forum that would facilitate discussions on the future of Dublin and be responsible for the implementation of a shared vision for the city. Although the Chamber’s initiative was warmly welcomed by the Council, a number of concerns were raised. The councillors feared that this vision, as many others, would never be realised and the forum could become another ‘talking forum’, which does not bring any real change.

5.3.1.3 Participation

Participants comprising the ‘vision group’ were selected mainly from within the Chamber’s membership by the project initiators. They were chosen because: they represented different sectors, had some experience in forecasting and strategic thinking, and most of all, they had visionary ideas and were able to stand back and think ‘outside the box’. The ‘vision group’ had 14 members out of which 12 represented the business community. Two remaining members came from the education and international relations areas.

Initially the Chamber considered inviting to the process representatives of all sectors recognising that if the vision was to be realised it needed the involvement of all groups within the city. This idea was abandoned because ‘widely inclusive’ process seemed to be too slow. Instead the Chamber decided to start the process with a small group and try to engage other sectors at the later stage.

5.3.1.4 Outcomes and outputs

The main output of the process was the Dublin 2020 Vision document (Appendix 9). The desired vision which portrays the city as:
• "A knowledge city", in which life-long learning and personal and civic development are on the daily agenda, where civic and environmental attitudes are formed at the beginning of the learning cycle and teaching how to think creatively and independently is a part of the curriculum.

• "A great European city", which is well-known in Europe for its distinct cultural identity and trademarks, where citizens feel and act as stakeholders, where living is safe, comfortable and convivial.

• "A city that works", because growth is planned and managed, resources are utilised in an efficient way and public services, such as transportation, waste management, energy and water supply, meet the highest standards.

• "A highly competitive city", which attracts highly qualified labour and encourages R&D, where enterprise and entrepreneurial culture are promoted and a fiscal regime and regulations support business and innovation.

• "A city wisely governed" by a directly elected Mayor, who ensures implementation of plans and enforcement of policies, a city with its own transparent financial system, in which central and local government powers are in balance and citizens, the business community and public authorities work together to ensure its optimal development.

The document also includes the Chamber’s proposals of key policy measures and actions that need to be introduced in order for the vision to be realised.

5.3.2 Dublin – A City of Possibilities 2002-2012

5.3.2.1 Origins of the project

_Dublin – A City of Possibilities 2002-2012_ is a strategy for the economic, social and cultural development of Dublin City\(^{12}\). The strategy was developed by the Dublin City Development Board (DCDB) over approximately a two year period, starting in January 2000 and being finalised in April 2002. City/County Development Boards (CDBs), mentioned earlier in section 3.2.5., were created by the Department of the Environment and Local Government in order to address the challenge of integration of local services at the county and city level. In Ireland, as in many other countries, there are a large

\[^{12}\] The area governed by the Dublin City Council.
number of different agencies and bodies responsible for different sectors of activity, such as industrial and local development, physical planning, education, health, social services, agriculture, environment, and tourism. All these agencies and bodies report to their sectoral departments at central level, but the level of their ‘horizontal’ integration is rather low. Also, the degree of cooperation with other interest groups operating at a local level, such as business, local development and local community groups, is rather limited. The establishment of CDBs, which brought together, in a mandatory manner, representatives of local government, local development, relevant state agencies functioning at the local level and the social partners (including the community and voluntary sector), facilitated a platform for greater integration of different services and enhanced cooperation between various sectors (DoELG 2000).

The main purpose of City/County Development Boards is to prepare and manage the implementation of economic, social, and cultural development strategies. Such strategies should provide a ‘shared vision’ for the development of the city or county for the next 10 years. The legislation introduced by the Department of Environment and Local Government (DoELG 2000) defined the term ‘vision’ as

“a broad sense of direction, a view of where the county or city is going, what it wants to achieve, what are its problems and challenges, and crucially how they are to be addressed.”

and explained the meaning of ‘shared’ vision in the following way:

“this view must be common one – worked out among the CDB members, the interests they represent, and other stakeholders – so that it becomes an agreed framework within which all parties can work and move forward together.”

The legislation set out that the strategies would be implemented by the constituent members of the CDBs (state agencies, local authorities and local groups). Each of these bodies would deliver different elements of strategy through their own operational plans and services (ibid).

The Department of Environment and Local Government prepared relatively detailed guidelines for the development of CDB strategies, which were included in the document entitled A Shared Vision for County/City Development Boards: Guidelines on the CDB Strategies for Economic, Social and Cultural Development (DoE 2000). The guidelines specified the background, concepts and scope of the strategies; outlined
a general approach, process and timetable, which should be used for their development; described how the written strategy statements should look like, what should they contain and what potential pitfalls should be avoided; they also portrayed how these strategies should be implemented in practice (DoELG 2000). Even though the guidelines document specified many details related to the process of development and implementation of the strategy and its content, the individual City/County Development Boards were still left with a fairly large degree of freedom as to the practical application of these guidelines. As a result, the final strategy documents and the approaches and methods used for their development vary greatly from county to county.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative/leadership</th>
<th>Dublin – A City of Possibilities 2002-2012</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effect of legislation prepared by the Department of Environment and Local Governance</td>
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<th>Methodology</th>
<th>‘Strategic visioning’</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Bodies represented on DCDB, local authorities, various state agencies, social partners, community groups, third level educational institutions, business groups, citizens</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time frame</th>
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<tr>
<th>Time horizon</th>
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<tr>
<th>Project management</th>
<th>Dublin City Development Board</th>
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<tr>
<th>Outcomes and outputs</th>
<th>“Dublin – A City of Possibilities 2002-2012” strategy, a number of different actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Table 5.16 Dublin – A City of Possibilities 2002-2012 – summary of the project**

The Dublin City Development Board employed an approach which was described by its director as ‘strategic visioning’. The focus of that approach was placed on change and improvements of current ways in which things were done and services were delivered, rather than as in the case of other counties on specific capital projects. The ‘strategic visioning’ approach was underpinned by a philosophical model embracing relationships between the past, present and future. This model was described by the DCDB’s director in the following way:

“It is a philosophical model that I created about past, present and future and their different layers, consciousness within that. So if you are going to bring about change you have got to very much respect what was done before and understand it, root yourself in the reality of present, which includes political reality and then project something for the future, which arises from that reality.”

201
Such an approach enabled people involved in the development of the strategy to ask themselves how things could be done differently, in a more effective and efficient manner, and to identify gaps that needed to be filled. This model placed as much emphasis on the process as on the final outcome, on the attempts to try and fulfil the existing possibilities as much as on the need to achieve all the goals and targets included in the vision. The approach acknowledged that these goals and aims could be different in the future, therefore, it was important to look not only at specific targets but also at different ways of realising them.

5.3.2.2 Process and methodology

The document *A Shared Vision for County/City Development Boards: Guidelines on the CDB Strategies for Economic, Social and Cultural Development* outlined the recommended approach, which should be used for development of city and county economic, social and cultural strategies. The recommended conceptual framework of the process, presented in Fig. 5.10., involves eight main steps: process initiation: aims/philosophy; audit of service provision; analysis of present economic, social and cultural situation; analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; development of vision, goals and objectives; identification and selection of options and development strategies; establishment of targets and key result areas; and drafting of the section on monitoring, feedback and evaluation system.

The first four steps attempt to answer the question: ‘Where are we?’ The first step is crucial as it involves setting and agreeing the aims of process and the philosophy and values, on which the process should be based. Also the detailed format and methods for research, consultation and consensus should be agreed at this stage. The aims of the second stage are identification and assessment of the relevant service provision, both public and other, in the city/county area. This includes activities of all organisations represented on the Board. The results of the audit should be compiled and reported on systematically. The third step involves analysis of the present economic, social and cultural circumstances and trends in the city/county. The legislation advised that this analysis should be based on all available statistical data and other existing information, which would help to develop a comprehensive picture of the area. The legislation set out a list of key data, which should be examined as minimum, giving CDBs a power to
establish their own priorities, to choose types of information that needed to be considered according to these priorities and to develop their own sources. The next step is identification and examination of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) facing a city or county. This analysis should be aided by the information gathered in earlier stages (second and third) and the consultation process.

The fifth stage attempts to answer the question ‘where do we want to go?’ and is central to the whole process. It involves development of the ‘shared vision’ for the city or county and establishment of goals and objectives arising from the vision. It utilises knowledge gathered in the previous phases and from the consultation process.

**Where are we?**

Step 1: Process initiation: aims/philosophy

Step 2: Audit of service provision

Step 3: Analysis of present economic, social and cultural situation

Step 4: Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

**Where do we want to go?**

Step 5: Development of vision, goals and objectives

**How should we get there?**

Step 6: Identification and selection of options and development strategies

Step 7: Establishment of targets and key result areas

**How will we know we are getting there?**

Step 8: Drafting monitoring, feedback, and evaluation system

*Fig. 5.10 DoELG recommended approach to development of CDBs strategies (DoELG 2000:13)*
The next two steps address the question ‘how should we get there?’ In the sixth phase different options should be identified and selected and operational strategies established. Operational strategies can for instance illustrate alternative ways of getting to the desired state and select the ones, which should be employed. The legislation suggested that this task in the process should be fulfilled using structured brainstorming. This step involves establishment of quantified targets and identification of key result areas, which would reflect the goals and objectives determined in earlier phases. The last phase addresses the question ‘how will we know we are getting there?’. It aims at development of monitoring, feedback and evaluation arrangements, which would enable to follow the progress being made towards achievement of the vision (DoELG 2000).

The legislation recommended not only the conceptual framework to be used for the development of CDB strategies, but also a series of key principles, which should guide that process. Among them were:

- Foundations laying in the distinct features and circumstances of each city/county.
- Understanding of the individual needs of the bodies represented on the CDB.
- Recognition of the needs of groups and individuals socially excluded.
- Agreement with the principles of sustainable development.
- Transparency and accountability with regard to the steps and participants of the process.
- Ensuring participation of as many groups as possible and inclusion of these groups in the process.
- Mutual respect for all individuals and groups taking part in the process.
- Decision-making based on consensus.
- Shared responsibility and ownership of the project.
- Work should be team-based.
- Recognition of sub-city/county issues and concerns (ibid).

Other important issues specified by the legislation, which CDBs and appropriate bodies should adhere to, included: proofing of the strategies, consideration of regional dimensions and relationship with County or City Development Plans. Proofing of the strategies involved two main actions: (a) ensuring that all public service bodies operating within a city/county would verify their operational plans against the
strategies, and (b) that CDB strategies should be ‘proofed’ against the wider national and regional policies and plans. City/County Development Boards were also required to consider the regional dimensions, which included the following:

- Ensuring that CDB strategies would be in agreement with various regional and national plans and policies, such as Regional Planning Guidelines and National Spatial Strategy.
- Considering regional plans of different statutory agencies, also those represented on the Board (e.g. Health Boards, FAS, Teagasc, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, and Regional Tourism Authorities, third level colleges).
- Taking account of inter-county and regional projects, such as infrastructural projects.
- Developing appropriate ‘regional thinking’ in the strategies through: encouraging regional cooperation of the Directors of Community and Enterprise, having a specific regional dimension in the strategy, and avoiding unnecessary competition between the counties.

The legislation considered the relationship of strategies with City/County Development Plans through three key aspects: (a) close partnership between the CDB and the local authority should be a model for collaboration between different bodies represented on Board; (b) the CDB strategies should provide socio-economic context for the City/County Development Plan; (c) and correspondingly the CDB strategy is required to consider the goals, needs and statutory status of the development plan (DoELG 2000).

All the guidelines, principles and recommendations outlined by the legislation provided foundations, on which individual CDBs developed their own frameworks for creation of the strategies. The approach developed and employed by Dublin City Development Board aimed at:

- Raising awareness about development of the strategy and work carried out by the DCDB.
- Discerning key concerns of various stakeholders through the process of participation.
- Agreeing a shared vision of the future and ways of its achievement.
- Mobilising commitment for creation and implementation of the vision (DCDB 2002).
The two year process consisted of the following three phases: assessment of the current situation; development of the vision; and the implementation of the strategy.

Assessment of the current situation. In the first phase desktop research was conducted in order to collect information on relevant policy and strategy documents, which would effect the future development of Dublin, and also to learn from the past experiences – positive and negative. This phase involved three key elements: analysis of the National Development Plan and its relevance to Dublin City area; a citywide audit of service provision by public and other organisations; and the report on the socio-economic profile of the city prepared by NIRSA (National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis).

Development of the vision. This phase, a key to the whole process, consisted of two main steps: (a) creating a platform for participation that would allow to raise awareness among the stakeholders about the work carried out by DCDB, facilitate development of the strategy and also encourage sharing of ideas, solutions and joint decision-making in the future; (b) carrying out a ‘sustainability proofing’ exercise that would help to ensure that the strategy is in accordance with the principles of sustainability.

Implementation of the strategy. The implementation of the strategy was stated as a responsibility of all stakeholders (statutory agencies, local government, local development partnerships, communities, businesses and citizens). The role of the DCDB is to co-ordinate, monitor, review, appraise and evaluate the implementation of the strategy by the stakeholders. The implementation process involves preparation of Implementation Plans by the DCDB with the assistance of the Office of the Director of Community and Enterprise. The Implementation Plans, covering periods of two years up to the year 2012, include: setting objectives, developing delivery plan, identifying resource commitments, linking commitments to NDP, identifying time related qualitative and quantitative targets, committing to reporting progress and proofing the delivery plan against the sustainability proofing criteria of the strategy (DCDB 2002).

As the development of the strategy was a key part of the process, it will be discussed in more detail. The phase started with formulating and agreeing statements of strategic vision, mission and motto by the DCDB members. These statements were seen as guideposts for the development of the strategy and its implementation in the future. The starting phase also involved development of an understanding among the members
of the Board in regard to what is the strategy and what is the whole process about. The next step involved development of the mechanisms for participation of stakeholders and community, so called 'participation process', and ensuring that they would be involved in that process from its beginning. It was recognised that:

"Participation in the early stages of the strategy development is desirable, as it is often the outcome of decisions made at this stage that have the greatest effect on peoples needs and chances to benefit. It provides the greatest opportunity to develop a sense of ownership and opportunity to make a difference." (DCDB 2002:18)

The first step undertaken in the ‘participation process’ was the establishment of the City Community Forum, which embraced community and voluntary organisations in the city. The Forum, directly represented on the Board, was seen as a ‘co-ordinated and recognised structure’ for the two-way consultation process involving community groups, state agencies and other bodies and organisations.

The development of the vision was carried out in three main phases: development of the Strategy Working Papers; shaping of the Draft Strategy; and refining the Draft Strategy.

*Development of the Strategy Working Papers.* This phase began with the establishment of five Strategy Development Working Groups. The Groups were working on five areas of interest: “Citizens shaping the city – culture, communications and participation”, “Putting people first – social inclusion”, “Living learning city – human resources”, “Business making the city work – economic development” and “Living breathing city – built and natural environment”. Using the expertise of the members, knowledge developed by different organisations and collected through research, the Groups drafted a number of Strategic Working Papers, which were published in the document called “Capital Vision”. The working papers encouraged discussions, highlighted various options and helped to build consensus. They also provided a base for further development of the strategy.

*Shaping of the Draft Strategy.* There were seven major initiatives undertaken in order to shape the Draft Strategy. Among them were: an information and awareness campaign, establishment of a web portal (www.dublin.ie), consultation brochure, a series of ‘let’s talk circles’, civic forums, consultation seminars, and views of youth
groups. The information and awareness campaign was designed to target as broad a range of stakeholders and citizens as possible in order to raise awareness about the process and to encourage people to take an active part in the development of the strategy. The campaign used a number of different means to achieve its aims: advertisements in local and national newspapers, a Free-phone Information Number, press coverage, newsletters, website, information posted on cable television, radio interviews, and video. The web portal (www.dublin.ie) had a key role in the process. It provided up-to-date information on the strategy and enabled people to express their own views and comments through the online feedback form. The consultation brochure, entitled "Dublin – a city of possibilities", was distributed among individuals and different organisations in the city. People were asked to read the brochure and then pass it to their neighbours and friends. The ‘Let’s talk circles’ series were a form of focus groups. They brought together staff of various agencies and specific interest groups to discuss specific policy priorities for the city. The members of the circles were encouraged to go back to and talk to their teams, clients, and the organisations they worked for in order to obtain their views and consequently involve more people in the consultation process. A special ‘consultation pack’ including a video presentation was prepared to assist the members of the circles in generating discussions within a wider audience. The civic forums provided platforms for participation at the local level in five areas of the City Council. Hosted by the Area Committees of the City Council, they were a meeting place for councillors and people representing local interests, e.g. public servants, community organisations, local business and citizens. The sessions focused on the strategic issues that in the participants’ view should be addressed and identified solutions that could be included in the strategy. There were three consultation seminars organised to discuss issues of integration, participation and social inclusion. These brought together people from voluntary groups, businesses, statutory organisations, councillors and citizens, who had previously contributed to other parts of the process. The last initiative involved obtaining views of young people in the city. In order to do so, a video encouraging consultation and highlighting the main issues was distributed along with copies of consultation brochures to secondary schools in Dublin. Inputs generated through all these initiatives were fed into the Draft Strategy.
Refining the Draft Strategy. This part of the process involved obtaining feedback from the stakeholders on the Draft Strategy. The main challenge faced by the DCDB was to maintain interest and momentum achieved during phases one and two. Four main initiatives were designed in order to collect feedback: information and awareness campaign, meetings of stakeholders, listening to youths through Comhairle Na nóg (Youth Council) and sustainability proofing. The information and awareness campaign targeted as wide a range of people as possible, especially those who might not have been reached in the first two phases. The Draft Strategy was posted on the www.dublin.ie website, where people could post their feedback. In addition, the stakeholders, community groups, individuals and organisations who participated in the previous phases have been notified about the publication of the Draft Strategy and received either a full copy or the executive summary of the document and a feedback form. Access to the copies of the document was provided in the libraries and through the offices of the agencies represented on DCDB. The awareness about the Draft Strategy was also raised through radio and TV programmes, and a supplement in the Irish Times. The Draft Strategy was also exhibited over a ten-day period in the civic offices. Its exhibition ended with a Family Open Day. People attending both events were asked to share their views regarding the ideas included in the document. The Office of the Director of Community and Enterprise organised a series of stakeholders meetings. The aim of these meetings was to gain support for the Strategy from senior management in relevant agencies and governmental departments. The Youth Council was organised in Dublin in order to enable young people to express their views and opinions and to elect members to represent Dublin in Dail Na nóg (Youth parliament). The last step in the development of the strategy was sustainability proofing. It was carried out by Schumacher Ireland, an organisation commissioned by DCDB to develop a sustainability proofing toolkit and apply it in order to evaluate the strategy.

5.3.2.3 Participation

The legislation that established City and County Development Boards was created in order to address the fragmentation of agencies and organisations responsible for local development and the lack of effective collaboration between community groups and other stakeholders at the local level. As stated earlier, “Guidelines on the CDB strategies” emphasised that the visions developed by CDBs should represent a
common agreed view of the future, and therefore, the active participation of a wide range of stakeholders, community groups and citizens was recognised as the key to the whole process.

One of the major problems faced by the Dublin City Development Board in relation to participation was the size of the city. The area of Dublin City is inhabited by approximately 500,000 people and, according to DCDB, is used by about 1.7 million people on daily basis. There is also a complex array of agencies operating in the area (e.g. three Health Boards and four FÁS regions). DCDB was faced with a very difficult task of creating participation mechanisms, which would enable as many stakeholders, community groups and individual citizens as possible to take part in the process.

Different participation mechanisms developed by the Dublin City Development Board were already partly discussed in the previous subsection (5.3.2.1). Here, these mechanisms are discussed in regard to the numbers of people participating and the range of different sectors they represented. DCDB developed seven main mechanisms for participation:

1. **City Community Forum.** The forum consists of 750 community and voluntary organisations. It is directly represented on the DCDB.

2. **Five Strategy Development Working Groups.** Ninety individuals and organisations were involved in the groups including DCDB members, Community Forum members, main stakeholders and experts.

3. **Consultation brochure.** It was sent to over 70,000 households, businesses, schools, libraries, organisations and agencies around the city. People were asked to complete a survey included in the brochure and when they finished reading it to pass to their neighbours and friends. DCDB received around 1,000 replies to the survey.

4. **‘Let’s talk circles’.** There were ten sessions organised under the ‘let’s talk circle’ name. They were attended by over 300 participants representing staff of different agencies and specific interest groups, e.g. City Council, FÁS, Health Boards, Third Level Institutions (students), Ethnic Minority Groups, Economic Focus Groups and others.

5. **Civic forums.** Five civic forums were held within five different areas of the operational area of Dublin City Council. They were attended by 198 people
including councillors, public servants, community organisations, local business and residents.

6. **Consultation seminars.** There were three consultation seminars organised. They brought together 250 participants representing voluntary groups, businesses, statutory organisations, councillors and citizens.

7. **Meetings of stakeholders.** Twenty three meetings of stakeholders involved the participation of 140 people (mainly holding senior positions within their organisations) from nearly 60 agencies and organisations, such as City Council, FÁS, Department of Justice, Garda Síochána, Department of Education, Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Department of Health and City Councillors.

5.3.2.4 Outcomes and outputs

The main output of the process was the cultural, economic and social strategy (vision) for Dublin City published in the document “Dublin – A City of Possibilities 2002-2012”. The strategy is based upon a unique structure, which incorporates fifteen themes (Fig. 5.11.). The whole strategy is built around its central theme – “A city of neighbourhoods”. The ultimate objective of the strategy is to reconstruct or deconstruct the city into 14 to 15 neighbourhoods. The next four themes are the so called ‘enabling themes’: “A diverse and inclusive city”, “Connected and informed city”, “An integrated city” and “A democratic and participative city”. They underpin the whole strategy as they represent cross-cutting principles. The remaining ten themes are the outcome themes, which influence how and where people live in the city.


The vision was constructed in a way that would ensure a balance between the four pillars of development: economic, human, cultural and societal. The difference between the human and societal was that the human pillar was individual and the societal was collective. The economic pillar meant generating wealth, and the cultural was related to the ways in which people expressed themselves and how society was
progressing. The whole concept was based on the belief that a sustainable city of the future would need to be built upon these four pillars.

![Diagram showing the four pillars of Dublin's vision: A safe city, Connected and Informed, A family friendly city, A cultural and enjoyable city, A learning city, An enterprising city, A community friendly city, A city of homes, A healthy and active, A moving and accessible city, Diverse and Inclusive.]

Fig. 5.11 The structure of the vision “Dublin – a city of possibilities 2002-2012” (DCDB 2002:5-6)

The strategy attempts to look at the wider area, not only at the operational area of Dublin City Council. It takes into consideration the fact that Dublin is a capital city, and, therefore, tries to consider how the changes in the city could influence other parts of the country and the national policy on the whole. The strategy identified a number of issues for the national agenda, over which regional and local agencies do not have control, for example income differentials. The Director of Community and Enterprise proposed the establishment of a strong central unit, which would work together with local CDBs on issues of national character, that need to be addressed by national government in order to enable local agencies to implement their strategies.
5.3.3 Development of community indicators in Ballymun

5.3.3.1 Origins of the project

The project ‘Development of community indicators in Ballymun’ was carried out by the Ballymun Regeneration Limited (BRL) in association with the Global Action Plan (GAP Ballymun) as a part of the large-scale regeneration of Ballymun in Dublin. The exercise is also a part of the European project “It-Takes-Two”. The project aimed at the development of a set of community indicators that will be used to monitor progress of Ballymun towards sustainability. The visioning method was used to identify the wishes and fears of the community regarding the future of Ballymun, to create a shared vision of the future and to engage local citizens in the process of change.

Ballymun, which is Irish for Town of Shrubs, was built between 1966 and 1974 as a response to the housing crisis in Dublin. The development consisted of a mix of over 2,800 flats in 4-, 8- and 15-storey blocks and 2,400 houses concentrated in an area of 1.5 square miles (Community Action Programme Ballymun 2000). The town was constructed in order to move people away from the crowded inner city to a more open and convivial environment. Three decades later, the area was designated for a regeneration programme, the biggest in Ireland. The decision of the Irish Government in March 1997 to launch the regeneration scheme was a response to the accumulation of a whole range of severe social, economic, infrastructural and environmental problems.

The regeneration scheme has been carried out by a special agency, Ballymun Regeneration Limited (BRL), which was set up by Dublin City Council. The project aims for the overall regeneration of the area with the extensive participation of local residents. Their involvement and support was recognised as crucial for the success of the programme. The Master Plan for Ballymun’s regeneration was developed in close consultation and partnership with Ballymun residents (Ballymun Regeneration 1998). It addresses social, economic, infrastructural and environmental problems collectively. A variety of social, economic and environmental projects conducted within the regeneration programme is hoped to create linkages in the area and to build a healthy, viable community in the new town of Ballymun. It is also hoped that a wide and active
participation of Ballymun residents in the regeneration programme would help to create a feeling of ownership and good sense of place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative/leadership</th>
<th>Development of community indicators in Ballymun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ballymun Regeneration Limited and “It Takes Two” Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Visioning method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of the process</td>
<td>Two workshops and a series of preparatory meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>GAP Action Teams, Dublin City Council, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. and local community groups and organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>Started in late 2001 and is ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time horizon</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>BRL and GAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes and outputs</td>
<td>A set of future scenarios and a set of environmental, economic and social indicators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.17 Development of community indicators in Ballymun – summary of the project

“It-Takes-Two” is a project co-ordinated by the International Institute for the Urban Environment (IIUE) with financial support from the European Commission. It aims at reducing barriers for technological innovation in sustainable urban environments. It concentrates on five post-World War II high-rise residential districts in the cities of Antwerp, Dublin, Gothenburg, Leipzig and Naples. A combination of futures related methods, such as SWOT-analysis, Technology Assessment, European Awareness Scenario Workshops and Visioning was brought together and incorporated into an integrated approach (It Takes Two 2002).

The visioning method was chosen to be used for the development of community indicators from a whole range of methods and techniques recommended by the “It-Takes-Two” project. This choice arose from the need to assess community’s values and preferences, to encourage and involve residents of Ballymun in building sustainable society, and to create a feeling of responsibility for change towards a better future, based on residents’ wishes and values. Visioning was a tool applied in order to identify the most severe areas of concern and the value systems characteristic for Ballymun’s community, and further, to develop a set of community indicators that

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13 Action Teams are consist of groups of local residents interested in environmental issues as well as sustainability, with the purpose to decrease the negative impact on the environment on their own individual level

214
would reflect residents' concerns. The indicators developed through the process were to be used to monitor the progress of the town towards sustainability.

5.3.3.2 Process and methodology

The process of development of the community indicators for Ballymun started in the second half of the year 2001. It involved the following phases:

1. the first workshop under the name *Visioning Day*;
2. the second workshop;
3. development of an action plan.

**The first workshop** took place on 20th of September 2001 and was held under the name *Visioning Day*. Participants of the event came from: GAP Action Teams, Dublin City Council, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. and local community groups and organisations. The purpose of the Visioning Day was to develop a shared, common vision of the future of Ballymun underpinned by the community wishes and fears. Such a vision incorporated goals and targets for the future, which needed to be accomplished in order to create the desired future state.

During the first part of the workshop the participants were asked to write their ideas about how Ballymun would be like in twenty years time. Each idea was recorded on a single piece of paper. These thoughts were subsequently collected and clustered, and resulted in the emergence of five themes. In the next stage, the participants were divided into five groups, which developed these five themes into five future scenarios. Then each group brainstormed on the goals that would help to avoid an unwanted future and to build the desired one. The last part of the workshop involved the identification of key benchmarks within scenarios that would indicate whether Ballymun was heading towards the desired future. These benchmarks became a foundation for the establishment of the initial community indicators (Scully 2002).

**The second workshop** took place on 12th March 2002. As in the case of the first meeting, invited to the workshop were: GAP Action Teams, Dublin City Council, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. and local community groups and organisations. The

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14 Action Teams are the groups of local residents interested in environmental issues as well as sustainability, with the purpose to decrease the negative impact on the environment on their own individual level.
purpose of the event was to develop twelve indicators, which would represent the most important issues for the Ballymun’s residents and which would be measured to monitor the change in these areas.

At the beginning of the workshop the continuity of the project was emphasised through presentation of the scenarios developed during the first workshop. The scenarios were demonstrated in a form of a future local newspaper. The articles in the Local paper illustrated the trends that emerged in the scenarios and showed how Ballymun could be like in the year 2017. Then the facilitator explained the concept of an indicator. She presented its definition, roles and uses, and the criteria for choosing the indicators in the course of the workshop.

In the next stage of the workshop, the main group was divided into three subgroups discussing indicators under three main headings: social, economic and environmental. Participants were free to join any subgroup depending on their area of interest. 15 participants out of 29 joined the ‘social’ group, 9 the ‘environmental’, and 5 the ‘economic’. The task of each group was to choose three indicators for each of the four subheadings (Table 5.18) from the indicators shown in grids. The grids with indicators were prepared in advance by the organisers of the workshop. They selected the indicators from three different sources: the Ballymun Masterplan, scenarios developed during the first workshop and the experts’ indicators. The participants working in groups were also allowed to propose their own indicators, if they thought about better ones than the ones presented in the grids. Each group had a facilitator, who guided the discussion upon the choice. At the end of this stage of the process, each group presented three indicators they had chosen for each subheading and the justification for their selection.

The last phase of the workshop involved choosing one indicator from the three selected for each subheading. Each participant of the event had a chance to award his or her favourite indicators with a number of points (one, two or three points depending on the preference for a given indicator). The indicators with the highest number of points were the ones to be measured in the future, once it was established that each indicator met the relevant criteria for indicators.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENTAL</th>
<th>SOCIAL</th>
<th>ECONOMIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Participation and Local Building Democracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste</td>
<td>Community Safety Local Jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>Health Social Economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Education Housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5.18 Headings under which indicators were discussed*

The next stage in the process is **development of an action plan**, which would specify the actions that need to be undertaken to ensure the sustainable development of Ballymun. The first step at this stage is identification of stakeholders responsible for change in the areas covered by chosen indicators. Then a number of workshops should be carried out in order to target all bodies responsible for change, to choose the ways of monitoring and communicating the progress, and to set up the goals, which should be achieved in the future. These workshops should bring together the local community and stakeholders. Initially, they were planned for the period of Spring and Summer 2003. However, due to organisational and management changes, work on the project was stopped for a period of approximately a year and a half. The first action, which was taken after the project resumed last year, was checking whether the indicators met the relevant criteria and identifying the ways in which these indicators could be measured. One of the BRL representatives pointed out difficulties with the measurement of certain indicators, which needed to be solved before an action plan could be developed.

5.3.3.3 Participation

The project was prepared and managed by the members of GAP Ballymun and BRL, who also took part in the two workshops organised as a part of the project. The participants of the workshops came from four different groups: Ballymun residents, who completed Action Team training, Dublin City Council, BRL and local community groups. The potential participants were targeted by a written invitation to the workshops and a follow-up phone calls. Approximately 150 people included in the GAP Action Team database were approached. The first workshop gathered 30 participants from: Action Team (18), GAP (5), Dublin City Council (2), BRL (1), Housing Task Force (1), Agenda 21 Group (CAFTA) (1), Balcurris Forum (1) and the National College of Ireland (1). It is necessary to stress that some people, who were
classified as the members of Action Teams were also representing BRL or local community groups. In the second workshop, 29 people participated. The numbers of participants from each of the four groups were not recorded.

5.3.3.4 Outcomes and outputs

To date, the main outputs from this project are: the set of five scenarios portraying the future of Ballymun in twenty years time; and a list of indicators chosen by the community, and to be measured by BRL in order to monitor Ballymun’s progress towards sustainability. The scenario stories, included in Appendix 10, describe Ballymun as:

1. “Characterless Suburb”
2. “Learning Centre”
3. ”Successful Small-business Centre”
4. “Great Community Spirit”
5. “Common Goals, Safe Place”.

Four out of the five scenarios showed a positive vision of Ballymun’s future. Only one scenario, the “Characterless Suburb”, had a negative character. This vision emerged as a result of the fear that the strong community spirit existing in Ballymun at present might be lost during the regeneration process.

A list of the twelve indicators consists of the following:

1. Economic
   - Number of childcare places and jobs with a liveable wage.
   - Development of improved management and maintenance arrangements and the role of residents and local organisations.
   - Number of jobs (with liveable wages) available in the area.
   - Number of sites available for economic/social use and their availability and use.

2. Social
   - Increase in school attendance.
   - Percentage of pupils completing the Post Primary Cycle.
   - Number of voters in local and national elections.
   - Reduction in anti social behaviour measured by:
o No. of broken trees,
o No. of broken street lamps,
o No. of fires started,
o No. of dumped furniture/appliances,
o No. of incidents of graffiti,
o N. of animals abandoned.

3. Environmental

- Number of people buying eco-products.
- Number of facilities available for recycling, including composting, in Ballymun.
- Number of homes with better insulation features and improved energy conservation awareness.
- Ease of access to key services, e.g. number of public transport routes that serve Ballymun and link Ballymun to the rest of the city.

The range of indicators selected by participants enables the establishment of what are the most important issues for Ballymun’s community, and what problems should be addressed first. Observation of the discussions around the choice of indicators allowed the capturing of the emotional weight put on the concerns. For instance, one of the issues very passionately debated was the provision of sufficient number of miscellaneous childcare places, which are crucial for enabling mothers to re-enter employment and education. This issue was debated in two groups: economic and social, even though the indicator was recognised as belonging to the economic category.

5.3.4 Dublin – Belfast economic corridor

5.3.4.1 Origins of the project

The “Dublin – Belfast economic corridor” study was designed and conducted by The Futures Academy at DIT in cooperation with the University of Ulster over a period of six months starting in January 2003. It focused on cross-border cooperation between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and the emergence of a metropolitan corridor on the east coast of the island, between Dublin and Belfast. The aim of the project was to explore a range of possible future directions, in which the corridor could evolve over the next 20 years and to uncover public and private, economic and social
aspirations for that region on both sides of the border. The expected outcome of this exercise was the creation of a number of scenarios describing possible future developments of the corridor and development of a ‘prospective’ – a vision of the preferred future of this region underpinned by the wishes and hopes of business, the public sector and communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative/leadership</th>
<th>The Futures Academy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Scenario through Prospective process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Local and central government, academia, private sector, various governmental and nongovernmental agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>Approx. six months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time horizon</td>
<td>2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>The Futures Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes and outputs</td>
<td>A set of four scenarios, a prospective and presentation at the conference in Newry, Sept. 2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.19 Dublin - Belfast economic corridor – summary of the project

5.3.4.2 Process and methodology

The design of this project was based on the ‘scenario through prospective process’. The process consisted of the following steps: establishment of a strategic question; identification of the main driving forces of change and the specific issues and trends arising from them; clarification of the level of impact and the degree of uncertainty; and formation of a ‘prospective’.

Establishment of a strategic question. The strategic question was identified through a number of strategic conversations held in order to clearly identify the objectives of the study. The final agreed question was: “What might the future hold for the Dublin – Belfast economic corridor in the year 2025?”

Identification of the main driving forces of change and the specific issues and trends arising from them. The main driving forces of change and more detailed issues and trends were identified using the ‘Six sectors approach’ (Society/Culture, Demography, Economy, Environment, Governance, Technology). A survey and a number of strategic interviews were conducted in order to distinguish the driving forces of change. The same methods and additionally the environmental scanning were used to identify more specific issues and trends.
Clarification of the level of impact and the degree of uncertainty. The main aim of this phase was the recognition of ‘pivotal uncertainties’ – issues and trends, which if took place would have high level of impact and the uncertainty of their outcomes would be also high. The issues and trends identified previously were assessed in regard to their likely level of impact and degree of uncertainty of their outcome. This phase was completed through an in-house brainstorming session, and by obtaining data from the survey and strategic conversations.

Creation of the scenarios. A set of four scenarios: “Redemption”, “Bridging the gap”, “Back to the future” and “Avarice”, was developed by one of The Futures Academy members. The scenarios were created using the two-by-two matrix. The first axis of the matrix constituted economic stability/instability and the second one government stability/instability. The scenario logics determined prior to the formulation of the scenario stories and the stories’ initial skeletons were developed during a brainstorming session attended by The Futures Academy members. The full scenario stories are included in Appendix 12.

Formation of a ‘prospective’. The last step in the process involved identification of the aspirations, wishes, hopes and fears of different actors operating in the Dublin-Belfast economic corridor and development of an agreed vision of the preferred future. Having a picture of the desired future would enable decision-makers and stakeholders to focus their thinking towards achieving the preferred state, while having a range of alternative future scenarios would help to test their policies and decisions against different future possibilities.

5.3.4.3 Participation

The organisers of the study tried to approach as many diverse groups as possible to discern their views on key issues for the future development of the region. The participants took part in the process through a survey and a range of strategic interviews. The survey targeted 198 people representing the following groups on the both sides of the border: companies, academics, local authorities, central government agencies and other organisations, such as chambers of commerce in the corridor area, investment and industrial agencies, regional bodies, and public transport providers. The exact numbers of questionnaires distributed between different groups in the
Republic and in Northern Ireland are shown in Table 5.22. Eleven people, representing Newry and Mourne District Council, NI Department for Regional Development, IDA, CIE, NRA, Aer Rianta, Dundalk Institute of Technology, The Centre for Cross-border Studies, Drogheda Chamber of Commerce and TESCO, were identified and approached for strategic conversations. Only three of them, from Newry and Mourne District Council, NI Department for Regional Development and TESCO, agreed to meet and were interviewed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups of respondents</th>
<th>The Republic of Ireland</th>
<th>Northern Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business (companies)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authorities</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other organisations and agencies</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5.20 Numbers of questionnaires distributed between members of individual groups in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland*

5.3.4.4 Outcomes and outputs

The main outputs of the project were the four scenario stories (Appendix 11) portraying four different possibilities of how the Dublin-Belfast economic corridor could evolve and the vision of a preferred future. The results of the study were presented at a special conference looking at co-operation between North and South and the Dublin-Belfast corridor, which took place in September 2003 in Newry (Northern Ireland). The conference was attended by representatives of local and central government, private sector and academia. One of the main aims of the conference was to stimulate further coordination of the strategic spatial plans of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland at the national and local level and to consider issues related to governance, implementation, quality of life and positive and negative trends arising from the development of a corridor. Presentation of the scenarios and the ‘prospective’ at the conference enabled to bring a long-term future dimension to the discussion on these aspects.
5.3.5 Mobile and Accessible Dublin – testing the methodology

5.3.5.1 Origins of the project

The “Mobile and Accessible Dublin” exercise was designed and carried out by the author of this thesis in order to test the Prospective methodology in the context of urban planning. The author’s choice to explore the future of the relationship between land use and transportation in Dublin was inspired by an ongoing debate around the transportation and infrastructural problems of the city. As mentioned earlier (Section 5.3.1.1) Dublin has been greatly transformed as a result of the economic and demographic boom of Celtic Tiger era. The unprecedented growth of the city and its region in the 1990s and early 2000s placed enormous pressures on the existing infrastructure and created a whole range of severe problems, such as traffic congestion, pollution, poor accessibility and mobility, a housing crisis and urban sprawl. As infrastructural difficulties result in very high social, economic and environmental costs, which need to be reduced in order to maintain the high competitiveness of the city and to improve the quality of life for people living and working in the city and region, one of the project’s aims was to develop a vision of an effective integration of land use and transportation in Dublin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative/leadership</th>
<th>The author of the thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Prospective methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Postgraduate students from DIT and TCD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time horizon</td>
<td>2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>The author of the thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes and outputs</td>
<td>Gaining practical knowledge on conducting exercises with use of futures methods, and a set of different documents describing the relationship between land use and transportation in Dublin, including a portrait of the present situation, scenarios of possible futures and a vision of a preferred future.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.21 Mobile and Accessible Dublin – summary of the project**

However, the main purpose of the exercise was to enable the author to apply the Prospective methodology, and to gain an understanding of various practical issues, such as facilitation, possible weak points in the process, potential problems with
application of individual techniques, timing, stimulation of participants thought processes, and explanation of various steps in the process to participants.

5.3.5.2 Process and methodology

The initial process, developed by the author on the basis of documentary research into the French Prospective methodology, consisted of five main phases: formulation of the problem or strategic question; understanding the past and present; exploration of possible and probable futures; development of the most desirable vision of the future; and recommendations and suggestion for implementation of the vision. *Formulation of the problem or strategic question*, which involved the identification of the problem/strategic question and formulation of a precise statement addressing it. *Understanding the past and present*, which aimed at the establishment of a complex picture of the present situation. It included: recognition of the key-issues and problems of the present state, identification of the past trends and decisions and their role in shaping the present state, detection of the main actors present on the scene and gaining an understanding of the interactions between the actors and the factors. *Exploration of the possible and probable futures* involved using the scenario analysis method. *Development of the most desirable vision of the future* consisted of the development of the preferred future vision for the issue in question, and an identification of obstacles that could be met on the way to the achievement of that vision. *Recommendations and suggestions for implementation of the vision* included: formulating policy proposals and suggestions for action, development of indicators to measure progress, identification of agencies responsible for action and development of mechanisms that would assist in revisions of the vision and in generating new suggestions in order to respond to changing conditions.

A number of different methods were used to complete the project. The main one was the Prospective workshop designed around the process presented above. The additional techniques included strategic interviews, environmental scanning and a futures survey. Table 5.20 presents methods used to gather information for each of the five phases of the process.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Prospective workshop</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Environmental scanning</th>
<th>Strategic interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of the past and present</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration of the future</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most desired vision</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for action</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.22 The sources of data for each stage of the process**

The Prospective workshop took place on 3rd (full day) and 5th (half day) December 2002. It comprised the following stages.

1) *Welcome and introduction.*

2) *Development of an understanding of the past and present.* This phase began with a short introductory presentation on the past and present situation of the land use and transportation in Dublin made by the facilitator (the author of this thesis). Then, the participants brainstormed in order to gain an understanding of the present situation. As a result of the discussion a mind-map of the present situation was created. The phase ended with the identification of key issues characteristic of the current state.

3) *Exploration of the future using the scenario method.* The first step in this phase was the identification of the driving forces of change, which would effect development of the whole city and its transportation and land use patterns in particular. Next, the main issues and trends arising from the driving forces were discerned. Then, participants assessed the level of impact and degree of uncertainty for each of these issues and trends. This stage finished with the creation of four future scenarios.

4) *Development of the preferred vision of the future.* This stage began with an introduction given by the facilitator, which recapitulated the aims of this part of the process and outlined a set of rules for the session, for instance, ban on any criticisms and cynical comments, encouragement of participants to think the unthinkable and support their ideas about the future, even if they seem to be ridiculous. The visioning started with a short exercise “set your imagination free”, in which the participants created a short story portraying the future relationship between land use and transportation. Each person added a sentence to the narrative, ensuring that the whole story is logical and consistent. The next step was a brainstorming session, in which the participants proposed their ideas of the desired future for land use and transportation. Then, out of all the ideas collected the core points for the vision were identified and a vision narrative created. The last step in this phase, as well as the first day of the
workshop, was the detection of factors, which would enable to verify whether the real course of action is leading to the achievement of the desired vision.

5) **Guidelines for action.** The last phase in the process involved three main steps: brainstorming on the suggestions of the short-term actions, proposals of the long-term actions and identification of the actors responsible for the implementation of these suggestions.

The workshop ended with a talk about the Futures Studies field and futures methods given by Professor John Ratcliffe and the summary of the workshop.

The remaining methods used in this study had a complementary role. Environmental scanning assisted in the collection of information on the existing trends and future issues, which may gain impact over the topic of the exercise. The author monitored media, performed field observations and gained knowledge from various conferences, seminars, informal chats and the Internet. The survey, distributed among the workshop participants, helped to discern their opinions on the present situation and to discover their fears and wishes about the future. The questionnaire aimed at the stimulation of creative thinking among the participants and also was a valuable source of information for the facilitator of the workshop. The strategic interview was conducted with an expert on transportation issues in Dublin. As with the case of the survey, information collected from this interview was valuable for the facilitator of the workshop and was also used in the final report presenting the results of the exercise.

5.3.5.3 Participation

The exercise was designed and coordinated by the author of the thesis. Ten people took part in the Prospective workshop and completed the survey. Most of them were postgraduate research students in planning and fields related to it, such as geography and social science. There were: three postgraduate research students from TCD, two postgraduate research students from DIT, two students from a taught Masters course, one postdoctoral fellow from DIT, one researcher working at DIT and one DIT graduate. The participants answered to the author’s advertising of the event and volunteered to take part in the exercise.

While discussing the participation issues in the context of this project it is necessary to remember that it was a ‘training’ exercise and its main aim was to test the
methodology. The postgraduate students were targeted to take part in the project for a number of reasons, which are restated below.

- They have enough knowledge and very fresh views at the same time.
- They have openness and enthusiasm for novelty.
- They are very good participants for the pilot study as they are more likely to attend a two days workshop than professionals, who could be more limited by work duties.
- They will become practitioners in the future.

5.3.5.4 Outcomes and outputs

There were two main types of the outcomes and outputs from the project: the experience and lessons learned by the author from applying the methodology in practice and a whole range of documents describing the relationship between land use and transportation in Dublin. The lessons learned from the practical application of the methodology, mainly from the workshop, were related to the structure of the workshop, its weak points, the Prospective process, facilitation and timing. The author recorded her observations related to different practical issues, which arose during the workshop and in the process of analysis of the results. Also the participants had a chance to express their opinions about the workshop and the methodology in general through a feedback questionnaire distributed among them. The discussion of the issues related to the practical application of the methodology (below) is based on participants’ comments raised in the feedback questionnaire and observations recorded by the author.

The structure of the process. Participants did like the structure of the process, as they believed it to be ‘logically progressing’ and ‘having a good flow’. They found the handouts with timetables for both days very helpful, as they could see a picture of a full process and recognise which stage was reached. One of the participants proposed that instead of a day-and-a-half, the workshop could have been conducted over two three-quarter days, what would help to maintain participants’ concentration. The participants, when asked which phase was their favourite, pointed out three different phases: development of a picture of the present situation, brainstorming on the ideas for the preferred vision of the future and creation of the scenarios. None of the participants indicated the last phase – generating suggestions for action – as his or her
favourite. The author has found that carrying the workshop over two days with one day of break between was very beneficial. One day of break enabled her to compile all the material gathered during Day 1, including composing the vision story from the collected ideas, and report it back to the group in the beginning of the Day 2. The author has also learned that for the workshop to run ‘smoothly’ it is crucial to prepare each step as thoroughly as possible, including a clear statement of the aims and expectations; detailed procedures; timetables; alternative explanations of procedures for each tasks; ways of dividing the main group to subgroups and so on.

*Weak points of the workshop.* The weakest point of the process was the assessment of the level of impact and degree of uncertainty of issues and trends arising from the driving forces of change. This step usually allows distinguishing issues characterised by a high level of impact and high degree of uncertainty of their outcome, so called ‘pivotal uncertainties’, around which different scenario stories are structured. Failure to discern pivotal uncertainties as well as other types of issues, such as significant trends, potential jokers and context shapers, creates difficulties for the next step – development of a set of scenarios portraying alternative futures. Two different factors could be responsible for that failure: lack of clear explanation of what was expected from participants and how should it be achieved, and lack of adequate knowledge and experience of the participants in assessing these features. The author has learned that for difficult steps like the one discussed here it is useful to have some kind of a backup procedure, which would allow the reduction of the impact if something goes wrong. In the case of this exercise, the alternative solution was devised during the workshop. The facilitator, using the experience gained previously, created a matrix with two axes: economy (strong or weak) and governance (strong or weak) (Fig. 5.12), which provided the framework for development of scenarios. Although the scenario stories created during the workshop could not be perceived as ‘proper’, the participants found the process in which they were developed as very interesting and enjoyable. As one of the participants described it:

“... the most enjoyable part for me was developing a vision for the future within a framework. For example, the group I was involved in developed a vision with strong governance and a strong economy in place. It was interesting to see what the group believed possible given the two factors. The possible alternative futures and priorities were really broadened and some of the group members had really innovative ideas.”
Another weak point in the process was the creation of a mind-map portraying the present situation and the past trends and policies, which led to its development. The participants were asked to draw a diagram/mind-map on a big sheet of paper. As it was the first step in the process and the participants were just beginning to get to know each other and to start thinking collectively it was difficult to find a person or persons who would take initiative and start drawing the mind-map. The author has learned that the first step in the process, often crucial for establishment of group’s dynamic, should be designed in a way that would, on one hand, engage and absorb the participants and, on the other, allow the facilitator to invigorate the group if it is slow starting.

The Prospective process. Most of the participants perceived the Prospective methodology as valuable and interesting, encouraging the articulation of fresh and innovative ideas and enabling the approach to a given issue to be made from a new perspective. One of the participants described the Prospective workshop as “an enlightening exercise with a refreshing dose of imagination involved”. Another person emphasised the importance of looking at different possible futures in order to choose the one which is desirable, and believed that the scenario method was very useful in so doing.

A number of participants pointed out that the Prospective process could be very biased if only certain groups would be involved in development of the desired vision for the future. They believed that a preferred future vision for any city should be created and agreed on by all agencies, groups and individuals existing and functioning in the city. Another concern raised was related to the ‘danger of cynicism’ that could easily prevent people from taking seriously parts of the procedure, such as development of a desired vision, or even the full Prospective process.

Facilitation. The author has learned that facilitation of an exercise, such as Prospective workshop involves a number of different aspects.

- **Explanation of each task** in regard to its aims, expected outcomes and procedures has to be clear and simple. The facilitator should be able to do that in a number of alternative ways, for instance by giving appropriate examples.
- **Ability to engage all participants** in the exercise, to create space for each of them to express their opinions and to not let individuals dominate discussion.
- The facilitator has to be able to **stimulate and inspire** participants’ thinking using different means, such as asking questions, providing examples, making provocative statements or acting as ‘devil’s advocate’.

- Capability to put the participants at ease and to create a **friendly**, but **intellectually stimulating atmosphere**. And at the same time being able to keep the time arrangements, ensure progress of work and maintain the group’s concentration.

**Timing.** The last but not least practical lesson learned was related to timing. Timing can be considered in relation to two sides – planning of a time outline for an event and keeping to that outline during the event. Obviously, it is much easier to keep to the timetable during the event if the time structure was well thought out in the first place. While planning the time outline it is necessary to ensure that the amount of time assigned for each task is adequate to complete it. For instance, in the case of the workshop discussed, there was no time assigned for summarising the results of the assessment of issues and trends in regard to their level of uncertainty and impact. Such activity required approximately half-an-hour given the technique applied (survey completed individually by all participants). Another issue which needs to be considered when planning the workshop, is the length of a workshop and decline in participants’ concentration at the end of, for instance, an eight-hour day.

![Matrix providing the basis for the development of scenarios](image)

**Fig. 5.12** Matrix providing the basis for the development of scenarios

In terms of trying to follow the timetable during the event it is helpful frequently to remind participants how much time is left to finish a given task. It is also important to encourage participants to give their best, but also to reassure them that their input is
very valuable even if it constitutes mainly general ideas, due to a lack of sufficient time needed to explore them in-depth.

The additional documents which emerged from the exercise, and which are presented in full form in Appendix 11, include:

- *Description of the present situation and past trends and decisions, which formed the current state*. This document, based on data gathered from the Prospective workshop, the survey, the strategic interview and through environmental scanning, presents the existing relationship between land use and transportation through discussion of the following features: spatial structure, property market and housing stock, transportation system, quality of life and social, cultural and economic aspects.

- *Set of four future scenarios created during the workshop*. As discussed above, one of the weaknesses of the process was the failure to distinguish a set of ‘pivotal uncertainties’ around which scenarios are usually built. This affected the ability to develop scenarios in the manner specified by the method. The three scenario stories are not proper scenarios, but a result of an intellectual exercise in imagining different possible futures. The participants insisted on carrying out this task and found it very interesting.

- *Vision of a desired future*. The vision was composed by the author from the themes, which emerged in the clustering of the ideas proposed by participants as features of the desired future. The vision portrays all aspects of Dublin city in 2025 with a special focus on the relationship between transportation and land use.

- *Obstacles to the vision*. The groups of obstacles – local and global – were identified during the workshop. Among the obstacles of local character were: financial constraints, attachment to the car, lack of courage, the motor-industry lobby, the system of local governance, lack of political will, economic systems, lack of efficiency in public expenditure, lack of political vision, lack of co-operation, lack of imagination, self-interest, corruption, short-sighted developers, ‘short-termism’, cynicism and scepticism, apathy, lack of opposition in the political system and global ‘monopolism’. Among the global factors identified as obstacles were: running out of oil, diseases, slowdown in the world’s economy, too much centralised power in the global context, technology in the wrong hands,
Sellafield, ideological fundamentalism, flooding and climate change, Dublin under threat from Northern Ireland terrorism.

- **Recommendations and suggestions for action.** The analysis of suggestions and recommendations for action how to achieve the desirable vision led to establishment of the following ‘suggestion themes’: development of an integrated public transport system, formation of a multi-skilled specialist body responsible for the planning and development of Dublin city and the region, rising political, civil and environmental awareness through different channels, such as media and education, changes in taxation, changes in the planning practice, reductions of the needs for travel, role of employers in supporting alternative modes of transport and in the integration of transportation and land use, development of land use patterns integrated with transport systems, implementation process and planning control, accessibility of public spaces and their role in community building.

5.4 **Synthesis**

The ways of approaching and constructing the future in urban planning processes, discussed in the first part of the chapter, involve a whole range of different elements. The in-depth examination of the urban planning processes in Dublin enabled the author to identify issues, factors and actors that play an important role in shaping the future of the city. In general, it was recognised that the majority of the decision-makers and planners strongly support future-oriented thinking and planning, and acknowledge the need for a long-term vision of the preferred future to drive the development of the city. The governance system and structure, various issues related to the nature of planning, information base, methods, relationships between the stakeholders and a number of behavioural and cultural factors were identified as the main issues related to the future orientation of planning. The list of actors that play an important role in shaping the future of the city included a whole range of individuals, organisations and interest groups. A significant number of people and agencies on that list were also perceived as the ones that perform future-oriented thinking and planning. Besides the actors carrying out future-oriented activities, there were also a number of examples of the past and present future-oriented thinking and actions detected. These included positive examples of planning, social and economic policy and specific projects. Also, several cases of negative initiatives that should provide good lessons for the future were
discerned. Finally, the factors impeding and encouraging long-term future-oriented thinking in the urban planning processes were identified. The factors impeding the future-oriented thinking and planning were related to governance, resources, behavioural and cultural aspects and methodology. The issues encouraging future-oriented thinking and planning included the same types of factors, and additionally the issues related to communication and collaboration between the stakeholders.

The second part of the chapter included a presentation and review of five projects carried out in Dublin, in which futures methods were employed. The projects were discussed in regard to their origins, approaches and methods used, participation and outcomes and outputs. They varied in many different ways. The initiatives looked at different geographical levels, from the regional level, through city-region to the local community level. They looked at least 10 years ahead and at most 20 years into the future. The numbers of participants were from up to 10 to 600-800 people, which represented a single sector of society or a whole range of different groups. Various futures approaches and methods, such as Prospective, visioning, scenarios, were used to look at city as a whole or at its specific aspects, such as social, economic, environmental, land use, and transportation.
6. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The main aim of this study was to develop a future-oriented methodology that would encourage and facilitate a shift in the way of thinking and acting about the future of cities. This chapter presents the summary of the research, conclusions and recommendations. It consists of three main parts. The first part reiterates the main aims and objectives of the research and reviews the way in which they were addressed throughout the thesis. The second part discusses the main conclusions arising from the research. The final section presents the recommendations arising from the research that are grouped into three main subsections. The first subsection presents general recommendations for encouraging the shift in the way of thinking and acting about the futures of cities, while the subsequent section discusses suggestions for fostering future-oriented thinking and planning in Dublin. The final section presents specific recommendations for the development of a suitable futures methodology and discusses the proposed Prospective methodology model.

6.2 Summary

The two main research questions posed in this thesis were "what is the role of futures methods in urban planning processes in Dublin and in which way the application of futures thinking and methodologies could improve these processes?" and the main aim of the study was to develop a future-oriented methodology that would encourage and facilitate a shift in the way of thinking and acting about the future of cities. In order to achieve this aim and to address the research question, a set of detailed research objectives was developed. The first objective involved the in-depth review of the Futures Studies field with regard to its origins, purposes, philosophical and epistemological foundations and methods. The results of the review, based on documentary research, were discussed in Chapter 2. At first, the main concepts and notions underlying futures thinking, such as time and its sequences (past, present and future), change and discontinuity, complexity and uncertainty, were explored. Subsequently, the Futures Studies field was examined as to its purposes, the main characteristics and issues and values and ethics within its context. Then, the evolution
of the Futures Studies field was portrayed and various strands that originated in the field were discussed. And finally, a key aspect to the development of the suitable methodology, issues of data reliability and methodological rigour and various futures methodological approaches and techniques were considered.

The second objective involved the investigation of cases in which future-oriented methodologies were employed in urban planning processes. This task was addressed through documentary research and examination of case studies. The international case studies were discussed in a general manner in Section 3.3.5 within the context of the evolution of planning approach towards the future. Additionally, the cases of four cities (Lyon, Bilbao, Barcelona and Vancouver), where futures approaches were used were reviewed in detail in Appendix 2.

The completion of the next research objective required the exploration of how the urban planning approaches towards the future have evolved. This was achieved through documentary research and the results were presented in Chapter 3. A number of issues were investigated: the way of thinking about the future, the attitude towards change and complexity, the way of thinking about the city and its various dimensions, methods and techniques used for the exploration of the future, people and institutions involved in the planning process and the weaknesses of the planning process in relation to the future. The focus of this investigation was placed on European, British and Irish planning. The examination of the urban planning approach towards the future enabled the author to discern its main weaknesses and identify gaps that needed to be addressed in this thesis, which are presented in Section 3.4.2.

The achievement of the next objective, the examination of how the future is constructed in existing urban planning processes in Dublin, involved the collection of primary data through in-depth interviews, survey and case studies. The results of this examination are presented in Section 5.2. The construction of the future in the current urban planning processes in Dublin was discussed in the light of a number of issues. Among them were: general attitudes of decision-makers towards the future; planning practice and its regard to the future; factors involved in future-oriented decision-making and planning, such as governance, planning issues, information base, methods, collaboration between the actors, behavioural and cultural factors; actors involved in the planning processes; examples of future-oriented thinking and action; and factors impeding and encouraging long-term future-oriented thinking. The development of an
understanding of the way in which urban futures (in this case the future of Dublin) are being created was critical to a comprehension of what is needed to encourage and facilitate the change in the mindset of urban planners and decision-makers, as well as the development of a suitable futures methodology that would facilitate this shift.

The final objective involved a critical examination of urban planning projects carried out in Dublin in which future-oriented methods were employed. Five different cases studies were investigated: Dublin 2020 Vision, Dublin – A city of Possibilities 2002-2012, Development of community indicators in Ballymun, Mobile and accessible Dublin, and Dublin – Belfast economic corridor. The projects were examined with respect to their origins, the process and methodology employed, participation issues and their outcomes and outputs. The results of this examination provided suggestions as to the practical application of futures methods in urban planning and constituted foundations for the development of the Prospective model.

6.3 Conclusions

The results of the in-depth examination of urban theory and practice corroborated the argument presented in the beginning of this thesis that there is a strong need for a fundamental change in the ways of approaching and planning the future of urban territories. In the Introduction chapter (section 1.1.2) the author proposed requirements, which a new approach towards the future in planning should address. Having incorporated the results of the study, she proposes that a traditional ‘predict and provide’ model should be superseded by a fresh, future-oriented approach, which could be described as ‘explore alternative future possibilities, envision the preferred future and plan to achieve it’, which could be shortened to ‘explore, envision and plan’. Such an approach can be also described by the adage ‘divergence, emergence and convergence’ as used in the “Prospective through Scenarios” model developed by The Futures Academy (Section 2.5.4).

The proposed ‘explore, envision and plan’ approach is based on the concepts and principles characterised by the Futures Studies field. First and foremost, it tries to reinforce the view that the future will not be an extension of the past, and, therefore, it can unfold in many different ways, and can, more importantly, be shaped. It proposes an in-depth exploration of the short- to long-term future possibilities in order to inform
decision and policy makers about existing possibilities, and it promotes the development of a vision of a preferred future to encourage change in the desired direction. The approach is based upon the notion that futures thinking is mainly required in three phases of the planning process: policy making, decision making and urban research. To a lesser degree futures thinking is needed in the implementation phase.

This new futures approach should provide methods and mechanisms for:

1. communities
   - to envision their desired future, building upon common values and wishes;
   - to actively participate in the decision-making processes;

2. professionals
   - to challenge the thinking of people involved in urban planning processes;
   - to manage the increasing complexity of urban systems and the context within which they function, and to deal with the uncertainty of future change;
   - to identify global trends and examine how they interact, and what consequences they could have for a given urban territory;
   - to anticipate and examine the short-, medium- and long-term impacts of future change as well as the consequences of their policies and decisions;
   - to channel the thinking of stakeholders into contemplating what future is desirable in the long-term perspective and the tasks that need to be addressed in order to achieve that future;
   - to consider cities as entities and examine various urban components in connection to other dimensions;
   - to discern the needs and values of communities, and to map the changing aspirations and ambitions of policy and decision makers; and
   - to develop mechanisms that would facilitate collaboration of all stake-holders and communities in shaping the future.

The results of the research strongly indicate that a futures approach in urban planning is required not only to improve the toolkit available for the examination of future change and dealing with the complexity and uncertainty attached to it. However, it can be also used for the mobilisation of actors, the creation of a platform for the cooperation between stakeholders and decision-makers and the development of networks of actors sharing common intelligence in a given urban territory. The
research has shown that the collaboration between actors is a key to the effective urban governance and realisation of future plans. Only through the commitment of stakeholders, it is possible to ensure the implementation of future visions and strategies. The examples of cities, like Lyon, Barcelona, or Vancouver, indicate that a futures approach can be very effective in encouraging such collaboration. Using the future as a ‘blank canvas’ encourages discussion free of the present conflicts and bias arising from vested interests.

The results of the research also indicate that there is a strong need for a greater incorporation of societal values and wishes into strategies for the future. In order to achieve this there is a need for more effective engagement of communities in planning processes. Again, futures methods, such as visioning, can be used to discern values, wishes, fears and ambitions of communities. A good example of such a project is the Development of Community Indicators in Ballymun project.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Shifting the prevailing mindset

In the course of the research, a range of different elements and factors that are required to support the transformation of the prevailing planning mindset from the traditional ‘predict and provide’ model to the ‘explore, envision and plan’ approach were identified. These elements and factors were classified into three categories: ‘enabling factors’, ‘encouraging factors’ and ‘facilitating elements’. The ‘enabling factors’, in the author’s view, are necessary to bring about the required change in the way of thinking about the future dimension of planning, which would consequently trigger the change in behaviour. The ‘enabling factors’ involve the development of a widespread understanding of three fundamental issues: the importance of long-term future-oriented thinking and action; the weaknesses and gaps in the traditional approach towards the future; and the advantages of a futures approach for urban planning.

The importance of long-term future-oriented thinking and action. Although many people would agree with the statement that thinking about the future is important, only a small group seems to have a comprehensive understanding as to why this is so, an understanding that makes them to think about and, even more importantly, to act about
the future in a different way. The author believes that in order to enable a change in approach it is necessary to develop an in-depth understanding as to why long-term future-oriented thinking and action is important among the majority of people involved in the urban planning processes – planners, policy and decision-makers, developers, consultants, politicians and community representatives. The development of such understanding could be supported by the sustainability concept, which is widely accepted and is often a major driver for various future-oriented initiatives.

*The weaknesses and gaps in the traditional approach towards the future.* Although the weaknesses of and gaps in the current planning approach towards the future are becoming increasingly recognised, the ‘predict and provide’ model seems to be dominant in urban planning. In order to enable the transformation of the traditional mindset towards a more innovative futures approach it is necessary to develop an understanding of the weaknesses and failures of the traditional model and to create a motivation to search for new methods that could address these weaknesses and gaps.

*The advantages of a futures approach for urban planning.* The last, but nonetheless essential, issue is the development of an awareness about how the application of futures thinking, and associated methods, can be beneficial for planning’s approach towards the future. This awareness should particularly be developed among policy and decision-makers, planners, consultants and people involved in various forms of urban research.

The second group of factors are the *elements encouraging* the transformation of the approach. Among them are the following factors: education of future planners; extensive dissemination of information on various projects using a futures approach; research into the application of urban strategic planning and futures thinking; and leadership.

*Education of future planners.* Education is a key aspect for development of a new planning mindset. The author recommends that planning courses, next to the traditional methods used for approaching and constructing the future, should incorporate subjects introducing strategic planning, foundations of futures thinking and futures methodologies and techniques.

*Extensive dissemination of information on various projects using a futures approach.* As the number of cities using various forms of strategic planning and futures
approaches is growing, there is an increasing amount of information available about the role futures methods can play in urban planning processes. To encourage the change of mindset, it is very valuable to communicate and propagate available information on the application of futures methods in urban planning. It would be desirable that this knowledge would reach the majority of people involved in the planning processes. The information can be communicated through a variety of means: publications, brochures, reports, conferences, seminars, the Internet and informal channels.

Research into the application of urban strategic planning and futures thinking. Another element that can encourage the transformation of the ways of thinking and acting about the future of cities is research into new approaches and methods. Research should provide information on how new methods are used, identify their advantages and weaknesses and how they can be improved and incorporated into mainstream planning activity. It would be also very valuable if innovative projects were evaluated in terms of their effectiveness.

Leadership. So far, leadership, individual or institutional, has been a key element in undertaking processes aiming to develop visions and strategies of the long-term future development. Strong leaders and progressive thinkers have been pointing out weaknesses of the traditional approach and promoting new innovative methods for dealing with the future. As they play an important role in a shift in prevailing mindset, it is important to give them as much support as possible.

The last group of factors are the facilitating elements, which could be described as more specific things that are required for the transformation to happen. These elements include: training in the use of futures methods and techniques; developing a systematic futures approach for urban planning; building of a platform (framework) for the communication and collaboration of stakeholders; development of a mechanism for public participation and decision-making in regard to future development; creation of an urban futures methods toolkit; and provision of necessary resources.

Training in the use of futures methods and techniques. As stated before, education is one of the key aspects in changing the ways of thinking and acting about the future. It is recommended that people involved in urban planning processes would be trained how to use various futures methods and techniques. The author believes that training
should be done at two levels: a general level, which would introduce the concepts on which the future-oriented planning is based, and reinforce the understanding of its importance; and a methodological level that would develop skills in applying futures methods as well as acquiring some additional expertise, such as facilitation capability. The training provided in order to develop skills should be adjusted according to the needs of a given group. Planners, policy makers or politicians deal with different aspects of planning for the future; therefore, training should be designed in a way that would be most beneficial for a given group. Training could take the form of seminars, training courses or workshops. As part of such training, the author recommends the involvement of participants in a Prospective workshop, which according to her experience, is an effective way to create an understanding of the ‘explore, envision and plan’ approach.

*Developing a systematic futures approach for urban planning.* At present, most urban territories that decide to undertake a strategic or long-term future-oriented exercise create their own methodologies for that purpose. The innovativeness and informality of such approaches often is a source of difficulties in conducting the exercises. The results of the study show that a more formal systematic methodology for futures thinking would be very beneficial. The development of such methodology is the main aim of this thesis and specific recommendations for such methodology are discussed in Section 6.3 and the methodology itself is proposed in Section 6.4.

*Building of a platform (framework) for the communication and collaboration of stakeholders.* The results of the research have shown that effective collaboration of stakeholders is one of the key requirements for effective long-term future-oriented planning. The fragmentation of local governance and institutions responsible for the development of the city, and a lack of effective communication between them, often results in numerous uncoordinated, sometimes contradictory policies, plans and timeframes. In order to overcome these difficulties, it is necessary to create a framework within which the main stakeholders could meet, discuss and collaborate on various issues related to the future development of their city. Such a framework would be very beneficial for: the development of an understanding of different views and positions, exchange of information on what is happening in different constituencies and sectors, creating collective intelligence, building a common vision for the city’s future and achievement of greater integration of policies, plans, and timeframes for
implementation of such a vision. Collaboration of stakeholders could be encouraged through legislation, as in the case of City and County Development Boards, or through informal channels, for instance future-oriented process such as Prospective of Foresight exercise.

Development of a mechanism for public participation and decision-making in regard to future development. It has been recognised that next to collaboration of stakeholders, public participation is another very important aspect in future-oriented planning. While developing the vision of the preferred future for an urban territory, it is critical to involve people representing all sectors and generations of society, and to give them a chance to share their views, feelings, needs, wishes and fears as well as to contribute with their knowledge and experience. Active participation gives them feeling of belonging and ownership of the vision, and creates commitment for the implementation of that vision.

Creation of an urban futures methods toolkit. Such a toolkit should: provide information for professionals about the available methodological approaches, such as strategic planning, territorial Prospective, and regional Foresight; present various futures methods and techniques with practical examples of how they can be applied; demonstrate projects in which futures methods were employed; consider mechanisms for encouraging the collaboration of stakeholders and public participation; and discuss issues related to project continuation, sustaining commitment, evaluating the progress, common problems that can be encountered during project realisation.

Provision of necessary resources. The final, but vital, factor required to facilitate a transformation in current planning approach is the recognition that in order to perform future-oriented thinking and planning it is necessary to provide adequate resources, such as funding, time and human capital. These resources are needed in order to undertake specific projects as well as to develop a strategic intelligence capacity within organisations and agencies. The author supports the suggestion of one of the interviewees’ to create small think-tank based groups within different public agencies whose main responsibility would be gathering and developing strategic intelligence.
6.4.2 Fostering future-oriented planning in Dublin

The recommendations discussed in the previous section are related to the transformation of the planning approach towards the future in general. Many of them are relevant for planning in Dublin. This section presents the findings and recommendations specifically linked to future-oriented planning in Dublin. The main recommendations involve the following: establishment of a body responsible for the development of Dublin’s metropolitan region; establishment of a structure such as the City/County Development Board at city-regional level; and creation of a strong voice for Dublin.

*Establishment of a body responsible for the development of Dublin’s metropolitan region.* One of the major obstacles for the long term future-oriented thinking and planning in Dublin is lack of a body or agency, which would have executive planning powers at the metropolitan level. At present, the governance system is quite fragmented, which impacts various forms of future-oriented planning. The following forms of future-oriented planning can be found in Dublin: five year development plans prepared by the four local authorities; ten year social, economic and cultural strategies developed by four City/County Development Boards; the Regional Planning Guidelines (2004); the twenty year National Spatial Strategy and the five year National Development Plan. What is lacking is an agency that would develop a strategic and unified vision for the development of Dublin metropolitan region and would have the power to implement that vision.

*Establishment of a structure such as the City/County Development Board at city-regional level.* The legislation which established City/County Development Boards, is considered to be an excellent example for tackling the lack of effective communication and collaboration among the stakeholders within the city. Although it is eminently suitable for the Irish administrative structure of counties, it fails to recognise the specific local governance structure of Dublin. The author believes that whilst Dublin is comprised of four counties, there should be only one structure, such as a City Region Development Board, bringing together all stakeholders within the city region.

*Creation of a strong voice for Dublin.* Another recommendation arising from the research is the creation of a powerful voice for Dublin. The strong county identity, so characteristic for Ireland, is usually linked to extensive media coverage and effective
political representation. However, this is not exactly characteristic for Dublin. Issues related to Dublin are usually covered by the national media, and its political representation is weaker than for other parts of the country. It is believed that creating a strong media and political voice for the city would encourage more thinking, discussion and action aimed at ensuring the city’s sustainable and prosperous future development.

6.4.3 The methodology model

This section presents specific recommendations for the development of the methodology model. It begins with a justification of the choice of the Prospective methodology as the one suitable to be adapted and further developed for the urban planning context. Then, the detailed recommendations related to different aspects of the approach are presented in four groups: organisational and management issues, methods and techniques, participation mechanisms, and other.

As mentioned before (Section 2.4.4.2), Prospective is seen by some authors as a French name for Foresight, and by others as a separate methodological approach developed in France. The lack of a clear distinction of what constitutes Foresight and what constitutes Prospective creates a certain amount of confusion in terms of the differences and similarities of the two approaches. The author has chosen the Prospective approach to be adapted and developed further in order to be applied in the urban planning context for a number of reasons. These reasons are based on her own perception of the differences between the two approaches. In her view, the Prospective methodology places slightly greater emphasis on the creation of a collective vision of a desired future state. It seems to be more action-oriented, as well as it is stressing the importance of values in futures thinking. Furthermore, it attempts not only to inform decision-makers, but also to provide a space for the articulation of needs, wishes, fears and values. The Prospective approach has also been used successfully in cities like Bilbao, Barcelona and Lyon.

The first group of recommendations presents issues related to the application of the methodology in practice. The Prospective approach can be used to explore the future of the whole city-region, a town, a district within the city or a specific issue or problem, and it can be a base for a formal or informal process. Although the scale of
the projects may vary, most of the organisational issues discussed here can equally apply to exercises conducted at different scales. The organisational recommendations include: establishment of a project team; provision of sufficient resources; identification of individuals and agencies that should be involved in the process; design of the process; pilot studies; promotion of the project; and continuation issues.

*Establishment of a project team.* Any project, regardless of scale and formal status, should have an appropriate team coordinating the process. The size of such a team would, of course, depend on the scale and complexity of the exercise. Naturally, it is important that this team would be adequately resourced. Its functions should include various organisational matters, promotion of the exercise, secretariat duties, channelling communications between actors involved and the collection of all documents, reports and files produced during the project. The issue, which needs to be considered on an individual basis, is whether such a team should have a management board (e.g. City/County Development Board model) comprised of representatives of various sectors in the city. The author believes that the establishment of such a body would be desirable, especially for large-scale projects at a regional or city level, as it would ensure the formal representation of different sectors and, therefore, result in greater commitment to the process.

*Provision of sufficient resources.* The required resources usually involve funding, human capital and space. The lack of adequate means can put pressure on people coordinating the process, and, in effect, the outcomes of such process can be compromised or the continuity of the project disrupted.

*Identification of individuals and agencies that should be involved in the process.* The results of the study have shown that one of the key issues for projects aiming to develop visions and strategies for the future development of cities is the inclusion of all groups and sectors within the city in the process. This is required to ensure that a vision or strategy would be as unbiased as possible, and also to create a feeling of ownership of such a vision/strategy and generate commitment in its implementation. It is recommended that in the preparatory phase of the project, actors taking part in the process would be identified and invited to participate.

*Design of the process.* As this is one of the key elements in any project, it needs carefully to be considered in order to ensure that the process is transparent, well
structured and has an adequate time-frame. The plan of each phase of the process should include the following elements: a clear explanation of aims and expected outcomes; detailed description of the methods to be used and the tasks to be performed; and a timetable, and follow-up arrangements. This would be particularly beneficial for the identification of possible difficulties that can arise during the exercise. Additionally, it creates space for participants to meet and to get to know each other, as well as making the whole process more familiar and understandable to them.

Pilot studies. It is worthwhile rehearsing different elements of the process with a smaller group of participants in advance. This helps to prepare for unexpected turns of event and familiarise participants with the conceptual framework and methodology. The experience gained from the project conducted by The Futures Academy for the City of Lincoln\footnote{"Imagine Lincoln 2020: a vision for the future of our city" – the development of future vision for city of Lincoln carried out by the Futures Academy in cooperation with the University of Lincoln in 2004 and 2005.} reinforced the importance of such pilot studies.

Promotion of the project. An important issue for all urban future-oriented projects is the dissemination of information about the initiative to as broad an audience as possible in order to encourage people to take part. As stated earlier, public participation is one of the key elements in projects aiming to develop visions of a desired future. The promotion should spread awareness about the process, its aims and expected outcomes, and emphasise the importance of citizens involvement. This process can be promoted through a wide range of channels, including media (newspapers, television, radio), brochures delivered to door (mailing lists, election register) and distributed in public places like libraries and community centres, Internet, outdoor advertisement, public events and the like.

Continuation issues. The future-oriented projects examined in this research varied in terms of continuity. Some of them were once-off activities, and others had a continuous character. The author believes that in order to be most effective the projects should be ongoing. Once a vision or strategy is developed and its implementation has started, it is valuable to monitor progress towards the desired future. Ongoing future-oriented activity allows the detection of new threats and opportunities and creates a space for revisions of the strategy when necessary. Continuation can be also considered in relation to a single exercise. Organisers are often faced with problems
arising from a loss of project momentum and motivation, staff changes, withdrawal of partners, resources and so on. The issues related to continuation should be considered at the exercise planning stage and, if possible, addressed in the project design.

The second group of recommendations is related directly to the methodological aspects of the process. The following recommendations are proposed.

*The choice of individual methods and techniques.* In order to be most effective, individual methods and techniques should be chosen according to the aim that is to be achieved and the level of expertise of the people who would be using them. The methods suggested for different phases of the process are presented in the next Section 6.4.4 and were previously reviewed in detail in Section 2.4.5.

*Methodological rigour.* The application of the methodology needs to maintain the requirements of methodological rigour. As discussed previously in Section 2.4.3, there are a number of conditions that can assist in establishing methodological rigour. Among them are: relevance, consistency, plausibility, importance, transparency, value and impact explicitness.

The third group of recommendations includes suggestions related to various participation issues, including collaboration of stakeholders and decision-makers, public participation, engagement of national government in regional or local projects, involvement of youth and children, and communication issue – a common language.

*Collaboration of stakeholders and decision-makers.* As was stated before several times, collaboration among the stakeholders within a city or urban region is one of the key elements in ensuring the effectiveness of future-oriented planning. One of the general recommendations discussed previously was the establishment of a platform/framework for facilitating this collaboration. The author believes that a Prospective process could provide an excellent framework for the cooperation of actors in a given urban territory in regard to its future development. The Prospective process can be used: to bring them together; to start the discussion on the issues related to the future of an urban territory; to encourage them to find a common view; and to implement the decisions taken in that process. The author proposes the concertation process, which will be discussed in detail in section 6.4.4, to provide a basis for communication and collaboration among the main actors in a city.
Public participation. Another very important aspect of future-oriented planning is active public participation. As with the case of stakeholder collaboration, the Prospective process could be used to facilitate public involvement in future-oriented planning. It can provide a platform for expressing communities values, needs, wishes and fears with regard to the future and create a framework for discussion and collaboration between the community and decision-makers. Different methods of community participation are presented in Section 6.4.4.

Engagement of national government in regional or local projects. The research identified that the engagement of national government representatives in the Prospective process would invariably be very valuable. Often, the problems identified in the process require solutions that can be only introduced at the national level. It is hoped that involvement of national government representatives in the process would develop a better understanding of the issues on the ground; and it would also result in the communication of these problems to the appropriate institutions at a central level that could subsequently address them.

Involvement of youth and children. The Prospective process can be also used to involve young people and children into a discussion about the future of their city. This can be beneficial from three points of view – it allows the development of an understanding as to how young people perceive their city, and fosters the discovery of what aspirations they have for it. Also it can bring fresh thinking, creativity and imagination to the process. And finally, it can foster future-oriented thinking in youth.

Communication issue – a common language. Another aspect related to participation is the communication between different groups involved in the process. It is necessary to ensure that participants have a good understanding of the terminology and theories used in the process. A fairly common phenomenon is that during the exercise, collective intelligence and language develops, which then is recognised and widely used by actors within the city.

This last group of proposals is derived from all other observations that have arisen from the research. These include: importance of the process itself; ‘hard facts’ and ‘soft emotions’; and innovativeness, creativity and imagination.

Importance of the process itself. The examination of various future-oriented exercises has shown that the process in which visions and strategies for the future development
are created is as important as its outcomes. It helps to: develop a greater understanding of how the future can unfold; create stronger awareness about the existing and possible threats and opportunities; reveal stakeholders and communities aspirations and wishes for the future; clarify the main aims and principles of urban development; establish new partnerships and networks at local, regional and national level; and develop ownership and commitment to the solutions so they can be implemented.

'Hard facts' and 'soft emotions'. The information collected during future-oriented exercises should have an appropriate balance between factual information, often of a quantitative character, and information leading to the understanding of the 'emotional' side of urban life, community values, wishes, hopes and fears. This balance should especially be ensured at the phase when the understanding of the past and present is being developed. Frequently, the present situation is described mainly by factual information, while the more subjective 'emotional' side is far less explored.

*Innovativeness, creativity and imagination.* Innovativeness, creativity and imagination should be encouraged and fostered throughout to ensure that images of possible, probable and desirable futures are explored and 'fleshed-out' as far as it is possible. Fresh creative thinking allows the identification of innovative and effective solutions to many difficult problems. Any futures methodology should encourage the questioning of well-established ways of thinking and acting, and try to look at a given issue from many different perspectives.

**6.4.4 The proposed Prospective methodology model**

6.4.4.1 Process

The Prospective process (Fig. 6.1.) consists of the five main phases: formulation of the problem/strategic question; understanding of the past and present; exploration of the future; development of the most desirable vision of the future; and recommendations and suggestions for implementation of the vision. Each phase is discussed in regard to its aims, steps involved, methods and techniques that can be employed.
Formulation of the problem / strategic question

Understanding of the past and present

Identification of the main actors present on the scene
Recognition of factors responsible for the current situation
Identification of the key-issues characteristic for the present
Understanding of interactions between actors and factors

Exploration of the future

Identification of driving forces of change
Determination of main issues and trends shaping the future
Clarification of the level of impact and degree of uncertainty
Establishment of scenario logics
Creation of different scenario stories

Development of the most desired future vision

Generation of ideas of what is desired
Agreeing a vision of the desired future shared by all stakeholders and sections of society

Recommendations and suggestion for the implementation of the vision

Generating policy proposals and suggestions for action
Development of indicators to measure progress
Identification of bodies responsible for action
Development of feedback systems and mechanisms for revising the vision and to generate new suggestions in order to respond to changing conditions

Fig. 6.1 The Prospective process
I. Formulation of the problem/strategic question

The methodology described can be used for different purposes in the planning process. For example: setting a vision for the entire city or region; determining a desired future of a district or area; and examining the future of various urban aspects such as transportation, land use, and community development. It is very important to identify and formulate a specific problem/strategic question that is going to be examined at the start of the process. In doing so, it is useful to form an exact statement of the problem/question and determine the expected outcomes of the exercise. Often, the initial concept of the problem or issue to be considered is vague and needs further clarification. Among the methods that can assist in formulating and clarifying the problem/strategic question are strategic conversations carried out with the key actors/stakeholders and brainstorming sessions.

II. Understanding of the past and present

An overall aim of this phase is the drawing of a complex picture of the present situation. Having a fully comprehensive picture of the present situation enables the exploration of possible alternative futures and helps to determine a path from the present state to the desired future state. This phase involves the completion of the following steps.

- **Recognition of the main actors and stakeholders.** It helps to recognise, the individuals and agencies that should be involved in the process of the exploration of the future and development of the vision, and who would be responsible for undertaking various actions to implement it. These people and institutions should be invited to participate in the process.

- **Identification of key issues and problems characteristic of the present situation.** This involves collecting a whole range of factual and statistical information as well as knowledge on community perceptions, memories, values, wishes, fears and so on.

- **Exploration of past and present decisions, policies and factors that have led to the development of the present situation.** These should be considered at the local, regional, national and global level. It is valuable to discern decisions and policies, which still have a strong, often hidden, influence, even if the reasons for their introduction are no longer relevant.
• Gaining an understanding of interactions between actors and factors. Mapping relationships and interactions between actors and factors can help to reveal interdependencies, of which there was no previous awareness, and, therefore, their impact and consequences are not fully appreciated.

There are different methods that can be employed in order to complete the steps of this phase: strategic conversations, brainstorming sessions, desktop research, Prospective workshops, environmental scanning, mind-mapping and relevance trees.

III. Exploration of the future

The third phase in the process is the exploration of the future. Its main aim is to identify the main driving forces of change, trends, issues and factors, so as to understand how they can influence the future and to create images of possible future states. The proposed technique for the exploration of the future is the particular scenario method developed by John Ratcliffe (2002b).

The scenario method consists of the following steps:

1. Identification of the driving forces of change. The driving forces of change are identified within the six sectors approach: Culture/Society, Demography, Economy, Environment, Governance and Technology. They can be determined using methods such as environmental scanning, strategic conversations with experts, targeted questionnaires, Prospective workshops and brainstorming sessions.

2. Detection of the main issues and trends shaping the future. This involves an examination of the driving forces of change recognised earlier and, deriving from them, more specific issues and trends that would have an impact upon the problem/strategic question. They can be identified using the same techniques as for the identification of the driving forces of change.

3. Clarification of the level of impact and degree of uncertainty. As the issues and trends derived previously would have a different role to play in creating and shaping the future, it is very helpful to classify them according to their level of impact upon the problem/strategic question and degree of uncertainty (likelihood) of occurring within a given timeframe. There are four different types of issues and trends: potential jokers, pivotal uncertainties, significant trends and context shapers (Fig. 6.2). ‘Pivotal uncertainties’ have the central role in building the future
scenarios, as they are characterised by their high impact upon the problem/strategic question and also the high uncertainty of their outcomes. This means that the future will be influenced by these trends to a large degree, and, as their outcome is very uncertain, a range of very different futures can unfold. This step can be carried out during a Prospective workshop, brainstorming session or through a survey.

4. Establishment of scenario logics. This part is crucial for the whole scenario process. Here, the structure and foundations of scenarios are established. The scenario stories can be constructed around the framework provided by the two main ‘pivotal uncertainties’. The scenario logics, built around the trends with a high level of impact and high uncertainty of their outcome, provide the main themes for scenario stories. These themes would perform differently in each scenario. Imagination, intuition and creativity help to establish how these themes would evolve in different circumstances.

5. Creation of different scenario stories. Scenario stories are developed around the scenario logics established previously. They can be developed during a workshop by the participants, or can be written by a member of a project team. Each scenario should have: a beginning, a middle and an end, key events that made it happen, early indicators of change and an evocative title.

![Fig. 6.2 Types of issues and trends](image)
It is important to remember that the process of exploration of the future is as important as its outcome (a set of scenarios) as it allows participants to understand how the future unfolds and to learn to anticipate changes and their consequences. This part of the process should involve the main stakeholders and decision-makers in order to let them develop a more comprehensive understanding of the complex and interconnected context within which the future of their urban territories is being shaped. Also to enable them to anticipate, in a more structured way, local and global changes and their short, medium and long-term consequences.

IV. Development of the most desirable vision of the future

This is another crucial step in the Prospective process. Knowing what future is desired enables the direction in which decisions and actions should be led to be determined. It helps to develop measures that would monitor the current course of action and verify the direction taken. Knowing what type of future is desired enables the path and means how to get there to be identified; it also supports strategic thinking and planning. The vision can be described as a ‘landmark’ that orientates present decisions and actions.

The desired vision can be created in a single visioning exercise, during the Prospective workshops, through targeted questionnaires and a series of brainstorming sessions, futures workshops and so on. When visions for urban territories are being developed it is necessary to ensure that everybody is invited to take part in the process: stakeholders, public and private organisations, community groups, minority groups, different generations, individual citizens and so on. Different parties and groups have different expectations, aspirations, needs, values and fears. It is very important to let them express their views and to enable them to engage in a dialogue that would result in agreeing a shared vision. While developing the vision it is important to remember that decisions and actions taken in order to achieve it will have impact upon future generations.

There are two main steps in this phase of the process. The first step involves the collection of views, aspirations and ideas held by different stakeholders and groups about what kind future is desired. The aim of the second step is to reach, through dialogue and negotiation, agreement between all involved parties on what the desired vision is.
V. Recommendations and suggestions for the implementation of the vision

The last phase in the process involves four main steps. The first one is generating policy proposals and suggestions for action. These are usually generated during Prospective workshops, brainstorming sessions, strategic interviews and surveys. The proposals can have a general or specific character. The second step is the development of indicators for measuring progress. It aims at the establishment of measures that would enable the monitoring of progress towards the achievement of the vision and provide feedback information on the key issues specified in the vision. The third step involves the identification of bodies responsible for the implementation of the vision. It is hoped that these bodies would have been involved in the development of the vision and, therefore, would accept their role in its implementation. The last step includes the development of feedback mechanisms for communicating the progress towards achievement of the vision, and for revising the vision and generating new suggestions in order to respond to changing conditions.

6.4.4.2 Mechanisms for collaboration and participation

Mechanisms for collaboration and participation in various future-oriented exercises for urban territories are usually designed on an individual basis. The author of this thesis proposes the ‘concertation’ process to be used as the mechanism for facilitating the collaboration between stakeholders and decision makers. She also suggests three methods for facilitating public participation: community forums, futures workshops, focus groups and consultation brochures.

I. Concertation process

The structure of the concertation mechanism presented in this thesis is based on the French model, to which the author was introduced at the ‘Prospective Masterclass’ delivered by Fabienne Goux-Baudiment at the Dublin Institute of Technology in October 2003. This structure can be modified to suit the specific context of a given urban territory and the particular requirements of a project.
The concertation process involves the participation of Locally Involved Actors (ALC). These are, for example, major employers, universities, hospitals, army, police, church, trade unions and so on. There are three main groups of actors: administration and public decision-makers (e.g. elected councillors, civil servants), economic sector (e.g. employers, trade unions, banks, and business associations), and non-economic sector (e.g. civic society, education, health, police, army, and church). Actors can also be classified by their role and power. They can have: power of authority (legal), power of function, and power of influence (e.g. the media).

![Pyramid illustrating the importance of actors](image)

**Fig. 6.3 Pyramid illustrating the importance of actors**

Importance of actors can be ‘measured’ by the number of powers they have. In a given urban region for every 500,000 inhabitants there are approximately 300 people who have at least one type of role/power in the society (group C), 100-150 people who have two types of role/power (group B) and around 30, who have all three types (group A). This classification is illustrated in Fig.6.3 in a form of a pyramid. In the concertation process actors representing all three groups (A, B, C) are targeted. As a first step a questionnaire is distributed between the members of all three groups. The members of group C are asked to complete and return the questionnaire. The members of group B are also asked to complete and return the questionnaire. If they fail to do so within a given time limit they are phoned twice in order to encourage them to complete the questionnaire. If an actor representing group B or C fails to return the questionnaire, it is treated as an answer in itself – a lack of concern.

The members of group A, the most important and influential actors in a given region, are invited to participate in the workshops as well as to complete the questionnaire. They are asked to leave behind their professional background and stand back from the organisation they represent. They work on specific issues within so-called ‘functional groups’. The actors meet several times. Their task is to define the problem, develop a
vision and come up with proposals for action. There are also three workshops attended by ten people representing three different sectors (public administration, economic and non-economic) (3+3+4).

The concertation process used to facilitate collaboration between the stakeholders and decision-makers leads to the creation of partnerships and networks between the most important and influential actors as they are forced to meet and work together. Also it results in the development of ‘collective intelligence’ shared by these actors.

II. Public participation

Public participation can be facilitated in urban planning processes in a number of different ways. It is important to ensure participation of representatives of as many various sectors of society as possible. The following mechanisms for public participation are proposed.

- Establishment of a community forum, which brings together all kinds of community and voluntary organisations. Such a forum, as a structured and recognised platform, can facilitate dialogue between the community organisations and local government and other stakeholders.

- Creation of futures focus groups, which are comprised of citizens, community organisations, stakeholders and experts. Focus groups can explore specific issues building upon knowledge already existing and develop it further.

- Distribution of consultation brochures and surveys among citizens. This could be a way of developing awareness about a project, encouraging citizens to participate in it as well as gathering valuable knowledge on their concerns, aspirations, wishes, perceptions and so on.

While designing the public participation methods it is necessary to ensure that the public has a chance to exchange their views and present various issues to the decision-makers and stakeholders and vice-versa. It is also important to ensure that the civic voice will be listened to and incorporated in the vision, strategies and plans. Stable relationships based upon trust can be only developed through respectful discussion and the acknowledgment of contributions of all parties involved.
6.4.4.3 Interplay of different generations

The interplay of different generations is considered from two different points of view, the first is related to the general development of urban areas and the second is associated with the roles which different generations can play in shaping urban territories. While exploring different future possibilities and deciding upon the preferred options decision-makers and stakeholders need to remember that their choices will have an impact not only on the lives of the present generation but often, and possibly to a greater degree, on the lives of people living in 50, 100, 200, or more years time. In the same way as decisions made by past generations, such as the segregation of land uses, have impact on the present ways of living. This notion has been already recognised in relation to the natural environment and has been promoted through the sustainability concept. However, it could be argued that although every planner and decision-maker knows the word ‘sustainable’, many of them lack an in-depth understanding of its meaning in the context of their own sphere of activities. Therefore, it is important to make people participating in future-oriented exercises fully aware of that notion.

Future-oriented planning should create a space for participation of different generations. Older generations through dialogue with younger people can put a different perspective towards certain aspects of a city and give a fresh meaning to different places. Conversely, the involvement of young people in the development of visions for the future can bring a large dose of enthusiasm and innovative and creative thinking, not limited by knowledge of financial, administrative or other type of restrictions. Hence, it is worthwhile to listen to all ideas expressed by young people about the future they imagine and the future in which they would like to live. Another role of different generations in the development of desired future visions is making stakeholders and decision-makers aware of their present needs, be it the needs of the elderly, young people, or those just starting families.
7. PROPOSITION

"The future belongs to those who prepare for it today." (Malcolm X (1925-1965))

The research presented in this thesis was undertaken in order to address the need for a change in the way of thinking about and planning for the future of cities. Coming from the Social-Economic Geography background, the author was strongly aware that in recent decades, urban development became one of the key concerns for policy and decision makers not only at local, regional and national level, but also globally. On one hand, cities are thriving centres of human activity; on the other, their worsening problems are becoming a threat to the economic growth, social stability and environmental sustainability. The existing problems combined with the accelerating pace of change and increasing complexity and uncertainty of the context, within which the urban territories have to function, pose difficult challenges for people and institutions involved in the urban planning processes. Over the last years while conducting this research, it became even more apparent that in order to enable cities to deal effectively with their current problems and ensure their sustainable and prosperous future, it is necessary to find new ways of addressing these challenges.

The Futures Studies field, whose concepts and foundations the author had a chance to explore in-depth, offers a whole range of methodologies and techniques that can assist urban planners in dealing more effectively with these challenges. But more importantly, it promotes a different way of thinking about the future. It reinforces the notion that future can be shaped, encourages the exploration of alternative courses of action and stimulates the creation of the vision of desired futures. All of this, in the spirit of collaboration between various actors and building upon the values and wishes of communities.

It is hoped that this research will help to make a small step towards the change of the urban planning mindset - the less and less effective 'predict and provide' approach - towards a new attitude, already used in many cities, the proposed 'explore, envision and plan' approach. It is also hoped that the Prospective methodology model proposed in this thesis would assist communities in envisioning their desired future, and provide a structured approach for planners and urban decision-makers in exploring future possibilities, understanding the complexities of urban environments and anticipating change and its consequences. And additionally, it would act as a platform for dialogue
between communities and the decision-makers and as a mechanism for collaboration amongst the stakeholders.

Having finished work on this thesis, the author hopes to continue the research on the application of futures methods in urban planning working towards the change of the planning mindset. In the course of the study, a number of issues were identified that need further research. They are divided into two groups: those related to the continuation of the research and those addressing gaps in knowledge about urban planning processes. The issues suggested as continuation of this research include the following.

1. **Evaluation of the proposed Prospective methodology.** As this research proposes the methodology, it would be very valuable to evaluate its practical application in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses, and consequently enhance the methodology.

2. **Comparisons of different approaches applied in cities all over the world.** Delimitations of this study did not allow for an in-depth examination of projects employing futures methods in cities worldwide. It would be useful to conduct comparisons between different projects and to determine whether there are any cultural links between the ways the projects are carried out, what methodologies are applied, and its cultural context.

3. **Identification of the main barriers to futures thinking.** One of the aspects of this project has looked at the factors impeding futures thinking. A more in-depth research into the barriers for futures thinking would be very beneficial especially within an institutional context. Such research could also help to determine the obstacles for application of futures methods in urban planning context.

4. **Application of the Casual Layered Analysis method.** This method has been identified as one that could be used for analysis of the past and present - the second phase of the Prospective process. The author became aware of that method at the later stages of the research and did not have an opportunity to employ it in the ‘testing’ study conducted at earlier stages.

Among the other issues that were identified as possible topics for further research are the following.

1. **Interactions between different urban components.** Understanding of how different components of urban environments are linked and how they influence each
other would be very beneficial for dealing with complexity of cities. One of the issues, which has arisen a number of times, was the interplay of culture and economy in urban regions. Another topic involved exploration of the relationship between spatial planning and market forces.

2. **Formal and informal networking of actors.** Collaboration of stakeholders was identified as one of the key elements in future-oriented planning. Research into the existing and possible formal and informal networks between actors would be very beneficial in order to establish types of networks, how they are created, what are the stimulants and barriers for their establishment, and how such collaboration can be fostered. Also it would be very beneficial to examine this issue in cities, which undertook visioning and other future-oriented exercises.

3. **Creation of collective intelligence within the city.** Another issue, which is linked to the collaboration of stakeholders, is creation of ‘collective intelligence’. As this concept is often used in the context of futures and urban planning, it would be beneficial to explore further in order to determine what does collective intelligence involve, how it is developed and in what ways it is beneficial for urban planners and decision-makers.

The topics of further research presented above have general character. However, the author, in her future career, would like to address some of the issues that have arisen from this research. One of them is the development of an ‘urban futures methods toolkit’ that would provide information for professionals about the available methodological approaches, such as strategic planning, territorial Prospective, and regional Foresight; present various futures methods and techniques with practical examples of how they can be applied; demonstrate projects in which futures methods were employed; consider mechanisms for encouraging the collaboration of stakeholders and public participation; and discuss issues related to project continuation, sustaining commitment, evaluating the progress, common problems that can be encountered during project realisation. Another one is an active involvement in setting up a formal or informal ‘Prospective process’ for the city of Dublin and creation of a platform for the collaboration of stakeholders. This would allow the author to utilise her knowledge and expertise gained through the course of this research. Finally, the author would like to bring futures methods to the education of
planners, as the education is one of the key factors in encouraging and facilitating the shift in the planning mindset.